



October 2022 Graduate Program Lesson

Exploring Lesson Four – Form and formless are one

Introduction

This month in the Graduate Program we be looking at Lesson four in more detail. One of the more challenging ideas to overcome on the pathway is the idea of duality itself, that there are 2 basic substances which are different. The whole idea of duality gives birth to the sense of choice, decision and preference and when these are believed in we begin to suffer. The original idea that all duality seems to come from is the idea that form and formless are two very different substances.

To reach permanent and stable peace we must come to a deep understanding that form and formless are one. That means an experiential understanding that everything we see, feel or experience is none other than the formless Silence appearing to be something.

We can begin to celebrate the appearance of form as non-different from the formlessness to find peace. We can do this many ways and we shall practice some of these this month. All we need is to want to see there is only One.

We may notice an idea that it is hard to see this or that we are not capable, ready or worthy of seeing this and living in peace. This may show up as resistance to doing these exercises or confusion but let us remember we are only seeing how things already are.

Exercises for this month

1-Take some common objects around the house and look at each one in turn deeply. You can ask a question such as “what is this really?” or “what is the essence of this object?” When you feel ready you can do this with your own body by asking what it really is.

You can also do any of these exercises about money, fear (or any emotion) or any particular person you have been challenged with or by.

2-You can try to imagine what the object would be experienced like without your human senses to perceive it. Would you be able to see colours, feel textures or taste anything without senses? What would you know about this object? Perhaps everything we think we know about these objects vanishes when our body dies.

3-Ask yourself if you can actually suffer if you do not know anything about the objects you perceive.

4-Consider if you can perceive forms at all without your body?

If the appearance of forms AND formless is dependent on having a human body then it cannot be permanent and not the ultimate truth. Only that way of perceiving that remains permanently is ultimately real.