

Conversations with Orland Bishop
Course three: The Ecology of Consciousness
<https://charleseisenstein.org/>

Course 3, Unit 1: Reverence and Irreverence

Unit 1.1: How Should I Be

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

consciousness, intelligences, year, utilized, beings, january, phenomena, call, understood, new year's day, energy, generated, field, collective consciousness, cloud formations, planet, threshold, human, thoughts, issue

SPEAKERS

Charles Eisenstein, Orland Bishop

Audience 0:00

I've been reflecting a lot on what he said yesterday, which was this question we're supposed to ask other people:

Who do I need to be for you to be who you're meant to become?

Powerful question and maybe a really difficult one to do well. Just essentially been reflecting on that question in all of my different relationships and how am I doing that or not doing that. And seeing the places where you could say there's incompatibility, maybe? Like for this person to be themselves needs me to be something that I don't know how to be, or vice versa?

Does that make sense? How do I navigate relationships?

Orland Bishop 1:10

So how do I have to be? What state of awareness? Preparedness? Am I capable of when I ask that question? If I'm my body, then I'll feel certain forces in my consciousness. If I am my feelings, I would feel another quality of forces in my consciousness from my thoughts of others; and so I have to choose between those thoughts, feelings, and body.

One allows me to have more freedom when I'm engaging with this person. Do I change my thoughts? Do I change my feelings? Do I actually hold my body as a space that is not distinguished by the chemistry that's running through it that makes me man, or woman, or black, or white? Am I really willing to be a witness of what I am willing to hold a space for in my own

becoming?

Because in a certain way, every human being is a threshold for me to cross into a higher expression of myself.

Every human being, every moment, is a confrontation with the soul about who I am and am I willing to be that?

Yes, we have choices with certain people because we're familiar with their nature of being and can adjust that. But for the most part, the areas that challenge us in our world are the unfamiliarity with others, and the challenge that others bring in their own distinctions of body, feelings, and thoughts as to who they are and why I put that question...

So the three things about the three agreements comes back to this: Am I willing to move energy around and discover more qualities of myself? Or am I fixed into this particular distinction and then just represent myself from there?

You know, it's not for the sake of certain kinds of rights and privileges people do, 'This is who I am, I'm not moving.' And then for certain depths of relationship, people open the space and let others into the sanctuary of their heart. And so part of it is really an exercise not of the body, mind, but of the soul/spirit, to do this.

Because those two levels want more room in the chemistry of our body/mind's dynamic and feelings about reality, so that it could actually bring more into our lives. But that's just a way of reminding myself:

Who do I have to be for life to become more abundant?

I have to be a host for my spirit—not for just what the world is bringing.

Now if my spirit comes first, it will be a host for the world, because it brings capacity to hold the world. But I have to let it in. But if I'm just my body and I live from that my spirit can't enter.

Charles Eisenstein 5:25

I might take just one little piece of that and amplify it a little bit.

So I've heard Orland say pretty much the same principle in slightly different forms, 'Who do I have to be for you to become what you're meant to be?' Or, 'Who do I have to be for you to be free?'

This is not actually an act of self sacrifice. But it is, as he described, a threshold for the development of the soul. So there's this magical convergence between what you have to be for the other person to be more who they are, and what is the threshold for you to be more who you are?

We attract people into our lives, who have that complimentary match. So to clarify that, I find it useful to give attention to the fullness of all the motives that go into why I interact with somebody in some way, to bring the shadows to light the hidden contradictions to light, using the practice that he described yesterday from Rudolf Steiner.

You know, you have some interaction with somebody, you don't feel that comfortable with it, you don't feel like you really were in service to who they are meant to be. So you go just before that, and you remember, *What was it like to be me in that moment?* Because then, the other things in operation that are not aligned with who you are meant to be will become visible.

And as they become visible, there, you can de-habituate from them, and become more of somebody who is in a way that others can be more free. Does that make sense?

Orland doesn't always offer a practice, so I'm maybe converting it into a little bit of a practice, but just stating the principle will give birth to maybe your own practice, or your own way of integrating this knowledge. You don't have to worry so much about 'How do I do this?' Something is in motion.

Orland Bishop 8:07

I appreciate that. The practice for me is attention. If I tell anyone, 'If you want to do any practice, give attention—it'll lead you to your own practice.' If you give attention to how I'm feeling, my feelings will tell me what I need to do. Give attention to my thoughts, it'll tell me something different.

Attention is the basic truth for the human being recovering everything—*everything* that we think of being forgotten or lost can be discovered again by *attentiveness*. Because everything that we know comes from it—the attention we give. So things that we don't know come from attention we give.

And so for me, over the last 25 years, my basic practice is attentiveness. Then it leads me to all kinds of other practices. But the basic truth of it. So I would say start there.

In the states where I'm saying, learn creativity with it, because this was fundamentally true for the civil rights movement and any struggle that a person is trying to transform in society. When I say, 'I'm not my body,' if someone is trying to harm you, *be* your body. Know when to get your body out of the way of harm.

All of these things require contemplation first. Don't do it before you have contemplated how it can be done in your particular unique circumstances. That's why I don't assign it as a practice because people could harm themselves. If they say, 'I'm not my body,' and someone is trying to physically harm them. No.

Orland Bishop 10:40

'I'm not my thoughts.' No—there are times when you really have to think through critical judgment of a situation and act. The civil rights movement—Dr. King taught people civil disobedience and nonviolent action. They put the physical bodies in the way of violence, but they had to change their feelings and thoughts about it. That's what gave rise to the kind of work that came in with the civil rights movement. If they were only passionate about their protection of their bodies, and angry about that abuse, we would not have gotten a non-violent movement to grow.

So these things apply to deep, deep transformation. But it has to be done with preparation and contemplation of what it means. Ultimately, we want the physical life to be preserved. So don't put it in harm and say, 'I'm not my body,' because we lose it.

But the body allows the humanity of ourselves to grow when we could understand its power. To stand in the world against tremendous forces and say, 'I know where I need to stand.' So it's really about the stand you want to take in the world and how to prepare yourself to go there. And take your body, feelings, and thoughts with you.

