

# BEHIND THE CURTAIN

*Remembering Who We Are*

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DAVID RAMIREZ

— **Free Reading Sample** —

*The opening pages. Read freely, question everything.*

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# Our Starting Point

Have you ever had the feeling that the person everyone expects you to be is not actually who you are? Not a vague restlessness — something more precise. A quiet suspicion that beneath the role you play every day, beneath the personality you have assembled for different people in different rooms, something else exists. Something that does not quite fit the label your family gave you, the identity your friend group expects, or the version of yourself you have been presenting online.

You are not imagining it. That something is real. And this book is the beginning of finding out what it is.

In the beginning, before the curtain rose, there was us. We stood behind the curtain in darkness and we were nothing, yet we were everything. We were divine. But being divine, there was nothing for us to experience, there was no show. So we created a grand performance called Life, this existence we currently live in, and we became what is now over seven billion I's. We were no longer One. But there was no need to fret. Our story had just begun. We would unite again in the future and we would live in tune with our true nature. We knew that's how our story would end. All we needed to do was remember. Today is the first day of our journey to remembrance.

This is a guide to self-realization. You may have found it because you were searching for something meaningful in your life. Maybe you were just curious. Maybe it was a little bit of both. Whatever the reason for you finding it, and embarking on this journey with me, I thank you for showing up. We were meant to go on this quest together.

And so our journey begins here. Or it doesn't. The decision is yours to make. And the decision must be made on your own, without influence. Do not stay because you think I am a guru, teacher, or prophet. I am simply an investigator joining you on this path and serving as a guide during your exploration.

If you're wondering what led me here, it was a feeling. It was the feeling that everything I believed in my whole life was incorrect. I knocked on doors and explored the world in search for answers to some of the world's most fundamental, yet complex, questions: Who am I? Where am I? Why am I here? It dawned on me that I was going about it the wrong way. I was looking outside into the world before looking inside at myself. When I looked within, the search was over. But I knew the story was much bigger than that, much bigger than me. It was about all of us. It was about everyone discovering what lies within them and how society arrived at where it is today.

I remember the exact moment it shifted for me. I was sitting alone, late at night, replaying the same questions I had been asking for years, about God, about purpose, about whether the life I was living was really mine or just a version of someone else's expectations. And in that silence,

something gave way. Not dramatically. Not with fireworks. It was more like a lock clicking open that I didn't know was there. I realized that the answers I had been searching for out in the world, in books, in churches, in conversations, were already inside me. They had always been there. I just hadn't been still enough to hear them. That realization didn't make everything perfect overnight. But it changed the direction of every step I've taken since.

Our story may be simple, it may not be. It may take you an instant to understand, it may take your whole life. But you will come to understand it. Everyone will. We all have the opportunity to realize that we no longer have to live in conflict or confusion. Once we awaken to that, we can all evolve and live with a purpose of coexisting in a world free of suffering, attachments, and, most importantly, desire. This may sound utopian, but know that if we keep our eyes closed any longer then the world will remain in a perpetual state of chaos.

In order to conduct a thorough investigation, we must look at some of the ideas and theories found within various bodies of knowledge. Thus, we will examine several sources including scientific studies as well as sacred texts found within various religions and spiritual sects. Doing so will give us a variety of perspectives and a greater, more concrete, understanding of what's being discussed. It will also lead us to the middle point, and we will see the truth of how we're all connected.

*Note: If you encounter a term that feels unfamiliar as you read, a glossary of key concepts is included at the end of this book for easy reference.*

## **How to Use This Book**

In the pages ahead, we will look at the great question of who we are from three angles, religion, science, and spirituality. You don't need to be an expert in any of them. You don't need to believe in any of them. Each of these traditions has spent thousands of years investigating the same questions you're holding right now. When we see what they found, and where those findings converge, something remarkable happens. A picture emerges that no single tradition could have painted alone.

I have one request. Do not bring your pre-conceived beliefs with you on this journey. Put aside your interpretations and opinions concerning the subjects of religion, science, and spirituality. This will allow you to look at and analyze the information without automatically dismissing it because it doesn't fit into one of your current ingrained beliefs.

It isn't my objective to dismiss or disprove the things you've learned from your parents, siblings, friends, community, a lecturer, a teacher, or even what you've read or watched yourself. I just ask that you question it. Questioning is essential to this process, honest and authentic questioning. I implore you, question everything within these pages. I wouldn't want you to believe

it just because it was written and published. I don't want you to believe anything that's been told to you. That way of thinking is the root of all of our conflict and how we ended up in the state we're in now.

## The Art of Questioning

The philosopher Socrates understood that truth was of the highest value and that it could only be discovered through inquiry and the willingness to question everything. He spent his life asking the citizens of Athens the hardest questions he could think of — not to hand them his own answers, but to help them discover their own. The Athenian government eventually sentenced him to death for it. The questions themselves were threatening to those in power.

