

The Natural State

The first glimpse of our true nature is usually pure consciousness in the absence of phenomenal perceptions. In Sanskrit, that is known as *nirvikalpa samadhi*. In some traditions, that is regarded as the goal of the spiritual path. Just going 'inwards' to pure consciousness, leaving the world and the objects of perception behind, and abiding in this state for as much of the time as possible. For those who are drawn to living the life of a recluse, this is the obvious route to peace.

But in the Direct Path, *nirvikalpa samadhi* is just the starting-point. Francis often talks about *sahaja samadhi*, the 'natural state' as being what we are really looking for. It's called a 'state', but it would be a mistake to conceptualise it as a state of mind which comes and goes. Here is a description of the path from *nirvikalpa samadhi* to *sahaja samadhi* which Francis described in answer to someone from a Hindu background. The questioner started by asking about *satchitananda*:

FL: *Sat*¹ and *chit*¹ are the two aspects of reality that are always present. *Ananda*¹ shines in the absence of *nama rupa*². In the absence of *nama rupa*, we have *satchitananda* as one single experience, which is, in fact, *nirvikalpa samadhi*, because there is no *nama rupa*, therefore there are no *vikalpas*³ of manifestation in this experience. The *nirvikalpa samadhi* is the revelation of *satchitananda*. That's also *mukti*⁴.

Now, in the presence of *nama rupa*, *ananda* can be veiled if *sat* and *chit* are believed to be different. If *chit* is attributed to some object, some *nama rupa*, such as the *jiva*⁵, the mind, the separate human being, and *sat* is attributed to Brahman as universal reality. As soon as they are seen as distinct, there is duality between *chit* and *sat*, and as a result, *ananda* is veiled. When the recognition of the identity of *sat* and *chit* is revealed in *nirvikalpa samadhi*, then also the true nature of *ananda* gets revealed. In ignorance, what happens is slightly different. In most cases, there is *sat*, *chit*, *nama*, *rupa*, but *ananda* is veiled because *sat* and *chit* are seen as different, and *chit* is attributed to some *namas* and *rupas*, but not to *sat* itself. ...

Q: If *sat* is entire, what you call, homogenous, continuous, permanent, and same with *chit*, which is objectless knowledge, then the happiness is also objectless, and then there is this oneness in understanding?

FL: But when the world appears, it appears out of this presence, you see, and then it is made out of this presence.

So, that's *sahaja samadhi*, that's when the peace doesn't require the absence of objects, and there is no tension any longer, no desire for the *nirvikalpa* experience.

In the beginning, we have access to it only through the *nirvikalpa*, but then, before the extinction of the objects, and after the reappearance, the creation of the new objects, the peace of the background still shines. It's like a fish that comes out of the water is still wet from the water. It's that type of presence.

¹ *Sat* = being, *chit* = consciousness, *ananda* = bliss, causeless happiness

² *Nama* = name, *rupa* = form

³ *Vikalpa* = imagination, illusion, conceptualisation

⁴ *Mukti* = liberation

⁵ *Jiva* = (illusory) individual self

And then, if the glimpses of truth are like discrete moments, and that's the time that elapses, then what happens is, before and after the glimpse, we still have the shine of peace.

And what happens over time is that the density of the glimpse, if you will, increases – there are more and more glimpses. And also, as a result, the presence of peace as an experience becomes continuous throughout the glimpses. You don't need the glimpses. That's how we transition, if you will, from a first isolated glimpse to a multiplicity of glimpses, to a constant condition of peace, or quasi-constant, which for all the practical purposes is the same.

Q: Right. With understanding and with regular investigation, you'll have that peace which will last, and then you'll be always seeking desirelessness, and then the consciousness will be the background, and the objects will just be like waves?

FL: Yes, but when you have the peace, you don't desire anything else. Everything else is like an adventure in this peace, but at the deepest of your being, you have this peace. You may endeavour to manifest this love and this peace in your daily life, in your environment, in your relationships. Yes, you have this endeavour, but deep in your being, you're at peace.

Q: Because peace is the foreground and the background, and then the activities of body and mind are then purposeless in a way, right?

FL: The activities of the body and mind really don't interfere with the peace the moment they originate from the peace. They are simply the extension of the peace, like the trees are the extension of the ground.

