

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are

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Understanding the profound insights of Alan Watts on the human condition and the societal taboos surrounding self-knowledge offers a transformative perspective on life. Watts, a philosopher and speaker renowned for interpreting Eastern philosophy for Western audiences, delved deeply into the human tendency to avoid or deny true self-awareness. His observations reveal that the taboo against knowing who we are is not just a personal barrier but a cultural construct that shapes our perceptions, behaviors, and societal structures. This article explores Watts's insights on the taboo against self-knowledge, its origins, implications, and how individuals can transcend this barrier to attain genuine understanding and fulfillment.

Who Was Alan Watts?

Before diving into his teachings, it's essential to understand Alan Watts's background. Born in 1915 in England, Watts was a philosopher, writer, and speaker known for interpreting and popularizing Eastern philosophy, especially Zen Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism, for a Western audience. His works bridge spiritual traditions with contemporary thought, emphasizing the importance of direct experience over doctrinal adherence.

Watts challenged conventional beliefs about reality, identity, and consciousness, urging individuals to question societal norms that foster disconnection from their true selves. His lectures and writings continue to influence spiritual seekers and thinkers worldwide.

The Concept of the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are

At the core of Watts's teachings is the idea that society enforces a taboo—an unspoken societal prohibition—against truly knowing oneself. This taboo manifests in various ways:

- Denial of True Self: Society promotes identification with roles, possessions, or labels rather than the authentic self.
- Fear of Reality: Facing the truth about oneself can be unsettling; thus, many avoid deep self-inquiry.
- Social Conditioning: Cultural norms often discourage questioning authority or societal expectations that obscure personal identity.
- The Illusion of Separateness: The prevailing belief in separateness from the universe and others creates a barrier to understanding one's true nature.

This taboo is not overt but embedded in language, education, religion, and social interactions, reinforcing a superficial sense of identity that distracts from deeper self-awareness.

Origins of the Taboo in Society and Culture

Understanding the roots of this taboo requires examining societal structures and cultural narratives:

Historical and Religious Influences

- **Dualistic Thinking:** Western philosophy and Christianity have historically emphasized dualism—mind vs. body, good vs. evil—leading to a fragmented sense of self.
- **Original Sin and Guilt:** Religious doctrines often discourage innate self-knowledge, promoting guilt and shame around natural inclinations and desires.
- **Authority and Hierarchy:** Religious and political institutions encourage obedience and conformity, discouraging individual inquiry into true self.

Modern Societal Conditioning

- **Materialism and Consumerism:** Emphasis on possessions and external achievements shifts focus away from inner exploration.
- **Educational Systems:** Often prioritize rote learning and external validation over introspective understanding.
- **Media and Cultural Narratives:** Promote images and stories that reinforce superficial identities based on appearance, status, and success.

These influences collectively reinforce the taboo, making self-knowledge an uncomfortable or even dangerous pursuit in societal terms.

Why Is the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are So Persistent?

Several factors contribute to the persistence of this taboo:

- **Fear of Loss of Control:** Knowing oneself might challenge existing beliefs and threaten social stability.
- **Fear of Uncertainty:** Self-knowledge often uncovers the unknown, which can be unsettling.

- Comfort in Illusion: Superficial identities provide a sense of security and belonging.
- Power Dynamics: Societal leaders and institutions benefit from maintaining the status quo, which often relies on ignorance of true self.

Watts believed that this taboo is deliberately maintained to keep individuals compliant and disconnected from their innate wisdom and power.

Implications of the Taboo on Personal and Collective Levels

Suppressing genuine self-awareness has profound consequences:

Personal Impacts

- Existential Anxiety: A disconnect from true self can lead to feelings of emptiness or meaninglessness.
- Mental Health Issues: Anxiety, depression, and identity crises often stem from superficial self-understanding.
- Lack of Fulfillment: Pursuit of external achievements fails to bring lasting happiness.

