

Am I My Limited Mind?

The third of the five sheaths veiling the Self is *manomaya* – the belief that I am identical to *manas*, the ‘moving mind’. The word ‘mind’ is used in several different ways, even within the Direct Path teaching. In the two volumes of *Presence*, Rupert mostly uses the term ‘mind’ to refer to thoughts, images, memories, ideas, concepts, hopes, desires etc., and this is what is meant by *manas*. Our experience of ‘mind’, in this sense, is a continual stream of all of these things, which pauses in deep sleep, starts up again in dreaming sleep and continues during the waking state. Occasionally Rupert uses ‘mind’ in a broader sense to include sensations and perceptions, but this is always clear from the context.

It is important to distinguish these uses of the word ‘mind’ from the Buddhist concept of ‘original mind’ which might be described as the vast, open, empty, knowing field in which *manas* arises, and which, in our terminology, refers to pure consciousness. Rupert has used the concept of ‘original mind’ in several of his recent meditations, distinguishing ‘original mind’ from the ‘objects of mind’. But in this paper, ‘mind’ refers only to *manas*, the stream of ‘objects of mind’.

Here is Rupert’s description of *manomaya*:

The first attribute we usually add to our self, to the simple knowing of our own being, is the belief that it resides *in*, is made *of* and is limited *to* the body and mind. We consider that our self resides inside the body and mind and that everyone and everything else resides outside.

This is the primary belief that is responsible for the fundamental presumption that underpins our entire culture, that experience is divided into two parts — a separate, inside subject, the self that knows, feels or perceives, and a separate, outside object, other or world that is known, felt or perceived. ...

Now what about the mind that, for most of us, is considered to be identical with our self? The mind consists of thoughts and images. In fact, no one has ever experienced a mind as such, that is, a permanently existing container of all thoughts, images, memories, fears, hopes, desires etc. The existence of a container of all of those is itself an idea. In other words, we do not know a mind, as such. All we know of the apparent mind is the current thought or image. ...

If we stay close to experience, using only our actual experience as a test of truth or reality, we will see that the body and mind do not *know* or *experience* — they are *known* or *experienced*.

[*Presence Volume I*, pp 7, 8, 10]

Once the idea of mind as a vast container is considered to represent something that actually exists, thought can have a field day! It can populate this imagined container called ‘mind’ with all sorts of imagined experiences such as time, space, memory, objects, people, birth, death, causality etc.

Only one thing is missing in this picture that would account for our current predicament: having created this imaginary world of time, space, causality etc. in thought, we then have to *forget* that it is all created simply with the thought that thinks it. In other words, we have to *forget* that it is imagined and *imagine* instead that it is real.

So, thought imagines that its very own creation is, in fact, not its very own creation but rather that it exists independent of its being thought about. At that moment imagination *seems* to become reality and reality itself seems, as a result, to become lost or veiled.

That is, imagination and reality change place. Imagination seems to become reality and reality is, at best, imagined or, worse still, considered non-existent.

This forgetting of the reality of experience is known as 'ignorance'. It is the ignoring of the direct, immediate and intimate nature of our experience. This ignoring of reality is synonymous with imagining the separate inside self and the separate outside world, that is, the subject and the object.

Once we have forgotten that time, space, entities, objects, causality etc. etc. are imagined, they seem to become very real and we, the imaginary people that appear as the result of this forgetting, seem to reap the inevitable consequences of this forgetting.

However, having forgotten that all this is simply a creation of thought, we find ourselves bemused by it, because deep in our hearts resides the knowledge of the reality of our experience. That is, there is no true forgetting. [*Presence Volume II*, p 156]

The Direct Path teaches that all objects point back to our true nature: 'Wherever the eye falls is the face of God'. Having allowed attention to travel 'outwards' towards an object of mind, body or world, we simply turn around and walk our way back, coming closer to our actual, raw experience with every step until we reach the limits of mind ...

The body/mind does not experience the world, but rather Consciousness 'experiences' the body/mind/world. Or, we could say that the body/mind/world rises as one single, indivisible 'perception' — not Consciousness 'seeing' a world through a body/mind, but rather Consciousness 'seeing' or 'experiencing' a body/mind/world.

Or, we could say, Consciousness doesn't 'see' or 'experience' a world through a mind, but rather the world is the mind (in the broadest sense of the word) that is 'seen' or 'experienced' by Consciousness.

In fact, that is not really true. However, it is a valid statement because it relieves us of the belief that Consciousness is located inside the body, looking out at a world. It is a step in the right direction.

It would be truer to say (and, of course, not completely true) that sensations, thoughts and perceptions appear or, more accurately, a sensation/thought/perception, appears in Consciousness, and that thinking alone abstracts or conceptualises a separate body, mind and world from the raw data of singular, seamless Experience.

In fact, even the slightly more refined concept of a single appearance, the body/mind/world (or sensation/thought/perception) is a concept that tries to evoke the 'taste' of Experience as it is, but refers to something that is never actually experienced, as such. However, it is another step 'in the right direction.'

It is 'truer' than the previous formulation but will, in time, be found to be simply another slightly more subtle conceptual superimposition upon Experience itself.

As we look closer — and notice that all we are doing is looking — we do not find sensations, thoughts and perceptions, or even a single 'sensation/thought/perception,' that is, we do not find any object or objects, gross or subtle, in Experience.

We could say, again provisionally, that we find sensing, thinking and perceiving or, more accurately, sensing/thinking/perceiving. Again, another 'step.' What we conceived as a single

'multi-dimensional' physical object is now conceived as a single 'multi-dimensional' subtle object.

And as we go further, that is, as we look with more simplicity and honesty, even the conceptualisation of Experience as 'sensing/thinking/perceiving' falls away and we could say that there is just Experiencing. Another step.

And what is it that 'knows' or 'experiences' Experiencing? Experiencing! There is nothing outside of Experiencing with which it could be known. It knows only Itself.

However, it doesn't know itself in the way that dualising thinking normally conceives of knowing, that is, in subject-object relationship.

For Experiencing, its knowing Itself is simply its being itself.

To know and to Be are One.

Now go deeply into Experiencing.

Does it stand back from itself in order to know 'something?'

Does it take place at a certain place? No, all apparent places would be made only of Experiencing.

Does it take place at a certain time? No, all apparent times would be made only of Experiencing.

... Experiencing is homogeneous, made of only one 'substance,' made only of Itself. ...

Does this one 'substance' ever appear or disappear? No! Into what would it disappear and from what would it appear? In order to legitimately claim the reality of such a place, it would have to be 'experienced' and would, therefore, be 'made out of' Experiencing. ...

Thinking falls silent even in attempting to look towards this 'one,' let alone in attempting to name it. Thinking is destroyed in the attempt like a moth turning towards a flame. It turns and as it turns, it dies. It cannot stand the light of Truth.

[\[http://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/the_everpresent_seamlessness_of_experience159\]](http://non-duality.rupertspira.com/read/the_everpresent_seamlessness_of_experience159)

Contemplation

With your mind, know ten thousand things; with your heart, feel only one reality.

[Rupert Spira]