

PB Notebooks: Why are we Here?

There are a variety of answers we can consider from many sources: some fun, some serious. A few from PB:

25.1.157 26.1.64, 152, 155 + 221-225, 229 26.4.24, 63, 82, 257 27.3.25 28.1.60, 62
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Not to escape life, but to articulate it, is philosophy's practical goal. Not to take the aspirant out of circulation, but to give them something worth doing is philosophy's sensible ideal. (20.1.340)

Whatever we call it, most people feel--whether vaguely or strongly--that there must be a God and that **there must be something which God has in view in letting the universe come into existence. This purpose I call the World-Idea, because to me God is the World's Mind.** This is a thrilling conception. It was an ancient revelation which came to the first cultures, the first civilizations, of any importance, as it has come to all others which have appeared, and it is still coming today to our own. With this knowledge, deeply absorbed and properly applied, man comes into harmonious alignment with his Source. 26.1.64

Since no one could have been present before that Beginning which the West calls Creation, no one could *directly* know why the universe was manifested at all. But the intuitive intelligence of the sages penetrated to this idea, that **the infinite potentiality and indefinite expansion or contraction of the universe expresses in space-time form and motion the infinity of the incomparable Void, the unique Reality.** 26.1.152

Why creation of the universe? Alone, the eye cannot see itself; but with a second thing present, a mirror, it can do so. **This universe is as a mirror to the World-Mind.** 26.1.155

It is not only man that is made in the image of God: the whole universe likewise is also an image of God. **It is not only by coming to know ourselves that we discover the divine life hidden deep in our heart: it is also by listening in the stillness of Nature to what she is forever declaring, that we discover the presence of an infinite World-Mind.** 26.1.221

He comes to see the whole cosmos as a manifestation of the Supreme Being. It follows that involuntarily, spontaneously, he brings himself--mind and body, heart and will--into harmony with this view. 26.1.222

The World-Idea is slowly but rhythmically being unfolded from the Infinite Mind. Yet if we could speak in spatial terms of what transcends space, we could say **that the Idea and its process of unfoldment occupy no more than a single point in that vast Mind.** 26.1.225

Each individual centre of life and intelligence is a replica in minuscule of the World-Mind itself. 26.1.223

Not only man was made in the image of God, but also the universe. It is as geometrically infinite as God is absolutely infinite. There is no limit to the number of things in it, no limit to the differences among those things, and no limit to the space it occupies. 26.1.229

There is a beauty in the infinite reality which outshines whatever beauty there is in the imaginative phantasy. 28.2.77 SL 34

Man is the keystone of the arch of material life, whereas an animal lives solely under the impulses of self-preservation and self-procreation. Only in man can this Divine Being arrive at Self-consciousness, because only man can develop intelligence in its fullness. The intelligence which animals possess, however excellently it suffices them, is after all one which is concerned purely with objective things. Animals cannot move in the realm of abstract ideas, but man can escape from the concrete through his developed reason, his religious feeling, his mystic intuition. 26.4.24

The ideas in a man's mind are hidden and secret until he expresses them through actions, or as speech, or as the visible creations and productions of his hands, or in behaviour generally. Those ideas are neither lost nor destroyed. They are a permanent part of the man's memory and character and consciousness and subconsciousness, where they have been recorded as automatically and as durably as a master phonograph disc records music. Just as a wax copy may be burnt but the music will still live on in the master disc, so the cosmos may be annihilated or disintegrate completely but the creative idea of it will still live on in the World-Mind. More, in the same way a man's body may die and disintegrate, but the creative idea of him will still remain in the World-Mind as his Soul. It will not die. It's his real Self, his perfect Self. It is the true Idea of him which is forever calling to be realized. It is the unmanifest image of God in which man is made and which he has yet to bring into manifestation in his everyday consciousness. 26.4.63

If we do not know the "why" of universal existence, we do know the "why" of human existence. It provides the field of experience for discovering the divine soul. The integral quest which ends in this discovery is, consequently, the greatest and most important of human undertakings. 26.4.82

We are constantly faced by the hoariest of all problems, which is "Why did the Universe arise out of the depth and darkness of the Absolute Spirit?" The Seer can offer us a picture of the way in which this Spirit has involved itself into matter and is evolving itself back to self-knowledge. That is only the *How* and not the *Why* of the world. The truth is not only that nobody has ever known, that nobody knows, and that nobody will ever know the final and fundamental purpose of creation, but that God himself does not even know--for God too has arisen out of the Absolute no less than the universe, has found himself emanated from the primeval darkness and utter silence. Even God must be content to watch the flow and not wonder why, for both God

and man must merge and be absorbed when they face the Absolute for the last time. (In the symbolic language of the Bible, "For man cannot meet God face to face and live.") 28.1.60

