

The Difference Between Nirvikalpa Samadhi and Deep Sleep

James,

Would you please clarify for me what the differences are between *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* and deep sleep? If I understand it correctly, the mind is absent in both cases. If that is true, the person in *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* is not aware that he is in *samadhi* just like when we are in deep sleep we are not aware of that state. Is my understanding correct? Thanks.

Manigandan

Hi Manigandan,

In terms of *moksa* there is no difference since the intellect needs to be available for self knowledge to take place. But there is a difference. In deep sleep there is an experiencer. It is called *prajna*, the deep sleeper. It is not the waking state entity but it is a transformation of the waker into a 'suksma vritti,' a subtle thought, that makes the experience of limitless/bliss without thoughts possible. In *nirvikalpa Samadhi* there is no *vritti*, no *vikalpa*, so there is not even the experience of limitlessness. As far as the waker is concerned, the knowledge of the *Samadhi* is only inferential since the waker is a grosser transformation of *prajna*, the sleeper. In *nirvikalpa* there is no knowledge. The self 'experiences' itself without the aid of an experiencing entity, which is to say that it is an experienceless experience i.e. no experience at all.

James