

The Knower: Journey into the Center of Our Existence



Over the last several months, we have gained an increasingly higher and more refined spiritual understanding of essential me. Now, we have arrived at a critical point of entering the most mysterious domain of the true center of our existence – the knower. ‘The knower’ is a more accurate name for what we have previously called ‘the observer’. To enter the domain of the knower is to finally become conscious of that which actually makes consciousness conscious. The knower is the most hidden and yet the most obvious aspect of our consciousness. He is the unseen seer who is concealed not only from the world of appearances but also from the world of pure subjectivity, and he who looks out to and knows both of these worlds. We are truly blessed to know the knower at last.

The knower is the center of intelligence of the soul who illuminates her multidimensional self with recognition. He is the first and foremost conscious manifestation of immanent I am, and as such, he can be regarded as the deepest dimension of who we are as individual beings. And yet to know the knower is the most challenging task for any seeker on the path. Paradoxically, the knower is the the most unknown. He is the blind spot in our consciousness that all spiritual traditions have failed to recognize. And if one fails to recognize the knower, what is ‘consciousness’ or the ‘realization of self’? One is recognizing what the knower recognizes through his expansion via pure attention into transcendent I am. But one is not recognizing the recognizer himself. Why did Buddha speak of no-self? The simple answer is because he did not know the knower.

The truth is that no matter how profound our spiritual accomplishment may be, when we do not know the knower, we remain fundamentally asleep and unconscious.

Part One: The Two Faces of the Knower

Knower: The Two Faces of Janus

The Roman demigod Janus, represented as a head with two faces, one looking in and one looking out, can be used as a metaphor for the knower. For the Romans, Janus was the god of beginnings, the guardian of passages and gates, and the protector of the state in times of war. He looked into the past and into the future, which was symbolized by his two faces. Similarly, the knower looks in two directions: his outer face looks into the external reality via external attention, while his inner face looks at the inner world of pure subjectivity via pure attention. The outer face is what we call the 'outer knower', and the inner face the 'inner knower'. There are not actually two knowers, but one knower with two very distinct facets. The inner knower is the primary identity of the knower, while the outer knower can be regarded as his secondary center.

The inner knower can be present even before he has an awakened center of identity as a result of pure attention being activated. However, the inner knower establishes his identity only through activating his bare attention and embodying essence-me. The outer knower can also be present before he is awakened, but only in an unconscious way as the observer. For the outer knower to awaken, he must establish his own center of bare attention by embodying what we usually call the 'secondary center of essence-me', and which we could also call 'outer essence-me'.

The Inner Knower

The inner knower is the one who brings all the dimensions of the soul into recognition. He is the one who actually experiences them and owns them. When pure me of consciousness is awakened, who knows it? The very principle of awakening and embodiment implies that pure me knows and feels itself from within its pure subjectivity. And this is indeed so, but pure me is only able to do this because it belongs to the inner knower. If we take the inner knower out of

the equation, everything vanishes into nothing. It is through the inner knower that all, including the individual himself, comes to be known.

As we have said, the inner knower can come into existence even before the awakening of his bare attention. This explains why we can recognize the subjectivity of other centers of the soul, such as pure me of consciousness or even the observer, long before the inner knower has actualized itself. However, he can only be known to himself by awakening his own center of bare attention, and that awakened center of identity is what we call 'conscious me'. So just as the outer knower comes to know himself when he becomes the self-conscious observer, the inner knower comes to know himself when he becomes conscious me; conscious me is identity of the inner knower.

The first step towards actualizing the subjectivity of the inner knower is to recognize the subjectivity of the outer knower, which we have called 'outer essence-me'. Then, through self-absorption in outer essence-me, we can shift into the primary center of essence-me, thereby awakening conscious me. From the base of the awakened identity of the inner knower, which is conscious me, we can then return again to the outer knower and become fully conscious on that level, manifesting the 'conscious outer knower'.

Who is it that recognizes the subjectivity of the outer knower? It is pure attention, but more precisely said, it is the inner knower, who is the carrier and owner of this pure attention. It is the inner knower who enables the observer to become conscious of its subjectivity as the self-conscious observer, and it is also the inner knower who activates essence-me through self-absorption in the bare attention of the self-conscious observer.