As Mind the Real is static, as World-Mind it is dynamic. As Godhead It alone is in the stillness of being; but as God it is the source, substance, and power of the universe. As Mind there is no second thing, no second intelligence to ask the question why it stirred and breathed forth World-Mind, hence why the whole world-process exists. Only man asks this question and it returns unanswered. 28.1.62

The World-Mind is expressing through an infinite number of minds its own infinitude multiplied by infinity an infinite number of times. 27.3.25

Were the World-Mind beyond, because outside, the finite universe, then it would be limited by that universe and thus lose its own infinitude. But because *it includes* the universe completely within itself while remaining completely unlimited, it is genuinely infinite. World-Mind is neither limited nor dissipated by its self-projection in the universe. If World-Mind is immanent in the universe, it is not confined to the universe; if it is present in every particle of the All, its expression is not exhausted by the All. 27.2.25

The uniqueness of each person, his difference from every other person, may be metaphysically explained as due to the effort of Infinite Mind to express itself infinitely within the finite limitation of time and space, form and appearance. 25.1.157 sl 47

The Infinite cannot be set against the finite as though they were a pair of opposites. Only things which are on the same level can be opposed to one another. These are not. The Infinite includes and contains within itself all possible finites. The practical import of this truth is that Mind cannot only be experienced in the Void but also in the world. The Reality is not only to be discovered as it is but also beneath its phenomenal disguises. 20.4.124 sl 18

Think! What does the "I" stand for? This single and simple letter is filled with unutterable mystery. For apart from the infinite void in which it is born and to which it must return, it has no meaning. The Eternal is its hidden core and content. 8.1.8

Consciousness can assume different forms, can operate on different space and time levels, so that it is relative. But it can also remain itself and assume no form; it is then what has been called absolute, not relative. But to reject the possible existence of all these other forms, however temporary they may be, as do those Indians who limit themselves solely to the doctrine of nonduality--fascinated as they are by the reality of the Real and the illusoriness of the unreal, so that they forget whether they are real or unreal--is to forget that he who holds the doctrine is himself a human being. He who comes back from the mystic experience of universality comes back to a human form, is himself a human being, however divine in his inmost essence. The Absolute is not a human being and can have no possible point of view, but the human being must have a humanized philosophy

and can have a point of view. What is he to do after recognizing the opposition between the absolute and the relative consciousnesses, between the real and the unreal? The answer is and must be the double point of view. Not, mind you, the double nature of Truth, but the double point of view for us, humans: the one being empirical, practical, earthly and rational, the other being ultimate, divine, intuitive. 19.2.23

What is the use, ask many questioners, of first, an evolution of the human soul which merely brings it back to the same point where it started and second, of developing a selfhood through the long cycles of evolution only to have it merged or dissolved in the end into the unselfed Absolute? Is not the whole scheme absurdly useless? The answer is that if this were really the case, the criticism passed would be quite a fair one. But it is not the case. **The unit of life emanated from the Overself begins with the merest glimmer of consciousness, appearing on our plane as a protozoic cell. It evolves eventually into the fullest human consciousness, including the intellectual and spiritual.** It does not finish as it began; on the contrary, there is a grand purpose behind all its travail. There is thus a wide gulf between its original state and its final one. The second point is more difficult to clear up, but **it may be plainly affirmed that man's individuality survives even in the divinest state accessible to him.** There it becomes the same in quality but not identical in essence. The most intimate mental and physical experiences of human love cast a little light for our comprehension of this mystery. The misunderstanding which leads to these questions arises chiefly because of the error which believes that it is the divine soul which goes through all this pilgrimage by reincarnating in a series of earthly forms. The true teaching about reincarnation is not that the divine soul enters into the captivity and ignorance of the flesh again and again but that **something emanated from the soul, that is, a unit of life that eventually develops into the personal ego, does so.** The Overself contains this reincarnating ego within itself but does not itself reincarnate. It is the parent; the ego is only its offspring. **The long and tremendous evolution through which the unit of life passes from its primitive cellular existence to its matured human one is a genuine evolution of its consciousness.** Whoever believes that the process first plunges a soul down from the heights into a body or forces Spirit to lose itself in Matter, and then leaves it no alternative but to climb all the way back to the lost summit again, believes wrongly. **The Overself never descends or climbs, never loses its own sublime consciousness. What really does this is something that emanates from it and that consequently holds its capacity and power in latency, something which is finited out of the Overself's infinitude and becomes first, the simple unit of life and later, the complex human ego.** It is not the Overself that suffers and struggles during this long unfoldment but its child, the ego. It is not the Overself that slowly expands its intelligence and consciousness, but the ego. It is not the Overself that gets deluded by ignorance and passion, by selfishness and extroversion, but the ego.

