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ANOTHER WAY *of* LIVING

Book Two

A Journey to Self-realisation



Dr Snezhana Djambazova–Popordanoska, MD, PhD

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to my loving husband Emil, for his unconditional love, unwavering support, and positive encouragement to pursue my passion and make my dream a reality.

Foreword

Reading a book on personal growth is like going on a journey with the author as your guide. In this exciting journey of self-discovery, my intention is to show you another way of seeing life, and seeing yourself. This can open your eyes to the truth about who you are, and who you are meant to be. In light of this new understanding, you can design the greatest vision of yourself, manifest your dream life, and reach self-realisation.

*“Find your peace now,
Have faith, and be patient.
Everything that is yours,
Will come to you...”*

– Dr Snezhana Djambazova–Popordanoska

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Human Consciousness

Chapter 1

Understanding Human Consciousness

“To become more conscious is the greatest gift anyone can give to the world; moreover, in a ripple effect, the gift comes back to its source.”

– Dr David Hawkins

The evolution of man is the evolution of his consciousness. Socrates’ wise words, “Know thyself” remain for all those who enquire spiritual wisdom, self-knowledge and authentic happiness. An enquiring mind longs for the truth of the heart by penetrating deeply to the essence of oneself, thus attaining profound self-knowledge and understanding of the laws of the nature. If a man reasons soundly and contemplates deeply, he must inevitably arrive back at himself, and discover that the solution of all his problems lies deep within himself. In this journey of self-discovery, he will find out his true place in the world.

In essence, there are two layers of consciousness: one pertaining to the mind (consisting of all thoughts and beliefs that one holds about oneself and the world – that is the ego), and the other belonging to the soul (that is one’s genuine self). Sometimes called the lower and the higher mind, those two aspects of human consciousness are often in conflict with each other. The lower (or the rational) mind may see a certain situation in one way, while the wisdom of the higher mind (the soul) may see the same situation in another way and suggest something different. The proximal goal of the spiritual evolution of one’s consciousness is to merge the two together as

one in such a way that the wisdom of the soul gradually infuses itself into the rational mind. In the deepest sense, this is the highest goal underlying human evolution of consciousness, and its completion is enlightenment itself.

It is important to understand that the level of our happiness is determined by the level of our consciousness, as the level of our consciousness determines what we attract and what we experience in life. In general, all events and all experiences in life are opportunities drawn to us, or created by us individually or collectively through consciousness. So, we draw those opportunities to us in order to use them as tools in the process of creation and experiencing of who we are. Hence, it is a mistake to judge the events and experiences in life. Instead, we must always strive to increase the level of our consciousness, as well as the level of the group consciousness wherever we go and with everything we do. In this way, we can create more loving and harmonious experiences on our planet. Remember that the only way to raise the consciousness of others is by your own example. Therefore, choose to be the source of the level of consciousness you wish others to experience.

It is interesting to note that in our modern world, majority of people at the beginning of their careers are mainly interested to gain only material wealth. As their level of consciousness grows, people become more interested in their social status, their position in the society and their professional achievements. At this level of consciousness, people usually compete with each other, striving to achieve higher positions in the society. The highest level of consciousness is associated with finding one's true purpose in life and what one has become as

a result of his life experiences and his personal growth. This is the level of consciousness when people become enlightened, and they inspire others to improve their lives. Those individuals genuinely care about the progress of the humanity as a whole, and they take appropriate actions to create a better world. They devote their life for the wellbeing of others. Remember that life devoted to service and improvement of the wellbeing of others never loses meaning!