As the home and identity of pure attention, it is also the inner knower who is responsible for the awakening of our spiritual longing. Many seekers actually enter the path based on the observer; their knower is simply not activated yet. But to enter the path without the inner knower is to enter a false path through an artificial door; it has nothing to do with the real path. The inner knower is the true seeker. It is through the inner knower that the soul begins to have the potential to actualize her pure subjectivity.

The Inner Knower and Conscious Superposition

As we have said, it is the inner knower who recognizes and embodies all the other centers of the soul through pure attention. But how is he able to do this

without changing his location? Prior to actualizing his center of identity as conscious me, the inner knower does not yet have a location. He underlies both the sense of me of the observer and essence-me, but does not yet have a solidified identity. So here, the inner knower actually identifies with, for example, pure me of consciousness, and in doing so, his location becomes defined by the location of pure me of consciousness. In this case, even though the inner knower feels himself as pure me, he still does not know himself directly, and is still not awakened to his own subjectivity.

Once his own identity is awakened and defined as conscious me, how can the inner knower continue to be in his own bare attention and yet still embody other centers of pure me as well? To explain this, we can borrow a concept from quantum physics called 'superposition'. In physics, 'superposition' means that, for example, a photon can exist in two mutually exclusive states, such as being both a wave and being a particle, simultaneously. However, as soon as we observe that photon, the very act of looking at it causes the photon to move out of superposition and become a singular state – either a wave or a particle. This is called the 'observer's paradox', because in the act of observing, we suspend all possible states of reality apart from one; by looking, we fix reality into a tangible experience. When we do not look at a photon, it is (or at least may be) a wave or a particle, but when we look at it, it becomes a particle.

Similarly, when we feel pure me of consciousness, the inner knower is in a 'wave' state, but when he becomes identified with pure me and embodies it, he immediately moves into 'particle' state. And what happens to the inner knower when his own bare attention is embodied and he is also embodying pure me? How can he be in two locations simultaneously? He can be, and he is. He is actually in three states at the same time. He is fixed as a 'particle' in his own bare attention. He is also fixed as particle in the bare attention of pure me. And he also is in the wave state as the flow of pure attention into pure me. If we then add the simultaneous recognition and embodiment of the other centers of the soul, plus the surrender from their centers into the transcendent I am, we can begin to appreciate how breathtakingly multidimensional the inner knower really is. It is truly astonishing.

All of this may seem confusing or appear paradoxical. But what is a paradox after all? It is something experientially questionable which the linear mind is unable to comprehend or explain. But while the linear mind cannot understand such paradoxes, the intuitive mind can. From that place these phenomena are no longer so puzzling.

Pure Me: Secondary Center of the Inner Knower

The awakened inner knower, which is conscious me, is the primary center of the soul's intelligence. Given this, we can now see all the other dimensions of pure subjectivity as the secondary centers of the inner knower. When the inner knower embodies pure me, he projects his light via pure attention and forms another, secondary, bare attention as an outpost of his pure subjectivity. So yes, he can be in several places at the same time, but he is only in one place as his primary center.

Unlike in the superposition of quantum physics, in the superposition of conscious recognition, we can experience all the states of the knower at the same time. There is no observer's paradox because it is what we could call a 'conscious superposition', where the knower is consciously present in all of his states and centers with perfect simultaneity. Here, there is no distinction between his possible states and his actual states when they are being determined by the act of recognition.

Seeing that all centers of pure me are actually secondary centers of the knower, it becomes clear that awakening any dimension of pure me is a secondary awakening, while the only primary awakening is that of the knower to itself. And if someone who has not realized their knower experiences an expansion into a higher state of consciousness which does not include the awakening and embodiment of pure me, then neither the knower nor one of his secondary centers have been awakened, meaning that such an experience is not an awakening at all.