Collective Impacts

- Social Fragmentation: Societies built on superficial identities tend to be divided and conflict-prone.
- Environmental Destruction: Disconnection from nature and the universe fosters exploitation and ecological crises.
- Authoritarianism: When individuals do not know their true nature, they are more susceptible to manipulation and control.

Understanding these impacts underscores the importance of breaking the taboo to foster healthier individuals and societies.

How Alan Watts Suggests We Can Overcome the Taboo

Watts offered practical and philosophical approaches to transcend the societal barrier to self-knowledge:

1. Embrace Direct Experience

- Move beyond conceptual thinking and intellectualization.
- Practice mindfulness and meditation to observe thoughts and feelings without judgment.
- Recognize that true understanding arises from direct, lived experience rather than external authority or beliefs.

2. Question Cultural and Societal Norms

- Critically examine internalized beliefs about identity and self.
- Identify societal conditioning that promotes superficiality.
- Cultivate skepticism towards dogmas and narratives that prevent genuine self-awareness.

3. Recognize the Illusory Nature of the Ego

- Understand that the sense of a separate self is a mental construct.
- Explore teachings from Eastern traditions that describe the ego as an illusion.
- Realize that dissolving the ego can lead to a sense of unity with the universe.

4. Practice Self-Inquiry and Reflection

- Regularly ask oneself fundamental questions:
 - Who am I?
 - What is my true nature?
 - What is the nature of consciousness?
- Use meditation, journaling, or contemplative practices to explore these questions.

5. Cultivate Openness and Courage

- Be willing to face uncomfortable truths about oneself.
- Accept that self-knowledge may challenge existing beliefs.
- Embrace vulnerability as a path to authenticity.

The Role of Spiritual Practices in Breaking the Taboo

Watts highlighted that spiritual disciplines are vital tools for overcoming societal restrictions on self-awareness:

- Meditation: Cultivates inner silence and observation.
- Contemplative Prayer: Opens a dialogue with the deeper self.
- Yoga and Movement: Connects body and mind, fostering holistic awareness.
- Study of Sacred Texts: Offers insights into the nature of self and consciousness.

Engaging in these practices helps dismantle the mental barriers imposed by societal conditioning.

The Benefits of Knowing Who You Are

Achieving self-knowledge according to Watts leads to numerous benefits:

- Inner Peace: A sense of harmony and acceptance.
- Authentic Living: Acting in alignment with one's true nature.
- Spiritual Fulfillment: Experiencing a connection with the universe.
- Resilience: Greater capacity to handle life's challenges.
- Creative Expression: Access to innate wisdom and inspiration.

Furthermore, personal transformation can ripple outward, positively impacting relationships and society.

Conclusion: Breaking the Silence About Self-Discovery

Alan Watts's teachings remind us that the societal taboo against knowing who we are is a barrier to authentic existence. Recognizing this taboo's origins and implications empowers individuals to challenge societal narratives and undertake the journey of self-inquiry. By embracing direct experience, questioning conditioned beliefs, and practicing spiritual disciplines, we can transcend the illusions of separateness and discover our true nature.

Breaking this silence is not merely a personal endeavor but a collective necessity. As more individuals awaken to their authentic selves, society as a whole can move toward greater compassion, understanding, and harmony. Watts's insights continue to serve as a guiding light, encouraging us to look beyond superficial identities and embrace the profound mystery of our true selves.

Final Thoughts

The journey to knowing who you are is one of the most profound adventures you can undertake. It requires courage, curiosity, and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths. Alan Watts's teachings illuminate that the greatest barrier—the taboo against self-knowledge—is also the greatest opportunity for liberation. By dismantling societal and mental barriers, we open ourselves to a life of authentic presence, inner peace, and connectedness with all that is.

Remember, the path to self-awareness is not a destination but a continual process of exploration. Embrace it with an open heart and mind, and you may find that the truth of your being is far more wondrous than any societal story you've been told.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Alan Watts' main message in 'The Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are'?

