

# Rupert Spira

## Three Possibilities of My Self

### *The Known, the Knower and Knowing*

#### **From the Known to the Knower**

Thought considers Me to be a separate self, born into a world, moving around in space and time and destined one day to disappear. As such thought considers Me an object, a mixture of thoughts, feelings, sensations and perceptions, sharing their limits and destiny.

In this way thought overlooks My essential nature and considers Me a body/mind - a man or woman, tall, short, hungry, sad, happy, intelligent, twenty five years old, etc. - that *knows* or experiences objects, others and the world. However, one simple look at experience shows that I know the body/mind just as I *know* the world. I am the *Knower* of experience; the body/mind is *known*.

#### **Qualities of the Knower**

I *know* thoughts, feelings, sensations and perceptions but am not Myself made out of thought, feeling, sensation or perception and am therefore said to be empty, silent, transparent. I am present and aware and therefore known as Awareness.

As such, thought likens Me to open, empty space in which all appearances arise. Like physical space I am not affected by what does or doesn't take place within Me and, therefore, peace is My nature. Peace is not a quality of Myself; it *is* Myself, ever-present under all circumstances.

Like empty space I have no agenda with appearances. It makes no difference to Me whether the mind is silent or not, whether the body is young, old, healthy or not, nor what is happening in the world. I allow all appearances unconditionally and impartially.

Thought likes and dislikes but I neither like nor dislike these likes and dislikes. Thought resists and seeks but I neither resist nor seek the end of resistance or seeking. Being empty, I do even not know resistance and am, therefore, causeless happiness itself.

Like empty space, I do not share the qualities nor the destiny of the objects that appear within Me; I do not move and change when they move and change; I do not appear nor disappear when they appear or disappear; I am not born and do not die. The body and mind are always on a journey but I never undertake the journey with them. They journey through Me but I never journey in them. I am the unchanging and ever-present Knower of all that is known.

#### **From the Knower to Knowing**

However, by thinking of Me as the Knower or the witnessing space in which all appearances arise, thought is imagining Me separate from appearances. In fact, I am more like a screen, one with and intimately pervading the image that appears on it. In fact, the image doesn't appear *on* nor is it pervaded *by* the

screen. There is no independent image present to be 'one with' or 'pervaded by' the screen. Only the screen is *truly* present. The screen *is* the appearing image. 'Image' is another name for screen.

Likewise, although the body, mind and world seem to exist in their own right, they owe their apparent reality to Me alone. 'Body,' 'mind' and 'world' are just the names and forms that thought gives to Me when I have been overlooked.

The character in a movie is only real from the viewpoint of one of the characters. The image is only real, as such, from the illusory viewpoint of the image. From the true and only viewpoint of the screen, only the screen is truly present and real. There is no real character there; there is only the screen.

Likewise, I am all that is truly present and known in all experience. All that is known of the body, mind and world is the *knowing* of them and I *am* that Knowing. It is only thought that abstracts a 'knower' and a 'known,' from the seamless intimacy of *Knowing* or *Experiencing*. However, the body, mind and world are never known or experienced *as such*. So we cannot say there is the knowing 'of them,' but rather that there is only *Knowing*. I am not the knowing that *pervades* all experience; I am the Knowing that *is* all experience.

Just as, relatively speaking, we do not see objects, we see only modulations of the sun's light, so in reality we do not know objects *as such*, we know only modulations of Knowing. Only Knowing is truly known and it is Knowing that knows Knowing. I am and know Myself alone. This absence of distance, otherness or separation is love. True knowledge and love are identical.

#### **The Imaginary Separate Self**

It is thought that superimposes a subject and an object upon the seamless intimacy of experience thereby seemingly veiling the peace, happiness and love that lie ever-present and always available at its heart. With this *apparent* veiling, I *seem* to be lost or forgotten and, as a result, an imaginary self, made of Myself plus the belief that I share the qualities and destiny of appearances, comes into apparent existence. This imaginary inside self is always on a mission to regain the experience of peace, happiness and love that seems to have been lost when My nature is apparently veiled.

To this end the imaginary inside self undertakes a great adventure in the imaginary outside world, in time and space, without realizing that these are its own creations. Like the character in a movie who travels the world looking for the screen, the imaginary self travels the world seeking peace in circumstances, happiness in objects and love in relationships, without realizing that it is already made of the stuff for which it is in search. I *am* already the love with which I am longed for.

Frustrated by the inevitable failure of its search, the imaginary inside self devises all kinds of strategies such as stilling the mind, disciplining the body and shunning the world, in the hopes that I will be revealed as a result.

In time, the activity of seeking and resisting that *is* the separate self may, through exhaustion, frustration or intelligence, come to an end and, as a result, the peace of My true nature shines for a timeless moment as it truly is. This dissolution of the activity of seeking and resisting *is* the unveiling of My presence.

In fact, even that is not true. I am eternally as I am, independent of what thoughts and feelings do or say, never truly veiled by the activity of seeking and resisting. In fact, I never cease to be aware of Myself and, therefore, never *really* become aware of a separate self, let alone an object, other or world, as such. Therefore, the separate self is only a separate self from the imaginary viewpoint of a separate self.

From My viewpoint, which is the only *real* viewpoint (and which is not really a *point* of view) there is never any real veiling or forgetting of Myself. The entire adventure of the separate self takes place in a bubble of thought and feeling whilst all the while I am at rest in and as Myself.

Like the wave that reaches the shore and, ceasing to be wave, is revealed as ocean, so the seeking/resisting thought comes to an end and, losing its name and form, stands revealed as Myself alone. It doesn't *become* Myself; it is always only that, just as wave is always only ocean. Only its temporary name and form seemed to make it something other than ocean. The fuel of all desire is already the happiness for which it seeks.

### **Love and Freedom**

Like the moth that longs for the flame but cannot experience it, so all the separate self's activities are designed to find Me alone, but I am the one thing it cannot know or have. The only way the separate self can know Me is to die, just as the moth can only know the flame by dying in it. That death is the experience of love, the dissolution of self and other.

However, for the flame, there is only the flame; for water there is only water; for Myself, there is only Myself. Veiling, forgetting, searching and finding are for the self that thought images Me to be, never for Myself, the true and only self that is. Whatever the limited qualities of the body and mind that thought superimposes on Me, I stand eternally free, untouched but intimately touching all seeming things, lending them My reality, thereby giving them seeming existence.

It is upon Me that thought superimposes the witness and the witnessed, and then further invests My witnessing presence with the qualities and destiny of a body/mind, thereby downgrading Me to a separate self. But all the while, I stand naked and alone never actually being, knowing or loving anything other than My eternally free self.

For thought there are three possibilities for the self – to be the known, the Knower or pure Knowing; to be a person, a witness or pure Awareness; to be something, nothing or everything. However, I never truly am or know anything other than Myself.

Rupert Spira January 2012

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