



Truth Comes at a Cost, by Adyashanti

If I was to translate the enlightened state down into human terms, I'd have to describe it as contentment. Being nobody, going nowhere, needing no reason to exist. To the ego, that probably sounds a little boring and of course to an ego it is. But then again, there's really nothing for the ego in enlightenment. [...] I'm not saying that ego is bad or evil because it's not. I'm saying that ego is a social and personal construct and therefore an illusion. But there's nothing wrong with an illusion. A painting is an illusion; a movie is an illusion; a good novel is an illusion. The problem isn't with illusion; the problem is with the emotional attachments and addictions of ego. To most people "attachment" is a very abstract word that they think they understand. People in spiritual circles think of attachments in terms of things that they are attached to. They identify the things attached to and endeavor to let go of them, but this misses the whole point of what attachment really is. Attachment isn't about things attached to; it's about emotion in the form of a magnetic energy of attraction. That energy is how you know who you are as an ego. That energy is who you are as an ego. Ego defines itself by what it does and does not like. There is no ego outside of this emotional energy of attraction and repulsion -- better known as love and hate, like and dislike, good and bad, right and wrong, us and them, me and you. Without emotional investment in the ego's points of view, what's left of ego but a hollow shell with a little personality mixed in? You breathe life into your ego in the form of emotional addictions. Emotion is the very life-force of ego. So the point of detachment isn't to detach from things, but to detach from your emotional bonds with things. And you don't simply let go of emotional bonds; you burn through them with investigative awareness. You see them for what they are: prisons, false structures holding you in spiritual infancy. You may think that I am being a bit harsh -- which I am, but awakening to truth is a harsh business. Bottom line is "What do you want more: to feel better or to realize the truth?" Sure, truth realization feels really good, but no one gets there whose driving motivation is simply to feel good. Feeling really good is a byproduct of the awakened state; it is not the state itself. The state itself is reality, and it's won at the hands of unreality. Simply put, ultimate truth comes at a cost, and the cost is everything in you and about you that is unreal. The end result is freedom, happiness, peace, and no longer viewing life through the veils of illusion. --Adyashanti

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