

# Awareness Is the Eternal “Knower”

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2016-08-03

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2851>

**Ingrid:** How can we know awareness is self-aware without objects?

**Ted:** Objects are dependent on awareness for their existence, for if awareness did not exist, no objects would be known. Hence awareness must exist prior to objects. And since something can't come out of nothing, the nature of this existence must be awareness.

**Ingrid:** The light shines of course, but does it know it shines?

**Ted:** Awareness is not a personal entity with a mind that can know objects, so awareness doesn't know itself in the same way that the mind knows objects. Awareness simply is. We say that awareness is aware of itself in a figurative sense. As awareness, awareness is aware, but not of objects. Awareness is the “light” that illumines, or lends sentience, to the mind, and thus allows the mind to know objects.

**Ingrid:** And if so, how to prove it?

**Ted:** We can't prove that awareness knows itself, because, for the reason just explained, it doesn't know itself. Also, because awareness is limitless, and thus without delineating boundary or distinguishing characteristic/quality, we can't prove the existence of awareness in the way that material science proves the existence of objects. Luckily, we don't need to. The existence of the self, the nature of which is conscious existence itself, is self-evident. No one doubts that they exist or that they are conscious. The only issue is that people don't realize that the true nature of the self, or conscious existence, is limitless.

**Ingrid:** I know I exist, but how can I be sure the light knows?

**Ted:** The “light” doesn't know. It simply is. The “light” is conscious in the sense of it being the principle of intelligence, the consciousness that lends sentiency to the mind and allows it to perform the various functions that we call knowing.

**Ingrid:** Probably because I am the light. Knowing it exists.

**Ted:** The mind knows the “light” because the “light” is self-evident.

**Ingrid:** The light is self-illuminated. I know. But how can we know without body-mind-self complex to shine on and prove it that it can know?

**Ted:** The “light” doesn’t know itself as an object. It is the knowing principle that enables the mind to know objects.

**Ingrid:** I hear people say different things.

**Ted:** Yes, people say a lot of things.

**Ingrid:** I think it cannot know it is awareness without objects, since objects are what it is aware of.

**Ted:** The self doesn’t need objects in order to be awareness. It does need the mind in order to fathom that objects are reflected awareness and that the true nature of reflected awareness is limitless conscious existence.

**Ingrid:** At the same time, since awareness is aware, then it must be aware that it is awareness, since that is what it is: aware.

**Ted:** Figuratively speaking, yes.

**Ingrid:** What is the difference between seeing and knowing as terms?

**Ted:** In terms of seeing one’s true nature, the term “seeing” is a figurative means of describing “knowing” or “understanding.” The closest the mind comes to seeing the self is the apprehension that occurs as a result of having mentally negated all objective phenomena. Once all objects have been “removed,” the knowledge that the self is limitless conscious existence dawns in the mind.

**Ingrid:** When knowing and seeing is not the same, why do so many use the term knowing as equal to seeing?!!

**Ted:** In some cases, it’s probably a figurative expression rooted in our propensity to describe everything in terms of experience. In other cases, it might be a misunderstanding rooted in the belief that the self or “enlightenment” is some kind of discrete experience or state.

**Ingrid:** No wonder they do not see knowing as love, because it is just projected awareness, which of course is limited (the manifestation is of course also God, awareness, love). The

“knowing” word is involving intellect, while “witnessing” does not, to know intellectually you are *Brahman*. What is the use of that, if you do not know you are God in truth?

**Ted:** I know you like to use the word God for *Brahman*, or limitless conscious existence, but just to be clear in terms of Vedanta, the *jiva* is not *Isvara*, or God the Creator, because the individual and God are two different *upadhis* in *Brahman*. Both the individual and God, however, are *Brahman* in essence.

**Ingrid:** It is a step on the way to self-knowledge, but how can it be total self-knowledge?

**Ted:** Yes, you first have to gain an intellectual understanding before you can start to fully assimilate the truth of it as a result of self-inquiry, which is based on a thorough analysis of one’s own experience.

**Ingrid:** To be free, you must use intellect to discriminate unmanifest from manifest.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Ingrid:** But you must also identify as the witness, to see you are free of the objects.

**Ted:** This identification is the fruit of *atma-anatma-viveka*, or the discrimination between the self and the “not self,” the real and the apparent, the subject and the object.

**Ingrid:** Why is “knowing” used, when it also is cognitive and discriminative functions?

**Ted:** It is used in a figurative sense. This is why it is difficult to gain understanding without a teacher. The teacher has to point out the implications of the words of scripture.

**Ingrid:** No wonder why many complain that they are confused by that word.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Ingrid:** Seeing, witnessing, is objective, free of the body-mind-sense complex. Totally. No discrimination or anything that judges or negates, just witnessing. The light of awareness. Please tell me if I am wrong.

