

NO-POINT PERSPECTIVE



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JUSTIN ALLEN

Acknowledgements from Andreas Müller:

Thanks to Nadine and Soham, Tony and Claire Parsons and
Dorothea

Acknowledgements from Justin Allen:

Thanks to my family, close and far friends, Andreas and
Dorothea

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June 21, 2020

JUSTIN ALLEN

PREFACE

This is at most a collection of talks between a self-confirmed apparent person and an unconfirmed non-person, which ultimately offers nothing of value to any persons. It is not a book which you will read and then be able to do something afterwards with some newly acquired knowledge, like understand the equation $E = mc^2$ or bake a cake or know what is right or wrong, and it won't provide any helpful or useful information on how to live life better or worse.

Yet there are illustrations, and it is possible that the reader relates to and identifies with myself as an apparent person trying to figure something out unsuccessfully. Maybe reading these talks triggers an apparent clarity regarding the absurdity of seeking in which ever form it comes, through teachers, gurus, jobs, family, relationships, location, rebellion, diet, meditation, therapy, drugs, partying, sport, a combination of things or giving up or "letting go." At least, this book captures the absurdity of my seeking.

I consider myself to be average. I am of an average age (40), an average upbringing, an average social status and a sort of well-rounded every-person of sorts. I have dabbled in several paths to fulfillment as mentioned above, and I am unconvinced of every path I have tried. I was even

unconvinced while trying them and unconvinced of my “unconvincement.” By “fulfillment” I mean that search for the thing or things, in whichever form or forms they may come, that you think will end the search for fulfillment and leave you contented. For example, when I finally find the right place to live, with the right partner and a good job, I will have it all (and be done searching). And even though I am confessing that I am unconvinced of the search for fulfillment in whatever form it comes, I still can’t stop searching.

This project that I have undertaken with Andreas Müller was a setup to share this dilemma of seeking, which you can’t seem to stop and doesn’t seem possible for you to end, even when you know it’s basically futile. I use the word “basically” because it softens the seeming fact that there is no point. In our talks, in this sense, I am the experimental lab rat or the average Joe, and I wanted to share my dilemma in the form of a chronologically ordered series of talks between myself as a self-confirmed person or a “me” and Andreas Müller as a non-person or a “no me,” to see what happens. In a sense we have put the dilemma on display with me as the mannequin.

Originally, before we started our talks, I thought of this project as a modern-day, normal-people, non-stigmatized *Bhagavad Gita* in that it follows a similar framework of the *Gita*, which is that of a dialogue between the prince Arjuna (Justin Allen) and his guide Krishna (Andreas Müller). But I am not a prince and Andreas is not a guide, and this is just a collection of talks between two apparent people with no spiritual, religious or scientific intentions, which took place from October 23, 2019 to March 23, 2020.

June 21, 2020

ANDREAS MÜLLER

INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of talks between Justin Allen and myself. To suggest that we had a goal or purpose was not my intention, although there might have been one originally for Justin. In the end, we talked about the nature of apparent separation in an undefined outline beginning broadly with teachers and gurus to “getting down to the point,” even though there is not really a point.

When Justin contacted me with his proposal, which was to start a dialogue and possibly turn it into a book to share, I was surprised and curious. We had never met before, so I only heard his voice on the telephone. On the one hand, there was this instantaneous “yes,” but on the other hand, there was a bit of skepticism. To me, Justin seemed to have had some kind of picture and idea of what he wanted to achieve or what he was hoping may or may not happen. Usually, I am open for having a conversation on this “topic,” especially when it comes from a genuine and sincere interest, but there seemed to be a potentially disingenuous aspect as well – a personal goal maybe or the “making a of book.”

However, as the conversations started, I liked them right away. And as they continued, so did my own interest and

enjoyment. In the early talks, we addressed deceased and current spiritual teachers as a place of reference and in order to compare apparent differences to the “no-point perspective.” Looking back, there seemed to have been an apparent movement from rather superficial aspects (like comparing teachings and gurus) to a rather distinct examination of this apparent topic. Now, having the text in my hands, I am very happy with it.



October 23, 2019

Talk 01

TEACHERS AND GURUS

Justin Allen: So, one thing is that I've started reading this Ramana Maharshi book called *Be As You Are*.

Andreas Müller: All right.

Justin Allen: I haven't read that much of it yet, but what I notice is that it's almost verbatim what Rupert Spira is talking about.

Andreas Müller: All right.

