

IMMERSED

*12 POWERFUL WAYS OF LIVING
MORE FULLY IN THE NOW*

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INTRODUCTION

Greetings to you fellow adventurer!

You have journeyed a long way to find me I see, many pathways you have trodden which inevitably lead you here, here to your humble guide for this journey into life unconfined and into yourself.

Now now don't be startled, as your host is a respectful host that will impart unto you his own highest existential understandings.

All his philosophies, outlooks, attitudes, arts and contemplations can be summarized in the term "direct experience", which is according to his own understanding the equivalent of life fully lived.

In this book I will list an overview of 12 pathways that lead you to life and direct experience.

If you have browsed the blog Nirvanic Insights, you will inevitably have come across this term "direct experience".

Now I'm fully aware of the fact that for many people the term may be somewhat abstract and undefined, therefore I found it high time to write something concrete about it, and that is precisely what I will do here.

To give you a broader perspective on Nirvanic and its blog Nirvanic Insights, I could just concisely and definitely say that the main purpose of the website(s) is to empower your direct experience through meditative wisdom and spiritual insights, and in doing so allowing your wisdom to grow naturally and spontaneously.

Moreover, as you will find out, there happens to be quite a lot of ways of empowering your direct experience, and in this book I will list a dozen ways I have found to be worth the candle.

However before we get on to the actual paths to living more directly I would like to briefly give my best attempt of clarifying the idea behind it.

WHAT IS DIRECT EXPERIENCE?

I can begin with going right to the point by proclaiming that direct experience means life unfiltered by any psychological projection.

Its only “concern” is the pure experiencing of reality.

Direct experience could also be said to be an existential “outlook” that is mainly concerned with how reality is and not how and what one thinks about it. It’s simply you and the present moment, untouched, unrefined and inseparable.

I sense that direct experience, for the most part, remains quite elusive for modern man living in today's noisy world.

A “noise” which consists of three kinds:

The first being the actual concrete noise of today's buzzing machinery of a society, the cars, the buildings, gadgets, technology, engines and what have you.

This noise is quite palpable for our senses and can sometimes fill us to the brim and drive some of us into a deep existential despair.

The second noise is the prevalent addiction to thinking and thoughts. Which simply means that one most often is heavily identified with the thinking process that occurs in the brain, which consequently leads to the result that one's projections about life become innumerable and quite frankly unbearable, at least this was the case for me at a certain point in my life.

Lastly, the third noise is the ever-fluctuating cultural ideologies, which all modern societies more or less are impregnated and operate under.

It is some sort of a cultural operative system if you will, an operative system that shapes the individuals into gross masses and most often turn them into

blind worker bees and zombies, instead of free, independent spiritually healthy individuals.

All these three mentioned noises can and is incredibly distracting for the human mind. Our original sense of presence and our subjective experience of life is somehow overlooked as a result of being surrounded and fascinated by this noise.

Furthermore I maintain that these distractions bring us out of our direct contact with the immediacy of experience and thus are the mechanisms that are responsible for what I call “indirect experience”. This indirect form of living and navigating through life is quite limited in scope and meagre in existential wisdom.

In my previous book on direct experience, I argue that life becomes watered down and filtrated when one lives in ones own personal projections and/or distractions. Direct experience is the cure for this rather peculiar condition which affects us humans. It is peculiar in the sense that if one really goes to the depths of direct and indirect experience, one arrives at the conclusion that in reality, direct experience is all there truly is. Whether your attention is in harmony with it is a different matter, though a matter which I deem to be prime importance for your subjective experience of life and yourself.

In this book I shall attempt to provide genuine ways of aligning yourself with your own innate direct experiencing of life. These ways will be both practical and contemplative; hopefully these two modes of approaching the subject in matter will prove to be favourable for you.

Now let us leave these nice formalities behind us and get on to the real goodies.

Lets look if we can empower your life so you can be more fully immersed in the here and now.

1. SENSITIVITY

This first path of direct experience is about the heightening of your sensitivity. Our senses are windows into reality, and if these windows are clogged by too many mental projections about life, the result will be that you're left with an experience of life that is watered down and unfulfilling.

Your senses are wonderful tools of intuitive understanding of your surrounding world and yourself. So why shouldn't one expend some extra time and energy by paying more attention to these essential faculties of ones biological existence.

For starters how do you actually heighten your sensitivity? Surely you couldn't simply "turn up the volume" the same way you can with a stereo speaker can you?

Well, most likely not.

However what you can do is to direct your **attention** towards your ever so available senses.

In more practical words, you can go about this exercise by simply increasing your awareness of your bodily senses, either all of them simultaneously or choosing one specific sense-organ and from there allowing yourself to be completely absorbed by it. This will inevitably make your experience more direct and palpable for your consciousness.

If you happen to be eating something delicious, great! This is an excellent moment to allow this specific gate of direct experience.

Which brings us to the question...

How do I actually allow myself to be absorbed by my sense perception?

For most people to allow things to happen is easier in theory but harder in practical terms.

That being said, my genuine instructions would be that you simply let yourself be absorbed by the richness and uniqueness of the input that is being received by your consciousness through this specific sense-organ.

Notice also that process which drives your attention away from the actuality of the experience.

There is a subtle force always moving about in your body and consciousness, a restless force which always wants to find new things to stick itself to. It's a force that has no consistency and stability, a force that you can overcome by simply staying put as you are and in doing so allowing life to happen spontaneously instead of having your mind and projections jumping around like crazy monkeys.

Furthermore, if we would continue on the example of taste, you can simply do this by letting the myriad

of sensations emerge in your mouth, simultaneously as you let every layer of the taste organ become your immediate reality, and thus dissolving in the experience.

