

Experiencing the Benefits of Self-Knowledge

We can sum up this teaching and talk about it in terms of Self-Knowledge.

We can talk about ourselves, what we are, in terms of two of qualities. One is our *absolute nature*—which is timeless, changeless, and formless. And the other is our *relative nature*—which is in time, always changing, and in form. Our *absolute nature* and our *relative nature* are not separate—they are one.



We will talk about self-knowledge, and we will do so in a way that evokes a direct realization—a direct experience. By the end of this talk you will have more than a conceptual, intellectual, and philosophical understanding of yourself—you will know yourself directly, and experience the benefits of self-knowledge. We will clear up all doubts in your mind as to who and what you are. You will know and understand yourself intellectually, philosophically and conceptually—and you will realize and know yourself experientially.

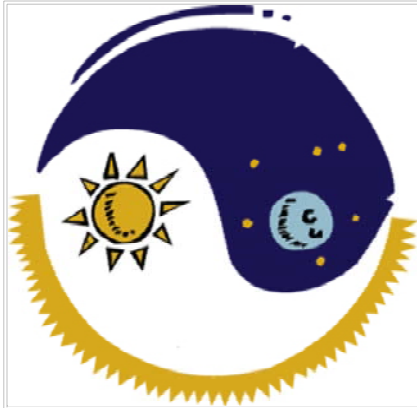
Now, we can begin to notice what we mean by our *absolute nature*—our timeless, changeless and formless nature. Our absolute nature can be referred to as *awareness*. What does this mean in our own direct experience? Right now you can begin to let everything slow down—and notice that you are aware. And you can notice that you are aware of the sounds you are hearing in the background—you are hearing the sounds in the background.

As you hear the sounds in the background, you can notice that you are also aware of the sensations of your body—you can feel the energy of your body, and the sensations of your body now. And it may feel as if everything is slowing down—your mind can slow down now. As you are sitting here, you are aware of the sensations of your body, and you are aware of the sounds in the background. You are aware now. We are all aware—right now.

As you feel the energy of your body, and hear the sounds in the background, you can also notice these words as you are reading—you can see the words, as you sense your body sitting here—with the sounds in the background. You are aware of these words as you are reading them—and your mind can continue to relax and slow down.

Also, you are aware of everything you are seeing—as you hear sounds in the background, you can sense the energy of your body as you notice these words. You can also notice, at the same time, you are aware of everything that is happening in the room. You have a full field of vision, a panoramic view that you are aware of now, as you are reading these words, hearing the sounds, feeling the energy and sensations of your body. You are aware of all your senses now. You are aware of these words—and as you are aware of these words, you are also aware of any thoughts that may be arising in you—floating through you. You are aware of those thoughts flowing through you, as you are aware of the sensations of the body.

And maybe you notice your stomach moving up and down as you are breathing. You may notice the movement of your stomach as you inhale and exhale.



You may notice a sense of spaciousness—as you hear the sounds in this space and see these words. And you may notice thoughts floating through you, as you feel the movement of your stomach—breathing in air and breathing out.

It is obvious to you now that you are aware. In a very simple way, in your own direct experience, you can notice there is awareness here now. You are fully aware of all the senses. You are aware of seeing and hearing. You are aware of the tactile sensations of the body as you are sitting here—breathing in and out. This

simple presence of awareness, relaxed and at ease, may be more obvious to you now. You are aware.

The experience of being present and aware may be more obvious to you than it was five or ten minutes ago. This is the direct realization, and direct experience of the Self—yourself. This is awareness—our absolute nature—timeless, changeless and formless.

As you look back over your experiences today, you may recall that you have always been aware. And as you go back farther in time—go back to last week, last month, last year—you may even go back and recall as a child, feeling this same sense of presence—simply being aware.

And as you consider your experience you may realize that you have always been aware. It may become more and more obvious to you that this presence of awareness—being aware of seeing these words, hearing sounds in the background, feeling the sensations of the body—as you consider your experience, you may realize that you have always been aware. And you may notice that this awareness—being present and aware right now—is the same as it has always been.