Contemplation, concentration of attention, contemplation of purpose—of these processes of life, and meditation—for the moment when you have to make a decision—a life or death decision—as to your higher purpose in the world. Most people think it's just about life alone. No. Some people know that this is the moment that I'll also die, knowing my purpose. I don't always want to go there with it. But this is the initiatory knowledge of that practice.

Everything does not always work out to live it out. Sometimes you know that life is bringing me to a complete point. But I still have to believe in that higher purpose. And people have done so countless number of times. But it's important to know that your spirit is authoring that, not the world.

And much of what I say sometimes in these imaginative knowledge and esoteric knowledge traditions is to evoke parts of ourselves that I know, from what I'm sharing, knows this. And it's not often common that intellectual frameworks best support knowing it. There is a kind of quickening in the etheric body that *feels* the truth of it, not thinks about it.

So the heart cognition. I'm speaking to the heart. It's a very different faculty for our time. Heart thinks in our time.

Charles Eisenstein 14:56

I think it's a beautiful ending. Yeah.

Orland Bishop 15:00

Thank you. Thank you for your contributions.

(End of Unit 1.1)

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Course 3, Unit 1: Reverence and Irreverence

Unit 1.2: Attention & Moral Intelligence

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

consciousness, intelligences, year, utilized, beings, january, phenomena, call, understood, new year's day, energy, generated, field, collective consciousness, cloud formations, planet, threshold, human, thoughts, issue

SPEAKERS

Charles Eisenstein, Orland Bishop

Charles Eisenstein 0:02

I just want to put a few things back together again to touch back in on the themes we're talking about. And this is what keeps coming up again and again—attention.

At one point, I decided that the only (maybe I said this already) but the only choice we ever make is the choice of what to pay attention to. And I'm not 100% sure if this is true, but it seems pretty true sometimes, so that anything else that seems like a choice is actually the automatic result of who I've created myself to be through the power of attention.

I also experience attention as the primal gift that you're always free to give, and it's the one freedom that cannot possibly be taken away from you. You *always* have the choice of what to pay attention to. And maybe because it's the only choice, it's also the most fundamental application of will. It's the quintessence of will—what you pay attention to.

So whatever I've chosen to pay attention to throughout the course of my life, each one of those choices builds myself as a certain being, and also creates the world in reference to myself. It creates the world of my experience, too. In that sense, it is a gift.

Okay, so then the choice is, what do we pay attention to? Which brings up the theme of reverence, which I've been really wanting to talk to you about. Rudolf Steiner mentions it in *How to Access Higher Worlds*, which is the only book that I've read more than 10 pages of, of Steiner. I think I've probably read 30 pages of that one before I decided that I had read the relevant part for myself. He holds reverence to be the first principle of accessing higher worlds.

I'll bring in one more little piece—one of my operating principles is that the story that we hold

about another is an invitation for them to live from that story, or to be that story. The same thing—the story we hold about the world is an invitation for the world to be as **beholden** in our story.

So just like a really mundane example: if I hold the story that you're an unscrupulous, scurrilous, untrustworthy individual, then you might not fulfill my expectation, but I'm not going to create much room for you to be anything else in my experience unless you violate that story, which is, therefore, an act of mutual creation. Because by violating my story, you're introducing something new and giving *me* an invitation to change the story.

But anyway, this comes up in the context of my climate work, where I observe that we live in a scientific ideology that holds the world as a thing. So it's no surprise that our collective actions are turning the world into a thing, because we're inviting that reality.

So reverence is a very different invitation. Because when we are reverent, we put attention on the most sacred dimension of another person or, I'm not sure how you would put it, but maybe... Reverence is the awareness of the fulfillment of that being or what that being wants to become, or can become.

Maybe if you could expand a bit or offer something about reverence, maybe if you want to go back to attention too, but I would just love to hear what you have to say about that.

Orland Bishop 5:03

Thank you.

Human nature carries awareness. Awareness of a given—a domain we call the Given. Anything that appears in sense perception or cognition to which I then give attention is the Given—the world comes into me, even without me knowing, because part of my nature is to perceive it. Perception happens without full awareness. And it has to, because it has to awake cognition.

The human spirit, which is attentiveness, engages with the world through perception, and then I become aware of creativity: creativity to give meaning, understanding, intentions for fruitfulness with what I'm interacting with, from what I take up as the world in me. And so, the power of cognition asks of me, 'How committed are you to the truth of what has just awakened in you as the world?'

This is the aim of reverence—to strengthen my will and conviction, to dedicate as the aim of my goal, truthfulness. It is not only in me that I seek truthfulness; the spiritual world seeks it for me. Their aim is to encourage through inspiration or even from true intuition, for me to have access to their domain of beingness.

Reverence is an attitude towards life. It can be found in playfulness as a child, the concentration of a game that a child plays, attends to the thing as reality—in becoming, crafting of the intellect to be able to draw upon sources of inspiration, that then can lead to real work in the world.

The reverence for me comes when it reaches the heart, the impulse of the world reaches my heart. Do I withhold my higher commitment to it or do I dedicate more will in service of the renewing of the Given that it might appear in me again and be given back as goodness to the world, as truth and beauty in the world?

This is the aim of the faculties of conscience: do I keep it free of hiddenness, of shadows, of doubt or fear, that will allow me to withhold myself from acting as a representative of this tremendous creative power.

The reverence also comes to bear upon the human will, when we have to confront adversarial forces. In particular, when we are tempted to suppress the natural tendencies of life, to be in this truthfulness to a compromise in which I take something without asking permission from creation, meaning asking for the lawfulness of the rights to have it in me.

Charles Eisenstein 10:10

Yeah.

Taking without awareness of what you're serving, which could maybe fortuitously end up not causing any harm, but as a general rule, if you take without awareness of the aim of what you're serving—you might proclaim that you're serving peace, but actually serving the appearance of serving peace, or the appearance of being a social justice warrior, or the appearance of something, then the results will ultimately end up being divergent from what you think you're serving.

So I guess maybe what we're saying is that honesty with oneself about *why* you do what you do is a prerequisite. I mean, reverence is not possible without clarity about the aim.