“Letting” or “allowing” is an important concept for us when it comes to this first path of direct experience.

Why?

Well because you cannot really force direct experience to happen, at least not gracefully and consistently.

Sure you can put yourself in situations that seemingly empowers your experience, but those can be pitfalls and traps in the end.

I find direct experience to be one of those things where the more you try to force it the less effective it will be.

Moreover when allowing direct experience to transpire, you become total in your experiencing of reality, life becomes immediate and existentially fulfilling. Obviously it doesn't have to be about gastronomy as mentioned above, but can truly be about anything and everything that your senses take in. The wind blowing and kissing your face, the emotions that arise when listening to your favourite music or perhaps simply the vibrations that the

music causes in your ears, perchance it could be the smell of a blossoming flower in a beautiful and colourful garden, yes that would be a nice one!

That being said, essentially what is required from you is that you wholly align your attention to your senses and in doing so heightening them to that degree where life becomes total and direct.

This is one of the most natural ways of allowing direct experience to happen, and it is in reality happening whether or not we are consciously aware of it or not. As I previously said in the introduction, when ones understanding is more cultivated, one realizes that all experience is in truth direct experience. However for the subjective experience of a sentient being, in our case humans, it is enough to just be distracted by ones psychological thoughts to have the feeling of living indirectly.

In other words although in a completely different context, Shakespeare's contemplations resonate with this sentiment as he so eloquently put it in the play of Hamlet

"For there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

The same is true about this notion of direct and indirect experience. Your thinking and your belief in your thoughts determine the nature of your experience. A person can actually come to a certain

point where he doesn't really value or even notice the richness of the senses and the surrounding world because she is so completely absorbed by his own psychological identity and habits of thought.

I find this to be very unfortunate, because life is truly too rich to let it slip away to be lived in the shadows that the psychological mind so often creates for "us". But in truth it's only a shadow that it creates for itself...

Why?

Well because you are not your mind, you are consciousness and that entails such a vaster horizon!

Having said that, my earnest proposal to you would be to aim to see through this rather superficial aspect of psychological reality and dive into your own aliveness fully and unreservedly.

So... what are you waiting for?

Immerse yourself in yourself!

2. MOVEMENT

Life is characterized by movement, and if you want to be more fully immersed in life, it is key to move around more. This can be relatively simple movement as taking a walk or it could be more complex patterns as for example dancing or other artistic movement based disciplines.

Just as ones own senses, movement in the same way is almost always readily available for your engagement. This is of course if you aren't physically impaired in any actual sense.

When one is moving, one becomes in tune with the dancing nature of life. The somewhat renowned “flow state” of athletes and artists is precisely this attuning of one attention of ones bodily mechanics to oneself and ones immediate surroundings. This movement approach to direct experience is a powerful and again a supremely natural way of empowering ones own direct experience, and it simultaneously has the benefits of giving you an exercise while you're at it.

THE CONCEPT OF MOVEMENT

Movement happens to be a very broad concept. If we would go with the broadest meaning I can think of, movement could be seen as thoughts appearing in your consciousness, or perhaps the conscious act

of ones will or perhaps we could go into more fundamentals, by seeing movement as an inherent feature of the universe. In this last fundamental approach to movement, particles and waves can be seen to be in constant movement in our dynamic universe.

Movement is therefore an inherent element of the universe and perhaps more importantly, life itself. Thus employing movement as a means of being more immersed in the dance of life is utterly sensible.

On a more personal note, I love doing creative movement, that is to combine elements from Yoga, Qigong, calisthenics, dance and what have you. Simply moving around with unrestricted creativity is something I recommend very highly for you living directly.

Why?

First and foremost it feels good, the body itself loves movement, as a matter of fact it was precisely born for this so called movement and experiencing of life.

Secondly, it releases dormant tensions in the physical body. It allows your body to flow more instead of rigidly moving about. When living indirectly, tensions can and in fact will arise in certain places of the body. It could be the face, or more specifically,

between the eyebrows, which is a rather common one.

When one is so occupied and hypnotized with ones psychological identity and mental habits, tensions arising and remaining in your body and psyche is indeed an expected occurrence.

That being said, sensitivity and movement are two legitimate and effective ways of accessing your direct experience, they can be easily be combined and they also happen to be some of the most natural ways of being present in the moment.

How could they be combined?

COMBINING SENSITIVITY AND MOVEMENT

First of all you could just start of by moving around and dance to an upbeat song while simultaneously focusing your attention entirely on your feet. It could be both feet and perhaps some specific part of the feet, just to make it even more challenging.

You could also try using some Baoding balls, which are rotated in your hands through certain delicate muscles. To master this flowing circulation it takes some practice but the focus that one achieves through those metal balls from China is quite impressive.

These examples could be seen as a healthy way of combining your sensitivity and movement. A combination, which makes your mind, one-pointed, a term I adore which they sometimes use in the insightful Zen tradition.

ZEN AND ONE-POINTEDNESS

This one-pointedness is in fact a different word for direct experience, it is something the Zen masters and sages held in quite a high regard, something that I also hold in high regard, something that in fact all spiritually advanced beings hold in high regard.

Why?

Simple.

Life is experience and the more you are here to experience it the more you shall be fulfilled to yourself and your surrounding world.

This is perhaps the greatest gift you can give to yourself, the gift of yourself to yourself. A gift which consists of being and existing as you are wherever you are, untroubled by the psychological noise that your mind so often creates for you.

Oh my where have I gone. I sometimes go seemingly off-topic but that's just the mystic hippo in me that does that. Never mind that :)

Now what you should do is to keeping living life fully!