The belief in the merger of the ego held by some Hindu sects or in its annihilation held by some Buddhist ones, is unphilosophical. **The "I" differentiated itself out of the infinite ocean of Mind into a distinct individuality after a long development through the diverse kingdoms of Nature.** Having thus arrived at consciousness of what it is, having travelled the spiral of growth from germ to man, the result of all this effort is certainly not gained only to be thrown away.

Were this to happen then the entire history of the human race would be a meaningless one, its entire travail a resultless one, its entire aspiration a valueless one. If evolution were merely the

complementary return journey of an involutory process, if the evolving entity arrived only at its starting point for all its pains, then the whole plan would be a senseless one. If the journey of man consisted of nothing more than treading a circle from the time of his emergence from the Divine Essence to the time of his emergence back into it, it would be a vain and useless activity. It would be a stupendous adventure but also a stupid one. There is something more than that in his movement. Except in the speculations of certain theorists, it simply does not happen.

The self-consciousness thus developed will not be dissolved, extinguished, or re-absorbed into the Whole again, leaving not a trace behind. Rather will it begin a new spiral of evolution towards higher altitudes of consciousness and diviner levels of being, in which it will co-operate as harmoniously with the universal existence as formerly it collided against it. It will not separate its own good from the general good. Here is part of the answer to this question: What are the ultimate reasons for human wanderings through the world-process? That life matters, that the universe possesses meaning, and that the evolutionary agonies are leading to something worthwhile--these are beliefs we are entitled to hold. If the cosmos is a wheel which turns and turns endlessly, it does not turn aimlessly. Evolution does not return us to the starting point as we were. The ascent is not a circle but a spiral.

Evolution presupposes that its own possibility has always been latent within the evolving entities. Hence the highest form is hidden away in the lowest one. There is development from the blindly instinctive life of animals to the consciously thinking life of man. The blind instinctive struggles of the plant to sustain itself are displaced in the evolutionary process by the intelligent self-conscious efforts of the man. Nor does this ascent end in the Vedantic merger or the Buddhistic annihilation. It could not, for it is a development of the individuality. Everywhere we find that evolution produces variety. There are myriads of individual entities, but each possesses some quality of uniqueness which distinguishes it from all others. Life may be one but its multitudinous expressions do differ, as though difference were inherent in such expression.

Evolution as mentalistically defined by philosophy is not quite the same as evolution as materialistically defined by Darwin. With us it is simply the mode of striving, through rhythmic rise and fall, for an ever fuller expansion of the individual unit's consciousness. However, the ego already possesses all such possibilities latently. Consequently the whole process, although apparently an ascending one, is really an unfolding one. 26.4.257

And related to this: where do we meet the Divine?

WHERE WE MEET: **DIRECT IN SLIDES: 7-10, 13, 15- 18, 21, 23-30, 32, 34,35, 38-47**

*We can not ever know the Divine which is Transcendent but we can acknowledge that it IS. We may however know the Divine which is Immanent, recognize, perceive, and feel its presence. 25.1.120 **sl 7***

The omnipresence of the Infinite Mind carries great meaning for us individually. For it signifies that this Mind is not less present and not less active in us too. 25.1.23

That which is at the heart of all existence--the world's and yours--must be real, if anything can be. The world may be an illusion, your ego a fiction, but the ultimate essence cannot be either. Reality must be here or nowhere. 28.1.15

There is only this one Mind. All else is a seeming show on its surface. To forget the ego and think of this infinite and unending reality is the highest kind of meditation. 28.2.102 **SL 30**

... But it is possible to arouse ourselves and to begin viewing life as it unfolds in the Eternal Present, the Now, with wholly fresh eyes. Every morning is like a new reincarnation into this world. It is a fresh chance to be ourselves, not merely echoes of our own past ideological fixations. Let us take it then for what it is and live each moment anew. **sl32**

When a master mystic like Jesus tells men to refrain from being anxious about the morrow and to let today's evil be sufficient for today, He speaks out of his own consciousness of living in this Eternal Now. Consequently, he spoke not of periods involving twelve or twenty-four hours, but of pinpoints of a moment. He told them to live timelessly, to let the dead past bury itself. He is indeed a Christian, a Christ-self man, who lives cleanly and completely in the present--free, uncontrolled, and unconditioned by what he was, believed, or desired yesterday. 19.4.171 **sl33**

The little center of consciousness that is myself rests in and lives by the infinite ocean of consciousness that is God. The first momentary discovery of this relationship constitutes a genuine religious experience, and its expansion into a final, full disclosure constitutes a philosophic one. 25.1.31 **sl 27**

There is a beauty in the infinite reality which outshines whatever beauty there is in the imaginative phantasy. 28.2.77 **SL 34**

Every sentient being is AWARE. We need to recognize that awareness... present moment of unmade wakefulness Allow that to simply be as it is, let be in naturalness...

