Intrinsic Awareness

Introduction to Gnostic Studies
Awareness in the Bardol Thodol: *Tibetan Book of the Dead*
The Introduction to Awareness:
Natural Liberation through Naked Perception, [which is an extract] from the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities:
A Profound Sacred Teaching [entitled] Natural Liberation through Recognition of Enlightened Intention
Through the single nature of mind which completely pervades both cyclic existence and nirvana,

Has been naturally present from the beginning, you have not recognized it.

Even though its radiance and awareness have never been interrupted,

You have not yet encountered its true face.

Even though it arises unimpededly in every facet of existence,

You have not as yet recognized this single nature of mind,

In order that this single nature might be recognized by you,

The Conquerors of the three times have taught an inconceivably vast number of practices,

Including the eighty-four thousand aspects of the sacred teachings.

Yet, despite this diversity, not even one of these teachings has been given by these Conquerors,

Outside the context of an understanding of this nature!

—The Tibetan Book of the Dead
And even though there are inestimable volume of sacred writings, equally vast as the limits of space,

Actually, these teachings can be succinctly expressed in a few words, which are the introduction to the awareness. —The Tibetan Book of the Dead
Of fortunate children, listen to these words!
The term 'mind' is commonplace and widely used,
Yet there are those who do not understand its meaning,
Those who falsely understand it, those who partially understand it,
And those who have not quite understood its genuine reality.
Thus there has arisen an inconceivably vast number of assertions as to the nature of mind,
Posited by the various philosophical systems.
Further, since ordinary persons do not understand the meaning of the term 'mind,'
And do not intuitively recognise its nature,
They continue to roam through the six classes of sentient rebirth within the three world-systems,
And consequently experience suffering.
This is the fault of not understanding this intrinsic nature of mind.
—The Tibetan Book of the Dead
The Three Considerations

The following is the introduction to the means of experiencing this single nature of mind

Through the application of three considerations:

First, recognize that past thoughts are traceless, clear, and empty,

Second, recognize that future thoughts are unproduced and fresh,

And third, recognize that the present moment abides naturally and unconstructed.

—The Tibetan Book of the Dead
When this ordinary, momentarily consciousness is examined nakedly and directly by oneself,

Upon examination, it is a radiant awareness.

Which is free from the presence of an observer.

It is manifestly stark and clear.

Completely empty and uncreated in all respects.

Lucid, without duality of radiance and emptiness.

Not permanent, for it is lacking inherit existence in all respects.

Not a mere nothingness, for it is radiant and clear.

Not a single entity, for it is clearly perceptible as a multiplicity.

Yet not existing inherently as a multiplicity, for it is indivisible and of a single savour.

—The Tibetan Book of the Dead
Though one were to scan the entire external universe,
Searching for the nature of mind, one would not find it.
Buddhahood cannot be attained other than through the mind.
Not recognizing this, one does indeed search for the mind externally,
Yet, how can one find one’s own mind when one looks for it elsewhere?
This is like a fool, for example, who, when finding himself amidst a crowd of people,
Becomes mesmerized by the spectacle of the crowd and forgets himself,
Then, no longer recognizing who he is, starts searching elsewhere for himself,
Continuously mistaking others for himself.
—*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*
This intrinsic awareness, which is not extraneously derived.

Is itself the genuine introduction to the abiding nature of all things.

For in its intrinsic awareness, the three Buddha-bodies are inseparable, and fully present as one.

Its emptiness and utter lack of inherit existence is the buddha-body of reality (Kether).

The natural resonance and radiance of this emptiness is the buddha-body of perfect resource (Chokmah).

And its unimpeded arising in any form whatsoever is the buddha-body of emanation (Binah).

These three, fully present as one, are the very essence of awareness itself. —*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*