In this second way of direct experience you are advised to focus mostly on the miraculous act of moving!

Feel your body and let it express itself totally.

3. BREATH

Just as with movement, breathing is a key feature and characteristic of biological life. Breath is also fascinating in that it is something that happens to us naturally, and something that we somehow can manipulate with our own sense of will. It is indeed one of the few biological instruments at our disposal in this immediate sense, meanwhile pretty much everything else, like for example body temperature and the heartbeat are much more difficult or maybe even impossible to influence on pure will.

Breathing is also an effective anchor to place ones attention, and in doing so aiding the mind to become one-pointed and focused. This one pointedness, as mentioned in the previous chapter, can aid you in bringing you to the direct experience of your body and its natural mechanics, all being done quite effortlessly.

As long as you are experiencing life as a biological organism, breathing will be an essential component of your experience. This is precisely why I consider it to be an effective anchor to place your attention.

You can access your direct experience through the breath by simply being aware of it. My own experience of focusing my attention on my breath can be summarized in the sentiment that by being fully aware of the breath you become

indistinguishable from it. The breathing becomes you and you become the breathing, there are no longer any barriers between you and the experience of breathing.

This is indeed a powerful way of tuning yourself to direct experience, just as one fine-tunes the strings of an instrument to the desired tuning.

THE BUDDHA'S WAY OF VIPASSANA

This awareness of breath is in fact how the famous Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha. This “Vipassana technique” was his main technique employed when it came to becoming enlightened, and it only consisted of being aware of the breath. Nonetheless it should be stated that when one is truly in harmony with one's breath, one is achieving a unity of the mind and body and in doing so also bridging some parts of the unconscious with the conscious.

Whether or not you wish to become spiritually enlightened, awareness of the breath is a powerful technique for anyone to use. That is anyone that is so wishing to live more directly or someone that wants to resolve the muddy waters of his/her mind.

You may have noticed that awareness and attention have so far been important keywords in our quest for a more immersed life.

This is because wherever you place your attention that “focus” becomes your immediate reality, this is a power that can’t be stressed enough. A power which most people aren’t fully conscious of, instead they are being ruled by the whims of their own capricious psyche.

I truly feel that our responsibility as consciousness is to learn and to understand this fundamental power at our disposal, which is this sense of attention and from thereon aligning it gracefully with our true interests and desires.

If you don’t cultivate this power, it will be a wasted gift and it will also inevitably be more manipulated by external factors and things, which will in the end be working against your existential wellbeing.

This is precisely why awareness of breath is such a powerful tool.

PROACTIVE BREATHING METHODS

If you find just being aware of your breath to be rather boring, you could try some proactive breathing methods as a means of both being immersed in the moment and as a mean of the strengthening your physical organism.

Manipulating the breath can have many health benefits but it should also be done with great care and wisdom. Changing your breathing patterns too

quickly can also be detrimental if you don't know what you're doing. The key for these breathing methods is to do them gradually and to trust your intuition and what your body tells you.

My personal favourite methods which I almost use daily are the following:

- The Buteyko Method
- The Wim Hof Method
- Breathing Breeze Method (My own spontaneous method)

I initially had a problem with reconciling the Wim Hof method with the Buteyko, but now I've found a middle ground for them by doing them in different times during the day.

BUTEYKO METHOD

1. Sit down comfortably and settle down by taking a couple normal-sized breaths by breathing in and out through the nose.
2. Then commence the method by reducing the amount of oxygen intake with each breath. That is with each intake of breath reduce your intake volume by roughly 5-10%
3. Keep reducing the intake until you find a sweet spot where you can relatively comfortably maintain that state of reduced oxygen intake and still be alive!

4. (Hard Part) Maintain this state of reduced breathing for a couple minutes. (3+ for beginners)
5. When this is done, allow your natural and normal breathing to function as usual.

Helpful Tips

A couple important things to keep in mind while doing this breathing exercise:

Tip I: Don't suffocate yourself! As the goal isn't to totally deprive yourself of oxygen, but to lower the rate and volume comfortably until you reach a state of "mild air-hunger".

Tip II: Breathe only through the nose and try to use your diaphragm instead of your chest.

Tip III: Sit or lie down comfortably while doing this and try to maintain a still posture and empty mind.

WIM HOF METHOD

1. Sit or lay down somewhere comfortably and take a couple normal breaths to wind and settle down.
2. Start the exercise by taking full powerful breaths from the diaphragm, you could do this either through the nose or the mouth.
3. The intake of breaths should be powerful and a total conscious activity while the out breaths

- should be quite effortless, where you are simply letting go of the breath and not forcing anything.
4. Take 15-30 of these breaths, depending on your physical reaction to these powerful breaths.
 5. After you've completed this first set, you can decide to continue by doing one or two more for maximum benefits and rejuvenation.

Helpful Tips

Tip I: If you start feeling overly dizzy, stop the exercise and return to your normal breathing.

Tip II: Begin with 1-2 sets of 15-30 breaths, and as more experienced you get the more sets you can do.

Tip III: When you feel quite experienced and comfortable with the Wim Hof method, consider doing one before, during and after an ice cold shower. This is in fact how I'm currently doing it and I've got to say that I'm loving it!

BREATHING BREEZE METHOD

1. Find a silent place where you can sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Begin the exercise by breathing in through your nose, and these in breaths should last between 3-5 seconds.
3. Start breathing breeze now by breathing out through the mouth, and these out breaths should be prolonged and last between 10-15 seconds.

4. When the out breath is complete, let your lungs stay rested and relatively empty by neither breathing in nor out, and try to keep this state of non-breathing for 3-5 seconds.
5. Do 10+ of these breathing breeze breaths and feel how you become more relaxed as you listen to the sound and sensation of your breathing.

