



FINGERS POINTING - BIRDS SIGNING

A collection compiled by Ron Flowers, co-author of the eBook “What Is?” (ronflowers@suddenlink.net)

As was said by the ancient Chan Buddhists of China:

Words are like fingers pointing at the moon -- don't confuse the fingers for the moon!
 Words are like the chirping of birds – birds do not sing because they have an answer,
 they sing because they have a song!

Death itself is nothing, but we fear
 to be, we know not what, we know not where.

Dryden

The happiness of the drop is to die in the river.

Al-Ghazali

No matter how alienated, separate, insignificant, and desperate we might feel at times, each of us represents the sum total of all existence, the universal network in its entirety, the Universal Mind itself... each of us has the potential to break through the limiting barriers, to expand his or her consciousness to encompass all of existence, and experience unity with the One Mind.

Stanislav Grof

The basic Hindu, Buddhist, and Taoist view of existence is that the Eternal Reality, the root and ground of Being, is always, at the very deepest level, you. And the feeling that you are not that; that you are a temporary individual, a skin-encapsulated ego, a mortal organism, is called Maya, or illusion.

Alan Watts

Above the heavens,
Below the heavens,
Only I, alone and sacred.

Buddha, upon Enlightenment

Mans' innermost consciousness is identical to the absolute and ultimate reality of the universe. Mind is what there is and all there is, spaceless and therefore infinite, timeless and therefore eternal, outside of which nothing exists.

Ken Wilbur

Illumination means the realization that Illumination is not something to be attained.

Hui Hai

When you see, see it direct! If a thought moves, it is gone!

Zen Master Dogo

A man who understands the Tao in the morning,
may die, without regret, in the evening.

Confucius

If we have not found heaven within, it is a certainty we will not find it without. *Henry Miller*
Unborn emptiness has let go of the extremes of being and non-being. Thus it is both the center itself and the central path. Emptiness is the track on which the centered person moves.

Tsongkhapa

The thought is the thought of the thoughtless,
Your singing and dancing is no other than the voice of the Dharma.

Hakuin

Those who dream of a great feast may weep the next morning. Those who dream of weeping may enjoy the hunt the next day. While they dream, they do not know they are dreaming. They may even interpret their dreams while still dreaming. Only after they awake do they know it was a dream. By and by, there will be a great awakening; then we will know that this is all a great dream. All the while, the fools think they are awake, appearing to understand things, calling this man ruler and that man herdsman. How stupid! You and Confucius are both dreaming. When I say you are dreaming, I am dreaming too.

Chuang-tzu

All beings are flowers
Blooming
In a blooming universe.

Nakagowa Soen Roshi

We are equal beings and the universe is our relations with each other. The universe is made of one kind of entity; each one is alive, each determines the course of his own existence.

Thaddeus Golas

Tozan to Kassan: How are things? Just as they are.

Existence is beyond the power of words to define:

Terms may be used, but are none of the absolute.

In the beginning of heaven and earth there were no words,

Words came out of the womb of matter;

And whether a man dispassionately sees to the core of life, or passionately sees the surface,

The core and the surface are essentially the same,

Words making them seem different, only to express appearance..

If name be needed wonder names them both: From wonder into wonder, existence opens.

Lao-tzu

Life itself is a disease with a very poor prognosis – it lingers on for years, and invariably ends in death.

C. C. Jung

The Gita gives two rules for the game: Do what you do, but do not be identified as the doer. Do what you do, but be not attached to the fruits of your actions.

Ram Dass

The morning glory! This too cannot be my friend.

Basho

In the beginning, which is really no beginning ... the will wants to know itself, and consciousness is awakened, and with the awakening of consciousness the will is split in two. The one will, whole and complete in itself, is now at once actor and observer. Conflict is inevitable; for the actor now wants to be free from the limitations under which he has been obliged to put himself in his desire for consciousness. He has in one sense been enabled to see, but at the same time there is something which he, as observer, cannot see.

D. T. Suzuki

Awaken out of your thinking mind. Awaken out of the illusion of your separateness. Go into 'nobody special' training. And remember: you always have the choice of being either the victim or the creator. See the perfection of the teaching environment. Everything is grist for the mill.

Ram Dass

From one point of view, each moment is so elusive and so brief that we cannot even think about it before it has gone. From another, this moment is always here, since we know no other moment than the present moment. It is always dying, always becoming past more rapidly than imagination can conceive. Yet at the same time it is always being born, always new, emerging just as rapidly from that complete unknown which we call the future.