Alan Watts explores the idea that society enforces a taboo against recognizing our true nature, encouraging us to see beyond the illusion of separateness and understand that we are interconnected with the universe.

Why does Alan Watts believe there's a taboo against knowing who you are?

Watts suggests that societal conditioning promotes the illusion of individual separateness, making it uncomfortable or taboo to realize our true identity as part of a larger, interconnected whole.

How does Watts describe the concept of the 'self' in his talk?

Watts describes the self not as an isolated ego but as the universe itself experiencing itself, emphasizing that our true identity transcends personal ego and is rooted in the cosmic whole.

What role does language play in the taboo against knowing who you are, according to Watts?

Watts argues that language reinforces the illusion of separateness by labeling and differentiating, which prevents us from perceiving our unity with everything else.

How can understanding Watts' perspective help individuals in their personal growth?

By recognizing the interconnectedness of all things and shedding the illusion of separateness, individuals can experience greater compassion, reduce ego-driven fears, and find a deeper sense of peace.

What is Watts' view on the fear of death in relation to the taboo against knowing who you are?

Watts suggests that understanding our true nature as part of the universe can diminish the fear of death, as we realize that death is just a transition within the ongoing cosmic process.

In what ways does Watts suggest we can break the taboo and realize our true nature?

Watts recommends practices such as meditation, mindfulness, and philosophical inquiry to dissolve the illusion of separateness and experience our interconnected existence directly.

How has Watts' idea influenced modern spiritual and philosophical movements?

Watts' emphasis on non-duality and interconnectedness has profoundly influenced contemporary mindfulness, Eastern philosophy integration, and the movement toward understanding identity beyond ego.

What is the significance of the title 'The Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are'?

The title highlights the societal and psychological barriers that prevent individuals from recognizing their true nature, urging a reconsideration of how we perceive ourselves and our place in the universe.

Additional Resources

Alan Watts on the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are: An In-Depth Reflection

Alan Watts, a renowned philosopher and speaker known for his ability to bridge Eastern philosophy and Western thought, often explored profound themes related to human identity and societal conditioning. Among his most compelling insights is his discussion on the "taboo against knowing who you are," a concept that challenges the very foundation of our understanding of self and the societal structures that inhibit genuine self-awareness. This article aims to delve deeply into Watts' perspective on this taboo, examining

its implications, the philosophical underpinnings, and its relevance in contemporary life.

Understanding the Core Concept: The Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are

What Does Watts Mean by the "Taboo"?

Alan Watts frequently emphasized that modern society discourages individuals from truly understanding their innate nature. The "taboo" refers to an almost unspoken societal prohibition—an ingrained resistance to contemplating or recognizing one's true self beyond societal roles, labels, and conditioned beliefs. This taboo manifests in various ways:

- Social Conditioning: Education, religion, and cultural norms promote identification with roles (e.g., worker, consumer, citizen) rather than authentic self-awareness.
- Fear of Dissolution: Recognizing the true self often entails dissolving ego boundaries, which can evoke existential fears.
- Avoidance of Responsibility: Accepting one's true nature might imply a radical responsibility for one's life, which society often discourages.

Watts suggests that this taboo is maintained subtly yet powerfully, shaping how individuals perceive themselves and their place in the universe.

The Significance of Self-Knowledge in Watts' Philosophy

For Watts, understanding who you are fundamentally shifts your experience of life. It is not merely a philosophical curiosity but a vital step toward liberation from suffering and illusion. Self-knowledge, in Watts' view, involves recognizing the illusion of separateness and the interconnectedness of all existence.

He often compared the human tendency to see oneself as a separate, isolated ego to a "dream" that masks our true nature as expressions of the universal consciousness. The taboo against knowing this truth keeps individuals trapped within a limited perspective, preventing authentic joy and freedom.

