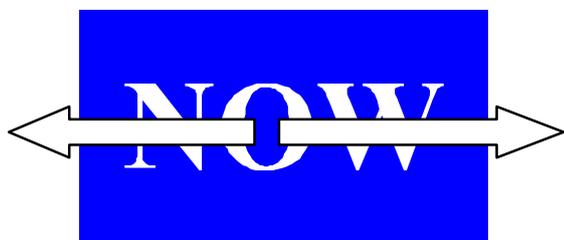


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*Email: [awmann@optusnet.com.au](mailto:awmann@optusnet.com.au)*

Phone 02 9419 7394

Websites:

**[www.capacity.org](http://www.capacity.org)**

**[www.traherne.org](http://www.traherne.org)**

**Next Greville Street Meeting – Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

Thanks to the contributors to this issue and please let me have an ‘Unsubscribe’ email if you want me to remove your address from the list or a ‘Subscribe’ if you want to join the list. Some of your later contributions have been held over until next month.

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## The Inward Turn by James Charlton

*(This article is an edited extract from a new book: Non-dualism in Eckhart, Julian of Norwich and Traherne: a Theopoetic Reflection. It was first published in the Uniting Church magazine Cross Purposes. The extract was compiled by the book's author James Charlton and appears here with his permission).*

These three famous writers drew strength from the reported words of Jesus: 'It is I. Don't be afraid!' To them, the consciousness of Christ defeated fear. And so they committed themselves to assisting other people to grow into Christ-consciousness.

For example, in situations of ethical choice, the disciple of Jesus does not ask: 'What would Jesus do?' The vital question is: 'What should *I* do, within my True Humanity?' This is because True Human Consciousness turns out to be Divine Consciousness, since Christ is understood to bring divinity within the potential ambience of all.

Eckhart, Julian and Traherne were astute theologians, and not mystics in any popular meaning of the word. They blurred the boundary between God and humanity. They are correctly regarded as moderate non-dualists. But the Christian tradition of non-dualism has been overlooked, if not opposed, for many centuries. Eckhart's writings were attacked because he was more non-dualistic than the church hierarchy could accept. The non-dual emphasis in Julian and Traherne was not attacked, but ignored.

Johannes Eckhart (d. about 1328) was popularly known in his lifetime as 'the Meister' (or 'The Professor'). He spoke and wrote in Middle High German, but also in Latin. Mother Julian of Norwich (d. about 1420) wrote two versions of a single prose work, *Revelations of Divine Love* (or *Showings*). Thomas Traherne (d.1674) was a Church of England clergyman. He is mainly remembered as a poet, but also wrote many prose works.

Westerners (such as myself) find their non-dualism to be confronting. This is because we are conditioned from childhood to assume the absolute truth of dualities such as God/humanity, spirit/matter, objective/subjective and self/other. But Eckhart, Julian and Traherne tend to collapse the assumed objective world into a world beyond form and name. They share an 'internalist' approach and are in favour of inner transformation, pointing in the direction of unitive consciousness.

In contrast to possible 'New Age' interpretations, neither Eckhart nor Julian nor Traherne make any claim that humanity is divine. But rigid and defensive Christians

(who insist on ‘possessing the answers’) continue to be upset by this trio of Christological thinkers. This is because (very curiously) these thinkers allow a remarkably ‘Eastern’ participation *within* the divine. This relies upon the progressive departure of the separate, calculating, egoic self.

We need not assume that ‘supernatural’ intervention is required, if by ‘supernatural’ we mean a power which is ‘unearthly’ yet interventionist. Rather, the transformation of the egoic self lies within the natural framework of life. It is a transformation of perspective. Within ordinary activities, ‘the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God’ (Romans 8:16). It is not our own spirit which ‘bears witness’. It is the Spirit of the One who is Inexpressible (and ultimately formless and nameless).

An interesting parallel between Christian non-dualism and the Indian religious tradition of *Vedānta* is that both traditions place emphasis on ‘the knowledge which saves’. In other words, the emphasis is not on the transient play of personal experience, as such. After all, any experience (whether it leaves us feeling more complete, or less complete) is only as valuable as our interpretation of it. And our interpretation is not necessarily connected with any valid understanding.

