

SATORI. It happened again today - it doesn't happen often; there was no indication it was coming - there never is; it was not a special occasion - I did nothing to bring it on. I was lying in bed, my eyes were closed - one of those half-alert moments between sleeping and waking. Then the world retreated. I was not thinking of anything; I was beyond space & time; beyond my individuality, my ego. Instead of thoughts, instead of me, there was an all-encompassing consciousness of one-ness and eternity; an eternal moment of bliss and peace that lasted seconds.

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sa·to·ri

... means 'understanding' in Japanese Buddhism. In the Zen Buddhist tradition, satori is a flash of sudden awareness - a moment of enlightenment, and a realisation of the true nature of existence.

In Zen one must prepare oneself for satori with meditation and clear the mind of attachments to the world. Satori is attained through personal experience; it is deemed a first step toward nirvana.

I first wrote this piece in 2006. At the time I had had these experiences a couple of times. Since then they have become a more frequent occurrence; often while walking or sitting near the ocean etc.

Virginia Woolf (1882 - 1941) wrote in Moments of Being about experiencing a heightened awareness of being, with "the deeply hidden and inarticulate desire for something beyond the daily life".

*see also MEDITATION 2, 3
and WHY MEDITATE*