Later that night, in the dark, lying on a mat on the floor of the bamboo hut, the rain pours down on the rainforest and the insects are an interweaving of a million sounds and rhythms. Lying there in the quiet peace of the surrender that had come a few hours before. Not knowing or caring at what time or in what manner the inevitable death would come.

There is a tearing, a searing physical pain in the chest that feels like my rib cage is being torn open; at the same time there is a tingling at the top of my head and the sensation is that the top is peeled off my skull like a tight cap being removed. There is peace, consent, no fear. The sensation is
that there is an immense surge or explosion or expansion, which the body cannot contain. Something surges, spins up out of the top of the head to I know not where, to infinity; while my heart expands up and out of my chest, outward, until it fills first the forest, then the world, then the galaxy.

The surge out the top of the head is noticed, but not followed. What is followed with the attention is the expansion of the heart, because with the heart’s expansion the ‘I’ sense also expands. And I find myself in what in my ignorance, without language or categories, I call Presence: expressing as Brilliance, like light but clearer and brighter, beyond light. Not white or gold, just absolute Brilliance. Brilliantly Alive, radiantly Being All That Is.

And there is an awareness, quite amusing, that Presence has been aware of ‘david’ forever, and is ‘enjoying’ that ‘david’ has woken up enough to perceive It. And there is a profound realization that nothing, absolutely nothing matters. Anything I had ever thought, or experienced, or ever would think, or experience, was nothing, a dream; absolutely did not matter. It was all really quite funny. I laughed and cried alternately for many hours, all night in the rain.

In this part of that experience in the jungle, I knew three things about this Presence, about All That Is. Three things, and later, a fourth. The three words I used at the time were:

First, that it is Alive. Not an inanimate cloud or energy field of some sort; nor even a thing which is alive: it is pure Life, Aliveness, Existence.
Second, that this Presence is Intelligence. It is alert, awake and Aware; it is Knowing. Not something that knows; rather it is the Knowing.

Third, that its nature, its essence, is pure, unfathomable, endless, unconditional Love, Compassion, beauty, outpouring. In this Presence, I find myself in a state of overwhelming gratitude, bliss, unfathomable Peace, Love.

Months later, I read about three Sanskrit words traditionally used together to try to express this brilliant Presence, this All That Is: **Sat, Chit, and Ananda.**

**Sat:** Being. Not being something, nor something being; but simply pure Being in itself; Am-ness. I Am who Am. What I called 'Alive.'

**Chit:** Consciousness. Not consciousness of anything, just simple, pure Consciousness itself; Awareness. What I called 'Intelligence,' knowing.

**Ananda:** Bliss, Peace, Outpouring.

I lay in this Presence for many hours. There was an intense experience of what I would call 'processing.' I felt that I was taken back through my whole life, stopping at the places where there were unresolved issues or unfinished business. Issues from childhood, from relationships; old pain, loss, grief, many of which I had dealt with extensively in many years of therapy. They were intensely re-lived, re-experienced, completed, and let go. When one was finished, another would arise. That night there was final resolution and closure on many old wounds that had never before been able to heal.
The Presence that was first experienced that night has, ever since then, never not been experienced. This life is lived in the Light of Presence, always: it cannot now not be. The sense of Presence is all pervading, this awareness of Sat Chit Ananda, which is Brilliance. The moment the heart seemed to expand out of the chest to fill the galaxy, Presence which is All That Is was first perceived as immense Brilliance, Light beyond light.

My eyes were closed when this happened, and the Brilliance was infinite. When I opened my eyes, the jungle was dark, black as only the deep rainforest can be, far from any lights and sheltered under the dense canopy of great trees from even the light of the moon and stars. With the eyes open, the Brilliance receded to the background, still there and still ultimately bright toward the back of the head, but allowing the eyes to see darkness in front of them. When my eyes closed, it was as if the Brilliance filled my head, or more as if there were no head, no bamboo hut, no jungle, no earth, nothing to contain this Brilliance which itself contains all and is all.

For the first few days and weeks, this was distracting and a little disconcerting. Whenever the eyes are closed, it is far brighter than when they are open, even in daylight. It took some adjustment to be able to sleep bathed in this Brilliance; darkness comes only with the eyes open, and even then the light is still there in the back. And the Brilliance is not inert light; it is Sat Chit Ananda, living, breathing, aware, love compassion bliss outpouring.

I have not talked with many people about the Brilliance. If it had been all that happened that night, more may have been made of it. But in view of what happened a few hours
later, it is simply what it is, no more. It has been suggested to me, by those who know about such things, that it has to do with release of Kundalini energy. I don't know much about Kundalini; and beyond reading enough to confirm that it does seem to fit the description, it really isn't important. All of this; surges of energy, Sat Chit Ananda, the Brilliance, the processing and healing of old wounds, was and is all experience. Wonderful, beautiful experience, but nevertheless experience and therefore dream stuff, dream experiences of a dream character, part of the 'everything' that is not.

There is a deep gratitude for this experience, for the Brilliance. It is a constant reminder and a deep comfort. It has made it impossible for the dawd body/mind to ever make the conceptual mistake of separating the world of mystical experience and Sat Chit Ananda from the world of body and mind and sense and objects. The Brilliance is not in some other realm accessible only under certain conditions: it is here, always, exploding in this head, affecting the visual functioning of this organism. It is a beautiful and astonishing gift: once again unsought, unearned, undeserved.

But all this is still dream stuff, and has nothing to do with the Understanding.