The Outer Knower

Before the knower is awakened, there is only the observer. The observer is a false, subconscious outer knower. We prefer not to use the term 'false knower' as the term 'knower' already implies awakening; the knower by default knows himself, which is beyond the scope of the observer. There is a stage in the evolution of the observer when he begins to be in touch with the inner knower, and based on this, he begins to activate his spiritual intelligence. When the observer is evolved enough to come in touch with his own subjectivity, we realize the self-conscious observer, which is a bridge to conscious me. Then, based on the identity of conscious me, the observer can stabilize his own identity and transform into the 'conscious outer knower'.

Both the inner and outer knower possess intelligence, but their intelligence is very different. The intelligence of the inner knower is an intuitive-feeling intelligence; it is both more direct and more pure. The intelligence of the outer knower is based on thinking, processing information, and forming conceptual understandings. Both of these types of intelligence are indispensable for our evolution in consciousness and for understanding our inner reality. The intelligence of the outer knower should not be seen as inferior to the intelligence of the inner knower; it is just different.

The intelligence of the outer knower has to evolve to match and reflect the spiritual intuition of the inner knower. It has to become based on the intelligence of the inner knower, so that it can actually support our spiritual evolution. There are seekers whose inner knower is spiritually mature, but their outer knower is still too undeveloped for them to progress any further on the path in an intelligent way. In fact, if the outer knower is spiritually passive or brainwashed by shallow spirituality or religion, he will actually block our ability to enter the realm of pure subjectivity.

Both the inner and outer knower share the same core of essence-me. However, just as we need to get in touch with the inner knower, so we need to get in touch with the outer knower as well. It is possible, and in fact common, that one may be conscious on the level of the inner knower but unconscious on the level of the outer knower. One can also have awakened the bare attention of the inner knower and be deeply connected to it, while failing to integrate the outer knower or even to become conscious on that level, remaining instead on the level of the observer. Here, one facet of our knower is awakened while the other facet remains unconscious. This is why it is imperative to strive to bring the outer knower into consciousness. We need to actualize the complete integration and unification between the two facets of the knower within their twofold center of essence-me as its primary and secondary centers. If the outer knower is unawakened, it means that the outer part of essence-me remains unconscious of his own subjectivity, causing him to remain disconnected from the inner knower.

First Level of Self-absorption of the Outer Knower

For the outer knower to be transformed, he has to become both conscious and self-absorbed. It is pure attention which is the force behind self-absorption, and as such, the outer knower is not *doing* the self-absorption – he is being self-absorbed by the inner knower. The purpose of the first step in self-absorption is

to facilitate the awakening of conscious me, because for the inner knower to awaken his own identity of essence-me, he must go through his secondary center. However, even once the identity of the inner knower is awakened through the first level of self-absorption of the outer knower, the identity of the outer knower itself is often forgotten. Here, although one has managed to awaken the self-conscious observer and meet oneself as the outer knower on a certain level, one can still fall back again and lose oneself in the observer. This is why it is necessary to reach out into the outer knower from conscious me with the intention of becoming conscious of and embodying his subjectivity. In this way the bare attention of the outer knower can be properly established and stabilized as the identity of the conscious outer knower.

Second Level of Self-absorption of the Outer Knower

The second level of self-absorption can take place only when the outer knower has properly formed his bare attention as the secondary center of essence-me. The purpose of this self-absorption is threefold: to fuse the outer knower with the inner knower, whose bare attention has been realized as conscious me, to merge conscious me with pure conscious me, and to deepen the internal connection between the inner knower and essence-me, that deepest identity which sits at the core of conscious me.

Even though the inner knower can also self-absorb directly, it does not have enough leverage alone to truly merge with his core of essence-me. In order to gather the necessary force, the inner knower must facilitate the self-absorption of the outer knower, which has the result of fusing these two bare attentions. The inner knower is fully dependent on the self-absorption of the outer knower, as it gives him the momentum to gravitate deeper towards essence-me.

To understand this, we need to understand how the inner knower actually recognizes his own sense of me. His sense of me is essence-me, and by recognizing it, the inner knower becomes actualized as conscious me. But this recognition flows from a certain distance, and that distance is such that it is close enough for the inner knower to be able to embody essence-me, but not close enough to actually merge with it. It is this merging that represents the further and final goal of self-absorption. It is a very challenging task, and many tools need to be utilized to manifest it.

