The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover has a light gray background with a subtle diagonal gradient. The title 'The Illusion of Being a Person' is centered in a large, black, serif font. Below the title, the author's name 'Peter Joseph' is printed in a smaller, black, serif font.

The Illusion of Being a Person

Peter Joseph

If your goal is to wake up and lead a life filled with more happiness and peace, this book will take you there. You will learn how to recognize and follow your own inner guidance. You will explore the perspectives that are shaping your current reality, and be led step-by-step to a path that will return you to a life filled with grace.

The Illusion of Being a Person

by Peter Joseph

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Contents

Chapter 1

The Illusion of Being a Person – 1

Chapter 2

What's the Illusion? – 21

Chapter 3

Reality – 101

Chapter 4

Waking Up – 107

Chapter 5

Trusting the Knowing – 129

Chapter 6

Peace – 141

Chapter 7

Happiness – 149

Chapter 8

Love – 161

Chapter 9

God's Will – 169

Chapter 10

Ascension – 175

Chapter 11

A Closer Look – 189

Chapter 12

A New World – 195

Chapter 12

A New World

When we're committed to eliminating our ego, our relationship with the world changes. As an ego, our focus was on pleasuring ourselves mentally and physically as our means to happiness. We valued, and enjoyed, the desires forming in our mind. And as they formed in our mind, we would focus our attention on satisfying them.

There was an endless stream of desires, and each one gave us a purpose for living. One desire after another appeared in our mind in the form of thoughts. What we were desiring was the focus of our lives. They formed the path that we chose during our waking life. And we followed that path unconsciously, rarely questioning the wisdom of the choices we were making.

What we desired we chose. We had no idea it was an addiction — that desires were forming in our mind because we were controlling what we were feeling. Our choices seemed so logical to us at the time, even when they were harmful to ourselves and others.

What we desired was giving form to every choice we were making, including our conversations with others: *That restaurant was so good. What a beautiful, blue sky day it is. That's a great place to vacation. What a great store for discounts. Have you read The Lying Game? It's so good. I wish I had a better boss. These are the reasons for doing it my way.*

Obtaining what we desired was the guiding principle of our life. It formed the “path” we were traveling. It shaped our inventiveness, institutions, cultures and our history. And unless we all had the same desires, our desires often put us at odds with one another.

And what was the payoff when we could satisfy a desire? It was a sensation of pleasure we experienced in our minds and bodies. It was that sensation of pleasure in our minds and bodies that we were living for — and even dying for. But that was then, when we were completely immersed in the illusion of being a person.

Now that we're committed to eliminating our ego, our focus has changed. And our relationship with the world has changed.

Our focus is now on the Divine, on God, on being what we truly are, and on what the Knowing is guiding us to do.

Before, the world was a source of pleasure for us — our means to happiness. Today, the relationship we have with the world is shaped by our Knowing. It's telling us what to do and how to do it. Our motivation for acting in the world isn't to be pleased, as it was before. It's to be integrated with the Divine.

Today, we're motivated by what's in our Heart, not what's in our mind. We're motivated by the intrinsic Truth, the Realness, of the Knowing — not by the prospect of being mentally or physically pleased. We're integrating with the Divine, and it is completing us. And the attributes of what we truly are have begun appearing.

We're not egos becoming happier as egos. We're experiencing ourselves as an entirely new Being — a Being with new attributes. They are the attributes of our true nature, and because of those attributes, we're no longer interested in a life where pleasuring our minds and bodies is our purpose for living. What's of profound interest to us is the world of the Divine.

We're not focused on the world of the Divine because a religion tells us to focus on it. We're focused on it because we know it's Real, and because focusing on it is eliminating the upsets and conflicts we assumed were an intrinsic part of our nature. We're focused on the Divine because we're becoming integrated with our true nature, and it is calming our mind and filling our Heart with Joy.

Finally, we're returning to Grace. Finally, we've rejected the fruit of the tree of worldly knowledge. We are no longer using the world to distract ourselves from the Truth within us. What we want now is the world of the Divine.

We're not ambivalent about this. We understand clearly that if we hold onto the world as a means for happiness, we would have to sink back into the murky existence of the person we were being and forfeit what is Real, and Joyful, and filled with Love and Power.

We worked hard to become honest with ourselves. We faced pain and fear to get here. And what a relief it is to be so honest with ourselves; it's brought Peace to our Heart. And it's brought an unexpected order to our life.

Jesus said:

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

For much of our life we ignored Jesus and the Prophets and the Enlightened Beings. They were explaining that our fall from Grace, our descent into the illusion, was because we were serving mammon instead of living in accordance with the Truth within us. Now that what's Real is no longer our enemy — now that we're no longer shunning or hiding from what we know in our heart is True — we are, at last, Happy, and our Attention is being drawn to the world of the Divine.

We are Awake. We are Present in a way we didn't know existed before. Our Knowing makes us aware of the world of man and the world of the Divine in ways our physical senses never could. Before, we sought an understanding of our world so we could feel in control, so we could satisfy our desires. Now we're no longer feeling insecure and we have a very clear understanding of everything we need to know.

Now that our attention is on the Divine, what do we see when we look at the world around us? We see the reflection of our consciousness. And we see our reality forming within the field of our Attention. And we see the Divine.

We're not imagining the Divine. We're not imagining anything at all. We stopped using our imagination when we stopped using logical thinking as a means for understanding our world or for making decisions.

Now we're relying entirely on our Attention when we want to experience something in our world or within us. And because we're relying entirely on our Attention, we experience everything as it truly is. It's a clarity that is an attribute of our true nature that we couldn't have imagined before.

