

## Orientation for Week 4

To start, let me return to a theme that came up at the beginning of the phone call. I had asked you in the assignment for the preceding week to do TSK Ex. 24 “with rigor and precision” (drawing on the quotation from KTS xviii included in the last orientation). The question came up of what it meant to do the practice in this way. In the quote, rigor and precision are opposed to relying simply on direct experience. Of course, this does not mean turning away from direct experience (see LOK xlii): that will always be the foundation. But there is a risk of letting the easy comfort or joyful appreciation of direct experience lull us to sleep, giving up the commitment to inquiry that activates the TSK vision.

This point helped guide us into the practice that we did during the phone call: sensing “the deep tranquility of space” that links us to all appearances (SDTS xvii, which we will read for this week). This is a ‘direct experience’ kind of practice, so it offers another opportunity to see how to engage experience with rigor and precision. I suggested one way: as you touch the deep tranquility of space, expand (or condense) it. This extra element will keep you awake: it will strengthen your commitment to inquiry.

The “deep tranquility” practice is an example of what I am calling a “walking around” practice: something to do as you go about your daily activities (perhaps in this case, when you have an idle moment or two: for instance, waiting for the teapot to boil. We are also doing “sitting down” practices. The assigned sit-down practice is TSK Ex. 7, but I want to ask you to do another practice instead (or in addition). It’s based on last week’s reading. Let’s call it “Activity of Knowing.” I’ll write it out as though it were a formal exercise, rephrasing the reading to do so.

### Activity of Knowing

The self has its usual ways of knowing, which depend on taking one position or another and thereby creating a separation between knower and known. So firmly fixed is this approach to knowledge that any other, more spontaneous approach to knowledge will seem mysterious. But in fact we can tap this ‘other’ way of knowing directly. The key is to engage the depth of knowledge.

Here is one way to do this. Instead of focusing on the object that is known, the subject that knows it, and the link between them, embrace the activities of knowing and seeing. Do not focus on the linear relationship of ‘subject knowing object’; instead, inquire into the ‘experience’ of ‘knowing’ the experience of knowing. This amounts to observing directly the ‘minding’ of the mind. You may find that this more direct way of knowing makes conventional patterns and structures—and the models or ‘programs’ that generate them—begin to seem more transparent.

The writing assignment for this coming week is based on a line from LOK xli: “[We can] loosen the hold that the self has on knowledge by [evoking] the joy that comes through inquiry.” Here is the assignment: Describe a time when you experienced the joy of inquiry (or learning, or discovery). Send your description (no more than a page) to [assignments@creativeinquiry.org](mailto:assignments@creativeinquiry.org).

Incidentally, not everyone in the teacher training program has sent in the first assignment. These assignments are required! Note also that teachers-in-training have an extra reading assignment this week: chapter 5 of Love of Knowledge.