Alan Watts

You have only to be silent. To be silent is everything. Silence does not mean absence of speech, it means absence of thoughts. When the mind quiets down it becomes linked to the infinite. Don't do anything, just

sit and watch the flow of thoughts, *just watch*. This *just watching* dissolves thought by itself.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

The world is not to be put in order, the world is in order. It is for us to put ourselves in unison with this order.

Henry Miller

Coming, going, the waterfowl leaves not a trace,
Nor does it need a guide.

Dogen

It's not that the material world obeys a higher law, but that the patterning of matter is the law.
The beauty of the rose was not made by consciousness. The rose is consciousness.

Alan Watts

At the beginning of *this* and every moment, each individual *is* God as the Clear Light; but by the *end* of this same moment – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye - he winds up as an isolated ego. And what happens In Between the beginning and ending of *this* moment is identical to what happened in Between death and rebirth as described in the Bardo Thotrol.... The souls duty in this life is to remember.

Ken Wilbur

We are in fact Dreamers in a dream called 'reality,' and we 'show up' in the dream to deny this fact and create drama and 'suffering,' or we 'wake up' in the dream to remember the truth of who we are and what is 'going on.'

Dr. Gregory Tucker

The time of death is every moment.

T. S. Elliot

Much suffering comes into the life of one who tries to be anywhere but here in the present moment.

Sujata

Truth has no special time of its own. It's hour is now – always.

Albert Schweitzer

This dreaming deluded state, this ignorant state we are in, is the awakened state! There is no other state, no other shore, and nothing else to be realized.

Dennis Genpo Merzel

If a man gives way to all his desires, or panders to them, there will be no inner struggle in him, no 'friction', no fire. But if, for the sake of attaining a definite aim, he struggles with the desires that hinder him – he will than create a fire which will gradually transform his inner world into a single whole.

Ouspensky

Ego is but a worrisome product of unmindful, wandering thoughts.
When powerful awareness is cultivated, we gladly learn that there is
no one who thinks – only thinking,
no one who walks – only walking,
no one who sees - only seeing,
and finally the great burden is dissolved.

Sujata

See the sun in the midst of rain,
Scoop clear water from the heart of the fire.

The Zenrin

Enlightenment is intimacy with all things.

Jack Kornfield

Man always dies before he is fully born.

Erick Fromm

Student to the 6th Zen Patriarch: ‘Is it the flag that moves, or the wind?’
‘Neither – it is your mind’

Reality and your perception of it are one and the same - the experience of the universe by the universe.
R. H. Blyth

As a sword cannot cut itself, as a finger cannot touch its own tip, Mind cannot see itself.
The Lankavatara Sutra

Whenever I look for my true Self, all I find is objects of perception.... Thus the split, the *space*, between the ‘subject in here’ and the ‘object out there’ is a subtle illusion. The real Self does not know the universe form a distance, it knows the universe by being it, without the least trace of *space* intervening. And that which is spaceless is and must be infinite.

Ken Wilbur

Do what you do with another human being, but never put them out of your heart.

Ram Dass

Having no distinction, I am never lost.

Ikkyu

There are tree elements of Buddhahood: Emptiness, Oneness, and Uniqueness.

Robert Aitken

The only real ‘you’ is the one that comes and goes, manifest and withdraws itself eternally in and as every conscious beings. For ‘you’ is the universe looking at itself form billions of points of view, points that come and go so that the vision is forever new. What we see as death, empty space , or nothingness is only the trough between the crests of this endlessly waving ocean. It is all part of the illusion that there should seem to be something to be gained in the future. Yet just as there is no time but the present, and no one except the all-and-everything, there is never anything to be gained – though the zest of the game is to pretend that there is.

Alan Watts

Spiritually there are no others to help. So the highest services you can do for others is to work on yourself. Separate forms and beings exist only as long as you identify yourself with the body. The Realized Being does not see the world as different form himself. The Self is the one and only Reality.

Ramana Maharshi

We are being dreamed. And when we awake, we’ll find there was no ‘others’ in the dream, and that there was no dreamer.

Wei Wu Wei

You awaken from the dream not by trying to get rid of the ego, but by realizing you are the dreamer. Upon awakening the ego disappears, and so also the dreamer, and only the dreaming remains.

Wei Wu Wei

I, Buddha, who wept with all my brother's tears,
 Whose heart was broken by a whole world's woe,
 Laugh and am glad, for there is liberty.
 Ho! Ye who suffer!
 Know ye suffer from yourselves, none else compels,
 None other holds you that ye live and die
 And whirl upon the wheel, and hug and kiss its spokes of agony,
 Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness.

Buddhist text

In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.

