

What Is the *Akandakara Vritti*?

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BG: *Namaste.* *Akhandakara vritti* is continuous I-thought, which is caught by calm and clear mind. From where this originates? Is it the peak experience that Maslow talked about? Can you make it happen? We are blessed to have you and Ram, the authentic teachers of Vedanta. Thanks in advance. Take care.

Sundari: The *akandakara vritti* means “the unbroken or unending knowledge of Self as your true identity,” not a “peak experience.” As such, it does not “originate” from anywhere, because there is nowhere the Self is not. It is the knowledge that appears in the mind when ignorance of your true nature is removed by the scripture, leaving only the Self, which has always been there.

Although the *akandakara vritti* experience comes from Self-knowledge, if the full assimilation of Self-knowledge is not firm, the experience ends and the knowledge is lost. But if it is the result of permanent Self-knowledge, that is *moksa*, which it is not an event or something you can gain. The Self is not an object of perception/experience and does not feel like anything. It is subtler than the experiencer.

The teachings of Vedanta are conceptual because the teachings are *mithya*. But what they reveal, that you are the Self, is not conceptual knowledge, it is the truth about you. Self-knowledge dissolves the power behind the conceptual definition of yourself, the objective knowledge about yourself and sets you free. The freedom Vedanta talks about is the freedom from the prison walls of attachment to the notions of yourself as the limited ego-entity. The walls of the prison are made of nothing more substantial than limited concepts – thoughts – of who you are. If Self-knowledge remains a concept for you, assimilation has not taken place.

While some concepts of who you are as a *jiva* may continue “after” *moksa*, none of them are binding. They are like a non-binding contract that exists only for momentary convenience and ease of living in the world, but does not limit or even define your action in thought, word or deed, because you know the world is not real.

BG: *Namaste* to you as a couple. You have no idea what you and Ram are doing. You are absolutely right, dear, when you say Ram is the best Vedanta teacher on the planet. I am the proof for this. I was stuck with juicy *sattvic guna*. My mind was about to explode, caught between *satya-mithya* concept. Finally, *Isvara* through your teachings cleared all the misconceptions. I have stopped seeking. Pesky *vasanas* do not affect me. I can witness my three bodies! I feel the world is perfect as it is. I am living authentically recognizing my personal vulnerabilities. Tell my *pranamas* to my *dronacharya*. I am his *ekalavya*. You are *gurumaata*. On realization, the belief that self is sentient disappears (**Mandukya karika*). This blew my mind. Ram is right. *Sankalpa samadhi* is the best.

Sundari: Thank you for your acknowledgment; while what you say here is very good, I must ask you, who is it that sees? Taking a stand in awareness as awareness

sometimes turns out to be more than a little tricky because it is so subtle. The split mind watching itself has a slippery tendency to claim to be awareness. But is it “unfiltered” awareness or is it a delusion? How to know, and how to deal with that? Taking a stand is done with the mind and can lead to a kind of self-hypnosis that makes the *jiva* think it is the Self without the full understanding of what it means to be the Self. Of course, based on logic alone (is there an essential difference between one ray of the sun and the sun itself?), the *jiva* can claim its identity as the Self – but only when it’s knowledge of *satya* and *mithya* is firm.

The practice “I am awareness” does not give you the experience of awareness nor make you awareness. It negates the idea “I am the *jiva*.” When the *jiva*-identity is negated, the inquirer should be mindful of the awareness that remains because negating the *jiva* only produces a void. Nature abhors a vacuum. Many inquirers get stuck here, and depression can set in if they cannot take the next step, which is understanding that the emptiness of the void is an object known by the fullness of the Self, the ever-present witness. Or, at that time, many inquirers “start” to experience as awareness and make a big fuss about it even though you have only ever been experiencing as awareness all along! So, the discrimination between *jiva*’s experience of awareness and the Self’s experience of awareness is essential.

The Self’s experience of itself is qualitatively different from the *jiva*’s experience of the Self as an object or as objects. As we have said before, it is one thing to say “I am the Self” as the Self, and another to say it as the *jiva*. This realization may well be a painful moment for inquirers who are very convinced that they are enlightened without knowing that they are only enlightened as a *jiva*, not as the Self.

Sankalpa samadhi or the *akandakara vritti* is seeing all things as Self, as non-dual. As stated above, the *akandakara vritti* experience comes out of Self-knowledge, and if the knowledge is not firm, it will end, as do all experiences. Full assimilation of the *akandakara vritti* – meaning “unbroken or ending,” is *moksa*.

BG: May *Isvara* give you students like me. I am in London visiting my daughter. When I return India, let us see whether we can organise a retreat in Bangalore.

Sundari: Thank you, but it is highly unlikely that we will return to teach in India. We have just bought a base in Spain and will be teaching primarily from there.

~ *Om*, Sundari