Orland Bishop 11:21

Yeah, the aim is guided by moral intelligence. So it's not just emotional intelligence or intellectual intelligence; there's a moral intelligence. It comes with the heart forces.

Again, what has happened when the world comes into me? And what I'm calling the blood—the blood is not just the substance that we say today, just moves through and carries nourishment. It carries the cosmic will in it, cosmic memory in it. It carries the human archetypal potential of transforming the old into the new.

And so these light forces, when reaches the heart, catalyzes the blood to go through what we call etherization. Etherization is a heightened sense, some would call it passion or compassion, for whatever has appeared in the world. Passion for my work, compassion for the transformation of something that has served its purpose, or may have been keeping the higher purpose of something from coming to life.

This happens in the faculties of the heart. And I'm using it different than an organ. It can be

interchangeable, but a faculty is something that I actually have control over. And so the heart is an organ on one level and a faculty on another. Just like intellect can be a faculty of consciousness. At this level, the heart posits in me a choice of becoming a host for this new impulse.

(End of Unit 1.2)

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Course3, Unit 1: Reverence and Irreverence

Unit 1.3: Irreverence

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

consciousness, intelligences, year, utilized, beings, january, phenomena, call, understood, new year's day, energy, generated, field, collective consciousness, cloud formations, planet, threshold, human, thoughts, issue

SPEAKERS

Charles Eisenstein, Orland Bishop

Audience 0:00

I mean, selfishly from earlier, on to the chapter on irreverence—

Charles Eisenstein 0:07

Oh, yes. Irreverence.

Audience 0:09

Yeah, I understand. As a clarifying thing, don't pay attention to that or something, even though it is drawing attention to the thing you're saying don't pay attention to, I feel like it's, there's more to it.

Charles Eisenstein 0:21

Partly it's just that our society enshrines things that should not be enshrined. So irreverence actually directs us toward what we should be reverent toward. Yeah, I mean, it could just be like togetherness, for example, play, but I don't know.

What about irreverence?

Orland Bishop 0:50

Yeah, I put it in the same category as humor—don't take yourself seriously. Don't take the sacred so reverential that we don't touch it. Don't allow a child to go and say, 'What is this?' I said, 'No. If you want to know, go to the sacred.'

For some people, it's a rule that we don't touch the sacred. It used to be only specially trained people should go. We were speaking about the tarot process earlier—the Fool is the greatest

part of the card deck. Why? Because they venture into spaces with the innocence of the child, with the openness of a wanderer. And then you meet everything.

So a critical thing: can an open heart find everything? Yes. Can an open mind find all forms of knowledge? Yes. You don't have to be a believer—you have to be an open-hearted, open-minded being.

Charles Eisenstein 2:15

It's about casting down idols. You're talking about idolatry.

Orland Bishop 2:19

Exactly. To liberate ourselves from inheritances of all kinds, including that this should be done this way.

And then yet, there are times when you recognize, 'This person needs some training.' Because they're ready, though they'll stumble too many times, of course. Like, come on, stand up, let's go, let's show me how to cross the threshold. And you accompany them, not just send them on their own.

So there are certain things if you want the person to be able to refine their interest in something, then their methods of schooling for them. But you can't point the interest before they're ready. It's something that honors their freedom and timing. And again, it depends on how much responsibility you want to take for those who you see in the world and share the world with.

I'll say one more thing about irreverence, I put it in the category of humor but I want to say, the part that struck me when you spoke to—there's a reverse part of our will that when I'm reaching for something, it's also reaching for me. And there's sometimes I have to understand my own readiness for responsibility of certain kinds. And say, 'No, I'm not ready.' That's irreverence.

Charles Eisenstein 4:25

So a kind of deflection, which could actually be healthy

Orland Bishop 4:29

It could be very healthy.

Oh, that's why I am putting it in that sense. It is a way of really allowing humility and a gesture of honest striving and to individuate your own unique way of looking at things. And when I say it that way, it is not against the sacred—it is standing in unity with the freedom that the sacred allows me to have. Sacred does not want my will as a compulsion. It wants it as a unifying freedom.

Charles Eisenstein 5:24

I'm thinking also, again, of the Fool, which is also the Jester, who, in the court of the king, was the one who was allowed to make fun of the king. So that kind of irreverence basically is

interrupting the tendency to hold something false, in reverence, in place of the true.

What we're supposed to revere in the office of the king is not anything about his personality. So to make fun of his personality and his quirks, you know, and his idiosyncrasies, that actually opens us toward reverence for what we're supposed to be reverent of. And so that gets back to 'don't take yourself so seriously'.

Orland Bishop 6:12

Yeah. Right. Because if humor is not connected with it, it can do harm. And that's the critical thing. It is really, and could be a practice rather than just an act of defiance against something.

Audience:

Can you explain that more—"if humor's not involved, it could be dangerous"?

Charles Eisenstein 6:34

If you take something very seriously... Like for me, there's always a warning. If any political person, any organization, where there's not, you know, some humor, there's not a thread of humor going through it, I'm like, 'Uh oh', because they're holding the idea of themselves too tightly. Which means that there's not room for any truth to come in that is inconsistent with their idea of themselves. So in that case, if they're resistant to humor, which can be a way to dispel one's idea of oneself, then it's like, there's no hope for them.

Orland Bishop 7:32

So the development of comedy in our literature and culture was to actually be irreverent. The purpose of it was to point out all the contradictions and paradoxes that people saw within the sacred and the cultural life. You know, other than life would just be tragedies, and who wants to watch tragedies every day?

So part of it is like, we needed to infuse these other archetypal gestures of intelligences around seeing—not believing the comedy, but appreciating the fact that it could show us areas of the shadow without losing this deeper interest in the same power, in the same position, and pathways of things. So it's the **gesture/Jester**, and it is to acknowledge the fact that it has a blind side to it. And it's not perfect—can't be, shouldn't be.

Charles Eisenstein 8:56

Yeah. Think of the toilet video we made, and what, you know, enshrined image that it dispels.

Audience 9:13

So then irreverence without humor, does that look like vandalism or...

Orland Bishop 9:21

Yes.

