

Published: December 31, 2023

Citation: Lattuada, P. L., 2023. Awakening: The main road to integral healing. Medical Research Archives, [online] 11(12).

<https://doi.org/10.18103/mra.v11i12.4887>

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.18103/mra.v11i12.4887>

ISSN: 2375-1924

REVIEW ARTICLE

Awakening: The main road to integral healing

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ABSTRACT

A condition of awakening consciousness seems to be characterised as one of the most significant aspects in achieving integral healing, i.e., psycho-spiritual, organismic and social. There are different types of awakening to be considered from contextual to structural, from vertical to horizontal to distal or proximal.

The new paradigm of the science of consciousness and the approach of transpersonal psychology provide maps and methods for mastering the inner experience, fostering the conditions for awakening and realization of the Self.

The purpose of that article is to focus on the importance of considering awakening of consciousness among the landscape of psychological development both for individual and society. Through a phenomenological approach we'll describe the awakening process,

Thanks the result of two inventories we'll focus on characteristics of awakening and we'll suggest the Integral Transpersonal Vision as an approach to the experiences of awakening.

Keywords: Awakening, Awareness, Consciousness, Self – Realization, Healing, Second Attention.

Humanity is facing the problems of post-modernity, from pollution, water use and migration, to globalization, lack of time, speed, loss of contact with oneself, digitalization, global warming, species extinction, global finance, information inflation, self-importance, hypertrophy of rationality, and competition.

Consensus consciousness, through the dual mind and rational thought, seeks a solution in the material world, a choice that seems to have come to a standstill.

As Goswami explain:

"The philosophy that has dominated science for centuries (physical, or material, realism) assumes that only matter—consisting of atoms or, ultimately, elementary particles—is real; all else are secondary phenomena of matter, just a dance of the constituent atoms. This worldview is called realism because objects are assumed to be real and independent of subjects, us, or of how we observe them.

The notion, however, that all things are made of atoms is an unproven assumption; it is not based on any direct evidence for all things." (Goswami 1995 p. 34)

At the same time, seemingly unseen, a different vision has survived the millennia and since the dawn of humanity through the songs of shamans, the scriptures of the sages, the medicines of the forest, the myths of the different traditions and the parables of the masters recites its message of awakening.

Various metaphors have been used throughout history by the wisdom of mankind to emphasize the importance of awakening; one thinks of Plato's Cave Myth (Bloom 1968), or Campbell's Hero's Myth (Campbell 2000),

Andersen's The Naked King (Andersen 2016), the shamanic admonition, the world is what you dream it (Perkins 1994), to Prince Siddhartha, Buddha the Awakened (Chopra 2007).

See what Tart point out:

"We need to awaken to reality, the reality of the problems caused by our fragmented selves, so we can discover our deeper selves and the reality of our world, undistorted by our entranced condition." Tart (2001 p. 32).

A new Paradigm

The good news is that, like the Naked King, more and more clear eyes and innocent looks are able to recognise and hear it.

More and more Heroes are on the journey who have embarked and are embarking on the path of awakening to get out of the cave of identifications with the shadows cast on the wall by the false needs of the ego.

From a scientific point of view, a new paradigm is available to anyone who wants to set out aware that matter is the concrete manifestation of the flow of consciousness, the foundation of everything.

Following his theory of monistic idealism Goswami extend the concept by affirming that "the universe is "self-aware" and that is consciousness itself that creates the physical world, "nothing-but-consciousness must be experienced in order to be truly understood." (Goswami 1995 p. 23)

Then, to continue with Goswami:

"The centerpiece of this new paradigm is the recognition that modern science validates an ancient idea—the idea that consciousness, not matter, is the ground of all being." (Goswami 1995 p. 24).

By his side Faggin, the father of microchips, presenting his Quantum Field Theory explain:

"Consciousness is the capacity to know through an experience of qualia, that is, through the sensations and feelings that carry with them the meaning of what is known. The capacity to know must therefore exist before knowledge, and knowledge brings into existence that which is first known." (Faggin 2022).

The transpersonal approach, which offers tools and methods to master the inner experience of states of consciousness and stages of thinking, suggests a way forward based on key competences such as: partnership, creativity, emotional competence, connection with the Self, tolerance of uncertainty, service, interconnection, fluidity, mastery of states of consciousness, archetypal experience, readiness for change, trust, listening, awareness, self-observation, disidentification.

It seems that nothing is lacking, after millennia of evolution, centuries of culture, thanks to the new information technologies and the ancient and new inner technologies, thanks to the science of matter and the modern science of consciousness, humanity is ready for a leap, a leap of consciousness that takes the form of an awakening, an exit from the cave of the script written by a mind imprisoned by the drama of control, from the dream of consensual reality dominated by fear and its conditioning.

Some might say: it would be so easy!

