



How to raise your level of awareness!

I was so touched by your response to the booklet, "What is your level of awareness?" that it brought a tear of joy. Thank you for being who you are. This flood of mail was unexpected but it was a great gift!

Many of you have asked questions like...
"How can I apply what I have learned about the levels of awareness?"
"Will emotional suffering ever end?"
"Isn't awakening a matter of grace?"

“How can I live now when I have so many demands from my work and family?”

I hope that this booklet will shed a bit more light upon your way and solve your questions.

According to the great teaching of Vedanta, there is one reason why people suffer and that’s because they don’t know who they are. Many claim that they do know because they have read so much but the truth is that any identification with suffering is identification with the self-image known as ego. The identification brings attachments to material things of the world and thus creates the fear of death. The fear of death actually doesn’t exist because what we fear is not death (which is like going to sleep) but the belief in it. In other words, what we fear is our belief in the idea of death.

Once we awaken to who we are then the fear of death will be eliminated as surely as the knowledge that there is only NOW!

When we ask, “Who am I?” the initial reply is, *“My name is John and I am a Canadian...”* These answers are simply the self-image talking. We can’t help this initially because it was conditioned in us from our first years of life on earth.

There is also a strong identification with the body that says, *“This is my body.”* If we ask, *“What is my body, and why call it mine?”* Then know that the body is the raw material of the universe; recycled earth, water and air. This material is recycled every few years so that even the personality and looks change radically from a baby form to teenager form, young man and woman and then older. Trees are also made from recycled water, earth and air. We identify with the body because it is located inside our consciousness, which makes us believe that we are physically located. Many people believe that they are located somewhere in their head; others think it’s located behind the heart or solar plexus.

Did you know that no scientific experiment has ever found a center of awareness in any location in time or space?

You start recognizing who you are when asking, *“Who am I?”* You’ll feel somehow shocked by the truthful answer, *“I really don’t know who I am!”*, and the paradox is...that you will have had your first glimpse into your true nature. Your true nature is awareness. It is your Presence. This center of our awareness is the center of all space and time. It is at once everywhere and nowhere.

We are like the many waves on the surface of the ocean that forget they are the ocean itself. When the wave recognizes that it is indeed part of the ocean and the ocean itself, there could be a temporary fear that it will be lost in that immensity, without realizing further that it can never be lost because awareness always is. You are not part of this infinite being – you *are* this Infinite Being!

Your essential being is the source of all being – it is the field of pure consciousness (awareness). When you come to know yourself as this field of unbounded and free consciousness, you have power to manifest your life the way it is meant to be – free, happy, joyful and complete. In fact, your life the way you are living it now is a direct manifestation of your desires, whether conscious or unconscious.

You are your own creation and when you, unconsciously complain about your life, you are reinforcing upon yourself your circumstances and sabotaging what you love.

Now the question arises, *“Why do we create such misery in our lives?”* We don’t create it deliberately, only unconsciously because we have identified for so long with an image (that is just imagination) that we have manifested it.

How to use level-knowledge

There are two things to understand initially and that is time-consciousness and the choice between love or fear. Time-consciousness blocks us from the Now-Presence because it creates a thinker 'caught' in past or future. In fact, most people suffer some form of anxiety due to this time-consciousness (past regrets and future fears).

The level of awareness is gauged by our feeling nature. Just as the higher levels involve pure feelings such as peace and freedom, so do the lower levels conform to "fear" such as doubt, insecurity, anxiety, stress, past-conditioning-focus (time-consciousness). In other words, the more involved we get in thought, the less aware we are of our true nature (what we want more than anything). Thought, by its very nature, raises many questions, where as pure awareness rests in Being.

Emotions are the nature of energy motion. They fluctuate according to different aspects of life's vibrations. We are all affected by both negative and positive emotions (contraction and expansion). Emotion, being the nature of motion of energy, is universal. The moment we make a motion of energy as personal we suffer accordingly.

You are NOT the emotions you feel. What you feel normally is your mind's interpretations according to how personal you have made that motion of energy. The more we interpret an emotion as personal, the greater the contraction of spirit.

Our body and mind is a continual fluctuation of energy motion contracting and expanding. Our awareness contracts and expands according to how we identify with the "I" self.

6 contractions & 3 expansions

(please refer to the booklet “Awakening to love and freedom” which you can get free from the website www.burtharding.com).

There are 6 contractions of energy in different levels of emotional feeling and 3 expanded feelings.

