**Awareness**

**Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things.**

***(Psalm 119:18)***

**Know this also, that now is the time and the hour**

**that we should awake from our sleep,**

**for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed.**

***(Romans 13:11)***

**To be awake is to be alive. I have not yet met a man who was quite awake. *(Henry David Thoreau)***

**We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures. *(Thornton Wilder, in The Woman of Andros)***

**There is no evidence that animals possess a mysterious sixth sense allowing them to predict natural disasters. Their keen senses of smell and hearing and sharp instincts alone are enough to send them scattering for the hillsides during a hurricane or tsunami. And even so, animals often die during natural disasters, so if they do have some sort of sixth sense, it’s not worth much. *(Live Science.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 3, 2006)***

**The quaking aspen quivers not just during a storm, but before. A naturalist says the trees know. They feel the barometric pressure. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The Sanskrit meaning of the word “Buddha” is “awakened.” The Buddha was enlightened because he was fully awake. This is a new understanding of what it means to be wise – not to know, but simply to be aware; not to be certain, but simply to be awake. *(Barbara De Angelis, in How Did I Get Here?, p. 313)***

**Catfish, too, sense impending earthquakes. It has been shown repeatedly that normally sluggish catfish tend to become exceedingly lively before an earthquake in their vicinity. But nobody yet knows why. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Despite appearing completely comatose, some “vegetative” patients remain aware of their surroundings and may even be able to communicate their thoughts, new research shows. An international team of neurologists used a sophisticated brain-scanning tool called a functional MRI to peer inside the minds of 54 brain-damaged patients classified as either in a “persistent vegetative state” or “minimally conscious.” The patients were all asked to imagine that they were exploring their homes, room by room. Most of the patients’ scans showed no activity. But five patients’ brains “lit up” in the right areas, clearly indicating that they were responding to the spoken directions and visualizing the two activities. “It was incredible,” neuroscientist and study leader Adrian Owen tells The Washington Post. “These are patients who are totally unable to perform functions with their bodies – even blink an eye or move an eyebrow – but yet are entirely conscious. It’s quite distressing, really, to realize this.” One of the patients, a 29-year-old Belgian man, was even able to respond to questions about his personal life – “Is your father’s name Alexander?” – by visualizing playing tennis for “yes” and walking through his home for “no.” Scientists and doctors must now consider the possibility that some “vegetative” patients could be asked to make decisions about their treatment – and even whether they want to go on living. “They can now have some involvement in their own destiny,” says Owen. *(The Week magazine, February 19, 2010)***

**Some computers have been known to catch cold. One in California, for instance, recently shut itself down until its operator started covering it every night with an electric blanket. *(L. M. Boyd, in Boyd’s Book of Odd Facts, p. 6)***

**Consciousness: that annoying time between naps. *(The American Legion magazine)***

**A female cowbird will lay her eggs in the nest of another songbird. She will keep an eye on her eggs from a distance. If they are removed, she will quickly destroy the eggs laid by the songbird and wait for a new batch to be laid. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 160)***

**Crows will watch squirrels bury a nut and swoop in to dig it up as soon as the squirrel leaves. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 158)***

**Each female cuckoo specializes in producing eggs that mimic the appearance of one specific species of bird, which she lays in the other bird’s nest for that bird to unwittingly raise as her own. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 160)***

**Billy crawls on top of his Dad while he is sleeping and asks; “Daddy? Are you ready to wake up yet?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Only the day dawns to those who are awake. *(Henry David Thoreau)***

**It’s an amazing dilemma when one begins to discover that . . . you’re living your life in a trance – in a dream. When that occurs, there’s a kind of amazing thing that takes place. One is despair, and the other is a sudden awakening. *(Sam Shepard, playwright)***

**Some dogs can be trained to predict an epileptic seizure in their owners.**

**Other dogs can sense low sugar levels in diabetics and warn them so that they can ingest carbohydrates to avoid passing out. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 164)***

**The only way to let your dreams come true is to wake up. *(Paul Valery)***

**Scientists in China report they can predict weather with about 80 percent accuracy by monitoring the croaking of frogs. *(Boyd’s Curiosity Shop, p. 161)***

