"There are trivial truths and there are great truths. The opposite of a trivial truth is plainly false. The opposite of a great truth is also true."

- Niels Bohr

"Profound things are simple. If it is not simple, it cannot be true. But simple things are difficult."

- Douglas Harding

Those who were qualified to teach, those few like the Maharshi, said that silence was more efficacious, but in early stages teaching can only be given via a series of untruths diminishing in inveracity in ratio to the pupil's apprehension of the falsity of what he is being taught. Truth cannot be communicated. It can only be laid bare." (Wei Wu Wei)

The ordinary person's acceptance of the illusions of the
individual self, physical 'reality', birth, death, creation, destruction, free will, personal achievement, (in short, maya) as truth has so inverted the perception of truth and falsehood, that what is true is generally perceived as false and what is false is given credence as truth. In this environment, a teacher who speaks the naked truth will be perceived by the ordinary person as speaking falsehood or, perhaps, as lunatic. Through no fault of his own, the listener, because of his conditioning, will not give himself the chance to hear or understand what is being said.

Thus out of compassion for the listener, in order to initiate the process of coming to understanding, the teacher will sometimes begin by couching a small amount of truth in images, illustrations or thought categories which are known to the teacher to be essentially erroneous. The listener on the other hand will perceive this teaching as mostly 'true' (i.e. familiar) with a small and perhaps puzzling element of what seems to be 'untruth.' If this is explored and his own presuppositions challenged, the listener may with help understand the truth of what he had perceived as the small untruth. It may then be possible for the teacher to gradually, in his teachings, introduce more elements of truth and just as gradually to reduce the falsehood used to make the truth comprehensible.

At some point the listener begins to recognize the inconsistency and incompatibility of the conventional imagery that is being used as a vehicle with the truth that is being conveyed. When the listener thus "apprehends the falsehood of what he is being taught," the teacher is free to dispense with the vehicle and "lay the truth bare" in a way which the listener would previously have found unacceptable.
19. Teaching Truth

Since truth is beyond concepts and language, this exposing of the truth will necessarily include less and less in the way of statements of What Is, and more pointers by way of what is not (i.e. the *via negativa*) until perhaps at length the listener may actually reach a point where she is able to hear and understand the truth in silence, about which Ramana Maharshi said that it is the only accurate expression of Truth but unfortunately very few are capable of hearing it. Only in silence is there freedom from the dualism inherent in the subject-object structure of language and thought.

II

T*RUTH, REALIZATION, THE SELF*, the Understanding, is One, *a-dvaita, not-two*. But how the teaching, consisting of pointers toward the Understanding, is expressed in or through any ‘teacher’ or ‘sage’ will vary greatly; and that expression will be to a significant degree determined by the programming and conditioning of the body/mind organism in which it is expressed. In particular, the heart of the teaching, the ‘basis’ or irreducible core, will find a unique expression in the case of each in which the apperception has occurred. And this will be shaped to a great extent by the way, the manner, the context, the circumstances, in which the event of the Awakening occurred in each case.

This can perhaps be better illustrated than explained.

For Ramana Maharshi, the Awakening occurred as a young boy. Having the overwhelming feeling that he was about to die, he lay down and let a vivid experience of death occur, experiencing what it would be like for the bodily and
Perfect Brilliant Stillness

mental functions to cease in death. When this had occurred, there was the realization that the 'I' that one thinks one is dies with the body and mind; yet while this false 'I' and everything else disappears, still there remains a sense of pure existence, the awareness 'I am.' This, he realized, is what the 'I' truly is; not the body or mind or personality or sense of being a separate self, all of which die, but rather the 'I-I' which is eternal. In the case of Ramana Maharshi, this is the central understanding; and so his teaching reflected this, telling listeners to "simply be," to "follow the I am," and to "abide in the I."

Nisargadatta Maharaj's account of how Realization happened is quite different. He states that his guru told him that he was not who he thought he was, not the body, but rather that he was in truth nothing other than the Absolute. He says he believed his guru, took his words to heart, and after three years of meditation and concentration on this, the Understanding was complete. And so this is the point on which all of Maharaj's teaching centers, and he addressed his listeners uncompromisingly by speaking in the first person as the Absolute, "I am That," not as a separate individual; and he insisted that no question be asked which was based on identification with the body.

From one who studied with a teacher or a guru before awakening occurred, there will likely come a teaching that a teacher or a guru is the way. From one in whom awakening happened spontaneously, without a teacher, may come the idea that a guru is not necessary. One whose awakening follows an intense period of meditation and is inextricably linked with a powerful mystical experience, may well teach meditation and mysticism.
You can read the ancient masters; Huang Po, Hui-Neng, and others; or modern teachers such as Tony Parsons or Adyashanti, and find further examples. These expressions of the core teaching, what is continually returned to as the basis, may seem to vary greatly or at least be very different in emphasis. And that difference is due for the most part to the different backgrounds, cultures, tendencies, circumstances, and events in each of the body/mind instruments, and particularly the event of the awakening itself.

In the case of what I have come to call, with some affection, 'the david thing,' the irreducible core of the Understanding was expressed in the first thought which formed when there was that sudden shift of perception and it was clearly seen that "there's nobody home!" There is Presence, Being, Consciousness. There is this apparent mind/body in which and as which Presence streams, functions, experiences. And that is all; there is no separate individual self or entity or person except as a mere thought construct.

And so the expression here necessarily revolves around this basis and returns always to this: that it is the sense of individual self that is the illusion, the 'bondage,' the essential 'endarkenment.' When this illusory sense of individual self is seen through, falls away, then there is simply What Is, there is awakening from the dream of separate, individual selfhood.

What is awakened to, what is Understood, is only One. Yet each occurrence in a body/mind instrument is different, according to the infinite variables in the programming and conditioning of each instrument and in the script or part or 'destiny' each plays in the infinite unfolding in Consciousness. Each has a different flavor, a different emphasis.
If the Understanding is a house, some come in through the front door, some the back. Some enter through windows, perhaps slipping in unnoticed or perhaps smashing the window and setting off all the alarms. One may come down the chimney, another tear through the roof shingles one by one. One may fall from a great height and crash through the roof and land on the floor in a pile of dust and debris while yet another may hand his hat to the butler as he steps from the porch into the parlor.

And these different manners in which it occurs will lend a different feel, different color, different flavor, to the expression, the description, of the One Taste. The way Ramesh talks about the Understanding and the way Tony Parsons talks about Presence are quite different, have a very different tone. Wayne Liquorman says you have no choice; Gangaji says all you have is choice. They are all pointing to exactly the same thing. All part of the infinite unfolding of totality. In form and expression, the teaching is never the same twice. Yet always the Understanding itself is not-two. All the pointers are toward What-Is.