

# **MAPPING MYSELF**

## **EXPERIMENTS IN THE GIVEN WORLD**

### **A COMPENDIUM OF THE WORKSHOP TOOLS**

**OF D.E.HARDING**

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## PREFACE

This is an attempt to produce a basic grammar for those who would like to conduct a 'SEEING' workshop and wish for a guide.

It's short and as simple as I can make it. I've tried, however, to go the full distance to cover the main features of the journey, as I see it now.

I've used a loose leaf format so that each booklet can be added to and customised as time and your inclinations indicate.

The limitations of any manual of instructions are ineradicable; I shan't list and apologise for them here – I'd just end up writing another booklet at least as long as this one!

Bear with me, then dear reader, and let's hope the time you spend proves useful.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A WORKSHOP?

The point of a “Seeing” workshop is for each participant to investigate their experience of who or what it is that is experiencing, and to do this by using the senses, not by thinking or imagination.

What is required, therefore, is for each one to see/hear/touch/taste a way to a conclusion based on perceptual evidence given in present time.

It follows that each one must have at least a preliminary preparedness to be open to the evidence and that each has an exclusive authority on what is found at the spot occupied by the subject. No one can tell you what it’s like where you are, for the simple reason that you’re there and they’re not!

The tools are preliminary physical devices for focusing the attention back into the point of experiencing – the instantaneous Here and Now of the Subject.

Some of the tools and some of the experiments are also concerned with the subsidiary aim of exploring the meaning of what is found. This is a never-ending, endlessly fascinating study whose principle laboratory is life itself. Though capable of the most sublime subtleties and great riches, it cannot reach the Absolute and is therefore secondary.

So, first we are each of us looking to see what we look like to ourselves, and then what this means.

WU – MEN  
12C Zen Master

The Great Way has no gate:  
There are a thousand paths to it.  
If you pass through the barrier,  
you walk the universe alone.

D. E. HARDING

Just as I am the sole authority on what I am for me at centre, so you are the sole authority on what you are at centre, in your own first hand experience right now.

## SETTING UP

You're likely to be dealing with from four to forty people.

If any more, congratulations!

What is required is a quiet-ish space large enough to accommodate people so that they can see one another. A circle is ideal: It focuses on the empty centre, not the one who is running the workshop.

With large groups it is sometimes necessary to use a two or three tiered wedge with the speaker at its angle, but this gives a passive-active bias which has its drawbacks. The presence of microphones and their stands in front of the speaker is also unhelpful, in my view.

A workshop out of doors makes an interesting change. Even one experiment outside is worthwhile, especially in a long workshop.

## TOOLS

I shall give details of tools required for the experiments I have included.

Other options may, of course, need other tools (see Note 4 page 51) : -

### EXPERIMENTS

### TOOLS

Pointing

None

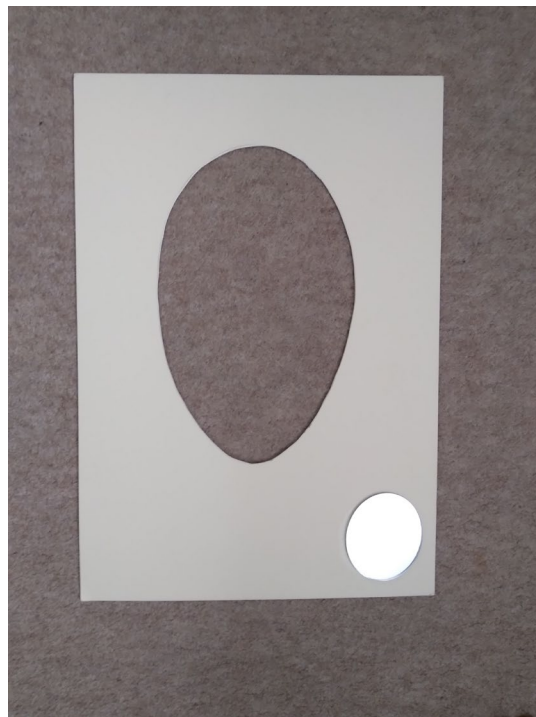
Single Eye

None

The card

A rectangular piece of stiff card roughly 28 X 40 cm, with an oval hole in the centre and a small mirror placed low down to left or right (see image).

To suggest the shape of a face, I have used dimensions of two circles of radius 12.5 cm centred horizontally and melded with a circle of 8 cm above and 7.5 cm below. This may very well not be the best way to do this!



## The Tube

A tube of card or stiff paper with ventilation holes and dimensions roughly 30X45 cm. See below. Post Covid, there are now some versions of the tube which incorporate a perspex vane half way across: I have never used them.



The Closed Eye ( or Going Blind)

None, though a gong or some other sounding device is useful.

The Foursome

None

Onion Peeling

A large scale drawing of the map on page 45 is desirable.

Spinning the World

None

The No-head Circle

None



## INTRODUCTION

A ‘scene setting’ is a necessity in the setting of a workshop (as opposed to just sharing This with a stranger on a plane, for example, where the moment dictates the method).

Getting down to the business at hand is a very special moment and influences much that arises later. I recommend that, whatever your style, you come to that moment empty. Whatever preparations you have made, just leave them aside so that the moment of contact is allowed full expression. A workshop is a swim into the present moment and this preliminary period is the dive. Very important, useful and exhilarating, and sometimes the water’s cold!

On a more concrete note, I have found it useful to include my name and an outline of the timescale and structure of the workshop.

Beyond that the options broaden out. Sometimes a round of brief self-introduction can be used. Sometimes a slant or text given either by the makeup of the group or by one’s own current reflections.

At some point it is necessary to spell out just what the workshop is for; What it is – a shared opportunity to attend to what our senses tell us is the nature of the one who senses – and what it is not – a religious meeting, a therapeutic meeting, or a meeting for mutual support. All of the above will certainly be taking place, and you may choose to go on to further explorations. The scope needs to be clear for oneself and others.

This period, for me, always points two ways; I find myself listening to what I am saying as an interested observer.

## THE EXPERIMENTS

These, of course, are the heart of the workshop. Since the time available may be an hour, a day or a week, I have chosen to indicate the thrust of each experiment by a straightforward transcription of me doing the experiment at the time of writing. These instructions, questions and comments are given in capitals. Your particular style and requirements will, of course, be different.

Each experiment should usually be followed by an opportunity for response – relaying experience or asking questions (making objections!) and so on. How much latitude and time is allowed in this regard is a matter for you. It's worth saying, however, that the responses are personal and the focus of the group needs maintaining. Really difficult personal points are often best referred to after the workshop, if there is time: there is a danger of simply losing momentum when one strays too far from the shared aim of shared experimenting in the sensory field.

## STARTING EXPERIMENTS

- Single eye
- The Finger Pointing

### The Single Eye.

The purpose of the experiment is to test whether you do, in fact (i.e. going by what is given as evidence to your senses right now) look out of two eyes – as we believe – or whether you are looking out of one frameless ‘window’ or ‘eye’.

This experiment can be done with a partner, as I shall illustrate, but need not be.

The simpler experiments, such as this, are very elastic. They allow movement in all sorts of directions which can be given by initial responses or simple preference. The Single Eye, for instance, can move into consideration of lack of boundaries, what’s inside and what’s outside, motion and stillness, the size of the subject, as given, and so on, probably without end!

Get people into pairs, as simply as possible..maybe just by turning to their next-door neighbour. The speaker either joins a pair or does the experiment alone, depending how the numbers play out.

Invite each person to make a pair of spectacles by enclosing a space between thumb and forefinger of each hand and joining the spaces together.

HOLD YOUR HANDS OUT – LENSES LINKED, AS WITH SPECTACLES – AT ARM’S LENGTH.

(You would, of course, be doing this. As always, whenever practicable, the speaker participates)

SLOWLY, AND WITH GREAT ATTENTION, BRING THEM TOWARDS YOU.

NOTICE HOW THE FRAMES CONTAIN MORE AND MORE.

NOTICE HOW THE BRIDGE GETS BLURRED AS THEY GET CLOSE.

WHEN THEY ARE RIGHT ON, ASK YOURSELF – HOW MANY HOLES ARE THERE NOW? ONE OR TWO? THREE?

HAS THE PARTITION DISAPPEARED, LEAVING AN OVAL FRAME AROUND THE WHOLE SCENE?

WHAT IS YOUR SIDE OF THE FRAME? COLOURED IRIS, BLACK PUPIL, WHITE SCLERA AND ALL THE REST – OR A SINGLE CLEAR EYE, LARGE ENOUGH TO TAKE IN EVERYTHING?

NOW TURN TO YOUR PARTNER.

TAKE TURNS MOVING YOUR SPECTACLES SLOWLY FROM THE TWO COLOURED SMALL EYES IN THAT HUMAN SETTING TO THIS HUGE OPEN SPECKLESS ‘EYE’, WITH NO SETTING AT ALL.