Justin Allen: So, last time we talked, kind of an interesting thing that we came upon was that if there is only "oneness," then it seems logical that there would only be one message.

Andreas Müller: So to speak, yes.

Justin Allen: Yeah, and one of the things that Ramana Maharshi has already talked about and also Rupert Spira talks about a lot and probably they all do in some sense is this analogy of the "screen." Have you heard this?

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Justin Allen: So, it's more or less like you watch a movie, and there's the screen and there's really nothing on the screen. It's just light.

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Müller:

Justin
Allen: But it creates the image as if something's happening, but nothing can happen without the screen.

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And there, the message is that we are consciousness - "me" as myself and "you" as yourself, you're just a screen, and I'm a screen -, and as consciousness we somehow create our physical body and this idea of being separate and there being objects and that there's things happening.

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And that's what I've always understood. That the illusion is not realizing that "you" are the "screen," even though that's all that you are and that's all that you can be. Somehow you're not aware that "you're" the "screen," you're only aware of the objects and things appearing on the screen.

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And so, when I hear that, it all seems logical ...

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And then I think, “Okay, how do I realize that ‘I’m’ the screen?” And then that’s where it all gets ... I don’t know if it gets illogical, but that’s where the kind of practice comes in, in a sense of ...

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: Somehow trying to abide as that, like abide as the awareness and somehow deny the ...

Andreas
Müller: Whatever the technique is, “to bring the awareness back,” “to abide as awareness,” “to bring awareness to awareness,” “to just be,” or “to learn how to consciously be awareness.”

Justin
Allen: Right.

Andreas
Müller: All that stuff, yes.

Justin
Allen: Right, and then that’s where I see that even that seems so convincing in a way, but at the same time you realize that you’re still ... There’s still somebody that’s doing all that.

Andreas
Müller: Oh, of course, and as far as I would see it it’s a complete personal teaching. Because in a way, they state, or the statement in that picture is that there is something which you are and something which you are not. So, they give a solution and a promise and say, “If you learn to be how you are or if you recognize who you

actually are, then you are free.” What I’m actually saying is that there is no screen either. I would say exactly that’s the illusion: that there is something which you are, namely awareness, and that there is something which you are not, the options in awareness or the appearance in awareness, all that stuff. And I would say, that’s the reason why it’s logical and understandable because it perfectly reflects and describes the personal experience.

Justin
Allen: Yeah, that’s true.

Andreas
Müller: All that comes out of that again is another teaching (laughing). There is no other possibility, because it’s a personal teaching right from the start. The whole picture is personal.

Justin
Allen: Well, but at the same time it still seems kind of ... It still does seem possible. Of course, it’s possible because there’s no formula and there’s no real way to recognize when it’s equally ... In a sense, it’s possible that you might follow these teachings and somehow come to a recognition, and you might attribute it to the teachings then and say, “Ah, I can’t say for sure that it’s because of this teaching,” but you would think that there was a correlation, possibly.

Andreas
Müller: I wouldn’t really say so, to be honest. Not if the apparent recognition happened that it’s an illusion. For me, it’s rather impossible to come

to the conclusion that it happened because of the teaching.

Justin Allen: Right, but if you were following Ramana Maharshi for ten years, and then all of a sudden you had this enlightenment experience or this recognition or whatever, some part of you would have to think it had something to do with your meditating or with your inquiring, no?

Andreas Müller: Not really, it's a story, but when the "me" dies, it's ... No, it's not possible to entertain that idea in the end.

Justin Allen: So, would you want to say, not that you can make these conclusive statements, but would you say that if someone like Ramana Maharshi is giving this kind of personal teaching, and his and Rupert Spira's message is that they haven't really recognized the absence of the "me"? Or is it possible that they've understood or recognized the absence of the "me," but they're just somehow flawed in their teaching?

Andreas Müller: Well, it's really in a way hard to talk about it because there are no "persons" doing that either. But yes, my impression is that whenever that statement was made, it wasn't really coming from a "no me" position, so to speak.

Justin Allen: And then I've heard of the necklace analogy where there's a woman that can't find her necklace, and she goes all around her house looking for it. Then she starts to ask her friends, and then at some point somebody comes along and says, "Hey, have you tried

feeling for the necklace around your neck?" And then she reaches for her neck and finds it and goes, "Oh, I found it," and then she's happy. And then if somebody later on says, "Hey, did you ever find your necklace?" she again replies, "Yeah, I found it." And then they use this analogy to explain how she didn't actually find it, right? Because it was always there. It wasn't lost in the first place. It was around her neck all the time.