Then we might reply, when a flower blooms, it seems easy, when a spring gushes, it seems easy, when the sun rises, it seems easy, endless processes have taken place to make

such a miracle possible, which at the right moment simply happens.

But what if it is the moment? What if we woke up from the dream of Cronos, the linear time that re-proposes repetitive patterns to us, always the same, and made ourselves available to Kayros, the auspicious moment, the occasion, here and now.

Metologue on Awakening

An awakening in which we dare to realise that the right moment is now.

- Like achieving enlightenment in twelve moves?

- Such a question expresses exactly that typical skepticism masquerading as rationality, generated in truth by the fear of stepping out of one's comfort zones, leaving the safe harbor of one's convictions and crossing the Herculean pillars of the recognition of one's own nature.

- You try to make poetic sense of what makes no sense at all. But do you look around you? Do you read the newspapers? Do you browse social media? Where do you see the awakening?

- "How difficult it is to see the dawn within the dusk" - sang Battiato, the Italian singer. You cannot see the new with old eyes, while sleeping you only see your dreams. The paradox of awakening is that it only happens when you realise you are asleep and as long as you are asleep the dream seems real.

- And who tells you that you are awake or that your presumption makes you think you are?

- That's right, bravo. That is why we need a psychology of awakening, a science of consciousness that knows how to collect data

on a phenomenology of higher psychic states, of self-realization.

In this way one could study with method and guarantees of validity the claims of millenary traditions such as Buddhism and Vedanta or the transpersonal experiences described by those who have experienced spiritual emergencies, peak experiences, or non-ordinary states of consciousness.

- Yes, but real life is about those who face real problems and don't have time to play at being enlightened.

- Have you ever tried forgetting to sleep or deciding to wake up?

- What do you mean?

- Sleep as well as waking up are phenomena that happen to us, side effects that happen when the right conditions are created. Just as it is possible to study the organic conditions that determine the physiological state of wakefulness or sleep, in the same way it is possible to study the psychological conditions that determine states of consciousness equivalent to sleep or awakening.

- You mean objectively, measurably?

- This too is a question that demonstrates the myth of consensual reality in which we are all immersed unless we do something to notice. Your question assumes that the basis of the universe is matter and that the object is out there separate from the object in here. The 'awakened' of every tradition have been telling us for millennia, and they do so with great detail, providing maps and tools to make the journey, they repeat that at the base of the universe there is consciousness (Goswami, 1995) and that there is no separation between object and subject.

- You mean there is no separation between you and me?

- I tell you that the science of consciousness suggests to us that every experience is made up of matter, energy, and consciousness. Matter follows classical physics; Consciousness follow Quantum physics. We are separated in matter but not in energy and consciousness. I tell you that realising this is a good step towards awakening. I also tell you that when you are asleep you do not see who is awake, when you are awake you see who is asleep. And this is a fact that should be accepted.

The awakening process

Wanting to analyze the awakening process in detail, we could identify a contextual and a structural awakening, so to speak.

By contextual awakening we mean the many little awakenings that may occur in our lives: when we have an insight, a sudden understanding, when we realise an overlooked detail, when we see a truth beyond appearances.

By structural awakening we identify a real leap in consciousness characterised by a radical change of worldview.

At first glance it might seem that the latter is far more significant, but on closer inspection we realise that the latter without the former risks being characterised as the most classic of spiritual by-passes. This is a frequent risk in contexts with a strong spiritual imprint such as religious communities, human potential development movements, experiential groups of meditative practices or traditional ceremonies.

A certain psychology reminds us that we are so dormant in the sleep of consensual reality that we constantly come across occasions of awakening that, precisely because they are frequent and generalized, we tend to overlook.

Think of the most mundane of situations, reading and answering daily e-mails. The consensual reality is that we are in a hurry, we neglect details, we read without paying attention, thinking of something else, we answer trying to make the minimum effort, maximum output, the important thing is to get the task done. The awakening could be characterised by the use of a '*second attention*' capable of making us realise that behind those few lines on a screen there is a person, a soul on a journey who has shared his time and thoughts with us, who would like to be listened to, understood, and respected just as much as we would like to be.

Or think about when we are wronged and react with anger, when we feel neglected and try to impose ourselves, in which case waking up might mean recognising the wounded child inside us and caring for it instead of getting angry with the other person, or even seeing the helplessness in our aggressor's eyes and feeling the compassion flowing from our heart.

Awakening in the everyday life.

The story goes that a Catholic missionary in the presence of the conditions of an African slum complained to God: "Lord, can't you see how much misery, why don't you do something? Then the Lord answered him: "but I have done something, I have made you."

If we look around, we might perhaps ask ourselves what to do? And remain bewildered. What to do in the face of the blindness of war, misunderstanding and discord, the resumption of the arms race, the seemingly unstoppable climate change, global crises and the overwhelming power of world finance, drought, misery, pandemics, hunger?