You do not have to divide the practice, making one practice for meditation and the other for post-meditation. Here, meditation state lasts up until one is distracted from awareness, and then turns into post-meditation. The moment you remember to recognize, you see immediately how mind essence is. ... It does not make any difference if you recognize while

you are standing or sitting or eating.. The practice, as I state over and over, is short moments repeated many times... --Urgyen Tulku Rinpoche **sl43**

During the gap--infinitesimal though it be--between two thoughts, the ego vanishes. Hence it may truly be said that with each thought it reincarnates anew. There is no real need to wait for the series of long-lived births to be passed through before liberation can be achieved. The series of momentary births also offers this opportunity, provided a person knows how to use it. 23.8.162 **sl25**

Q: How can I aspire to such heights, small and limited as I am?

M: realize yourself as the ocean of consciousness in which all happens. This is not difficult. A little of attentiveness, of close observation of oneself, and you will see that no event is outside your consciousness. *I Am That ch 65* **sl 45**

Q: How do I get at it?

M: You need not get at it, for you are it. It will get at you, if you give it a chance. Let go your attachment to the unreal and the real will swiftly and smoothly step into its own. Stop imagining yourself being or doing this or that and the realisation that you are the source and heart of all will dawn upon you. With this will come great love which is not choice or predilection, nor attachment, but a power which makes all things love-worthy and lovable. Ch 1 **sl 44**

By this simple act of unlearning all that you know--all that you have acquired by thinking, by remembrance, by measurements, by comparison, and by judgement--when you return to the mere emptying of the consciousness of its contents of thoughts and ideas, and when you come to the pure consciousness in itself, then only can you rest in the Great Silence. 24.4.78 **sl 46**

...What we have most to learn at this stage is, in one sense, easy and simple. Yet in practice, it turns out to be hard and elusive. It is to let go, to cease from striving, to let your will relax, to stop thinking that the Overself is something you must grasp and to let yourself be grasped by it. Moreover, you are not to limit this attitude to the meditation period only, but to bring it into your ordinary life briefly several times a day... **sl 42**

Think of yourself as the individual and you are sure to die; think of yourself as the universal and you enter deathlessness, for the universal is always and eternally there. We know no beginning and no ending to the cosmic process. Its being IS: we can say no more. Be that rather than this--that which is as infinite and homeless as space, that which is timeless and unbroken. Take the whole of life as your own being. Do not divorce, do not separate yourself from it. It is the hardest of tasks for it demands that we see our own relative insignificance amid this infinite and vast process. The change that is needed is entirely a mental one. Change your outlook and with it "heaven will be added unto you." 21.5.95 **sl 47**

We do not get at the Real by our own efforts alone nor does it come to us by its own volition alone. Effort that springs from the self and Grace that springs from beyond it are two things essential to success in this quest. The first we can all provide, but the second only the Overself can provide.

... Our initiative pushes on toward the goal, whilst divine Grace draws us to it. Both forces must combine if the process is to be completed and crowned with success. Yet that which originally made the goal attractive and inspired with faith in it and thus gave rise to efforts, was itself the Grace. In this sense Paul's words, "For by Grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves," become more intelligible. 2.9.67

"...The very fact you have consciously begun the quest is itself a manifestation of Grace, ... Thus the very search upon which you have embarked, the studies you are making, and the meditations you are practising are all inspired by the Overself from the beginning and sustained by it to the end. The Overself is already at work even before you begin to seek it. Indeed you have taken to the quest in unconscious obedience to the divine prompting. And that prompting is the first movement of Grace. Even when you believe that you are doing these things for yourself, it is really Grace that is opening the heart and enlightening the mind from behind the scenes.

... What is needed to call down Grace is, first, a humility that is utter and complete, deeply earnest and absolutely sincere, secondly, an offering of self to the Overself, a dedication of earthly being to spiritual essence, and, thirdly, a daily practice of devotional exercise. The practices will eventually yield experiences, the aspirations will eventually bring assistance. *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton* 2.9.67 2.9.67

Look at a tree a flower a plant... let your awareness rest on it... how still they are... how deeply rooted in being.... Allow nature to teach you stillness..

When you look at a tree and perceive its stillness, you become still yourself. You connect with it on a very deep level. You feel a oneness with whatever you perceive in and through stillness. Feeling the oneness of yourself with all things is love. *Stillness Speaks*

Love says: all of this. Wisdom says: I am none of this. Between these I live.