

Tricks

by Bob Fergeson

As individual points of awareness, our chief feature is one of identifying. We become whatever we stare at long enough, and we have been looking at the body/mind since birth. This hypnosis is so strong, most of us cannot escape it without help. The ego, being the clever, self-righteous fool that it is, will not let us accept this help, so we have to be tricked. Fortunately, the Powers That Be invented some very useful tricks to help us out. All tricks are for destroying the ego-centric fantasy that we actually exist, as the body/mind or anything else for that matter, and for freeing us from believing that there is such a thing as an individual 'self.' They serve to back the awareness out of the individual mind/memory and into the state of universal awareness, away from self into silent witness. Thus, a retreat or dis-identification from the mind and its projections is caused, hopefully leading to the realization of one's true self: the observer. Here are a few tricks to get you going but remember . . . they won't work if you actually believe any of this.

- **Trick of going against negative emotions:** This helps lead us away from the extreme defensiveness of the ego-centric position. We believe we're doing good and being virtuous by not being negative, but we are actually just moving away from manically defending the false or particular, i.e. the 'self.' This brings about an inner movement towards a more universal view where one thing, or self, is not set up against another. This trick is also known as 'helping others,' practicing virtues, etc.
- **Trick of 'know thyself':** The point of this trick is to cause dis-identification with the individual memory pattern by becoming familiar with it: what we see is not us. Getting to know the robot leads, hopefully, to realizing it's not you. The information gained by knowing one's self isn't the point, it's the inner movement or retreat that counts. So, don't worry if you discover you're not the person you thought you were.
- **Trick of effortless meditation:** We simply watch our thoughts without being attached or affected. Again, we're led within, as this trick serves to unattach us from our personal reactive mind and places us in the universal rather than the particular. This trick has the added benefit of being quite peaceful.
- **Trick of self-remembering, "Who Am I?" meaningless Zen koans, etc.:** These tricks are quite simple, and therefore very effective. The ego loves complexity and distraction, so the act of focusing the attention on an unanswerable, meaningless koan knocks the ego off its feet, for a bit. Eventually, we may become less afraid of the silent unknown. The movement back and forth between the formal (mind chatter) and informal (silent awareness following the shock of perplexity) might bring about a triangulation: the body/mind and accompanying 'self' or looker may be seen for what they are.

- **Trick of self-inquiry:** Great trick for the astute, since they think they'll have it figured out in no time. Eventually, they might come to find they're not as clever as they thought. It can lead the inquirer to accidentally going within, thus being effective. At its best, it will cause a surrender, or ego-death, when the mind comes to a dead end, thus teaming up with the trick below.
- **Trick of surrender:** A most powerful trick in that we are led to believe we are doing something pious, and instead end up getting a good look at our pride. The trick is that we've never been in charge anyway, meaning we do nothing and never have. Surrender as an act of the prideful, pious ego usually fails miserably. This can eventually lead us to inquire as to what we did wrong, thus leading us back to the trick above. If both inquiry and surrender are practiced, we might trick ourselves right into a massive ego-death, so be careful, ... don't get tricked.