[Francis Lucille, 15/2/2022 [Sat Chit Ananda Nama Rupa Explained](#)]

So that is the theory. But how does it work in practice? How does that peace remain with us through the ups and downs of our everyday lives? As Francis explains, it happens automatically, following a liberating glimpse, but the extent to which it happens, and how quickly it happens will depend on the depth of our love of truth. The deeper our love of truth, the more we will be conducting experiments to explore and verify the understanding and deep intuition we gained from the glimpse:

FL: The same experience that we had in the glimpse, which we call *nirvikalpa samadhi*, we begin to have this same experience, in the presence of neutral objects. That is different, this natural state, *sahaja samadhi*, in the presence of objects. And then gradually life gives us opportunities to notice that even when the situations are pleasant or when they are unpleasant, this peace is still there. ...

[Francis goes on to describe a graph which looks like the one illustrated below.]

You have these two *[initially]* parallel lines and if the manifestation remains within these two lines, we don't lose our peace. So if you draw this figure, it will start with parallel lines, like that, and you have two curves moving away *[from each other]*.

So the angle with which they will move apart depends on how much you desire for them to move apart, how much you invest in conducting experiments. Some people they don't, so they will remain like this *[area between the two 'few experiments' lines]*. They will have had a glimpse, and gradually a little bit *[more peace]* during their life, but there are still events that are going to throw them off. And other people, they will be more like this *[whole grey area between the two 'lots of experiments' lines]*. So it would take *[higher]* levels of intensity of pleasure and displeasure to take them away.

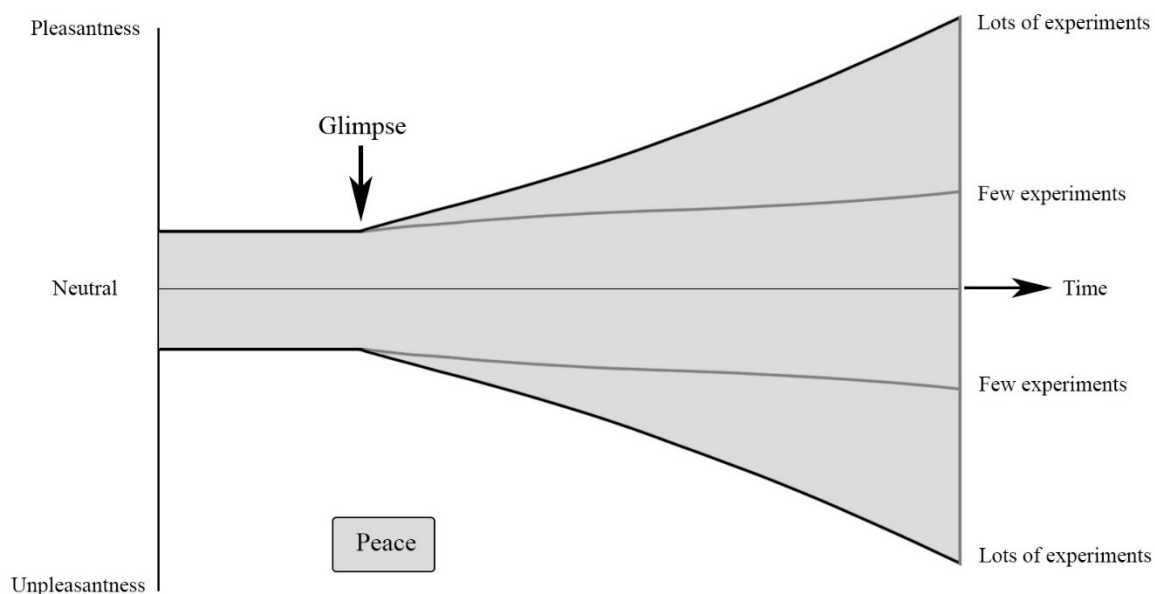


Diagram illustrates that after a liberating glimpse, the extent to which our experience of peace increases depends on our desire for it, and hence our level of experimentation.

Nobody is guaranteed. Even the greatest sage – I guess sometimes Krishna had problems with some Gopis, and he got upset! So nobody is perfect. Get rid of the notion that gurus are perfect.
[Francis Lucille 19/8/2023]

It seems like this experience of peace, *sahaja samadhi*, is a state of the mind that comes and goes. But that's just the mind's conceptualisation. Jean Klein called it a 'non-state'. Here is Francis's explanation:

Q: Could you elaborate on this quote from Jean Klein: 'There are many states, but there is only one non-state: call it *sahaja*. In a state there is concentration. All the kinds of samadhis are concentration. In a non-state your ears, your eyes, your sense of smell, touch and taste are alive. There is no withdrawing.'

