

Wake Up Call #18a

The Senses as a Gateway to Observation

"Hot water, cold water, and room temperature water" (my hands are being placed - one hand in cold water, the other in hot. Then I put both in the room temperature water).

You've done this experiment when you were young, right? The hand from the hot feels cold and the hand from the cold feels hot. But, the science textbooks say, "Your senses cannot be trusted because they reported the temperature incorrectly." Well, that's right. They do tell the wrong temperature. You're not a machine. They're comparing you to a thermometer or a machine. You're not a machine. You're a sense being. And your senses are a gateway to observation. Don't ever tell the kids, "Don't go to your senses." Yes, don't trust them if you want to know the temperature. By the way, if you want to know heat flow, the human body is an awesome detector of heat flow. That's why you kiss the baby's forehead. Because your lips are so sensitive, you can tell if the baby's temperature is getting a little bit warmer or cooler.

But that's not the point. The point is that you *should go* to your senses. When you go to your senses, you're in your observation. You're not thinking, you're paying attention to what is being received. You are being attentive, and loving attention is one of the foundations of spiritual growth.

So, the wake up call today is, "Use your senses as a gateway to observation! And stay in them all day, all of the time." Every morning I go out on the porch - I close my eyes and I take in - sometimes there's a smell, the fragrance of the outside - I listen to

the birds - I have just looked at some of the trees or bushes or the sky or the clouds - and I take in the beauty of that scene and what I heard. Then I close my eyes and replay it. And then, I start my day. It takes less than sixty seconds.

So, guess what your exercise is for today - your wake up call? Go take in something coming into your senses. Especially if it's something growing or alive. I consider almost everything alive. So, take it in. Goethe said, if you take in the beauty of a flower, you complete the flower's mission in life. It has a purpose - it's alive - it's a sentient being - and it's really grateful that you took it in. So, you get a double good for this experiment.

So, I'll see you in one of those tomorrows.