Albert Camus

Imagine instead of God the father, God the mother, and instead of blazing light, an unfathomable darkness

Alan Watts

Our state of apparent bondage is due to identification with an imaginary objectification of 'I'. I become identified with my selves, and my selves are all sentient beings. Whenever we think or speak as from the object which we are illusorily identified we are thereby making an object of Subject. As long as we are identified with an object: that is bondage.

As long as we think, act, live via an object, or as an object: that is bondage.

Wei Wu Wei

He quickens, but owns not. He acts, but claims not. Merit he accomplishes, but dwells not in it. Since he does not dwell in it, it will never leave him.

Lao-tzu

He who knows does not speak. He who speaks does not know.

Lao-tzu

However deep your knowledge of the scriptures, it is no more than a strand of hair in the vastness of space; however important seeming your worldly experience, it is but a drop of water in a deep ravine.

Tokusan

That which is not seen by the eyes, but by which the eyes see, THAT, understand truly, is Brahman and not what the world worships.

The Upanishad

Desires are fulfilled according to your level of awareness. When awareness is pure, every desire is fulfilled completely.

Deepak Chopra

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more: it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing....

Shakespeare

On the vast canvas of the Self, the picture of the manifold worlds is painted by the Self itself; and that Supreme Self seeing but itself, enjoys great delight.

The Sankarscarya

How marvelous, how wonderful! All sentient beings are perfect and without flaw. It is only due to delusive attachments that the truth cannot be seen.

Buddha

If it's not good enough HERE-NOW then it's never going to be good enough.

Ram Dass

This separate and subjective 'self,' the 'little man inside' that supposedly looks out at the universe of objects, is obviously an illusion. Although I imagine it to be the subject which sees, knows, and feels the universe, it is in fact simply another object of perception. This 'separate self' is actually something which I can see, know, or at least be aware of. I feel I can look at myself, and yet anything at which I can look *must be an object of perception*. ...The real Perceiver, the true Self, cannot be seen because it is doing the seeing.

Ken Wilbur

Mind is always *now*. There is really no before and after for Mind. There is only a *now* that includes memories and expectations.

Erwin Schroedinger

If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present. Our life has no end in just the same way in which our visual field has no limits.

L. Wittgenstein

Enlightenment is the thunder and lightning discovery that the universe and oneself are not remote and apart, but an intimate palpating Whole.

D. T. Suzuki

There is no use for artificial and outward discipline – the inner and natural discipline is enough.

But what is the inner disciplines? In one word: *acceptance* – total acceptance. And acceptance can be only total because partial acceptance is just a contradiction in terms.

If you live – live! If you die – die! If you suffer – suffer! And then there is no problems and no anxiety and no anguish – and what *freedom!*

A Zen Master was once asked: It is terribly hot, how shall we escape it? Why not go, answered the Master, to the place where it is neither hot nor cold? Where is that place? The Master laughed and said: *In summer we sweat and in winter we shiver.*

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

To a mind that is still, the whole universe surrenders.

Chuang-Tzu

You are pure spirit – not matter. You are a very old being – not the body-mind. So why don't we remember what we are? Because of our attachments to the physical plane of reality. Because of the power of our identification with our own body senses and thoughts.

Ram Dass

A moment's awareness is sufficient to reveal to us the fact that this 'perpetual uncalculated life in the present' is exactly the type of life that we are always leading anyway, whether we realize it or not. Mystical and eternal awareness of the Now-moment is in no way other than what you are already experiencing now. We 'miss' realizing this because we imagine that we should in some way try to get in touch with the Now-moment, as if it were something different from what we are already doing at THIS moment.

Ken Wilbur

When there is no more separation between ‘this’ and ‘that,’ it is called the still-point of Tao. At the still-point in the center of the circle one can see the infinite in all things. Right is infinite; wrong is also infinite.

Chuang-tzu

We sit to express our Buddha nature, not to get it.

Roger Walsh

To carry yourself forward and experience myriad things is delusion. But myriad things coming forth and experiencing themselves is awakening.

Dogen

The mistake which we have made – and this, if anything, *is the fall of man* – is to suppose that that extra circuit, that ability to take an attitude toward the rest of life as a whole, is the same as actually standing aside and being separate from what we see.

Alan Watts

In that place where you are pure Being, there is nothing to do and no place to go.

Ram Dass

Mounting on high I begin to realize the smallness of Man’s Domain; Gazing into the distance I begin to know the vanity of the Carnal World. I turn my head and hurry home – back to the Court and Market, A single grain of rice galling – in the Great Barn.

