

Integration of two ways of being

 wccm.org/weekly-teachings/integration-of-two-ways-of-being

29 December 2023

Last week we looked at the meaning of the Kingdom. Laurence Freeman in his book 'Jesus, the Teacher Within' states: "The Kingdom is freedom from all inner and outer domination: 'the glorious liberty of the children of God'. It is the power of God flowing freely in every human dimension both social and personal. It is the fulfilment of the individual both as a unique individual and as a part of the whole that is indivisible from all other individuals. It is the end of the tragedies of alienation and isolation, the two most powerful causes of suffering and of human inhumanity." We may well feel on reading this, that this is a state only saints can experience, not one accessible for you and me. And yet, as we will see, when we were very young, we did still live in that state.

God has given us all we need for our existence on this earth, not only to survive but also to connect back to the Divine we came from. Our brain is a beautiful instrument for doing this, for tuning into different levels of consciousness, the various realities that surround us. My daughter Dr Shanida Nataraja in her book 'The Blissful Brain' explains that there are two halves to our brain and she describes their functions as follows: The left brain has a centre – the ego – that interprets the sense impressions, emotional and intellectual stimuli, coming from the outside world, and uses language, logic and analytical abilities to make sense of it. Its main objective is to protect us from anything that may interfere with our ability to survive in this world as a single individual. It will totally ignore anything that does not fit into this survival matrix. The right brain too has a centre – the self – that sees the global picture, as it is the overarching consciousness that includes the ego. It sees the individual in the context of the totally interconnected whole, including all of humanity and creation – all of it embraced by the Divine. It too has senses, the interior senses of intuition and creative imagination. Because of its all-encompassing view, which includes the emotions, the right brain adds to the picture the ego paints empathy, compassion, care for the survival of others and creation – it is the source of our spiritual being and our connection to the Divine.

That we have the innate capacity to link back to our Source is proved by neuro-science brain wave research. It has shown that children under two years of age still live mainly in their right brain, as shown by the dominant presence of alpha waves; hence the empathy, the love, the compassion and the vivid creative imagination that characterizes a child. Therefore a very young child is still undivided, in touch with the whole, still connected to God, still lives in the Kingdom. In ordinary adult consciousness beta waves of left brain activity dominate; we all experience this as the constant whirl of thoughts that occupy our minds. The switch over from the right brain's to the left brain's view of the world gradually happens between the ages of two and five; from then on society and education emphasize the left brain way of being and the right brain view is not encouraged.

This connection, however, is never severed but just disconnected to various degrees. Yet we have the potential to switch it back on, as it is a natural divinely given part of our human nature. In fact it is something Jesus encourages us to do: 'Unless you turn round and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.' (*Matthew 18,3*)

Shanida also highlights the role meditation plays in this re-connection with our wider consciousness: meditation through its one-pointed attention on the mantra switches us from a left brain way of being to a right brain way of being. For some of us the switch has become rather rusty over time, but for children the access remains easy; hence they take to meditation as ducks to water.

Of course we need to be able to look after our own survival as well as that of others. We need both sides of our brain; they may be different but they are definitely complementary. Their co-operation is essential to our well-being, our sense of harmony and balance. It adds the meaning to life, which is often sadly lacking when we live entirely from our left brain. Here too meditation helps: it encourages an increase in connectivity between both halves of the brain. In doing so it facilitates the ease of switching from one mode of being into the other. Just by repeating our word lovingly and faithfully we end "the tragedies of alienation and isolation" and allow our entry into the Kingdom.

[download printable version](#)