Helpful Tips

Tip I: To get the breeze-like sound effect, make your mouth circle shaped when breathing out.

Tip II: Do at least 2-3 sets of 10x breaths to get maximum relaxation.

Tip III: Just like the Buteyko, the goal isn't to suffocate yourself but to ease and slow down the breathing, through conscious manipulation of the breath. If an mild hunger arises that is fine, but nothing more than that is my recommendation.

BREATHING IS POWERFUL

Whether you decide to go with Vipassana breathing, which is simply being aware of the breath and from thereon being dissolved in it, or with these above mentioned proactive breathing methods, where there seems to be more to be “done” actively. What you will find is that you are effectively being immersed in your breath, body and overall experience of life.

This is indeed a powerful way of accessing your direct experience and a way that shouldn't be underestimated for its potential!

These methods were initially published on my blog dedicated to relaxation, if you wish to read the whole shebang. You can find the article I wrote at

TrueRelaxations.com

4. MUSIC

As a lover and vessel for music, I find it to be one of the most soul soothing activities one can undertake. Melodies and harmonies always bring you to the immediate moment.

One can be walking in a crowded street and suddenly hear some melodious sounds in the noise of the crowd and immediately be drawn to it.

Music in its highest form compels one to feel and go deeper into ones own existential situation. Its beauty isn't merely for the ears but also the spirit. Life becomes direct because our thoughts and mental projections become less prominent and attractive to us when compared to the beauty of the immediate moment, which the music is inevitably played out in.

Music is simply a celestial gift from the muses!

MY OWN MUSICAL STORY

I began my real musical journey in 2012, after a seven-week biking/train adventure through Europe. I returned to Sweden, my country of birth, with lots of inspiration and a deep need to express myself. That need to express myself led me to create a handful of songs that did just that, as many things that were hidden subconsciously and many things that was obviously in front of me were manifested and finalized in those songs.

The music could be seen as some sort of catharsis, a release which I needed vehemently and a catharsis which I dare say is something most modern people are in need of.

Why?

Well, precisely because life is lived indirectly. Indirect living leads to energies storing up in the psyche, most often negative energies that leech the inherent joy of life.

Direct experience is always fulfilling the consciousness that you are. This is to be realized either through these methods put forth out in these twelve paths, or simply in an overall existential understanding of your own inherent nature.

This latter approach, which is an intrinsic and profound existential understanding, is enough for that which I call a perpetual direct experiencing of life. Something I've covered in my previous book on direct experience.

That being said, the mystery of music is that it also brings out and manifests vividly the spontaneity of life, expressed in sounds and vibrations. It's simply airwaves dancing in space! And in that very simplicity a complex attraction is born in the heart of man!

What great existential poetry to even contemplate this!

If you also happen to be drawn to music, my extremely simple proposal would be to let yourself just sing or play whatever you feel in each moment for about 20+ minutes a day.

If you can't play an instrument, you could just as well buy one and start practicing, though I know how it can be quite frustrating initially.

Nonetheless when one masters something sufficiently it becomes almost effortless, and this is certainly the case with music.

Becoming immersed in the creative act of music is powerful, and you should definitely try it!

5. THE ARTS

Music, poetry and the arts are all inextricably linked, but what is meant by art in this fifth path towards direct experience is the art of all creative endeavour. Sculpting a sculpture, writing and reciting a poem, telling a good joke, building an aesthetically pleasing structure, writing a novel, etc.

The list truly is endless of what artistic endeavours one can pursue and excel in.

I argued in my previous book, the Door of Direct Experience, that art is a window to the timeless and that it is precisely because of this revealing of the timeless that we are so drawn to artistic expression. Whether we are aware of it or not, this timeless dimension of consciousness is there.

What does this timeless feature of consciousness mean?

Well in a nutshell, your perceiving eye is not bound by time as we ordinarily think about things in life, nature etc. Your consciousness looks upon time as an object, though a very subtle one, yet still an object to its ever subjective eye.

Consciousness therefore exists in a plane which is beyond, but not beyond as in distant rather just beyond as in more subtle and profound.

When being creative and creating art or enjoying art, we are sucked into this timeless field of experience, where our sense of time gets influenced.

Now if this sounds too abstract, don't be alarmed, this is also something which I address in the last chapters of this book and in my other books on spirituality & direct experience.

I could continue with giving a couple of examples and suggestions on a couple artistic activities which you could try out!

Lets begin with...

POETRY

Yes, the poem... The good old poem. Poetry is a powerful medium of direct experience as it weaves and creates realities unto this already existing one. The poem has the power to lift forth the very essence, the crux of the heart of the world. Direct experience is all about experiencing life as it is, not as one simply imagines it to be.

Though poetry can be imaginative, this imagination still compels the consciousness to live the imagination directly.

Poems have a wonderful power to express that which cannot be expressed in mere talk, and also the

wonderful feature of breaking the linguistic rules which language sometimes is imprisoned with.

Poetry is a wonderful key to direct experience, a key I've myself have used quite often when needing to express my innermost and to be more in tune with my intuition.

HERE ARE A COUPLE OF MY SHORT POEMS:

“Truth sings
when the formless
meets brimming void“

“Colorless breeze
from sparkling blue seas
kisses the trees“

“Black rose
with seven red thorns
droplets of blood.”

If you happen to be drawn to painting realities with words, give poetry a good try!

Feel the words and let them become your DIRECT reality.

VISUAL ART AND CREATIVITY

If you happen to be drawn to your visual faculty more than your other senses, I have a couple of suggestions which may or may not be of interest to you.