Po Chu-I

The universe is a self-surprising arrangement, so as to avoid the monotony and boredom of knowing everything in advance. And you and I have conspired with ourselves to pretend that we are not really God. But of course we are. We are all apertures through which the universe is looking at itself.

Alan Watts

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by the infinite expectation of the dawn.

Henry David Thoreau

Earth, mountains, rivers – hidden in this nothingness.
In this nothingness – earth, mountains, rivers revealed.
Spring flowers, winter snows;
There’s no being nor non-being, nor denial itself.

Saisho

The stuff of the universe is mind stuff.

Eddington

Among the tens of thousands of scriptures, the one to be most grateful for, the one where all the important points are made, is the Heart Sutra. According to this sutra, ‘The Lord Buddha declared, ‘Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. Matter and the spirit are one, but all is void. Man is not alive, is not dead, is unborn and undying, without old age and disease, without increase, and without decrease.’’

Masamobu Fukuoka

You’re not watching what’s happening, what’s happening is watching itself. ... You’re standing on the bridge, looking down, watching yourself flow by.

Ram Dass

To be aware is to be aware of thoughts, feelings, sensations, desires, and all other forms of experience. Never at any time are you aware of anything, which is *not* experience, not a thought or not a feeling, but is instead the experiencer, the thinker, or the feeler. If this is so, what makes us think that any such thing exists?

Alan Watts

I know only one thing, that I know nothing.

Socrates

Trees show the bodily form of the wind;
Waves give vital energy to the moon.

The Zenrin

The wild geese do not intend to cast their reflection;
The water has no mind to receive their image.

The Zenrin

Entering the forest he moves not the grass;
Entering the water he makes not a ripple.

The Zenrin

It is not just that *satori* comes quickly and unexpectedly, all of a sudden, for mere speed has nothing to do with it. The reason is that Zen is a liberation from time. For if we open our eyes and see clearly, it becomes obvious that there is no other time than this instant, and that the past and the future are abstractions without any concrete reality.

Alan Watts

Buddha's ministry didn't try to alleviate people's physical suffering, but rather sought to liberate them from the root cause of suffering - belief in a self, which leads to greed, hatred, and dilution, and sets up the whole wheel of Karma.

Joseph Goldstein

The place where you are is the place from which you are always pretending you should be somewhere else.

Alan Watts

It is the discriminating mind that nurtures such residual notions as 'the meaning of life.' If you are fully absorbed in what you are doing at each moment, where is there room for wondering about its' meaning? The mystery of life is revealed through living it, not pondering over it.

Philip Kapleau

Do whatever you want to do, but do it entirely.

Rinzai

With realization, I stand resolute and alone in the universe, but also I stand one with the universe.

Robert Aitken

What we seek is to forget the self in the act of uniting with something.

Yamada Roshi

Zen mind means returning to original mind. To see the world as it is.

Seung Sahn

It is fallacious to think that you simply move from birth to death. Birth, from the Buddhist point of view, is a temporary point between the preceding and the succeeding; hence it can be called birthlessness. The same holds for death and deathlessness. In life there is nothing more than life, in death nothing more than death: we are being born and are dying every moment.

Dogen

Zen is understanding myself – What am I? Zen is to see into your own essential nature and the essential nature of all beings and things.

Seung Sahn

Buddhism is not a teaching. Its essence consists in a certain kind of experience, a transformation of consciousness, which is called awakening or enlightenment, that involves our seeing through or transcending the hoax of being a separate ego.

Alan Watts

Had I not known that I was dead already, I would have mourned my loss of life.

Ota Dokan's death poem

Isness is so noble. No creature is so tiny that it lacks isness. If a caterpillar falls off a tree, it climbs up a wall to preserve its isness. So noble is isness.

Meister Eckhart

Having the seed of Buddhahood is not the same as being Buddha from the beginning. We practice as Arhats or Bodhisattvas to realize what has always been true.

Robert Aitken

My mind and yours already include all beings. They are already saved. Our task ... is to realize that fact.

Robert Aitken

Zen practice is of the greatest importance... It requires great faith, great courage, and great questioning.
Soen-sa-nim

To study Buddhism is to study the self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things. – This traceless enlightenment is continued endlessly.

Dogen

Without the nucleus there is no circle, without the circle, no nucleus. You are the nucleus, the circle of the universe. If you exist, the universe exists, and if you disappear, the universe likewise disappears. Everything is related and interdependent.

Yasutani-roshi

Because I am, heaven overhangs and earth is upheld. Because I am, the sun and the moon go round. The four seasons come in succession, all things are born, because I am, that is, because of Mind.

Eisai-zenji

In knowing the world we humanize it.

Alan Watts

All motion is perceived in relation to time.

Dogen

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