Other than mastering the practical tools of self-absorption, vertical surrender, and the simultaneous embodiment of the pure conscious me while self-

absorbing, the most important element in dissolving the distance between the inner knower and essence-me is self-love. It is here that we can truly understand the deepest meaning of self-love: the love of the inner knower for his very own essence-me. The lover (inner knower) is indeed the beloved (essence-me), but he becomes the beloved only when he fully merges with essence-me.

Three Levels of the Outer Knower: Conscious, Transparent, and Translucent

When the outer knower is first awakened, he becomes the conscious outer knower. In order to become conscious, that outer knower must be experienced from the self-realized inner knower – in other words, from conscious me. So the conscious outer knower is the knower experienced from conscious me, which has in addition awakened to and stabilized his own bare attention of the outer essence-me.

We do not consider the stage of conscious outer knower as a level of attainment so much in itself, but more as a transition to the transparent knower. This is because the outer knower should automatically and instantly become transparent when he becomes conscious, if conscious me has been embodied properly. However, if one's connection to conscious me is not deep enough, one can easily lose the transparency, and fluctuate back into the conscious outer knower. In addition, it is common to struggle to make the outer knower fully conscious. Therefore, one's practice at this stage should also focus on embodying the outer essence-me fully, in order to put an end to the fluctuation between conscious outer knower and transparent outer knower.

The next stage in the evolution of the outer knower is the translucent knower. The translucent knower is the deepest realization of the outer knower, which manifests when the light of the inner knower truly illuminates his outer center of intelligence. The term 'transparent knower' implies that the thinking and perception of the outer knower is no longer influenced and distorted by self-consciousness: he becomes a transparent window through which the inner knower can freely live in creation. But there is more to the outer knower than becoming an open window to the relative world for the inner knower: he is also meant to actively bring the luminosity of essence-me into creation through external attention.

The transformation from the transparent knower to the translucent knower occurs through the second level of self-absorption, in which the outer knower becomes fused with the inner knower. Even though he has his own bare

attention (what we call the 'outer essence-me'), that bare attention now comes to belong to the inner knower. There is a clear sense of the outer knower being the extension of the inner knower into the world. It is at this point that external attention, the vehicle of the outer knower, transforms into pure external attention, because it has become fully integrated with the pure attention of the inner knower.

So the translucent knower arises from his fusion with the inner knower. And here the inner knower itself is in both internal and vertical samadhi, resulting in him being merged with pure conscious me (which itself must be in vertical absence). The inner knower that is merged with pure conscious me is what we call the 'absolute knower'. The absolute knower is entirely internalized, and is using what we call 'pure intelligence' – the intuitive, feeling intelligence of the soul, which has no connection to the mind or to concepts.

The relationship between the absolute and translucent knower has two modes.

- in the first mode, the translucent knower arises from the absolute knower, and forms a separate center on his own through which his more relative intelligence (translucent intelligence) operates
- in the second mode, the translucent knower is in samadhi in the inner knower, and the two centers are entirely fused.

At this advanced stage of his evolution, both of these modes are natural ways for the outer knower to exist. When either our ordinary intelligence or visual perception are active, the outer knower has to separate himself from the inner knower and become a functioning center. The absolute knower is resting deeply at the bottom of the forehead (where the upper essential tan t'ien is located), while the translucent knower rises up to the middle or upper part of the forehead to function and process external activities. When these functions requiring his external attention are suspended, for instance in meditation, the outer knower is reabsorbed back into the inner knower, and both centers of intelligence become fully unified, even though they remain distinct on a subtle level.

The second mode, where the outer knower is in samadhi in the inner knower, also has the important purpose of deepening the realization of the inner knower. As such, it helps to facilitate essence-samadhi and immanent samadhi. It must be remembered that the outer knower belongs to, and is the secondary aspect of, the inner knower, who is our primary center of intelligence.

