

The practice of Atma Vichara -2

Seeking the I thought

Practice

Sit quietly, relax and become still.

Let your attitude be vigilant alert and bright.

Thoughts are rising in awareness but who is it that is thinking these thoughts what is it that is at the centre of this thinking?

Bring your attention to the very first person, to the I thought itself. Look to find, identify and isolate what it is that claims I. Chase it, seek it, hold it, hold it. Can you actually find it, does it exist?

There is thinking, there is perception but where is the actual I that all my life I have assumed is at the centre of my thoughts and feelings. Incredibly and beautifully the answer is that there is no substance of I thought, it has all been assumed. I am and this is but I am nothing that can be held or identified. This is Advaita (not two).

Commentary

Through taking the principle approach of Atma Vichara and asking "Who am I?" "Who knows these thoughts?" there comes about a cessation of thought and a keen appreciation of the presence of being. There is a benign and positive state, thoughts have ceased and stillness abounds, presence of being is apparent.

Take care that unknowingly you are not viewing this presence as an object. Are you looking at it, experiencing it as a feeling, a mood or a state? The reality is deeper.

What is it that is experiencing presence as an object? It is the residual I thought. Even though other thoughts are quiet, you are still maintained as the identity I, looking at the presence of being as an experience. This will continue to dominate unless discrimination sees through it. The Atma Vichara practice given above is that discrimination.