

It Is What I Am

The clear seeing described in the previous paper is the direct knowing of oneself, not as a separate entity that lives inside a body that exists inside a world, but as that which knows the experience of mind, body and world. We can't define it, and all names are inadequate, but in order to speak or write about it, we need to give it a name. The names Rupert uses are 'awareness', 'consciousness', or simply 'I'. Here is Francis Lucille's summary of the first step in exploring the relationship between consciousness, I, and mind, body and world:

Consciousness is that which is hearing these words right now. It is that which perceives and in which the world, the body, and the mind appear. We place these phenomena, or objects, into three categories.

When we hear a sound or see and touch a solid object through our senses, we put these outer perceptions into the category that we call 'the world'.

When we have inner sensations of the body, these inner perceptions go into the category we call 'the body'.

When thoughts arise, they go into the category we call 'the mind'.

[Francis Lucille, *Truth, Love, Beauty: 'Permanent Satisfaction'*]

As soon as we start to label anything, we create an artificial division. As Francis explains, the first label we apply is a limitation of 'I', consciousness. For example, we might say 'I am a man' and this implies 'I am not a woman'. Every qualification of 'I am' creates a division. Francis explains how this first division into 'me' and 'not me' is the origin of ego and simultaneously the origin of the world.

FL: The moment we say, 'I am this or that' we create a division in reality . . .

Q: Between the me and the not me?

FL: Exactly, because if I am 'this', I am not 'not this'. There is something that I am not. I have assigned a limit, a contour to my being. The ego is this contour. It defines two separate domains, creating duality.

Q: So the ego is the first distinction, from which all others arise?

FL: Precisely. This distinction, the ego, the dualizing thought, which has no real foundation, creates plurality. It is a larger definition of the ego than the division between the observer and the observed, which is one of its modalities.

Q: It seems to me that defining the ego the way you have defined it simultaneously defines the world.

FL: Absolutely. The body-mind complex and the world are two sides of the same coin, artificially created by the same dualizing thought out of what was, and still is, oneness.

[Francis Lucille, *Eternity Now: 'There is Nothing that is Not Him'*]

It takes some detailed investigation of our experience for this to penetrate beyond just intellectual understanding. Rupert uses a systematic process which starts from the basic recognition: 'I am that which is aware of my experience', pure consciousness, and goes on to investigate the substance and reality of mind, body and world. Here is an extract from his description of that process in *The Transparency of Things*:

Once we have established the presence of Consciousness as a fact of actual experience, we can take another look at the mind, body and world from the point of view of Consciousness.

Where do our thoughts appear? Do they just appear *to* Consciousness or do they appear *in* Consciousness?

If they appear *to* Consciousness rather than *in* Consciousness, there would have to be a clearly perceived border or interface between the perceived thought and the perceiving Consciousness.

Do we experience such a border? Look at a thought now. Is it separate from Consciousness? Is there a place where they meet?

No! There is no dividing line between the two. The thought obviously occurs *within* Consciousness.

We can do the same experiment with a bodily sensation. Take the tingling sensation of the face.

Where does that sensation appear? Is there an interface between the sensation and Consciousness? Does it not appear in the same place as thoughts appear? Does it not appear not just *to* Consciousness but *within* Consciousness? ...

We can conduct the same experiment with the world, with our sense perceptions.

For instance, take a sound that would normally be conceptualised as taking place at a distance. Refuse any story that the mind tells us about the nature and whereabouts of that sound.

Does it not occur in the same place as the thoughts and sensations? Does it not arise within Consciousness? Are the sound and Consciousness not one seamless experience? Is the sound at a distance from Consciousness, separate from it? Is there a border or interface between the sound and Consciousness?

No! When thoughts, sensations and perceptions appear, they appear *in* Consciousness, not just *to* Consciousness.

[Rupert Spira, *The Transparency of Things: 'We Are What We Seek'*]

Having seen that thoughts, bodily sensations and perceptions of the world appear *in* consciousness, in other words, mind, body and world appear *in* consciousness, Rupert takes the exploration further to investigate the substance of thoughts, sensations and perceptions, and discover whether they are separate from the consciousness in which they appear:

Take a thought, for instance. Is its substance different from the Consciousness in which it appears?

Is there any difference between the actual sensation of the tingling in our fingers and the Consciousness in which it appears?

Take a sensation, a sound, a texture, a taste or a smell. See that each appears *within* Consciousness, and then go deeply into the experience itself and see what it is made of.