Third Level of Self-absorption of the Outer Knower

The third level of self-absorption refers to self-absorption of the translucent knower from within his samadhi in the absolute knower. This is very subtle, because when in samadhi, the translucent knower is almost indistinguishable from the absolute knower. And yet these two are not the same, because the translucent knower is still the center of alertness and discrimination. As we have said, even though the inner knower has the ability to self-absorb, in order to reach essence-samadhi or immanent samadhi, he needs the extra energy provided by self-absorption of the outer knower in order to be able to penetrate his innermost depths of absence.

Part Two: Five Levels of the Inner Knower

Since the inner knower is our primary identity, it is important to have an overview understanding of his inward journey to completion. We should remember that because the inner knower is directly tied to the outer knower, the outer knower's own development must continuously be aligned with the inner knower, so that it both complements and assists in his evolution.

There are five stages in the development of the inner knower:

- the conscious inner knower; conscious me
- the absolute knower
- the fundamental knower
- the primordial knower
- the immanent knower.

Conscious Me

The awakening of the inner knower, where we establish his identity of bare attention as conscious me, marks a very significant event in our evolution. For the first time, our spiritual intelligence gains a center of identity which becomes its conscious axle. This happens through the self-absorption of the self-conscious observer, which is facilitated by the inner knower itself, and which results in the recognition and awakening of the primary center of essence-me. For the realization of the conscious me to become complete, essence-me has to then be fully embodied and constant self-recognition on this level needs to be stabilized.

Absolute Knower

Despite it being such an incredibly important step and shift, the realization of conscious me still has many limitations, including being separated from the absolute I am (and hence from absence and vertical rest). In addition, there is still a limiting duality between the inner knower and essence-me, and an excessive duality between the inner knower and the outer knower.

For the inner knower to deepen his evolution, pure conscious me needs to be awakened, and conscious me then needs to attain vertical samadhi through it in absolute I am. Following this, the inner knower can activate the second level of self-absorption of the outer knower (which is now the transparent knower). This facilitates the fusion between the outer and inner knower, and the resultant merging of this new, single center with pure conscious me.

To summarize, the absolute knower is the inner knower in vertical samadhi in absolute I am, merged with pure conscious me, more deeply seated in essence-me (meaning there is less duality from essence-me), and fused through the second level self-absorption with the outer knower.

From the new identity-base of the absolute knower, the outer knower is transformed from the transparent into the translucent knower.

The Dimensions of Intelligence in the Absolute Knower

The intelligence of the absolute knower is called 'pure intelligence'. It is a direct, feeling, primary-recognition intelligence that exists prior to actual thinking.

The intelligence of the translucent knower is called 'translucent intelligence'. It is the same intelligence that the outer knower has been using through the mind, but much subtler and more refined. Translucent intelligence is a selective, conceptual, reflective, and discerning intelligence which can engage in thinking. This intelligence is highly intuitive but more dynamic in nature than pure intelligence.

As we have explained, the translucent knower can exist in two modes: either merged with the absolute knower or as a separate center arising from the absolute knower for the purpose of pursuing more relative thinking processes. For instance, with eyes open, the translucent knower has to form a separate center to be able to meet the requirement of external perception. When the

translucent knower is merged with the inner knower, he adds his translucent intelligence to pure intelligence. This results in that translucent intelligence becoming more internalized, resulting in what we can call 'pure translucent intelligence'.

Fundamental Knower

An even deeper realization of the inner knower is the fundamental knower. Here, the inner knower merges with fundamental me, which occurs through a combination of double self-absorption – of the outer absolute knower and inner knower – and a deeper vertical surrender of the absolute knower.

In some ways, the fundamental knower is similar to the absolute knower, but he has penetrated much more deeply into the realm of the absolute I am by merging with fundamental me, and has also come one step closer to merging fully with essence-me. This is because the deeper the vertical absorption of conscious me, the more it gravitates into essence-me, even though it can merge with essence me only in essence-samadhi.