FL: Well, if I paraphrase what he said is that when there is no concentration, meaning no effort, meaning no goal, meaning not going anywhere, meaning no intention to change what is at that moment, meaning complete welcoming of what is going on at that moment, that's *sahaja*. The question is not what *sahaja* is, that's clear, because then he says all the senses are open, there is no choice.

But there are two things. First, most people, even when they experience *sahaja* fleetingly, they want something else. So they immediately decide that that's not enough and they go back into the future, into the past, into fear and desire. Second: how to get there. *Samadhi* means 'state'. *Sahaja samadhi* means the natural state, the effortless state. So, how to get to effortlessness? How to get to a state which is effortless? It's obvious that we cannot get there through effort, because more effort cannot take you to effortlessness. So what is it in our experience that brings about a change effortlessly? What kind of event brings about a change effortlessly, but nevertheless seems to originate from us? I understand that if a cop stops you for speeding, it's

an event that brings about a change. You're going to have to pay a fine, right? But then that's an external event which seems to be completely independent from you. So what kind of event that is felt as originating from us brings about a change effortlessly? Can you think of something?

Q: Yes, it's a repose, it's a relaxation, it's sort of a dropping back. That's how I experience it.

FL: If we let it happen, yes. But there is another type of event that all of a sudden brings about a change effortlessly and that originates from us. It's understanding. We cannot understand through effort. Understanding happens, in fact, when we relax the effort to understand. So understanding comes from desire. We seek understanding, we have the desire for it, but it's a desire that has no direction because we don't know the solution. Therefore, because we don't know, we cannot go into a predefined direction. So it's a desire in which the energy of the desire is no longer directed into a defined direction, because we don't know. So the energy of the desire goes back onto itself, so to speak, because it is not given a direction. And then effortlessly understanding happens.

As a result of this understanding, we are left in our natural condition. In other words, as a result of this specific understanding here, not an understanding about phenomena or what we have to do in life in a given situation, no. Understanding about what we are, consciousness, reality. When we understand that we have no reason to believe that we are separate, that's the understanding we are talking about here.

For a short moment in the beginning, we are in our natural state. We just cannot stay in it because we forget the understanding. The understanding was telling us everything is just fine right now. Then the old habit comes up, no, no, no, it's not fine. I want this, I want that. It's not good, not good enough. I want to see God, I want to see the angels, I want to see the symphony of the angels, etc. Now we are cooked, because then we start making an effort to see the angels, or whatever. ...

So when we fall in love with truth as a result of the glimpse, immediately after a glimpse, we are left in our natural state. We have to know this, but then there is a residual habit to escape it. It's an effort. We cannot rest in the effortlessness. So we leave the natural state because it seems so natural to make an effort to do this, to do that, to think about other people. And then, because it seems so innocent to think about other people. But it's already ignorance, you see, it's very insidious how ignorance comes back to us. Because remember, as we see others, we see ourselves. So if we see other people, if we think, OK, this person is very nice, that seems very innocent to say, this person is very nice. Of course, if we say this person is a jerk, that's it. So it's very insidious. ... Every time after a glimpse, we are in our natural state. In other words, we are back in the garden, naked, happy. And then we say, oh, there is this apple here. And we take a bite at the apple, and then we are kicked out of the garden. ...

Sahaja is our natural state, meaning that we are there already. We don't leave it really, we just pretend that we are leaving it. How can we leave that which we are? We cannot leave consciousness. So the trip out of the garden is not a real trip

Q: And you've used the expression 'readily available' before, because it's not usual to be in that non-state of sahaja 100%. Some of the time you're just into the...

FL: No, either we are knowingly in it or not. So we are not 70% in *sahaja*. It's a yes or no situation. And the way to test it is at that moment, what do I truly believe to be? At that moment. If at that moment I believe to be a separate, a limited person, I'm out of the garden. If I

don't know, I am in the garden. I don't have to know that I am not separate. I simply have to disown the belief that I am separate. That's very important because it's simple. It's very simple to reach a conclusion that I don't know that I am separate. And the moment I don't know, I am in the garden. But the next moment I believe I know, I want something else, etc., and I'm out of it. So these oscillations in and out, in and out. Over time it stabilizes.

[Francis Lucille, 22/1/2023: [Effortless Understanding & Sahaja Samadhi](#)]

Contemplation

Withdrawal is still looking for a result and maintains the subject/object duality on a subtle level. You can never come to unconditioned listening through withdrawal. ... It is a kind of samadhi, an experience you enter and leave. But why pursue such experiences? They have nothing to do with sahaja.

[Jean Klein: *Be Who You Are*]