

# Two Appropriate Pointers

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2015-02-27

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2049>

**Ellen:** Hi, Ted. I woke up this morning with another question. One of the ways you've explained awareness is as that which is illuminating objects (experience).

When I visualize this, I imagine something like light shining on a dark room in which objects are already there, but are invisible until the light shines on them.

From what I'm understanding, I know my image is not accurate (of course no image could be accurate to express awareness), because the objects are made of awareness. So of course there are not objects separate from awareness that are revealed by the light.

I understand that this is one of many metaphors used to explain what is from different angles, and that the emphasis is on that which is being pointed to rather than the pointer itself.

The metaphor about this you've used that feels clearest for me at the moment is that awareness/objects are like a hologram. Even though awareness is a "substanceless substance," it is like light projecting itself or forming itself into apparent objects that are made of the light of its own being.

Is there a difference between the "light illuminating objects" metaphor and the hologram metaphor? What I mean is that, is there something different to understand in each of these metaphors?

~ With much gratitude, Ellen

**Ted:** Dear Ellen, there is no difference between the intended implications of the analogies.

It should be noted, however, that limitless awareness is both attribute-less and action-less. It is attribute-less due to the fact that it has no limitations that could serve as boundaries that set it apart from anything else, for there is nothing other than itself, nor has it any characteristics or qualities by which it could be described or defined as a particular objective phenomenon. It is action-less due to the facts that (a) it has no field in which to move nor any background against which any movement could be discerned; (b) it is immutable, for there is nothing other than itself that it could change into; and (c) it is perfectly full, and thus even were it possessed of personal will, would have no desire to obtain anything other than what it already has and hence no motivation to act.

Therefore awareness is not projecting itself or forming itself into apparent objects; that awareness is not a volitional entity; awareness has no personal will. In this regard, the "light" metaphor is most appropriate.

Nevertheless, given the non-dual nature of reality, the fact remains that awareness is the "substanceless substance" of which all objects are made and the "field" in which they appear. Objects only appear, however, due to the apparent conditioning awareness undergoes at the

hands, so to speak, of the deluding power of *maya*, ignorance, which by means of *avaruna shakti* veils the true limitless, non-objectifiable nature of awareness and by means of *vikshepa shakti* projects upon (or “within” in the case of a hologram) the screen of awareness the vast array of objects, both gross and subtle, that constitute the apparent reality referred to as the manifest universe. In this regard, the hologram metaphor serves as an appropriate pointer.

I hope that clarifies the matter.

~ All the best, Ted