

Nonduality Salon Presents

ASMI

Excerpts from Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj's *I AM THAT*

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I am the Self, the Witness of Consciousness, pure Awareness.

*I am only the Self, which is universal and
imagines itself to be the outer self, a person.*

Somebody, anybody, will tell you that you are pure consciousness, not a body-mind. Accept it as a possibility and investigate earnestly. You may discover that it is not so, that you are not a person bound in space and time. Think of the difference it would make! (441-2)

The personality (vyakti) is but a product of imagination. The self (vyakta) is the victim of this imagination. It is the taking yourself to be what you are not that binds you. The person cannot be said to exist on its own rights; it is the self that believes there is a person and is conscious of being it. (143)

How can there be two selves in one body? The "I am" is one. There is no "higher I-am" and "lower I-am". All kinds of states of consciousness are presented to awareness and there is self-identification with them. The objects of observation are not what they appear to be, and the attitudes they are met with are not what they need to be. If you think that Buddha, Christ or Krishnamurti speak to the person, you are mistaken. They know well that the vyakti, the outer self, is but a shadow of the vyakta, the inner self, and they address and admonish the vyakta only. They tell him to give attention to the outer self, to guide it and help it, to feel responsible for it; in short, to be fully aware of it. Awareness comes from the Supreme and pervades the inner self; the so-called outer self is only that part of one's being of which one is not aware. One may be conscious, for every being is conscious, but one is not aware. What is included in awareness becomes the inner and partakes

of the inner. (294)

The self you want to know, is it some second self? Are you made of several selves? Surely, there is only one self and you are that self. The self you are is the only self there is. Remove and abandon your wrong ideas about yourself and there it is, in all its glory. (516-7)

There is no second, or higher self to search for. You are the highest self, only give up the false ideas you have about your self. (517)

Your own self is your ultimate teacher (sadguru). The outer teacher (guru) is merely a milestone. It is only your inner teacher that will walk with you to the goal, for it is the goal. (51)

Yoga is the work of the inner self (vyakta) on the outer self (vyakti). All that the outer does is merely in response to the inner. It [the outer self] has some control over the body and can improve its posture and breathing. Over the mind's thoughts and feelings it has little mastery, for it is itself the mind. It is the inner that can control the outer. The outer will be wise to obey. The inner is the source of inspiration, the outer is moved by memory. The source is untraceable, while all memory begins somewhere. Thus the outer is always determined, while the inner cannot be held in words. The mistake of students consists in their imagining the inner to be something to get hold of, and forgetting that all perceivables are transient and therefore unreal. Only that which makes perception possible, call it Life or Brahman, or what you like, is real. (74-5)

The self by its nature knows itself only. For lack of experience whatever it perceives it takes to be itself. Battered, it learns to look out (viveka) and to live alone (vairagya). When right behaviour (uparati) becomes normal, a powerful inner urge (mukmukshutva) makes it seek its source. The candle of the body is lighted and all becomes clear and bright. (110)

You can observe the observation, but not the observer. You know you are the ultimate observer by direct insight, not by a logical process based on observation. You are what you are, but you know what you are not. The self is known as being, the not-self is known as transient. But in reality all is in the mind. The observed, observation and observer are mental constructs.

The self alone is. (219)

The self is universal and its aims are universal. There is nothing personal about the self. (212)

***I am not an object in Consciousness but its source,
its Witness, pure shapeless Awareness.***

You are and I am. But only as points in consciousness; we are nothing apart from consciousness. (92)

You are not the body. You are the immensity and infinity of consciousness. (264)

The source of consciousness cannot be an object in consciousness. To know the source is to be the source. When you realize that you are not the person, but the pure and calm witness, and that fearless awareness is your very being, you are the being. It is the source, the inexhaustible Possibility. (65)

Discard all you are not and go ever deeper. Just as a man digging a well discards what is not water, until he reaches the water-bearing strata, so must you discard what is not your own, till nothing is left which you can disown. You will find that what is left is nothing which the mind can hook on to. You are not even a human being. You just are - a point of awareness, co-extensive with time and space and beyond both, the ultimate cause, itself uncaused. If you ask me "Who are you?", my answer would be: "Nothing in particular. Yet, I am." (318)

I am not my body, nor do I need it. I am the witness only. I have no shape of my own. You are so accustomed to think of yourself as bodies having consciousness that you just cannot imagine consciousness as having bodies. Once you realize that bodily existence is but a state of mind, a movement in consciousness, that the ocean of consciousness is infinite and eternal, and that, when in touch with consciousness, you are the witness only, you will be able to withdraw beyond consciousness altogether. (327)

Do realize that it is not you who moves from dream to dream, but the dreams flow before you, and you are the immutable witness. No happening affects your real being - that is the absolute truth. (333)

The witness is not a person. The person comes into being when there is a basis for it, an organism, a body. In it, the absolute is reflected as awareness. Pure awareness becomes self-awareness. When there is a self, self-awareness is the witness. When there is no self to witness, there is no witnessing either. It is all very simple; it is the presence of the person that complicates. See that there is no such thing as a permanently separate person and all becomes clear. Awareness, mind, matter - they are one reality in its two aspects as immovable and movable, and the three attributes of inertia, energy and harmony. Awareness becomes consciousness when it has an object. The object changes all the time. In consciousness there is movement; awareness by itself is motionless and timeless, here and now. (233)

The difference between the person and the witness is as between not knowing and knowing oneself. The person is in unrest and resistance to the very end. It is the witness that works on the person, on the totality of its illusions, past, present and future. (358)

[The person and the witness] both are modes of consciousness. In one, you desire and fear; in the other, you are unaffected by pleasure and pain, and are not ruffled by events. You let them come and go. (190)

The pleasure to be is the simplest form of self-love, which later grows into love of the self. Be like an infant with nothing standing between the body and the self. The constant noise of the psychic life is absent. In deep silence, the self contemplates the body. It is like the white paper on which nothing is written yet. Be like that infant, instead of trying to be this or that, be happy to be. You will be a fully awakened witness of the field of consciousness. But there should be no feelings and ideas to stand between you and the field. (216)

***Only the feeling "I am", though in the World,
is not of the World nor can be denied.***

A reflection of the watcher in the mind creates the sense of "I" and the person acquires an apparently independent existence. In reality there is no person, only the watcher identifying himself with the "I" and the "mine". The teacher tells the watcher: you are not this, there is nothing of yours in this, except the little point of "I am", which is the bridge between the watcher and his dream. "I am this, I am that" is dream,

while pure "I am" has the stamp of reality on it. (343)

That which makes you think that you are a human is not human. It is but a dimensionless point of consciousness, a conscious nothing. All you can say about yourself is "I am". You are pure being-awareness-bliss. To realize that is the end of all seeking. You come to it when you see all you think yourself to be as mere imagination, and stand aloof in pure awareness of the transient as transient, imaginary as imaginary, unreal as unreal. (316)

Only your sense "I am", though in the world, is not of the world. By no effort of logic or imagination can you change the "I am" into "I am not". In the very denial of your being you assert it. (200)

It [the "I am"] is unreal when we say: "I am this, I am that". It is real when we mean "I am not this, nor that". (395)

To identify oneself with the particular is all the sin there is. The impersonal is real, the personal appears and disappears. "I am" is the impersonal Being. "I am this" is the person. The person is relative, and the pure Being fundamental. (71)

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