

# What You Know but Don't Know

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1. When you experience an object you experience light and the illumined object. But when you are asked what you are experiencing, you will say you are experiencing the object because the light seems to be part of the object. But you actually know that the object has no association with the light. If the light belonged to the object we would have limitless kinds of lights in the universe. Similarly, there is only one "light of consciousness" but it seems as if there are many because it is associated with many bodies.

2. In everyday speech we say "one" does this and one does that. We say someone and no one, not "sometwo" and "no two," because there is only one of us. If there are two freedoms neither will be free, because one will define and limit the other.

3. Everyday speech shows that we have conflicting ideas of who we are. Sometimes we speak as if we are the body ("I am fat") and sometimes as if we are separate from the body ("my body feels heavy today"). The second statement can only mean that I am consciousness because the body is matter and matter is the only other category in existence.

4. If you want to identify only a part of an object you need a discriminating thought. It is called *bhaga tyaga vritti*. When I say, "I see you," the normal primary meaning is "I see your whole body." But when I say, "I see you," I actually only see the front part of you. I don't see your back. In this case "I see you" means "I see the part of you that is facing me." If you say, "I see an apple," you see the whole apple. But when you say, "I ate an apple," you understand that only the edible part was eaten, not the seeds, for example. In this case the intellect automatically filters the words to get the actual meaning. This discrimination between the primary and the secondary meaning is unconscious. You do not think about it when you do it, because *Isvara* does it

5. Vedanta is learning to appreciate the is-ness, the "me"-ness, of things by separating the object from the existence that supports it. For example, sunlight falls on a tree. I see both the tree and the sunlight, but when asked what I see, I say I see a tree. It is true that I see a tree, but it is only partially true because I am omitting the most essential part of my experience from my understanding - the sunlight.

5. For example, without any thought we say a tree exists. In this case the word "exists" is a verb describing something that the tree does. It exists. But this is not true. The sentence should read "existence trees" because existence is the subject for every object, not the object of multiple subjects. Every object comes from existence, the substance of all objects.

6. This unconscious mixture of existence and objects is called superimposition (*adyasa*). We don't realize that the existence of the tree is completely independent of the tree.

7. When you use the words "green glass" you are actually separating the property from the substance even though you physically see only one object. Since you unconsciously do it on a daily basis, it can be consciously done with every object. Or

when you say that the computer made a mistake, you unconsciously know that you made a mistake because you know that computers are not sentient. Computers are a fine example of *mithya*: they seem to be conscious, but they are just inert matter.

8. Whenever you see a single object you also appreciate the class to which it belongs. We teach individuals, not as individuals, but as awareness. When you see a trout you know it is a fish. Existence and space are known to be different even though they cannot be physically separated.

9. To physically separate the *jivatman* and the body is murder, but we unconsciously understand that they are separate. A person who says, "I am doing good *karma* to get to heaven," knows that the body is not going to heaven. In the same way, understand the difference between existence and space. They appear to be one, but we know they are two. If you make this distinction in every experience, you are free. Freedom is just discrimination.

8. When you drink sweet tea, the tongue does not distinguish the sweetness from the tea, but you know that the tea is not sweet and the sugar is not tea. The intellect discriminates automatically. When you know who you are, experience remains the same.