

Step Five: Direct Perception of Essential Meaning

The Causal Root of All Things

By Rawn Clark 13 September 2009

Today I will be discussing the mental section of Step Five. I think for the modern reader especially, this is perhaps the most enigmatic section in the whole of IIH. But with just a few essential bits of additional information it begins to reveal its meaning. The first essential bit of information that I suspect most readers are unaware of has to do with the philosophical conceptualization of a point. In geometry, a point has no dimension. It has no length, width or height. It is infinitely finite, infinitely small in relation to its surroundings. One could say that it does not exist as a physical thing but rather is solely a philosophical idea or construct meant only as an indicator of position within three dimensional spaces. With this idea in your mind that a point is dimensionless, infinitely finite and non-physical, listen anew to Bardon's introduction to Step Five --

The wise Archimedes once said, "Show me one point in the Universe and I shall lift the globe off its hinges!"

Very few people probably know that this sentence is concealing a great occult mystery, namely the secret of the fourth dimension. As we all remember from our schooldays, every thing having a shape – a stone, a plant, animal, man – in short, every body owns length, width and height, definitions familiar to us. If in the middle of a form, for example a spherical form, we imagine a double-crossing, on the crossing spot we get a point, the so-called depth-point. And Archimedes certainly did have this point in mind, because it is actually the point of beginning, the starting point, the nucleus of every form. Regarded from this point, every form is symmetrically (uniformly) objective, that means, it happens to be in its true equilibrium. This is the base of the mystery of the fourth dimension, hence the concept of time and space, of timelessness and spacelessness, and therefore also the secret of space-magic. The scholar is advised to meditate very intensely about this problem, and he will be able to open up profundities he never dreamed of and a high intuition will be his reward.

Here then, Bardon is talking about a center-point, not just any point, but the center-most point of a three-dimensional form. This is an important distinction since the nature of an infinitely finite point is that it always exists at the exact center of an infinite space. Considered in a generic, universal context, such a point exists at the exact center of the infinite Universe, but this is not what Bardon is focusing upon here. Instead, his focus is specifically upon the center-point of a finite three-dimensional form, such as the sphere in his example.

Because such a point is infinitely finite, it must exist within an infinitely large space; yet we are speaking here of the center-point of a most assuredly finite form. This is the "great occult mystery" Bardon mentions. In order to begin to comprehend this mystery you must do as Bardon instructs and "meditate very intensely about this problem" of the infinitely finite point.

The instructions for this meditation are very simple: *Consider a point in space. It is infinitely small.*

If you sincerely follow this concept in your meditation, it will lead you to many amazing realizations and experiences in regard to the nature of infinity. One of the first things you will notice is the sensation of inward motion as your mind tries to find the stopping place of infinite finiteness. The mind cannot grasp such smallness so it continuously strives for a smaller and smaller point which produces this sensation of falling deeper and deeper toward the final resting place of the infinitely finite. But of course, since it is infinitely finite, there is no resting place for the mind and thus it seems to contain an infinite depth, which is why Bardon uses the term “depth-point”.

Furthermore, you will be led to understand and indeed experience the fact that from the perspective of an infinitely finite point, the surrounding space is infinitely infinite. In other words, space extends infinitely in every direction from the infinitely finite point. So this point must therefore exist at the exact center of the infinite space. Or as Bardon stated it: *“Regarded from this point, every form is symmetrically (uniformly) objective, that means, it happens to be in its true equilibrium.”*

Once you have achieved this realization it becomes apparent that every point must exist at the exact center of an infinite space. Space still extends infinitely in every direction from each and every point within an infinite space. So, this means that every point shares in this property of centrality. No point can be said to exist off-center.

And then comes the Big Leap – the realization that every point contains within itself the essence of the whole infinity, just as the drop reflects the ocean in which it resides.

You must of course pursue this meditation for yourself and not rely just upon my description. Your work with Step Five cannot be based solely upon an intellectual understanding of the infinitely finite point; instead, you must experience these realizations first-hand in order to truly make use of them.

Having meditated intensively as Bardon instructed, you are now ready to begin the first mental exercise of Step Five. This is a preliminary exercise in which you practice transferring your awareness into the center of an object, not its depth-point. The difference between this exercise and the Step Four exercises with the transference of your awareness is slight. Here you are focusing your awareness at the center of your target; while in Step four you inhabited the entirety of the target, sensing its boundaries and its surroundings, etc.

The instruction for this exercise is very simple. Place a symmetrical object, such as a small ball or cube before you and transfer your awareness into its center-most point. When you are able to perform this exercise for 5 minutes uninterrupted, then move on to a differently shaped but symmetrical object and transfer your awareness into its center. When you reside at the object’s center, try to make yourself smaller and smaller, as small

as an atom. Work with a variety of symmetrical objects until this transference becomes an easy matter, then move on to the same with asymmetrical objects.

