

The Heart of Spiritual Knowledge:

Knowledge of our oneness with God, of our co-creative opportunities and responsibilities, comes in many ways. Edgar Cayce consistently spoke of the highest form of consciousness, as well as its destined goal, as the knowledge that we are simultaneous both individuals and one with God. In one statement he gave a clue about how to achieve this realization: "...the purpose of the heart is to know *yourself* to be yourself and yet one with God..." (281-37, A-18). As we've conducted quite a bit of research on how to enter a state of heart awareness in order to achieve this spiritual knowledge, I'd like to share some of our findings.

Entering into heart awareness can be as simple as focusing on the heart. Research at the HeartMath Institute in California, for example, has shown that heart awareness can be magnified by first thinking of something that makes you feel appreciative or grateful. Their research has demonstrated measurable effects upon the heart of such feeling imagery. Similar to how meditation produces "alpha" waves in the brain—a sign of greater inner harmony—feelings of appreciation create more coherent or harmonious "heartwaves". Their research also shows that this appreciation-induced heart coherence has a calming and harmonizing effect upon the brain. Functionally, the person is able to achieve insights about troubling personal situations while in this state of mind. When activated, heart awareness has implications for how we experience reality.

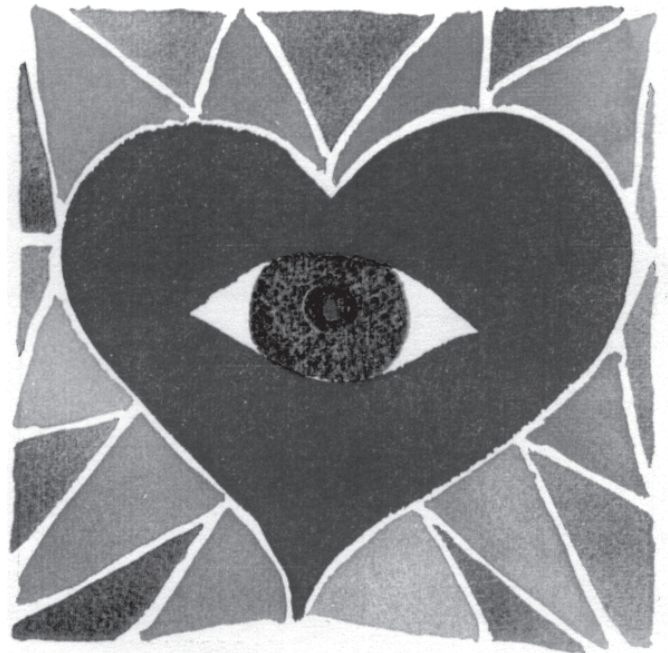
In our research, described fully in the A.R.E. Press book, *The Intuitive Heart*, we have used the breath to initiate a feeling of gratitude. We ask a person to focus attention on the natural flow of breath, exerting no intentional force to direct the breathing, but relaxing into the spontaneous breath with this affirmation: "Not me breathing me, but Spirit breathes me and I trust the inspirations." When a person experiences the breath as coming freely as a gift, it feels good,

and can evoke a feeling of gratefulness. The surrendering of control over the breath and the acceptance of natural breathing introduces a loosening of personal boundaries. The gratefulness for the breath awakens the heart, as the heart seems to respond to gratitude the way a flower responds to the sun, softening, warming, opening, expanding, blossoming with love. Soon the person experiences love as if pouring through the heart, the heart being a channel of love. It is easy to relax into this experience, as if melting into love. The personal sense of boundary dissolves as if the person were blending with love, as if love were all there is. The person remains aware of self yet also experiences being at one with love, all there is.

Lest this sound purely poetic, consider what happens in the Intuitive Heart training when two people experience one another while in this state of consciousness. After awakening heart awareness by accepting the natural breath, each person imagines that their heart can "reach out" and touch the other person's heart. As the two people imagine having a "heart connection," they then observe the flow of their experience, without directing it further, to notice what happens during such an encounter. There are definite effects, described in detail at www.edgarcayce-intuitionsschool.com/intuitiveheart/texts/close2you.htm, but here are some basics:

People report that they can easily imagine having a heart connection with another person. It begins by an intentional imagining, such as visualizing the two hearts joining, embracing the other person with one's own heart, bringing that person into one's

own heart, or experiencing the person as within one's heart. Even though stimulated by the imagination, the connection feels "real" to people and they respond to it as if it were real. According to reports from participants in the training, it feels as if the two people are "close," or are "joined" in some manner. They experience the presence of a love that combines the two of them in its reality. Edgar Cayce noted that when we perceive each other through our senses, we appear separate from each other. When we



perceive each other via the subconscious mind, as in the imagination or heart awareness, we experience ourselves as one.