Each human being is on a different level of the evolution of his consciousness. Nowadays, most people's lives are structured around seeking and experiencing only pleasures of the physical body, instead of experiencing pleasures of the soul. This is the main difference between lower and higher consciousness level. Majority of us become obsessed with the notion of "possession" or "ownership". However, we should understand deeply that the Earth including all living and non-living things, is not something that can be possessed by any human being. We need to care about everything and everyone on our planet without a tendency to own them. I believe that success and achievement should be defined by that which brings peace, joy and happiness to the society as a whole, and not only by the amount of profit, or fame one has reached. Instead of comparing our material possessions with each other, let's compare how much compassion, love, acceptance and integrity we have as human beings. A truly loving and compassionate human being is the one who feels happy to see others' happiness. You need to see others' happiness and success as your own because the only thing that will bring you everlasting happiness is when you feel happy to see the achievements and joys of

others. Remember that what you give to others, you give to yourself. What you do to others, you do to yourself. What you fail to do for others, you fail to do to yourself. The pain of other human beings is your pain, and the joy of others is your joy.

By raising your consciousness level you can connect with the Universal all-creating Source, and you can find right solutions to your problems. In the process of spiritual evolution of your consciousness, as the soul gradually infuses itself into the mind, you can connect more deeply with yourself, and discover your true purpose in life. The soul is a source of deep and abiding love. When it expresses itself through the soul-infused human being, the individual becomes less preoccupied with the desire for personal gains and material wealth. At higher levels of consciousness, the selfless service of humanity becomes the primary goal in one's life. Soul-infused individuals will increasingly feel the need to make a positive contribution to the humanity, to the betterment of something greater, beyond themselves. As Patanjali explained: "Dormant forces, faculties, and talents come alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be." This is the path to a truly meaningful and abundant life.

Finding meaning in life is crucially important for one's happiness. Life without meaning brings feelings of emptiness and meaninglessness. It is important to note here that the things that give us the greatest meaning in life arise from the spiritual domain, not the material world. Many millionaires and famous people lack spiritual knowledge and understanding and therefore, they succumb to addictions, suffer from anxiety or

depression, have broken marriages, and often they end up their lives by committing a suicide. The limited belief that the source of one's power is in the external world and it is related to material wealth or fame makes the individual vulnerable and powerless. Majority of people long for wealth, thinking that the more money they have, the more freedom they will have to do anything they like. However, when they achieve financial freedom, they will realise that this freedom is superficial. Deep inside they will continue to feel empty and powerless as they can be easily influenced by others and dragged by their own desires. Ask yourself, "If my proximal goal in life is to attain financial freedom, what will happen once I accomplish this goal?" An authentic power comes from within, from one's deepest spiritual source regardless of any external achievements, including one's social status, fame, or material wealth. One's true power can be recognised only through greater self-awareness and heightened self-knowledge. By raising your level of consciousness, you will begin to see in others what you see in yourself, and that is immense peace, infinite joy and pure love. Then, your peaceful existence will enable others to feel peaceful, calm and energised in your presence.

Each of us should nourish the spiritual part of ourselves and raise our current level of consciousness. When people do not nurture their soul, and their spiritual qualities such as love, respect, consideration of others, humility, altruism and compassion, they become loveless and lifeless. They become selfish, fearful, manipulative and aggressive. They are more likely to distort the truth for their own self-serving purposes. Moreover, when people lose touch with their spiritual essence, they suffer and life appears to be

a struggle for them, causing feelings of disappointment, hopelessness and emptiness. As Hsing Yun pointed out wisely, “We should change greed to giving, hatred to compassion, delusion to wisdom, and jealousy to respect. Then we will be blessed with a blissful life.” Remember that each day you can make a conscious choice whether to join the forces of fear or the forces of love. If you establish a daily spiritual practice and act out of love, you will be able to overcome your fears, transcend your anger and overcome your suffering. When you raise your level of consciousness, you will enter the field of love willing to express itself through you, by showing kindness and compassion toward each living being, and expressing your creativity. Achieving and maintaining a loving state of mind is necessary to re-connect to the all-creating Universal power. Then you can choose to do what you love, and what you feel truly passionate about. In this way, you will become all that you are capable of becoming. As Wayne Dyer proclaimed: “The elemental nature of life is to increase and seek more expression.” When you become aligned with the Universal all-creating force, you will allow this force to express itself through you, and expand all aspects of your life, as well as the lives of others. In this way, by increasing your individual level of consciousness and accessing your higher self, you can have a positive impact on the collective level of consciousness.