Primordial Knower: Essence-Samadhi and the Realization of 'I'

The realization of the primordial knower requires a deeper self-absorption of the inner knower (now as the fundamental knower) in essence-me, one which enables him to merge fully with it. The result of this is what we call 'essence-samadhi'. In essence-samadhi, the knower becomes essence-me, that which has always been his source but which now has finally become his identity. At last, the imperfection of the duality between the inner knower and essence-me has been dissolved. This is the correct realization of I, for only essence-me is our true I. Here the recognizer (inner knower) has at last become the recognized (essence-me).

Why could essence-samadhi not be realized in the absolute knower? Because there was not enough absence to dissolve the knot of presence that is inevitably created by the tension of duality between the inner knower and essence-me.

The direct byproduct of the inner knower merging with essence-me is the activation of immanent I am, which comes now to be illuminated by the pure attention of the knower. Immanent I am is the source-identity of essence-me and its bridge to primordial I am. Here, the primordial knower takes over the identity

of essence-me at this level, but at the same time, it becomes the secondary identity of the immanent I am.

The inner knower is the mirror in which the immanent I am sees her own formless face. The inner knower is the child of immanent I am, her creation, and now he gives her back the priceless gift of recognition. The primordial knower serves as the primary center of consciousness, while immanent I am is his deeper identity. When immanent I am is finally illuminated, the primordial knower becomes the center of her intelligence.

By illuminating the immanent I am, the inner knower opens the translucent door to primordial I am, for to experience immanent I am is to, by default, experience her source.

Immanent Knower: Immanent Samadhi, Shift of Identity into Immanent I am

The final step in the evolution of the inner knower is to dissolve the duality between himself and immanent I am. Through a yet deeper self-absorption which we call 'immanent samadhi', the inner knower further penetrates essence-me, moving into its innermost core of pure subjectivity, and in doing so, enters the immanent I am. 'Immanent samadhi' is the name for the absorption and merging of the inner knower with immanent I am and their simultaneous fusion with primordial I am.

At last, immanent I am becomes the ultimate center of our existence and the final center of our intelligence. She becomes the ruling center of all centers of our multidimensional self. Because immanent I am is the receiver, when the inner knower merges with her through his activity of surrender, the receiver and the received become one self that is steeped in the original femininity of the primordial ground of creation.

Part Three: The Realization of I in the Context of the Evolution of the Knower

How does the revised map of the knower change our understanding of how 'I' is realized? And what are the new definitions of the terms for 'absolute I' and 'primordial I'. Through these revelations, we have chosen to emphasize the

evolution of our primary identity, the knower, and this brings some important changes in our understanding of the evolution from me to I.

First of all, we can contemplate again the difference between me and I. How does me know that it is 'me'? To know oneself as me through any particular center, we must be linked to essence-me in some way. There is no sense of me without essence-me. For instance, pure me of consciousness knows that it is me because the pure attention that flows from essence-me via the inner knower identifies with it as his secondary bare attention. And how does the inner knower know himself to be 'me' in the realization of conscious me? Because he is closest to it, the inner knower feels essence-me directly. Hence, conscious me is the primary center of me.

We need to see that in the realization of pure me through any of its centers, pure attention actually flows *away from* essence-me to recognize and form a center of pure subjectivity. It is an internal flow towards pure subjectivity, and yet from another perspective, it is an external flow away from essence-me, and which creates a certain objectification of the identity that is being recognized. It is this element of objectivity that makes it relevant to use the objective pronoun 'me' when we describe this sense of identity. Then, we have conscious me, which is the only center to awaken through pure attention actually flowing *into* essence-me, into the core of our subjectivity, rather than away from it. However, this level of realization of essence-me is still not completely free from objectification because there continues to be a fine duality between the inner knower and essence-me. So even though recognition flows into essence-me to awaken and embody conscious me, this identity of the inner knower is also experienced as me.

This is an important matter to contemplate. What is the difference between the objectification of our identity in pure me (where pure attention flows away from essence-me) and in conscious me (where it flows into essence-me)? In the awakening of pure me, pure attention flows away from our individual essence into transcendent I am (universal or absolute I am). So there is the element of transcendence in the awakening of pure me, but the price we pay is that we are, in a sense, moving away from the core of our sense of self, causing the identity of pure me to be connected more to transcendent subjectivity than to individual subjectivity.

