

Knowledge Works

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Peter: Dear James, I see that you summed up what I expressed earlier, although you did it much nicer. ☺ But I probably would have missed the import of your words if I had not had the “aha” and seen it for myself. I can’t describe what I feel right now, because your email opened something up and waves of understanding are randomly appearing... just bits of things I read or heard along the way, and now I really understand what they were pointing to! For that, I express my deepest gratitude! What a wonderful day! And I can “arrest the mind” at will now and see the self, now that I know what I’m looking for, thanks to you, which brings me to this quote from your book: “Experience of the self in the form of its reflection in an arrested mind will result in enlightenment, assuming the knowledge ‘I am whole and complete, actionless awareness’ arises and is completely assimilated.”

Your email helped me to realize the first condition and now the second because (continuing from your book): “Unless you understand that enlightenment is self-knowledge, you will probably not take the self as your primary identity.” This is what’s missing and the cause of my “problem” with sleep: I haven’t taken the self as my primary identity. I still believe I’m the mind that comes and goes in sleep and waking states. I see! But I still have to SEE! ☺ And for that I “require constant practice, until the last vestiges of duality are removed,” as you say. But now it’s so different! I can’t put it in words right now, but I had it all backwards the whole time! I was doing it from the standpoint of “me.” Aha!

Alright, I’m going to spend some time with this chapter, pondering it and looking deeply. Thanks SO MUCH for your help, and I’ll be back after I’ve had some time to digest this. Jeez, I had everything so backwards! I was trying to stop thought from the standpoint of a “me” being the thinker. What frustration! Thanks!

~ Peter

James: Dear Peter, I can only say that I am happy that the Vedanta teachings have made things clear. Your understanding is perfect. As you say, “I haven’t taken the self as my primary identity and still believe I’m the mind that comes and goes in the sleep and waking states. I see! But I still have to SEE! ☺”

We call this “the practice of self-knowledge.” There is a section in the same chapter entitled “Taking a Stand in Awareness as Awareness” – or something like that. It should be helpful. When you find that you are identified with the experiencing subject – the “me” – apply the knowledge “I am awareness” and you will shift back to the self’s point of view. Stick with it. It will finish your seeking. Feel free to write if you have any questions.

~ James