**Ted:** You are correct.

**Ingrid:** I saw another thing you might help me see. I just asked James this. I copied it. I know I am unborn awareness. I have always been. But how to prove it to scientifically-minded people? Can you help me do that maybe? It would be great to be able to! But is it not just a direct experience?

**Ted:** You cannot prove the existence of unborn awareness in terms of material science, because material science only measures objective phenomena. The fact that awareness is unborn means that it has no beginning. The fact that it has no beginning means that it has no qualities that can be measured or recognized as having come into being. The fact that it has no qualities means that its existence cannot be measured in objective terms. The fact that it cannot be measured in objective terms means that it lies out of the purview of material science.

That said, we don't have to prove the existence of awareness, because awareness is self-evident. The very fact that we exist and know we exist attests to the irrefutable fact that awareness exists. And the very fact that awareness exists attests to the irrefutable fact that it (i.e. conscious existence) must be limitless. It is only the logical conclusion, based on the evidence at hand.

Not only is it obvious that we exist and that we are conscious, but its also obvious that the existence of any object is dependent on its appearance within the "field" of consciousness. In other words, unless an object exists within consciousness, it cannot be said to exist.

Now, this doesn't mean that an object only exists if it exists within the consciousness of a given individual. But any and all objective phenomena must exist within what we might call "the collective consciousness," which includes the consciousness informing all beings.

At any rate, since all objects, including time and space, which are the most basic objects and are the fundamental parameters by which all objects are defined, exist within consciousness, consciousness itself must be beyond all limiting parameters, and thus must be limitless, which means that it unborn, uncreated, beginningless, endless, eternal, immortal and infinite.

The logic of this argument is laid out in more detail in the section of my book entitled *Inquiry into the Nature of Existence* (pp. 34-47), which includes a progression of six *prakriyas*, or methods of analysis, that lead to the conclusion that the nature of reality is non-dual and that non-dual awareness must necessarily be unborn.

**Ingrid:** Someone asking for proof of the Big Bang is right, and that we live on after death, something like that. I know God is creator/creation, not *satya*. I used it for common people, not *advaita* and *Isvara*, etc.

We see reality differently, since some see God as awareness as unborn, meaning prior to the universe, which is eternal existence. It has always been the is-ness, the existence before creation. But how to prove it?

**Ted:** Vedanta's definition of God, or *Isvara*, is *Brahman* conditioned by *Maya*. When *Maya* exerts its influence on *Brahman*, it makes *Brahman* appear to be something other than what it is. In specific terms, pure awareness seems to be objective phenomena. But this appearance is only superimposed on *Brahman*. It is like the appearance of the snake on the rope or the appearance

of mirage water on desert sand. *Brahman* appears to be objects, but the essential nature of pure awareness hasn't changed a bit.

So *Isvara* is an object, a personification of *Maya's* influence on *Brahman*, and thus *Isvara* is not *satya*, but *mithya*. The Big Bang is also a known event within the "field" of conscious existence, and thus awareness, as has been explained, must have existed "prior" to it.

**Ingrid:** Science has not yet proved it. Science cannot know if something was prior to the Big Bang either.

**Ted:** There was no object prior to the Big Bang, but awareness had to have existed.

**Ingrid:** How can you prove consciousness was before creation, empirically?

**Ted:** The existence of consciousness can't be empirically proven, because awareness is not an object. Still, it's obvious that it exists. We couldn't even think of trying to prove its existence unless we were conscious.

**Ingrid:** People will always wonder what created consciousness or God if they do not see it is eternal.

**Ted:** As explained, consciousness and God are not the same. God is a power, so to speak, within conscious existence. It is the primary object that makes consciousness appear to be all the other objects.

**Ingrid:** The argument that something cannot come out of nothing is not bulletproof. Is not God not from anything?

**Ted:** No, God is a figurative entity, perhaps more accurately termed a power, within awareness. So God has a beginning.

**Ingrid:** Since is something cannot come out of nothing, then how did awareness come out of nothing?

**Ted:** Awareness didn't come out of anything. It is eternally (i.e. wholly beyond the concept of time) existent. The mind can't fathom this, but that is the only conclusion that we can ultimately arrive at, and it is upheld by the logical analysis earlier presented and that which is further contained in my book.

**Ingrid:** I do think one must settle with one's own understanding until one might see it differently...

if the Big Bang came first or awareness was first. Those seeing awareness or God as something that is eternal cannot convince those that think creation just happened out of nothing that it was not, or how do you do it? It is like trying to convince you that awareness had a beginning, for you to convince them about that there was something before creation. How can you prove it?

**Ted:** By following the logic that has been laid out earlier.