

Transcript of Urban Guru Café Episode 68 – Randall Friend - Undefinable

Areti:maybe you can talk a bit about the investigation, how it's done, how you can look back to see that there is absolutely nothing there?

Randall: Well, if it can arise, then can it be reality? What knows that it came and went, that must be I?

That knowing must be I, not the coming and going, not the sense, not the feeling, not the idea because those are all patterns in some way which come and go. But what we have always referred to as I, what we really mean by I is that knowing, or I, or self.

So we are really saying is that the I is false as an individual self among things, a thing among things. What we really mean by I is that sense of being, that sense of existence, that's what we really mean when we say I, that's what the real reference for I is. That's already known, we are trying to discard the I, or discard the me, see through the me, and it's very confusing because that I is intimately known. We can't negate it because it is always there, but I is taken to be an individual, an independent entity and that is false, that is still the mind's template of duality and thingness, so if the I is a thing then there must be all that is not I, and that's isolation, that's limitation, that's being a small insignificant temporary thing and that's our feeling of limitation. But the I, refers to, something which is undeniable and that is that present sense of being or existence which is the same thing as that sense of knowing, that present knowing which is that subjectivity, which is found to be limitless.

But the instant we start questioning it, the game is up because this illusion, we may call it illusion, delusion, this false idea of reality is entirely dependent upon the belief that I am an individual. Because everything is dependent on that, every thing from there is dependent on that sense of an individual entity, its dependent on it, there can't be anything else without that I. There can't be God, there can't be the universe, there can't be the computer screen without that sense of an individual I. Every other thing is dependent on that.

Nisargadatta said that the seed of duality is "I am." I am a thing, I am this or that, the seed of duality, the instant we have taken I am, that knowledge of existence, that undeniable knowledge of existence, the instant we have taken that in terms of the mind, in terms of things, the world comes into creation, the world is created in concept as the opposite of I.

Areti: Nisargadatta says that I am beyond consciousness?

Randall: Yes, well take a look, do you know consciousness? Do you know of it? Do you know the absence of consciousness? We call that deep sleep, and then dreams come in, that's consciousness, and in that consciousness there is the world. So we could say that consciousness is the appearance, and you are that which knows the appearance. So you are that which knows consciousness. Consciousness fades again then comes back we call that the waking state and once again you know the arrival of consciousness. Very clearly you know that, every day you know that, you know it comes and you know it goes, without a doubt, so you know consciousness.

And in consciousness comes that sensation we call the body, comes the sensation we call thought, comes the sensation we call the world, or the perceptions we call the world. Consciousness is required for all of that, yet you know even the arrival and departure of consciousness and you know that, it's already known. It's not something that's found, we don't go somewhere and sit in the cave for 20 years to know that consciousness comes and goes, we already know, we just don't notice that, it's not pointed out.

And that consciousness is required for that conceptual thingness, we might say consciousness is mind, can we differentiate the two? Can we ever differentiate mind from consciousness? So its mind that sleeps, you do not sleep, mind sleeps, and the conceptualization sleeps, that's obvious direct experience, mind sleeps. The mind sleeps, it stirs and in that stirring a world comes and we call it a dream, there is no way to differentiate the dream from the waking state.

In fact there come experiences that are so bizarre that we sometimes ask, am I dreaming? Because we can't really differentiate the two. When the dream is happening we don't know the difference, the dream is consciousness, what part of the dream is not consciousness, and what part of the waking state right now is not in consciousness, and this will pass. Every bit of it will pass, you might call it the totality of appearance, right now, this will pass, and you know that it will pass, you see it come and go, you, that which remains.

So every movement, every feeling, every sensation, every perception, which pretty much encompasses everything, is gone.

If we define the seeing, and then we define consciousness, and then we define the mind, and then we define the body, you know absolutely, they are all separate and that's the only way the mind can do it. But can we ever differentiate that consciousness, from that which knows consciousness? Can we ever separate the reflection from the mirror?

There is no distance between consciousness and awareness except in concepts, except in trying to define them, which is always problematic. We never can do it, it's only a pointer, its only saying something remains, pure being remains as the appearance comes and goes, so the appearance cannot be what you are. And that, if its open to, that has the effect of really ripping the rug out from underneath that idea that I am an individual self, because everything I know about myself is gone and all that remains is pure being, pure untouched being.

Now just like the ocean, the waves can come and go. The waves come sometimes they are big, sometimes they are small, but if you touch a wave, you touch the water; the wave is not separate from water. The ocean of consciousness comes as waves but it never separates itself from that, it is always that, it's always just this and if you say that, it's just that, because it's trying to eliminate thingness, it's trying to eliminate duality, you are that. That is the closest we can get, you are that. You are this just this, the instant we go any farther we have already conceptualized. In fact you are that is still even a concept, it doesn't even have to be said. You are, you are without saying you are, and that's as far as we can ever go.

If we touch what is with a label... So right now just what is, just this, this right here and now when all the meaning has gone from the words, when all the words are inert and there is no meaning, then the instant that we touch this with a concept we have created the world, we have instantly created the world.

So there is a lamp, I just touched what is with a label, in saying there is a lamp, I have automatically created the table, the room, the walls, the space, time, the universe, I have instantly created all of that by differentiating the lamp, by giving it a name, giving it a label, because then it's a thing, then it is a separate thing.