Collective consciousness is a result of the combined individual thought processes of the world’s population. It holds the key for balance and harmony in the world. Collective consciousness affects everything on our planet: the prospects of war or peace, and the possibility of widespread illness or worldwide wellness. A collective

consciousness of fear, anger or insufficiency can attract that experience in the material world across the globe or within the local community. Therefore, each of us should take individual responsibility for the welfare of all. When each of us is willing to stand responsible and to take care for all of us as a whole, the collective consciousness will increase and produce positive collective results. Hence, the question people in each country should ask is the following: “Can self-interest be replaced by the best interest of the humanity as whole?” We must begin seeing someone else’s interest as our own. Remember that the quickest way to get to a place of love, peace and harmony is to see all humankind as one family. And the quickest way to see all humankind as one family is to stop separating and disconnecting from other human beings. As the American author Neale Donald Walsh noted wisely, “World peace is a personal thing. What is needed is not a change of circumstance, but a change of consciousness.” A long term solution for the humanity is a higher level of consciousness, a consciousness of love and oneness. Intolerance and separatism produce conflicts and wars. Love breeds peace, compassion and acceptance of differences.

Evolution of human consciousness is demonstrated by global movement towards unity and oneness, not comparison and separation. Unity is the truth of who we are. Unity brings harmony! We should act as we are all one! We should start seeing everyone through new eyes, start seeing everyone as a human being seeking happiness and peace. If we understand that we are all one, we would start treating each other with utmost respect and unrestricted love. If we understand that there is enough for everyone,

we would share everything we have with everyone. As the Venerable Master Hsing Yun wrote majestically, “True possession is not something that is owned by oneself, but something that can be shared with others.” Remember that only by making positive change within yourself, you can bring positive change in the world! Hence, to maintain a high level of consciousness, you need to bring your awareness to others by example. Be the source of love in the lives of others! For that which you give to others, you give to yourself. That’s because we are all one! We are all made from the same substance, and that is pure love. The day will come when we will think, speak and act as one!

Chapter 2

Levels of Human Consciousness

“The effect you’ve received is the result of the cause you’ve cultivated.”

– Buddha

The evolution of one’s consciousness goes through successive stages until there is a complete self-forgetfulness and enlightenment. Each level of consciousness represents a differing degree of one’s awareness. Dr David Hawkins, an internationally renowned psychiatrist and consciousness researcher, conducted a research over a twenty year period, involving thousands of test subjects ranging in age from children to elders in their nineties, from different parts of the world including Canada, the United States, Mexico, South America, and Northern Europe, and covered a wide spectrum of physical and emotional issues. Based on his thorough scientific research, Hawkins developed a ladder of the levels of human consciousness (also known as a scale of consciousness).

The consciousness ladder described below (Hawkins’ scale of consciousness) is a useful and pretty accurate tool to understand where each of us is in terms of our level of conscious awareness. The levels of human consciousness can be divided into positive energy-giving levels, and negative energy-taking levels. The negative levels of consciousness are the levels of shame, guilt, apathy, grief, fear, desire, anger and pride. The positive levels of one’s consciousness are the levels of courage, neutrality, willingness, acceptance, reason, love, joy, peace and enlightenment. People at lower level of

consciousness attract predominantly negative experiences in their life. On the contrary, high energy feelings such as the feelings of love, joy and serenity are powerful attractors of positive life experiences.

