



Live Like a Window, Work Like a Mirror: Enlightenment and the Practice of Eternity Consciousness

Mark C. Brown

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Don't say you weren't warned: Doctor Mark C. Brown makes clear as early as page two that his book is not easy reading, especially at the outset. He's right. There's no fast track to enlightenment, but readers of *Live Like a Window, Work Like a Mirror* may want to flip ahead to page 101 for Brown's definition of the term, then determine whether it's worth their effort. Or lack of effort, since much of the "work" required to walk the talk here involves slowing down and doing less.

Those who choose to continue will be treated to a text that is dense but rewarding. While the techniques espoused here as useful to the pursuit of eternity consciousness (among them meditation and belly breathing) are nothing new, Brown's mentions of them are notably free of the step-by-step instructions that many books incorporate, giving the reader the bare minimum needed to begin, and some freedom to experiment and adapt. There are also suggestions apart from a formal meditation practice that can be incorporated while reading the book, like simple awareness of the breath and the suggestion not to "try" to be tranquil, but simply focus on the breathing and let relaxation happen.

While the discussion of eternity consciousness is complex, Brown does offer some very accessible examples of what it might look like in practice. One scenario puts the reader in between an aggressive dog and undefended kitten and shows how it's possible to intervene constructively without being swept up in the drama of the momentary crisis. Vignettes like these help the reader take heady material in on a bodily level. Some of the methods involved in living like a window amount to being told, "Don't just do something, sit there," like Buddhist author Sylvia Boorstein's book of the same name. Remaining open and allowing experience to pass and ego to disengage are challenging precisely because they demand doing less instead of more. Readers frustrated with the overall simplification of spiritual literature to the "dummies" level will be delighted by this more challenging work; the rest of us will get there eventually.

Brown is a practicing psychologist and meditation teacher as well as a student of enlightenment.

HEATHER SEGCEL (December 13, 2011)

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