Expanded feelings are not necessarily emotions but pure feeling (a state of inner feeling/knowing). Contraction is fear-based feeling while expansion is love-based feeling-knowing.

Here are the six contractions of lower feelings...

Pride (specialness and separation) which could lead to...

Anger (resent life or others for not conforming to personal wishes).
which could lead to...

Lust (lust for food, sex, thinking, doing etc) which could lead to...

Fear (fear results from lack of self-respect) which could lead to...

Grief (fear blocks love and brings loss) which could lead to...

Apathy (which leads to deep depression, indifference to life etc)

There are three expanded feelings and they start happening when we get some insight how fortunate we are to be ALIVE human beings. It is this first inkling of **gratitude** that starts the first expansive element called...

Courage -- Courage results from facing our fears listed above. That is, facing them without any judgment on our part. After all, how can you face a fear if you judge it wrong? This sense of wrong would keep you in its strangle-hold, right? Please see this clearly.

Now the question arises, “*How can I not see anger or fear as wrong?*” The answer is simple – you can see anger as a need for control because you feel helpless and out-of-control. In other words, what made you angry was your need to get your own way which you didn’t get. If you see this contradiction as the pull of the lower self

than we are in business. Similarly with fear, isn't it the need not to have something happen which you don't want? Then, are you willing to stop focusing on it?

This *facing of the contraction* in the body as a sensation of emotion is the first step towards our higher sense of Self. It awakens the courage to go through with it without getting involved in its egoic story.

This courage to face the drama that you have created is your first real step towards awakening of the Love Presence that you are. You have **FORGIVEN** yourself (and others) of your false belief in the limitation you had previously imposed on yourself. **You have thus awakened the courage to allow yourself to be who you really are, without hoping for some myth or idea of enlightenment explosion.** You just want to be YOU!!! (and NOT some idea of some blazing Light from the sky). You allow yourself to be ordinary and innocent. This courage will lead to full...

Acceptance -- This means that your self-respect and self-love are restored as the Self you really are. In this case you have faced the fact that you couldn't be the thing you feared, which is ego. You are in truth the Self that is love, glory and beauty beyond mental comprehension. It is this insight that will abide in you after having had the courage to face the fears without personal judgment. Realizations will last only when you see that your personal suffering is self-created from conditioned response to life. And, this seeing happens through the courage to face them without story.

This acceptance leads to the final awakening of...

Peace -- This is the highest love because separation is no longer experienced between you and other beings and creatures.

All contraction and expansion of energy motion is between love and fear. The True Self (the only Self there is) is LOVE and the 'false' little 'self' is fear. Fear is the illusion of time-consciousness which brings the thoughts of death, decay, change and body-consciousness.

Here you see clearly that there are no victims in life. You have never been a victim, which means that every time you had identified yourself with limitation you were identifying with a false sense of self.

We do have a choice to move from fear to love. It is claiming this choice that gives you also the power to change. You do NOT change yourself – you only need to love you. It is this love of Self that automatically moves you from self to Self.

Jesus said, *“When you die to your self you find your Self.”*

The most exciting and inspiring moment happens when, through the eyes of grace, you see yourself as you actually are. And, what is grace but this timeless NOW beyond time?

The Levels of Awareness

Since apathy is the lowest contracted feeling of self, so is peace the highest expanded feeling of Self.

An unknown feeling that most people experience (who have not realized their true nature as Self – Presence) is unconscious guilt. This guilt is so prevalent that 90% of the population feel it most of the time without knowing it (that's why it is called 'unconscious'). This unconscious feeling continuously affirms to us subconsciously...

“I am bad...”

“I don't deserve love.”

“I don't feel love”

"I feel a sinking feeling inside me"

"I'm not good enough"

"There's something wrong with me."

It is only after many years of conducting hypnotherapy (now known as Supersentience) that I realized everyone feels this unconscious guilt if they haven't discovered their true nature.

As a young man I had experienced this feeling of guilt so strongly that I believed something was seriously wrong with me. Yet, most people cater to this feeling without knowing its universality of self-identification as a separate 'me.' Imagine the beauty and freedom when you have the courage to face it and let it go.

This unconscious guilt is the reason for most relationships breaking up because it brings, in its wake, a need for self-sabotage. In other words, we find ourselves hurting the very people we love the most as an unconscious need to punish ourselves.

This unconscious guilt (ego's tool) often convinces the self that one is not worthy of the best in life.

