

# Limitation versus Limitlessness

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2016-10-24

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2962>

**Umala:** Thank you again, Arlindo. Could you perhaps explain a little more about the sense of limitation versus limitlessness? I'm not clear on how that comes into suffering, nor how essential it is to be free of limitation as the cause of psychological suffering. I no longer seem to suffer internally, but I do know my knowledge is not complete. I feel I'm missing this key aspect around limitation versus limitlessness, but I don't know where to start in grasping what it refers to. Thank you.

**Arlindo:** Yes, Umala. A gold ring is limited by its form as a ring – its existence is not only dependent on the gold and limited by name and form, but also limited by time because one day that ring will be recycled to become a different name and form. The gold in this analogy is free of all attributes of forms – its independent nature does not modify with time. Likewise, our essential nature as pure awareness is not limited by time, space and the attributes of *mithya* which affect, modify and decay all of its apparent objects.

On the other hand, *jiva*, the experiencing entity, is an animate “self-conscious” object, and therefore it modifies with the contact with other objects. It is limited by time, space, what it knows, etc. *Jiva* lives and experiences life according to its *karma* – cause and effect is the name of the game for the *jiva*, but regardless of how much *punya karma* *jiva* may have stocked in its account to produce favorable experiences, a day will come when the same *jiva* will be faced with unfavorable experiences such as old age, disease, pain, suffering and death.

Among all limitations experienced by *jivas*, the one of “time” is the most afflicting because, due to its identification with the body, it appears to the *jiva* as the end of its existence. But the intriguing thing is that this most limiting attribute of *mithya* called “time” is *jiva's* own subjective creation/projection, brought about by *jiva's* ignorance of the non-dual nature of reality, as well of his own identity/nature as pure impersonal consciousness. *Jiva* is always going to experience the sense of limitation because self-ignorance (which is designed by *maya*) is built in to *jiva-hood*. Do you see the logic? *Maya* – apparent duality – *jiva-hood* – self-ignorance – identification with the body-mind – sense of limitation – suffering.

On the other hand, the *jivamukta* is the *jiva* that has firmly realized his primary identity as the limitless consciousness, the essential nature of all manifest and unmanifest universes. This realization is only possible by a clear and doubt-free self-knowledge – and although *jiva's* firm knowledge of his/her essential identity as awareness does not cancel his/her secondary identity as the limited *jiva*, self-knowledge will greatly affect *jiva's* experience of life. And how so? Limitation, adversity, old age, disease, pain will all present themselves to the *jivamukta*, but due to his/her hard and fast self-knowledge they will not produce psychological suffering. He/she will know it all to be a trick of *maya: mithya*. *Jivamukta* remains unaffected by limitation.

You, Umala, are the limitless awareness, the causeless cause of all universes, the all-pervasive pure intelligence/knowledge that creates, maintains and recycles everything in *mithya*. But you only “experientially” know that, as your own self, with

the aid of your secondary apparent identity as the *jivamukta*, the *jiva* with a clear intellect and a pure heart with the ability to contemplate and know the truth.