Both *Vedānta* and Christianity can be said to pursue an ‘inward turn’. The Transcendent God, who is ultimately ‘out there’, is sought and found ‘within’. The *Vedāntin* path is towards Self-realization (where ‘Self’ refers to Ultimate Being, or Consciousness with a capital C). The Christian path is towards ‘...the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). In both traditions, the transcendent (or ‘the One’) chooses immanent manifestation.

What is the nub of the matter? The renewal of the mind. In *Vedānta*, this process might be described as becoming subsumed by undivided Consciousness, the infinite basis of all phenomena. In the biblical referencing of Eckhart, Julian and Traherne it is called ‘the fullness of One who fills all in all.’ Other phrases are ‘the undivided Christ’ and ‘the plenitude of divine Spirit.’

*James Charlton*

*(Dr. James Charlton has explored non-dual spirituality for some years, first through an MA from the University of Cambridge, and then through a PhD from the University of Tasmania. He is the author of three books, most recently Non-dualism in Eckhart, Julian of Norwich and Traherne, published by Bloomsbury.)*

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## Seeing in action

*(This letter, from a musician who recently discovered the [www.headless.org](http://www.headless.org) website, was circulated by Richard Lang).*

I have been working as a musician for 30 years, doing all the gigs and orchestra-to-solo playing that one does, but about 10 years ago became more aware of huge insecurities (which I also felt more in my social life too) and suffered enormously during and after performances. I'd learnt to deal with the pre-concert nerves and also the way to 'behave'; on stage (or socially) which always gave people the impression I'm extremely self confident. So there I was feeling dreadful and hearing that I was wonderful and no idea which one I was? Could I be both? how to bring the two together? In the end the tension was too much to bear and I retreated from the stage, teaching more and more (which I LOVE).

But I was lucky and found your website and Douglas Harding. For more than a year I've been 'practising'; the seeing. My favourites are the bottom line (while practising the cello) and the one 'in motion/not in motion' while jogging, sitting in the tram, walking anywhere, and of course the 'single eye' which is always there whatever.

I feel like there are parallels with cello practice, because it really IS the practice that counts. One just does it and what happens 'on stage' is actually not something we DO anymore, it is the goal we work towards, but approaching that goal we LET GO OF IT! Well, I can only write that last sentence because having said no to every engagement for 3 years I suddenly got asked for some chamber music and said yes. And I built practicing seeing into it all. What an experience!! Now words fail me. I'll be going out on stages again though, practicing hard and 'seeing' what happens.

My social life has changed too, not in an exterior way at all. I suppose for me it comes down to the 'placing' of things. I wrote to you ages ago with a question about pain and what to do with it. Of course there are still the moments when it feels so huge that I really think I'm just this blob in agony, but they come less often and the pain is less central. It has its place, but it's not my whole world. Sometimes I've found it fun to 'see' when I'm feeling really good, also seeing that in that moment the capacity is endless for what is seen and heard and felt and that in the end it's kind of irrelevant whether what's felt is nice or not nice . . . just simply irrelevant!!!

The other huge change in my life is that I spent years searching and reading books on the subject of becoming a better, happier person. Hundreds of those books! And the

search felt terribly urgent. It was always present and always in my mind, like I HAD to get somewhere else as fast as possible because where I was (all internal) was unbearable. This has stopped! I feel like the seeing has given me THE most enormous gift. The direct access to . . . I can't describe it . . . But all the words in all those books didn't do it. Some I 'understand' differently now, but that could be diluted down to a couple of sentences probably. Anyway the most amazing thing for me is that I have phases of forgetting to look . . . and that simply doesn't matter. It occurs to me then again sometime and then I look. The whole stress is gone! Thank you! !

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### **Doug Lloyd's New Book—The Timeless on Time from Alan Mann**

*(The following is my response to the book which Doug adopted as a the foreword).*

I am a long-time admirer of Thomas Traherne and throughout my life I've enjoyed occasional experiences of what he called *Capacitie*, his word for our essence or first nature. Sometime in the 1970s I read an article by Douglas Harding entitled *On Having No Head*. I felt that the writer was pointing to something very significant but I didn't quite understand what he was getting at. The penny didn't drop until I was exposed to a series of experiments when Douglas came to Sydney in 1991. In his introductory lecture he asked us to participate in a simple experiment which demonstrated beyond question, for me, that Traherne's *Capacitie* is neither imaginary, nor temporary but ever-present and here for the looking.