It comes in with protests when it loses the sacred gesture of trying to point out what's wrong.

What's wrong is not the thing that you burn. We know that. Some people just like fire because it makes the statement more profound. But the critical thing is that it's still trying to find a way to express all of these contradictions, and so be appreciative for having said it. Because it's just part of the psyche of the intellect. Intellect knows irreverence very well.

Charles Eisenstein 10:21

And if there's humor, it means that we're that you're offering the invitation to be irreverent together. Whereas if it's violence, then you're creating separation through your irreverence.

(End of Unit 1.3)

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Course 3, Unit 2: Dissolving the Self

Unit 2.1: On Death (Length: 16:46 mins.)

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

death, ecology of consciousness, emerging culture/economy/worldviews, soul, witness, reincarnation, near-death experiences, Buddhism, Rudolf Steiner, Akashic field, astral space

Charles Eisenstein 0:00

You know, I had that sense when a friend of mine passed away last year. Her name was Polly Higgins. She was an Earth rights lawyer, and just an incredibly courageous woman. She lived in the UK. And inspirational...she just inspired so many people. And then she got this unusual extreme... She was my age, you know... This virulent form of cancer, and she just died very quickly. And I talked to her not that long before she died. And she was like, 'Yeah, I've got this cough that won't go away', you know.

And I had the sense after she passed that, on some level, she decided that she would be more useful to the world dead than alive; which sounds like a curse. You say to somebody, 'You're better off dead than alive', or 'The world would be better if you were dead than alive'. But it is like her will and her dedication diffused, and now it is like she's working through everybody now.

Orland Bishop 1:21

Yeah. And for me, the practice around the ecology of consciousness *includes* the dead in the activation of what we'll call our new or emerging culture. Our emerging economy, emerging worldviews... They're playing an active part in this substantive rise of new impulses.

Charles Eisenstein 1:53

So, how do they do that? I mean, just take it to a very mundane level. They're dead, so how do they do it?

Orland Bishop 1:59

Well, the soul. The soul, the same soul, that leaves the body and engages things when we sleep. Leaves the body completely, and enters into the physical matter of the Earth—interacting

with the *being* of the earth.

So the human being, before to become an ancestor the way we imagined that to be, becomes an *agent* for the evolution of the Earth. A catalyst for us, substantive wakening. And that happens in the inner substances—in the inner life processes of the Earth.

Charles Eisenstein 2:46

Are they... having a subjective experience?

Orland Bishop 2:54

It's more truthful than, 'This is my experience'. There is no subjective *being* there. The witness that we have always been in the world is there as a witness for the Earth's purpose.

The witness *in our own higher cognition* is part of the destiny of the Earth. So that part takes its initiative more freely. And everyone that's in relationship to it—as you said, your friend, you can feel this substance—our feelings, then, give access to that being *to transfer to us wisdom of the Earth*.

Charles Eisenstein 3:52

So, this gets more metaphysical, but... I'm thinking about the witness and going back to attention. One thing that led me to my understanding of attention was—I had done a thought experiment. I contemplated: What happens when I remove everything that makes me me? What's left? What's left if I forget my language? If I forget where I am? If I forget how to use my body? Everything can be taken away. And what's left is just attention.

Because it is stripped of anything else that makes it *me*, therefore, my attention is no different from your attention. It's the same attention. As if it were appearing out of the world through different eyes.

So it seems, by the same logic, that all of the dead are just one, because it's just one witness. From a linear space-time, like from our subjectivity where we've separated out space and time, it might look like there's one there, and one there, and one there—all witnessing—but it's actually one witness.

So, is this so far accurate?

Orland Bishop 5:28

It carries memory of what it witnessed while it was in the body because the body was a domain for its individuality to be expressed. So this great astral ocean that we call the cosmos, every one of us carries a part of that in our own body, giving us *collective* experiences in our own particular way.

When that is incarnated and goes back into the substantive *depositing of that personal experience to the Earth*, the Earth is receiving something that has never been there before—the experience of a witness. So that part is the evolutionary processes of, say, *new realities* that the Earth will give birth to—human intelligence in its organic life.

Charles Eisenstein 6:42

Because that particular life has never been lived before. So, when it returns to the Earth, it is new information.

I'm just kind of wondering what it's like for the dead person. Like, I'm not deeply versed in it, but I've read about near-death experiences. And, the life review and the tunnel, and there's, you know, great commonality among these experiences across cultures. It's not like something that's programmed in by a certain cultural expectation. It's quite universal.

And then also, reincarnation research, where you—I'm sure you're familiar a little bit with some of this—Ian Stevenson's compendium of children who have verified... Yeah. So, I wonder if you could offer a, like... What's it gonna be like? You know, I'm curious!

This was a question that came in our metaphysics course as well. What happens? (I think Lauren asked it), 'What's going to happen to me after I die?' And I feel like you know more than you've explained so far. Or maybe you have no idea, just like everybody else? [laughter]

Orland Bishop 8:16

[laughter] Again, some levels of it shouldn't be talked about without the right preparation. Because it could activate parts of ourselves that are already touching that reality. And for some people, it could be right into the experience of the witness being fully present and these realities being revealed.

So I'm always careful about who is asking the question, or who's listening to the answers about it.

Charles Eisenstein 9:00

We have no idea who's listening.

Orland Bishop 9:01

Right. So I'll say as much as I can feel safe to say.

The time after death depends on how we lived before death. Meaning that, when attention is prepared well enough to be in this observation of our life, that's helpful to have attentional forces—*free forces*—within the superconscious conscious nature of the soul that then comes to awareness that they were able to utilize more of their life forces and not only the inherited forces of the body. They're able to find freedom in '*out of the body*'.

Charles Eisenstein 10:06

Yes.

Orland Bishop 10:07

Because some of them, if they have not found enough freedom from the body, they don't want to die. Because the body has life potential in it. Even if it's an image, they want to finish that. That's gonna go on for a long time—wanting to stay in the body. Because that's all the impulses that they were able to live from.

Charles Eisenstein 10:37

Right.

Orland Bishop 10:38

And so it's critical to experience *thinking free of the brain, feelings free of the emotions, and perceptions free of the body*, in order to die within creative processes to continue without lingering into the desire of the body.