The tools of reason cannot find solutions.

If we stop to reflect, we realise that when we are at peace with ourselves, we do not make war, we do not pollute, we do not follow false needs, we do not seek to prevail over others; this is a fact verifiable by anyone.

It is therefore evident that achieving peace with oneself and helping others to do so is the most direct way to contribute concretely to the betterment of this world.

Of course, achieving inner peace may turn out to be a complex matter that requires several conditions to be fulfilled.

The proposition of this article is that awakening is among the most significant qualities to foster inner peace and thus, helping processes.

Entering deeply in the awakening process, we may add to structural and contextual ones too more kind of awakening: the vertical and the horizontal awakening, so to speak.

Thinking on awakening most of us would figure out the Enlightened guru meditating in a cave. We may consider this kind of mystical experience, connected with the divine, vertical awakening. They bring us insight about the ultimate nature, the essence of things.

Actually, the true challenge is to act as if one is awakened in the ordinary life. A horizontal awakening, we may say. What am I feeling inside, what's am I doing, where do am I, what's actually happening, what's behind appearances, who actually are you? Etc.

The horizontal awakening would be proximal or distal depending on the distance. I wake up to the awareness we all are sisters and brothers thus I feel compassion to the humankind, is an example of distal awakening; I wake up to be kind with you

while bother me, may be called horizontal proximal awakening.

True nature of awakening

In order to understand the true nature of awakening and its importance on wellbeing we can think of AI.

It seems that artificial intelligence is taking, inexorably, more and more space in the cultural landscape of post-modernity, a fact, sooner or later, the whole of humanity will have to come to terms with.

Whatever position we have on the matter seems to me to be of an absolutely revolutionary scope, but also, I think it is too early to say anything sensible about it.

One wonders what artificial intelligence will be able to do, how far it will go, Steven Hawkins (Hawkins 2014) had gone so far as to speculate that when machines realised, they were dependent on humans they would start looking for strategies to get rid of them, Matrix docet.

My invitation is to shift our attention and ask ourselves, what artificial intelligence will most likely never be able to do. The answer then might be: not doing, the Taoists' *wei wu wei* appears to be irretrievably precluded to it.

The *waking up* we are dealing with, the awakening of consciousness is characterised as a not doing, a realising, a disidentification, a disappearing we might say. Something peculiar to human being, even though seems we are too busy to run after technological progress to forget it.

AI may go far and overcome human being in some specific type of intelligence but never could get its true nature, the essence of wellbeing and individual achievements. We

are pointing out the difference existing among the Ego and the Self.

AI may help humanity on Ego issues, like success, security, commodity, economy, even health, while related to the physical body but never could assist us in getting the happiness, by reaching home, the essence of our Self.

Happiness, fulfillment, Self - Realization in fact lay beyond the threshold of the ego, once we give up our identifications, free from the attachment to our needs, then the ineffable dimensions of the Self open up, those more genuinely human transpersonal areas that characterise us and reveal our true nature.

We could hardly watch a machine disappear into itself, go beyond its artificial identity because beyond it would find nothing but electrical impulses and silicon.

Here, then, is the challenge that technological progress offers us, the threshold of contradiction, the eternal troubled conflict of humanity's spiritual evolution poised between temptations of the ego or surrender to the self, between illusions of desire, attachments to needs and fears or freedom from personal history, between egoic ambitions or adherence to right action, between the fullness of the goals to be realised or the emptiness of being oneself.

Perhaps it is time to break the deadlock and make a definitive, irreversible choice.

One of the greatest gifts that transpersonal psychology (TP) can offer humanity are models and methods for awakening.

Awakening is a psychological attitude, a state of consciousness that embraces a broad spectrum of conditions related to both the inner and outer quadrants of human experience.

Taylor masterfully defines the condition where TP may lead the client into wakefulness (Taylor, 2017), see below:

“The clearest way in which wakefulness manifests itself is in terms of the wakeful person’s different perception and experience of the world around them. Awakened individuals don’t perceive the same world as other people do. The world is as different a place to them as the world of a child is to the world of an adult — or, you might say, as the world of a pre-civilized indigenous person is to the world of a modern Westerner (Taylor, 2017, 198)”.

Taylor also conducted a qualitative research through an Awakening Inventory below I will report some of the results (Taylor, 2017).

Characteristic of wakefulness

Change in a wakeful person may start with a difference in the perceptual characteristics.

Taylor states the following:

Change in perceptual characteristics:

- Intensified perception
- Increased presentness/timelessness
- Awareness of “presence” or an all-pervading spiritual energy”
- Aliveness, harmony, and connectedness”

Wakefulness changes the way one feels inside; she/he may feel as if have been reborn with a new psychological identity.

