

This book, *The Transparency of Things*, by Rupert Spira is a very special book. Let me explain why.

Recent years have given birth to a multitude of contemporary western books on the subject of non-duality and the nature of consciousness; few have been particularly instructive. In actuality, to this reader, most are, at best, redundant caricatures of work better espoused by earlier sages.

Rarely does there appear to be specific assistance to the reader attempting to investigate the nature of reality. This seems odd since, by definition, the search for truth must discount beliefs in favor of direct inquiry and experience of the truth.

For this reason, it would seem that "best of breed" literature regarding consciousness would clearly enumerate specific queries and "exercises" designed to provoke deep analysis in the reader in the hope of replacing belief with the tangibility of fact through experience regarding true nature.

In the ancient Indian Upanishads and Vedas, much specific instruction was given to the student on methods for discovering the truth of one's nature. This is not so often seen in contemporary advaitic literature. In fact, there appears to be a growing body of pontification on non-duality but little direct teaching or actionable guidance assisting the seeker in forming his own conclusions.

*The Transparency of Things* is a notable exception.

Rupert takes the reader on a comfortable stroll as consciousness: stopping, pointing, examining and questioning what our actual experience is in any given moment.

These are not generalities cast about wholesale; these are gentle nudges designed to have you look more closely at the core assumptions of your daily living, the very assumptions that hold our illusory view of the world, body and mind together.

Since the primary focus of the book is to encourage examining our experience in the 'here and now', *The Transparency of Things* takes a moment to dissect what comprises our moment to moment experience: name and concept from the mind and form from the senses.

Rupert observes how we clothe Reality with these names and forms. He draws our attention to the appearances derived from our instruments of perception that are mistaken for the objects themselves.

Gently, he delivers us to the realization that our own minds and senses act like "a prism through which the unity of Consciousness/Existence appears to be refracted into ten thousand things."

Taking us deeper, he encourages us to witness the daily transition from deep sleep to waking state: a great deal can be observed when awakening daily regarding the emergence of the "I thought" and the unfolding first, of time, and then, of space.

As Rupert repeats, " Time is the first language of the mind; space is the first language of the senses".

This is the point we continue to return to: Remove the perceptions of mind and senses for even a moment and what is left but Presence, Awareness, Being. In a word, consciousness is all, nothing more.

As this awareness establishes itself, we shed the veiling powers of the senses and mind, transforming our senses/minds into revelatory instruments.

Shine on.

Don't be fooled. This investigation into the reality of our experience eventually leads us to the observation that all of the world of form, both gross and subtle, is nothing more than thought and thought is made of mind;

But, what is mind made of? The same stuff as thought: perception, sensations, memories, even dreams.

At first glance, objects, gross and subtle, seem to appear to consciousness; later, they seem to appear from within it; finally, it is seen that they are consciousness itself.

What is the true nature of the body we experience? Is there a mind? What, exactly, are we referring to when we refer to the "world"? What is "the thing in itself" as opposed to our perceptions of it? Does consciousness reside in our bodies? Or is it the other way around? What exactly is fact and what exactly is belief, parading as fact?

What is the truth of what we experience as distance when viewing objects? When looked at closely, is 'distance' actually our experience or is it merely a learned sensory concept?

Rupert provides easy to follow real time "explorations": using a step by step, methodical approach to many topics that are often superficially glanced over in books, dialogues and satsangs. Here, He takes the time to allow for your complete examination of the underlying truth of the conclusion.

The result: rather than inheriting yet another set of beliefs, no more helpful than those you just let go, you gain direct experience, a knowing unique to you.

This is revolutionary, dismantling deep inquiry. In reality, there is just no other valid method. When your curiosity has been piqued, serious self investigation begins.

Many hope for a spontaneous awakening of the type Ramana Maharshi had as a teenager; such experiences do, in fact, happen. But, so does 00 appear on a roulette wheel in Las Vegas, once every 38 spins.

For the rest of us, as long as there is this core belief that we are human beings, there is the task of deconstructing the house of "separate self", one rafter and nail at a time, until the entire supporting structure collapses due to glimpses occurring outside of time.

As Francis Lucille once said, "As long as there is a belief (that they are a person), I think it is better to do something to get rid of this belief."

No doubt about it. These are disturbing and disruptive inquiries, asking us to question the very nature of that which we have taken for granted our entire lives. The conclusions obtained have the power to disassemble our views of the world, our bodies and minds at a very intimate level.

So, no, this book and these 'exercises' are not for the faint of heart, gentle though Rupert's approach may be. They are not necessarily another "feel good" set of replacement beliefs that work until life tests us once again with a new series of 'unacceptable' events, designed to awaken us to our hidden misconceptions.

Trust me, the inevitable conclusions are worth the effort; un-obscured life shines with presence, happiness and peace which return to the forefront. We stand in awe at the complexity and beauty of it all and bow to that which is.

Rupert's book is thorough and worthy of a much deeper review; I am reluctant to spoil the valuable experience each will have exploring The Transparency of Things at this juncture. It is best to make the commitment to read the book in its entirety.

One warning: I promised to finish this tome within one week for review back to the author. It turned out that the material was so rich and well presented that it took three months and as many complete readings for me to fully digest its message.

It is a remarkable and substantive work. I hope we see more of the same soon.