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## The Phenomenology of Awareness as the Second Reduction

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Basic Assumptions and Methods
1.  Our theme has been the power of awareness. Hopefully, we have discovered that we can suspend our mind…just enough to enter into awareness. Both the European phenomenologist’s as well as the Dzogchen masters in Tibetan Buddhism emphasize suspension of mind. We make that shift from being in the analytic mind and we shift into the awareness state. And in this experiential state we can become aware of thoughts, we can be aware of feelings, we can be aware of sensations, we can be aware of memory, and we can be aware of fantasies.  We can also use this mind to be aware of the environment around us…we can be aware of the face, hands, buildings, fields and we can be aware of the words. And, this experiential awareness is really wonderful and brings us experientially near not only to our own self but to the self of otherness.
2.  Being in this experiential state is wonderful and clarifying...in meditation this would be called mindfulness and in therapy this would be view and basis of Gestalt psychotherapy and many of other forms of experiential therapy.
3.  Yet we can take one more step…we can take one more turn, we can take what the phenomenologist call one more reduction, we can become aware of this awareness, we can become aware of awareness itself…the object of awareness becomes its own self…to do this we turn the gaze of awareness on to or into the gaze. We gaze into the gaze.
4.  When we gaze into the gaze of awareness we enter awareness of awareness. This is a great and little used discovery. In gazing into the gaze we begin to experience the qualities of this awareness state…we begin to experience spaciousness, we begin to experience clarity and luminosity of this state. We begin to experience the vitalism of this state…the energy. We begin to experience the oneness of this state; we begin to experience the purity of this state…untouched, uncontaminated, unburdened.
5.  As we allow our selves to stay in this state we begin to discover that this awareness is not our mind…we begin to differentiate our mind from awareness and awareness state from the mind. We begin to experience that our mind is not our awareness and our awareness is not our mind. As we stay within this awareness state three more discoveries begin to take place….slowly, but surely, if we sustain being in the awareness field over time; we discover this awareness is field, awareness becomes the base, awareness is knowingness knowing knowingness not only in our self but others.
We begin to experience that this awareness is not a state like other psychological states but is a field...it opens and closes, expands and contracts.  It can be located in one part of the body and then pervade the body in fullness. Then we begin to experience this field going beyond our body boundaries, unbound. Actually, the horizons may feel infinite in horizons and even multidimensional.
6.  We experience this awareness, this knowingness, and as we have focused knowingness into knowingness, the field like characteristics begin to manifest both within the body and beyond the body…We are beginning to experience what the yogis call gnosis, knowingness, direct perception…This knowingness is non-conceptual without thought, preconceptual or prereflective. What does this knowingness know? This knowingness knows knowingness within one’s own self and even in time with others.
7.  As we learn to stay within this awareness field, this innate intrinsic awareness field, the third discovery begins to take place. We begin to experience that the base begins to shift decisively from our mind to this awareness field. What an experience! The base is no longer our mind. The thinking function, seeking a thought, the affective function seeking a particular feeling, the sensation function desperately seeking a particular sensation, the memory function seeking the good memory, and imagination seeking a wonderful fantasy…the mind trying to become the base of experience, the ground to rest in.
8.  As that decisive turn takes place, innate awareness becomes the base, we begin to feel a freedom from the objects of the mind and this innate field becomes our base…becomes self…source. This base of spaciousness, luminosity and oneness begins to influence the mind and the functions of the mind. The mind itself becomes more spacious, more luminous, more connected.
9.  So the functions of the mind can be integrated into this base of awareness…One begins to think and feel, imagine and sense, see and remember all from within this place of innate awareness, from within this field that is alive and vital. The field becomes slowly but surely the organizer of the personality...and begins to assimilate and dissolve old internalizations and old ways of thinking, and feeling and doing…one becomes freer; freer from compulsive thoughts, and the internalized structures of the mind.
10.  In the shifting of the base, the base shifts from the head to the heart…the base of awareness is the inner heart essence, the spaciousness of  the heart  is where this innermost field of awareness comes forth…So one feels this center of psyche within the body….cultivated like a hen with its egg. This inner openness opens the body to the luminous light and energy. This inner openness opens the mind….opens the functions of the mind…
11.  In this opening of the openness the resonance becomes more powerful…knowingness through resonance.
12.  As one begins to feel this resonance, this inner resonance resonating both within ones own body and without, there will be a co-emergence of the field between two people and the corresponding experiential base will form and provide a base, a container, for both participants.  If there is more than one participant, then a base and container of awareness for all emerges. The resonance of the field is base, source and medium. Both within the individual and within the small group….the self within the individual and self within the group.
This co-emergence means that the more you are in the field the more I experience the field out of resonance. And the more I am in the field the more you will be in the field…and as we both are in the field the field will be amplified. If you are in the field and have a strong field the co-emergence of the field may be limited by the limitations of the other who is in the field.
13.  Extension is the effortful side of resonance….effort side of oneness. The capacity to extend the field or one’s perception of the field is most important for the therapist and the capacity to equally resonant to the other is equally important.  The more one can sense the field in the other, the more probable the field will emerge in the other. The sense of recognition is most important in bringing forth awareness both in one’s self and in the other.
14.  Recognition is not simply a cognitive experience but is somatic and is a function of resonance which is a feeling although not an affect…a bhave…a perception. Learning to hold the field together and the effortlessness of holding and being and becoming the field…Becoming more and more absorbed in the field of beingness of being which is awareness or knowingness.
Some people are limited in their entering field experience because of a concrete operational mind that will keep them stimulus bound, beliefs that interfere with perception of field and an overall fragmented sense of ego or mind functions.
15. The activation of the field brings forth the field both in oneself and may bring forth the field in the other. The activation of the body brings forth the field. By activating the body one activates the field…the use of pulling the field is fundamental to our endeavors.
16. One must have a sense of activation and pacification in order to intensify and deintensify the field so that experience is assimilated and made usable.