NOTICE HOW ABSOLUTELY DIFFERENT THE TWO SITUATIONS ARE IN PRESENT EXPERIENCE. YET LEARNED CONVENTION HAS IT THAT I AM MUCH LIKE YOU IN MY BASIC CONSTITUENTS – THAT WE ARE TWO OF A KIND.

KEEPING THE SPECTACLES (OR SHOULD I SAY SPECTACLE?) ON, LOOK ROUND THE ROOM.

IS THERE ANYONE PRESENT WHO ENCLOSURES NOT A PAIR OF EYES, BUT THE WHOLE SCENE? ARE THERE MANY LIKE THAT OR IS THERE ONLY ONE?

ARE YOU AT ALL LIKE ALL THE PEOPLE YOU CAN SEE IN THE ROOM? CAN YOU MAINTAIN THAT YOU ARE, IN YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE, BUILT LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, OR ARE YOU TOTALLY DIFFERENT, NOT ONLY FROM THE THOSE PEOPLE, BUT FROM ANY OF THE THINGS YOU CAN SEE?

WHAT ARE YOU, THE SUBJECT, LIKE FOR YOURSELF, NOW?

### The Finger Pointing.

Often the very first experiment. Useful in a short lecture setting.

Participants are invited to hold their index finger up in front of them: the finger is the equipment used.

FIRST, POINT TO THE CEILING.

NOTICE THE CONFIGURATION: SOLID FINGER – DISTANCE – SOLID SURFACE. A DEFINED EVENT.

NEXT, POINT TO THE WALL: SAME CONFIGURATION.

NEXT, TO A PERSON'S HEAD, MORE OR LESS OPPOSITE ( if participants are arranged around the speaker, they are likely to be that person).

THEN DOWN TO THE TRUNK, LEGS, FEET, FLOOR – NOTICING EACH TIME THE SAME PATTERN OF FINGER – DISTANCE – OBJECT.

NOW POINT TO YOUR OWN....FEET!

HERE'S ONE POINT OF INTEREST TO THE VIEW OF ONE'S OWN BODY, AS EXPERIENCED NOW: IT'S PRESENTED FEET UPWARDS!

This opens onto the whole area of our lack of attention to the perceived world, which we tend to see through the filter of expectation. This is a constant and major theme of this work. It comes up again and again. The choice of when to treat it and at what length can be left to the moment or planned as a separate experiment. It is interesting to produce a piece of writing large enough to be seen at a distance and with one or two errors and invite people to agree or disagree with a ‘correct’ reading of it (see note 1, page 50 for an example). One of the reasons why this vision of the emptiness Here is so hard to assimilate is that we just can’t credit the degree to which we edit our experience to fit our preconceptions. We can’t be that wrong about what we are – or can we?!

Unstructured exploration of this theme – all the linguistic support for the notional world of ‘common sense’ and so on – can be confusing if this experiment is used early on. You could choose to repeat it with this in mind at a later stage.

THEN KNEES, THIGHS, BELLY, CHEST, THEN.....WHAT?

WHAT IS YOUR FINGER POINTING AT NOW, WHEN IT ‘SHOULD’ BE POINTING AT YOUR HEAD?

WHAT DISTANCE IS GIVEN NOW BETWEEN THE FINGER AND ...WHAT?...THE OBJECT? WHAT OBJECT?

WHAT DO YOU, THE SUBJECT, LOOK LIKE NOW, GOING BY YOUR OWN SENSE INFORMATION?

IS THE FINGER POINTING AT ANYTHING AT ALL, OR AT NO THINGS, OR AT NOTHING? IS THE PLACE YOU’RE LOOKING FROM A MERE BLANK, OR VIVIDLY AWARE OF ITSELF AS EMPTY FOR, AS IT WERE, HOSTING THE SCENE BEFORE YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU LIKE, FOR YOURSELF, NOW? RECAP THE JOURNEY FROM THE FAMILIAR REGION OF CEILINGS, WALLS AND RIGHT-WAY-UP PEOPLE TO THE (I SUGGEST) UNFAMILIAR FIRST PERSON SINGULAR PRESENT TENSE – THE ‘I AM’.

GET USED TO SEEING WHAT YOU SEE NOW, INCLUDING THAT SMALL, RIGHT-WAY-UP, HEADED PERSON OPPOSITE AND THIS WRONG-WAY-UP UNHEADED PERSON HERE.

TRACE A LINE SLOWLY, ACROSS YOUR SHOULDERS, WHILE CONTINUING TO LOOK AHEAD (The speaker demonstrates). NOTICE HOW IT EXTENDS FROM ONE EDGE OF THE SCENE TO THE OTHER. UNLIKE THOSE SMALL SUPPORTERS OF HEADS YOU SEE AROUND THE ROOM.

ARE YOU REALLY LIKE OTHER PEOPLE, OR ARE YOU, FOR YOURSELF, THE ONLY EXAMPLE OF THIS NO-HEADED CONTAINER-WITH-A-BODY TO BE FOUND?

HAVE YOU EVER, IN YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE, BEEN DIFFERENT TO THIS? HAVE YOU EVER (INCREDIBLE AS THIS IS) ACTUALLY PAID ANY ATTENTION TO THE WAY YOU REALLY ARE, IN SOBER OBSERVED FACT? IS IT CRAZY, IRRESPONSIBLE, STUPID, NAIVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FACTS OF YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE OF YOURSELF, OR IS IT CRAZY AND ULTIMATELY DEADLY DAMAGING TO PRETEND THAT THE ONLY VIEW OF YOU IS THE VIEW SEEN BY OTHER PEOPLE AND IMAGINED BY YOURSELF: THE VIEW (AND NOT THE ONLY VIEW) FROM OUTSIDE?

## FURTHER EXPERIMENTS

### The Card

For this experiment you will each need a card as described in the ‘Tools’ section. It is possible for two people to share a card. If this is unavoidable, some care must be taken to allow people to take turns.

The proposition is that we have each taken our face as a defining feature of what we are. Indeed, we are forced to do this, since it is our face that is used by others to identify us. The passport photo is not of the back, the arm or the top of the head for good reason!

Ask people to hold the card out at arm’s length and look at the image of their face in the mirror.

THIS FACE IS WHAT WE CALL THE ‘LITTLE ONE’. IT IS WHAT EACH OF US HAS TAKEN AS OUR IDENTITY. THERE IT IS, AT ARM’S LENGTH, AND IT IS SMALL. IT CAN BE MOVED AROUND, AS YOU CAN SEE, TO FLOOR, CEILING, OR EVEN ANOTHER PERSON’S SHOULDER!

IT IS MOVING, COLOURED, OPAQUE, LIMITED BY ITS BORDERS – PRESENTED AGAINST A BACKGROUND AND AT A DISTANCE OF ABOUT A METRE FROM WHERE YOU ARE.

BUT HAVE WE TAKEN THAT AS SOMETHING THAT ACTUALLY BELONGS HERE, WHERE WE ARE?

SO LET’S SEE IF IT FITS: PLEASE MOVE THE CARD SLOWLY TOWARDS YOU, WHILST KEEPING YOUR ATTENTION ON THAT FACE. AS IT GETS



NEARER, IT GETS LARGER, AND BITS OF THE EXTREMITIES BEGIN TO BE LOST.

CLOSER STILL, LESS AND LESS OF IT IS GIVEN AND IT BECOMES LESS RECOGNISABLE AS YOURS.

AT TEN CENTIMETRES OR SO IT IS STILL RECOGNISABLY HUMAN AND PROBABLY MALE OR FEMALE, YOUNG OR OLD, BUT WHAT IS PRESENTED IS PROBABLY LESS THAN ENOUGH TO GIVE AN IDENTITY. AS THE CARD IS MOVED CLOSER, THE IMAGE BECOMES BLURRED AND INCREASINGLY DARK UNTIL, WHEN YOU BRING IT RIGHT UP TO YOU, SO THAT TOUCH SENSATIONS APPEAR, THE IMAGE, THE FACE IDENTITY, HAS GONE.

SO WE HAVE SURELY LEARNED FROM THIS EXPERIMENT THAT, AS LONG AS EACH OF US IS CONCERNED WITH SENSE DATA EVIDENCE, WE HAVE TO ADMIT THAT WE DON'T KEEP THAT FACE HERE.

IT CAN ONLY APPEAR FOR EACH OF US AT A DISTANCE. AND OUR FRIENDS, WHO ARE, OF COURSE, AT A DISTANCE, CAN CONFIRM ITS PRESENCE THERE, FOR THEM.

SO WE'RE BACK, ONCE AGAIN TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT EACH OF US IS, RIGHT AT ZERO CENTIMETRES FROM OURSELVES: THE PLACE WE LIVE FROM.

