



March 2021 Graduate Program –
Moving from ego to Self
(Encompassing lessons 1, 2, 3 and 4)

1-Focus of the lesson

This month we will continue our study of unconditional love by discerning how the Self sees everything. We can recognise that the ego sorts through our experiences and uses a dualistic mechanism to interact with reality; whereas the Self sees only formlessness.

Let's compare ego and Self:

The ego's way of perceiving

- Ego sees everything as an object outside of and separate to itself
- It gives every object it perceives a label/name and begins to associate memories and meanings to that label. Meanings are given to an object based on how much it seems to help ego's goals and needs or not.
- Everything that ego encounters then is labelled into two major categories such as good/wanted/safe/helpful vs bad/unwanted/dangerous/to be avoided
- Based on which one of these two categories a thing is labelled with ego will either reject it or try to keep a hold of it.

- Both of these lead to feeling MORE separate from that thing and emphasise a division inside.

Note that ego can never reach its goals and satisfy its needs because it assumes objects actually exist outside of itself and it assume it is an object/separate being.

The Self's way of perceiving

- The Self sees only the pure formlessness and subjectivity/awareness/silence. It does not see any “thing” “out there” or “in here” to label.
- The Self does not therefore have any use for labels or meanings because there is nothing TO label.
- If every thing is simply the Self “appearing as” something and not actually something then there is no urge to reject it or keep a hold of.
- Because Self sees the essence of an object rather than focusing on the shape or appearance it does not artificially divide itself and therefore there is peace always. Formlessness has no edges and so can only perceive itself.

2-Questions to contemplate

Homework

- Notice where you suffer in your life still and see if you can notice what you are seeing as an object still
- Look for places you feel a strong desire, a strong emotion or have the same experience going again and again.
- Notice the labels that have been given to the “object” and how you feel separate to it. This could be another being, time, money, awakening itself even.
- Ask yourself how the Noumenon sees this-does it see an object? See if you can notice how the Self would see this as compared to ego.

3-Reading and Contemplation

- **Read Chapter 6 from “Reality Check”** and contemplate it. https://www.amazon.co.uk/Reality-Check-Simple-Guide-Enlightenment/dp/1982283173/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=reality+check+by+helen+hamilton&qid=1614656951&s=books&sr=1-1

Chapter 6 The difference between the noumenon and phenomena. What is real and unreal?

First, we must begin by explaining and defining what “noumenon” and “phenomena” mean:

The **noumenon** is something which exists outside of AND is undetectable by the human senses. It is not something that can be experienced by us as something that comes and goes because it is not perceptible by our five senses. It is most certainly NOT the opposite to phenomena.

A **phenomenon** is something that can be observed as existing. It can be experienced by our senses and it can be thought about in our mind. A phenomenon is an object of our perception.

Here is a basic error or assumption in our thinking process-

“The noumenon and a phenomenon are opposites. All the phenomena exist inside the noumenon.”

Here is the fact and what actually is true-There isn't any phenomena because they simply appear to exist inside the noumenon. The noumenon is all pervading so all phenomena are made out of it and ARE it. The noumenon has no opposite. It is one and is beyond all duality. The noumenon and phenomena are the same One and only appear to be different.

As we learned in the previous chapters we are conditioned to value only that which we can perceive with our five human senses or that we can think about. Our mind thinks about the objects we perceive with our senses because it thinks they are real. Once we have come to see that our true essence is the formless Self we will tend to reject the forms or the phenomena that we see.

To realise the ultimate state of reality it is necessary to stop trying to distinguish which is most real. As spiritual students we had to develop an ability to discriminate between “real and unreal” or “truth and illusion” and this was very necessary until now. In this final seeing we must come to realise that if we are trying to decide which is most real we will be excluding something else. Our journey of realisations usually goes something like this.

Step1- “I am this body”. Here we are convinced that we are a separate being that was born and will die. We are excluding everything else that exists in our definition of “me” and “what I am”.

Step 2- “I am not his body”. Here we come to realise that we are not limited to the body and we are formless in our nature and we identify as that formless Self or awareness. We feel strongly that we are not any form, any manifestation and we dismiss anything transient, temporary and changing as unreal. We can become very detached in this step from our mind, body and our life.

Step 3- “I am the formless Self and all that arises out of it”. In this step we have come to see that anything which has arisen out of the Self must be the Self also. We now include all objects and forms in our definition of what we are. We may say or believe something like “I am the formless Awareness and all that arises from it is me also”.

The important thing to note in this step is that although we may have included all form back into our self-definition (what we know our self to be) we are still seeing form and formless as different. The vital point here to understand is that I may still think of myself as two different things here. We may say the manifest arises out of the unmanifest source; or that all of this creation arises out of the creator. We could also believe in God vs Godhead.

We must come to see that even this level of realisation will cause us to suffer eventually because it is still seeing TWO different things and we are still discriminating between “real” which is the noumenon or formless Self and what we think of as “unreal” which is the phenomena that we see coming and going.

If we stop for a moment and directly experience what we are we will find only One in that direct experience. Let me caution you again here against thinking about the Self. Of course you will have to use your mind to understand what is written here but to check it against your own direct experience you must actually look with your inner sight to see what you actually are.

It is vitally important to confirm in your own experience and to prove to yourself that you cannot find two when you look. There is just you-only One. Confirm this over and over.

There is a lot of literature and scripture written about steps 1, 2, and 3 but this book is written to clearly explain step 4. The final stage of realisation has rarely been clearly explained and all of this book is dedicated to that.

Step4 of Self-realisation is when we simply do not know what we are. We have no idea at all what we are and we have no interest in any self-definition. To define what we are would only be happening at the level of thought and it would automatically exclude something from that definition.

The very moment I know what I am then I create the opposite in my experience and I must experience it over and over. If I know I am formless then I will keep having experiences of being a particular form. If I know I am a form I will keep having experiences of being formless (what the world calls death, birth and life). The very moment I know I am both form and formless I must keep having wild swings in my experience of being form and formless. I will experience the small contracted state of being human being only and then massive expansion back to being infinite and everywhere. I will keep switching back to from one to the other in an endless cycle of expansion and contraction experiences.

If I know that formlessness is real and forms are unreal then I am still seeing two items there and will have to continue to experience in dualistic ways and suffer.

I can only come to see that form and formless are the same thing and that both words are synonyms for Reality.

Form is the formlessness appearing to be a shape. Formlessness IS the essence of all forms.

Step 4 Then becomes “I have no idea what I am, what God is, what Reality is. I am beyond any definition. I have no ability to determine, discriminate or label and I am totally happy.”

It really is as simple as not thinking about yourself at all OR knowing that no thought is going to be true about you. Even the thought “I am the All” or “I am Nothing” is not true here. You do not need to eliminate thought to stop the mind working. It is enough to see no thought about you, or anything at all, has ever been true.

“I am ALL” is not true because the concept of “all” include numerous forms and categories. There are no objects, manifestations has never truly occurred as something independent to the Self.

“I am Nothing” is also not true because it excludes all forms and objects.

Even to feel that both of these are true or neither of them are is still delusion and self-defining.