Our visual window into reality is arguably our most powerful one, and this is also the case when it comes to direct experience.

What we see often looks to be incredibly tangible and concrete, whereas what we smell, taste, hear, feel and think is much less so.

This is the ordinary experience for most people, though certainly not the case for all.

If you happen to be an individual drawn to your visual faculty, here are a couple “concrete” tips to get you in the groove for living more fully in the moment!

DRAWING AND PAINTING

Most people aren't expert at drawing or painting, but one doesn't need to be an expert at it to become absorbed by the very act of drawing and painting.

This is a beautiful aspect of especially the visual window into reality. One does not need to be practised as in the same way one often needs to be to enjoy playing an instrument or what have you.

Everyone can draw and paint, children love it because it is so easy and intuitive. We can indeed learn something beautiful from our inner child.

We just have to be available to it!

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMMAKING

If you happen to be interested in something more hi-tech, you could definitely try out photography and filmography as a way of being immersed and creative.

Taking a photo, or creating a movie, has the power to move not only yourself but a whole lot of people.

If you feel drawn to this aperture of direct experience, I say go for it!

CERAMICS AND SCULPTING

Lastly and although I've never done any actual ceramics or sculpting, I like every other child growing up have played with matter to mould different shapes and figures to fit my imagination. This is indeed a very powerful way of being immersed with ones immediate surroundings.

I can only imagine how soothing and giving an experience ceramics and sculpting could be.

To express oneself creatively with ones hands, that is to make manifest your imagination into the physical three-dimensional world before you is no wonder a great way of living directly, and thus being fulfilled.

Heck, I need to get my hands on some clay and start creating things right away!

6. FEAR AND PAIN

What a jump!

From music and the arts to fear and pain!

Initially I hadn't planned mentioning fear and pain as a means of direct experience, and in reality perhaps you are just as surprised as me by the title of this sixth path of direct experience. However that being said, through pains and fears, mostly physical, one can come to a deeper understanding of oneself and ones own existential situation.

The immediacy of fear and pain compels one to be present in the moment, one cannot so easily be distracted by everyday thoughts that one typically walks around with when something pressing seizes your attention.

Understood from a deeper perspective, the reason why fear and pain compels the subjective experience to direct experience is mainly because the felt imminence of death.

From a philosophical and/or spiritual standpoint, death is a powerful idea to contemplate. Death means the end of the physical organism and perhaps also the psychological sense of I. I say perhaps because I can certainly see the possibility of an "ecology of souls" before and after a sentient physical being dies. Most people aren't completely

unfamiliar with this concept, though it may have been expressed in different ways, such as reincarnation or the transmigration of souls.

Nonetheless the felt imminence of death has a peculiar tendency of making us appreciate each moment more carefully and thoroughly. Perhaps it is precisely because of this refocusing into direct experience, where death becomes so powerful in making us humble and grateful.

That being said, before we move onwards something has to be made very clear, in no way shape or form am I trying preach the conscious infliction of pain on yourself, oh most certainly not.

Rather what I'm putting forward is the understanding that when the body is under distress, that distress inevitably brings our attention to the present moment. Moreover I also recommend you to be consciously present when fear or pain appears in your life.

In doing so, what are typically seen as misfortunes or hardships can now be seen as opportunities from which you can grow. If this isn't one of the greatest discoveries I for the life of me don't know what is.

In other words try to intuitively understand and use your fears and pain, especially bodily pains, as a

means of understanding the difference between direct and indirect experience.

Pain and fear are instantaneous and immediate happenings in your consciousness, use them well and wisely to grow into direct experience.

Whether it is an illness or an accident, grow!

7. RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships between human beings, animals or even plants can be a powerful way of becoming immersed in your experience.

It is indeed one of the most natural ways of feeling in tune with ones surrounding and it also happens to be an important element when it comes to cultivating ones wellbeing.

We cannot escape the fact that we human beings are social animals, even though some may consciously decide to live on a mountaintop or in the forest i.e. in seclusion, this inherent feature of the human organism of wanting to belong to a tribe and community can't be fully escaped. And I find this to be a beautiful thing.

However if we would turn our gaze towards consciousness, then it is indeed a different matter, where it isn't limited to the preconditions and constitution of the human organism the same way our personality and identity is. Consciousness itself is supremely flexible and yet somehow perfectly still, though this is a topic which is we will address concisely in the last chapters of this book.

For now, and for the sake of this chapter on relationships as a means of allowing life to be lived more fully is justifiable.

When we are born we are brought into a world of great care (if we are lucky) and surrounded by loving family and relatives.

This sense of community is indeed how most people try to increase wellbeing for them selves, that is by either trying to escape from their psychological noise or to a state they deem to be more pleasant than the one they find themselves in.

For someone wanting to be more immersed in life, relationships are a wonderful way of sharing and growing. This isn't always the case, as people often see friendships and relationships as a way of letting off steam which they have gathered throughout the day(s).

This is not the way of direct experience, but rather a cheap escape from your crude psychological state of mind.

One who is interested in being immersed isn't escaping for relief, they are rather exploring for the sake of life and experience.

There is a great difference there, a difference that makes all the difference in the world.

TIPS ON BEING FULLY IMMERSED WHEREVER YOU ARE

If you have a problem with staying present in certain places and surroundings, perhaps mostly when in contact with other people, here are a couple distinct tips which you can make use of next time you feel yourself being distracted by whatever the distraction. It could be anxieties, stress, overthinking, it doesn't really matter, you can transcend them all.

FOCUS

You could try with focusing on a certain thing that catches your fascination, it could be a certain feature of the person your talking to, a facial feature or a bodily feature. It could be the sound of a certain syllable or word that the/she pronounces.