This simple fact is quite important, as it points out just how psychologically "real" is the alternate reality of what students of Carl Jung call "the imaginal realm," or what Edgar Cayce might term "the imaginative forces." These unseen forces are called unseen as they cannot be seen with the eyes, yet they are perceptible through the heart awareness of feeling and imagination. Perhaps you recognize the often-quoted statement from the author of *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupery, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is

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essential is invisible to the eye." Here is a reference to the heart-centered imagination as an interpreter of subtle, perceptible feelings.

There is a paradoxical duality, like yin and yang, to Cayce's formulation of the highest consciousness—to know yourself to be yourself and yet one with the whole. I am me and I am one with you. People in our heart awareness training seem to have both experiences rolled up into one. It is interesting in this regard: Cayce describes God the creator as of two aspects. One is impersonal, like electricity. The other is personal. God is a thing, God is a being. What is the personal aspect? Usually the answer is love. Love is that energy personalized. We commonly talk of vibration. Vibration is the essence of energy. Vibration is the continual back-and-forth between two incompatible states of being, yin and yang. If love is an energy, then what is the back-and-forth of the love vibration? Our Intuitive Heart training reveals the meaning of this oscillation to be the two perceptions: "I am me and you are you" alternating with "You and I are one." Many folks in our training experience, in fact, a creation of energy in the space between the two partners, as if that yin-yang experience is generating an energy flow arising in the space between. The boundaries between the two people fluctuate, appearing and disappearing, the oscillation expressing the love energy being channeled in their experience.

When I am in a heart connection with another person, we feel as one, yet we each experience this oneness in our own individual manner. In various exercises from the Intuitive Heart training, we begin to appreciate how heart awareness allows us to experience harmony, achieve resonant

communication, even have healing moments with the other person. Yet, these experiences come in a manner different than the kind of knowing with which we are familiar.

Our conscious mind, created through interaction with sense perceptions of the outer world, supports an ego that has its sense of separateness reinforced by sense perceptions. It experiences itself as separate from what it surveys with the senses. "I" am seeing "that" and "that" that "I" see is separate from "me." Heart awareness, experienced through the imagination, perceives the unseen, non-sensory realm. Yet its form of perception is different, in that the perceiver and the perceived are not experienced as separate. Instead, the perception is experienced as arising from the perceiver. Instead of receiving knowledge that I can point to, as if coming from outside me and into my awareness, my experience is itself the knowledge. The knowledge is implicit, rather than explicit, in my experience. That is, suppose I make a heart connection with you. While my ego (separation consciousness) may be entertaining images of you, separate from me, at a more subtle level I find myself involved, for example, in humming a lullaby and smelling flowers. In our discussion, it turns out that one of your loveliest memories is being outside as a child, amidst a garden of flowers, as beautiful music is playing. Further discussion reveals that we both have a special connection to the same hymn. Our eyes smile

across the space in between us, our hearts are as one. Without the opportunity to discuss afterwards our experiences of the heart meditation, I would never realize that I was resonating with you, that our hearts were in communication, because no "facts" about you were experienced separate from my own personal reverie. Instead, the reflection of our communion was implicit in my reverie. It is another of the reasons to support Edgar Cayce's advocacy of small group work as the best context



for developing spiritual intuition, because of the feedback we can provide one another. Group discussion, with the possibility for collaborating on the task of discovering together our individuality in oneness, provides something that solitary meditation cannot. It is a wonderful shared experience of oneness, yet manifested in personal and individual experiences. When I find you within my own heart, I understand you by using the vocabulary of my own experience, resonating with your experience of yourself by visiting some of my own experience of myself. Heart awareness provides the opportunity to inhabit the spiritual reality of our inter-connectedness. ❖

The Edgar Cayce Institute for Intuitive Studies offers opportunities for home-based training and research into applied spirituality. The Intuitive Heart training, a spiritual discovery process

for small groups, is available to Search for God study groups, and to private, club, church or office groups. For more information, see www.edgarcayce-intuitionschool.com.