It is important to realise that each of us is at different level of consciousness, and we are functioning according to the knowledge and awareness that we've obtained at that particular level of consciousness. Hawkins claims that although there may be times when we may function at different levels of consciousness, in general, we operate at one particular level. This can be considered as our core level. It is here where I would like to give a detailed account of each level of human consciousness (Hawkins' scale of consciousness) starting from the lowest (Shame) to the highest possible level of consciousness (Enlightenment). It is important to understand that each vibrational level of consciousness dictates the thoughts, feelings and attitudes that arise in the mind of someone who is aligned to that level. Low energy feelings such as the feelings of guilt, fear, hate etc., calibrate below the level of 200. According to Hawkins, the primary drive for the individuals who calibrate on those low levels of consciousness is only their own personal survival, although at the lowest levels of hopelessness and helplessness even the motive for survival is lacking. However, as one's level of consciousness rises the wellbeing and the happiness of others become increasingly important. At the highest levels of consciousness, above the level of 600, one's life is dedicated to the good of mankind and the salvation of the humanity. It is important to note that the ladder of consciousness exists within each human being through which the soul climbs towards the highest level of consciousness which is self-realisation. In fact, self-realisation is the ultimate goal of the human life.

The illustrations of each level of human consciousness are based on Hawkins' descriptions but blended and expanded with my own thoughts, reflections and experiences from my counselling practice. This may help you to better understand yourself, and why you have made certain choices and decisions in your life. At the same time, the ladder of human consciousness may serve you as a useful framework to identify your current state of personal growth, and hopefully inspire you to move beyond your current level of consciousness and make positive changes in your life.

The Ladder of Human Consciousness

Shame: Energy Level 20

The lowest level of human consciousness is the level of shame. Shame is a long-lasting, powerful negative feeling that something is “wrong” with the person and because of that, s/he cannot fit in the world. The feeling of shame is usually developed as a result of unpleasant or traumatic early life experiences when the child has been neglected, abandoned or mistreated by significant others in his life. For example, the child was constantly criticised, severely punished, humiliated, sexually abused or s/he went through other traumatic experiences in the childhood. As a result of those uncomfortable or distressing early life experiences, the child gets the message that s/he is unworthy, inferior, incompetent or inadequate. As those children grow up, the feelings of shame and embarrassment become an integral part of their self-image and self-worth, often leading to abnormal and destructive behaviours. Those individuals are generally fearful and overly sensitive. They have an inner belief that

other people dislike them, and that whatever others say is against them. Therefore, they often end up feeling rejected by others, feeling lonely and disconnected from the people around them. They are prone to hallucinations of accusatory nature, often projecting their own feelings of shame onto others, by verbally or physically attacking them. People who calibrate at this low level of awareness are even prone to commit a crime or a murder. Unless their unpleasant feelings of shame are resolved by therapy (counselling), they will affect individual's emotional and physical health, and stand in the way of their happiness and success in life.

Energy Level 30: Guilt

Guilt is an emotional experience that occurs when a person believes that s/he has violated a moral standard accepted by the society, or has done something that will result in disapproval from others. People who calibrate at this low level of consciousness are usually preoccupied with their unpleasant feelings of guilt, and have an unconscious need for self-punishment. They usually have an unforgiving attitude. Unfortunately, those people have a tendency to project their guilt unconsciously on others, and are likely to act out their guilt. In this way, they attempt to escape the pain associated with their unbearable feelings of guilt. The most common result of guilt is anxiety and depression. In an attempt to escape these uncomfortable emotions, the guilty person will often choose to deny or repress their guilt by trying to forget the event or action that caused their guilt. However, because those individuals are living their life based upon externally imposed beliefs of the significant people in their life, and not expressing their true self, they will never feel fully satisfied or truly

happy with their life. If not resolved by psychotherapy, the feelings of guilt will manifest in psychosomatic diseases, accidents or even suicide.

Energy Level 50: Apathy

Apathy is a state of indifference as a result of the suppression of emotions such as concern, joy, excitement, motivation or passion. The apathetic individuals have an absence of interest in life activities, as they may lack a sense of purpose, worth or meaning in life. Hence, their future looks bleak, without any hope to be improved. Those individuals do not have a will to live, feeling pity for themselves. They even lack the energy to ask for help, and reach for available resources to move forward in life. Without help, or unless external energy and motivation is provided by others, the individuals who calibrate at this low level of consciousness will continue to feel helpless and hopeless inside. As a consequence, by abandoning hope, they will become unresponsive to external stimuli, and eventually they will close their eyes, thus committing a passive suicide.