What are our ideas and perceptions to us now? They are of no value or interest to us. Those that remain in our mind are merely masking our Awareness, clouding our awareness of what is Real. We formed most of our ideas and perceptions unconsciously — unconsciously absorbing them from others, or as a reaction to what our circumstances were. We formed them,

one after another, drifting deeper into the illusion of being a person, and masking our Awareness of what's True.

Before, we were experiencing ourselves and our world from the viewpoint of our ideas and perceptions. Now, we're focused on removing those ideas and perceptions whenever possible. As we do, the world around us is becoming more vivid: It was entirely unexpected. And the Knowing is becoming even clearer and more precise. We're no longer bound by the limits of our physical senses. Our Attention and Knowing extend the reality that we're aware of in ways we didn't know existed before.

Before we began this spiritual ascent, our life was desiring mental and physical pleasures and avoiding painful experiences. Now it has much more purpose to it, a purpose that's integrated with our true nature. Before, it was difficult to act wisely. Our desires had such a hold on us. Now, we love the Wisdom that's an attribute of the Knowing. It turns chaos into order. It turns upsets into Peace and Happiness. It provides solid foundations to live from. It's all that we wanted before, and more, but we just couldn't get here by controlling what we were feeling, by satisfying the desires coming to mind.

When we're engaged in the world it's different than before. The world sways to and fro, sometimes swirling around us, but we are solidly planted in the Knowing. We know what to do and how to do it. Each step we take is deliberate and conscious. We're so present, nothing is wasted. While others are using their logic and memories and imaginations, drawn by their desires, we Know what to do and how to do it. We're not assuming or guessing anything. We Know what to do and how to do it when we act. And the outcome reflects what's Real.

Before, we were hoping we could understand life and why it was sometimes so difficult and painful. Now, we do understand life and we understand that much of the pain and difficulties stemmed from our need to control what we were feeling.

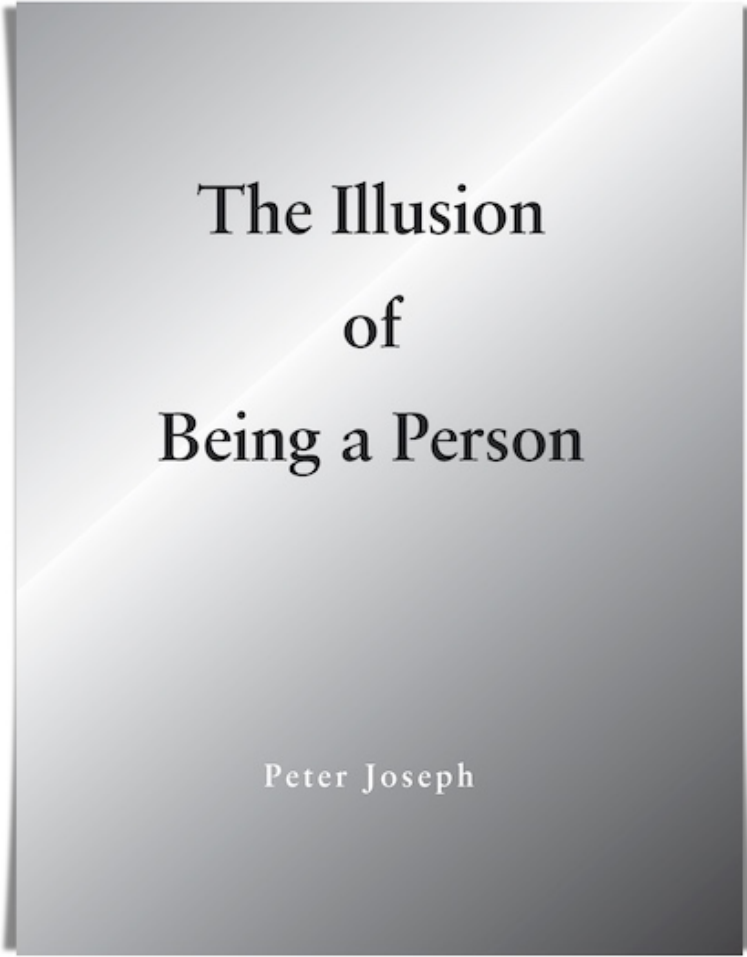
What an illusion it was! The importance we gave to avoiding what's True, especially when the Truth could be painful, was so logical to us. We couldn't see that it was causing all of our troubles. And we couldn't see how foolish we were being making ourselves almost incapable of experiencing pain when it was present. We were making the avoidance of pain the compass for our lives instead of Truth and Wisdom, and it was making our

world more painful and chaotic. And it was depriving us of the Joy of Life, and the Joy of Intimacy with others and with God.

Now the illusion is lifting, and with each day our life is becoming more integrated with what's Real. The constant stress that we experienced being dishonest with ourselves and others is gone. Now we take each opportunity there is to remove the ideas and perceptions that are still masking our Awareness. And we follow the Knowing — finally, a life worth living.

We kept looking for meaning in the life we were living, but how could we have ever found it? From one day to the next we were in the pursuit of our desires, often casting aside what we knew in our heart was true in order to satisfy them. Truth was so easily cast aside, it was nothing to us. All that mattered was what we desired.

We look on now at a world that's driven by its desires, and pray that each Soul grows to understand that without what's Real, the happiness they're searching for will elude them. And we pray that each Soul learns the value of Truth, so that they may end their suffering.

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