Listed below are the changes in affective characteristics described by Taylor:

Change in affective characteristics:

- Inner quietness
- Transcendence of separation/sense of connection
- Empathy and compassion
- Well-being
- Absence of (or decreased) fear of death.

- Heightened/increased energy.

- Inner security

Spiritually advanced people are used to change the way to see themselves in relation to the world and other human beings. See the following changes indicated by Taylor:

Conceptual and cognitive characteristics:

- Lack of group identity
- Wide perspective: a universal outlook
- “Heightened sense of morality”
- Appreciation and curiosity

Consequently, awakened people change their Behavior and habits. Here are some of the changes listed by Taylor:

Change in behavioral characteristics:

- Altruism and Engagement
- Enjoyment of Inactivity: The Ability to “Be”
- Beyond Accumulation and Attachment / Nonmaterialism
- Autonomy: Living More Authentically
- Enhanced, More Authentic Relationships

The challenge

But achieving and maintaining an inner condition of awakening is directly related to context, that is, it is a participatory dialogue between the individual and the world.

And here comes the challenge of hyper-complexity.

On the one hand the psychological risk zones that constantly check our inner achievements and test their degree of depth, on the other hand hermeneutics: how do I interpret the condition achieved, who appropriates it within me, what do I do with it?

With Bronlet, we developed a *Psycho-Spiritual Experience Inventory (P-SEI) questionnaire*.

The analysis of the observations leads to interesting conclusions such as the spiritual

representation are necessary to ensure that spiritual experiences of awakening have a significant impact on the behaviors. (Bronlet, Lattuada 2023 p. 53)

On this threshold, every method stops, leaving room for individual freedom and responsibility.

How to develop the capacity to create representations of one's own spiritual experience of awakening? How, thus, to organise them within a semantic context that can give meaning?

I want to mention here a psychological function that more than any other may support the heroine/hero on the path, who inhabits us: the attention.

The Integral Transpersonal Vision (ITV)

However, awakened we may be, ordinary interaction with the world brings into play patterns of behaviour, habits that are automatically activated within us. To notice and unmask them is an act of responsibility to be renewed in every moment, here and now at the surface of contact with the things of the world.

The Second Attention

To do this, ordinary attention is not enough, we need a *second attention* (Lattuada 2023) that, unlike the first, pays attention to paying attention, pays attention to the attention we put into things and improves it, takes a step beyond, beyond habit, on the back stage, and unveils the veil of appearances, grasps the essence, at least a more essential appearance.

The *second attention* through the *Further Mode* (that is, by grasping in addition to what is on the stage also what is behind the scenes—the within and the without) provides us with the opportunity for a leap of consciousness.

It indicates a new frontier in attention and, in the *Further Mode*, the tool to investigate it.

It outlines a method of investigation and validation based on the inseparable participatory dialogue between the individual and the environment, which has its roots in psycho-physical contents that can be standardized thanks to phenomenologically accessible reference maps.

The *Further Mode* is defined as a particular mode of knowledge that grasps the complementary polarity in the manifest polarity; for example, it grasps what it reunites in separation and what it separates in reunification. The *Further Mode* represents a mode of knowledge that transcends the dual perspective of ordinary consciousness as it integrates opposites and provides a unified vision of existence.

The *Further Mode* allows us to unify dualisms (light and shadow, emptiness and fullness, highness and lowness, within and without) by making the two (what is separate) into the one (what is integrated). This allows us to access the essence, which is the dimension of the Self. (Lattuada 2022).

In ITV, the *Further Mode* works as both the figure and the background. It shows what the facts reveal and conceal, as well as what a boundary precludes but also what it indicates, on the surface of every contact, in the presence of every boundary, and in front of any event, the *Further Mode* suggests a pure unidentified presence, the zero, a way to grasp in addition to the figure, what appears, also the ground. (Koffka 1936).

Second Attention i.e., by paying attention to how I am paying attention while greeting you or talking to you or looking at you, how I am

paying attention to the sensations I feel when I enter into a relationship with you or the environment.

Applying Second Attention means to be able to shift from the classical linearity of dual mind to the quantum dimension of unitive mind, from cognition to meta-cognition, from knowledge to awareness, from symbolic to semantic (Faggin 2022).

Second Attention allow to see beyond the consciousness beyond the matter, to see the archetype beyond the personal behaviour.

On this journey, the little ordinary things of everyday life come as allies: paying attention to how careful I am when I fill up at petrol station, fill in an application form, pay a bill at a restaurant, sit on a chair, greet the shop assistant at the supermarket or the neighbor,

smile at the sunshine that greets me when I go out on the street, or at the trees, and the flowers, but also at the rubbish rather than the traffic of cars.

Life is a ceremony, the shamans say, the second *attention* helps us to act as if we knew it.

Conflicts of Interest Statement:

None

Acknowledgements Statement:

None

Funding Statement:

None

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Bio

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