

# Knowledge versus Being

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**James:** Terms like “self-knowledge,” “*Brahma vidya*” and “*atma vidya*” can give the impression that knowledge of awareness as the self is Vedanta’s ultimate goal because they give the impression that knowledge causes freedom. But knowledge of one’s self is not equivalent to being oneself. It only removes the self-ignorance that causes suffering. It is a vehicle that should be parked when one gets to the destination. I “become” free when I realize I have always been free of both knowledge and ignorance!

I will always appreciate self-knowledge and feel a deep gratitude to the tradition and teachers that keep the knowledge flowing millennia after millennia. Overcoming self-ignorance is not easy. By grace we become exposed to Vedanta. Because knowledge is the only “vehicle” that can bring me “home” to myself I pursue it until the last vestige of ignorance is gone. Then I no longer say, “I am consciousness,” I say, “I am.”