It's when you're working with the asymmetrical objects and shrinking your size further and further that you begin to realize that this point is not a spatial locale. It has no physical dimension and as noted in your meditation on the nature of an infinitely finite point, every point within the infinite space exists at the exact center of that space and thus "center" has no definite physical location either – it can be anywhere within the infinite space and still be labeled "center". By working in this way with an object's center, you quite naturally begin to identify the object's depth-point.

The depth-point is, in fact, a philosophical thing, not a physical thing like a form's spatial "center". It expresses and reveals the philosophical nature of the space; which is to say, it houses the essential meaning manifest by the finite object. And if you spend enough time in this depth-point you will eventually perceive the essential meaning of the finite object. And so the next set of exercises concerns just that, transferring your awareness into the depth-point of objects.

Start as before with a symmetrical object and transfer your awareness into its exact center. Now you must sense the dimension and shape of the object, its external boundaries, and then make yourself smaller and smaller until those boundaries are an infinite distance away from you.

This point is, of course, infinitely finite and it's by considering its infinite smallness that you transform the defined, finite size of the object into an infinite space. In other words, your own infinite smallness is what extends the physical boundary of the shape infinitely in all directions from your position. The object itself does not magically increase its size; but rather, it is your awareness that infinitely diminishes in size as you become the object's infinitely finite depth-point. Thus you are completely surrounded by the object as it extends infinitely in all directions around you. The object becomes your entire universe. Nothing else exists other than this infinite form with your awareness at its center.

If you look back to your first work with the Elements in Step Three you will recognize that you performed a nearly identical feat of imagination when you surrounded yourself with an imagined universe of each Element, so this should not be difficult for you to manage.

Hold this depth-point awareness without interruption for at least 5 minutes before working with a different object. Practice with a variety of symmetrical and then asymmetrical objects, each time transferring your awareness into their infinitely finite depth-point. When this becomes easy to perform with objects, move on to working with plants, insects, animals, humans and even objects that are not before your eyes.

Since this depth-point has no dimension -- no length, width or height – it is in effect, "spaceless" and where there is no space and no matter, there is no time or duration. Thus

the depth-point is an aspect of the spaceless and timeless (i.e., non-sequential) Akasha Principle. It is the infinite causal root of the finite form from which we can learn everything about the form and through which we can directly influence the entire form.

When your awareness exists at a thing's depth-point, you effectively transform the finite form into an infinite space. Since every point within that infinite space becomes its center-point, every point is thus the same; or rather, every point contains the essential meaning of the whole form. As we've established already, similar things attract each other within the mental realm, so when you inhabit a thing's depth-point, every point within the form is attracted to your awareness within the mental realm. Since all points within the form are exactly the same in terms of essential meaning, the whole of the form with all of its points piles up on the focal point of your awareness, in effect spreading your awareness completely and uniformly throughout the whole mental body of the form. In other words, you encompass the entire infinitely infinite form with your awareness whenever you enter its infinitely finite depth-point.

An important Hermetic axiom, as it were, is revealed here; namely that *inhabiting the infinitely finite leads to encompassing the infinitely infinite*.

If you completely open your perceptive awareness and set aside all of your preconceptions, expectations, interpretations, etc. -- in other words, rise above your thinking mind – then the form itself will communicate its essential meaning to your awareness. Everything is a manifestation of a unique quantum of essential meaning. Bardon used the term “Akasha Principle” to describe this root causal force but I prefer “essential meaning” since it is more descriptive and thus more practical. In any event, essential meaning is the root or essence of every thing that exists; each form being a perfect manifestation or expression of its essential meaning. Thus each form can be said to communicate its essential meaning. It doesn't speak its meaning with words; rather its expression is perceived as an inner understanding that defies description and rebels against categorization and labeling. It's therefore impossible for me to give you a concrete example of an object's essential meaning but it is very simple to experience this, at least superficially, for yourself.

A simple experiment is to quickly look from one object to another and focus your awareness on the differences between how one object feels in comparison to the next and so on. You will perceive a subtle difference in the feeling generated by each object you view. This is a communication of each object's essential meaning albeit at a fairly dense emotional level. With this experiment you perceive only one small layer or level of the object's essential meaning. On the other hand, when you use a deeper, more focused and infinitely more objective state of awareness in your perception, you can directly perceive the raw essential meaning itself. This deepest layer of essential meaning is infinite in scope and it is this level of essential meaning that is perceivable from the object's depth-point.