Charles Eisenstein 11:03

That sounds similar to what Buddhists say about how to exit the...reincarnation. Because if you're dependent on the *body* forces, then you're going to want another body. So to complete what you were supposed to do, you need a body because you haven't developed anything independent of the body enough to complete that project.

Orland Bishop 11:31

And, again, some beings, even if they could be free of the body's impulses, are not free of the love for those who are not yet free of the body. [laughter] So there are ascended masters who can die whenever they want, or not. And stay in the body for the purpose of supporting compassion for the **fascists**. And all of us that suffer from body attachment.

Charles Eisenstein 12:07

Yeah. One thing that's coming into **mind** right now, to add a little link is, I've been told that Rudolf Steiner said that his purpose was to bring back the knowledge of reincarnation to humanity, something like that. Do you know what quote I'm getting at?

Orland Bishop 12:25

I don't know the quote, but I know the commitment to be helping the idea of reincarnation to be very present in his theory of knowledge.

Charles Eisenstein 12:39

Yeah, and it's in theosophy and stuff. So, since that's part of your lineage, I was just curious whether, you know, what you had to say about it. But, you know, I think I understand what you're saying.

Orland Bishop 12:52

Yeah. One is that... He's been able to recapitulate significant parts of the yoga tradition in a form that the western mind could understand through contemporary science. And to then utilize other techniques in cultures. In Egyptian and others to Atlantean. He went back quite a ways to understand life in the cosmological sense on different planets—moon, sun, Saturn—influences of what we now call our body.

Charles Eisenstein 13:42

Yeah. And I'll just say like, there's serious incoherencies in the idea of reincarnation simply that being, if you want to say, 'I was reincarnated as something', in what sense is that still 'I'?

When who 'I' am and who 'I' experienced myself to be in this world is a function of this body, this conversation, these relationships, this environment. So, say I die, and then someone else is born. That's somebody, but in what sense is it 'me'?

And in what sense are you not me? Like, how do I know that you're not my reincarnation in present time? And we're all the same being?

Orland Bishop 14:40

Again, come back to the witness that you were saying. At the witness level, we share a common humanity, we share a common domain of this astral creative power. The individuated parts can be traced from lifetime to lifetime if someone wants to understand that because there is a continuity of memory for that.

Some people dissolve it right after death. You know, come back with...

Charles Eisenstein 15:12

A clean slate—

Orland Bishop 15:13

...a clean, fresh impulse of it.

But in the Akashic field, this astral space, everything is found. As I say, human being cannot lose anything if we know the processes of recall that the soul can access realities of knowledge that has been forever known and engage with that.

And those techniques are, that's what he called in the book he was speaking of, *How to Know Higher Worlds: A Modern Path of Initiation* (Rudolf Steiner, 1904), to get there you go through these realms of... But then there are guardians at each of those thresholds that says, 'Why you want to know?'

So again, you can't speak about some things if certain people don't ask the question.

Charles Eisenstein 16:07

Yes. And I totally understand why there's certain knowledge that you just can't speak to anybody because the same words might be truth to one person and poison to another.

Like even something as simple as, 'You are not your body'. Or something as simple as.. Like to one person what they need to hear is, 'You only have one life—make the most of it.' [laughter] And somebody else, what they need to hear is the opposite.

Orland Bishop 16:35

I totally agree. [laughter] Yeah. Life and death have to be specific.

(End of Unit 2.1)

Conversations with Orland Bishop
Course three: The Ecology of Consciousness
<https://charleseisenstein.org/>

Course 3, Unit 2: Dissolving the Self

Unit 2.2: Oneness

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

oneness, dissolving 'self', sacrifice, wheel of reincarnation, meditation, ego,

Panelist? Question 1?? 0:01

The idea was brought up about how, in some way, we're the same being. As in, when I look into your eyes, I'm looking into my eyes. And I guess, I was just curious to hear a bit more about that. And I guess what it means for any action that I have. As, in some sense, like a response or like a direct impact on me. So if I help someone with the task, in some sense, I'm helping myself and that we are all like one being. I don't know what that means.

Orland Bishop 0:46

Yeah, I appreciate that. For sure, there's a subtlety there. The Oneness is in the *ideal* sense. Not the *real* sense. There are levels above the real, which already manifested. So the ideal human state as an archetype is that *I'm willing to be less of me that you may become more of you*. The ideal gesture is not for the human being is not more power, or more abilities, it's the capacity to sacrifice to make you sacred enough that I serve that objective, that *you are my higher objective*.

Now I don't lose anything. That's the Oneness that we're bringing: *the more I give love, the more love is created; the more I give devotion, the more devotion is created. The higher forces of the human being, the more we give it away, the more it comes into being*. Because that process of giving it is the higher purpose of the being. Until it's free of the self-identified space of 'I'm giving' it dissolves the substance that held the unique power of the gift to becoming.

So I dissolve myself by giving away everything that I am. **End of the** wheel of reincarnation. And so how do I cultivate individuality, to the degree in which I'm part of the whole and no longer separate as an individual of it? I dissolve my 'self'.

And we do this as a meditation practice. *I dissolve myself*. This was a phrase. And see what begins to happen. What parts could truly be dissolved? My ambitions? My creations? My attachments?

Charles Eisenstein 3:27

I would add to that, that this doesn't have to be a war where you're forcing yourself to dissolve. It's more a recognition of what is *ready* to dissolve, or what part of the self is ready to be sacrificed.

And as one becomes aware of that readiness, then situations will arise to offer the opportunity to sacrifice that. So, maybe your ambition at a certain point of life--ambition starts to feel like an old suit of clothes. You're gonna die someday, you know, and like this whole pursuit of personal advancement and power and money and fame and stuff. It's like, 'Yeah, what's good is that really gonna do to me anyway?' So there's a ripening of this particular fruit of the ego, you could say it's ready to be surrendered and then a situation will arise where you could serve your ambition. Or you could dissolve that--make a sacrifice of that--and serve something else for this other person.

Like maybe what this person really needs to be free is directly contradictory to what you need to serve your ambition. So that's the moment where the sacrifice can be offered.

