

## Living in Not-Knowing

Rupert often speaks about realigning our thoughts, perceptions, activities and relationships with our non-dual understanding. But what does this really mean in practice? One way of describing it is what Jean Klein calls 'living in your not-knowing': living in the now, without the now being coloured by past feelings and experiences or by future hopes and fears. But I think there's more to 'living in not-knowing' than that: it's being open to all that arises, claiming nothing, not resisting anything and not grabbing hold of anything. Only a separate self could claim, or resist or grab, and we know nothing of a separate self.

Here are some passages from Jean Klein's book *Transmission of the Flame* which give a flavour of what it is like to live that way:

You must really understand what it means to live completely in not-knowing. In this "I don't know" you feel your vastness, immensity, a kind of space without a frontier, without a centre, you are nowhere. When you say, "I don't know," you will see that the looker is what he is looking for. When you look for the "I am" through techniques and systems, you objectify it. You must really see in your daily life that when you look for it, you go further away. When you see this, then there's a complete giving-up.

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In practical life you must take facts as they are; don't start from knowledge, from psychological memory. First there is inquiring, watching, and then comes acting. So live in not-knowing, free from memory. Then perceptions are very rich. We are not accustomed enough to seeing things without memory. When you live with the pure perception without any mental interference, you see the whole history of what you are looking at. A kind of metamorphosis takes place. Things are always new.

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When there is right observation of the situation, the action comes up instantaneously and then it is really creative. Otherwise it's more or less a reaction.

*So the insight gives you right observation?*

I would say, the insight comes from the situation itself, from right observation – attention without selection. It is the art of living in not-knowing, living really in openness. When you live in openness your highest intelligence functions and your personality functions completely differently, because in this openness your whole being acts with the highest sensitivity. In this openness there is absolute security, but of course the person feels in absolute insecurity!

[Jean Klein: *Transmission of the Flame*, p26, p59, p192]

So how do we make the transition to living in this way? Do we need to change the work we do, the activities we engage in, the friends we hang out with? This is how Rupert sees it happening:

Prior to this understanding most of our thoughts, feelings and activities revolve around the imaginary entity that we believe ourselves to be. This includes our interaction with others in a wide variety of ways from normal social interaction to intimate relationships.

When an interest in the true nature of our experience takes a deep hold of our mind and heart it is quite natural that some (or all) lesser interests get dropped, in order to allow time and energy to devote to what has now become our deepest and most abiding interest and love. It is natural at this stage that some interaction with others, particularly those that were based on validating and substantiating the belief of ourselves as a separate entity, will naturally drop away, not

through rejection or judgement, but rather through lack of interest.

It may also be equally natural in some cases, as we become more established in this understanding and taste its fruit in terms of peace, happiness and love, that a desire to share this will arise. This is not a desire that comes from a sense of separation but rather one that comes from the deep sense that what we truly are is in fact already shared. It is just a desire to express or celebrate this.

In other words such a desire does not come from a sense of lack, from a need to *find* happiness or love, but rather it comes *from* happiness and love, from a natural impulse to share what we now know ourselves to be.

How this takes place is unique in every case and will vary greatly from one to another. Find your own way and be confident that even if it appears otherwise, your behaviour comes from love and intelligence not from judgement and rejection. Not everyone will see this to begin with but in time our true colours are usually revealed.

I should also add that in some cases, there may be a desire to lead a simple, quiet life, without much social interaction, and if that is so, you should do that. Peace and happiness are the tests. There is no need, for instance, even to speak about this to anyone if you don't feel like it. Your understanding will be conveyed unmistakably and without words to those around you and that may or may not elicit a response or a question.

[\[https://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/living\\_the\\_understanding\]](https://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/living_the_understanding)

So at a practical level, is there anything we need to do to make this happen? How do we discover a way of expressing and sharing our understanding that feels natural to us? What form should that take? Do we need to search for some opportunity for expression, or medium of expression? Rupert was asked about how he lives his life – how he does business, sets boundaries, decides what he does and doesn't want to do. After telling a delightful story about how he interacts with the builders who were working on changes to his house, he continued as follows:

RS: I see the situation and I do my best to bring my love and understanding to bear on that situation. It may or may not be successful. There may be other elements or other forces at work, so my own intervention may be more or less successful. It may be partially successful.

*Q: When you guide us into meditation, and to let everything be as it is, and to become the awareness, I'm a little stuck in what to do, or if to do anything at all, with the experience. And therefore, how to translate it in daily life ...*

RS: You don't have to worry about what to do. You don't have to consciously express this understanding in life, because the way we think and feel and the way we subsequently relate, is based upon our deep understanding of ourself. 'As a man is, so he sees' (William Blake). As a man is, so he sees, acts and relates. So it all depends on 'as a man is', 'as a person is'. As someone knows themselves to be, so the way they think and feel and subsequently act and relate will unfold. So you don't need to worry about consciously expressing this love and understanding. At any moment, our understanding, such as it is, is expressing itself – in our thoughts and feelings, and subsequently in our activities and relationships. It expresses itself naturally. We have all of us effortlessly, been expressing the fears and desires and neuroses and insecurities of a separate self for decades. We didn't have to make an effort to express the needs of the separate self. The separate self just expressed itself moment by moment

effortlessly. So if our knowledge of ourself changes, so our expression of ourself will effortlessly change accordingly.

