

# Chapter 1 draft 3.31.25

## Chapter 1 — Section 1: The Impossibility of Absolute Stillness

(Draft 4: Alan Watts tone)

Let's start with nothing.

Not as a concept or a belief, but as a starting point. Not the kind of nothing that's empty like a room with no furniture, or space with no stars—but nothing in a much deeper sense. No space, no time, no here or there. Not even blackness, because that would still be something.

It's hard to picture. And that's the point.

This kind of nothing—the void—isn't something you can look at or step into. It has no features. It leaves nothing to hold onto. But even so, it plays a necessary role. For anything to exist, there must be the possibility of it not existing. And that possibility is what we mean when we talk about the void.

But here's where things get interesting.

The moment you try to think about the void, it changes. By imagining it, you've already introduced something: a distinction, a contrast, a sense of inside and outside. In trying to picture pure stillness, you've created motion. Not motion through space, but motion in form—in relationship.

It's as if the very attempt to hold onto "nothing" creates "something." A ripple. A curve. A break.

The void, it turns out, can't stay perfectly still. It folds in on itself, not because of an external force, but because of the logic of what it is. Absolute stillness—when examined closely—always gives way. And that giving way is the beginning of form, of contrast, of reality.

This isn't a story about a moment long ago. It's something that's always happening. Everywhere you look, you'll find the same basic rhythm: stillness giving way to motion, nothing giving rise to something. The paradox at the root of all things.