The meditation is a preparation to do that when the time comes. So in the meditation, I might look at what evolution is wanting to happen. And just be aware of what is no longer serving me? What feels kind of done with? What feels like, maybe I'm not quite done with it?

Like maybe in theory, I would like to sacrifice it. I'd like to give it away, but honestly, like, I'm not really quite ready to let go of that. And to give attention to that. To give attention to the *not readiness*. That's actually part of the maturation of it *into readiness*. So in my understanding this can be a more gentle process. It still requires attentiveness, but it's not a violence against the self, which is actually a very beautiful thing.

Just to be vigilant around the tendency to make everything into a fight or a conquest. That's also the mentality of fascism. There's an inner fascism where it's about overcoming evil in the self and then you become obsessed with purity. And that's exactly the mentality of fascism. Fascism is all about purity, ethnic cleansing...

Orland Bishop 7:12

I'm hoping the understanding is shared that here sacrifice needs to make sacred to really honor with clarity and choice what cannot be lost by me giving it away. Because in here, this act is really important for not just this life, but *after* this life.

Because it refines this space in which I know that I have to give my body away at some point. I have to give my feelings away at some point. I have to give my thoughts away at some point. In reality, and all I'm left with is to witness. And we must be able to cultivate an attitude towards this gesture of freedom from these instruments that hold for us space for others to interact with the 'I'.

So I agree that I can find peace in my living to the degree in which I'm *free from want* to where I feel really empowered by giving away the forces that keep my will grasping on something. Because that's a practice in preparation for letting go.

I had a beautiful experience with a friend with cancer. And we had a consultation and our question was, 'Was my body capable of carrying on with life?' And in the conversation in the assessment was that she had gone into remission twice before like. This time it's like, your soul is saying something more, not just the body. Okay, and then, 'Let's go home and prepare.'

And we were discharged from hospital and went home and, in few days, we sat in preparation for this transition. And she remained conscious until the very very, very last moment because she has prepared with this body served me to be aware of my life and now it has to serve me to be aware of my death.

And at the very last moment, she's squeezed my hands. Because I was holding it and she knew I was there. Like, opening our eyes like, 'You're still here? Okay.' You know, and she left. But I could still feel the subtle release--the grasp went away. But it's...I can hold my hand I can still feel it. She gave me an imprint of the moment when she crossed.

The imprint comes from not the physical, but from the etheric. The life body is what moves the physical. But we are imprinted all the time, by the life body of people, not the physical.

And so when people get angry, they project it on the physical, but the life body is trying to work through this is how we treat the diplomats. Like, don't take that person physically, not seriously. Don't take them physically. Or you will want to do harm with the knowledge that you have about them. *Feel*. Feel their life. *Feel their life*. Like, 'Did somebody come into the room? Wow, I have an opportunity to actually be with this life with this person as an antagonist to the world.'

(End of Unit 2.2)

Conversations with Orland Bishop
Course three: The Ecology of Consciousness
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Course 3, Unit 3: Becoming Together

Unit 3.1: Holding the Will

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

consciousness, intelligences, year, utilized, beings, January, phenomena, call, understood, new year's day, energy, generated, field, collective consciousness, cloud formations, planet, threshold, human, thoughts, issue

SPEAKERS

Charles Eisenstein, Orland Bishop

Charles Eisenstein 0:01

I've been looking forward to this conversation for a long time. I'm really happy that it's happening. I feel like it's gone really well. And I wonder if there's anything that you came with the intention of sharing, that you haven't had a chance to share yet? Or something that has been born since you got here that feels like you want to share it?

Orland Bishop 0:30

Yeah, I was just thinking of the social question of our will—the agreement structure for civil engagement. Because I think, given our political climate of things, civil society could be another space in which something new can be offered.

Some people call it social capital, but it's more than that. And what made me come to it is the feeling of this hand that I held as she left this world. And so in the social realm, people are feeling a quality of interest in something but can't point to it. Because it's not a thing anymore.

It's our own will that we're trying to feel. And when it reaches this level of contact, I'm holding actually someone else's will, not just my own. And I've been interested in this question that we're calling 'social innovation' or social whatever, what the social part really could be, when developed to the level in which I could feel supported by a collective and act without, again, the decision being it's mine that I'm acting *into* or *from*?

Charles Eisenstein 2:36

Can you explain a little bit more of what you mean by holding another person's will?

Orland Bishop 2:49

When we look at our economic and political life, our will, personal will being used all the time.

Charles Eisenstein 3:00

Yeah, because what comes to my mind—I might affirm some goal, some aim that I have, some ideal that I really want to work toward. I really want to devote myself to this in this moment. And I might recognize that my will could waver. So I might say, Orland, can you help me hold this? Hold this will. Can you remind me when I've forgotten? And can you hold for me when I'm not holding it?

Orland Bishop

Yes.

Charles Eisenstein

And maybe I can hold it for you when you're not holding it. And if we have a large enough group of people, someone will always be holding it and therefore be able to remind me and re-invoke it in me because they've been holding it for me. So it's a collective will that I choose to participate in it. Yeah.

Orland Bishop 4:14

Yeah. It's consciously shared. It's consciously shared. So again, it's not something that exists without me choosing to be part of it.

Charles Eisenstein 4:29

So if you're holding—when you say you're holding somebody will, there's a relationship there of trust.

Orland Bishop 4:40

Yes. And agreements that enhances what the will can be in service to—it could be in service of our individualized recovery of capacities to do something in the world. It could be surely a way of communicating and collaborating for something in the world. And it can be really to be able to hold the world, nature, as it goes through its particular changes now.

And so I feel like a social, the social question is a critical one to ask. And we put it in the frames, like who do I need to be for you to be you? But it's more than that. It is now like, 'What agreements can we share that we can be here with these changing times?'

Charles Eisenstein 5:36

Yeah, this is what I'm passionate about as well. I frame it in a slightly different way, just, 'What is the story that we're going to join and hold together?' What's the new story for humanity that the story of the people, the common story, but a story is, in the sense that I'm referring to it, includes both a narrative and it also includes a web of agreements.

