

BE AWAKE & ALERT

06/01/2024

Hi,

During my sleep last Tuesday night, I found myself in a virtual universe where people are programmed by an application that controls everything. The source of its energy is Power-Hunger and Selfishness. All of the people's activities are monitored, influenced or manipulated by this application. In this dream, I was struggling to know my own identity. Although I was told that I have my rights as well as my freedom, all of my actions or speeches were monitored and sometimes censored. I felt helpless and I was suffocating in this universe... Suddenly the sound of the air conditioner woke me up!

Laying there, I continued to think about this dream. I remembered Master Luong Minh Dang's remark from the HUE Seminars, "We think we have freedom, but we really do not! The fates of humanity and our world rest in the hands of the capitalists, politicians, scientists and religious leaders."

We are living in a world of advanced technology where virtual reality, social media and artificial intelligence will eventually put us to sleep, if not in a coma. Throughout history, we can see how people's lives are gradually affected, manipulated, or controlled by these sophisticated systems. The architects behind them are the capitalists, politicians, scientists and religious leaders. They feed us with data information to achieve their objectives that are based on power-hunger and selfishness. If we really think about it, they give us a false sense of security. They want to keep us in a dormant state with minimal curiosity or resistance, instead of being awake to question or challenge their authority and decisions. For the majority of the population, people's mind eyes are blindfolded, their hearts are numbed, their hands are tied, and their feet are chained. These powerful leaders used the educational systems to indoctrinate us with their ideologies and rules. They established the political systems to keep us in line. They continue to create situations that cause animosity, confusion, doubts, temptations, and so on. Eventually, those issues bring aggression, disease, envy, fear, hatred, stress, or war that divide us and keep us under control.

More than 25 centuries ago in India, Prince Siddhartha said, "*I am born for supreme knowledge, for the welfare of the world—thus this is my last birth.*" ([Buddha Carita](#) 1:34) After reaching the Enlightenment, people saw him as the Buddha or Awakened One. He used this status to spread the teachings and to break the caste system. Then, 5 centuries later in Israel, Jesus Christ had to fulfill His role as the Messiah who came to liberate His people from the Roman empire. The people were drawn to Him because of His ability to perform many extraordinary and miraculous deeds. Jesus had to confirm that He is the Son of God, and ultimately sealed His fate.

At the present time, we are living in a very turbulent environment where we have the imminent threats of pandemics, nuclear / biological / chemical wars, mass extinction, and so on.. People are hoping and looking for the One who will come to help our world. I think the concept of the One Messiah (or Savior) can be a big challenge, or perhaps a major threat to the ruling powers on earth. These powerful leaders will either find ways to manipulatively control it, otherwise, they will eradicate it completely. Therefore, each of us can cleverly or wisely be the "nobody" or the "unknown" who can silently make a difference. Then, suddenly we have many "unknown" variables that have the abilities to effectively help the entire system. From this viewpoint, we will see the emergence of the thousands or millions of Buddhas (Awakened) or Christs (Messiah), instead of the One.

I recalled the scenes from my 2 favorite movies:

In *The Matrix* (1999), Morpheus believed in Neo and offered the red and blue pills. Neo took the red pill and woke up to realize he is a part of the matrix.

In *Dune Part 2* (2024), Stilgar saw the signs that were written and believed in Paul. But Paul had to drink the Water of Life and faced death in order to be awakened to know his destiny and purpose.

More than 25 centuries ago, Prince Siddhartha discovered a path for humans to be awakened. After meditating under the bodhi tree for 49 days, he reached the Enlightenment and saw the Truth. He was different after he successfully reached the Enlightenment. In a way, he was the awakened one who walked among people who were dormant. They could see or detect the difference in him as written:

When the Buddha started to wander around India shortly after his enlightenment, he encountered several men who recognized him to be a very extraordinary being. They asked him: "Are you a god?"

"No," he replied.

"Are you a reincarnation of god?"

"No," he replied.

"Are you a wizard, then?"

"No."

"Well, are you a man?"

"No."

"So what are you?" They asked, being very perplexed.

Buddha simply replied: "I am awake."