Your object of focus could really be anything in the world, except for your overly personal thoughts and identity, that isn't a good object of focus, unless you are focusing on it with a meditative eye. Oh then it is indeed a completely different matter altogether. and

Furthermore here I am going out a limp with saying that you don't really have to focus and "listen" on what they say, but I find it much more effective to attune yourself to the energy and vibration which they emanate.

The words that they speak are most-often coming from their own personal projections, so it isn't that important in the end.

What is important is their Being. Focus on that and witness the transformation happening within you and perhaps within them as well. They might just like you all the more, because you connect to them in a more existential level than a superficial level.

DEFOCUS

This second tip is the opposite of the first one, namely by defocusing and resting your attention in its source.

Here you simply absorb your entire experience without caring for anything in particular. You welcome the totality of each moment, though it can feel overwhelming at times, you are in reality never overwhelmed.

This second way of being is probably my favourite. It is the main key to the door of perpetual direct experience. It is effortless and smooth.

Life is happening and you are dancing freely in it, simultaneously as you are the witness of all these happenings.

This defocusing is from my perspective, what meditation truly is.

Meditation is about letting go of all effort and resting in your original place.

By defocusing your meditative lens, you become the very meditation itself.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

If you feel distracted or caught in a certain way of thinking or “feeling”. You can easily break this spell by letting your creative powers loose.

Simply flow with the moment, and let your spontaneity be your only compass.

Sing something creative, say something peculiar, move around in complex ways and tell me if you still have this strange problem of not “being present”.

8. PSYCHEDELICS

Psychedelics are incredibly powerful tools that can function as a sober wake up call for the human mind locked in its own self-reflective egoic bubble. They have the power to be exceptionally healing and constructive for a human beings wellbeing but they can also be quite ruthless in their exposing of hidden tendencies, energies and tensions in the human mind.

What kind of experience you will have from the psychedelics is often dependant on your attitude and openness. Most often the case is that the more you resist the overwhelming experience, the harder and more bitter it gets.

You probably weren't expecting psychedelics to be featured on this list of ways of living more fully. But it is indeed a very effective way of inducing the state of direct experience.

WHAT ARE PSYCHEDELICS?

Psychedelics aren't just the experience of a myriad of colours, sounds, feelings and forms spinning in amazing patterns right before your eyes. Though this intensive "sensitivity" aspect of it is quite neat, it isn't the crux of the cookie.

Most often times, the psychedelics are there for a profound insights and realizations about your own

human condition in the midst of nature and the universe. They humble you by showing the incredibly variety and flexibility of what consciousness can be like.

The layers of complexity within our manifest reality are simply infinite.

Psychedelics could also be seen to be like enzymes that kick-start your interaction and experience of the very stuff of what consciousness and life is all about. They are chemical instruments that have the power to almost forcibly break down any mental and emotional barriers that a person has build around himself or herself growing up.

As I just mentioned, psychedelics has a tendency of almost always compelling you to live life directly, there's no second way about it. If you happen to take a sufficient dose of psilocybin, LSD, DMT or Ayahuasca, your perception will most definitely be reoriented, empowered and realigned with your immediate experience.

You most likely will find it very difficult to “live safely” thinking about your everyday things that your mental projections and illusions produce during an ordinary day.

These substances also have the power to reveal unto you many things that have stayed hidden, repressed or dormant within your psyche.

As the late Terence McKenna once said, the universal effects of psychedelics appear to be that they dissolve boundaries and that they compel you to the experience of what he called the “felt presence of direct experience.”

As touched upon just now, whether you want to or not, your life will become more direct during a psychedelic trip. You may come in contact with your own spiritual centre and this may be quite alarming for your personal psychological identity and ego.

This alarming and subsequent resistance to the experience, can sometimes result in a “bad trip”.

So acclimatising to the attitude of “letting go” and “allowing” are vital for a good experience and deeper insights into your own self.

AREN'T PSYCHEDELICS ILLEGAL DRUGS?

Just to reword McKenna's insightful thoughts again, you have to take the step of freeing your mind from cultural ideology and conditioning, because to buy everything the law and state feeds you with as infallible and true is downright foolishness.

To class psilocybin or DMT with heroin and cocaine like many governments around the world are doing is an incredibly misleading, erroneous and even immoral act to do.

These are not the same substances, not at all.

That being said, it is also true that psychedelics may not be well-suited for everyone, because of the incredibly diversity that lies in the personality, stage of life and other factors like ones own constitution, i.e. genes and what have you.

Psychedelics can be as I said in the beginning of this chapter; incredibly helpful and healing for many people suffering from deep psychological anguish, and it would be almost a crime to withhold the medicinal and therapeutic benefits of some of these plants and substances.

HOW TO USE PSYCHEDELICS

Like any other tool out there in your toolbox, it all depends on how you use it. The classic example is the example of a knife. Because a knife can be effectively used to simplify your time cooking and eating, or it could be used to hurt another human being.

The tools are innocent, but the malevolence and ignorance of the user is not.

SET AND SETTING

I don't recommend you going into a psychedelic trip if your set and setting is lacking in any important way, as being in a comfortable and supporting space is crucial for a overall "good" trip.

Therefore having a relaxed and proper surrounding can be of utmost importance. Surround yourself with people who are psychologically sound and existentially humble, then you will most likely come out of the experience a wiser, refreshed and reinvigorated human being.

ATTITUDE

Being earnest, humble and patient are three good means of approaching the psychedelic experience. This graceful attitude can save you even if your set and settings don't turn out that great.

One has to keep in mind that ones reality is always co-created by your own personality and its interpretations.

