

Aware of Awareness

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Ayumi: Dear James, in my *yoga* practice usually I am aware of the observer which is observing my body, thoughts, etc. Is it same as *viveka*? Or different?

James: *Viveka* is knowing what is the body and what is the observer, you. It is knowledge that you are the awareness that knows the body and Ayumi. Who is aware of awareness? Is it Ayumi or is it awareness? Or is Ayumi just name for awareness? It is awareness, you. Ayumi is not a person who is aware of awareness. She is awareness aware of itself with the belief that she is Ayumi, someone separate from awareness, someone who is aware of awareness. *Viveka* is just knowledge. *Moksa* is when this knowledge “I am Ayumi and not the body” is there even when Ayumi is not in meditation, because awareness is and the body is all the time. It is good to have this experience in meditation because it stimulates inquiry but it is not good for Ayumi to try to be aware of awareness all the time or a *vasana* for the aware of awareness experience will develop and frustration will set in. *Moksa* is when you know that you are awareness at all times. But it is not a continuous knowledge in the sense that it does not have to be in your mind as a conscious thought all the time. It is like the knowledge of your name. It is there but hidden. When you need it, it is available. When you don't you just think and feel what you think and feel, knowing that your thoughts and feelings are just you appearing as thoughts and feelings.

Ayumi: It seems that meditating on “I'm already happy” works a lot, more than when I'm trying to investigate who I am and what is not me. Is this *viveka* too? Or I should work on *viveka* besides meditating on “I'm already happy”?

James: Yes, this is *viveka* too. Any and all Vedanta teachings are *viveka*.

Ayumi: I feel very powerful and I laugh a lot when I meditate on this! I think the affirmation *mantras* like “I am already happy” are great. They keep the mind focused on the self and deliver lots of bliss.

~ Love and peace, Ayumi