

Zero

Many people that I talk to have a difficult time understanding the merits of formless awareness, both in the practice of meditation and the continual resting in emptiness that accompanies the marginalization of the ego. A different way of seeing the benefit of practice is from a limited mathematical, scientific aspect. All scientific comparisons require reference points. These reference points are the grounding area around which analysis of the gross realm occurs. There are a few general constants that seem to arise out of nature which science and mathematics use as foundations for expressions of reality. Some of these are Pi, Phi, k, etc. The relations of aspects of physical reality somehow, time and time again, create these patterns that can be used as tools to generate 'empirically meaningful' statements. But, despite the coincidental materialization of such constants, there are three reference points that, mathematically, stand out as the most useful. These are actual absolutes, of sorts: ∞ , $-\infty$, and 0. To project anything in the gross realm out to the range of infinity or, even more abstractly, to negative infinity is something which is not only empirically difficult to sustain, but is even more difficult to comprehend. Therefore, the concepts of infinity and negative infinity, as opposed to generally direct statements about the gross realm, are concepts that are largely relegated to theoretical statements. So, the most useful and meaningful reference point that crosses over all realms, whether they be theoretical, empirical, or mystical is unequivocally zero.

Zero is unparalleled in its power as a concept. It is the starting block for everything that contemporary thought considers to be meaningful. One could argue that until one defines the difference between nothing (0) and something (all else), one has no foundation on which to make any statements at all. It is the most basic relation that can exist. Here we have two sides of a divine coin: zero and not zero.

Just as zero holds a privileged property above all other concepts, it also holds the key to laying the foundation for what is arguably the most intensely debated concept of all time: truth. As any concept approaches nothing, the amount of detail allocated to the concept is reduced. Conversely, the further a concept's complexity deviates from the ground floor of nothing, the more properties can be attributed to it. The more properties with which one uses to describe something, the more comparative statements can be made about it. Arising out of this influx of complexity is a general capacity for inaccuracy or error. The more we define something, the more properties we lay upon a concept, the more the overall accuracy of the concept can be called into question. With this realization, we understand that the only reality that can be called absolute truth is a reality which finds its origin in emptiness. But placing all effort into emptiness leaves no way to describe the world in which we are required to subsist... a reference point is not useful unless it is used as such.

Zero, emptiness, or formlessness is the ultimate reference point with respect to truth that has direct application to relating consciousness to the gross realm. The more we are

familiar with emptiness, the better we will understand the other side of reality: the realm of form. And so, the practice of meditation and formless awareness actually resets our consciousness in such a way that makes the experience of form more meaningful. The more often we rest in a state of absolute truth, the more truth will permeate our everyday lives. And as this duality becomes apparent, the more intimate those other references, those consisting of infinity, will be.