Therefore my last tips is to keep an even mind even when the going gets rough, that is, stay on the path to life and its magnificence!

9. MEDITATION

Through meditation you become a witness of all things that happens to you, within and without. You become a witness to your body, thoughts, emotions and also the seemingly external world. Through this witnessing you are naturally detached, or as I previously used the term “defocused”, to a certain degree from those phenomena appearing before you.

That being said, when one is sufficiently distanced (in a healthy way) from ones own psychological noise, life naturally and spontaneously becomes direct and immediate.

You will not be able to help yourself but to be more directly in tune with existence.

However when your consciousness becomes mixed with the psychological identity, life is filtered and watered down. From this perspective the asphyxiating identity is the "sickness" and meditation is the "cure".

Meditation, when reaching its completion, brings you back to your own core, and from this core life is always direct. Meditation unlike the first paths mentioned, has more of a long-term and permanent quality to it. I feel that when one has completed ones own meditation, one will always be in direct

experience. There will be no such thing as indirect living or a gross superfluous psychological identity. It will evaporate in the light of each moment.

This is the chief objective of meditation.

Most people's definition of meditation is that it is an activity that one undertakes a certain time-period during the day, to calm down ones overthinking mind. I deem this understanding of meditation to be a rather superficial and inadequate one.

Meditation in my own dictionary and more importantly in my own experience, is something that one fulfils. The goal of meditation is to know yourself, and to know oneself should be a discovery and subsequently an established profound understanding should grow from this discovery.

You won't have to "re-know" yourself every day at 4 p.m, if you get my point.

That being said, even after one has completed ones meditation, one can still enjoy a couple moments during the day to sit down and relax the body and mind fully. This is indeed what I do and its lovely. 😊

HOW BEGIN YOUR MEDITATION

But before one can talk about completion of the meditation, one has to first of all know how to begin it.

If you have done some of the ways covered in this book, you will indeed have come in contact with your direct experience, which is one and the same thing as what meditation induces.

It isn't hard to meditate, and you don't need to "sit" down or create a certain ritual of meditating in a certain way or pose, though these can be attractive preconditions for some people, but they are not definitely essential.

Your meditation is you simply witnessing the content of your consciousness without too much personal identity latching on to every object occurring in your experience.

Meditation is our true position, what is needed for us to realize this is only for our conscious and unconscious attention to be realigned and absorbed with it.

How to do this?

Do as the great mystic Plotinus said...

Withdraw into yourself and look.

ON THE COMPLETION OF YOUR MEDITATION

One does not complete ones meditation, its rather other way round, where the meditation completes

you, the active seeker of truth and perpetual direct experience.

When your meditation is complete, your sense of presence is sufficiently detached from your psychological identity, and in this detachment, you have come home into the universal space of consciousness.

This presence is your truest expression and original sense of existence. Honour it and you will be fulfilled like nothing other can fulfil you.

The light of life from your own core...

Marvellous isn't it?

10. CONTEMPLATION

You may have noticed that I'm a fan of combining and mixing techniques to see what works the best, and just like I recommended the combination of sensitivity and movement, so too I will advise the way of meditation and intellectual contemplations on the nature of reality. Combining these two can be a strong and healthy duo when it comes to gaining insights into the nature of reality, and of course as a means of accessing ones own direct experience.

Now what constitutes and differentiates a contemplation from a meditation? This is a good question to ponder and hopefully answer.

My own view is that meditation is a silent witnessing to everything that happens in ones own subjective reality, while contemplation is an active sowing together of ideas, mostly meditative and wise ones, and insights to an intellectual pattern that is compatible with and empowers your direct experience. Contemplations are hints and cardboard signs that guide you to that which already is true, or in other words they are explorations and most often affirmations to the Truth.

What is the Truth? The truth is that life is experience and experience is life, and the more directly you are experiencing your reality, the more fulfilled you shall be as a sentient human being.

So you might be wondering, how is this contemplation done?

My answer would be that contemplation is something natural and simple, it is the act of creative thinking and seeing patterns between certain ideas.

SELF SIMILARITY IN NATURE AND MEANING

One of the most powerful contemplations I have come across is the phenomenon of self-similarity in nature and cosmos. A contemplation that most people somewhere in the backs of their minds know but most likely aren't fully conscious of.

Take the example of the structure and mechanism of an atom and compare this microscopic world to the structure and mechanism of a solar system.

What does this mean?

This could mean anything under the sun really or nothing at all, everything depending on your approach and attitude towards it.

A crucial idea to contemplate, (giggles), is that nothing really “means” anything unless there is someone, i.e. you to project meaning unto that object in question.

That being said, the actual experience and observation of this self-similarity in nature is compelling. This can be seen in all imaginable expressions of consciousness; the spectrum is incredibly vast and extensive.

Contemplate on that!

11. PRAYER

When one stumbles upon the realization that ones own contemplations and meditative efforts may have their own set of limitations, one need not give in to despair, but one can turn towards the power of prayer. Prayer takes one deeper into ones souls abode, through true prayer one becomes conscious of the deepest existential yearnings and desires of ones own being. I say true prayer, because prayer has in many ways become dishonoured within most religions, as in many cases it has become an instrument to somewhat bargain or extract personal favours from life/God/universe.

This mundane form of prayer is often done routinely and automatically by the “believer”, and lacks the quintessential quality of earnestness and harmonious thinking.

In a sense true prayer is much more about impersonal, universal yearnings rather than the active seeking of personal gain or anything like that.

In my own experience true prayer can bring you very close to the Supreme experience of reality, it brings you to the very pearly gates of Nirvana, and combined with meditation, contemplation it can and will make your consciousness blossom into the marvellous beauty that it truly is.

