Nothing Happens to You

Post by Nirmala
Sunday, 02 August 2009 13:04

Everything happens within you. Nothing ever happens to you. You are the nondual consciousness that is experiencing the words on this page, and yet that consciousness is so empty and spacious that nothing ever happens to it. Just as a thunderstorm passes through the sky but does not happen to the sky, every thought, feeling, desire, sensation and event happens in awareness, but does not happen to it.

This is more obvious when it comes to an external event that doesn't take place near you. A bird flying high above you or the distant sound of traffic obviously happens within the field of awareness, but it doesn't feel like these events happen to you. Yet if that bird flew right in front of your face, or that traffic was slowing you down on the highway, there is a tendency to think something is happening to you. And anything that arises within your own body and mind feels even more like something that happens to you. If a strong experience of fear or desire or confusion arises, we tend to think it has happened to us instead of within us.

The sky is unharmed by the thunderstorm, and that is why we would say the storm happened in the sky instead of to the sky. What about your experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires? Do they harm your awareness? Or do they eventually pass like a summer raincloud? Is your awareness damaged by them, or is awareness still empty and awake, awaiting the next experience after a sensation, feeling, or thought passes?

Your body is within awareness. Because of its physical nature, something can happen to it that leaves a relatively lasting effect, but what about the awareness that is experiencing the body? Every sensation comes and goes in awareness. The sensations in your body are always changing and shifting, and then your attention also moves to other elements of your experience. Even a chronic painful condition is not in your awareness every moment. So even physical events or injuries do not happen to you, they happen within you. What would it mean if a sore muscle or a stomach ache was not happening to you, but just within your field of awareness? What if everything that happens within your body is just another event within the open sky of consciousness?

The most surprising thing is that this is even true of your deepest and innermost feelings and desires. There are feelings of unworthiness and intense longings that can arise deep within your chest or abdomen. It can almost seem like they are a part of you. And yet even they are happening within the field of awareness, and not really to you. What would it mean if a deep feeling of sadness or an overwhelming desire for true love was not happening to you, but just within your field of awareness? What if everything that moves within your heart and mind is just another event within the open sky of consciousness?

All experience passes like a raincloud and leaves behind the fresh, open space of endless awareness. The source of awareness is always here. You are always here. Everything else happens within awareness. Everything else comes and goes. There is not even a separate you within awareness because you are the source of awareness. And so, nothing happens to you; everything happens within you.

Nirmala is a nondual spiritual teacher in the Advaita tradition of nondual self inquiry . He offers sa tsang or "gatherings for the truth" across the United States and around the world as a celebration of the possibility, in every moment, of recognizing the limitless love that is our true nature. He also offers Nondual Spiritual Mentoring, or spiritual counseling , in one-on-one satsang sessions either in person or over the phone. He is the author of several free ebooks about nonduality , spirituality,

enlightenment, and spiritual awakening
, including a collection of
Rumi-like spiritual poems
entitled Gifts with No Giver. More information about mentoring sessions and
free satsang videos
are available on his website at
http://www.endless-satsang.com
.