Andreas Müller: Yes. I mean the dilemma with all those stories is that they're fine, but in the end you're just left with "someone" seeing something.

Justin Allen: Yeah.

Andreas Müller: And that's just what remains for the seeker: That there is something to be seen and something to be found, and that there is "someone" who can see or find something.

Justin Allen: Okay.

Andreas Müller: In a way, that's the dream. I mean, one could say, "Yes, it's already there." Me too, I sometimes say, "What you are looking for is already what happens."

Justin Allen: Right.

Andreas Müller: So, maybe this part would fit the analogy, but this can't be found and it's not to be seen for

“someone,” and that’s where the analogy doesn’t fit anymore.

Justin
Allen: Okay, and that’s why I wanted to bring up that analogy.

Andreas
Müller: The dilemma for the seeker is that the only thing he or she can do is process that analogy. That’s totally fine, but of course, the seeker will always be left with the assumption that there is another circumstance to be seen. Namely, “Oh, I have the necklace already around my throat.”

Justin
Allen: Or to realize that I am already the thing that I’m seeking.

Andreas
Müller: Exactly. Seen by the seeker, this would just be another circumstance that “I” have to realize, probably beating up himself because it sounds so easy (laughing).

Justin
Allen: Right, yeah, it’s making it worse.

Andreas
Müller: Yeah, exactly (laughing).

Justin
Allen: But that’s the thing they point out in this book ... That’s what’s so confusing to me, because they also point out the exact same thing, always. There’s even this, “Hence I say no; you are really the infinite peer being the self,” and by self he means consciousness. “You are always that self and nothing but that self. Therefore, you can never be really ignorant of the self. Your ignorance is merely an imaginary

ignorance, like the ignorance of the ten fools about the lost tenth man. It's this ignorance that caused them grief." Do you know that analogy about the ten men?

Andreas Müller: No, I don't know that.

Justin Allen: That's where ten men cross a river, and when they get to the other side, one of them counts off how many there are to make sure nobody was lost in the river, but he forgets to count himself, so he only counts nine men.

Andreas Müller: Alright.

Justin Allen: And so, he says, "We're only nine," and then somebody else does the counting and makes the same mistake. It's only until they meet a passerby that lines them all up and says ...

Andreas Müller: "You are ten."

Justin Allen: "State your name and then count 'one', and then the next 'two' and so on," and then they realize. Then they go, "Oh, we didn't lose somebody." Throughout this book, so far it's saying that the whole point of trying to find yourself or realize that this is the ignorance is already the misstep. And that's what causes all the suffering and all the pain because you're just kind of inflating the problem the whole time by trying to figure it out, but there's

essentially nothing to figure out. You're already that which you're seeking.

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And that's where there's a correlation. That's why I think people can read this and then also find similarities with your message or Tony Parsons's message.

Andreas
Müller: Yes, yes.

Justin
Allen: And that's why sometimes I'm not sure if maybe this teaching is the same as yours in a way, but it's ... Or not that yours is a teaching, but that the message is the same as your message, just maybe that the strategy there is to try to ...

Andreas
Müller: I think it's hard to say, and this is only referring to Ramana Maharshi. It's really hard to say because all we have

from him are those few books. And he was sitting there for, I don't know, thirty, forty years?

Justin
Allen: Yeah.

Andreas
Müller: Speaking, talking to people every day?

Justin: Yeah.

Allen:

Andreas
Müller:

Talking to people about all kinds of stuff and all kinds of concepts during these forty years. And it's possible that at the beginning he said something completely ... Not completely, but he said something different than twenty years later. Maybe there was a subtle movement away from an awareness teaching to what I would call non-duality, and that's what I mean. You have those few books extracted from those forty years, from someone who chose exactly those dialogues, maybe from someone who felt much more attracted to this awareness thing. But maybe Ramana was just pointing out the concept.

I do that too in my talks. Not the concept, but I describe the personal experience. That's why I think it's very hard to talk about Ramana and every statement of his because it's the same for me. I see statements which would exactly fit that, and then there is this awareness stuff mixed in, to which, if I just got the statement, I would definitely say, "No, that's not what I would say."

Justin
Allen:

Yeah, and another topic that's running like a thread throughout this whole thing is the continuity through the waking state, the dream state and the sleep state, yes?