René Descartes, a French philosopher and mathematician of the early seventeenth century, once locked himself in a room and decided to doubt everything he had ever been taught — his memories, his education, his senses, even the existence of the physical world — until he found something he could know with absolute certainty. What survived every doubt was the act of thinking itself. From that single unshakeable foundation, he built his now-famous conclusion: 'I think, therefore I am.'

Siddhartha Gautama — who would become known as the Buddha — was born into extraordinary wealth and privilege. He had palaces, servants, and a future already planned for him. He walked away from all of it because none of it answered the one question that would not leave him alone: what is the nature of suffering, and how does one move past it? He had the same advice for his students that he had followed himself:

Think about something you've believed your entire life. Maybe it's something a parent told you when you were five. Maybe it's something your community assumes is simply true. Now ask yourself: did I arrive at this belief through my own experience? Or did I inherit it? Most of us, when we're honest, discover that the majority of our beliefs were handed to us before we were old enough to question them. That doesn't make them wrong. But it does mean they haven't been tested. And anything that hasn't been tested is, at best, an assumption.

Opening your mind is the first step. Then, begin to question, examine, and test everything you think you know. Allow yourself to acknowledge the beliefs that are actually yours versus those you inherited. There are two ways to test where your beliefs and understandings came from: direct observation and indirect observation. A direct observation is something that you observe using one or more of your physical senses. An indirect observation is something you read about or learn through the use of a tool, such as a telescope or camera lens. Regardless of your means of testing, the truth is that both kinds of observations should be questioned.

This is your opportunity to better understand who you are, what's going around you, and what that means for your life. This book is a catalyst that will open your heart and mind in a variety of ways that, while inevitably raising questions, will unlock a greater and more in-depth awareness of the world. And with it, you can live with purpose. You can live a life in harmony with yourself. When you finish this book, you'll know what to do.

I must also impart that it isn't my objective to give you a new belief system either. We're not breeding followers here. All I'm doing is joining you as you explore your mind and realize all of the knowledge within you. This is your opportunity to investigate yourself. Be a detective. Realize everything inside of you, inside of the entire world, and how wonderfully intricate it all is.

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## REFLECT

*What is one belief you hold that you've never personally tested?*

*Where did it come from?*

*What would change if it turned out to be incomplete?*

## PART ONE

# The Collective Consciousness

## What Is the Collective?

The collective consciousness is the bond that unites all of our experiences and the endless possibilities thereof. It is the unifying energy that sustains the world. Occurrences and experiences of the past, present, and future, in varying forms and degrees, are all within it. It is a repository that contains everything there is to know about the world, and is accessible to everyone.

It is the space from which we retrieve information or experiences using our senses, thoughts, and feelings, in order to make decisions and know how to react to something we've never personally experienced before. It is the script that dictates how we should act. Because of this information, for example, we know that touching something hot will burn us and drinking something deemed poisonous will harm us. The collective consciousness is what forms our intuition. Thus, to be guided by our intuition, is to be actively connected to the collective.

If this feels abstract, consider this: you have already experienced the collective consciousness. Every one of us has. Have you ever thought about someone you haven't spoken to in years and then, within hours, they called you? Have you ever walked into a room and immediately sensed that something was wrong, even though no one said a word? Have you ever known, without any logical reason, that a particular decision was the right one, a gut feeling that turned out to be more

accurate than any analysis you could have done? These aren't coincidences. They're moments when you were tapped into something larger than your individual awareness. You were accessing the collective.

The collective consciousness is a living, ever-evolving source. It evolves with the times. So whatever is being experienced by individuals in a certain period of time, is how the general population of that time is going to behave. It supports the beliefs of all conscious beings, for it contains what people are aware of in that time. Therefore, what was in the collective consciousness during prehistoric times, or even during the Renaissance, was vastly different from what's in our awareness right now. It changes as we change. It evolves as we do. So whatever we subscribe to, the collective consciousness will support and will create our environment accordingly. Whatever we love or hate, brave or fear, construct or destruct, will be manifested in our collective minds and the environment. Rest assured, the collective will look very different in the mind of someone who reads these words a hundred years from now.

### Hive Mind

The collective consciousness grows in conjunction with our minds. So as our minds grow and expand, so does the collective consciousness. Consider the 100th monkey phenomenon, for instance. In 1952, an experiment was conducted on the Japanese island of Koshima. Scientists dropped sweet potatoes onto the sand and observed the native monkeys as they ate them. Although the sweet potato was pleasant, the sand proved to be very problematic. One monkey, an infant named Imo, eventually solved the problem by washing her potato in a nearby stream. She then taught her mother. Subsequently, more and more monkeys began to learn this skill until all of the monkeys on the island knew how to wash their sweet potatoes in the stream. That was a wonder on its own. But it wasn't until some time later that the most interesting phenomenon occurred. Monkeys on a nearby island, ones that had no communication with the monkeys on Koshima, also began to wash their potatoes in a similar manner without being taught to do so.

