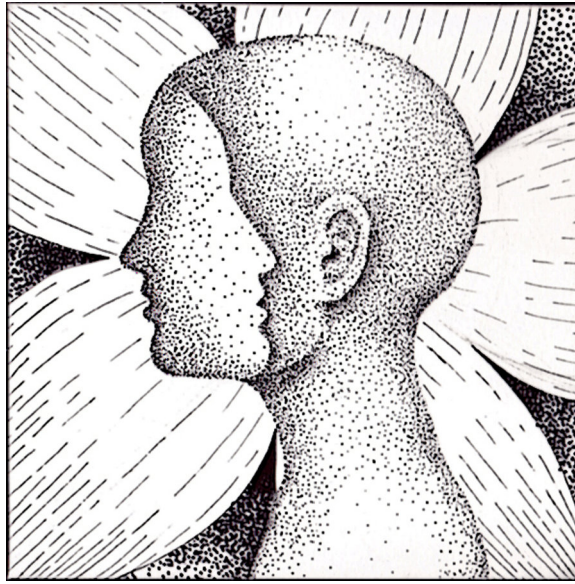


The Two Dimensions of the Outer Knower

Q&A



Could you explain what the difference is between the internal outer knower and the inner knower?

The internal outer knower is the internal aspect of the outer knower, and as such, it is naturally closer to the sense of me of the ordinary observer. Because of this, the internal outer knower is more tangible and easier to grasp. He is the internal dimension of the center of our intelligence. The inner knower, on the other hand, is more intuitive and subtle, and therefore can seem to be more hidden. When compared to the internal outer knower, there is less a sense of having control with the inner knower, and more one of surrendering to pure knowing and pure experience.

Can we speak of the internal outer knower and inner knower as being autonomous of each other, or are they interdependent?

They are fully interdependent. The inner knower cannot be activated without the internal outer knower. Seen from the other side, it is the very presence of the inner knower that activates the intuitive purpose of the internal observer. Even before awakening, the inner knower provides the internal outer knower with intuitive spiritual inspiration.

The inner knower, in turn, is dependent on the internal outer knower (or the internal observer), as the former cannot be activated without the latter having been activated first, since it is the internal outer knower who activates the inner knower. The inner knower can be seen as a part of consciousness which exists below the threshold of the conscious mind but is then brought to life through conscious recognition.

However, it is also possible that the internal observer may be active, having a level of self-awareness, but without having activated the inner knower. In other words, it is possible that internal attention and intelligence are present, but pure attention is absent.

What is the distinction between internal attention and pure attention?

With internal attention, you have the ability to initiate the intention to look within and control its direction and movement. With pure attention, you need to surrender to it for it to be naturally and fully effective. Internal attention is tied to outer essence-me, the sense of me of the observer, and hence cannot embody any other center of the soul; but pure attention has no such restriction, and can embody individual or multiple centers of the soul. Even though pure attention flows from essence-me, it is not bound by essence-me's energetic location, and so is able to identify with any center of me that it recognizes.

If the internal outer knower is bound to outer essence-me, how is it that he is also independent from the outer knower's bare attention?

He is independent in the sense that he does not have to have conscious reference to the bare attention of the outer knower. This is very important, because it means that the internal observer can be activated prior to the actual awakening of the outer knower. Otherwise, no one could ever evolve spiritually, because you need the internal observer to enter the path. However, this does not contradict the fact that the internal outer knower is tied energetically to outer essence-me. It is as if he is on an elastic link attached to outer essence-me; he can, for instance, stretch in the direction of pure me of consciousness, but he cannot go too far. This is why we need the inner knower and pure attention to embody any center of the soul, because pure attention is not limited through any similar attachment to essence-me.

Is it possible to have the inner knower while the internal observer remains dormant?

The inner knower is the internal observer's spiritual inspiration. As the hub of our soul, the inner knower links us to our spiritual purpose. It is as if we can intuitively sense the memory of our purpose in the inner knower's depth, but that memory cannot be revealed without the conscious presence of the internal observer. So the inner knower inspires the internal observer, and the internal observer links the inner knower with the conscious mind.