The Philosophical Foundations of Watts' Perspective

Eastern Philosophy and the Self

Alan Watts drew heavily from Eastern philosophies, particularly Zen Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta, both of which challenge the notion of a separate, enduring self:

- Zen Buddhism: Emphasizes direct experience and the illusory nature of the ego.
- Vedanta: Teaches that the true self (Atman) is identical with the universal consciousness (Brahman).

Watts believed that Western culture's denial of these truths perpetuates the taboo. Recognizing our unity with the cosmos is seen as a taboo because it undermines the ego-driven worldview that supports societal structures.

Western Societal Norms and the Construction of the Self

Western thought tends to emphasize individualism, material success, and the separation of self from nature. These ideas reinforce the taboo by:

- Encouraging identification with possessions, status, and roles.
- Promoting a sense of separateness that isolates the individual.
- Suppressing contemplative practices that might lead to self-inquiry.

Watts viewed this societal configuration as a form of collective illusion, designed to maintain control and prevent individuals from realizing their true nature.

The Impact of the Taboo on Human Life

Psychological Consequences

The suppression of true self-awareness can lead to various mental health issues:

- Existential Anxiety: The fear of mortality and the unknown intensifies when one is disconnected from a

sense of unity.

- Identity Crisis: Over-identification with roles and possessions can cause feelings of emptiness and confusion.
- Neurosis and Stress: Living inauthentically contributes to psychological distress, as Watts argued.

Societal and Cultural Effects

The taboo maintains societal stability by:

- Promoting conformity and obedience.
- Suppressing dissent or alternative ways of perceiving reality.
- Creating a consumerist culture centered around superficial satisfactions.

However, Watts pointed out that this stability comes at the expense of genuine human fulfillment.

Overcoming the Taboo: Pathways and Practices

Self-Inquiry and Meditation

Watts advocated practices that lead to direct experience of the self beyond conceptual labels:

- Meditation: Cultivates awareness of the present moment and dissolves ego boundaries.
- Contemplative Inquiry: Questions the nature of the self, encouraging insight into its illusory character.

Features of these practices include:

- Developing mindfulness.
- Recognizing the transient nature of thoughts and feelings.
- Experiencing unity with all existence.

Pros:

- Leads to inner peace and clarity.
- Breaks down the illusion of separateness.
- Fosters compassion and understanding.

Cons:

- Requires discipline and patience.
- Challenging for those ingrained in materialistic or ego-centric lifestyles.

Philosophical and Experiential Shift

Beyond practices, Watts emphasized a philosophical shift—embracing the paradoxes of existence:

- Recognizing that "you are the universe experiencing itself."
- Accepting the mystery and uncertainty inherent in life.
- Letting go of the need for rigid identities.

This shift involves:

- Cultivating humility.
- Embracing the transient nature of life.
- Seeing oneself as part of a larger, interconnected whole.

Critical Perspectives and Challenges

While Watts' insights are profound, some critiques and challenges merit consideration:

- Practicality: Critics question how feasible it is for the average person to break free from societal conditioning.
- Cultural Differences: Not all cultures view the self or ego in the same way; Watts' interpretations are rooted largely in Eastern thought.
- Potential for Nihilism: Some argue that dissolving the ego might lead to a sense of meaninglessness or loss of agency.

Pros of Watts' View:

- Encourages authentic self-awareness.
- Promotes spiritual liberation and inner peace.
- Challenges societal norms that inhibit growth.

Cons of Watts' View:

- May be seen as overly idealistic or difficult to implement.
- Risks misunderstanding as advocating for ego dissolution without nuance.
- Potentially conflicts with practical societal responsibilities.

The Relevance of Watts' Insights Today

In an era dominated by social media, consumerism, and rapid technological change, Watts' warning about the taboo against knowing who you are remains highly relevant. The superficial identities crafted online, the constant distraction from inner life, and societal pressures make it harder than ever to engage in genuine self-inquiry.