Being present and aware right now, these words are flowing through you—you are aware of these words. Thoughts flowing through you—you are aware of those thoughts. Sounds flowing through you—you are aware of those sounds. Sensations of the body flowing through you—you are aware of those sensations. You are aware of everything you are seeing, thinking, hearing, and feeling—you are aware now.

This awareness that you are, is timeless, changeless and formless. Now you know your absolute nature in your own direct experience. Now you have realized your Self.

And you may notice that the contents of awareness, the objects of awareness, are always changing. Notice that the sights and sounds are changing, these words are changing, the sensations are changing, the thoughts are changing—but you are still aware now. It may be more obvious to you that this awareness that you are right now is the same as it was five seconds ago, five minutes ago, or five years ago. This presence of awareness here now is timeless, changeless and formless.

When we consider our own experience it becomes more and more obvious that this

aware presence—wide open and spacious—has always been with us. Right now and throughout our lives, it has never changed. It is present and aware. Present and aware—even now.



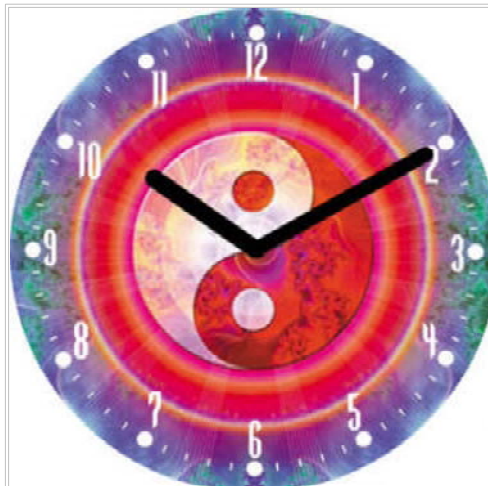
As this becomes more and more obvious to you, you may realize that this is a quality of yourself that is timeless, changeless and formless. You may recall looking out through those eyes as a child, walking to school, riding on the bus, or riding your bicycle—as a child. You may recall this sense of being, this sense of being present and aware. You may realize this is the same sense of being, the same sense of being present and aware—right now. This is our timeless nature, our unchanging nature, our absolute nature. And you notice this in your own direct experience. You realize this conceptually, intellectually, philosophically and experientially. Now you know: I am present and aware. I am this presence of awareness—here and now. This is my Self.

And you may notice that being present and aware, being aware of the sensations and energy of your body now, being present and aware, seeing these words, hearing sounds, simply being aware—relaxed and at ease—you may notice a natural relaxation response of your mind and body, being present and aware. Being aware of being aware. Being aware of being present. This is our absolute nature.

As we are exploring our own direct experience to know who and what we are, we can talk about this in terms of self-knowledge. And we realize that this presence of awareness is our absolute nature—timeless, changeless and formless. You know this now in your own direct experience. So this realization is more than a philosophy—it is your own direct experience. Now you know your Self.

As you continue observing your experience, you begin to notice a quality of yourself that is always changing. This is our relative nature. And you notice that these words are changing, the sensations in your body are changing now. The sounds are changing now. Sights are changing. Thoughts, emotions, sensations—all changing.

And you may recall, as you consider your day today, how your experience is in a constant state of change: thoughts flow through you; emotions flow through you; sensations flow through you; sights and sounds all flowing through you—always changing, changing. And as you consider your experience last week, last month, last year, and as you go back five, ten or twenty years, you can recall how your experience was always changing. Your beliefs are changing. Your body is changing. Your relationships are changing. Thoughts, emotions, sensations and experiences—all changing. You begin to notice this quality of yourself that is always changing. It is our relative nature.



You begin to notice this quality of yourself that is always changing. It is our relative nature. Our relative nature can be referred to as *mind* or *consciousness*.