HERE'S THE SECOND PART OF OUR EXPERIMENT, AND WE'RE TO APPROACH THIS UNKNOWN SPOT – POINT 'X' – FROM A DISTANCE WHERE WE'RE MORE USED TO OBSERVING ACCURATELY WHAT IS GOING ON ; FROM ARMS LENGTH AGAIN.

PLEASE HOLD THE CARD AT ARM'S LENGTH ONCE MORE AND FOCUS ON THE HOLE IN IT.

NOTICE THAT, IN CONTRAST TO THE FACE, IT HAS NO CHARACTERISTICS OF ITS OWN: NO AGE, SEX, HUMANITY, COLOUR, PHYSICAL FEATURES – ONLY A BOUNDARY.

MOVE THE CARD AROUND THE ROOM. SEE THAT THE SPACE IN THE CARD NEITHER REFUSES NOR RETAINS ANYTHING. BEING CAPACITY, PURE AND SIMPLE, IT WILL ENTERTAIN ALL CONTENTS, HOWEVER NEAR OR FAR, HOWEVER BIZARRE OR VARIED. INDEED, YOU CAN PUT YOUR HAND RIGHT THROUGH IT TO EXPLORE ITS TOTAL LACK OF SUBSTANCE. This consideration is interesting and can lead to experiments concerning the tactile evidence for a face Here at a later time, if so wished.

BUT FOR THE MOMENT THAT HOLE IS JUST A HOLE IN A CARD, HELD AT A CERTAIN DISTANCE AND GIVES NO CLUE TO THE NATURE OF THE PLACE WE'RE INTERESTED IN. SO THE NEXT STEP IS TO HOLD THE CARD FIRMLY IN BOTH HANDS AND TO SLOWLY TRAVEL THE DISTANCE – THE ONE METRE PATH – FROM THERE TO HERE.

PLEASE PAY GREAT ATTENTION TO WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE SPACE IN THE CARD AS IT APPROACHES THE SPOT WHERE YOU ARE.

SLOWLY, SLOWLY, THE SPACE GETS BIGGER – CONTAINS MORE.

CLOSE TO, THE FOCUSING DILEMMA (THROUGH THE CARD OR ON THE PLANE OF THE CARD) DISSOLVES.

Here is an interesting possible point of departure into the question of depth in the world, which can be returned to.

NOW BRING THE CARD RIGHT TO WHERE YOU ARE – PUT IT ON!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

HAS THE HOLE BECOME BUNGED UP?

IS IT NOW FILLED WITH A FLESHY OBJECT?

WOULD IT BE FAIR TO DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE HOLE – THE SPACE – AS UNCHANGED EXCEPT THAT IT HAS LOST ITS EDGES AND, MYSTERIOUSLY, IS AWAKE TO ITSELF AS CAPACITY-FOR-THE-SCENE?

LOOKING SIMULTANEOUSLY INWARDS AND OUTWARDS, WOULD IT BE FAIR TO SAY THAT THE SCENE IS NEVER GIVEN WITHOUT THE SEER AND

THAT THE SEER IS NEVER GIVEN WITHOUT THE SCENE? THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY TO EACH OTHER?

COULD YOU AGREE THAT THE SUBJECT – THE FIRST PERSON SINGULAR PRESENT TENSE – IS THE ONE SUBJECT THAT YOU AND I CAN SEE FOR OURSELVES AND KNOW THAT WE’VE SEEN IT COMPLETELY – ALL OF THIS EMPTINESS SEEN NOW FULL OF THIS NEVER COMPLETED FULLNESS?

YOU ARE THE AUTHORITY ON WHAT YOU FIND WHERE YOU ARE. NOW PLEASE LOOK AROUND AT THE OTHER PEOPLE IN THE ROOM. SEE HOW BLOCKED UP THEIR CARDS ARE. CHOCK FULL OF FACES, NOT THE LEAST BIT OF ROOM.

HOW PECULIAR THEY LOOK – AND HOW NATURAL AND ‘AS BEFORE’ YOU LOOK!

WE BELIEVE OURSELVES TO BE SEPARATED AS ONE THING IS (AND HAS TO BE) FROM ANOTHER, SHUT UP IN A BOX AND LIVING A SOLITARY EXISTENCE FROM BEHIND A FACADE – A PERSONA – UNABLE FULLY TO TOUCH OR BE TOUCHED BY ONE ANOTHER.

THE GENIUS OF OUR SPECIES, SURELY, HAS BEEN THE DISCOVERY OF THE SEPARATE SELF. BUT THAT MARVELLOUS PIECE OF WIT HAS INVOLVED THE SUPPRESSION OF OUR NATIVE, PRE-HUMAN VIEW OF WHAT EACH ONE OF US IS ACTUALLY LIVING FROM: THE SELF WE ALL USE TO GET FROM THE BEDROOM TO THE BATHROOM IN THE MORNING. ANY FICTION IN OUR LIVES, HOWEVER USEFUL, IS GOING TO LEAD TO TROUBLE. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS FICTION -THAT I AM, HERE, WHAT I LOOK LIKE TO YOU OVER THERE – IS EXACTING A NOW KILLING PRICE IN SOCIETY.

ITS UP TO YOU. WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY FIND IS YOUR IDENTITY, LOOKING AT WHAT YOU ARE FROM WHERE YOU ARE?

IF, LIKE ME, YOU FIND THIS CLEAR, EMPTY/FULL CAPACITY, AS CLEAN OF PERSONAL MARKS AND HISTORY AS CAN BE, AND WONDERFULLY AWAKE TO AND INTERESTED IN ITSELF, THEN LET'S ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT WE FIND AND SEE WHERE IT GETS US!

I'm aware that I've left everyone wearing a card for rather a long time here! It's often useful to invite people to take the card out and back again – the moment of joining card to Void is so dramatic and full of meaning. You may notice also that some opinion has crept in towards the end. How much of your own is allowed into the arena is a matter for you. I allow a little, now and again, but I'm aware that it is not strictly in the spirit of inquiring after the facts.

That concludes the experiential part of the card experiment. We now dive into some 'meaning' stuff:

The card illustrates very neatly a rough characterisation of developing self-awareness in a human life.

Stage 1 – The infant. 0 to 18 months or so, can be represented by the hole; Characteristically open, unlimited and unselfconscious. Sees baby in the mirror.

Stage 2 – The child, 2 to 12 or so years, can be represented as coming from both identities (open and having a face) without full awareness of either. Knows what he or she is to others and accepts a human identity but still having access to unselfconscious passages based in the open, playful non-identity naturally given; A blessed phase, but inherently unstable and needing to develop into...

Stage 3 – The fully self-conscious adult. Represented by the mirror alone, with the hole in the card covered. Firstly, the painfully self-conscious adolescent, busy working up a self: adopting postures, physical and mental, at first ill fitting and awkward, but gradually perfected into a mesmerising self image which is worn almost all the time and which is sufficiently complex and many faceted to require constant attention to a level that effectively masks the natural emptiness within. The individual shrunk from the magnificent ten thousand league boots of their birthright into a pair of size nines tight enough to prove their painful separate identity. Shrunk from being everything to being almost nothing, from the present to the hardly ever present, from the all embracing to the almost all excluding. What a fall! Is it any wonder that we are wracked with anger, fear, hatred, greed and such sadness that almost all our love songs are songs of loss?

We need to realize our investment. Let's return to ourselves the huge (and necessary) price we've paid for being human.

Stage 4 – The Seer. No age and all ages. Represented by the card once more present with both hole and mirror. As fully aware of what one is for others as is needful, but resting Here, in edgeless openness.. Openness given by way of attention. Readmitted to the entertainment of the given world as its host.

Gather together two or three cards. Point out that the holes merge. However many cards, there's only one hole, which can be brought to anyone and will fit, whilst mirrors obstruct one another, sometimes clash, and always are separate.

Invite one or two people to put on a collection of cards, or, probably better, ask people to share a card between two or three to discover whether the Capacity Here has any personal marks or whether, on the contrary, the Space is One, Indivisible and common to all.

### The Tube.



This experiment is a strong one. Some people find it hard to be in close proximity with a person hitherto unknown. For this reason it is usually done

towards the middle of a workshop, though you can, of course, choose otherwise.

You will need apparatus as described earlier, in the 'Tools' section, one tube for every two people. The length of the tube is a variable not much explored yet. There was, after the Covid epidemic, a version made with a transparent perspex baffle in the middle.

The participants need to arrange themselves facing one another in pairs, close enough so both can comfortably fit their face into the near end of the tube, without the tube sagging or folding.

Explain that the purpose of the tube is to get us to see what we see and not what we expect to see. This is made easier if what we see is presented in an odd context.

In the tube experiment, the primary aim (as always in these workshops) is to look and see what's looking. In this case we examine a situation where language describes the meeting as face to face, and we put the meeting in an unusual place to heighten our awareness of the data given.