How was that possible? These islands were separated by the ocean with no possibility of a monkey traveling from one island to the other. If we think about how the collective works, we can conclude that when all of the monkeys on Koshima learned to wash their potatoes to remove the sand, they reached a critical mass and began to harmonize their consciousness with the consciousness of the other monkeys far away. Thus, the awareness wasn't just apparent on the one island, but became the norm for both. This is how behaviors become well known and, even, expected.

What does this mean for us? Think about how quickly certain ideas spread across the world, not just through technology, but through a kind of cultural intuition. Fashion trends emerge simultaneously in cities that have no contact with each other. Scientific breakthroughs happen

independently in different labs at the same time. Multiple ancient civilizations, Egypt, Mesoamerica, Southeast Asia, built pyramids independently, with no contact between them. The concept of zero was discovered independently in India, Mesoamerica, and Mesopotamia. Flood myths appear in virtually every ancient culture worldwide. It's as if, when enough people arrive at an understanding, that understanding becomes available to everyone.

This phenomenon can also be seen and understood using random number generators. For fifteen years, starting in 1998, the Global Consciousness Project combined science and engineering to study the possible interaction of a global consciousness with the physical world. They set up random number generating machines in around seventy sites around the globe that collected data continuously. The purpose was to examine subtle correlations that would reflect the presence of a collective consciousness, as well as its activity. They hypothesized that the random data wouldn't be random at all. They believed there would be structure in the data, patterns, during times of major global events. This was proven to be true, and quite evident, just before the attacks on September 11, 2001. What was considered a statistical anomaly proved to be data consistent with the time and general location of the terrorist attacks on 9/11. It was as if we were all aware that the event was going to happen, before it did. Or, rather, if we think about the effects of the collective consciousness on our environment, enough people thought of something similar that then created the supporting environment to manifest the event. Considering this, it's probably no coincidence that the winning numbers for the New York State Lottery were 9-1-1 on September 11, 2002, when the events of 9-11 were on the minds of most, if not all, New Yorkers on its first anniversary.

These examples support the theory of not only the presence of a collective consciousness, but also how a hive mind works. They offer insight into how our minds function both individually and in unison.

### The Collective Unconscious

The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung spent decades listening to thousands of patients describe their dreams. He began noticing that people who had never met — living on different continents, speaking different languages, raised in different centuries of recorded history — were dreaming the same symbols, the same archetypes, the same mythic patterns. There was no way to account for this through individual memory or culture alone. Jung proposed the existence of a collective unconscious — a layer of the psyche shared by all humans, containing universal patterns deeper than any one person's experience.

Jung believed this was evidence that consciousness operates at a level deeper than the individual mind. His work gives us a psychological vocabulary for something that spiritual traditions have described for millennia: we are not isolated minds floating in separate skulls. We are individual expressions of a single, shared awareness, like branches growing from the same root

system, each reaching in its own direction but drawing nourishment from the same source.

### The Feeling of Connection

In 1927, Romain Rolland coined the phrase “oceanic feeling.” The term referred to the sensation of feeling eternal and without perceptible limits, like the ocean. But it wasn’t popularized until Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist and the founder of Psychoanalysis, analyzed its effect on our lives. “Oceanic feeling” describes the connectedness of an infant to its mother and its inability to differentiate itself as independent from its mother, for example. This phenomenon occurs most prevalently in the pre-ego stage of development when an infant has not yet grasped the concept of self as being separate from others. This is an awareness we all had at birth.

What’s interesting is that it seems as though we still sense or crave that “oceanic feeling,” whether we’re consciously aware of it or not. Freud noticed this and theorized that, as adults, we would covet certain groups of people, mainly in religious groups in which one seeks the psychological phenomena of oneness with each other, which is common in our world. So it is clear that a part of us strives for that oneness once more. The collective consciousness isn’t just an idea, it is something you felt before you ever had a word for it, and something a part of you has been reaching toward ever since.

In other words: you were born connected. You felt it as an infant. And everything since, every group you’ve joined, every bond you’ve formed, every moment you’ve felt “at one” with nature or music or another person, has been an echo of that original connection.

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### REFLECT

*Can you recall a moment when you felt connected to something larger than yourself?*

*What did that feel like?*

*Where were you?*

*What was happening?*

## Keep reading.

This is the opening of *Behind the Curtain: Remembering Who We Are* — the gateway book to the Divine Karma world. The full book continues through the Human Experience, the Trinity of Truth, and Harmony: karma, the observer, and the natural state.

*Find the full book and the Divine Karma trilogy at*

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