Andreas
Müller:

Yes.

Justin

So, this is being talked about a lot, and the

Allen: point is that you ... Or at least the point is that in the wake state you feel like you are yourself. And in the sleep state you could be sleeping in your bed in your home or wherever, but you're dreaming that you're in London, right?

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Justin Allen: And in the dream, you think that you're in London, and it's all real to you until you wake up in your bed and then you think, "Oh, it was just a dream." So that's one of the analogies they use to try to explain this. And then when you're in deep sleep, supposedly there's no objects that exist. There's no ...

Andreas Müller: Subject?

Justin Allen: Yeah, but you still know that while you're sleeping that's you.

Andreas Müller: Well, I think no.

Justin Allen: I mean like you do in the sense that somebody from the outside still says, "That's you sleeping," even though you can't relate to them while you're sleeping. And then when you wake up, you don't feel like you're a new person. You feel like, "Oh, I was sleeping," or like, "I had a good night's sleep." To be able to say that, their argument is that it's because somehow there was an awareness while you were sleeping ...

Andreas Müller: Yeah, which is utterly (laughing) ... I think that's just made up. That's assumptions. It's logic. It's thinking how it could be. It's philosophy, in the end. It's thinking about, "Hmm, which story would fit my experience? Which story would explain that? Which story would explain that I was there in the night, too?" (laughing) It's inventing a story to prove that I am.

Justin Allen: But I don't think that they're saying that "you" as a physical body are there in the sleep, but that "you" as an individual are there in the sleep.

Andreas Müller: Yeah, just as something.

Justin Allen: As "being". That's like Ramana saying, "There is continuity of being in all three states, but no continuity of the individual and the objects in all three states."

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Justin Allen: So, the individual and the objects are continuous in the waking state, so I feel like I can touch things and see objects. But in deep sleep, all objects have disappeared, or apparently there's nothing there, and there's no way I can even know what happened in deep sleep because there's no memory. There's no time, because time and memory only exist in the waking state.

Andreas Müller: I would say there is no experience.

Justin Allen: Yeah, they also say there's no experience, but they still might say that there's the awareness of no experience or something like that.

Andreas Müller: Mm-hmm (affirmative), yes. But yeah, I wouldn't say so.

Justin Allen: But still, wouldn't you say that there's a continuity of being or the continuity of ...?

Andreas Müller: No, I wouldn't even buy into that idea of continuity, because in order to know continuity you would already need someone to experience continuity. For me, change and continuity are two sides of the same coin. Something is constantly changing and moving, and something is going on continuously. Both would, for me, imply time. That's why I sometimes say it's timeless, but there isn't really something going on. Again, that's another thing. Maybe continuity was meant to be timeless. Maybe ... You know, that's what I mean. Again, it's hard with Ramana. It's seventy years ago. It's translated. I don't know how he actually used the words. But for me, continuity is definitely an experience. And again, it's an experience that the seeker is looking for to find something that's always there as a conscious experience.

Justin Allen: But even "oneness," if you take it as a message, is also ...

Andreas
Müller:

Yes.

Justin
Allen:

It can be seen as continuity of “oneness”?

Andreas
Müller:

That’s how the “person” would understand it,
yes. That

there is something called “oneness.”
Meanwhile, I actually say “noneness.”

Justin
Allen:

“Noneness” ...

Andreas
Müller:

But yes, the “person” will always turn it into
something which is in time and space. Always.

Justin
Allen:

And even if the “person” isn’t there, we say
that without the “person” there’s nothing, or
without the “person” there’s just “oneness” or
“noneness.”

Andreas
Müller:

Oh, but in the end, nothing can be said when
there is no “person.”

Justin
Allen:

Right, but then even in that case there’s no
waking state, dream state or sleep state.
There’s just ...

Andreas
Müller:

Yes, exactly. The waking state is the illusion.
And when something wakes up in the morning,
when the illusion wakes up in the morning,
that’s the only thing which makes a break.
That’s the only thing which has the experience
that, “Oh, now something else is happening,”

or, “Now something is happening.” And then all the ideas start, of continuity, of what really is, et cetera ...

Justin
Allen: But they have to because that’s the ... But even that’s a change. So, it’s saying that before that, let’s say, there’s no experience.

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: And then the illusion is the experience?

Andreas
Müller: Yes.

Justin
Allen: So, there’s a change from no experience to experience.