However, the increasing popularity of mindfulness, meditation, and holistic philosophies suggests a growing awareness and desire to transcend superficial identities. Watts' teachings serve as a reminder that true freedom and happiness lie beyond societal conditioning.

Conclusion: Embracing the Truth of Our Being

Alan Watts' exploration of the taboo against knowing who you are challenges us to question the assumptions and beliefs that shape our lives. His teachings invite a radical shift—a move from identification with transient roles and possessions to recognition of our innate unity with all existence. While the journey to dissolve this taboo is fraught with difficulties, it holds the promise of profound freedom, joy, and authenticity.

In embracing Watts' insights, we may find that the greatest taboo is not knowing our true nature. Overcoming this barrier requires courage, inquiry, and a willingness to confront the illusions that have been ingrained in us since birth. As Watts eloquently expressed, "You are the universe experiencing itself," and in recognizing this, we step into a life of deeper meaning and authentic self-awareness.

Final thoughts:

- The taboo against knowing oneself is a societal construct that limits human potential.
- Overcoming it involves philosophical inquiry, meditation, and a willingness to embrace paradox.
- Watts' teachings remain a vital resource for those seeking liberation from illusion and a more authentic

existence.

Remember: The journey inward is the most profound adventure one can undertake.

Alan Watts On The Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *The Book* Alan Watts, 1989-08-28 A revelatory primer on what it means to be human, from the perfect guide for a course correction in life (Deepak Chopra)—and a mind-opening manual of initiation into the central mystery of existence. At the root of human conflict is our fundamental misunderstanding of who we are. The illusion that we are isolated beings, unconnected to the rest of the universe, has led us to view the “outside” world with hostility, and has fueled our misuse of technology and our violent and hostile subjugation of the natural world. To help us understand that the self is in fact the root and ground of the universe, Watts has crafted a revelatory primer on what it means to be human—and a mind-opening manual of initiation into the central mystery of existence. In *The Book*, Alan Watts provides us with a much-needed answer to the problem of personal identity, distilling and adapting the Hindu philosophy of Vedanta.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *In My Own Way* Alan Watts, 2011-02-09 In this new edition of his acclaimed autobiography — long out of print and rare until now — Alan Watts tracks his spiritual and philosophical evolution. A child of religious conservatives in rural England, he went on to become a freewheeling spiritual teacher who challenged Westerners to defy convention and think for themselves. Watts's portrait of himself shows that he was a philosophical renegade from early on in his intellectual life. Self-taught in many areas, he came to Buddhism through the teachings of Christmas Humphreys and D. T. Suzuki. Told in a nonlinear style, *In My Own Way* combines Watts's brand of unconventional philosophy with wry observations on Western culture and often hilarious accounts of gurus, celebrities, and psychedelic drug experiences. A charming foreword by Watts's father sets the tone of this warm, funny, and beautifully written story. Watts encouraged readers to “follow your own weird” — something he always did himself, as this remarkable account of his life shows.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *A Study of the Sources of Alan W. Watts' The Book on the Taboo Against Knowing who You are* Lawrence J. Knapp, 1971

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Alan Watts—Here and Now* Peter J. Columbus, Donadrian L. Rice, 2012-06-01 Considers the contributions and contemporary significance of Alan Watts.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Do Christians Know How to be Spiritual?* John Drane, 2020-04-28 After a century or more of convincing ourselves that intelligent people should be 'secular', it is now trendy to be 'spiritual.' Why the sudden change? And what do we mean by being 'spiritual'? John Drane presents a whirlwind tour of the phenomenon of cultural change as it is being experienced in the West, identifying the challenges and opportunities this presents to the Christian church. He examines the question of whether human beings are intrinsically programmed to be 'spiritual,' offers theological reflection on the 'New Age' phenomenon, and focuses on how the Christian community can connect with spiritual seekers in today's world.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Just So* Alan Watts, 2020-02-25 From the luminary and prophetic Alan Watts, an invitation to embrace pleasure, play, and connection in our ever-evolving world “If you were God,” asked Alan Watts, “what kind of universe would you create? A perfect one free of suffering and drama? Or one filled with surprise and delight?” From the

