

DHARMA -- SEEING "SEEING" ITSELF

There is something that I want to share with my kids before I am too old. I would like to sit each of them down (if they would) and explain the following. It's about "Awareness."

Let's say you don't feel well. You are sick or getting sick. That awareness that knows you don't feel well itself does not itself feel unwell. It is just fine, perfectly clear. If you will just actually check, you will realize that that our innate awareness is in fact always perfect and unaffected -- inviolable. That within us that is aware of anything (and everything) is itself not stained or tarnished by what it is aware of.

In fact, it's a little scary that this inner awareness is not more personal in any way. And that is just a bad habit, the fact that we don't identify with our awareness. We ARE it (or it is in us), but we don't know it better and are not much in touch with it. We do well to become familiar with it. Most of us fully identify with it, even though it is what allows us to be aware. LOL.

Now, some of us may be aware of this awareness. Yet, even if we are not aware of this awareness, we can be aware that we are not aware, and that awareness of our unawareness is also awareness. In fact, it's the same awareness I am talking about here.

And that's my point. We might want to pay more attention and get to know (become familiar with) that basic awareness within us. And that basic innate awareness can't be compromised or influenced in any way by what it is aware of. It's untouchable, pristine.

All of the highest pith-dharma teachings tell us not only to become aware of our innate awareness, but to rest in (or on top of) that awareness. Turning awareness on itself, like shining a light on a light, is at the heart of the advanced Mahamudra teachings.

Yet, just as the eye cannot see itself, so awareness being aware of itself somehow short-circuits our ingrained dualism and forces us into a nondual state, a state where seeing sees itself seeing, but with no object to be seen other than itself. Otherwise, nothing happens and our mind remains normal. It reminds me of Peter Pan's quote "Second star to the right and straight on till morning." When non-duality strikes, we are flat out.

And so, any dharma practice that we might do has at its heart what I am attempting to describe above, launching ourselves beyond duality. And beyond duality is by definition singular, i.e. non-dual. It's like we are standing on our tiptoes, leaning into the wind of non-duality until it is our sole support. There are no witnesses and nothing to be seen, yet we see (and are one with) the seeing itself. We are all-in or all-out or both.

"As Bodhicitta is so precious,
May those without it now create it,
May those who have it not destroy it,
And may it ever grow and flourish"

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