MY OWN EXPERIENCE WITH PRAYER

If I would again draw from my own experience, I can begin with saying that in my late teens and early twenties I adhered to most atheistic ideas.

However I realized later on, when my seeking for the truth was at its climax, that my “atheism” never truly stood in the way of my prayers, maybe just a little bit but not so much as one would think.

These spontaneous prayers towards existence happened naturally in despite of my atheistic background, they happened also without any external influences, i.e. priests or other religiously inclined individuals commanding me to do so.

When I realized that my meditations and contemplations had certain limits, or that my identity had some residual arrogance which couldn't be so easily transcend by those other methods, something within me naturally became drawn to the act of praying.

So how did I go about with my so called true prayer?

The first thing I noticed preceding the prayer was a deep sense of urgency accompanied with a earnestness to reach a state of true understanding of my own true nature.

Not so chocking considering that I was after all a seeker of truth.

Only after one is out of a certain situation can one really start to evaluate it. This is certainly the case when I'm thinking about my own experience meditating and contemplating reality and myself.

Something within me was still unsolved, some arrogance and personal projections was still in the way of me and direct experience. This arrogance was and still is dissolved through my prayers/meditations/contemplations.

This trinity of meditation, contemplation and prayer together was responsible for me coming a state of total immersion or direct experience of life and myself.

No filtrations are made in the same way as before, before when I was far too invested entangled with my identity and personal ideas about life.

There truly is the greatest difference between living life through the medium of direct experience in contrast to the personal way of navigating through life. Only now do I realize the numerous limitations that I set upon myself when believing in the myriad of projections and by my unwise following of these projections and distractions into nowhere but inadequacy.

My spontaneous praying guided me to my own spiritual centre, a placeless place of stillness and rest.

This is the pinnacle of meditation and this brings you gradually into the state of sanctity...

Which is what?...

12. SANCTITY

I call this last path, though it's not really a path, I call it sanctity. I decided to use the word sanctity as an homage and allusion to Meister Eckharts luminous sermons, but in truth sanctity can also be seen to be synonymous with enlightenment, self-realization, nirvana, moksha, silence, stillness or what ever floats your existential boat.

As I just said, it's not really a path but rather a placeless destination, a destination that is yourself, or your own formless awareness.

This is what the Buddha's and Mystics of the world have discovered within themselves.

The pearl of existence which is something ageless, something formless, something nameless, something quite indescribable.

Maybe it isn't a "something" and more a nothingness, a term which The Buddha used to describe the indescribable.

Why nothingness you might ask?

Well because how could something that is formless, ageless and without any distinguishable quality be described as an ordinary object. It is not "something" that one perceives the same way one sees an apple before oneself.

It's rather something like an "absolute subjectivity", again a term I've borrowed from a Zen master, which means that you are looking from your absolute subjective perspective.

You aren't caught in the bubble of that which you are seeing anymore, but somehow completely detached yet utterly immersed in the moment.

Which means that in the dynamic dance of life you simply become indistinguishable from life and its spontaneous fresh unfolding simultaneously as you in the unmoving place of sanctity are the ultimate witness of all things.

One may call this ultimate seeing as God, the Source, Buddhahood or the Supreme Being, but it doesn't really matter, it is only necessary to see that it is the very substratum of existence, a substratum which your experience of being an independent, autonomous, long lasting human entity takes place.

Isn't it quite magical that I can actually write these words and you can hopefully understand and translate them into your own experiential reality?

When you realize this "source-being" to be within yourself. When you experientially "see" and intuitively know this formless substrate of existence to be responsible for all things arising within and

without, then you have achieved this state of sanctity.

A state of existential tranquillity and joy beyond anything your psychological mind could ever manufacture and deliver unto you.

Moreover when you are in sanctity, you are perpetually living life through direct experience.

Your reality is the one reality.

You cannot deviate from it because you realize that even the deviations are contained within the greater harmony.

This is when you have arrived...

You have reached the goal.

You are free...

You are life itself!

FINAL THOUGHTS

Direct experience is life unreserved and unfiltered lived boldly.

Live directly and come to see with your own eyes what I mean. You can never come to the end of direct experience, which means that you can never come to the end of the potential expressions of life...

When we are living fully and directly, we are happy. Our personal projections about life become mist-like while our immediate existence becomes our life.

This happiness which is derived from living fully in each moment is innate to your consciousness, only if you have the wisdom to allow it. It is in fact the joy of all life, the joy to experience and taste.

If you rather go more with your ideas about life, something incredibly subtle will try and succeed in hijacking your consciousness to its own capricious nature.

This sense of “separate-self” is the mental process that is responsible for indirect experience, i.e. unfulfilled living.

Transcend this by living directly and ultimately achieving this state of sanctity within the confines of your own soul.

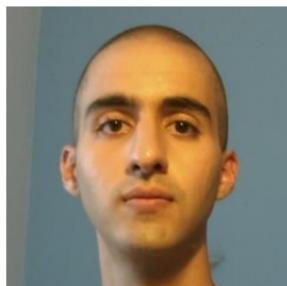
Here is your salvation, whether you be a Christian or a Hindu, a Muslim or an atheist, a philosopher or a poet, an apple or an orange, a wife or a whore, a pauper or a king, a lover or a loved.

Here is for life, here is for you!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel Seeker is a wandering dervish and lifelong student of the past, present and future.

He realized that he was made of immaculate and timeless consciousness when meditating in his hermit cave on the island of Gotland.



He's the author of a number of books on spirituality, presence and direct experience. His most recent project is a online video course named: "**Liberated:** The Spiritual Way of Not Giving a F*ck". You can find it at <https://nirvanic.co/liberated/>