So no need to stare into the eyes of the one opposite. No special expectations of emotions of one sort or another. The view in to the viewer is what we're after.

(I suppose, on reflection, that this experiment has been used mostly, hitherto, in settings without very heavy cultural interdictions concerning such things as eye-glance and close proximity. Some care will have to be taken here, as too high an emotional volume can render attention extremely difficult: Some of the force comes, undoubtedly, from the judicious increase

of emotion putting a keen edge on attention. Overstepping the mark is unskilful and, not least, uncaring.)

Ask people to fit their faces into either end of their tubes.

Length of time in the tube should probably be not more than two or three minutes – less in hot weather.

Questions should be considered silently: time for response at the end of the experiment.

Ask slowly, giving time for reflection:

ON PRESENT EVIDENCE, GOING BY WHAT IS SEEN, NOT REMEMBERED OR IMAGINED, HOW MANY FACES ARE THERE IN THE TUBE?

IS YOUR END OPEN OR BLOCKED?

IS IT FACE-TO-FACE OR FACE-TO-SPACE?

NOTICE THE COLOUR AT THE FAR END OF THE TUBE.

IS YOUR END COLOURED?

NOTICE THE SHAPES AT THAT END, AND THE BOUNDARIES OF THE FACE.

ARE THERE CORRESPONDING SHAPES AT YOUR END, AND A CORRESPONDING BOUNDARY?

ARE YOU IN THE TUBE, OR IS THE TUBE IN YOU?

NOTICE THE COMPLEXITY OF THAT FACE.

IS YOUR END OF THE TUBE COMPLEX, OR UTTERLY SIMPLE?

NOW, PLEASE CONTINUE TO HOLD YOUR PARTNER'S FACE IN VIEW, AND LOWER THE TUBE

REMAIN SILENT.

HAS THE SITUATION CHANGED NOW THAT THAT FACE IS SEEN IN A MORE NORMAL CONTEXT?

IN THE TUBE AGAIN PLEASE.

NOW, PLEASE FOCUS ON ONE EYEBROW OF THE FACE OPPOSITE.



LOOK HOW FULL OF TEXTURE AND DETAIL IT IS – EACH HAIR DIFFERENT. NOTICE HOW, WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE EYEBROW CLOSELY, YOU’VE LOST SIGHT OF THE LOWER LIP.

THAT FACE IS REALLY NEVER FULLY SEEN, IS EVER CHANGING, COMPLEX, FULL OF INFORMATION.

IS THE VIEW IN TO WHERE YOU ARE SIMILARLY CHANGING, FULL OF DETAIL, NEVER COMPLETELY SEEN OR IS IT, IN CONTRAST, TOTALLY AVAILABLE, OBVIOUS, PRESENTED ALL AT ONCE BECAUSE HERE THERE ARE NO GRADATIONS OR CHARACTERISTICS TO CHANGE?

LOWER THE TUBE, NO TALKING PLEASE: JUST LOOK OUT AT YOUR PARTNER’S FACE WHILE RETAINING AWARENESS OF YOUR OPENNESS.

HAS THE REMOVAL OF THE TUBE CHANGED YOUR SITUATION?

HAS THE CLARITY WHERE YOU ARE BECOME CLOUDED OR PERSONALISED OR CONFUSED?

WHATEVER THE EMOTIONAL CONTENT OF YOUR EXPERIENCE, CAN IT DULL THE BRILLIANCE OF YOUR SIMPLE CAPACITY?

IN THE TUBE AGAIN, PLEASE.

LET’S JUST CHECK THE BASIC PATTERN AGAIN.

IS YOUR END OPEN OR CLOSED?

ON PRESENT EVIDENCE ARE YOU, IN FACT, LOOKING AT A TUBE, OR AT A SORT OF COLLAR FRAMING THAT FACE?

DO YOU HAVE A FRAME AT YOUR END?

IS THERE A BACKGROUND TO YOU? A CONTEXT, OTHER THAN NON-BEING FROM WHICH YOU EMERGE?

SEE HOW MUCH INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT THAT END: SPECIES, RACE, SEX, AGE, ENDLESS NUANCES OF CHARACTER...

IS THERE ANY INDICATION OF AGE AT YOUR END? OF RACE, OF SPECIES?

LOOK AT THE COLOURS DISPLAYED THERE...

ANY COLOUR WHERE YOU ARE?

ARE YOU, IN SHORT, ANYTHING LIKE THAT HUMAN, LIMITED, BRIEF, APPEARANCE AT THE FAR END OF THE TUBE?

ARE YOU AND YOUR PARTNER CONFRONTING ONE ANOTHER IN A FACE-TO-FACE SITUATION, AS LANGUAGE WOULD HAVE IT, OR IS THE SITUATION ASYMMETRICAL: WHATEVER IS AT THAT END HAVING NO COUNTERPART AT YOURS?

COME OUT FOR A BREATHER, BUT STILL REMAIN SILENT, OBSERVING THE LACK OF ANYTHING WHERE YOU ARE TO SET AGAINST THAT FACE.

...

IN AGAIN, PLEASE, FOR THE LAST TIME.

NOW LOOK AT ONE OF YOUR PARTNER'S EYES.

IS THAT COLOURED OVAL OF JELLY INHABITED BY A 'SPOOK', OR 'SPIRIT' THAT MAKES IT UNIQUELY UNLIKE ANY OTHER OBJECT, OR IS IT, LIKE ALL OTHER OBJECTS, JUST COLOURED, TEXTURED AND SO ON? AN OBJECT SUBTLY EXPRESSIVE OF THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL LIFE OF YOUR PARTNER, TO BE SURE, BUT NOT OF AN ORDER DIFFERENT FROM, SAY, THE MOUTH OR THE CHEEK?

WHERE, ON PRESENT EVIDENCE, IS THE SEEING GOING ON NOW?

IN ONE SPECIAL PART OF THAT HUMAN LANDSCAPE OVER THERE, OR HERE, WHERE ALL APPEARANCE DISAPPEARS, AND FROM WHERE THE SEEING BECOMES THE SEEN?

NOW, SINCE THIS SEER IS CLEAR OF ALL CHARACTERISTICS, JUST AWAKE, WON'T IT DO FOR THE PERSON WHOSE FACE YOU SEE? FOR THE CAT AND THE DOG AND THE MOUSE?

DOES YOUR END OF THE TUBE CARRY A PERSONAL TAG?

CAN YOU SAY THAT THERE IS THAT PERSON'S APPEARANCE AND HERE IS THE ONE REALITY FORM WHICH ALL APPEARANCES SPRING?

FINALLY, LOWER THE TUBE AGAIN.

NOW THAT THE FACE IS GIVEN IN ITS USUAL CONTEXT, IS IT ANY LESS YOURS?

COULD YOU SAY TO YOUR PARTNER “THERE I HAVE YOUR APPEARANCE AND HERE I AM YOU.”?

Participants may now be invited to share impressions with their partners and then with the group. This can take some time! Lots of interesting topics may be initiated from this feedback. How much is followed up depends partly on the time available.

## The Closed Eye.

The experiment with closed eyes is very different from those illustrated so far. It comes from the quite reasonable objection that all our experiments have been based on the visual sense. There are good reasons for this:

Seeing is our principal tool for ordering and quantifying our world. Most of our powers of manipulation are based in this sense. The ‘Seers’ of Truth are appropriately so called, surely.

If the discovery of this Vacancy is to be significant, however, it must be true for all beings, including those not blessed with vision.

Use of the other senses in the work of exploring the First Person Singular Present Tense generally yields wonderful and quite unique fruit (of which more in the notes). This experiment is no exception.

The time taken to explore the world-with-closed eyes and its receiver is extremely elastic. We’ve sometimes done this for a whole morning. You should allow at least twenty minutes, I think. If people are lying on the floor, or sitting in too comfortable an armchair, they sometimes go to sleep. This is fine so long as they don’t snore. It’s probably best to guard against this by avoiding the period immediately after lunch!

The point of the experiment is to investigate what each one is like for themselves, with eyes closed, relying as far as possible on what is given in perception. Memory and imagination should play as little part as possible. Delivery, I suggest, is best slowed right down, with quite long pauses between elements of speech. The essential, as always, is to pay attention to one’s own experience, so that questions come out of that attention. The ‘performance’ will then look after itself.

A gong, or some other sounding device, is handy for consideration of sound/hearing. I shall assume we don't have one, however, in the illustration.

PLEASE CLOSE YOUR EYES.

GOING ON PRESENT EVIDENCE, WHAT ARE YOUR LIMITS?

HOW BIG ARE YOU?

HOW WIDE?

HOW TALL?

CAN YOU FIND ANY LIMITS, NOW?

IS THERE AN INSIDE AND AN OUTSIDE?

WHICH WAY ARE YOU FACING?

IS THERE SOMEWHERE THAT YOU STOP AND AN EXTERNAL WORLD BEGINS?

