

Awareness Does Not Shift

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1995>

Helena: Hi, Ted, I think things may be shifting in me some more.

Ted: That's a good way to put it. Things (i.e. the whole gamut of objective phenomena comprising the apparent reality in both its subtle and gross aspects) are constantly shifting, morphing, changing, transforming within the immutable scope, "light," "field," of your being as pure, limitless awareness.

Helena: Having spent most of my spiritual journey waiting for some sort of mystical experience to herald the doorway to my enlightenment, this shifting that Vedanta knowledge seems to bring about is somewhat inconspicuous. But it's definitely nice not to be waiting for that elusive mystical experience anymore!

The only way I can tell if I'm shifting is by comparing how things used to be to what they are like now.

Ted: Notice how your language changed. First you said that things were shifting in you, and now you say that you are shifting. Since language is a direct reflection of your understanding, it is important to pay attention to how you use it. In this case, your language indicates confusion concerning your true identity.

You are not shifting. Awareness doesn't shift. Awareness is. The mind shifts. You only appear to shift because you are identified with the mind-body-sense complex. When you "see" (i.e. understand) that you are the one witnessing the shifting, then you will finally know that you are not the one changing, but rather the one in whom the apparent changes are taking place.

Helena: The most recent example being the last time I was heading towards my two-week Christmas break without my reading as a safety net: my sister had to fly me to where she was living at the time to babysit me for the fear apparent Helena might off herself if left to her own devices during the two weeks. ☺ ...But this time things seem slightly/immensely different maybe, this being the first night of a second two-week Christmas break without reading as a safety net. And I seem to feel okay. Maybe even deeply okay. I can't exactly say I'm looking forward to the next two weeks with the extra downtime sans my reading to escape into. But I'm definitely not dreading it. Hence I think things might be shifting?

Ted: I'm not sure why you have so vilified reading. It is important to neutralize binding *vasanas*, those habitual tendencies that are based on gratuitous preferences that serve only to distract one from one's "inner" focus, and thus prevent one from conducting effective self-inquiry. But if you know that reading Victorian romance novels is not going to complete you and that you are actually the awareness in the scope of whose being both the reader (i.e. the apparent individual person) and the reading are appearing, then the act of reading an enjoyable book doesn't seem

to be that big of a deal. Of course only you know to what degree reading interferes with your understanding and acknowledgement of your true nature.

Helena: I find it somewhat hard to sign the end of these because I'm not always sure who's talking. LOL

Ted: It's the same you, awareness, who has always been talking. I get that you are making a joke, but don't become one of those "spiritual" poseurs who is so unattached to the apparent reality that they speak of themselves from the third-person point of view all the time. Full "enlightenment" encompasses the knowledge of both one's true identity as limitless awareness and the understanding of how awareness functions/expresses through the apparent individual person. For the purposes of analysis, it is useful to distinguish between pure awareness and the functional form appearing within its scope that is referred to as Helena. But you should be well aware of which is which while simultaneously knowing their essential identity.

Helena: Thanks for being there for me, whoever that is. 😊

Ted: It is awareness appearing as Helena due to the conditioning influence of its own inherent power of *maya* (i.e. ignorance). Cute joke, but be sure you are clear about this issue. Self-knowledge is not a dissociative personality disorder, but a matter of subtle discrimination that simultaneously allows one to understand the underlying non-dual nature of existence and yet still function as an apparent individual person within the context of the apparent reality.