If the internal observer remains dormant, the inner knower will also fail to awaken. This is the condition of the majority of humans on this planet: despite theoretically having the potential to evolve, they never even take the first step.

How is it that some people have the internal observer and the inner knower while others do not?

While making an interesting point, this question may not be phrased correctly. The soul of a person who existed in past lives will have already developed both the internal observer and the inner knower, so these spiritual faculties will naturally be carried into the current lifetime. But this is the first life for most people – they did not have previous lives.

A better way to express this question is: How is it that some rare souls manage to activate their internal observer in the first place while most do not? What triggers that shift from external attention to self-awareness and inward directed internal attention? There is no clear answer to this question. Some people seem to have an intuitive longing and are just more suitable vehicles for intelligence and evolution, which is another way of saying some people have more access to their free will while others do not.

You sometimes speak of the internal observer and, at other times, of the internal outer knower. Why not just use one term?

The seeming confusion here is that the same faculty of internal attention and intelligence can be present both prior to and after the awakening of the outer knower. This means the internal observer can perform the same functions (although operating without bare attention and in a more limited way) that the internal outer knower does.

Can a person evolve spiritually when the external observer is spiritually developed even though the internal observer is very weak?

There is no spiritual evolution without the internal observer. Any so-called ‘spirituality’ of the external observer is purely mental, conceptual, philosophical, or sentimental; it is restricted to external attention, and has no basis in real subjectivity or spirituality. There is also a separate variety, or branch, of the external observer’s ‘spirituality’ where the emphasis is based in feeling me, such as in bhakti paths of devotion and other similar forms of spiritual delusion.

Can the external observer also perform the function of gazing into the direction of our true self?

No, it cannot. External attention only flows in one direction, the one which is away from the self.

How do I know whether I am using the external or internal observer in my practice?

The external observer cannot practice. Such 'practice' is self-deception. Whether the external observer is practicing mindfulness, mantra repetition, visualizations, chakra concentration, intellectual self-enquiry, solving Zen koans, or praying to god – all of these activities are different expressions of spiritual delusion and fantasy, reflecting fundamental ignorance of the true meaning of the path.

If you are indeed practicing, that obviously must be happening from the internal observer. The internal observer is not just internalizing attention – it is feeling our pure subjectivity. It is the attention of feeling, of direct experience, and of direct knowing. But the internal observer is also limited, and its main function is to awaken the inner knower so that his pure attention can take over.

In which way does the internal outer knower allow us to reach transparency in the external outer knower?

A very good question. Let us say that you are in pure me of consciousness. The principle of transparency relates not to the degree to which you have embodied pure me, but to the quality of the outer knower's bare attention in relationship to his perception of the world. Even if your pure attention has firmly embodied pure me, the moment you engage in external activity, the outer knower has to form his own center as the subject to that activity.

Remember, it is the outer knower, not pure consciousness, that is the only center of intelligence, the only one who can see, think, and register external reality. So when the outer knower forms his own center, this may occur while pure me is also separately embodied, which can cause what we call a 'conflict of identities'. The fact that the outer knower needs to have his own center may result in him becoming crystallized, with a consequent weakening of our connection to pure consciousness. How can this conflict be resolved, keeping in mind that the outer knower requires his own bare attention to be able to function effectively in the world? The solution is that the outer knower's center needs to be dissolved in each instant that it is formed. It is through finding this perfect equilibrium between the formation and dissolution of his center that gives rise to his transparency.

In the past, we described the dissolution of the center of the outer knower in the act of perception as being achieved through maintaining the continuous flow of pure attention into pure me of consciousness. While this continues to be true, it is not a complete explanation. How is such a constant flow of pure attention sustained? It is thanks to the internal outer knower's continuous intention to gaze inwards towards pure me with his internal attention that permits the inner knower's flow of pure attention to become constant.

When we are not actively engaged in the outer world, the internal outer knower's internal attention can relax, and then intrinsic recognition with pure attention takes over. This is because the outer knower only needs to focus on his own center of bare attention when using external attention, which is when that has to be counterbalanced by the flow of internal attention that helps support the inward flow of pure attention.

While the above may appear complicated to grasp conceptually, it is actually quite simple in reality. You just need to contemplate it and experiment for yourself.