DO THE SENSATIONS – PRESSURES, ACHES, PAINS – MAKE UP A BODY?

IF SO, WHAT SHAPE IS IT? WHAT SIZE?

FOCUS ON YOUR BELLY SENSATIONS...AT THIS TIME WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOUR FOOT SENSATIONS? IS IT, IN FACT BELLY SENSATION, OR IS THAT JUST A MEMORY?

COULD THOSE SENSATIONS BELONG TO A CELL, OR AN ATOM, OR A TREE, OR A GALAXY?

WHAT ABOUT THE SOUND OF THIS VOICE?

IS IT INSIDE YOU OR OUTSIDE YOU?

WHAT ABOUT YOUR BREATHING?

ARE THE SOUNDS AND SENSATIONS GIVEN AT A DISTANCE, TRANSMITTED THROUGH A MEDIUM AND RECEIVED BY AN INSTRUMENT OR ARE THEY GIVEN IN THE MOMENT, JUST ARISING AND FALLING BACK INTO...WHAT?

WHERE IS THE HEARER?

IS THE HEARER MALE OR FEMALE OR NEITHER, ON PRESENT EVIDENCE?

WHAT IS YOUR IDENTITY NOW? WHAT ARE YOU MADE OF?

...

WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?

WHAT IS YOUR NATIONALITY?

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

WHAT IS YOUR HISTORY?

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

ARE YOU A SUCCESS OR A FAILURE?

ON PRESENT EVIDENCE, WHAT IS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

...

WHAT CAN YOU, AS THE SUBJECT, LAY CLAIM TO AS YOUR ABIDING 'I'?

SURELY NOT THE SENSATIONS OR SOUNDS WHICH COME AND GO.

MAYBE THOUGHTS OR EMOTIONS?

LET'S OBSERVE A SIMPLE THOUGHT...

THINK OF TWO WORDS THAT BEGIN BEGIN WITH 'B'...

WHERE DID THE WORDS COME FROM?

WHERE DO THEY GO?

DO THOSE THOUGHTS DEFINE YOU, SET LIMITS ON YOU, AS WHO YOU

ARE FOR YOURSELF AT THIS MOMENT, OR ARE THEY, AS ALL OTHER

EXPERIENCES, PASSING EVENTS WHICH LEAVE NO MARK ON THE 'I' YOU

ARE?

ARE THEY INTERNAL IN A WAY THAT THE SOUND OF MY VOICE IS NOT?

AND WHAT OF EMOTIONS?

IF YOU CAN SUMMON EMOTIONS AT WILL (PERHAPS YOU WILL NEED A  
MEMORY TO HELP) – BE HAPPY...BE SAD...BE ANGRY...BE LOVING.

IS THERE AN OBSERVABLE PERSONALITY FROM WHICH, AT THIS TIME,

THESE EMOTIONS SLIP OUT AND TO WHICH THEY SLIP BACK?

A SORT OF BOTTLE OR CONTAINER?

OR IS THERE NO CONTAINER?

ARE YOU, AS THE SUBJECT, SIMPLY OPEN – BOUNDLESS CAPACITY FOR THE CHANGING CONTENT; UNCHANGED BY PASSING EMOTIONS, THOUGHTS, SOUNDS, SENSATIONS?

UNCHANGED BECAUSE HAVING NOTHING TO CHANGE?

JUST EDGELESS AWARENESS, PURE AND SIMPLE – JUST ‘I AM’?

SO, FINALLY, HAVING FOUND NONE OF THE FAMILIAR LANDMARKS AND LABELS OF IDENTITY PRESENT AS YOURSELF, STRIPPED OF ALL BUT TIMELESS, CHARACTERLESS, CHANGELESS, EDGELESS OPENNESS YOU ARE LEFT, SURELY, POORER THAN POOR.

HOW DOES THAT FEEL? DOES IT FEEL LIKE A TRAGEDY, OR THE LIFTING OF A BURDEN?

IS THIS NAKED AWARENESS, SIMPLY GIVEN, A FORBIDDING NOVELTY?

OR YOUR EVERLASTING HOME: THE HOME YOU NEVER LEFT?

MARVELLOUSLY COMFORTABLE AND, AT THE SAME TIME, WONDERFULLY STRANGE?

IS ALL THE TALK OF EMPTINESS/FULLNESS SO MUCH HIGH FLOWN HOT AIR, OR IS IT SIMPLE OBSERVATION?

TWO-WAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU ARE FOR YOURSELF, NOW?

NOW, WHEN YOU’RE READY, OPEN YOUR EYES AND OPEN UP THE VISUAL WORLD AGAIN.

REMAIN QUIET FOR SOME MOMENTS, PLEASE. THEN LET’S SHARE!

Leave time for comments and observations at this point. The time it takes can vary enormously.

## The Foursome.

This is an experiment which throws the light of Self observation into the area of relationship and it gives answers which do not sound at all familiar. The issue of relationships is given considerable weight in society. We are, here, calling into question one of the basic assumptions, indeed the foundation, on which all the rules rest.

There is, therefore, some need to move on from the simple observation of what's so into a linkage with, for instance, our relatively new-found (and very valuable) discoveries in the field of psychology and our observations in the workshop.

As far as 'relationship' goes, I'm talking here of the acceptance that my experience of you is a product not only of the way you are, but of the way I, as a person, am.

This may seem obvious, but such relativism is a comparatively new development. It brings tolerance and self-knowledge – knowledge of the human region of one's appearance – and has enabled a rich flexibility in modern society; Though we needed the discovery of relativity, we suffer from our loss of contact with the Absolute.

The happy news is that we need not try to return to the pseudo-absolutes of our history, but can use the faculty of intelligent observation, which busted our certainties in the first place, to rediscover the essential, unmoving rock of the Absolute, without which we are becoming more and more distressed.



Surely these considerations alone show us the high importance of the work we are doing in bringing the Subject under the same clear-sighted scrutiny as that with which we are used to observing the phenomenal world.

This experiment needs some explanation; For this reason it is better done after the initial phase of simple observation of the Subject.

Just by the bye, I really value this experiment, and enjoy ‘hosting’ it, even though the speaker is better situated out of any group (especially when numbers are large). It is often the first opportunity to talk directly of ‘love and loving’. Love, and it’s relationship with clear-sighted observation is often one of the main topics springing from the ‘What’s so, so what?’ question. I’ve attached a short comment on this in the end notes at page 50.

Here we are, then, moving into ‘meaning’.

There are always differences when it comes to ‘meaning’, and the discussion needs to come from the heart, and simply. One can testify only to what one has experienced. Sometimes, if some of the implications of ‘Seeing’ are, as yet, no more than hearsay for you, it is worth opening them out and saying that.

So, back to the workshop!

Everybody is asked to stand up and to gather in groups of four, with people of roughly the same height getting together.

The foursome stand close together with each person facing someone and having profiles of the other two people in vision to left and right. Usually, people link arms, but it’s not of the essence.

Each person is asked to look straight across at the face opposite. No talking.  
It is not necessary to look at the eyes.

(I've found it inadvisable to crack jokes in this experiment as it tends to be a rather giggly one, for some reason, and once the virus is abroad, it's awfully contagious.)

FIRST, WHILE STILL LOOKING AHEAD AT THE PERSON OPPOSITE, PLEASE ATTEND TO THE TWO PROFILES AT THE LEFT AND RIGHT EDGES OF VISION: THIS ARRANGEMENT IS ACCURATELY DESCRIBED AS 'FACE-TO-FACE'. THERE, ON THE LEFT, IS ONE THING, ONE FACE, IN OPPOSITION TO ANOTHER FACE ON THE RIGHT.

THEY ARE SEPARATED BY A MEASURABLE DISTANCE, AND RELATE AS OBJECT TO OBJECT ACROSS A MEDIUM.

THEY NEED TO STAY SEPARATE IN ORDER TO BE THEMSELVES AND, ON THAT BASIS, THEY CAN EXCHANGE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INFORMATION OR CREATE A COMMON FIELD OF FEELING AND MUTUAL SUPPORT BETWEEN THEM.

THEY CANNOT MERGE.

THEIR RELATIONSHIP IS SYMMETRICAL.

THIS IS THE PATTERN OF RELATIONSHIP TO WHICH WE ALL SUBSCRIBE. WE ACCEPT IT AS AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF WHAT TAKES PLACE. BUT NOW, LET'S OBSERVE WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING IN OUR OWN CASE.

BEFORE YOU IS A FACE, MUCH LIKE THE ONES TO RIGHT AND LEFT, EXCEPT THIS TIME PRESENTED FULL FACE.

LOOK WHAT IS YOUR SIDE OF THIS MEETING.

WHAT IS FACE-ON TO THAT FACE? WHERE IS ITS PARTNER, ITS MATCH?