After this initial meeting with Douglas I saw him on a number of occasions in England and at his home in Nacton, Suffolk. On one visit, in my enthusiasm for this experiential approach to spiritual enquiry, I suggested to him that this is just what the church needed; a means of *seeing* what the New Testament is pointing to rather than relying merely on the words of scripture and/or interpretations of those words. He was very doubtful about my proposal as he felt that we are too committed to traditional approaches for this seeing of truth, as opposed to saying of truth, to take hold.

Doug Lloyd, by opening himself to the possibility that these simple experiments might have a profound consequence and by placing the Harding story in the context of his own experience as a Christian minister, has underlined its relevance to Christian

enquiry in general and, in particular, its value to individuals within or without the church.

You can imagine how delighted I am to be invited to provide a foreword to a book which I think has every chance of testing my claim that the Harding experiments offer the means of actualizing the gospels message, of turning the water into wine, as it were. I am grateful to Doug Lloyd for taking on this task and I ask the reader not to be deterred by the simplicity of the experiments nor by the obviousness of what is revealed. Different experiments seem to work best for different people and as Doug explains they don't always work first time. I find that I have to give the experiments time to work and, as for what they reveal, well I find that paradoxically I must also give time to the Timeless, or perhaps I should say 'surrender to the Timeless, for its effects to become clear.

*Alan Mann*

*About the Author: Doug Lloyd has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Melbourne. He is an ordained minister of the Uniting Church in Australia. He has served in various parishes across Victoria, as well as serving as a chaplain in industry, prison and a psychiatric hospital. Doug has performed post-graduate studies in New Zealand, U.S.A. and Canada. Now eighty-one and retired, he retains a passion for learning and participates in study groups both as a student and as a teacher. He enjoys reading books by historians, philosophers, and theologians and has even tackled a book on quantum physics. The author lives in Geelong, Victoria with his wife, Pat, and their dog, Pepi. The book is available from:*

<http://my.bookpal.com.au/bookstore>

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#### **Harding Meeting on 7th September—Garry Jackson**

*Garry Jackson gave a very clear and concise presentation entitled 'The direct path to Self realization' with subtitle 'The path of Jnana Yoga, The teachings of Ramana Maharshi'. In response to my request he provided his speaking notes, which provide an excellent summary of the talk itself, I now attach with Garry's permission. Garry also lent me a book The Path of Sri Ramana by Sri Sadhu Om which he recommends very highly.*

*The concluding paragraph in this book reads:*

... Therefore, unceasing Self-attention is possible only in the state of Self-realization and not in the state of practice (sadhana). What one has to do during the period of sadhana is to cultivate ever-increasing love to attain Self-knowledge and to make intermittent but repeated attempts to turn one's attention a full 180

degrees towards Self. If one once succeeds in doing this, then unceasing Self-attention will be found to be natural and effortless.

The correspondence with the Harding experiments needs no further comment and I remember that Douglas was well received by the Ramana Maharshi Foundation in London where he gave talks from time to time. Consideration of Ramana Maharshi follows the recent book on Non-duality by James Charlton we looked at in NOWletter 168 <http://www.capacitie.org/now/Nowletter%20168.pdf> . which includes a comparison of the non-duality of the three Christian mystics he considers with that of Ramana.

### **The teachings of Ramana Maharshi—Garry Jackson**

Most of us probably started our spiritual journey by reading a book by someone like Eckhart Tolle or Douglas Harding or Krishnamurti. Those people write about self-realization and we want to seek it. The first thing we do is to find more books. The books tell us almost exactly the same thing as the first book. We talk to others about the books they have read. We go to seminars or spiritual groups and talk about spirituality and gather more and more knowledge in the hope that we will find liberation in that knowledge.

Ramana Maharshi

Since it is said in all the scriptures that in order to attain liberation one should control the mind or make the mind subside, after coming to know that mind-control alone is the final decision of the scriptures, to read scriptures unlimitedly is fruitless. If, in order to control the mind, it is necessary to enquire who one is, then how can you enquire within yourself by reading scriptures?

