There Must Be More

When the Spirit-Soul Awakens Within You

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Michiel A.M. Arens



Author: Michiel A.M. Arens
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uitgeverij@jupiternederland.nl
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To the Reader

There Must Be More

You are born. You grow up. You learn to speak, to think, and to find your way in the world. You go to school, find work, build relationships, perhaps have children, make plans, achieve things, lose things, begin again, and all the while try to understand, as best you can, who you are and what you want to do with your life.

So much of this is so ordinary that you hardly stop to think about it. After all, life continually demands your attention. There is work to be done, there are people who need something from you, decisions have to be made, and every day brings its own small and significant events.

And yet, sometimes, in the midst of this entirely ordinary life, something extraordinary can happen.

A question may arise.

Not necessarily because something is wrong with your life, or because you are unhappy, but because you suddenly begin to suspect that what you see, do, and know may not be the whole story. You may have everything reasonably well in order and still, at an unexpected moment, find yourself touched by a thought that refuses to be easily dismissed:

Is this really all there is?

To be born, to live, and one day to die?

Or is there something within you that is seeking to unfold during this lifetime, something that may even touch upon the deeper purpose of your existence?

This book begins with that question.

It does not offer you an answer that you are expected to believe, nor does it ask you to adopt a particular worldview. Instead, it invites you to explore what happens when you do not immediately try to answer that question, but allow it to remain with you for a while and begin to look at your own life as though there might be something within it that you have not yet noticed.

For perhaps the extraordinary is not to be found somewhere beyond the ordinary.

Perhaps it lies hidden within it.

The Caterpillar and the Butterfly

A caterpillar does not know, as far as we can tell, that it can become a butterfly.

It lives its life as a caterpillar. It moves across leaves and branches, eats, grows, and responds to its surroundings. If we were to look only at its outward appearance, there would be little to suggest that within this same living being lies the possibility of an entirely different form of existence.

And yet that possibility is there.

The butterfly is not something that is added to the caterpillar from the outside one day. The possibility of becoming a butterfly belonged, from the very beginning, to the life that expressed itself in the form of a caterpillar.

This is precisely why such a simple metamorphosis offers such a powerful metaphor for the path explored in this book.

For what happens if a human being, too, is not merely what they presently know themselves to be?

What happens if your personality, your body, your history, your thoughts, feelings, desires, beliefs, and everything through which you have learned to describe yourself genuinely belong to you, but do not yet provide the complete answer to the question of who you are?

Inner development then takes on an entirely different meaning.

You do not need to keep improving yourself until you eventually become something else, nor do you need to turn away from ordinary human life. The question becomes far more interesting:

What does this human life already contain that is capable of unfolding?

A Core and a Field

To explore this question, we use a simple image throughout this book: a sphere with a core.

You can regard it as an image of creation that can be recognized at different levels of reality: a centre around which a field takes shape, and from which a particular activity radiates outward into that field.

We do not use this image as a scientific model that must be proven, but as an inner map through which you can begin to look at yourself.

The sphere represents your own small world: your body, your thoughts and feelings, your memories, experiences, relationships, and everything that has become part of the person you are today.

Yet at the centre of this small world, we propose the existence of a core that has not been created by your personal history.

Within that core, as it were, lies the original image of what may unfold within you, just as the possibility of the butterfly is already present in the life of the caterpillar.

For this core, we use an ancient term:

the Divine Spark.

The expression Divine Spark may easily give the impression that you must first accept some religious belief before you can continue reading. That is not how we use it here.

The Divine Spark is a name for the possibility that, at the heart of every human being, there is something that cannot be fully identified with the body, personality, or personal history; an original ground of life that has not been created by upbringing, success, disappointment, or experience, but which carries within itself the possibility of a different and deeper unfolding of what it means to be human.

You do not have to accept this as a belief.

You can explore it for yourself.

Perhaps you have experienced moments in which you sensed something of this: an unexpected silence in which everything seemed, for a moment, to fall into place; an insight whose origin you could not quite explain; a longing for truth that proved stronger than your need to be right; a sudden awareness of connection, beauty, or love; or simply that remarkable inner certainty that your life carries more meaning than you can presently put into words.

This book invites you to take such experiences seriously without immediately trying to explain them.

For if such a core truly exists within you, the growth of the soul may have far less to do with adding something new and far more to do with becoming receptive to something that was already there.

Just as the butterfly is not placed inside the caterpillar from the outside.

