

What Causes Awareness to Localize as an Individual

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Michael: Hi, James. The one awareness and its infinite range of expressions, including all and each, is something which I feel and realize as the truth. I am still left with an urge for some clarification and would like to ask for your response to the following: Is it the mind, and its role in reflecting (via the *vasanas* of the subtle body) the light of awareness, into creation that is the leading cause of the confusion, personalization and individual objectification of experience and the awareness of it? The flawed existing assumption being the mind is mine, a reflection (and an object to be removed), an object existing in me, to me.

James: It depends on what you mean by “mind.” The mind is just an instrument, like a hand or a foot or a wrench. It simply works out the *vasanas*. It does objectify, but objectification is the nature of *maya*. What causes the personalization of experience is self-ignorance. It causes the self to apparently identify with the mind. Note the word “apparently.” The self does not actually get identified with the body-mind – and therefore think it is a person. It is apparently deluded. The problem with Neo-Advaita teachings is that they identify the mind as the problem and ask you to stop it or drop it or transcend it. There is no need to do this, because the mind is just a useful function and you – awareness – always exist prior to it, meaning you know it, you see it and are therefore free of it – unless you suffer self-ignorance (*avidya*). So enlightenment is the removal of self-ignorance.

Michael: Is it that the mind is simply operating, carrying out that which is required? That this operation is a product of awareness shining through the subtle, the *vasanas* and the “personality”?

James: Yes. Definitely.

Michael: Where is mind located, physically or otherwise? A stupid question, unless the answer is unexpected.

James: It is located in awareness, in you. It has no physical location. The body is known in the light of awareness as it reflects off the mind. The body is in the mind and the mind in awareness. So physical locations are revealed by the mind – objectified – and known by awareness.

Michael: Thanks again! All the best!

James: You’re welcome, Michael.

Michael: Hi, James. I agree, understand, feel and sense that I am awareness and that the subtle body, mind, are temporary forms. There remains a question.

I am awareness. All occurs in me, without action. Why is there a sense of localization? Even while observing a “speck” of awareness, which I am, moving through the world, which is (appearing) in me, this apparent origin point for the field of current illumination, moves from place to place “on these legs” (for example).

James. Self-ignorance (*avidya*) causes the self to apparently identify with the (apparent) body. It apparently moves in the field with other bodies. When awareness looks at the field, the body that is called Michael appears as one of billions of other tiny specks apparently moving in it. It is not localized. Or if it is, its “locus” is awareness because all bodies are just awareness shaped by ignorance into material forms. These bodies seem to move because awareness is looking out through their eyes. If you look at the moon on a windy night with intermittent clouds it seems to be racing across the sky in the opposite direction from movement of the clouds. In fact it is stationary with reference to the observer. If you do inquiry into the body it resolves into the five elements and if you do inquiry on the elements each element, starting from the earth element, which is the grossest and a combination of the preceding four (water, air, fire and space), it resolves into water, which resolves into air, which resolves into fire, which resolves into space, which resolves into awareness. “Resolves” means that it is sourced in something else. It evolves out of something else and is a transformation of what it evolves from. In fact the elements – the source of the body – are inert. They cannot move on their own. And awareness can’t move either, because it is the eternal field in which all movement takes place. Movement seems to happen when awareness shines on the field.

Michael: As awareness, am I operating the subtle mind-body by shining upon it, and its form is a reflection point? The reflection point incorrectly taken to be the self?

James: Yes. Absolutely. I think you got it.

Michael: As limitless awareness, why am I apparently bound to experience through that body-mind, even though I know and feel I am outside of it? If you expose the mind to the teachings of Vedanta... as you are doing now...

James: Only for lack of understanding how *maya* works. When you understand the whole existential set-up, this sense of identification with the body dissolves and you are content with your limitless identity.

Michael: Thanks so much for your time.