Andreas
Müller: But I would say that’s the illusion; that waking up in the morning or having the experience of waking up in the morning makes for a real change. No, it doesn’t.

Justin
Allen: But the illusion is a change?

Andreas
Müller: Yeah, but it’s not a real change. It’s not real. “Me” isn’t real, so the illusion isn’t real either (laughing).

Justin
Allen: But it’s apparently different. It’s an apparent change, or it’s an apparent experience even though it’s also not an experience.

Andreas Müller: Exactly, and it's not a change. And it's a bit conceptual now, but it's not a change for wholeness. But to experience oneself as "I'm here now" is the apparent experience of the change. Nothing else experiences that change. Nothing else does experience a change in "me" waking up. It's only the "me" that believes itself to have woken up which makes the difference. "Oh, I'm here." But there's nothing else that experiences a "me" waking up.

Justin Allen: Right, unless you're in the illusion; then there is (laughing).

Andreas Müller: One could say it's only the illusion itself that experiences itself as "I'm here." Nothing does that. Nothing knows about the existence of "me," except the "me."

Justin Allen: Yeah, except that's also ... It's so absurd.

Andreas Müller: Yes, it's wonderful (laughing).

Justin Allen: Because it doesn't make any sense either, right? Because it doesn't make sense that an illusion which isn't real could even have ...

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Justin Allen: I mean, it makes sense, and it doesn't make sense.

Andreas Müller: Yes.

Müller:

Justin
Allen: Because an illusion can do whatever it wants because it's an illusion. But logically you'd think that something that's not real could never be real or never think that it's real.

Andreas
Müller: Yes, that's the thing. It can't even do that. It's what apparently

happens. It can't do. It can't think it's real. That's just what happens. And it's interesting what you just said because that's when we come to that message: It's not logical. Seen from the separate perspective, it's totally without sense. It can't be comprehended. It has nothing to do with these logical awareness teachings where everybody who can follow it a bit can say, "Yeah, true, true. That's right, mm-hmm (affirmative). I understand. I get it. Yes, mm-hmm (affirmative), right." All that stuff, that's all within the person. But what this is pointing to, apparently, is really beyond. It's almost difficult to say, but it's not within that setup. Because exactly that question is the impossible thing for the person: How can I experience myself to be here and hearing this message that I'm not here? Eh? How is that?

Justin
Allen: I mean, even that ... But I think there's even something more subtle that ... It's like when you watch a movie on a screen: From the audience's perspective you know that nothing is real. You know totally that this is all an illusion.

Andreas Müller: Yes, but there is someone who really knows that.

Justin Allen: Yeah, right. But I'm just saying, you know that it's an illusion, so you know that when you're looking at a mountain in a movie. Even though sometimes you might forget for a second and really think that the mountain is real. Or with this new 3D technology: Sometimes I've been in those 3D movies where you see people trying to grab something (laughing).

Andreas Müller: Yes, yes.

Justin Allen: And so when they're trying to grab something, they're at least momentarily convinced that there's something floating one meter in front of them.

Andreas Müller: Yeah, yeah.

Justin Allen: So, when you look at them, you think, "That's crazy that they're reaching out for something. Don't they know?" And it's the same thing here. Even though you know

that it's an illusion or a fake - something that doesn't really exist, so it doesn't make any sense to try to grab it or touch it -, it still seems to be there. And it's the same with this: How can an illusion create anything, in a sense, because it's just ... It's not real.

Andreas Müller: Exactly. That's why I would say, in that sense,

Müller: there isn't an autonomous illusion. That would again be the dream; that there is something autonomous at all.

Justin
Allen: But then in the same way, would you say that there's only illusion?

Andreas
Müller: No, not at all.

Justin
Allen: So, you'd say there's only not ... I mean, you can't say that there's only not illusion.

Andreas
Müller: Well, the word "illusion" in a way only applies to the illusion. I would say that everything just is what apparently happens. There is no real illusion anywhere, so if people think they're someone, that's not an illusion in the end. That's just what apparently happens. And it would be the apparent illusion to think that there is someone who is in an illusion and could or should wake up from that.

Justin
Allen: Right.

Andreas
Müller: In that sense, there is no illusion at all. Or if you go into the story, you have to say the only illusion is that there are separate people; that there is something autonomous. Call it people, call it an autonomous illusion, call it "I" - whatever. That would be the only illusion. This conversation is not an illusion. It's "wholeness" or "noneness" or "oneness" or whatever you want to call it.