



## **April 2021 Graduate Program Lesson Summary –**

### **What Is The Self?**

#### **(encompassing Lessons 3 and 4)**

##### 1-Focus of the lesson

For this month we will be turning our attention to what it means for us to be the Self. We all know very well what it means to be a separate being, we know the world of duality believes very well and it would serve us to get to know what it means that we cannot find a separate self when we look.

##### 2-Questions to contemplate

###### Confirming we cannot find a separate being

To confirm we are not a separate being we must try to find where and what we are without referencing the body, thoughts/mind or emotions. Anything that needs the body or mind to function is not going to remain after the body has gone.

This includes the following:

- Body
- Thoughts

- Emotions
- Experiences
- Feelings
- Senses

What do we know about ourselves when we do not reference these? What are you now? Where are you now? Can you actually find a separate being with edges and boundaries? It will seem like there is one but it is only a SENSE and not a fact.

### What it means to be the Self

You exist but not as a separate being. What does that mean for you now? Our mind only sees two options of either existing as a separate being or not. It sees present as a “someone” or absent.

If you are present (you exist) and you cannot find a separate being or an edge/end to your beingness then you MUST be everywhere. This will not be obvious at first and we must look and look again to confirm this.

### 3-Reading and contemplation

Contemplate the following points to deepen this seeing:

1. If you exist everywhere then are there any other beings or things?
2. If you are everywhere as the formless Self can you be present in one place only? Can you have a location? Can you be absent from somewhere? Can you be “over here” or “over there”?
3. Is manifestation really arising out of you? Can there be form and formless in the same place? Are form and formless actually two things and different?

Reading Chapter 2 of “Reality Check” in its entirety to help with this months study:

## **Chapter 2 Discovering that you are formless**

This chapter will help you to discover what you really are and it will begin to undo some of the main assumptions in our thinking process that keep us from seeing clearly. We will use the time old process of self-enquiry to begin to understand what we are.

Self-enquiry is simply when we actually look at what we are, rather than thinking about it. It is where we directly experience what we actually are which is important because our mind cannot get in the way of this process. If you sit here and think “I am the unlimited reality that is infinite and all pervading” then it will not help you unless you actually directly come to know that beyond just thinking about it. Only by directly experiencing what you really are will you begin to see clearly. If we merely think about this then our assumptions about our self will alter what we perceive.

Whatever we believe to be true about ourselves, the world and life, we will directly experience as if very real indeed. Most of us believe that we are separate human beings, born and due to live for a certain number of years before we die and this is what we experience as if real. The actuality of our existence is very different though and we must come to know it without relying on thoughts. There is nothing wrong with thoughts at all-many processes and issues in our daily life require a logical thought process; but to awaken fully to the reality of what you are we need to put thought aside for a while.

Each thought we believe will begin to colour our experience of the truth just as sure as wearing coloured spectacles will colour the world we see with our eyes. When we consider that most of the thoughts we believe to be true are totally under our conscious radar and we do not know what they are then we get into some very unreliable experiences of what truth is, what we are. It is necessary to always and only use your direct experience to verify what is true. We must be able to experience it and prove it within our own self so that we can know for certain it is true. Anything else is just adding to the mountain of thoughts that flies through most people’s heads and will not help

us. We do not need to stop thoughts nor eliminate the mind; in fact to try to do so will not help at all. We simply need to discern what answers we are willing to take as valid in our self-enquiry. So even if thoughts are there we can say “thank you very much mind” and only accept a direct experience.

So self-enquiry is as simple as asking “what am I really?” and seeing what answer we find. We will always find thought answers of course and there is nothing wrong with these; mind will have many things to say about what we are. What can we experience though directly is something very different to what you may have expected. What will you find from your self-enquiry? Nothing! You will experience nothing at all and this is the perfect answer.

When we self-enquire and ask what we really are we may experience a vast space that seems empty, void and with no substance at all and it can seem unsettling or strange to us at first, perhaps even a little frightening. If we will keep looking at that vastness, we will begin to get used to it. This vast nothingness is what we really are but it is not at all what we THOUGHT we are and so it will take some adjusting. This vast nothingness is not a thing at all and it is most certainly not the “someone” we expected to find. It is formless and shapeless and yet it is very much present. Remember we are only going to take our direct experience that we can know as truth here. Also remember here that we are only just finding out now what we have always been; no matter how long we may have believed, assumed and experienced ourselves as separate and limited human beings it has never been so. Never. You are now coming to see what you have always been.

Ask the question again and see what you find. You will find the same thing again and every single time you ask. It is just you and you are formless and

everywhere. If you stay in that direct experience and ask some questions of yourself based on that nothingness you may be surprised at what you find.

- ❖ Are you tangible or intangible?
- ❖ Are you over here or over there?
- ❖ Do you have any shape or colour?
- ❖ Where exactly are you?
- ❖ Are you changing, growing, becoming here as this vastness?
- ❖ What time is it in the vastness?
- ❖ How far do you reach and where do you end? Do you end at all?
- ❖ When did this vastness that you are appear? When will it disappear?
- ❖ Were you born as this? When did you start?
- ❖ Is there you and another person here? Where do you stop and the person next to you start?

These questions may seem difficult to answer at first but if you will continue to ask them you will soon find you begin to make some breakthroughs. As you go about your daily life you may notice that everything seems different now that you have seen what you really are. Our whole lives as human beings are based on the assumption that we are a separate person, a someone who is moving around in time and space and living out a life for 70, 80 or 90 years before we leave this planet. It can be quite a shock to realise that is not so.

Before we have fully understood what it means to be formless it may seem that life “out here” feels pointless and insignificant. You may find yourself wondering “what use is all this world then?”, “what is the reason for my existence if I am not what I thought I am?” If such feelings arise you can know that it is only a temporary phase of adjustment to your new way of perceiving yourself and that once you fully realise what you are you will know the answer to these questions. As human beings we are taught to value the familiar, the known and the safe thoughts and when we suddenly find what

we know to be challenged we can feel insecure for a time. It can help to realise that what we thought we knew about ourselves was never actually true but we have been fooled into thinking so. You are only coming to see how it has always been. It is safest to work from direct experience of what you can prove inside yourself rather than base your life on assumptions that have never been questioned until now.

Take some time to consider the questions listed in this chapter. Try to find an answer but do not worry if you cannot answer them all at this point. The answers will reveal themselves as you progress to the next chapters. Your understanding of what you are, what reality is, will deepen as you continue to read.

To continue to progress to the deeper stages of enlightenment we must be willing to realise that what we have called our life has been based on assumptions that are not true. We have based our whole existence on the idea that “I am so and so-a human being living in the world with family, friends, relationships, a job and an end point”. For some people it will take a while to come to terms with the fact that none of this has been true. You were never limited, lost or separate from everything and everyone. Some people that read this will immediately be unable to tolerate any lies within themselves about their origin and the nature of their existence and they will be driven by an urge to find out the whole truth and live as and from that truth. Others that read this will face too much resistance from their old and familiar ways of thinking about themselves and so may stop reading this, lose the book somehow or get distracted until a much later time. Any of these options is fine for once the truth has been revealed to you it is only a matter of time before the want arises in you to fully comprehend what you are and

what all this world is. This desire will become stronger until it seems to be the only thing that matters.