



Ego Relaxation & Holistic Inquiry

*'You speak as if you are here,
and the Self is somewhere else and you have to reach it...
but in fact the Self is here and now, and you are always it'*

Ramana Maharshi

Inquiry is an ancient practice that has appeared in many different traditions as a direct method to come home to our true nature. I share a holistic approach to inquiry that invites us to dive into our direct experience, in body, heart and mind, and practice Ego Relaxation with all that we find. This has a beautiful and powerful effect – it first:

SETTLES your ego activity that tends to reject what's here and grasp for a different experience. This activity that is often our “ordinary state” keeps you from deepening into and blocks access to the love, peace, clarity and joy within you.

SOOTHES the suffering that drives your ego activity. The more you contact your direct experience and open towards it, not trying to change or fix it, grace comes alive within you, bringing the healing, lovingkindness and compassion that is needed to let go and deepen.

DISSOLVES the ego structures. Just as moving water will dissolve what it moves through, practicing ego relaxation within inquiry will start to dissolve your familiar patterns and identifications. It transforms your suffering into wisdom and opens up inner doors to deeper states of consciousness.

Becomes EMBODIED WISDOM – helping your innate intelligence and the luminous qualities of your true nature to shine forth and deeper into life.



Distinct from classical Advaita approaches to Jnani yoga that focus on reaching a particular state, holistic inquiry invites you to inquire firstly into:

‘**WHAT’S here?**’ – the arising phenomena. Since everything that arises can only be arising out of the same source, if we meet the ‘what’ all the way, we naturally land in ‘**WHO’S here?**’ without bypassing or manipulating our experience. I invite you to regard absolutely everything as a gateway home – from your egoic reactions to your soulful longings. This supports an integrated awakening where all parts of your being are included. Nothing is rejected, as everything is arising ultimately from God.

Whether inquiring in meditation into more subtle depths of your experience, or working with a repeating question format, most of us tend to inquire through the faculties we are most identified with. If you are identified with your mind, it is easy to mistake inquiry with *thinking about your experience*. If you tend to be more identified with your emotions, you can tend to just report your emotional state only. For the practice of holistic inquiry open up to its potential to deeply unleash the depth of your true nature, challenge yourself in inquiry practice to look, sense and feel - **BE CURIOUS WITH YOUR WHOLE BEING**, as if you are letting the questions invite you to dive in and through your inner territory:

INQUIRING MIND:

Following the unfolding of your experience in the moment, asking, ‘*what’s here now?*’ and lean into the space between what you **KNOW** and **DON’T KNOW**.

Peer inward into the depths that might include memories, thoughts, beliefs.

Ask ‘*how old do I feel in this?*’ (such a question will reveal whether this is arising from your history or whether it is genuinely present time. You can almost guarantee that any ego reaction has history in it).

Relax the tendency to judge or commentate about your experience.

Let seeing into your experience happen.....

aware not just of the **CONTENT** but also the **AWARENESS** that is seeing.



INQUIRING HEART:

To inquire is to FEEL INTO the AFFECT of whatever is unfolding.

As if every feeling offers a scent that draws you deeper into the truth of your own heart... This will include emotions, and if you relax the tendency to try to justify or simply talk about your feelings, it will also up essential depths of the such as love, joy, gratitude, compassion, forgiveness, spaciousness.

Relax the tendency to justify your feelings.

Rather, be willing to know by feeling everything. I.e:

'What is sadness/ tenderness/ hurt/ compassion/ delight actually like?'

'How are you affected by the tone of this experience?'

INQUIRING BODY:

Your physical body is much more than you think it is. It is a vehicle for God to fully live here on earth AS YOU.

SENSE INTO your experience. For everything that arises in your awareness, there is both an affect and also an embodied sensation... at first more obvious things like tension, contraction, relaxation. Also, more subtle dimensions such as tingling, subtle energy and dimensions of presence that contain the light of the universe.

Really! With everything, stay present and inquire;

Where is this located in the body?

Where does it begin and end?

The shape? (round/ square/ cylindrical/ oblong)

The texture? (knotted/ jagged/ hard/ jittery)

The temperature? (hot/ cold/ neutral)

TRUE INQUIRY IS NON-INTERFERENCE:

Remember with everything you encounter, your soul knows the way.

Transformation and deepening happens when we relax all fixing, trying, rejecting.

Practicing Ego Relaxation through inquiry is incredibly enlivening, exciting and expansive. You can start to experience grace coming alive, bringing Divine



intelligence, beauty and depth. Since your source and your very nature is boundless, there is no limit to where this practice can take you.