

Discrimination and Unification - Part 3 of 4 ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 What is the experience of the mind?

00:00:10 As you are exploring experience, what do we mean by experience?

00:00:16 Physical body sensations, external sights, external sounds,

00:00:21 emotional body sensations, mental image, internal talk,

00:00:24 or various pleasant restful experiences such as relaxation,

00:00:29 gentle, quiet, and so forth.

00:00:33 As you are exploring sensory experience,

00:00:37 you could become aware of the presence of change.

00:00:42 If you became aware of the presence of change,

00:00:45 you might become aware of the presence of change in various flavors,

00:00:52 vibration, undulation, etc.

00:00:56 You might further get a sense that all change can be looked upon

00:01:02 in terms of pairs of contrasts.

00:01:07 And there are many dimensions, many types of contrast.

00:01:11 Shall I repeat it again?

00:01:12 More intense, less intense.

00:01:14 Speeds up, slows down.

00:01:16 Pressure pushes out, pressure pulls in.

00:01:18 Sensations or anything spreads or collapses.

00:01:24 Your attention is scattered in many directions.

00:01:26 Your attention is gripped and held by one thing.

00:01:30 These all can be looked upon as representations of expansion and contraction.

00:01:34 And of course, more than one can happen at the same time.

00:01:38 Something can speed up and grip at the same time.

00:01:43 Speeding up, that's expansion.

00:01:45 Gripping, that's contraction.

00:01:47 Something can spread and thin out at the same time.

00:01:50 Spreading, that's expansion.

00:01:51 Thinning out, that's contraction.

00:01:53 So you can have just expansive flavors, just contractive flavors,

00:01:57 and very frequently you have both flavors at the same time.

00:02:00 Maybe in the same place, maybe same time but different place.

00:02:05 So it could happen, as you're paying attention to experience,

00:02:09 that you become aware of change.

00:02:13 It could happen that you become aware of

00:02:20 how change can be looked upon in terms of various flavors of increase and decrease.

00:02:25 If so, if you become aware of change, then you can explore the change.

00:02:31 If you become aware of change as fundamentally being based on
00:02:37 different flavors of increase and decrease,
00:02:40 then you can note the increase and decrease as expansion, contraction.
00:02:45 And if both happen at the same time, you can say both.
00:02:48 And by increase or decrease, affirmation, negation,
00:02:51 I mean along any of the dimensions that this can happen.
00:02:57 Speeding up, slowing down, okay, should I go through the list again?
00:03:01 Speeding up, slowing down, intensifying, diminishing,
00:03:05 spreading, collapsing, outward pressure, inward pressure,
00:03:09 scattering of your attention, obsessing and gripping,
00:03:12 and fixation of your attention.
00:03:15 Outward and inward pressure are usually in the body looked upon as problems.
00:03:20 We tend to blame ourselves. I'm resisting something.
00:03:23 I'm somehow not letting things do what they need to do.
00:03:26 Certainly scattering and obsessing of our attention is looked upon as a problem.
00:03:32 But you don't have to look upon them as problems.
00:03:35 You can just look upon them as reflections of the cosmic doubt
00:03:39 of the effortless efflux and reflux of nature.
00:03:47 So if you don't become aware of change, fine.
00:03:52 Then make empowering distinctions.
00:03:55 Just bring concentration, clarity, and equanimity to the stability of your experience.
00:04:02 If you are aware of change and you want to explore it generically,
00:04:05 then you can note flow gone.
00:04:08 If the flow presents itself in a way where you can see,
00:04:14 you can analyze it into two fundamental flavors,
00:04:18 and at any given instant there may be just expansive qualities,
00:04:21 just contractive qualities, or both at the same time,
00:04:24 then you can go to a version of focus on change where you explicitly note
00:04:30 and surrender to the expansion, contraction, or bidirectional flow.
00:04:38 So expansion, contraction, and both at the same time are...
00:04:42 I look upon them as the fundamental flavors
00:04:45 or a sort of fundamental way of looking upon all flow.
00:04:53 When expansion and contraction disappear, then there's zero.
00:05:01 There's the one. There's the balance point, the still point.
00:05:06 Except for the point, the still point, there would be no dance.
00:05:11 And there is only the dance.
00:05:14 It's a great phrase.
00:05:16 So expansion and contraction are the dance.
00:05:19 The still point is where the dance comes from and where it goes to
00:05:22 and what peppers it at all times.
00:05:25 Next step. It could happen.
00:05:28 Not necessarily will or has to.

00:05:31 It could happen that as you're paying attention to expansion and contraction,
00:05:36 once again, to repeat, some of the expansion and contraction may not be that pleasant.
00:05:42 As you're paying attention to it and yielding to it,
00:05:47 it could happen that you notice that whenever there's anything expansive,
00:05:52 space grows with it.
00:05:56 Whenever there's anything contractive, space collapses.
00:06:00 Then you could focus on the expansion and contraction
00:06:04 of the pure, spacious nature of consciousness.
00:06:10 And that becomes an amazingly empowering and fulfilling experience.
00:06:19 Essentially, you get to feel the way the universe feels.
00:06:24 I guess that's why some people call it cosmic consciousness.
00:06:30 A further theme could present itself.
00:06:35 Not only do you have a sense that this is a dance of pure space,
00:06:43 the this meaning everything,
00:06:46 the so-called material world that is so-called outside,
00:06:53 the world of touch, sight, sound,
00:06:55 and the so-called inner world,
00:06:58 the world of thought and emotion that reacts to it and says, I am.
00:07:04 We say, I am. We say, it is.
00:07:07 And that's true from a certain perspective.
00:07:10 But it is also true that the I and the it are one arabesque of flowing, spacious energy
00:07:25 from another perspective.
00:07:27 Wave-particle duality is a beautiful metaphor for this
00:07:34 that we can derive from modern physics.
00:07:37 Yes, we can say there's an I and an it.
00:07:41 But we can also say that comes about as an artifact of habits of consciousness,
00:07:51 specifically lack of concentration, clarity, and equanimity.
00:07:56 And if you have habitual concentration, clarity, and equanimity,
00:08:00 you can tune into a different paradigm.
00:08:04 Instead of the I over here, always at the mercy of an it over there,
00:08:12 and eternally separate like two ice cubes,
00:08:15 cubes of ice that can only bang together,
00:08:19 there's the river called I and the river called it,
00:08:23 which will automatically become a single flow.
00:08:28 Can't prevent them, can't prevent the two waves from adding,
00:08:33 and can't make the two ice cubes merge.
00:08:41 If you participate, even at the level of a hint,
00:08:46 the sort of dramatic things that I'm describing maybe are not common experiences,
00:08:53 but you may get a hint of what I'm talking about.
00:08:56 And even when you get a hint of it, that's highly significant for a human being.
00:09:02 In any event, by having enough experiences of self and world as integrated wave,
00:09:11 the I versus it paradigm actually goes away forever.

00:09:16 It can never come back.

00:09:18 The sense of self, separate from the world most assuredly, can come back.

00:09:23 But if there's been enough I-I experience,

00:09:29 then you can never really go back to I-it.

00:09:34 You can only go back to what Martin Buber called I-thou.

00:09:39 Thank you.