

# The Great Revealer

Ram (James Swartz)

2014-12-10

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1945>

**James:** This excellent *satsang* following was written by one of my friends.

**Tom:** I think we're on the same page, that consciousness precedes the material world. I like your description. But can consciousness be truly independent of the realm of matter energy and the other assorted qualities of mind, such as emotion? Can we really say, "Time and space do not exist for it"? Again, perhaps just to be the Devil's advocate, but one can ask, how might consciousness ever be fully separate from the rest of the package? If we take away memory, perception, matter/energy and emotion, we're left with an empty box. The emptiness in the box might be conscious, but of what? How can it even be conscious of its own existence if it does not remember that it exists?

**Jeff:** Yes. Consciousness precedes the material world. Another way to say this is that the world depends on consciousness but that consciousness doesn't depend on the world. Consciousness doesn't need anything to validate its existence. Think of a powerful searchlight sending its beam into the clear night sky. If there are no objects in the beam, then nothing is illuminated. If an object comes into the beam, then it will be illuminated. Consciousness is similar to a beam of light that is always present everywhere. When a material object or thought or emotion is present, we know about it because it is illuminated by consciousness. Consciousness is always here. Memory appears in consciousness. Thoughts appear in consciousness. Feelings appear in consciousness. Consciousness is awareness. Consciousness can turn its attention inward towards itself and be aware of its own existence. Even in an empty box there can be awareness of what is aware. An object is not required to verify consciousness. Consciousness is self-revealing and can directly know itself.

**Tom:** I'm with you until we get near the end: "Consciousness is self-revealing and can directly know itself." I'd contend that any sense of knowing requires memory, a point of reference from which we "know" something. Without memory, what might consciousness know about itself? Without memory, how does it know whether it is aware or not? Without memory, how might something know if it exists? And without perception, what exactly is "knowing"? Without memory, things become timeless. They are unaware if they are changing or not. They become infinite. Or perhaps, dead.

**Jeff:** The memory you are referring to seems to be personal memory, the one that each of us has. Our personal memory is what gives us the continuity of our daily life. Pure consciousness is without memory and is timeless as well as spaceless and limitless. It doesn't simply recognize objects. It is all objects. It is this pure consciousness, *sat chit ananda*, that reflects in our subtle body and gives us sentience. We can meditate on this consciousness and allow it to recognize itself. Consciousness itself has no need to do this. It already is the non-dual totality and as such there is nothing for it to do, nowhere for it to go, no "thing" for it to know. When we deconstruct any object in the world, it decomposes into smaller and

smaller pieces which on further examination disappear altogether. What we thought was a cotton shirt turns out to be just a name and a form with no real substance. Objects in *maya* do have a strange existence. You cannot say they are real nor can you say they are unreal.