Adyashanti

Spirituality may be approached in two ways. The first way is the most common, which is through a horizontal movement of the mind. Horizontal movement means the mind goes back and forth collecting information. It's as if the mind comes to a wall that has writing all over it. This wall has all kinds of teachings, practices, things to do, and thing not to do. Usually the mind just makes a horizontal movement along the wall, acquiring and accumulating more information. It goes to the left side and then it goes to the right side, collecting information, beliefs, theories etc.

There is an invitation beyond the wall of knowledge, which is not to some regressive state before the mind can operate, but a transcendent state that's beyond where the mind can go. That's what spirituality is. It's going where the mind cannot go.

*So what does it mean to go where the mind cannot go?*

The feeling 'I am' is the experience common to one and all. In 'I am', 'I' is existence (sat) and 'am' is consciousness (chit). When our existence-consciousness, instead of shining only as the pure consciousness 'I am', shines mixed with an adjunct (something added onto it) as 'I am a man, I am so-and-so', then **this mixed consciousness is the ego**. The ego is the person we think we are.

When we feel 'I am a man, I am sitting, etc.' it's clear that we have mistaken the body for 'I', and that we have assumed its name and postures as 'I am this and I am thus'.

The feeling 'this and thus' which has mixed with the pure consciousness 'I am' is what is called 'thought'. *This is the first thought.*

The feeling "I am a man, I am so-and-so" is only a thought. *But the consciousness 'I am' is not a thought; it is the very nature of our 'being'.* The mixed consciousness 'I am this or that' is a thought that rises from our 'being'

It is only after the rising of this thought, the mixed consciousness (the first person), that all other thoughts, which are the knowledge of second and third persons, rise into existence.

*So to go beyond the mind is to go beyond the person we think we are.*

*Directing our attention to the ego*

The nature of the mind is to attend always to things other than itself, that is, to know only second and third persons. If the mind in this way attends to a thing, it means that it is clinging to that thing. Attention itself is attachment.

Since, whether we know it or not, Self, which is now wrongly considered by us to be unknown, is verily our reality, the very nature of our attention itself is Grace. This means that whatever thing we attend to, observe or look at, that thing is nourished and will flourish, being blessed by Grace. So, when the power of attention of the mind is directed more and more towards second and third person objects, both the strength to

attend to those objects and thoughts about them will grow more and more and will never subside. The more our attention falls on it, the more the mind's wavering nature and its ascendancy will increase.

On the other hand, if our attention is directed only towards ourself, our knowledge of our existence alone is nourished, and since the mind is not attended to, it is deprived of its strength.

When the mind, the ego, which wanders outside knowing only other objects (second and third persons), begins to attend to its own nature, all other objects will disappear and, by experiencing its true nature (Self), the pseudo 'I' will also die.

If the fickle mind turns towards the first person, the first person (the ego) will become non-existent and that which really exists will then shine forth.

Ramana Maharshi said "Attending to the first person is equal to committing suicide", because the person or ego will die.

*Here is a parable of the liberation found when the ego becomes non-existent.*

"Alas! I am imprisoned! I have been caught within this triangular room! How can I free myself". This is what a man was complaining and sobbing about, standing in a corner where the ends of two walls joined. He was groping on the two walls in front of him and lamenting "There is no doorway and no kind of an outlet for me to escape through! How can I get out?"

A friend of his standing at a distance in the open, heard him and turned in that direction and noticed his friend's situation. There were only two walls in that open space, with only one end of each joining the other. The friend quickly realized that the man who was facing only the two walls had concluded that there was a third wall behind him. That he was imprisoned within a three-walled room. He asked the man what he was doing and he replied "I am searching for a way out of this room, but I can't find any".

The friend said "Well, why don't you search for a way out on the third wall behind you?" The man turned around and seeing there was no obstacle started to run away. The friend said, "why do you want to run away. If you don't run away, will you still remain in prison?"

The man replied: “I was never imprisoned. How could I be with no wall behind me”. My not looking behind was the reason for my so-called bondage; and the turning of my attention behind is really the practice that brought on my so-called liberation. In reality I am ever remaining as I am, without any imprisonment or release!”

The two walls in the story signify the second and third persons. The first person is the third wall said to be behind the man. There is no way at all to liberation by means of second and third person attention. Only by the first person attention ‘Who am I?’ will the right knowledge be gained that the ego, the first person, is ever non-existent, and only when the first person is thus annihilated will the truth be realized that bondage and liberation are false.

