

Preface

WHAT I OFFER you in this book is freedom. Most people unknowingly live their lives in a prison. I will take you on a guided tour of the realms of imprisonment. If your enthusiasm is strong enough, you will be able to realize this freedom for yourself, and taste the joy that is available to those who are willing to do the work.

Ask yourself how often you wake up in the morning feeling excited about something—the next pay packet, the next party, the next vehicle, the next romantic partner—only to discover that things never quite work out the way you expect?

The one certainty is that you will continue to believe that satisfaction exists somewhere in the future. With repeated disappointments, your motivation and energy may fail. Even the will to live can be lost.

There is a better alternative.

The disciples often asked Jesus about the kingdom of heaven. Once Jesus called a child into their midst and told them that to enter the kingdom of heaven, they must “become as little children” (Matthew 18:3).

When we become as children, all things in life take on new meaning, and we see through the eye of a child. Everything is

fresh, and with this freshness enthusiasm returns. A whole new energy-cycle begins.

Freedom is about awakening from the great sleep. By sleep I mean the state of being captivated by the mechanical, unobserved mind—the unfocused mind, the mind that is like a boat without a rudder, driven by the wind. Even as you read these words, your mind may already be drifting off in different directions.

I would like to help you to know yourself, and become a self-realized or enlightened human being—if not fully, then at least on an intellectual level. A purely intellectual understanding can at least be the start of authentic development toward self-realization.

This book tells the story of my life. I do this not to promote myself, but to give you a tangible example of what self-realization means. Though superficially about me, at a deeper level the book is about you, since you are the one who must discover the truth for yourself.

As for my credentials, these were earned while I was serving a prison sentence, first in Cardiff prison in Wales, and then in Dartmoor prison in England. Through diligent work, I became enlightened.

Enlightenment means rising above the ego with its ideas and theories whose root is so often the desire to look good to others. This is a form of self-deceit, and the result of the workings of the lower nature. To feel peace—the great peace—you have to learn to read the book of Self. It is in that book that all the answers may be found. One has to learn to know the ego, and finally to conquer the ego.

The ego is the one who fights, who derives satisfaction from positions of power, and who revels in feelings of self-importance. You must learn to destroy this ego. Step back from the mind, and observe its workings. By so doing, you create the conditions necessary for the development of the higher mind—the mind that witnesses the workings of the lower, or thinking mind.

This thinking mind is not really your own. Rather, as you go

through life, you identify with traits coming from outside of yourself. A trait may be something as simple as a gesture, an expression, or a point of view. You pick these up from your parents, from friends you admire, even from people you hate. You then incorporate these traits into yourself, and mistakenly identify with them. After a while, you think of these external characteristics as “I” or “me.”

Having built such a prison, you must then protect it. This is the origin of the ego. The ego is the one who guards the fortress built from false identities. Whenever the edifice comes under attack, the ego will use whatever means available to defend it.

Rigidly-defended people may say: “Everyone is entitled to their own opinion.” In reality, everyone is entitled to know the truth, and there is only one truth. The person you *think* you are is a pretender.

Do you ever find yourself lost in the sleep of the mind, and drawn away from the task at hand? Are you aware of those moments? If you can become aware, you will begin work of reaching true light and true peace. But this goal can be reached only through constant work on the self.

Keep watching your mind. Learn to know yourself. As you make the effort to learn, you will begin to know more and more, until eventually you will know the great peace and light. Then you will be among the seers, prophets, and sages of all ages. Apparent burdens take on new forms, and life becomes joyful and blissful. You are free.

This freedom has always been there, but fear of the unknown can make you hold on all the more tightly. If you have the courage to let go, you will see that life can be so much better, both for yourself, and for the people who are connected to you in life.