

# Awareness Is the Source of Ignorance

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2014-01-04

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1187>

**Question:** If *atman* is perfect, how can it ever be deluded by *maya*?

**Ted:** *Atman* (i.e. pure limitless awareness) is never really deluded by *maya* (i.e. ignorance), but rather only apparently so. Given the non-dual nature of reality, and thus the fact that *brahman-atma* is the only thing, though of course pure awareness cannot be said to be a “thing” at all due to its attributeless and unobjectifiable nature that exists, *maya* is nothing other than *brahman-atma* itself. That is, it is a power inherent in the very nature of *brahman-atma*. Ironically, if *brahman-atma*, whose nature is limitless, were limited by the inability to apparently delude itself, it would not be limitless, and therefore would not be *brahman-atma*. ☺

**Question:** What is the source of *avidya*? If there is only *brahman*, how and why does *avidya* exist?

**Ted:** As mentioned in the previous response, the source of *avidya* (i.e. microcosmic, or personal, ignorance) is *brahman-atma* (i.e. awareness). There is no how or why for this. As a power inherent in pure awareness, ignorance be it macrocosmic *maya* or microcosmic *avidya* is beginningless, and thus has no causal explanation for how it came to be. It simply is. Why it exists is equally enigmatic. Since *brahman-atma* is by nature whole, complete, perfect and full, and therefore inherently desireless, and moreover, given the fact that it is not a person with volitional will or ulterior motive or even some anthropomorphic deity with a cosmic agenda or divine plan, there is no purpose for the manifestation, no end it it designed to accomplish. What could it possibly achieve or attain that limitless awareness needs or does not already have? If there be any reason for ignorance at all, it might only be guessed that it is for the purpose of its own eradication by means of self-knowledge. In other words, the self deludes itself in order to “experience” the ecstasy of remembering itself. Of course, given the fact that pure awareness is not an experiencer, even that doesn’t make much sense.