1950s to the 1970s, Eastern spiritual philosophies sparked in the West profound new ways of perceiving ourselves, the mysteries of reality, and the unfolding destiny of humanity. And through his live gatherings and radio talks, Alan Watts was at the forefront—igniting astonishing insights into who we are and where we're heading. Based on a legendary series of seminars, *Just So* illuminates three fascinating domains: money versus real wealth, the spirituality of a deeper materialism, and how technology and spirituality are both guiding us to ever greater interconnection in the universe that we find ourselves in. Along the way, readers will explore many other themes, at turns humorous, prescient, and more relevant today than ever. What unfolds is a liberating view of humanity that arises from possibility and the unpredictable—perfect and “just so,” not in spite of its messy imperfections, but because of them. Book highlights: 1. Going With - Theology and the Laws of Nature - Thinking Makes It So - Everything Is Context - Going With - What We Mean by Intelligence - Ecological Awareness - Of Gods and Puppets 2. Civilizing Technology - The Problem of Abstractions - We Need a New Analogy - Working with the Field of Forces - Trust - Synergy and the One World Town - Privacy, Artificiality, and the Self - Groups and Crowds 3. Money and Materialism - The Material Is the Spiritual - Money and the Good Life - True Materialism - Wiggles, Seriousness, and the Fear of Pleasure - The Failure of Money and Technology - The Problem of Guilt 4. In Praise of Swinging - Rigidity and Identity - Now Is Where the World Begins - Are We Going to Make It? - Polarization and Contrast - No Escape 5. What Is So of Itself - Spontaneity and the Unborn Mind - Relaxation, Religion, and Rituals - Saving the World

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: Psychology and the Perennial Philosophy Samuel Bendeck Sotillos, 2013-02-26 Modern psychology is at an impasse as it searches anxiously for new therapies to address the increasing occurrence of mental illness in contemporary society. In this groundbreaking anthology, leading authors from the perennialist school, including Huston Smith, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Frithjof Schuon, draw on the age-old insights of the world's wisdom traditions to argue that modern psychology—behaviorism, psychoanalysis, humanistic and transpersonal psychology—overlooks the specifically spiritual factors contributing to mental health and illness.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: In Praise of Radiant Beings David W. Jardine, 2016-09-01 This text is a collection of essays by noted curriculum scholar and philosopher of education, David W. Jardine. It ranges over twenty-five years of work with teachers and students in schools. The main purpose of these essays is to provide teachers with new ways of thinking about their circumstances that side step some of the panic and exhaustion that is all too typical of many school settings. Using ideas and images from Buddhism, ecological thinking, and hermeneutics, the author shows how these lineages help with the practical work of thinking and acting differently regarding the knowledge entrusted to teachers and students in schools. It offers the image of living fields of relations as an alternative to the fragmented, industrial-assembly machinations that drive much curriculum thinking and practice. It roots this alternative in solid scholarly work, both inside and outside of the orbit of educational literature. This book can provide encouragement and example to those working in schools who have sensed the shifting of human consciousness and conscience over the past decades towards issues of sustainability, interrelatedness, diversity, ancestry, ecological well-being, and dependent co-arising. It provides solid classroom-based examples coupled with substantial scholarly delving into the roots of such work in long-standing streams of thinking that are born outside of the usual orbits of educational theory and practice, but that provide that practice with a refuge and a relief and an alternative. This book can also provide examples to those doing graduate work in education of how interpretive research into classrooms can be conducted, and how this work is must be solid, well-rooted, scholarly and meticulously thought out. It is useful as a handbook and sourcebook for interpretive research or hermeneutic research, and provides a wide array of sources and themes for the conduct of such work.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: Virtually Human Martine Rothblatt, 2014-09-09 *Virtually Human* explores what the not-too-distant future will look like when