DO YOU HAVE, WHERE YOU ARE, THE OTHER HALF OF THAT  
SUPPOSEDLY SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP?  
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SET AGAINST THAT FACE? OR, TO PUT IT ANOTHER  
WAY, IS THERE ANYTHING WHERE YOU ARE?  
WHAT ARE YOU, FOR YOURSELF, NOW?  
IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THAT FACE ONE OF TOTAL ASYMMETRY?  
WHATEVER THAT ONE HAS, DO YOU HAVE A LACK OF IT – A RECEIVER FOR IT –  
HERE?  
IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR EXPERIENCE, HAVE YOU, THE FIRST PERSON  
SINGULAR PRESENT TENSE, EVER, EVER BEEN IN A SYMMETRICAL  
RELATIONSHIP WITH ANYBODY OR, COME TO THAT, ANYTHING?  
ISN'T IT STARTLING THAT WE MOSTLY OVERLOOK THIS MOST OBVIOUS  
OF OBSERVATIONS BEFORE WE PLUNGE INTO THE DETAIL OF  
RELATIONSHIPS – WHICH ARE ALL CONTAINED WITHIN AWARENESS!

### Onion Peeling

This is an experiment only for the two people actually involved. For the rest, it is a demonstration and suffers from that lack of 'doing'. It is, nonetheless, an important experiment and should, in my view, be included in all but the shortest workshops because it presents the experimental discoveries about what is Here living comfortably with our present secular scientific picture of the way things are. More than that, it shows how each completes the other.

A large drawing of the map on page 45 is a great help in tracking the data given by this experiment.

The proposition is that our self-image is so fixed in the human range that the outcome of external observation is almost as foreign to our ‘normal’ view of ourselves as what is revealed when I point ‘Here’.

So the same rules of open-minded receptivity to what is given are required of the observer – only, this time, the question is not “What do you look like to yourself?”, but “What do you look like to an observer?”

You – the unknown quantity at the point where you are – point ‘X’, say.

In order for the observer to build up a reasonably full answer to the question “What is at point ‘X’?”, they must observe that point from as great a range of distances as possible...from Angstrom units to light years away.

The experiment can only actually access a tiny selection of ranges (say, typically, from one centimetre to thirty metres away), so the appearance of point ‘X’ from distances greater than and less than this must rely on the reported observations of scientists: astronomical at one end and atomic at the other.

Now, as to the delivery, I have found that it’s important to explain well why this needs to be done. The marrying of our workaday, secular world with our more spiritual aspirations is long overdue and so valuable in the long run!

Also, I like to inject a certain amount of theatre into the presentation.

Without some drama, it is easy to lose the attention of those for whom the word ‘scientific’ causes a grey cloud to descend. The Map, which is such a beauty to look at, can help with this. You may well find your own style demands something different.

First, ask for a volunteer to be seated at point 'X'. You can choose to do the observing of point 'X' yourself; If you do ask someone else, I advise choosing someone who knows the experiment well. Observation is not as easy as we tend to think: we are used to being very selective in our gaze and what is required here is to observe the field of vision in its entirety. So the story starts from as far away as can be pictured – galactic level, from where point 'X' looks, as the observer approaches, like a tiny dot of brightness in vast emptiness, which increases in size to a most beautiful spiral of spinning stars – our own galaxy.

Then through this level to the stellar zone. Here the observations are of a, at first, very distant star about one third of the way out from the centre, in one of the curved arms of the galaxy. The view is similarly empty to begin with and then becomes more and more filled with the brightness of the star that is our sun.

Now to the solar level, as our observer continues the journey in towards point 'X'. Here the view is of a system of bodies spinning round the star. Each of these is wonderfully coloured and strange. The observer finds their target to be a planet in one of the inner orbits: a blue and white marvel of sublime beauty.

At the planetary level, as the distance diminishes, it becomes clear that the planet is singing, and talking, and vibrantly alive to itself and its surroundings.

So, in to the biosphere, where the traces of the planet's life-forms can be seen: vast forests and deserts, seas and rivers, cities and highways. Then, closer in, buildings, cars and, finally, in to the room where the workshop is

being run - it is effective to name the actual country, city, street, building that you are in.

At this point we can begin to report actual experience – the track of the journey up to now can be nicely followed on the map. The observer needs to be furnished with a peep-hole in a piece of card, or can use their thumb and forefinger curled together to enclose a small gap.

Through this aperture, they can report what the view is like from as far away from point 'X' as possible and then from three or four interim points on the way up to point 'X'. They will find themselves passing into and then through the human region. Its important to report literally what is seen through the aperture at each distance – so, for example, some pink and white patterned wall, a human torso, the arm of a chair and so on at each stop – say 10M, 5M, 2M, 1M, 0.5M, 10cm...

The very closest views – at cellular, molecular, atomic and sub-atomic levels – need increasingly rare and costly instruments to observe, but can be briefly summarised.

At each level we find a pattern of increasing complexity and order developing and then dissolving, rather like a sine wave pattern. As we approach the human level, the scene becomes increasingly rich; First sound, then life-forms (including humans and human society), then smell, touch taste – I don't recommend sampling this last sense without warning – and on inwards losing touch, taste, and sound. Losing life and colour and, finally, so we're told, even definite position, location and mass, at the level of fundamental particles.

The total journey goes, thus, from almost nothing to almost nothing, through regions of incredible complexity and richness.

All this makes up the story of what point 'X' looks like to an observer at various distances. The observer, however, cannot ever quite close the distance between themselves and point 'X' They are always at a distance, even if only angstrom units away.

Fortunately, we have had the foresight to choose for point 'X' a point that can speak for itself!

Now is the time to ask point 'X' what it finds when it looks at the spot it occupies.

With luck, and the judicious use of pertinent questions, point 'X' will report that its appearance for itself is no appearance at all, but Capacity for all appearances, but its own: other atoms, molecules, cells, people, life-forms, planets, star systems, galaxies, until the indivisible whole is reached once again...so the journey in towards an infinitesimal point explodes on contact: out to the infinite Totality.

This is the pattern of the living facts as actually available to open-minded research.

Here can be seen the completion of the journey of discovery.

Science, so far, would have it that everybody's word but that of the Subject – the First Person Singular Present Tense – is respectable. But everybody but the Subject is off-centre when it comes to reporting what is at point 'X'. Subjective opinion is, quite rightly, treated with reserve in questions of fact. But to disallow observation of the Subject by the Subject (who makes all the observations, in any case) is just blind prejudice.

If we look at the picture of the Subject and the Given World represented by the Map on page 45, we can see that World and Subject are unseparate.

The map has had to part them so All can be seen. Here illustrated is the indivisible Whole within which all discoveries are made.

The view of ourselves as exclusively human (aka the common sense view) can be seen for the parochial nonsense that it is. As usual, it is the obvious that has escaped us.

Incidentally, there is a rich humour in this observation. Deliciously funny as well as so deep...I'm very, very grateful for that!

### Spinning the World

This experiment requires no apparatus.

It has special value, apart from its content, because it allows everyone to get up and move around.

What we are doing is to test the usually unspoken assumption that 'I' move around in a world that is still. This is one of a range of assumptions that flow from this basic belief that:-

“I am a thing, a human being, which behaves, broadly, like other things.”

The proposition, here, is that, as in so many areas, what we experience is dictated by what we believe to be happening; That simple observation requires a special effort of attention (at least, at first!).

Thus, language has it that “I walk round the park”, “You walk round the park” and “They walk round the park” describe roughly similar events.

Would it be more accurate to say “He/She/They/You walk round the park”, but “The park walks round in me”?



Let's see what is actually so.

Everybody needs to stand up (or be mobile in whatever way they can). The area needs to be cleared of chairs and other obstacles: if it is possible to go outside to do this experiment, so much the better.

Be careful to look after anyone who may be especially at risk of a fall when you start spinning the world. It is not necessary to spin: side to side movement is good enough, though spinning makes the point more vividly. Its worth saying that.

FIRST, LET'S POINT TO THE SPOT WE'RE INTERESTED IN OBSERVING: HERE, WHERE THE SUBJECT IS.

YOU MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO SUPPORT ONE ARM WITH THE OTHER, BECAUSE WE'LL BE POINTING FOR A WHILE.

NOW, JUST GENTLY START TO ROCK FROM SIDE TO SIDE. PAY ATTENTION, TWO-WAY ATTENTION. TO **WHAT IS HAPPENING WHERE**.

IS THE TO AND FRO MOVEMENT DETECTABLE OUT THERE IN THE VIEW, OR IN HERE IN THE SUBJECT?

DO YOU MOVE, OR IS THE SCENE MOVING IN YOU?

DO THE SENSATIONS ARISING AS THE SCENE SLIDES BACK AND FORTH MAKE A SEPARATE IDENTITY FOR YOU, OR ARE THEY, TOO, AN ELEMENT IN THE CHANGING VIEW?

