

# Two ways of being | Weekly Teachings

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We heard John Main in the previous episode, talking about: *“man’s most haunting fear – of isolation, fear, and loneliness, that the world is itself only a terrible mistake”*. He carries on in the same passage by stating that this is: *“an absurd mis-rendering image of reality”*, which is *“dissolved by the sheer power of God’s love.”* We experience through prayer *“that the basic condition of man is not separateness but communion, being-with.”* How it is that prayer/meditation does this? How does it move us from meaninglessness to the full meaning of reality?

The important point here is the role played by attention. John Main knew this intuitively and from experience. Hence the stress he laid on his advice just to *‘Say your word’*. How right he was, has now been proved by neuroscience. Research has shown that by paying one-pointed attention to our mantra we move from the left brain to the right brain way of being. The brain has the ability to access two complementary ways of interpreting reality.

Perhaps an analogy with quantum theory might help us to understand these two different aspects of our wider consciousness. Experiments have shown that a subatomic particle, an electron, exhibits both *‘particle’* like properties and *‘wave’* like properties depending on the

experimental set-up, the circumstances, through which we examine reality: *“We have to remember that what we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning.”* (Heisenberg)

Since we are made up out of electrons, we could take this as also applying to us. Given the *circumstances* we find ourselves in, metaphorically speaking, we either exhibit our ‘*particle*’ nature or our ‘*wave*’ nature. When we are about our daily business we identify with our ‘*particle*’ nature; we are in our physical manifested ‘*matter*’ aspect, ruled by the ‘*ego*’ – separate, jostling for survival. When focus our attention on our word, we enter the inner solitude and silence and connect with our ‘*wave*’ nature and its centre our true ‘*self*’, through which we are connected with the ‘*wave*’ reality of all humankind, creation, the Cosmos, the Divine. Our left brain fixes us in our ‘*particle*’ nature and our right brain accesses our ‘*wave*’ nature. We can either be fixed in time and space or in a state of openness. When we are concerned with questions: ‘*What are we like at this particular moment? What is our position in life? What do we look like?*’ we restrict our being and consciousness to our ‘*particle*’ nature focused on our separate surface personality. However, when our consciousness is not engaged with particular thoughts, when we have switched on our right brain, we make instinctive connections and become intuitively aware of underlying unity; we are in our ‘*wave*’ nature. Touching this aspect of reality leads to truly, experientially ‘*knowing*’: *“that we are and that we are in God and that in Him we discover our essential identity and unique meaning.”* (John Main)

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