cyberconsciousness—simulation of the human brain via software and computer technology—allows our consciousness to be present forever. Meet Bina48, the world's most sentient robot, commissioned by Martine Rothblatt and created by Hanson Robotics. Bina48 is a nascent Mindclone of Martine's wife that can engage in conversation, answer questions, and even have spontaneous thoughts that are derived from multimedia data in a Mindfile created by the real Bina. If you're active on Twitter or Facebook, share photos through Instagram, or blogging regularly, you're already on your way to creating a Mindfile—a digital database of your thoughts, memories, feelings, and opinions that is essentially a back-up copy of your mind. Soon, this Mindfile can be made conscious with special software—Mindware—that mimics the way human brains organize information, create emotions and achieve self-awareness. This may sound like science-fiction A.I. (artificial intelligence), but the nascent technology already exists. Thousands of software engineers across the globe are working to create cyberconsciousness based on human consciousness and the Obama administration recently announced plans to invest in a decade-long Brain Activity Map project. *Virtually Human* is the only book to examine the ethical issues relating to cyberconsciousness and Rothblatt, with a Ph.D. in medical ethics, is uniquely qualified to lead the dialogue.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: Metanoia Mon Amour Nicolás Gadda Thompson, 2024-06-28 Today, more than ever, we need to regain a certain clarity, to re-integrate knowledge, to converge in ideas, to return to Oneness. Sacred geometry and introspective psychonautics are lost arts that we must recover. Regenerative development and systemic thinking are new approaches that we must incorporate. Thinking Reality as networks that connect nodes, and not as isolated elements in linear sequence, is the most concrete basic proposal that the reading of this book offers us. Acting generatively as a consequence will be one of the most demanding and relevant challenges of our present time. It is on this basis that the following proposal is developed: to recover lost knowledge, to incorporate it into our mental frameworks and to integrate it with the exercise of modern science and the advent of new technologies. It is time to recognize the symbolic and, at the same time, pragmatic capital that we inherited from our ancestors, and it is also time to celebrate the talent and vocation of those who today are leading disruptive development in all fields of knowledge. This proposal is not just an exercise in historical or social vindication, nor an ode to novelty for the sake of novelty, but rather promotes the key guidelines for the design of a roadmap that will allow us to identify and apply the right solutions to the multiple challenges facing our overwhelmed humanity today. This book is intended for freethinkers of all ages, of all colors and from all corners of the globe; it is a wake-up call that comes from deep within, but it is also a call to action that aims at the most universal.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: The Star Wars Heresies Paul F. McDonald, 2013-09-17 Despite the insatiable public appetite for all things Star Wars, the more analytical side of the saga is all too often ignored. This book offers a new way of seeing George Lucas' space opera--particularly the prequel trilogy, a series never given a fair chance because of constant comparisons to the iconic originals. In the classic style of Joseph Campbell, the trilogy is viewed through the lens of myth and metaphor, revealing a body of work not only worthy of scholarly study but perhaps destined to find therein its home. A wide variety of philosophical and mythological themes are presented and expounded upon, drawing from a rich source of scholars, thinkers, writers, and poets from East and West alike. Heretical or not, the Star Wars prequels are a surprisingly rich source of insight into the saga--as well as the human drama--as a whole.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: Notes on an Emergency Elizabeth Léonie Simpson, 2005-09 This challenging, probing work about a woman's recovery from tubercular meningitis is both an intellectual and intensely personal exploration of the unconscious, the mental state of nothingness, identity, existentialism, medicine, religion, and most especially, love.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: Awakening to the Dream Leo Hartong, 2003-07-01 For centuries, philosophers and theologians have pondered questions such as Who are we? and What is the self? *Awakening to the Dream* is a book about you and your true

identity. Awakening to the Dream is a very clear, approachable overview of the enigmatic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, also known as non duality. Essentially, this is a book about you. It points to and from the source of your true identity. The clear seeing that it refers to is neither complex nor simple. It is not something exclusive for intellectual or spiritual elite, nor is it remote or hiding in the future. It is all inclusive, pure presence, closer than your breath. It is the heart of hearts, your birthright and innermost self. This is your invitation to remember what was never really forgotten.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Rabelais and Panurge* Mary E. Ragland, 2023-11-27