(Dona Sutra AN 4:36)

More than 20 centuries ago, Jesus Christ tried to bring the light to this world so people could see the Truth and find the Kingdom of God. But the powerful Roman empire and the Jewish religious leaders extinguished this light by crucifying Him. Jesus encouraged the disciples to stay awake and pray because in this process they would be consciously aware of the communication link with God. Jesus reminded us to stay awake and always be consciously alert:

- But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man. (Luke 21:36)
- Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Mark 14:38)

I know you have heard or read about the concept of "awakening" or "consciousness" many times already. But by considering your current situations or environments, your logical option is to go with the flow in order to sustain yourself as well as your family members. These ideas may catch your attention for a short time, but you do not have the time nor the energy to pursue them until you meet your destiny. I was in a dormant state as I went with the flow to pursue my goals such as career path, financial stability, and relationship in the 1990s. However, I had a "wake-up" call on the fateful Friday night of 04/13/1990 and met my fate in a fatal car crash. Being the sole survivor, I remember laying in the dark emergency room feeling absolutely hopeless, and I was awakened after hearing, "*You plan things, I make things happen!*" Realizing that I was given a second chance, I made a vow to follow the Divine Will, and my life has completely changed since that moment...

Interestingly, I came across these research articles (shown below) and I saved them for our future reference:

NIH Research Study: [Awakening is not a metaphor - The effects of Buddhist meditation practices on basic wakefulness](#)

Journal of Consciousness Studies: [Seeking the Neural Correlates of Awakening](#)

Thank you,
Vu Tran

=====
On Tue, Jun 4, 2024 at 9:49 PM Richard Austin wrote:

Hi anh Vu,

As Divine synchronicity would have it, and before reading your email, I too have thought about the current power structure of the world. Although I believe many (particularly those in power), would deny this is the case on the surface, the power structure of the world seems to be stratified in a sort of caste system. The most “successful” ones who are yet in a dormant state and “in-flow” with the way society works, believe themselves to be free. However, I think otherwise. These “successful” people are actually quite enslaved by the ones who are TRULY in power! My guess is that the capitalists, politicians, scientists, and religious leaders provide a modicum of power/freedom to these folks to exemplify to them (and others) that they are “free” when, in fact, they are the most bound! While we all have to work to take care of ourselves, those who chase success may end up being the most bound by it, sadly. To me, this gives a fresher context of the quote credited to Sun Tzu (The Art of War) and made popular in the film The Godfather 2, to “Keep your friends close, and your enemies even closer.” Give someone the illusion of freedom in order to keep them bound.

This is why it’s important to remember the teachings of the Buddha and Jesus Christ, to wake up, transcend, and be *in* the world but not *of* it. Yet, not make waves for one’s own sake.

Hopefully this all makes sense.

Blessings,
Rich

=====
06/05/2024

Hi,

I received Richard’s thoughts on the power structure of our world. It seemed the universe was showing us something because last week I happened to watch a documentary film about the Japanese Kamikaze pilots during World War II. My father was a fighter pilot during the Vietnam War, and he shared with me those Japanese pilots were either indoctrinated or forced to commit suicide. During the later stage of the war, the Japanese generals were desperate and those pilots did not have a choice but to obey.

Regarding the rulers on earth, we have learned about many powerful empires that wanted to have absolute control throughout history. The Egyptian pharaohs believed they were the incarnations of the Deities. In imperial China, the emperor was considered the son of Heaven. He was the ruler of everything under the Heaven, as well as the bearer of the Mandate of Heaven; and his commands were considered as sacred edicts. In ancient Japan, the emperor was a god who is a human being. The Japanese people worshipped and showed absolute obedience to their divine emperor. For this reason, the Japanese military leaders sent the pilots and troops to die for their emperor during World War II. Personally, I have this question: under God’s eye, how can the lives of millions of soldiers as well as their family members be less important than the life of one emperor or one dictator?

I remembered Master Luong Minh Dang’s remark about our fates being in the hands of the capitalists, politicians, scientists and religious leaders. At this point in history, the ruling powers are very clever and manipulative. They utilize all the advanced technologies, financial resources, political avenues, religious influences, or social environments to keep the people under their control.

It seems that we are living in a world and everything is managed by a matrix. Our identity as well as existence can be virtually erased by the matrix if we do not follow its guidelines and rules.

I agree with Richard's viewpoint of being awake and not making waves for one's own sake. Whether you are aware of this issue or not, each of us will need to re-assess our own situation and make a decision. Now is the time we need to address these questions:

(1) **Are you awake or asleep?**

(2) **If you are awake, are you going to be a silent / unknown or a vocal / popular instrument?**

I know all of us have many concerns as well as goals that include our family, health, faith, career, relationships, financial stability, and so on. They are very important to us. Personally, I believe we can help ourselves as well as others more effectively when we are awake.

Thank you,
Vu Tran