

It's About the "Why"

Ram (James Swartz)

2011-08-30

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/491>

Carol: Dear James, it's funny how just yesterday I said I had no questions. But I also said that could turn on a dime. Maybe it was not that I had no questions, but I wasn't at all sure how to ask and figured, "Let me just continue with the ongoing discrimination process, and the bigger picture might get more clear." I've been reading a lot of the *satsangs* at the website, but the question persists, but at least I have a better idea how to ask.

I am confused.

James: If you know you are confused, are you confused?

Carol: On the one hand, I am sure of direct inner knowing of the self, that it is whole and complete, a partless whole, is untouchable by anything, and have reconciled it with the phenomenal world – and I know that everything that makes up "me" except for awareness is an object, is only reflected awareness, and the objects, including the subtle body, cannot see "themselves." I get it, so freedom rings.

There is something that I feel I can't make a logical sense of that is kind of scratching at my mind.

Is this a misguided desire of the intellect wanting something more to chew on or is it something legitimate that you would suggest I meditate on some more? It's like there is this gnawing thing in me that wants to get all the pieces of the puzzle in place because I want firm self-knowledge. When I ponder, I sometimes think I almost have it, but then...

James: Yes, it is based on a belief that if you just understand the whole you can stop seeking. But you are not considering the one thing that you already have that ties all the pieces together – you! You are the missing piece of the puzzle. The person who is trying to get all the pieces together is only one piece in the puzzle, so this piece, Carol, cannot get all the pieces together. You, awareness, have to see that Carol is in the puzzle. That is why I said above, "If you know you are confused, are you confused." The knower of the confusion is you, awareness. The confusion is fine. It belongs to Carol, the subtle body.

Carol: Why do some of the teachings about the self seem contradictory?

James: Some of them look at reality from the point of view of the individual who is in the puzzle and some look at reality from beyond the individual. They are different standpoints, so they seem to contradict each other.

Carol: Specifically the one that says the self as consciousness created everything in

order to know itself, but the self/consciousness does not experience anything.

James: The idea that consciousness created everything to know itself is just a cooked-up explanation for individuals caught up in *maya* who want a reason for their existence.

The self does not need anything to know itself, because it is self-knowing. If you look at the creation from consciousness's point of view there is no reason. The creation just is. It has no independent existence, however. It is an apparent reality, one that depends on consciousness.

Carol: The self is watching everything apparently being experienced, which the teachings say is not reality, it is apparent reality, and that the self is quality-free and it does not experience anything itself. So there is no real experiencing going on, actually?

James: Good thinking, Carol. That's right. The experiencer, which is the self under the spell of ignorance, is not actually experiencing anything except itself apparently changing. Experience is consciousness coming into form and dissolving into itself every microsecond. What you experience now is gone in a nanosecond and what you experience in the next nanosecond is gone in a nanosecond. It only seems to be solid and "real." It is like a moving picture. A whole lot of action seems to be occurring on a movie screen, but actually light is just flickering on and off at such a rapid rate that it looks like there is continuity and therefore "real" or solid objects.

Carol: What are the senses for then?

James: So awareness can apparently experience itself in the form of sense objects. Now we are in the dream trying to understand. From out of the dream - the self - the senses just are. They are not "for" anything.

Carol: And aren't sensing and experiencing the same thing?

James: Yes.

Carol: How does this square with the non-dual nature of the self?

James: It doesn't. It is only a projection, like a dream appearing in the self. When you wake up from a dream, what happens to it? It disappears because it does not belong to the waking state. The senses, the mind, the experience, do not belong to the self. They only exist in the *maya* world.

Carol: The self is everything, but everything is not the self.

James: Wrong. You have it backwards. Everything is the self, but the self is not everything. Everything depends on the self, but it depends on nothing.

Carol: The self is everything, all impermanent objects, including all subtle objects, like the mind, feelings, knowledge, ideas, opinions, memories, associations. But those things are not the self, they are only made possible by the light of the self, awareness shining through them. Okay. If I reflect on the analogies like how the clay becomes objects but it doesn't change the nature of the clay, it helps somewhat.

But objects made of clay are inanimate, so it goes only so far. Furthermore... on the one hand, the mind is insentient and only capable of perceiving when awareness is shining through it. The moon reflects the light of the sun, but the moon is not aware of its reflection. Self as awareness is aware of its reflection, but doesn't identify as anything that is reflected back to it.

The objects, including the subtle and causal bodies, can't "perceive" the self as such, because the self is beyond perception.

Thinking out loud here now... the knower, the experience, the creator of the experience is all one and the same, so nothing is really going on, nothing to experience or identify with. It just seems that way, like a movie being projected on a screen: characters, events and objects that vaporize into nothing at the end.

I think I'm beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel...

James, if you are so moved, can you straighten me out with this? I hope it is not too disjointed.

James: You are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The only problem was the first statement: "The self is everything, but everything is not the self." You had it backwards, but when you "thought out loud," meaning you reasoned it out, you came to the right conclusion. Nothing is happening in the dream. Now you know why. The "why" is very important. If you don't know why it is just a belief, empty words, to say "nothing ever happened." Good for you, sweetheart. You are right on track. Keep it up!

~ Much love, James