So hear it now – LISTEN carefully – you not only deserve the best but you are already the Self you seek so desperately. You just need to allow yourself to see it. And, you allow yourself to see it by facing your fears according to the above technique.

When we do not allow ourselves to see what is true and beautiful in life then we are 'caught' in continual self-defense, self-protection and the need for control which leads to inner anger and resentment.

To live with such a ‘thinker’ inside you is to live in a self-created prison. It can take us all the way to apathy (deep spiritual death known as clinical depression or suicidal tendencies – lies we had told ourselves are true.

We start to change (expand) when we first experience **gratitude**. You may even feel **gratitude** just reading this booklet. It is when we start feeling grateful for being who we are that actual expansion starts happening.

The Number System for facilitation

Just as guilt is the unconscious experience of fear, so is gratitude the beginning experience of true love.

There are many levels of fear and many levels of love. The following is a gauge of your feeling-consciousness.

Give yourself an average of 10 points for each feeling-consciousness level from the bottom up.

LOVE & PEACE (surrender to Self).....	100
ACCEPTANCE (forgiveness, gratitude, allowing).....	80
COURAGE (facing fear without indulging in the story).....	70
Pride (need for specialness – demanding, needing self).....	50
Anger (inner or outer violence).....	40
Lust (see self as body through food, sex, pleasure).....	30
Fear (propelled by guilt – punitive or vindictive).....	20
Grief (loss of love).....	10
Apathy (deadness of spirit, depression, deep shame).....	5
Death (catatonic, vegetable, in a coma).....	1

The willingness to see what is here-now, to look at what is obvious, to allow and forgive happens when we start accepting ourselves (facing our fear without personal judgment). This awakens

the feeling of gratitude and eventually leads to the Higher Self “I AM.”

One important thing to remember always – you are NOT a victim of this great illusion of self (ego). You have the choice to love rather than fear. The moment we face our fears, we gain the courage to see it through and regain our true nature as love.

How do we raise our level of awareness?

“So how do we break free from this creation of emotional pain?”

We start to break free when we understand which level of awareness it is that we have adopted. For example, if you go over page 9 above you’ll find the level you are at by how you feel presently. Feeling is the gauge of awareness level at the moment. For instance, you couldn’t be in the first levels of awareness or you wouldn’t be reading this, period.

Interest in consciousness growth starts at level 10 when we feel self-pity, low self-worth, loss of love or just not good enough. At this point, we start hoping that something will happen to change us into clearer and happier people. However, at this level we lack the motivation to forgive ourselves and **we want to be helped but haven’t got the strength to help ourselves.**

When we suffer guilt, shame or loneliness, there is inner resentment of ourselves projecting as -- ‘others’ bother me.’ “it is their fault.’ There is a need to get even which is often indicated in our thoughts as punitive or vindictive thinking. This is known as level 20 (fear and self-hate.)

When we are feeling a little better there is a tendency to do something to physically pleasure ourselves which this can turn to

lust. Lust can take many forms, such as lust for food, sex or pornography, partying and drinking and so on. This is an attempt to release the inner pressures of not knowing the inner beauty. This is known as level 30.

The next level is expressive of our anger against life, others or ourselves that 'things are not as we want them to be.' We dislike many things because they do not cater to our personal desires. This is known here as level 40, still does not have enough spiritual strength to forgive, allow, surrender or even listen attentively to what is happening inside. In fact, real *listening* doesn't happen until our pride is shattered.

I have had so many clients and readers tell me that they have read these booklets but then nothing changed. In other words, they expect something to change them without the need to understand the things that they keep telling themselves such as, "*I want this to go away...*" "*How I wish I could awaken...*" "*Why am I repeating the same pain over and over?...*" They are not aware that they are manifesting their life according to their belief system. Even wisest teachings couldn't reach them unless they start listening to their self-defeating thoughts and become aware of what they are saying to themselves. This is still level 40.

When we are stuck in a particular lower level then we develop dysfunctional behaviour known as psychological suffering or illness.

Oftentimes we become shaken by our own dysfunctional way of life and decide to do something about it. Our egoic need is so hungry for recognition and approval that as soon as we have a little understanding of this process, we take personal pride in it. I hear so often people saying, "*I had a wonderful realization and felt the shift happening and then I lost it.*" This is the level of pride which often comes when we begin to wake up, but not quite enough to see the ego's hand in it. This level is around 50. It takes humility and a deep blow to the pride to move high enough to face our fears.