Is it made of a substance that is different or distinct from the Consciousness in which it appears? Is there any difference between the actual sensation or perception and Consciousness itself? ...

The very substance of every experience is the substance of Consciousness. Objects do not just appear *in* Consciousness; they appear *as* Consciousness.

Consciousness does not just *witness* every experience; it *expresses* itself as every experience.

Everything that is experienced is experienced *by, through, in* and *as* Consciousness.

[Rupert Spira, *The Transparency of Things: 'We Are What We Seek'*]

Having explored our experience in this way – as Rupert describes it, 'in the laboratory' – we can deepen our understanding by applying it as we go about our normal activities. This is when the mind has a tendency to rebel and revert to its previous materialistic model. For example, we might say 'all this sounds reasonable in theory, but when I look around, I see that everything is outside myself'. So here is an alternative approach which arrives at the same conclusion by a different route:

Imagine an everyday occurrence such as walking into your kitchen, making a cup of tea and leaving again.

Our normal view is that we, as an entity located in and as the body, enter the kitchen which was there prior to our entering it, unexperienced so to speak. When we leave the kitchen, we imagine that it remains as it was prior to our entering it, that is, unexperienced.

Let us look more closely: the kitchen neither conceives nor perceives itself to be 'a kitchen'. Both conceiving and perceiving are faculties of the mind.

Therefore, in the absence of mind, the kitchen cannot exist either as a concept or a percept.

So, when it is neither conceived or perceived, in what form could it exist? To exist it must have a form. However, in the absence of mind, that 'form' cannot be a perception, that is, it cannot be a sight, a sound, a smell, a sensation or a taste.

In other words, conception and perception are faculties or qualities of mind. They are not faculties of the kitchen. It is the mind that conceives of a 'kitchen' and gives 'it' its name and it is the mind that perceives and gives 'it' its form.

Now what is this 'it' independent of the mind? What are its qualities?

We have no doubt that when the 'kitchen' is experienced, there is SOMETHING present. There is experience. In other words, whatever the 'kitchen' actually IS in its own right, divested of those qualities of name and form that the mind superimposes upon 'it', is present. Whatever that is, it has no objective qualities, because all objective qualities are supplied by mind. In other words, whatever 'it' is, is both non-objective and present. That is, we can be sure that BEING is present in the experience of the 'kitchen'.

The experience of the 'kitchen' is also, by definition, known, and as all knowing takes place in Consciousness, we can also be sure that Consciousness is present in the experience of the 'kitchen'.

Thus we have arrived at the simple conclusion, drawn from our own experience, that Being and Consciousness are present in the experience of the 'thing in itself', whether that thing is a kitchen, a table or a universe.

We can also go further and observe from experience that the experience of the 'kitchen', and indeed all experience, is always only one experience, not two, and can therefore conclude that Being and Consciousness are one and the same.

In other words, what IT IS is made fundamentally out of Being/Consciousness.

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To go back to the example of walking into the kitchen ... nobody walks into a kitchen in time and space ...

There is Being/Consciousness. It is this Being/Consciousness that takes the shape of a sensation called the body which a subsequent thought identifies as 'I'.

This Being/Consciousness takes the shape of the body, then the walls, then the floor, then the kitchen, then the kettle, then the water, then the tea ... on and on. And woven into this constantly seeming morphing of Being/Consciousness is a train of thought that conceptualises all this experience as 'me' a body, walking into a kitchen, that was always here, and makes a cup of tea in a kettle that exists along with everything else independent of its being known ...

But in fact there is just Being/Consciousness, that is, just 'I', always in the same place which is a placeless place, always at the same timeless nowness, taking the shape of sensing, perceiving and thinking ... always only being itself, never giving birth to anything other than itself ... giving its own substance to every appearance.

'I' body-ing, 'I' wall-ing, 'I' floor-ing, 'I' kitchen-ing, 'I' kettle-ing, 'I' water-ing, 'I' tea-ing, 'I' etc-ing, etc-ing, etc-ing ...

So it is not that the universe, objects, others, the world etc is not real. Every experience is real but its reality is that of Being/Consciousness. In other words, IT IS WHAT I AM.

[Rupert Spira 1st February 2010, [It is what I am](#)]

Contemplation

There is only Consciousness, there is only Being, which simultaneously creates, witnesses, expresses and experiences itself in every experience we have. [Rupert Spira]