

Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness

Look at your basic mind, just simple awareness which is not divided into sections, the thinking process that exists within you. Just look at that, see that.

The reason our mind is known as UNBORN awareness is that we have no idea of its history. We have no idea where this mind, our crazy mind, began in the beginning. It has no shape, no color, no particular portrait or characteristics. It usually flickers on and off, off and on, all the time. Sometimes it is hibernating, sometimes it is all over the place. Look at your mind. That is a part of ultimate Bodhicitta training or discipline. Our mind fluctuates constantly, back and forth, forth and back. Look at that, just LOOK AT THAT!

...

If you look further and further, at your mind's root, its base, you will find that it has no color and no shape. Your mind is, basically speaking, somewhat blank. There is nothing to it...This blankness is connected to mindfulness. To begin with, you are mindful of some THING; you are mindful of yourself,, you are mindful of your atmosphere, and you are mindful of your breath. But if you look at WHY you are mindful, beyond WHAT you are mindful of, you begin to find that there is no root. Everything begins to dissolve. That is the idea of examining the nature of unborn awareness. From Training the Mind & Cultivating Loving-Kindness by Chogyam Trungpa

Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness

The real purpose of this slogan is to pull the rug out from under you in case you think you understood the previous slogan. If you feel proud of yourself because of how you really understood that everything is like a dream, then this slogan is here to challenge that smug certainty. It's saying: "Well, who is this anyway who thinks that they discovered that everything is like a dream?"

"Examine the nature of unborn awareness." Who is this "I"? Where did it come from? Who is the one who realizes anything? Who is it that's aware? The slogan points to the transparency of everything, including our beloved identity, this precious M-E. Who is this ME?

The armor we erect around our hearts causes a lot of misery. But don't be deceived, it's very transparent. The more vivid it gets, the more clearly you see it, the more you realize that this shield - this cocoon - is just made up of thoughts that we churn out and regard as solid. It's not made of iron. The armor is not made out of metal. In fact, it's made out of passing memory.

...If you think this big burden of ego, this big monster cocoon, is something, it isn't. It's just passing memory. Yet it's so vivid. The more you practice, the more vivid it gets. It's a paradox - it can't be found, and yet it couldn't be more vivid.

When we awaken our hearts, we're changing the whole pattern, but not by creating a new pattern. We are moving further and further away from concretizing and making things so solid and always trying to get some ground underneath our feet. This moving away from comfort and security, this stepping out into the unknown, uncharted, and shaky - that's

called enlightenment, liberation. From *Start Where You Are : A Guide to Compassionate Living* by Pema Chodron

Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness

When you look directly at the presence of mind, no color, no shape, no form is perceived. Since mind has no origin, it has never come into existence in the first place. Now it is not located anywhere, inside or outside the body. Finally, the mind is not some object that goes somewhere or ceases to exist. By examining and investigating mind, you should come to a precise and certain understanding of the nature of this awareness, which has no origin, location, or cessation.

From *The Great Path of Awakening : An Easily Accessible Introduction for Ordinary People*

Investigate the Nature of Unborn Awareness

When we seek something to grasp as our personal identity, we naturally arrive at the mind. What *Sechibuwa* challenges here is precisely this instinctive sense of personal identity that regards the mind as an entity in its own right. He asks us to investigate whether awareness does in fact exist in its own right, whether our minds exist intrinsically, independent of other people's minds, of the environment, and of our bodies.

In the continuum of such mental events we then discover behavioral, cognitive, and emotional patterns. Out of these patterns we develop a sense of personality, which we identify as "I am". But to equate ourselves with these patterns is fallacious. There is no real personal identity, no "I," no self, in these ever-changing, dependently related events that constitute our stream of awareness. In an ultimate sense, the nature of awareness is unborn; that is, it does not intrinsically arise from some preceding cause. Only on a relative or conventional level can we speak of awareness arising and passing again and again. The concept of mind as an abiding, isolated, changeless entity that performs a variety of mental events—choices, memories, imagination, hopes, fears—that mind as an entity existing in its own right is in fact a non-entity. It is a purely artificial fabrication, and by identifying with that false concept of mind we do ourselves great damage.

At this point the author has discussed both the objective world and subjective awareness, and has concluded that neither exists intrinsically. Whereas he seemed at first to lead us towards idealism, denying that the objective world has any intrinsic reality independent of awareness, he then turns around to deny the intrinsic reality of awareness as well. Both the objective world and the subjective world do exist. Their ontological status is fundamentally the same: both exist as matrices of mutually interdependent events, but in neither do we find an absolute foundation for reality. This is neither materialism nor idealism, but something different. How different, we are about to see.

Excerpted from: *The Seven-Point Mind Training*(first published as *A Passage from Solitude : Training the Mind in a Life Embracing the World*), by B. Alan Wallace

Examine the Nature of Unborn Awareness

(the emptiness of mind))

Although it is difficult to realize emptiness, it is possible, by meditating on our own being and on outer phenomena, to recognize the invalidity of our ignorant concept of self-existence. However, a further complication remains, because our conception of independent existence also applies very powerfully to the mind that is meditating. When such a difficulty arises, we must concentrate on consciousness itself in order to perceive that the mind, too, is empty and does not exist independently.

The mind has not come from somewhere, like a guest who has come into a room, nor does it go anywhere. It has no form or color and does not abide in any definite place. In fact, it is completely intangible and depends on only two things - the object that is perceived and the senses through which it is perceived.

Through constant observation of the mind in this way we shall see that it does not exist in the way we previously conceived it to. When we had thought that our mind was meditating, it always seemed as though we could hold on to and isolate this concept, but after meditating as described we shall recognize the emptiness of this previous ignorant conception. However, this emptiness does not imply that mind does not exist, but rather that there is no mind that can be grasped and isolated. Since it does exist, we are able to use it for meditation. *Copyright Brian Beresford, 1977, 1996. Excerpted from Advice from a Spiritual Friend*

Analyze the Unborn Nature of Awareness

When anger arises in what we think of as our minds, we become oblivious even to the dangers that might threaten us. Our faces flushed with rage, we seize our weapons and could even kill a lot of people. But this anger is an illusion; it is not at all some great force that comes rushing into us. It achieves one thing only and that is to send us to hell, and yet it is nothing but thought, insubstantial thought. It is only thought, and yet!

At this moment, while I am teaching Dharma, let us consider the mental experience, or thought, which you have, of listening carefully to me. Does this have a form or color? Is it to be found in the upper or lower part of the body, in the eyes or the ears? What we call the mind is not really there at all. You can find out whether the mind exists or not by just turning inwards and reflecting carefully. You will see that the mind does not begin, or end, or stay, anywhere; that it has no color or form and is to be found neither inside nor outside the body. And when you see that it does not exist as any thing, you should stay in that experience without an attempt to label or define it.

When you have truly attained the realization of this emptiness, you will be like the venerable Milarepa or Guru Rinpoche, who were unaffected by the heat of summer or the cold of winter, and who could not be burned by fire or drowned in water. In emptiness there is neither pain nor suffering. We, on the other hand, have not understood the empty nature of the mind and so, when bitten by even a small insect, we think, 'Ouch! I've been bitten. It hurts!' or, when someone says something unkind, we get angry. That is a sign that we have not realized the mind's empty nature. *From Enlightened Courage, by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.*