Energy Level 75: Grief

Grief is a natural emotional response to loss, particularly to the loss of a loved one who has died, to which a strong bond and affection was formed. It is an emotional state of sadness, hopelessness and despondency. Most of us have experienced these feelings associated with certain losses at least once in life but as time passes, the intensity of the feelings as part of a grief reaction usually subsides. However, those individuals who remain at this level of consciousness are likely to live a life filled with constant

sadness, regret and depression. This level of consciousness colours individual's entire view of life itself, where s/he sees sadness everywhere, in each human interaction and in each life experience. People who calibrate at this level of consciousness have a deep belief that the loss of a loved one is equated with the loss of life itself, which in turn may cause depression or in some cases, even death. Those individuals could benefit from the help of a psychologist or another licensed mental health professional with an expertise in grief.

Energy Level 100: Fear

Fear is a distressing emotion triggered by a perceived threat or danger, whether or not the threat is real or imagined. It is a basic survival mechanism that signals our bodies to respond to danger with a fight or flight response, thus keeping us safe. However, once fear becomes the main focus in person's life, it becomes obsessive, taking over their life. From the viewpoint of fear the world looks hazardous, and full of traps and threats. For example, fear of loss of a relationship leads to jealousy. Jealousy, in turn can result in lying, manipulation, or even aggression and violence. Fear generates chronically high stress level and interferes with the decision making process, often leading to poor choices in life. In essence, fear limits the personal growth and the potential of the individual. As it takes conscious effort and energy to rise above fear, those individuals are unable to reach a higher level of consciousness without professional help and support of a counsellor, or a strong leader who can provide them a wise guidance of how to overcome their fears.

Energy Level 125: Desire

As humans, we use and enjoy material things in our daily lives. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as the desire for material goods does not become a dominant life motive, thus controlling our choices, decisions and actions in life. In such cases, desire becomes a craving more important than life itself. As a result, desire becomes an obstacle for one's personal growth, allowing the material things to control their life. Those individuals keep focused on things outside themselves, rather than on things that would be truly beneficial to them, such as their spiritual development, their close relationships and most importantly, their inner peace. Some people become addicted to the desire for attention, and drive others away by their constant demands. Desire of material things as a temptation to overindulge and a tendency to accumulate wealth that leads to greediness, is inherently wrong. Desire is insatiable because satisfaction of one desire is merely replaced by unsatisfied desire for something else. Therefore, people who constantly seek fulfilment of their desires for their imagined comfort can only gain increased dissatisfaction and disappointment, as they will never get satisfied. When people become focused on material things, they are spending a great deal of time and energy on something that is completely apart from their personal growth and development. This constant craving for material things produces a great deal of suffering and misery in their lives.

Energy Level 150: Destructive Anger

Anger can be either constructive or destructive, thus leading to constructive or destructive action. A balanced

view of self in relation to others produces constructive anger. Hence, when anger is communicated appropriately, it is a healing and helpful indignation that promotes healthy boundaries with others and care for one's personal well-being. Here is an example of anger expressed in a constructive way. When a person feels that their personal boundaries have been violated, anger can be a useful emotion, leading to constructive action that can motivate the person to stand up for himself and protect his values.

Those individuals who calibrate at the energy level of 150, express their anger in inappropriate, harmful and destructive way. Destructive anger is an intense emotional response induced by displeasure or unfulfilled desire. In those cases anger can be expressed as a resentment, hate or revenge which can lead to destructive action that usually involves agitation, malice, retribution or violence. In those individuals, anger as an emotion involves a strong uncomfortable and hostile response to a perceived provocation, hurt or threat. An inflated view of self in relation to others is seen as producing destructive anger. In those people anger stems from exaggerating the importance of their own desires. Hence, their unfulfilled desires lead to frustration, anger and disappointment. It is important to understand that anger that is destructive in nature impairs one's cognition. Therefore, an angry person may, like a frustrated child, go into a rage. Poorly managed destructive anger leads easily to hatred, which can have devastating effect on all areas of a person's life.