An Ancient Source of Inspiration

In writing this book, the verses attributed to Hermes Trismegistus have served as an important source of inspiration.

These ancient texts speak of the origin of humanity, of creation, consciousness, soul, life and death, of the Good, of the relationship between the visible and the invisible, and above all of the possibility that, during a human lifetime, a person may come to a different understanding of themselves and of reality.

But this book is not an explanation of Hermes.

For that reason, you will not continually be confronted with ancient names, cosmological images, or concepts that you must first study before you can understand what they are intended to convey. Instead, we have tried to look beyond the words and to ask ourselves, again and again:

What does this point to in the life of someone living today?

The ancient texts have provided the inspiration. Your own experience is where you can explore whether what they seek to express truly has meaning.

The Path, a shift of conciousness

The explorations that follow therefore do not describe a step-by-step programme that you must carry out, nor do they prescribe a path that unfolds in the same way for everyone. They do, however, follow a movement.

That movement begins very close to home, with things you can observe every day: your thoughts, your desires, your relationships, the choices you make, the way you look at the world, the meaning you give to events, and the moments when you notice that something within you is changing.
Gradually, the perspective begins to shift.

The questions become deeper. What is real? What within you is constantly changing, and what is it that observes those changes? Where does that sometimes almost inexplicable longing for truth, unity, or origin come from? What does freedom mean when so much of your life lies beyond your control? What happens when you no longer seek only to shape yourself, but begin to become receptive to what seeks to unfold from that deeper core within you?

In this way, the path gradually leads from the outer to the inner, from knowing to experiencing, from searching to recognizing, and from the person who tries to understand their life to the person who begins to sense why they are alive.

Perhaps, along the way, you will discover that the caterpillar does not need to know how to make a butterfly. Perhaps its task is something else entirely: to live, to grow, and eventually to make room for a possibility that it has carried within itself from the very beginning.

And perhaps something of this is true for you as well.

That is what we are going to explore in this book.

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Part I — Awakening

Movement 1 — The Call

There may be moments in your life when everything you know and have built retains its familiar meaning, yet you nevertheless have the feeling that something essential is missing, as though behind the reality in which you live each day there lies a deeper connection that you cannot yet put into words, but whose existence you somehow sense.

Perhaps this feeling arises during a life-changing event, perhaps when you are confronted with loss, beauty, or the transience of life, but it may just as easily appear on an entirely ordinary day, when you suddenly realize that the answers you have lived by until now are no longer sufficient to help you understand who you are and what your existence truly means.

Such an experience does not necessarily change anything in your life immediately, for you may continue with your daily activities while at the same time becoming aware that a question has arisen within you that can no longer easily be pushed aside, precisely because it concerns not merely the circumstances in which you live, but life itself.

Perhaps this is the beginning of an exploration for which you do not yet have the words and whose destination remains unknown, but through which you may discover that the question arising within you deserves more attention than the quick answers with which you might otherwise silence it.

The first movement along this path therefore begins not with a belief you are expected to adopt, but with a willingness to pay attention to what arises within you when you allow yourself to ask: is this really all there is?

The Call

Almost every genuine change begins with a question, not with an answer. There may come a moment when your ordinary life continues as before, while at the same time you become aware that something within you is no longer satisfied with the answers you have lived by until now. You do what you have always done, fulfil your roles and responsibilities, and yet a question presents itself that you have not consciously formulated: who am I really, why am I here, and is there something within me that reaches beyond everything I have learned about myself?

Such a question does not have to arise from dissatisfaction with your life. It may emerge precisely in the midst of a life that, on the surface, is functioning perfectly well. What makes it remarkable is that you cannot easily reason it away, because it asks for more than an intellectual answer. It touches something deeper within you, as though a part of you is beginning to remember that there is more to discover than what can be seen, measured, or explained.

When you do not immediately try to answer that question, but genuinely remain with it, something may begin to change in the way you listen. Amid your ordinary thoughts, expectations, and beliefs, a quieter form of knowing may become perceptible, not as an audible voice, nor as something you are expected to believe without examination, but as a clarity that sometimes arises before you are able to explain it. In this book, we call the origin of that inner knowing the Divine Spark.

What becomes important then is not finding the correct answer, but exploring your longing. What do you truly want to know? Are you looking for confirmation of what you already believe, do you want to have an extraordinary experience, or do you genuinely wish to discover what is true, even if that means allowing familiar ideas about yourself to change?

