

# Direct and Indirect Self-Knowledge

Ram (James Swartz)

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**Seeker:** Dear Ram, can you read this and let me know if I am on-track?

Indirect knowledge is hearing about the self and recalling the idea of the self in the mind. Direct knowledge could be said to be the gaining of the knowledge "I am the self." However, you already have the knowledge "I am the self," albeit indirectly. So what is the difference here? Is any new knowledge gained? I would say no, because direct knowledge is not gaining new knowledge but the "point" when you lose ignorance, allowing the knowledge "I am the self" to truly be assimilated. When the *avidya* is gone from the intellect and the knowledge takes root it negates your identity as being the one who "got it." You are not the body-mind-intellect that knows it is awareness, you are awareness, being, self aware of itself. The direct knowledge will continue to appear in the mind at appropriate times but it is no longer for you since "you" now means awareness. The important thing is that *avidya* is gone so direct knowledge can be present or absent in the mind. It then merely serves a purpose for the apparent person functioning in *mithya*. Awareness is there knowing itself without any media.

**Ramji:** This is a very good explanation. You elucidate an important point: that once the knowledge is assimilated it does not need to be consciously called to mind but arises automatically when the *jiva* needs it to neutralize a tendency to identify with an object.