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *At Home in Infinity* P. D. Crawford, 2021-03-31 *At Home in Infinity: Exploring a Philosophy of Wholeness* is a collection of short, non-academic essays that aims to promote thoughtful reflection as a way of meeting the challenges of everyday life. Written by an author with a background in Educational Psychology, Music, Interdisciplinary Studies, and World Religions, this book draws from an eclectic array of thinkers, ranging from ancient philosophers to contemporary poets. Its various topics provide a multifaceted focus on its major theme: the wholeness of reality, as experienced in the interdependence of all life. *At Home in Infinity* is for readers seeking encouragement to support transformative change or to enhance their ongoing engagement with everyday life through self-reflection.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *The Sense of Self* Richard W. Sears, 2016-11-30 At the heart of this book is one of the most ancient and profound question philosophers, spiritual seekers, and curious individuals have pondered since the beginning of history: "Who am I?". Advances in modern science, and access to Zen tradition, have provided us with broader and richer understanding of this topic. Over the chapters the author, a psychologist and Zen master, investigates how the brain fosters a sense of an independent self, situating his research in the contexts of neuroscience, ecology, evolution, psychology, and of the principles Eastern wisdom traditions. The book explores a broad range of insights from brain science, evolutionary biology, astronomy, clinical psychology, thoughts and emotions, mental health disorders, and Zen Buddhism. This book will appeal to psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counsellors, and researchers of Eastern traditions. General readers interested in the functioning of the brain will discover practical ways to integrate fascinating new findings on an age-old question into their everyday life.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Explaining Evil* J. Harold Ellens, 2011-02-18 In this three-volume set, international scholars from across a broad spectrum of scholarly fields examine the concept of evil throughout history and world cultures from religious, scientific, psychological, and political perspectives. The manifestation of evil has provided a convenient theme for popular culture entertainment, ranging from the classic film *The Exorcist*, to almost all of Stephen King's horror novels, to video games such as *Resident Evil*. Unfortunately, dealing with—and attempting to overcome—the forces of evil is a pervasive problem in the real world as well. *Explaining Evil* addresses incidents of evil from ancient times to modern day around the globe. Concepts of evil within the big three religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—are examined, as well as in Chinese philosophy and Native American beliefs. The political or national expressions of evil are explored, such as the axis of evil that culminated in World War II. These volumes identify the causes and effects of evil, and suggest possible remedies to humanity's inescapable flaw.

alan watts on the taboo against knowing who you are: *Inventing the Child* Joseph L. Zornado, 2021-11-18 This book traces the historical roots of Western culture's stories of childhood in which the child is subjugated to the adult. Going back 400 years, it looks again at Hamlet, fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm, and Walt Disney cartoons. *Inventing the Child* is a highly entertaining, humorous, and at times acerbic account of what it means to be a child (and a parent) in America at the dawn of the new millennium. John Zornado explores the history and development of the concept of childhood, starting with the works of Calvin, Freud, and Rousseau and culminating with the modern consumer childhood of Dr. Spock and television. The volume discusses major media

depictions of childhood and examines the ways in which parents use different forms of media to swaddle, educate, and entertain their children. Zornado argues that the stories we tell our children contain the ideologies of the dominant culture--which, more often than not, promote happiness at all costs, materialism as the way to happiness, and above all, obedience to the dominant order.

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