Can one awaken to pure me of consciousness without having the internal observer?

No, one cannot. Some seekers experience an opening into pure consciousness, but it can never be embodied without the internal observer; it can never be owned. Although still part of the outer knower, the internal outer knower, with his internal attention, can be seen as the directing intelligence and stimulating force guiding the inner knower's awakening, movement of pure attention, and evolution. One cannot have a soul without the internal observer.

How is it possible that we can have a very well developed internal observer without an actual awakening of the outer knower?

This is the wisdom of evolution. The outer knower cannot be awakened without having the internal observer first. The presence of the internal observer is our saving grace. As was noted, the internal observer can function very well without having bare attention, even though bare attention gives him an increased level of empowerment.

However, another issue here is that some seekers do have the internal observer but then fail to awaken the outer knower. They identify with different states beyond the mind but never realize the knower. And why is this? It is because the sense of me of the observer is exactly the same sense of me known as the 'ego', or false self, that people foolishly identify with. It is the commonly accepted rejection of the observer's usual identity as our fragmented mental personality that blocks the very possibility of awakening the outer knower. Regrettably, seekers have been so brainwashed by non-duality – especially in the forms of Advaita and Buddhism – that they keep cutting off the very branch, their very self, their sacred me, on which they sit.

You spoke about the pitfall that even after one has recognized pure me of consciousness, one can fail to embody it because the internal attention of the observer refuses to surrender to pure attention. Is this the same as when you have often said that the observer is controlling our practice too much?

Yes, it is the same, but it is explained here more precisely. We used to speak about the observer interfering too much; now we make the distinction between the functions of the external and internal aspects of the observer. On a very gross level, the external observer can also keep controlling our practice, but this happens only with students who are extremely unskillful because it is impossible for the external observer to become involved in any experience of pure subjectivity. In other words, if the external observer is trying to support our practice, what we are doing is not practice at all.

On the other hand, we must have the internal observer (or internal outer knower, when the outer knower is awakened) in order to consciously relate with our pure nature. But the actual practice happens from the inner knower – all the internal observer does is activate our intention and scan our internal situation with his intelligence.

The moment the internal observer activates the inner knower's pure intention, it must get out of the way or deactivate itself. If the internal observer fails to get out of the way, it will be gazing in the direction of pure me of consciousness or other centers of pure me, which would hold pure attention back from embodying any of those centers. The internal observer has to relinquish its control at this point. Due to fear of letting go of control, or just simple lack of skillfulness, some students tend to keep their sense of self in the internal observer too much, rather than fully shifting their identity into pure me.

However, an important thing to understand is that although the internal outer knower gets out of the way, a portion of his internal attention and his intelligence becomes unified with pure attention. Otherwise, there would be no conscious recognition or intelligence accompanying the activity of pure attention, as the internal outer knower can be considered to be the 'mind' of the soul/inner knower.

Could you describe the role played by the internal outer knower and his internal attention in the inward journey of the inner knower as he evolves towards essence samadhi and immanent samadhi?

The internal outer knower is only involved through his dynamic internal attention in the awakening the centers of conscious me in the essential channel and of pure me in the central channel.

The inner knower seeks peace. There are different levels of peace that can be reached through establishing the secondary centers of his identity, the different centers of pure

me, but he can never reach complete peace in that way – meaning the inner knower will intuitively feel that he is still suffering. The only way he can find peace is through self-absorption, by merging with his primary center, which is made of three layers: conscious me, essence-me, and immanent I am.

Where self-absorption is concerned, the internal outer knower's internal attention functions in unison with the bare attention of outer essence-me. Here, the internal outer knower has two levels of identity – dynamic (internal attention) and static (bare attention), and they both function in unison.

Without the internal outer knower, there would not be any journey of the inner knower at all; he is the dynamic force of intelligence and intention of the inner knower. But in order to empower the evolution of the inner knower, the internal outer knower must himself reach certain unification with the outer knower's bare attention. This starts with the second level of self-absorption, in which the bare attention of the outer knower enters the field of the bare attention of the inner knower, also known as conscious me. In fact, such bare attention becomes transformed into what we call the 'second level of pure attention' that operates from the outer knower. Here, the internal attention of the outer knower is fully integrated with his sense of me, and there is a unity in the outer knower's function and identity.