DOES THE SUBJECT MOVE, OR IS IT THE WORLD MOVING IN THE SUBJECT?

NOW, SLOWLY START TO MOVE AROUND THE ROOM, AVOIDING CONTACT WITH OTHERS AND KEEPING THE FINGER POINTING IN. DOES THE SENSATION OF WALKING MAKE THE SUBJECT UNSTEADY?

ARE YOU ON THE MOVE, OR IS THE SCENE MOVING THROUGH YOU?

AS PEOPLE MOVE INTO YOUR FIELD OF VISION AND THEN MOVE PAST, IS IT YOUR EXPERIENCE THAT WHAT IS HAPPENING OUT THERE, WHEN YOU SEE PEOPLE MOVE, IS ABOUT THE SAME AS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU, THE EXPERIENCER, MOVE?

IS IT EVEN SIMILAR?

DO YOU, IN FACT, MOVE, OR IS LANGUAGE COVERING AN ENORMOUS FICTION HERE? AREN'T WE SIMPLY DISCOVERING THE LANDSCAPE OF THE GIVEN WORLD?

FINALLY, AS A FITTING CELEBRATION OF THIS DISCOVERY, LET'S GET THE WORLD SPINNING! KEEP LOOKING AT WHERE THE FINGER'S POINTING AND START SLOWLY TURNING ON THE SPOT. CAN THERE BE ANY FURTHER DOUBT THAT ITS THE WORLD THAT IS CIRCLING, ON THE MOVE, WHILST HERE NOTHING IS CHANGED?

IF YOU KEEP YOUR FOCUS IN TO THE CENTRE WHEN YOU STOP, YOU MAY EVEN FIND THE DIZZINESS, TOO, IS IN THE ROOM!

### The Circle

The circle is almost always used to close a meeting, though there's no reason why it should be used only at the end.

All the participants stand and form a circle facing inwards. People should stand close together and will usually find themselves linking arms and shoulders, but this is not obligatory!

I shall give two versions of the guidance, both equally good. Some prefer one and some the other. There are many more variations to come, I'm sure.

### Version 1

LET'S START BY LOOKING DOWN AT A SPOT MORE OR LESS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CIRCLE OF FEET.

NOTICE ALL THE PAIRS OF FEET AND LEGS, ALL DIFFERENT AND SOON TO BE GOING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

THIS IS THE WORLD OF MEETING AND PARTING. OF CHANGE AND VARIETY. OF JUDGEMENT.

NOW, WHILE CONTINUING TO LOOK DOWN, ALLOW YOUR ATTENTION TO BE DRAWN UP INTO THE PLACE YOU ARE LOOKING FROM.

CLEAR, CHANGELESS, UNENDING AND CAPACIOUS. THE CONTRAST  
COULD NOT BE MORE PROFOUND.

YET ISN'T THIS THE TRUE PATTERN OF LIFE AS IT IS GIVEN? FROM WHICH  
IT IS LIVED IN EXPERIENCE, MOMENT TO MOMENT?

PAYING ATTENTION TO THE FACTS IS ALWAYS POTENT; ATTENTION TO  
**THESE** FACTS – THAT IS TWO WAY ATTENTION – REVEALS A SITUATION AS  
DIFFERENT AS COULD BE FROM THE WORLD WE THOUGHT WE LIVED IN.

STILL LOOKING DOWN, SEE HOW ALL THE LEGS DISAPPEAR INTO THIS  
ONE CLEAR 'SKY', LIKE THE PILLARS OF A TEMPLE.

HERE, RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, NEARER TO YOU THAN YOUR BREATHING,  
IS THE PLACE FROM WHICH ALL APPEARANCES FLOW, AND TO WHICH  
THEY RETURN.

IT MIGHT HELP TO TAKE ONE HAND AND POINT YOUR FINGER AT THIS  
PLACE.

ARE ALL THE FINGERS POINTING AT A SET OF ENCAPSULATED SPACES, OR  
ARE THEY POINTING INTO THE ONE CLEAR SPACE THAT HAS NO PERSONAL  
MARKS AND NO EDGES?

WE CANNOT GUESS WHAT MAY BE THE CHANGES WROUGHT BY  
ATTENTION TO THE FACTS AS PRESENTED NOW – TWO WAY ATTENTION IN  
PRESENT TIME – UNLESS WE ARE WILLING TO MAKE THE LEAP FROM  
MAKE BELIEVE INTO ACTUALITY. FROM IMAGINARY TO PRESENT.

EACH ONE HERE, AT LEAST, HAS THAT CHOICE.

## Version 2

FIRST, LET'S LOOK DOWN AND VIEW THE CLOSED CIRCLE OF FEET – A  
COMPLETE CIRCLE, WITH NO BREAK.

ALL THESE FEET ARE DIFFERENT, EACH ONE OF THE PAIRS DIFFERENT,  
EVEN. EACH PAIR WILL SOON BE GOING IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION.

NOW LET'S LOOK UP AND AROUND THE CIRCLE OF FACES, ALL, ALSO,  
DIFFERENT.

WE CALL THIS A CIRCLE, BUT IS IT A CIRCLE? A CLOSED PATTERN?

IS THERE AN OPENING? A GAP?

WHAT DO YOU SEE, RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE?

IS THERE A GAP BETWEEN THE FACE ON YOUR RIGHT AND THE FACE ON YOUR LEFT? A GAP SO BIG, IN FACT, THAT IT CAN CONTAIN ALL THE FACES AROUND THE ROOM?

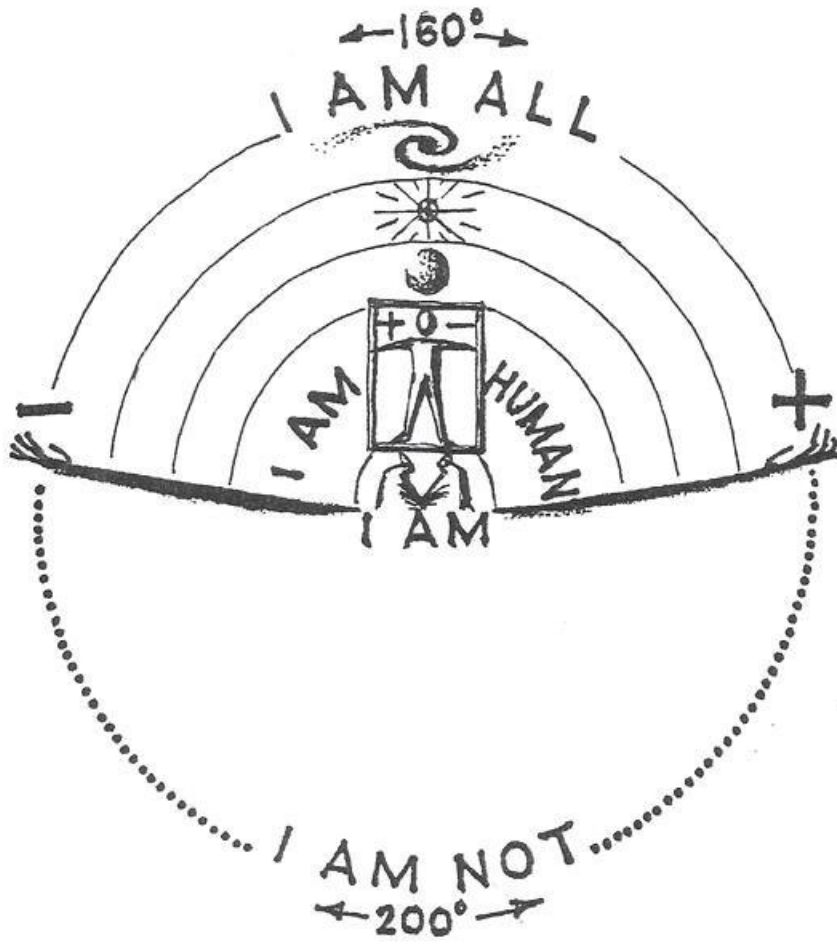
IS THIS, IN FACT, A CIRCLE, OR MORE LIKE A RING WITH A DIAMOND SET WITHIN IT? AND WHERE IS THE DIAMOND, AS FAR AS YOU ARE CONCERNED?

CAN YOU CONTINUE TO SAY THAT THE SITUATION IS WELL DESCRIBED AS A CLOSED CIRCLE , OR IS IT MORE ACCURATE TO ADMIT THE GAP, THE CLEAR SPACE THAT CONTAINS ALL THE FACES CURRENTLY ON SHOW, AMONG WHICH YOURS IS CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT?

HAVE YOU, IN EFFECT, TRADED THAT ONE FACE FOR ALL THE FACES NOW ON DISPLAY?

AND ISN'T THAT GOOD BUSINESS??

## **THE MAP**



## The Map (see Note 2 Page 50)

The Map stands central to this work because it has to do with both “What’s so?” and “So what?”. It has an arm immersed in each side of the inquiry, so to speak.