This is where the path of the soul's growth begins. Not because someone else tells you what you must believe, but because you become willing to examine your own experience seriously and remain faithful to a question that has come alive within you. You do not yet need to know where this path will lead. It is enough to recognize that the question no longer disappears.

When You Are Asleep Without Realizing It

Perhaps one of the most difficult questions is not what you want to achieve in life, but whether you are truly aware of the direction in which your life is moving. Your days, months, and even years may be filled with work, relationships, plans, obligations, and expectations, while the question of where you are actually heading is given hardly any room at all.

This does not mean that there is anything wrong with an active or busy life. The difficulty arises when the movement itself becomes so familiar that you no longer notice what is driving it. You respond to whatever demands your attention, solve problems, try to meet expectations, and move on to the next thing, while beneath all that activity there may be scarcely any opportunity to explore what truly matters to you.

You can function with great clarity and intelligence and still, in a certain sense, be asleep. Not because you lack knowledge, but because your attention is almost entirely absorbed by whatever continually presses itself upon you. Just as alcohol can cloud your perception without changing reality itself, haste, worries, desires, comparisons, and constant stimulation can make it increasingly difficult to see clearly what is happening within you.

Perhaps you recognize how easily this can happen today. Messages demand replies, work demands results, social media draws your attention, and everywhere you encounter images of what you might achieve, possess, or become.
Without consciously choosing it, your life can gradually become more and more determined by what approaches you from the outside.

From this perspective, ignorance takes on a different meaning. It does not mean that you lack knowledge. You may be highly educated, widely read, and possess considerable expertise, while having scarcely explored why you make certain choices, where your fears originate, or why particular desires exercise so much power over you. Knowing a great deal is not the same as living consciously.

You may experience life as though you are being carried along by a current. As long as you move with that current, it requires relatively little effort; you do what is customary, respond as you are accustomed to responding, and follow the direction indicated by circumstances, expectations, and habits. Only when you begin to ask whether that direction is truly your own do you discover how powerful the current can be.

This is where the possibility of moving in another direction arises. Not as resistance to the world, nor as an attempt to withdraw from ordinary life, but as a decision to stop automatically following everything that pulls at you. You begin to listen before reacting, to explore before drawing conclusions, and to choose before allowing yourself to be carried along once again.

This requires attention, because making conscious choices usually demands more effort than continuing on autopilot. Yet it is precisely through that attention that something may begin to awaken. You become more aware of what gives you energy and what takes it away, what genuinely belongs to you and what you have mainly adopted from others, and which choices bring you closer to what is essential in your life.

Awakening, therefore, does not have to begin with anything spectacular. Perhaps it begins simply at the moment when, in the midst of your familiar life, you become still enough to ask yourself one question without immediately supplying the answer: where am I actually heading?

The Harbour of Life

Once you begin to notice how easily you can be carried along by the current of life, you may also develop a longing for a place of inner peace. Not for a life without movement or difficulties, but for a point within yourself from which you can once again see where you are and which direction you wish to take. You might call such a place a harbour.

A harbour is not a final destination. You enter it after a journey, find shelter, repair what needs attention, and determine your course anew. Perhaps there are moments like these in your own life: a period of silence, an encounter, a book, a conversation, a loss, or an unexpected event that briefly interrupts your familiar routine and allows you to begin looking at yourself in a different way.

Sometimes another person plays an important role in this process. Someone says something at precisely the right moment that touches you, asks a question that stays with you, or lives in such a way that you recognize a possibility you had not previously considered. That person does not need to know your path and certainly cannot walk it for you. At most, they can make something visible that enables you to take the next step yourself.

As you begin to look more deeply within, you may also discover that not everything that is real can be perceived in the same way. You see a table with your eyes and hear a sound with your ears, but love, meaning, beauty, and inner peace cannot be pointed to in quite the same manner. Nevertheless, they can be profoundly real to you.

This also reveals why words ultimately have their limitations. You can speak about love, analyse it, and attempt to define it, but no definition can replace the experience of loving.

The same is true of beauty, silence, connection, and perhaps also of what you call God or the deepest origin of life. Words can point in a particular direction, but they are never the reality itself.

Especially in a time when almost everything is named, measured, and explained, this can feel uncomfortable. You are accustomed to the idea that understanding something means being able to describe it. Yet some experiences do not become clearer simply because you add more words to them. Sometimes genuine understanding begins when thinking momentarily stops trying to control the experience.