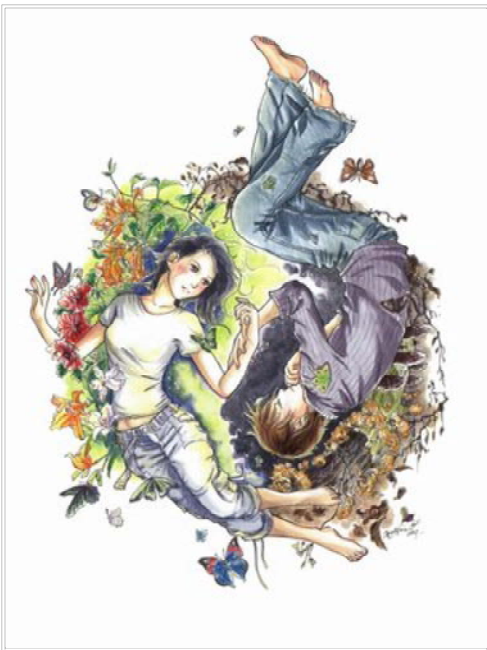
As we complete our exploration into who or what we are, we have realized there are two qualities of ourselves that have become obvious—one is our absolute nature—timeless, changeless and formless—we can call this *awareness*. And the

other quality is our relative nature—which is in time, always changing, and in form—our thoughts, emotions, sensations, and experiences—we can call this *mind* or *consciousness*.

In your own direct experience and in a very practical way, you may begin to notice the benefits of having self-knowledge—knowing yourself. You may notice the benefits in your own direct experience. When we let the mind slow down, the world slows down. When we let thoughts and emotions slow down, the energy of the body slows down. When we let the mind, our relative nature, slow down, our absolute nature becomes more obvious—this present moment of aware presence, relaxed and at ease.

And we begin to notice that simply being present and aware, there is a natural relaxation response of the mind and body. Being aware of awareness and letting the mind be as it is, you begin to notice this open spaciousness—relaxed and at ease. Being aware of being aware, being aware of sounds in the background, being aware of the sensations of the body now, being aware of the thoughts flowing through you, being aware of everything flowing through—you may notice a natural relaxation response of the mind and body.

Now you may begin to notice that our absolute nature—timeless, changeless and formless—is experienced as a sense of peace, a sense of love, a sense of contentment. And as this is becoming more obvious in your own direct experience, you deeply realize that your own presence of awareness *is* peace, love and contentment. And you begin to notice a change in the way you experience the world.



In the past we were trying to manipulate and control our thoughts, emotions, sensations, and relationships—our relative nature—hoping to attain a sense of peace, love and contentment—someday. And now we realize that peace, love and contentment are not to be found in the world of experience—not to be found in our relative nature.

We realize that peace, love and contentment are attributes of our natural state of awareness—our absolute nature. And now we experience the world in a new light. Now I realize that I am the peace, love and contentment I was seeking. Now there is a natural relaxation response of my mind and body because I have found what I was seeking.

And I know the peace, love and contentment as myself—my own natural state of being—right here and right now.

And as this becomes more and more obvious, it becomes easier and easier to let the mind relax, and let everything be as it is. Let the thoughts be as they are. Let the emotions be as they are. The relationships, the career and the finances—let them all be as they are.

Letting everything be as it is, simply being present and aware, there is a natural relaxation response of the mind and body. And it becomes more and more obvious that the peace, love and contentment I was seeking in my relationships, career, finances and other experiences, *is* my natural state of being. It is my absolute nature.

And you can notice this in your own direct experience so it becomes more and more obvious to you and is experienced more and more.

The understanding that was in the past conceptual, intellectual and philosophical is now your own direct experience—as your mind and body naturally relax. Now you let everything be as it is. You let the thoughts, emotions and sensations flow. You let everything be as it is—and you notice a natural relaxation response of your mind and body. This is the benefit of self-knowledge and now you experience it directly.