

## “Two Ways of Reflection”

The following magnificent quote from Kierkegaard comes from “Two Ways of Reflection,” a chapter in *Provocations: Spiritual Writings of Kierkegaard*.<sup>1</sup>

Speaking of the objectivity, Kierkegaard says, “It is of the opinion that it avoids the danger that lies in wait for the subjective way, and at its extreme this danger is madness. In its view, a solely subjective definition of truth make lunacy and truth indistinguishable. But by staying objective one avoids becoming a lunatic. However, is not the absence of inwardness also lunacy?” (58).

“It is true that subjective reflection turns inward, but in this inward deepening there is truth. Lest we forget, the subject, the individual, is an *existing* self, and existing is a process of becoming. Therefore truth as the identity of thought and being is an illusion of the abstract. The knower is first and foremost an existing person. In other words, thinking and being are not automatically one and the same. If the existing person could actually be outside himself, the truth would then be something concluded for him. However, for the truly existing person, passion, not thought is existence at its very highest: true knowing pertains essentially to existence, to a life of decision and responsibility. Only ethical and ethical-religious knowing is essential knowing. Only truth that matters to me, to you, is of significance” (58-59).

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<sup>1</sup> *Provocations: Spiritual Writings of Kierkegaard*..