This depth-point interaction with essential meaning comes as a flash of insight that rushes into your awareness and fills it entirely with an infinite amount of detail. It is too much

information for the thinking mind to encompass, so you must resist the habit of immediately thinking about the information filling your awareness and instead, focus upon the raw perception itself and the feelings it generates within your astral body. Wait until after you have vacated the form's depth-point to begin thinking about and analyzing the information you have absorbed. I say this because if you begin thinking too soon, then you will not spend enough time perceiving and what you learn will be incomplete and thus inaccurate.

With practice it becomes very easy to quickly dip your awareness into and out of the depth-point of any thing or person and thus rapidly gain a very deep understanding of the thing or person based upon your perception of, and interaction with their essential meaning. Since essential meaning is an aspect of the akasha Principle this interaction occurs outside of time. In other words, it takes less than an instant for the fullness of understanding to fill your awareness. Conversely, it will take at least several seconds for you to then process this abundance of information with your rational, thinking mind.

The amount of detail communicated during this interaction with essential meaning is truly astounding. Once received, it is possible to filter through to any level of information you wish to know. For example, when interacting through its depth-point with the essential meaning of a pocket rock I carry, I can focus in on the first person to pick the rock up ages ago. Through this connection, I can also discover anything I wish to know about that person, who he was, what he did, what he thought, etc.

In addition to perceiving essential meaning through the depth-point, we can also communicate or project essential meaning into the depth-point and thus affect the entire form. For example, we can impress an idea or thought upon an object or person through their depth-point and it will immediately manifest throughout their entire form. We can likewise accumulate the Vital Energy or an Element uniformly within the object or person from the inside-out, so to speak, through their depth-point.

There are other methods of interacting with essential meaning that do not entail transference of your awareness into the depth-point, but these methods allow only for the perception of essential meaning and by their nature preclude an opportunity to affect the subject from the inside-out. For example, it is quite possible to perceive an object's essential meaning from observation of its external form – from the outside, as it were, instead of from the inside – and achieve the same relative depth of information as one receives through a depth-point. But since one is on the outside, it is only possible to affect the object from the outside-in, instead of from the inside-out as with the depth-point. Even though this technique does still require a highly cultivated degree of objective perception or openness, it is much simpler to master than working through the depth-point. It's primarily a mystical technique used to increase one's understanding of one's surroundings and not to directly influence them.

Bardon's intention with the Step Five mental work however, is that as a Hermetic magician, you must encompass more than just perception – you must also be able to

influence or change what you perceive. This is an important distinction between magic and pure mysticism.

I recommend that you experience the depth-point of everything you can, however briefly. Each moment of each waking hour presents us with innumerable opportunities to explore. Just looking around me now as I sit here writing, there is my coffee cup, my computer, a lamp, a bit of meteorite, a book, a feather, a stone, a small figurine, and on and on and on. The opportunities are endless and I have explored the depth-point of each of these things. And when I go for a walk in town I am constantly exploring everything I see from the old buildings to the people I see walking past to the birds sitting in the trees to the dog turds scattered along the sidewalk. I do not care whether it is a thing of beauty or ugliness; I explore them all without bias for the sheer joy of increasing my understanding and experience of all things. It is even possible to touch the depth-point of nonphysical things such as ideas and feelings, overall situations and moments in time, using this technique and all of these explorations are equally important. Some things of course deserve a much longer and deeper probing. For example, experiencing the depth-point of each of the four Elements, of our planet Earth and our Moon and Sun should be prolonged sessions. Nonetheless, it is possible to probe anything and everything with this method and from each experience you will gain a treasure of understanding and experience attainable in no other way. This practice expands your awareness incrementally and readies your awareness for the Ultimate, Quantum Expansion of Step Ten.

Once you have mastered the technique of transferring your awareness into the depth-point of any object, plant, animal, human, etc. that you desire and interacting with their essential meaning; and furthermore, affecting them from the inside-out, you are then prepared for the final mental exercise of Step Five – inhabiting your own depth-point. This is placed last in the sequence because it's the most difficult. It's no more technically difficult to achieve than with a small ball, for example, but it is infinitely more difficult to achieve the objectivity required to truly interact with your own essential meaning.

As before, Bardón splits the exercise into two phases. First you must accustom yourself to maintaining your awareness as a small point at the center of your body. Bardón stated that this point is congruent with your solar plexus, situated between your spine and the frontal pit of your stomach. Of course in a male body this corresponds roughly the body's center of gravity and it is also correlated with the Akasha in Bardón's third book, *The Key to the True Quabbalah*.

Once you have mastered the transference of your awareness to the center of your body and are able to maintain this awareness for at least five minutes without interruption, you must then begin to shrink the size of your awareness as before until you reach the infinite finiteness of the depth-point. You are completely surrounded by your own being as it extends infinitely in all directions around you. You become your entire universe. Nothing else exists other than this infinite you with your awareness at its center.