**The scientific sky watchers say they now know that hawks can predict weather changes 200 miles away up to 12 hours in advance, but they don’t know how. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**My inside, listen to me, the greatest spirit, the Teacher, is near, wake up, wake up! Run to his feet – he is standing close to your head right now. You have slept for millions and millions of years. Why not wake up this morning? *(Kabir)***

**We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn. *(Henry David Thoreau)***

**Lost-pet ads in the classifieds run higher than usual a day or so before an earthquake. Such is he reported finding of California geologist Jim Berkland who researched the matter. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter what fork you use. *(Emily Post)***

**The midlife crisis is an experience that is misnamed. It should be called a midlife awakening. It is the emotional alchemy that rebirths us at a crucial point in our life journey. *(Barbara De Angelis, in How Did I Get Here?, p. 91)***

**Researchers have determined that pheasants start to tremble about ten seconds before an earthquake strikes. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It’s a Weird World, p. 23)***

**Any farmer will tell you that pigs are smart. But are pigs so smart that they’re self-aware, like monkeys and other primates? To find out, researchers placed two pigs in a pen with a mirror. While most animals interpret their own mirrored reflection as another animal, the pigs quickly grasped the link “between their own movements and their image in the mirror,” researcher Donald Broom of the University of Cambridge tells Science News. They nuzzled their reflections, moved about, and looked at themselves from various angles. Most impressively, when a bowl of food was introduced that was visible only in the mirror, the pigs quickly turned around to seek out the real thing behind them. The cognitive skills involved in making that leap suggest “some degree of self-awareness,” says Broom. “It’s not conclusive, but it is likely they are self-aware given our results.” Pigs now join the ranks of several other species, including monkeys, dolphins, magpies, and elephants, that recognize their reflections in a mirror. *(The Week magazine, November 27, 2009)***

**I had read of these remote tribes, Negritos as small as pygmies, who inhabit those islands and have been warding off modernization since Marco Polo dropped in on them in the 13th century. Anthropologists say they have been isolated from the rest of humanity for 30,000 to 60,000 years, and little is known of their languages or their gods. It has been speculated that they, living closer to nature, might have been able to anticipate the tsunami, and therefore moved out of its way in time. They may have been able to watch the behavior of animals and birds, as creatures are known to be able to anticipate earthquakes before any human being can feel the shock. *(H. D. S. Greenway, in Rocky Mounain News)***

**Among life’s rudest awakenings are the alarm clock on workdays and rain on the roof on weekends. *(Doug Larson, United Feature Syndicate)***

**Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing. *(Robert Bresson, French film director)***

**When an earthquake is about to occur, snakes will move out of their nests. If the earthquake is a big one, the snakes will even smash into walls while trying to escape. *(Jiang Weison, earthquake bureau chief in Nanning, China)***

**What is this precious love and laughter budding in our hearts? It is the glorious sound of a soul waking up! *(Hafiz (tr. Daniel Ladinsky)***

**That’s the way things come clear. All of a sudden. And then you realize how obvious they’ve been all along. *(Madeleine L’Engle)***

**Observe what is with undivided awareness. (Bruce Lee)**

**Some comatose patients deemed “vegetative” may actually be aware of what’s going on around them, a new study concludes. The startling finding came from MRI studies of a 23-year-old British woman left comatose by a brain injury suffered in an auto accident. Scientists told the woman to picture specific activities while they monitored her brain activity; though she was outwardly unresponsive, portions of her brain lit up when told to imagine she was playing tennis, or walking around her home. The scans indicated she was visualizing just as a healthy person would. “I was absolutely stunned,” says study leader Dr. Adrian Owen. “This showed that she is aware.” But Owen and other brain experts said it would be wrong to draw broad conclusions about all comatose patients based on a single patient, noting that she was in a coma only for five months; patients sometimes do recover consciousness after being in a coma for a short time. No patient in a vegetative state for more than two years has ever regained consciousness. Terri Schiavo, the Florida woman at the center of a national debate last year, had been in a coma for 15 years, and an autopsy showed that her brain was partially liquefied. Still, the new study inevitably will raise ethical questions, Cornell’s Dr. Joseph Fins tells the Los Angeles Times. “It will create some difficult choices for families,” he says. *(The Week magazine, September 29, 2006)***

**Why does becoming more aware of the world usually mean learning to be more cautious? *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**I thought things couldn’t possibly get any worse – and then I woke up. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

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