Perhaps this is what inner silence makes possible. Not that your thoughts disappear or that the world around you suddenly becomes peaceful, but that you no longer need to follow every thought or respond immediately to every stimulus. Amid everything moving within you, a space may begin to emerge in which you learn to perceive differently.

Within such a space, a form of knowing may appear that is not the same as reasoning. You may not yet know what to call it, nor do you need to explain it immediately. You can begin by exploring whether you recognize moments when something deep within you felt clear before you had found the words to express it. Perhaps this touches upon what we previously called the voice arising from the Divine Spark: not a voice telling you what to do, but a quieter knowing that becomes perceptible when the constant inner noise begins to subside.

The harbour, then, is not somewhere outside you. It comes into being wherever you become sufficiently still to see again. The world may remain exactly as it was, but the one who is looking is no longer quite the same. And sometimes that is enough for a new journey to begin.

The Garment of Ignorance

Throughout your life, you gather many things that become part of how you understand yourself. You acquire a name, a history, beliefs, roles, memories, and ideas about what you can and cannot do. Some of these help you find your place in the world and provide a sense of stability. But what happens when everything you have built up around yourself becomes so familiar that you no longer recognize that you are wearing it?

You might compare it to a garment. A garment can protect you, keep you warm, and even express something of your identity, but however familiar it becomes, it remains something you wear rather than something you are. Perhaps the same is true of much of what you have come to believe about yourself throughout your life.

This offers another way of looking at ignorance. It is not a lack of knowledge. You may have read an entire library of books, speak several languages, possess scientific knowledge, or have spent years studying philosophy and spirituality, and still not have discovered what is most essential about yourself, because self-knowledge does not begin with gathering information, but with examining everything with which you have come to identify.

Perhaps, for example, you have carried the belief for many years that you must be strong, that you must continually prove yourself, that you must never disappoint others, or that you are only valuable when you achieve something. Such beliefs can become so familiar that they no longer feel like beliefs at all. They simply seem to describe who you are.

And that is precisely where their power may lie. What you do not recognize as a layer, you cannot begin to examine.

An old feeling of inadequacy may continue to guide your choices, fear may disguise itself as caution, and the need for recognition may appear in the form of ambition. You do not need to condemn these movements within yourself. What matters first is learning to see them.

When your attention is continually occupied by fear, haste, possessions, comparison, or the need for approval, it is not only your behaviour that changes. The range of what you are still able to perceive also becomes narrower. You may become so occupied with keeping yourself going that you scarcely notice beauty anymore, so focused on results that you no longer feel what something genuinely means to you, or so accustomed to restlessness that silence itself begins to feel uncomfortable.

The movement inward, therefore, does not require you to improve yourself until you become a different person. Perhaps it is more about gradually laying aside what you no longer need in order to be yourself. Not through force, nor by rejecting parts of yourself, but by seeing more clearly which beliefs, roles, and protective mechanisms once served a purpose and now mainly restrict you.

This brings a simple yet penetrating question back into view: who are you when your position, achievements, possessions, appearance, opinions, and social roles are no longer allowed to provide the answer? Perhaps you notice that this question initially creates uncertainty, because familiar descriptions begin to fall away. Yet it is precisely within that open space that something else may become visible.

The garment does not need to be torn away from you. You lay it aside, layer by layer, as you discover that it is not your deepest identity. Awakening, then, does not mean becoming someone else, but gradually returning to what was already present before you began to mistake everything you had gathered along the way for who you truly are.

Why You Cannot Understand Everything at Every Moment

You may hear something that is deeply meaningful to another person and find that it hardly touches you at all. You may read the same book, listen to the same music, or experience the same event, yet perceive something entirely different from the person beside you. This difference does not necessarily mean that one of you is right and the other is wrong. Above all, it reveals that you always perceive from the place where you inwardly stand at that particular moment.

Some insights can be understood intellectually long before they acquire genuine meaning for you. You may have known for years that life is finite, yet a single experience can suddenly make that familiar thought deeply real. The words were not new; your receptivity had changed.

This helps explain why wisdom cannot be forced upon someone. You can tell another person what you have discovered, offer arguments, and try to find exactly the right words, but you cannot determine when something will genuinely take root within them. Apparently, an insight requires not only words, but also an inner space in which it can be received.

This is precisely why the desire to convince someone can so easily produce the opposite effect. When a conversation becomes primarily about being right, genuine listening often disappears. You defend your position, the other person defends theirs, and the more words are exchanged, the smaller the space sometimes becomes in which something genuinely new might be seen.