And how does the inner knower come to experience himself as conscious me? In feeling his me, the inner knower is still *relating* to essence-me. His recognition of

his subjectivity is based on his *relationship* through the feeling recognition of essence-me, and that essence-me is still somewhat external to him. The duality in this relationship is exacerbated by the duality between the inner and outer knower. The outer knower is pulling the inner knower away from merging with essence-me.

So we could say that conscious me is less 'me' and more 'I' than pure me, because the objectification in this case is much less. However, conscious me is experienced as me by the inner knower due to the minimal, but still tangible, duality between the knower and his essence. In itself, this duality is not negative, because through it the inner knower can grow into a deeper awareness of himself and into a deeper connection with essence-me. The inner knower gradually begins to recognize this duality as an imperfection and source of continuing discomfort or suffering, and out of this, he activates a strong desire and intention to merge more and more deeply with essence-me so that he can truly become one undivided self.

Previously, we defined the realization of I as the transcendence or minimization of the duality between pure attention and essence-me through self-absorption, which resulted in the fusion between the knower, conscious me, and pure conscious me – the realization of absolute I. But self-absorption on the level of the knower and the resulting fusion between the knower and conscious me is just not enough to truly realize I, because there is still insufficient absence for the inner knower to enter essence-me. Through self-absorption at this level, one comes to the threshold of I but cannot yet cross it.

To truly realize I, the inner knower has to merge fully with essence-me, and this is possible only after the fundamental knower has been established. It is here, through a deeper kind of self-absorption which we now call 'essence-samadhi', that the inner knower shifts his identity into essence-me and becomes the primordial knower. This is the true realization of I.

Part Four: Immanence is Transcendence

Fundamental Blocks of Consciousness: Immanent I am, Essence-me, Knower

Immanent I am is the original base of our individual subjectivity, but she lies dormant until she is illuminated with recognition. Indeed, we have to go through many steps in the evolution of our individual consciousness before immanent I

am can become conscious of herself. But it all begins with the birth of the knower, which is the center of our intelligence. For the knower to come into existence, his root-identity of essence-me must come into existence at the same time. However, initially, both the knower (as the observer) and essence-me are unconscious.

It is only when the observer becomes conscious and self-absorbed that essence-me can be awakened as conscious me. Here, the knower is realized as the recognizer of all. For immanent I am to be realized, she has to first become conscious as the outer knower, then as the inner knower, and then through the merging of the knower with essence-me, she can finally become conscious of her own immanency.

Why do we say that immanent I am represents a much deeper spiritual illumination than merging with universal I am or with the absolute I am? Of course, arriving at horizontal samadhi in universal I am and vertical samadhi in the absolute I am is extremely important. But in addition, without merging with these dimensions of I am, we could never properly realize essential me, and we could never enter immanent I am. Realizing universal I am and absolute I am is lower than the realization of immanent I am for two reasons. Firstly, immanent I am is who we are, the deepest core of our individual subjectivity. Secondly, it is only through the realization of immanent I am that we can enter primordial I am, which is the source of all the other dimensions of I am.

It is common to imagine transcendence as going to some distant 'place' far away from our sense of me, and, for instance, an expansion into the universal consciousness can seem more appealing in this context. But where can you really go? Wherever you go, your essence-me goes with you, even if you are not conscious of it. In reality, the only place to go is within, into the realm that is hidden within our very sense of me. This is the 'quantum theory' of subjectivity – to look for the greatest secrets of existence in the smallest building blocks of reality, in the microcosms of our very self. In spirituality, the idea of going within is, of course, present, but in practice it is actually about just the opposite – the 'within' that is beyond, not that which is within our sense of me. Honor your me and all the secrets will be revealed to you. Transcendence is immanence, because to reach freedom, one has to enter the black hole of one's own essence-me and pass right through it to the other side. The true beyond is within, for the beyond is immanent.

Blessings,

Anadi