

Speech Discipline

Ram (James Swartz)

2014-11-12

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1868>

When we speak or write, the words have two meanings, one ostensible and one implied. These two meanings happen because the unconscious mind, the causal body, and the conscious mind, the subtle body, affect our experience of ourselves and the world simultaneously.

It is not incorrect to say that experience is a combination of these two factors. Nor is it unreasonable to say that experience takes place on two “levels” at the same time, one level experienced directly and the other indirectly. In reality there are no levels. It is one. Only in *maya*, the apparent reality, do they exist. But since we not only live as non-dual awareness beyond *maya* but as apparent people in an apparent world it is helpful to understand the dual nature of experience.

It will probably come as a surprise to know that direct experience is simply the thought that is playing in the subtle body, the conscious mind, at any moment because we believe that thoughts are incidental to experience. Because the mind is one it cannot experience two thoughts simultaneously. Because we only experience one thought at a time we only have one experience at a time, so two streams of words do not come out simultaneously. Even if they did we could not hear both streams because incoming experience is controlled by the same rule that governs outgoing experience.

That the conscious mind speaks is known to us. We cannot speak unless the mind provides the thoughts that form into the meaning of words. But words not only enjoy an ostensible meaning, they also contain an implied meaning, which is supplied by the unconscious mind, the causal body. So how does the causal body speak? Or to rephrase the question, how does the implied meaning manifest? It is encoded in the spoken or written words.

So when you are speaking without full attention, i.e. when your mind is active (*rajasic*) or dull (*tamasic*), you are not aware that your words have two meanings and that the content of your unconscious is being revealed. And you are not aware that the causal body of the person to whom you are speaking is reading both your conscious and unconscious content and reacting to it. So in every communication there is a four-way, not merely a two-way, dynamic. The good or bad “vibes” you immediately feel when you meet someone are your causal body’s reaction to them.

Most problems between people – and people-problems are most of our problems – is due to the inability of the speaker and the listener, the writer and the reader, to discriminate between the ostensible and the implied meanings of words. If a speaker is unaware of the implied meaning of his statements and the listener is aware of the implied meaning, there is plenty of room for mischief. If the implied meaning of the speaker’s statement conflicts with the listener’s beliefs, opinions, likes and dislikes, conflict is inevitable. Good manners evolved to take care of this problem. If you have good manners and somebody makes a statement the implied meaning of which upsets you, you will not react negatively to it. You will feel it but you will not react, so the *karmic* link between you and the speaker’s unconscious mind will be broken and you will remain clear and open.

Engaging an individual on the basis of their unconscious content rarely yields beneficial results because the content is not available to them so they don't know what you are talking about, even though it is expressing through them all the time. And if it is available to them, usually they are not inclined to communicate about it, often because it does not cast them in the best light. Those aspects of our selves that contradict our own good opinion of ourselves are usually locked away in the basement of our minds and we prefer to leave them there.

One of the most important spiritual disciplines required to prepare the mind for enlightenment is speech discipline (*vak tapas*). What you think stays with you but what you say enters your environment and has the potential to agitate others which will somehow rebound back to you. The law of *karma* says "what goes around comes around." Knowing that your words have an implied meaning can give you considerable control of your *karma* because you can edit unacceptable implied meanings before they have a chance to pass your lips, thus averting agitating conflict.