

# The Inner Senses and the Non-Physical

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**Note:** I am acutely aware that what I say here raises many questions. I will answer those questions in longer articles. At this point my intention is simply to introduce the broad parameters of the topic.

I first read Rudolf Steiner's *How to Know Higher Worlds* in 1962. Steiner believed that all of us have "dormant inner senses" that we do not know about, and that, when awakened and trained, give us direct experience of what he called "supersensible worlds". His book outlined the training. At the same time I read his *Occult Science*, which claimed to be a very broad summary of the nature and history of the world and human being, as seen through the inner senses. It was, if you like, a spiritual history of the world and the human being.

I realised that if what Steiner said was true – that we and the world have a spiritual nature, and that we have the potential to experience this directly for ourselves – then that changed everything. It meant that our current experience of reality and our current understanding of ourselves and the world were very incomplete. We were seeing only one side of the coin. So I decided to try to train myself, using Steiner's method as a general guide. It was not easy and I had a few setbacks, but eventually I managed to reach the point at which I knew that Steiner's "supersensible worlds" did in fact exist. I prefer to call these worlds "non-physical" because I experience these aspects of the world and myself without using any of my five physical senses.

In the early days I rarely discussed my experiences, partly because I felt it would be too much to expect people to believe me, but also because at that time I did not have the

vocabulary to describe something so radically different. I can well understand why others who have tried to describe the non-physical felt they had to resort to metaphor or symbolism. In any event, I first went public when I gave a talk in 1993 to the Scientific and Medical Network on “Awakening and Training your Inner Senses”. It went down surprisingly well. And some people suggested that I create a training for people who wanted to learn how to do this. So, by 1997 I was running small groups in London. I learned a lot from the teaching experience. For example, I noticed that people came to this work with unhelpful preconceptions about the nature of the “spiritual world” (as they tended to call it). These preconceptions blocked progress. I also noted that the training worked better when presented in easy stages. So, it was better for people to work on their basic consciousness before they attempted to move on to more sophisticated work. That was the main reason for setting up the School of Consciousness in 2005.

As for the experiences themselves, I want to give only some broad brush strokes here, because there is so much that I could say. In my opinion, the most important features of the non-physical “world” are as follows:

#### *Great Intelligence*

My first impression was of the presence of vastly greater intelligence. It was palpable and it permeated everything. Even today the experience produces conflicting feelings in me. I am both reassured and disconcerted. I am reassured that the universe is clearly very benign, because that is how the intelligence feels. And I am disconcerted that this “universal intelligence” is so far beyond my own limited intelligence. Indeed, one thing became very clear to me – the human race on this particular planet still has a very long way to go. In evolutionary terms, we are still in our infancy.

#### *Form is Dynamic*

Length, breadth and height are very physical dimensions. They do not exist in the non-physical. So, in the non-physical there are no fixed forms, no discrete “things”. Everything is totally connected to everything else. And everything flows into and through everything else. It feels very odd to be “inside” something else and to have other “personalities” (for that is how they feel) inside me. I now believe that this “total interconnectedness” is how things will be for all of us sometime in the future. I believe that we will be much more connected to each other and to the world, and I believe that,

in a rudimentary way, the connectedness we now experience on the Internet and through new technology is an early precursor of this.

### *Beyond Space and Time*

Space and time exist only in the physical reality. So the non-physical is not subject to their normal limitations. For example, there are no beginnings and no endings. And it does not take any time to get anywhere. Simply thinking takes you to where you want to be. That takes some getting used to! One of the many thoughts this experience has prompted in me is the possibility that the “Greater Universe” (i.e. the physical plus the non-physical) dies and is reborn over and over again, much in the same way that we are. For this to be possible, of course, there has to be a thread of continuity (in folklore this is the “soul”). I have to say that such threads feel very apparent in the non-physical.

### *“Synaesthesia”*

I use this term, because it is the medical term for a very rare condition where sounds are seen and colours are heard. The non-physical is rather like this, in the sense that “sound” and “colour” and “form” seem to be infinitely interchangeable. It is stunningly beautiful.

### *We are not alone!*

Perhaps the most gratifying experience for me was to realise, with complete certainty, that human beings are not just physical entities who happen to have evolved on one planet. I am now convinced that human beings are integral components of the Greater Universe, one of its essential qualities, if you like. A helpful way of understanding this is to think of human beings as a particular form of “energy-intelligence” in a Universe that has many other forms. As with all other forms of energy-intelligence, human beings seek experience, expression, interaction and growth. To be able to do this, they need to have “vehicles” that make this possible. These vehicles are, of course, bodies. But these bodies have to be suited to local conditions. Our bodies have clearly evolved in accordance with the unique conditions of our planet (gravity, mean temperature, radiation, availability of chemical elements etc.) It is the same for all other human beings, wherever they happen to be. The form they take (their bodies) is dictated by their local conditions, which vary very widely indeed.

I could go on and give you much more detail, but at this stage I just want to introduce the general ideas. Meanwhile, let me just say a few more words about the training. It is

not easy! It requires a lot of persistence, because sometimes one seems to make no progress at all. Only those who take this very seriously will achieve success. The essence of the training is to create an inner reality that, eventually, is just as real as the familiar outer reality. At first, it is difficult to distinguish inner reality from fantasy and illusion, and one has to be very careful about this. There is a great temptation to believe that you have arrived when in fact you have just begun. The important point is that, by doing this inner work, you create the new “organs of perception”, in much the same way as muscles develop and become more useful when you use them.

One more thing – an inner senses training is as much a moral training as anything else. This is partly because you are exploring very unfamiliar territory and will need a lot of courage, but it is also because you have to be very honest with yourself. For example, while I was training myself, I discovered that I was becoming more and more telepathic (literally “feeling at a distance” and not the common misconception of “reading another's thoughts”), and that I was eventually able both to transmit and receive. The fact is that telepathy can be very dangerous if not practised with the utmost integrity.

Where is all this leading? I cannot be completely sure, but goes without saying that if large numbers of people had the use of their inner senses, our knowledge and understanding would be very different, and we would have different beliefs, values and lifestyles. In short, the world would be a very different place. Science, for example, would be “science of the whole”, exploring both the physical (as it does now) and the non-physical, and the relationships between them. But do I think this will happen in the near future? Certainly not! The human race is still locked into materiality and physicality, with all their attendant problems. That said, I do believe that we are moving rapidly into a transitional paradigm that will facilitate our entry into, and understanding of, the Greater Universe. This needs a little explanation.

I believe that the emerging transitional paradigm will consist, at its essence, of finding a healthy balance between pairs of notional opposites (see the attached list at the end of this document). They are notional because each member of any pair exists only by virtue of the existence of the other member (rather like the concept of Yin and Yang). If the left-hand column represents some of the most important features of the current paradigm (“modernity”), I believe that the emerging transitional paradigm will consist, of finding a healthy balance between those qualities and their notional opposites (the right-hand column). There are many signs that this process has already begun, and it

will greatly facilitate our move towards the non-physical, which is where I think we are ultimately heading.

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### **Notional Opposites**

Matter primary	Consciousness primary
Material	Spiritual
Physical	Non-physical
Separate	Connected
Individual	Community
Expert authority	Individual authority
Ownership	Access
Reductionist	Holistic
Quantity	Quality
Bottom-up causation	Top-down causation
Machine	Organism
Rational	Transrational
Certainty/control	Uncertainty/allow
Centralise	Localise
Material progress	Spiritual progress
Material growth	Spiritual growth