

The Body and the Self

Ram (James Swartz)

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Catherine: Dearest James, I'm loving the Telluride webinar and I love you so much! I hope you will make the DVDs available. Sadly, I have to work next week, so I can't tune in to all of your talks. I have a couple of questions.

I asked this via chat, but I don't think my question was clear. If the body is a meat tube, insentient and only appears to be sentient because awareness shines on it, and if I know that I am awareness, then why does the body need nutrition, sex, air, etc?

James: The body is not in the self. It is in the apparent reality. The rules in the apparent reality are such that everything depends on everything else. The body is an aggregate. So what applies to the self only applies to the self, and what applies to the body only applies to it. They are in different orders of reality. The self affects the body insofar as it gives it permission to be, but from that point on it does not interfere. It lets the laws operating in the *dharma* field take care of the body.

Catherine: Is that because awareness' light is being filtered through the *vasanas*? I have the same question about illness, let's say, cancer. You said the body has no intelligence. If so, how do cells become mutant and become cancer? Conversely, how do cells fight infection? *Vasanas* again?

James: Yes. Awareness operating the macrocosmic *vasanas*.

Catherine: Why would this happen even if I know that I'm awareness?

James: Because knowledge is in a different order of reality from the body. In that order things grow and die. Knowledge is eternal.

Catherine: The same question applies to certain life stages, such as menopause. Is menopause a result of the macrocosmic causal body?

James: Yes. It is something that affects all women. That it affects them differently is due to the makeup of their *gunas*.

Catherine: It appears that the body does things on its own.

James: The operative word is “appears.” It does seem that way. But when you investigate it, it is clear that it doesn’t. It is dependent on all the forces in the field of life. If you are looking at it from the self then it does exist on its own. The self is always free of the body.

Catherine: Clearly, I’m confused. Thanks so much.

James: You are welcome.