[YouTube: [Bringing Love To All Situations](#)]

So do we simply 'go with the flow', or are there choices to be made? And if there are choices, then who or what would make them? As we discussed in the previous paper: "There is no choice or cause in eternity." Here is a reminder:

We could say that from an absolute point of view, conception, creation, knowing and enjoyment are simultaneous and therefore there is no room for choice there.

It is only at the relative level that the mind conceptually separates out these elements sequentially and creates, as a result, the concept of choice.

[[https://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/does\\_consciousness\\_really\\_choose\\_anything](https://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/does_consciousness_really_choose_anything)]

So at a relative level, there do seem to be choices and our body-minds do seem to go along with them. There might be intellectual analysis or investigation of options, but that's just a natural functioning of mind – there's no feeling of a 'me' engaging in a 'choosing activity'. Whatever is needed in the moment seems naturally to arise in mind, and be followed up by action undertaken by the body. This is how Rupert describes it:

At a practical level, you want to lead a life that is consistent with your understanding. You don't just want to think thoughts that are in line with truth, you want your feelings, your activities, your relationships and your perceptions to be in line. Therefore, at a relative level, make choices in all those realms of your life so that you can lead a life that as far as is possible, in all realms of experience is consistent with this understanding.

You will inevitably, to a greater or lesser extent, come across situations that don't express this understanding. So if it's the role of your body-mind to intervene, to make some kind of an intervention in order to bring this love and understanding into the situation, then try to do that, if that's your calling. You may not be able to turn the situation around completely, but nevertheless, you will be able to intervene to a greater or lesser extent on behalf of love and intelligence. And that will have an impact on the situation, either directly, or down the road. But if you can't, or it's not appropriate to intervene in some way, either intellectually or physically, then just quietly remove yourself from the situation.

The more we are established in this peace, and this love and this intelligence, just trust your body-mind to act on its behalf. Just as previously you didn't have to discipline the body-mind to act on behalf of the separate self – it just naturally obeyed the dictates of the separate self – so now naturally you don't have to discipline the body-mind. Just allow each of our body-minds to be used to bring this love and understanding out of our minds and hearts into the world, in whatever way is appropriate for you, moment by moment.

[YouTube: [How to Relate to Ignorance](#)]

We all engage in business relationships and transactions of some sort. And most of us spend time with friends and relatives who don't share our understanding. So it is inevitable that from time to time, those activities will bring us into contact with egoic behaviour. If anything, we become more sensitive to displays of ego. It is easy to be drawn into either resisting or withdrawing from this behaviour. This is Rupert's advice on how to respond to such situations:

The important thing is not to have an agenda with the person. You may see a display of ego, a display of a sense of separation, trying to aggrandise itself or trying to protect itself or one of the numerous ways in which the separate self perpetuates itself. You may see that – that’s not a judgement, it’s an observation. It’s fine to see that. But it’s another thing to have an agenda with it. And to have an agenda with it is exactly the same as the ego that you are observing. In other words, it’s only the ego in ourself that would have an agenda with another ego. So make the distinction very clearly between observing the sense of separation, however it displays itself in another, and judging it. Awareness does the observing; the separate self does the judging. That’s the difference. So you, take your stand as awareness, you do the observing. That’s the first thing, not to have an agenda, not to feel that it’s wrong, that it needs to be corrected. It’s OK just as it is. This display is OK just as it is. You, awareness, don’t have an agenda with it.

And then the second thing is to realise that what this ‘other’ really is, is this presence of awareness. And there’s only one presence of awareness. Something that is without limits – there can’t be more than one of it. We know in our own experience, this aware presence doesn’t have an edge, it doesn’t stop anywhere, there aren’t lots of awareness’s. So this one you are speaking to is your very own intimate self. Now in between, like a kind of screen, there is a display of thoughts and feelings and behaviours and gestures that betray a belief in the other, that we are something other than this presence of awareness. So this display you are dealing with is just a set of conditioned thoughts and feelings and activities and gestures. So when you speak to them, relate in your heart to who they truly are. Don’t buy their story that they are a separate self. Don’t reject it, don’t judge it, but don’t buy it. Let it do its thing. One can respond to it appropriately. It doesn’t mean that you just ignore what they’re saying. No – you respond appropriately. But really the one you are speaking to is the presence behind this. And just that is enough. Because that attitude will ensure that whatever words you use that are responding to their words are somehow impregnated with this understanding. So although the content of the conversation may be what you did and what I did – it may be relative, psychological stuff – nevertheless your responses will be saturated in this deeper understanding. And something of your response will percolate through the conditioning to who they truly are, and in a kind of resonance. [\(How to Relate to Others Egos\)](#)

## Contemplation

*When we treat the world as the face of God, it reveals itself as such.*

[Rupert Spira]