Orland Bishop 6:08

And here, I'm actually positing the idea that we hold the will first before we hold the story. The

social will is, I'm willing with you to be willing to hold the story. And so you're holding my wheel, I'm holding yours, that agreement itself is a substance for something that comes into the story, as a kind of organic impulse. And the story could be even born *because* we're holding each other's will.

Charles Eisenstein 6:54

And it could also be that the story, if it's attractive, could be what gives me the courage and trust. Like, if you share the story, too, then couldn't it go the other way around? That I'm willing to... for you to hold my will, because I know that we're in service to the same thing.

And this is another thing. I talk a lot about story. But I also recognize that what I call the story is actually only one layer of something that is much bigger and deeper than just a story. It's the narrative layer of something else. And it includes the state of being and the state of the world that attracts that particular story to it.

So it's not that we have to, it's not that we just choose a different story, and then everything changes. It's part of a larger shift. And maybe what you're saying—the willingness to join our will is part of the inner layer of this being of which story is also a more outer layer?

Orland Bishop

Exactly. Yes, yes.

Charles Eisenstein

But I'm excited. I'm curious to know. Another thing I just want to throw in there—When you say 'civil society', I think of both meanings of the word. 'Civil', on the one hand, having to do with the civic realm, the civilians, the citizens, and on the other hand, 'civility', which is maybe what makes something into an actual society, in the sense that you referred to it earlier. And not just, you know, a bunch of people

Orland Bishop 9:00

The commons, the common good, the higher shared purpose. And those say, the agreement that's the currency at the level of soul. That's what it gives rise to: the collective consciousness that one can say, at this stage of evolution in consciousness, we really need to access, because the complexity factor that we're dealing with in our world around these various issues, no one person can be an expert in them.

And so we're depending upon a shared exploration of who knows what, and conserve in different intentions of hosting the work that needs to be done to organize into a body of deep service.

Charles Eisenstein 10:09

So what needs to happen? What's the next step into a truly civil society? What's wanting to happen right now that you could name and prophesy into existence?

Orland Bishop 10:31

We call the social asset mapping. I would say like, 'Who are you to me? And who am I to you?' We can create all kinds of distinctions of what the relationship is.

I have to be human to you. I'm not just a friend to you. Human to you means I will utilize everything that will allow me to be me to be available for you. It's an age in which people want to belong to organizations, and they want to be the boss and whatever.

I'm saying, 'No. The one organization we need is to be humanly present for each other.' The assets in that, just call it assets, because if I cultivate the truthfulness of it, we all need the same thing. In general, need. We might *want* different things. But the needs are—

Charles Eisenstein 11:55

—quite universal.

Orland Bishop 11:56

Quite universal. And we could meet those needs. What most of the design principles we know now.

Charles Eisenstein 12:11

So human asset mapping—so like, you'd have a bunch of people, and is there like a process that you have developed? Or is this more of a suggestion?

Orland Bishop 12:24

We've done this before. That's how we supported the gang truce in L.A., in Watts. We did it more for organizing the community of Watts' 70,000 people. We kind of used the 1990 census. Same things the federal government asked, we asked. We took the same document and repurposed it to be an asset for the community. And they saw their own statistics and they understood what they can add to that as value and create organizations to use their collective humanity.

It started with a \$25,000 grant from this right after the '92 civil unrest. And that organizing process created a social value equity process that's worth millions of social investment capital, in a matter of two years, by people repurposing their relational thing from what the federal government could do with it to what they can do with it. And then agree on how to do them.

There are, of course, technologies now that can make people share all kinds of resources that we have, that could be strategically framed to be a catalyst for social development.

Charles Eisenstein 14:14

What's coming to me is that the part of the power of social asset mapping isn't so that now we know what's available and where it is available. But it's actually in the very process of asking that question—What are you to me that creates what you would call a substance? That question, even being in that question, even seeing somebody that way, that's already a shift of

perception,

Orland Bishop 14:41

A very, very important shift in perception.

And then it goes further. Do you see me in the world that you're seeing yourself in?

Charles Eisenstein 14:53

Or *how* do you see me in the world that you're seeing yourself in?

Orland Bishop 14:55

Exactly right, right. And yeah. So we can actually arrange future relationships of ourselves in the world based on what we project ourselves to be able to know and do. Five years from now, what do you expect yourself to be doing? And am I part of that?

This is imagination, because in a certain way, we have to now begin to use imaginative knowledge and look at the exercise of projections to be collectively motivated and inspired. Because it's not expertise. It's really a relational goal. Can we deepen the use of forces that I know I'm carrying, and I've worked with it for many organizations to enhance the agreement structure for what we call vibrancy—feeling connected to this life realm that we are inhabiting.

And the dedication of it is that once it reaches a group level of functional capacity, or the archetypal world pours in, all kinds of potential emerges from that. And nature, the next realm beyond our group, cultural framework, nature then begins to become revealed in other ways. By our agreements, are the kinds of impulses are born into nature.

And then our dreams get wild. The Cosmos then says, 'Wow, okay, then I could start asking them to interact with our gifts.' So in that framework, that's what our sacred hospitality space is about.

And hold it as a vision for the city. And you could invite a whole organization, 'What is your role in the city'?

Yeah, and host them to see their social value creation in the entire city.

(End of Unit 3.1)

Conversations with Orland Bishop
Course three: The Ecology of Consciousness
<https://charleseisenstein.org/>

Course 3, Unit 3: Becoming Together

Unit 3.2: Hospitality and Kindness

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

consciousness, intelligences, year, utilized, beings, january, phenomena, call, understood, new year's day, energy, generated, field, collective consciousness, cloud formations, planet, threshold, human, thoughts, issue

SPEAKERS

Charles Eisenstein, Orland Bishop

Charles Eisenstein 0:00

Suppose I want to level up my hospitality. What is something that I should know to be a better host?

Orland Bishop 0:16

Wake early. So this is the thing about sunrise...

Charles Eisenstein 0:22

To get everything ready you mean or is there some other...

Orland Bishop 0:25

It can get to that, but sunrise is a chemistry of life. Sunset is a chemistry of life. This rhythm between day and night gives the human being etheric forces, life forces, to feel prepared for the next phase of everything.