*So what is the practice of turning the attention to the first person?*

The practice of attending to the first person is called self enquiry or “atma vichara”.

“Turning inwards, daily see thyself with an introverted look and it (the reality) will be known.

The mind will subside only by means of the enquiry “Who am I”. The thought “Who am I” (which is but a means of turning our attention Selfwards), destroying all other thoughts, will itself finally be destroyed like the stick used for stirring the funeral pyre. If other thoughts rise, one should, without attempting to complete them, enquire “To whom did they rise?”, and it will be known to “To me”. If one then enquires “who am I”, the mind will turn back to its source (the Self). By repeatedly practising thus, the power of the mind to abide in its source increases. When the mind thus abides in the heart, the “I” (the thought “I”, the ego), which is the root of all thoughts, having vanished, the ever existing Self alone will shine.

“Death is a matter of a split second! The leaving off of sleep is a matter of a split second! Likewise the removal of the delusion “I am an individual soul” is also a matter of a split second! The dawn of true knowledge is not such that glimpses of it will be gained once and then lost! If an aspirant feels that it appears and disappears, it is only the stage of practice; he cannot be said to have attained true knowledge. The perfect dawn of knowledge is a happening of a split second; its attainment is not a prolonged process.

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## **How do you find this face?-- Patrick San Francesco**

Patrick San Francesco a healer from Goa who runs schools and clinics across India was interviewed on an *ABC Spirit of Things* programme. This is an extract:

**Patrick:** Man has so many faces one for his employer one for his employee one for maid one for his spouse one for his family one for his friends . In the end he does not know which is his true face but the day you find your true face is the day you find the true face in everybody else and that is the God in everyone.

**Interviewer:** How do you find this face? Do you have to follow a particular regime, read special books or buy your tapes.

**Patrick:** No, it is just to be. Just be.

**Interviewer:** And does this do away with religion. Is this going beyond religion?

Patrick then goes on about his religion which is people and his meditation which is simply doing everything one does with complete commitment. He does not offer the obvious answer to the interviewer's question 'How do you find this face?' As George would say 'Close but no cigar'.

*Alan Mann*

## **On Finding this Face— Douglas Harding**

*... "Though notably natural from the start, this meditation gets more so, and in the end entirely so. At first you probably need little reminders to bring you to your senses - such as counting your eyes (what eyes?) and getting face-to- no-face with a friend, but in time (not necessarily reckoned in years) these devices are dispensed with: 1st-personhood becomes second nature (or first Nature regained) and the last thing you do is go around preoccupied with your facelessness. It's much simpler than that - more like resting at Home in Home's superbly clear air, without any thoughts about it at all. Just as no man loiters in the hall studying the front door he's just come in by, but goes on to enjoy the comforts indoors, so you come to enjoy the Immensity within, and these little gates to It are recognised to be the paltry and temporary contrivances*

- indeed gimmicks - which they are. (Many traditional religious devices are so complicated or mysterious or beautiful or impressive that they divert attention from their underlying purpose, and the means have come to replace the end. Hopefully the blatant triviality of our gadgets will render them less likely, in the course of centuries, to evolve into sacred objects credited with value in themselves."

Douglas Harding

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**From Jikoji Retreat and Zen Center—Greg Campbell**

(With apologies to Greg for modifying his creative formatting to conform to our less adventurous layout).

# 1

**I have a request for every one who is participating  
in this Way of Human Maturity---  
please answer the following question  
as rapidly as possible---**

**WHO IS THE WORLD HONORED ONE**

You see,

**You are the World Honored One !!!**

**I know this because I am also.**

**Every Human Being**

**is**

**The World Honored One !!!**

**There is only  
The Deathless Divine !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

2

**My Condolences on the Insane Murder of The Innocent Young Man  
from Australia**

by

**three Utterly Insane yet Innocent Young Men  
Here in America**

**Americans have been denying the Deep and Dark  
Collective American**

**Shadow**

**for So Long and with such Passionate Insanity**

**that Shadow must now unavoidably**

**reveal itself in ever more**

**Gruesome Catastrophic and Tragic Ways.**

**Jesus did say**

***"TAKE UP YOUR CROSS***

***AND***

***FOLLOW ME..."***

*Greg Campbell*

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