

Beyond Presence: The Higher Realization of Bare Attention



The term 'presence' has been misused by seekers and teachers, who devalue it by using it in an incorrect and rather blanket way, as if it is the equivalent of an awakened state or even our true self. Common misinterpretations of 'presence' include having a connection to the present moment, awareness of one's psycho-emotional state, a condition of internal relaxation, or the mindfulness of the observer. But none of these describe what presence really is. True presence is an energetic state of the partial, yet incomplete, realization of me (either essence-me or pure me), established beyond the mind and personality. This presence is not me itself, but when activated, it is linked to the realization of bare attention. So true presence is a lower and incomplete realization bare attention.

There are also states of presence which are not linked to bare attention. For instance, some seekers experience ungrounded states of awareness or mystical expansions that give them the sense of a deeper presence beyond their personality. But here, me has not been awakened at all, and neither has the energetic foundation of bare attention been established. Such seekers should first strive get in touch with their me beyond the mind, and only then, based on that, awaken a clear center of consciousness.

In the past, we have said that the realization of bare attention is the equivalent to the realization of me, that it is the essence of pure subjectivity within the awakened state. What we are now saying is that bare attention itself can be realized on different levels: as mere presence or as the essence of pure subjectivity. When bare attention is realized as presence, it is not yet consciously linked to essence-me or pure me. This is why it is common for seekers who have awakened presence to not comprehend or recognize *who* is present. When they contemplate who is present, they feel that nobody is present – they cannot recognize themselves within this experience.

Indeed, many seekers are not even looking for themselves. In many cases, this is because they have been brainwashed by non-duality, either in the form of Buddhism or Advaita, to believe that the absence of an individual sense of self is positive. It is alright to not know any better for an initial period, and it may even be acceptable to seekers who do not want to know any better, to those who are satisfied living in the barren land of no



soul. One of the reasons that such seekers stop their journey at the experience of presence is because they have never sincerely looked for themselves; they have not evolved to the point of meeting and crossing over threshold-personality. And while their experience of presence is supposed to point to a deeper sense of me, they are unconscious of their me and remain lost in their psychological self.

To evolve beyond presence, one has to become aware of oneself and recognize one's me as the subject to presence. One has to wake up to one's pure subjectivity that is hidden in the energetic state of bare attention or presence. Not only is presence by itself an incomplete realization, but without meeting who is subject to it, we cannot embody our state, and therefore, we cannot surrender into universal reality either. Without meeting our identity in presence, there is simply no one to surrender.

While we are acknowledging different levels of bare attention here, it is important to understand that only the realization of bare attention as the essence of pure subjectivity is correct. In addition, even within this correct realization of bare attention, there are two distinct levels. The initial realization of bare attention as our pure subjectivity is not fully me; rather, it is like the first level of meeting that me. Here, pure attention is consciously recognizing bare attention as pure subjectivity. In order to become the real me, however, bare attention has to not just be recognized but embodied by pure attention. It is not enough to recognize bare attention from pure attention. Even within presence, there is a very rudimentary level of pure attention recognizing bare attention. But it is not a conscious process and therefore, pure attention fails to fully meet the identity of essence-me or pure me hidden within bare attention. How do we know that we experience presence? We may not be able to feel who is in presence, or even sense how we are recognizing that presence, but we are aware of the experience of presence. Presence on its own has no consciousness. Although it is linked to me through pure attention, it is just an energetic state. It is pure attention that is allowing us to know presence, even though we may not be aware that pure attention is doing this. In other words, we recognize the state, presence, almost as if it is an object we are observing, while remaining unconscious of pure attention, which is what is recognizing and illuminating that state.

To awaken our soul, pure attention must intentionally and purposefully recognize bare attention, which means that it is learning to establish a conscious relationship with its source, the very substance of me. So pure attention must merge with bare attention in the act of recognition; bare attention must be embodied by pure attention. What is the extra factor that is needed for this to happen? It is the correct intention. Pure attention has to be integrated with our higher intention, which is an aspect of essence-me's intelligence. Pure attention without intention is unconscious, and intention without discriminative intelligence is blind and unable to give pure attention the correct focus. The key element in the intentional use of pure attention at this level is that, through meeting and having its relationship with bare attention, it is impregnating it with the seed of pure subjectivity, resulting in a growing embryo of pure subjectivity that increases in strength as pure attention continues to embody bare attention. The pitfall of presence is avoided because it is our subjective identity beyond the mind that is being born and nurtured in this process.



Summary

Bare attention awakens when pure attention recognizes the essence of me, and a portion of this pure attention merges with it.

On the level of pure me, the birth of bare attention is slightly different, as it includes the absorption of the energy of I am into our individual subjectivity, which is brought about through the surrender of pure attention into I am. This is what we call 'pure bare attention'. In the case of conscious me, pure attention is merging directly with essence-me to give birth to, and then embody, bare attention. This we call 'essential bare attention'.

The initial realization of bare attention, which is incomplete, is when pure attention links itself to essence-me or universal I am in an unconscious way, and so fails to awaken the subjectivity of bare attention. The outcome of this is the activation of presence.

In the correct but lower realization of bare attention, the first level of me is awakened, and we experience bare attention as the essence of our own self.

Finally, the proper birth of me takes place when pure attention embodies the previously established bare attention, resulting in the birth of a new identity. Here, we are in a conscious relationship with our own subjectivity through recognition and surrender, from pure attention to bare attention. Within me, the pure duality between pure attention and bare attention continues, but this duality is experienced in their unity.

The recognition and surrender of pure attention into bare attention is the true meaning of self-love. Pure attention is the lover and bare attention is the beloved; when they meet, the state of self-love is realized as the pure subjectivity of me. This is how our soul comes into existence. By establishing constant recognition and surrender from pure attention into bare attention, we stabilize self-love as a permanent state of our existence.

Blessings,
Anadi

For a full glossary of terminology please visit our website
www.anaditeaching.com/glossary