Once you reach this depth-point awareness, Bardón instructs that you meditate upon the following affirmation: *“I am the center-point of my physical existence; I am the determining power therein!”* Since this is an accurate and factual description of the depth-point, instead of an imaginary supposition, Bardón’s affirmation will reinforce your objective connection with your own depth-point and enable you to perceive your own essential meaning.

This perception is very subtle and may be more accurately described as the experience of intentionally being your own essential meaning, instead of actually perceiving it. Because of its unfamiliarity, this experience might be quite disorienting at first so patience and persistence are necessary. Eventually though you will shift into a radically different perspective of yourself and of your life, one which is surprisingly objective and calm. You will stand separate from your mundane life experience, yet intimately connected to it as the causal force, able to perceive and influence all that concerns your being.

Bardón stated that *“This consciousness transference into your own Akasha-Principle is the genuine magical state of trance and represents the preliminary stage of the connection with the cosmic consciousness.”* In kabbalah, this state corresponds with Tiphareth and the Individual Self which stands directly below Kether and The One Self, and enjoys a direct connection with the influences emanating from the Supernal realm. And in the terminology of the Self-Healing Archæous, this is the Fire region of the mental body, the Individual Self perfectly isolated and standing before the Akasha region or eternal mental body – the Greater Self.

Inhabiting your own depth-point is essentially an advanced form of the Step One emptiness of mind state. Depth-point awareness however, represents an important deepening and activation of the emptiness state. It is with this level of self-awareness, known as the Individual Self, that we hear the voice of our so called Holy Guardian Angel with the greatest clarity and understanding. It is therefore a very significant turning point in the sequence of initiation, the point at which one gains direct and reliable access to the most important internal source of guidance. This is the first stage of so called “adepthood”.

The depth-point or Individual Self is not only the prime place for receiving inspiration – the incoming breath – but it’s also the seat of expiration – the out-going breath. It’s the Individual Self that takes astral and physical form during incarnation and when physical death ensues, it is the Individual Self that lives on to reincarnate over and over. It is the breath of life that fills the astra-physical form. So when you inhabit your depth-point, you are absolute sovereign of your existence. From this point, you can affect any and every aspect of your astral and physical being from its essence to its manifestation. It is therefore the seat of your own Individual power, the most advantageous place from which to enact your transformative power upon yourself.

From within your depth-point it is also possible to access memories of your past incarnations since the Individual Self is the storehouse of all your previous experiences.

This is accomplished by intentionally probing the infinite vastness of Self that surrounds your point of awareness for past life memories. Your projection of intention will automatically draw these memories to your awareness.

As Bardon noted, inhabiting your depth-point induces a state of mental Equilibrium, similar to the way in which the Step Four astral exercise of balancing the Elements in the four regions of the astra-physical body harmonizes the astral Elements. I experience this as a sort of standing above, separate from my astra-physical existence, in the same way as in the first mental exercise of Step One I stood separate from my mental chatter. Yet in standing separate, I know that I may influence any part of my astra-physical existence that I wish to merely by act of will. This ability to stand-back, to disengage during moments of extreme emotional or mental stress can be very empowering, grounding and balancing when it is most needed.

Bardon wrote: *“Working through this step, the scholar should be able to transfer himself, at any hour and in every situation, into his depth point, that means into the Akasha Principle, from there perceiving and influencing all that concerns his being.”*

This implies that the more you practice this transference, the quicker and easier it becomes. Furthermore, his statement also implies that it is possible to inhabit your depth-point while simultaneously engaging in mundane interaction. In other words, it is possible to maintain awareness of the depth-point perspective while having a conversation with a friend, for example, and still be fully present and attentive to your conversation. The key to this is that once you have experienced your depth-point you know how it feels, you recognize it and this makes it exponentially easier to reacquire. With time and repeated practice you become able to make an instant internal shift to your depth-point perspective without having to go through the meditative process Bardon described.

Once you are able to inhabit your depth-point while simultaneously engaging in mundane interaction, it becomes possible to perceive the Individual Selves of everyone and everything in your environment. This makes it possible to interact with others at an Individual Self level, Individual Self to Individual Self. This type of interaction is radically different than personal interaction which is often clouded by conflicting personal motivations. With Individual interaction, communication of essential meaning is direct and unfiltered.

Eventually the seating of your awareness permanently shifts from being rooted in your personality to rooting in your depth-point of Individual Self. As a consequence, you intentionally interact in all your affairs as your Individual Self through your astral and physical bodies. In fact, the work of the next Step in *Initiation Into Hermetics* presupposes that you have either made this internal shift or are at least well on your way to its attainment.