As far as “What’s so?” is concerned, it can be seen that the Map is a representation of the visual world as it is discovered when 360° attention is paid to what is given.

We could fill in a lot more detail in the outward-looking direction. The layers, or onion skins, come to the centre laden with increasing time burdens as their distance increases. Each skin is studied by a different branch of science and the matter behaves in characteristic and different ways.

The possibility of producing Maps customised for different audiences is fascinating.

You can use the Map to enliven and track the Onion-peeling experiment..

Now we come to the “So what?” arm.

I have to take a deep breath at this point, because “So what?” is a never-ending dialogue, not a question to which there is a definite answer.

But more of that in the next section; Suffice it to say, here, that the following are some interpretations that have emerged so far.

It’s easy to see, with the aid of the Map, that, as First Person Singular Present Tense, I support and embrace my world and that I, in my turn, am supported and backed by the endless mystery of Non-Being, which flips into Being at my centre.

To see this is easy, but to assent to what the evidence is telling me is to accept authority for what springs into consciousness from this Centre...and that is a life’s work!

Looking at the Map in more detail, we can see that the Little One in the glass owns nothing, whatever they may have in the bank. The Big One,

contrariwise, cannot be other than owner of all; There's nothing at the Centre to keep anything out with.

The Big One faces the world – indeed, its face IS the world, whilst the Little One turns its back.

You may have noticed the '+' and '-' signs reversed between the arms of the Big One and the arms of the Little One – as are left and right in a mirror image. This illustrates the reversal of values between First and Third persons. Thus, the Little One wants MORE..More status. More money. More love. More admiration. The Big One..Less and Less.

The world of the Little One is ruled by the love of power; The world of the Big One by the power of love. Which reflects the facts?

The Little one is small, temporary, exclusive, one-off. The Big One unlimited, outside of time and change, all-embracing. Universal... One could go on.

The Little One is for respecting and listening to, but, to function at its best, must be kept firmly in its place. It's as if the vital spark of its life is generated across the distance between Third and First Person. Fool yourself about where the Little one is and what the Little One is up to (and we all do!) and what emerges is not clearly seen. Keep consciously coming back to the place you never left, and that self-deception is likely to be temporary.

I'll leave the implications of the Map there. Of course, there's more to be said (there always is) and I do believe that time and increasing familiarity with the Map will yield fruits of all sorts. It's a spreadsheet of the landscape that, so far, has been the province more of spiritual writing and thinking than of any other. But spirituality suffers from its loss of connection with the ordinary, down-to-earth, study of physical realities. The Map illustrates how a really serious look at the material world, without the exclusion of the Looker (and what a nonsense that is) turns out to indicate a pattern whose character is wonderfully expressed by the greatest genius of humankind down the ages. Poetry must be rooted in realism if it is to reach as far as it can. The Map is a beautiful and quite recent development. Try drawing a few of your own!



## SO WHAT?

One of the difficulties in bringing this inwards-and-outwards looking to people is that simple Seeing, as such, has no meaning, and thus no value.

The implications of this two-way vision must be spelled out and distinctions mean divisions; Immediately I start to talk about meaning, I have left some of the meaning behind.

Nevertheless, the whole workshop enterprise, indeed the whole world, is full of meaning, up to the point of attention inwards, and we need to give some account of the significance we attach to the discovery of this No-thing at the Centre.

The whole workshop speaks to those who want to hear, of course; There's no rule in running a workshop more important than simple sincerity. Speaking from the heart, and from experience, speaks for itself. I've mentioned one or two things like using a particular slant for a particular audience, but this section is primarily devoted to the last stage of a workshop, where the aim is to discuss meaning and to indicate ways to stabilise this waking state in the midst of ordinary life.

I do believe that this is an important time: the Inseeing can be startling and powerful during a workshop and, unfortunately, very vulnerable to being left encapsulated in those feelings unless one brings one's critical faculties to bear actually in the workshop itself.

The period set aside for explanations and testimony from the participants is usually shaped by the questions and comments themselves: one question leads to another and one testimony can spark others from other people, or prompt an experiment.

How much time and emphasis you place on exploring meaning is up to you. Each workshop is a shared expedition into the Unknown; Not knowing is a vital ingredient (particularly if you're running it!)! Often a response to a

question or comment will come from the floor and be enlightening to everybody.

The second important topic in this section is to indicate how to keep this vision alive in the day-to-day. I've found asking friends around the room, if you're lucky enough to have some, is very worthwhile and sometimes very entertaining.

That brings me to two points worth making in general.

First, that the more people heard from in a workshop the better – both responding to experiments, proposing experiments and running some of the proposed experiments. It's usually a good idea to give some warning to the people you want to help (they may say 'No').

Second, that there is no 'good' or 'expert' Seeing of the Vacancy. It's obviously impossible to see Absolute Clarity with anything but Absolute Clarity, but it's amazing how the habit of ordering people will keep popping up again and again, unless we say, on each occasion, and as often as possible, that there is, and can be, no hierarchy.

One very good way to illustrate the disorganised difference between us all is to listen to the tale of how Inseeing plays out in daily life. One thing is certain, that the differences will be impressive!

So, it's desirable to give time for discussion of meaning and time for discussion of how to live awake to one's True Identity in the day-to-day.

It's usual to end with a Circle experiment. Some sort of experiment, anyway. It is a good end note.

I would like to end by saying thank you to you, dear reader, for staying with me thus far, and to Douglas Harding, who dragged this new insight into our culture like an elephant hauling teak.

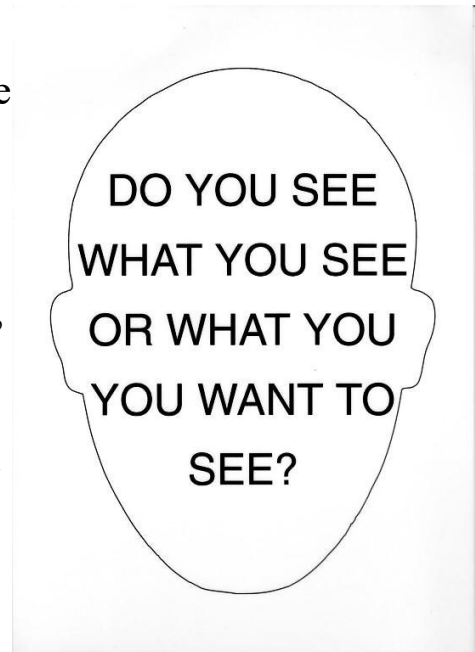
We have been given an opportunity.....

## NOTES

1.

This is an illustration of the general point that we all edit our experience more than we think.

It is fun, but not really effective unless it is new to a significant proportion of the attendees. First, silence is required, then the card is shown, slowly, to the room. Then it can be read out loud (error intact!) to the readers, and all who agree with the reading to raise their hand..and so on.



2.

In all but very short workshops, a large version of the map on page 45 is a great bonus when it comes to discussing the meaning of the discoveries made in the workshop. It relates, of course, primarily to the visual world.

3.

### LOVE AND LOVING

Above all other topics, this one seems to me to be ineluctably a matter of personal experience. After all, even in a romantic sense, we fall in love - we don't navigate our way there by calculation or discipline. There is a character

of grace, I would say, woven into the experience. Romantic love is hugely effected by conditioning. 'The meshing of neuroses' - so says the cynic.

The love that flows from noticing one's Openness - openness for the other, like them or not - is, in my experience, broad-based, quiet and increasingly profound. It cannot be ordered at will. This universal or unconditional love appears more as inherent in the nature of things (or, you could say, Being) than as a predilection for one thing over another. It cannot be summoned. The way to it is by attention to what is given in experience. Two way attention.

That is my testimony. Offered only as that. See how it comes for you!

#### 4.

#### SUGGESTED OPTIONS

I haven't talked about experiments that explore senses other than sight and sound.

New experiments come up all the time!

Body sensations are a rich field of inquiry; ask the attendees to lightly dig a thumbnail into the index finger tip, for example. Where is the pain? Is it inside the body? What size is it? What shape? Where does it come from?

When the hand is allowed to open again, where does it go?

Or three or so people can make a bundle of fingers and someone else can point to a finger and ask for it to be moved. Where are the finger sensations located?

There are so many interesting discoveries to be made when we wander in the Given World. Tastes (when I eat lunch, is the experience similar to when you eat lunch?), thoughts and emotions (where do they come from? Are they internal or external?). It is so much fun to explore and so valuable.

## ATTRIBUTION

This booklet was put together by William Garside and edited with Colin Fox.

The Map was drawn by D. E. Harding.

It has taken around thirty years for it to see the light of day, mainly because of the compiler's procrastinating nature, but it has the mark of having been written at a time and in a place where Douglas was very much around.

I hope you enjoy it!

## **FOR YOUR USE**