The moment we are resolved to face our fears that we have manifested through our thinking process, we move to a level known as Courage (level 70.) This is a delicate level and can go either way in a moments notice depending upon our resolve or the pull of ego. In other words, you can be pulled away from your resolve to truth by the hypnotic conditioned belief system and fall prey to it again. We are here in the middle of a crucial crossroads. The strength is there to move higher into acceptance, surrender, forgiveness and total allowing of what-is without personal involvement.

This is when we start feeling gratitude for our life. We may even start shedding tears of joy for the slightest happening. We start falling in love with love. If we remain in this level of gratitude for a few weeks without shifting to lower levels of pride and adopting “I-know-all-this” attitude, then we can move towards true Love and Peace, reaching levels of 85, 90, 95 and 100 (100 being the awakened level).

“Okay, now how do I use what I have just learned?”

First of all, remember that these levels are illusions that seem very real when you are caught in them. However, **there is only the Truth which is pure Presence. This is who you are always.** To awaken means to rise above the illusions of all these levels and wake up by proverbially smelling the coffee of truth as it actually is for the first time with its wonderful aroma of gratitude and inner joy. However, remember that you cannot create gratitude nor joy. They are the natural result of your resolve to move from the lower levels to the higher levels. For example, let’s say you are caught in the grief, fear or lust levels. Chances are that your resolve will fluctuate if you do not have the humility to pray for strength and ask your inner guidance for support.

If you are suffering from grief (see the booklet "*Awakening to love and freedom*" where each feeling is explained in detail. www.burtharding.com) then grief will keep you weak and filled with self-loathing. Then accept this grief by seeing it as a small child that has been abandoned or neglected or unloved and then sit with this child giving it love and care. In other words, sit still with this feeling of grief, then remove the label 'grief' and just stay with the feeling/sensation without its story. This is already asking a lot of you because your resolve to heal is very weak at this stage, however, it is not impossible. Be willing to face this self-created grief of loss (whatever the loss is) and take responsibility for it without self-judgment. Then see this feeling/sensation as a lost child seeking comfort, love, attention and recognition. In your stillness and silence give this inner child what it needs until you start seeing its beautiful large eyes smiling.

Follow the same procedure with fear and lust. There is often difficulty with lust because it has a tendency to become an addiction due to its need for escape. There are people who eat constantly to escape their loneliness and self-hate through indulgence, however, it only increases the problem by adding an addiction to it. Addictions are hard to rise above. However again, since the level is around 30 then there could be enough strength to see what you are doing to yourself. This could lead to anger but its okay to be angry as it is a higher level than lust. Anger moves things around inside you and helps you to unmask your *unlistening tendencies*. When you reach level 40 of 'feeling-awareness' then there is enough inner power to forgive or allow. Then it is imperative that you become very aware also at this stage because once you start allowing and forgiving anger you start having insights and some recognitions. These can easily fool you into believing you are waking up and pride sets in. Then when we have pride at 50 we also have the power to move into courage by facing what we are doing to ourselves.

Let's recap the 'method' of progressing through the levels.

1. Look over the booklet "Awakening to love and freedom" and find out which level of feeling you seem to be stuck in. This booklet gives you a complete definition of each FEELING or sensation (emotion).
2. Sit with this feeling after taking a deep breath and sighing relaxing into it. Look detached at this feeling/sensation in the body without thinking about it or creating a story around it. In fact, remove the label such as 'guilt, shame or fear etc' and just feel the feeling inside you.
3. See this feeling as a small child (between 1 to 7 years of age) for that's when problems arise in this lifetime. These are the influential years that determine our subconscious conditioning. Visualize this small child needing warmth and love and understanding and you supply it with your light of caring and warmth. Start with saying, "*Forgive me for not understanding you.*" Keep repeating to the child, "*I love you*" until you can feel it yourself.
4. See the child's large eyes melting into your affection and warmth as a smile forms in their expression.
5. Then finish off (after a few minutes) by saying, "*Thank you.*"

You'll find that you have moved from one level to the next or higher. Once you reach above 50 (which really means you are feeling gratitude without personal pride) then you are ready for total self-forgiveness and allowing openness to happen. At this point the sky's the limit.

Keep being reminded that these levels are NOT real. They are created by the ego system of belief known as the process of growth.

When we wake up we see that nothing ever took place except the truth that always was and IS!!

Burt Harding
The Awareness Foundation
206-1947 West 7th Avenue,
Vancouver, BC V6J 1T2 Canada