

Experiencing and Knowing Simultaneously

Ram (James Swartz)

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Seeker: Hi, James. Thank you for the seminar webcast and for making yourself and the knowledge so available. My question is, what is the difference between the self reflecting in the purified mind and the direct knowledge of myself as awareness? Does not the self automatically reflect in the *sattvic* mind? It would then seem there is the direct knowing of me without the mind and the reflection of me in the *sattvic* mind taking place at the same time.

James: Yes.

Seeker: Am I being clear with my question? I don't need to experience me, because I AM me, but if the mind is *sattvic* it will also reflect me accurately, which would turn me into an object of perception and thus an experience. But I'm not seeing any experience I can attribute to the mind beyond the experience of wondering about it.

James: Is there an expectation that there should be some kind of special experience when awareness reflects in a pure mind? The experience can be variously described as peace, contentment, uncaused joy, satisfaction without objects, love, etc. It is subtle.

But if you are awareness it does not really matter how the self is experienced. Once you have identified yourself as awareness and no longer engage *tamasic* and *rajasic vasanas*, the mind becomes increasingly *sattvic* and the experience of the self is more or less constantly pleasant. If there is an expectation that the knowledge, "I am awareness," should produce some kind of experiential bliss will validate the knowledge, there is still work to do. Knowledge stands alone because the self stands alone. Experience does not validate or invalidate it.

~ Love, James