The ensuing usual stages of evolution in self-absorption would be:

- In absolute samadhi, the outer knower enters the field of conscious me, who in turn merges with pure conscious me, assimilating pure conscious me into his own identity. Through this merging, conscious me realizes absolute I am, and the inner knower is transformed into the 'absolute knower'.
- Following this, there is the deepening of the self-absorption of the outer knower within the inner knower, within the state of inward fusion with the absolute knower. This is combined with vertical surrender, with the second level of pure attention, and a squeezing through the portal to absence helps shift the identity of the inner knower into fundamental me, increasing the realization of absolute I am into deeper absence. Here, the outer knower follows in the footsteps of the inner knower, and he is now in the state of inward fusion in the fundamental knower.

Essence-me is still the invisible center upon which conscious me is formed. To enter his innermost layer, the inner knower has to penetrate into essence-me; he has to go inwardly through conscious me into essence-me. For that to be possible, a complete vertical absence is required. If there is remaining presence, it will impede the inner knower's flow of pure attention into fuller surrender, restfulness, and peace. This is why absence in the fundamental knower has to be realized first.

- The third level of self-absorption is the inner knower merging with essence-me itself. In essence-samadhi, the outer knower enters the field of essence-me, our conscious individuality. The only reason that the inner knower is able to reach essence-samadhi – which is the merging of pure attention and essence-me – is because the internal outer knower, joined with the outer knower's bare attention, is pushing the inner knower into immanency. Essence-samadhi not only deepens our inner knower, but it radically transforms the outer knower, who is fused with the inner knower and joins the journey into immanency.

A further interesting factor is that when essence-samadhi is reached, the dynamic identity of the inner knower merges with his static identity, dissolving the duality between them. The resulting essence-knower can be considered as a higher merged static and dynamic identity journeying towards immanent I am.

- The next level of self-absorption is immanent samadhi, in which the inner knower finally transcends the duality between himself and immanent I am. In immanent samadhi, the outer knower enters the field of immanent I am. In fact, he becomes the secondary center of immanent I am, while the inner knower becomes immanent I am, the immanent knower.

When the immanent knower is realized, in him, too, both static and dynamic identities effectively become one, and he now begins to exist without any duality of his own in his relationship with primordial I am.

What is immanent samadhi? It is not something that is easy to grasp. It is our shift of identity from essence-me into immanent I am, a very profound realization indeed. In this, also, the internal outer knower with the outer knower's bare attention is the one who pushes pure attention into immanency.

The outer knower, with his internal attention and then second level pure attention, as well as recognition and conscious intelligence, is our essential companion all the way on this inward part of the path. The journey would not be possible, nor be a conscious one, without the outer knower's support and participation.

We need to remember that it is only in self-absorption that the bare attention of the outer knower is joined with his internal attention and these merge with the inner knower, accompanying him on his inward journey. In all the other levels of awakening and recognition, such as where embodiment of pure me and of conscious me are concerned, only the outer knower's internal attention is involved; in such cases, the internal outer knower relates to all those centers of pure subjectivity from its remote position.

This is similar with the inner knower, as it is only in self-absorption that his static and dynamic identities (conscious me and pure attention) function in unison. However, the

flavor of this unison is slightly different in the inner knower than in the internal outer knower because conscious me (or essence-me) is more passive in self-absorption.

Different processes could be said to be ongoing simultaneously in this self-absorption: the outer knower's bare attention (in unison with internal attention) is pushing itself – or is being pulled – into the bare attention of the inner knower, the outer knower's inner attention is pulling his bare attention into the bare attention of the inner knower, and the inner knower's pure attention is pushing essence-me into immanency – and as was explained, this pushing is additionally supported by the outer knower's second level of pure attention.

While we see the merging of the dynamic and static identities of both the outer and inner knowers in self-absorption, internal attention and pure attention can still simultaneously be in their usual dynamic relationships with all the centers of pure me.

Blessings,
Anadi

For a full glossary of terminology, please visit our website: www.anaditeaching.com/glossary