Energy Level 175: Pride

Pride is a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction taken in one's own or another person's achievements or material

possessions, leading to excessively high opinion of oneself or another person. Pride is considered to be a positive emotion fostered by positive social approval and admiration of others. It is important to understand that pride is dependent on external conditions, such as a good reputation, good conduct or a prestige in the society. However, once those external conditions are changed, pride can be a very damaging emotion, because loss of pride through ego threats can lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment. Then, one's level of consciousness can decrease rapidly to a much lower level of consciousness. In such circumstances, pride can serve as a trigger to engage in harmful or even violent behaviours in order to protect one's pride as a result of inflated ego. Arrogance and denial are closely associated with individual's pride, which in turn, are obstacles to one's personal growth. When the mind is engaged with denial, it does everything to protect its "rightness," and the illusion that it "knows everything." Notably, from this level of consciousness, greater levels of consciousness can be attained only with an attitude of surrendering to a spiritual teacher or a life coach, and a sincere willingness to change and grow.

Energy Level 200: Courage

Courage is a state of mind that enables the individual to feel confident to do what s/he believes in, as well as to overcome fears when faced with a challenging situation. Courage arises when people attain freedom from their limited beliefs acquired from others about how to live their lives. Courage involves an attainment of authentic power when a person is determined to be true to himself. People at this level of consciousness are willing to explore, experiment, and even change the circumstances that are

unacceptable, unpleasant or undesirable to them. At the level of courage, life's challenges are seen as opportunities for personal growth and advancement. Hence, life is seen to be exciting, motivating and interesting. People at this level of awareness have the capacity to face their fears and challenges, and have sufficient energy and self-motivation to accomplish goals that are beneficial for them and the society as a whole.

Energy Level 250: Neutrality

Neutrality is a state of mind that allows flexibility and non-judgemental attitude toward others that is demonstrated through one's behaviours and actions. People at this level of awareness are more likely to accept themselves, including their own strengths and weaknesses. Those individuals also feel confident in their own abilities. Moreover, the individuals at the neutral level are able to accept their current circumstances, while being unattached to the outcomes. Hence, they can remain undisturbed emotionally, even when things in life do not go according to their plans. People of Neutrality are not interested in proving anything to anyone, or controlling others' behaviours. Instead, they value their own and others' freedom, and accept others as they really are. They begin to sense their own power, as they realise that they can make their own choices in life.

Energy Level 310: Willingness

Willingness is a state of being prepared and feeling enthusiastic to take an action towards reaching one's goals. It is the ability to go with the flow. At the level of Willingness, people are able to show resilience in the

face of adversity, reflect on their experiences and learn from their mistakes. At the same time, they are willing to learn from others and therefore, they can accelerate their own personal growth and spiritual development. At this level of awareness, people can create employment opportunities for themselves and others, and are willing to contribute their ideas for the advancement of the humanity. They have high level of self-confidence, and are genuinely helpful and considerate of others. As a result, professional and material success is common in all their endeavours. Individuals at the level of Willingness often get social recognition and awards on their contribution to the world. Those individuals represent a significant source of power for the advancement of the humanity.

Energy Level 350: Acceptance

Acceptance is a process of assenting to the reality of a situation, without trying to resist it or change it. At this level of awareness, major transformation in one's consciousness occurs with a deep understanding that people have the power to create their own experiences in life. In light of this understanding comes the realisation that the source of one's happiness lies within oneself. Acceptance allows one to see the world with "new eyes", without misinterpreting or distorting the reality. People at this level of awareness have an expanded view of situations in life, recognising that their inner state of mind should not depend on the external conditions, but rather on their own responses to those conditions. No matter what the situation is, they realise that love should be the essence of each response. As a result, they are more accepting, understanding and tolerant of both themselves and others.