Charles Eisenstein 0:55

Right. So, yeah, that kind of makes sense. Even just if I get up after sunrise, I've missed the beginning.

Orland Bishop 1:03

You've missed the beginning of something that the body needs to experience.

Charles Eisenstein 1:11

Yeah, then I'm kind of playing catch up all day.

Orland Bishop 1:13

Again, yeah, people work different rhythms of the day and night now. So it's not, you know... You have to find a ceremony—Ceremony of beginning for most primal impulses is sunrise --- psychically. And what happens is that this energy of divine bliss, really, catalyzes the collective feel of people who say the sun is rising to bring our will into collective engagement. And then sunset—Oh the night is rising, so that we can go into dream time. We can go into—

Charles Eisenstein 2:12

—the astral—

Orland Bishop 2:13

—the astral world where the star beings reveal potential destinies for what we can dream it. It is not mythology, it is not psychology—it's physiology. We now know and can measure these quantum fields responding to climate and all of that is what's... This is how in touch we are with our environment.

Charles Eisenstein 2:42

Maybe mythology always has been physiology.

Orland Bishop 2:46

I wouldn't doubt that at all.

Charles Eisenstein 2:48

I read somewhere that they can measure the effect of the heart's electromagnetic field as influenced by the sun's field. Like the heart is influenced by the sun, like this is actually measurable. I mean, we always knew this, but...

Orland Bishop 3:09

Yeah. So the soul is solar energy. And the higher purpose of the soul of a person comes to the heart as an intention to suggest lightly to hold others. This is the reverence again. When reverence comes into the feeling life, I say, it doesn't matter, but it can be dedicated to anything, any process. And the purpose of it is to enhance the soul's influence on the person and the environment.

Charles Eisenstein 4:03

Okay. I'd kind of like another... something else besides rise early, although I—

Orland Bishop 4:11

Oh, there's lots. There are many, many others. Any count with a human being could be acknowledged as an agreement and not a random act. And even when people use the word 'random act of kindness', it's like—I think we should eliminate the 'random act' part. Just be kind—because it's actually more intentional than we know or would want to acknowledge. We're not making it up. It's a longing to be kind *cellularly*.

Charles Eisenstein 5:03

It is. People are desperate for opportunities that are allowable by their guardian intellect to be kind. People that just are so anxious, so, so desperate to have opportunities to give when most of those avenues have been culturally foreclosed.

Orland Bishop 5:21

Right.

Yeah, this could be the most significant currency—to distribute this energy of willingness to be in the... Moving the collective unconscious to the collective superconscious. Just kindness. And it's not a false impression of, you know, just wanting to look good or anything like that. There again, there's a direct effect on life.

Charles Eisenstein 5:51

A personal question here—Recently got a message through my contact form on my website that said something like, ‘Charles, you espouse such high ideals, but you treat people very badly. Why are you such a hypocrite?’

And so all night, I thought about all of the people I've might have treated badly. And, you know, sometimes people write to me asking me to do something and I ignore them, or people come up to me after I've spoken and they want something, and they want my attention, but I'm really tired. And if I—actually I kind of know the answer to my question but I'll ask it anyway.

If I'm kind to everyone, then I just can't spread myself that thin, you know. I've kind of put myself in a situation where I cannot meet the longing for my attention that is awoken in people when they are receiving something that I've put out there, because I'm putting out too many, you know. I'm not really sure what to do about that.

Orland Bishop 7:02

Yeah. I'm in the same space. And I think what you're doing now is part of that—you have others who care for your caring. It has to be a group and/or not an individual after a while. Your purpose in doing it must allow you to host the group that will host you. And others.

It's why a **city** idea is critical. It's for the purpose of being able to let someone else carry your will when you can't, and you know that they will do it well on your behalf. And they know that purpose of why they're supporting what you need to be doing in the world.

This is why this—for me, like I can't wake up and hold all of that anymore. I have for 20 plus years. The rhythm of the city, the rhythm of wisdom that pours in that's not collected, the rain that falls and then runs off to the ocean because we can't innovate our cities, engineers to understand the significance that the water from Peinado in the Eastern Sierra does not need to come to Los Angeles when rain falls here, enough to be kept here. This is for me like, we are not using our [inaudible].

Charles Eisenstein 8:44

Yeah, there it is. There's the generosity, there's the abundance, and it is shunted away. And then you're in scarcity. And then you have to take from the Peinado Valley. Yeah.

Orland Bishop 8:57

I shared with some water representatives that one of the times, maybe two or three, four years ago, when the rain fell enormously in abundance and caused flooding. We actually engineered the city for scarcity. Not for abundance. So when water comes, or even light comes, we don't engage with it. The world—most cities are designed for scarcity,

Charles Eisenstein 9:30

The design of the cities—I mean, the scarcity is endemic. It's in all of our institutions. It's invaded our psychology. And I'm grateful for anyone I meet who is carrying the story of abundance, of which kindness is an aspect.

Orland Bishop 9:55

Kindness is an aspect and I will just say—let the abundance of what you bring be with others, to the degree in which someone can say, 'I'll help him to get back to you later.'

Charles Eisenstein 10:07

We have this amazing guy, Lincoln, now, who went through all of the social media accounts and answered every message.

Orland Bishop

Where is he? Can I give him my... [laughter] Yeah, it's a beautiful thing.

Charles Eisenstein

And then humble, you know. Like, yeah, he's not on the stage. No one's gonna...

Orland Bishop 10:23

Yeah, I'm starting from mine, because I'm behind. So I'm starting from now and going back. So the last person that I mentioned may have sent a message two years ago, but I'm telling, 'I get to you.'

So I'm honored that we could share this. Share this space and hold these ideas into light.

Charles Eisenstein 10:44

Yes. Thank you, Orland.

Orland Bishop 10:45

Charles, you're very welcome. Thank you. Love you much. And thank you for what you're doing. Bring it to the world.

Charles Eisenstein 10:51

Yes.

Orland Bishop 10:53
Thank you, dear friends.

(End of Unit 3.2)