

Beyond “What About Me?”

The Torrent of Fulfillment in Nonduality

Introduction

For most people, life revolves around the thought, “What about me?” This preoccupation with self shapes decisions, relationships, and ambitions. It emerges from a deeper identification with the "person"—the sense of a separate self, or ego, that seeks to protect and enhance itself. When most people say “I,” they are referring to this construct, the "me" that feels bound by past experiences and future anxieties.

From a nondual perspective, however, this “I” is not the true self. The separate self is an illusion, a mental construct that appears real but lacks any substantial existence. Those who realize the truth of nonduality understand that the real “I” is not the person but **consciousness itself**—the infinite awareness in which all experiences arise.

When this shift occurs, the incessant thought of “What about me?” begins to dissolve. Life, no longer constrained by egoic concerns, flows abundantly like a torrent rather than a trickle. This article explores the profound freedom that arises when we transcend the illusion of the "me" and live as the limitless presence we truly are.

The Ego’s Lens: Me, My, Mine

Most people live within the framework of **Me, My, Mine**, constantly filtering life through the lens of a separate self:

1. **Me:** The ego identifies as the “person” who experiences life. Every situation is evaluated based on how it affects “me”—my happiness, my reputation, my comfort.
2. **My:** The ego extends its identity by claiming ownership over external circumstances. "My successes," "my problems," "my relationships" define the contours of the separate self.
3. **Mine:** The ego fortifies itself through attachments to possessions, achievements, and roles. It clings to “mine” as a way to reinforce its sense of individuality.

When people say “I,” they are almost always referring to this limited construct of the person. But this "I" is not the ultimate truth of who they are—it is a temporary, conditioned identity. This attachment to the "me" keeps life constrained, reducing it to a trickle of desires, fears, and judgments.

The True “I”: Consciousness

In nonduality, a profound shift occurs when we realize that the true "I" is not the person but **consciousness** - the timeless, formless awareness in which all experiences appear.

1. **Awareness, Not Identity:** Consciousness is the unchanging presence that witnesses the ever-changing experiences of the body, mind, and world. Unlike the "me," it is not bound by personal history or future concerns.
2. **The Dissolution of Separation:** In recognizing the true "I" as consciousness, the illusion of separation dissolves. There is no longer a "me" in opposition to "others" or "the world." All distinctions arise within the same field of awareness.
3. **Freedom from the “What About Me?” Thought:** The thought “What about me?” loses its power when it is seen for what it is—a fleeting mental activity arising in consciousness. Awareness does not need to defend or enhance itself because it is already whole.

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Surrendering the “What About Me?” Thought

The ego clings to the thought “What about me?” as its central refrain. It shapes relationships, ambitions, and even spiritual practice around the question of how things serve the self. But what happens when this thought is surrendered?

1. **The End of Self-Centeredness:** Without the fixation on "me," life expands beyond the narrow confines of egoic thinking. The false boundaries that separate "my interests" from the interests of the whole dissolve. Life becomes a seamless flow of interconnectedness.
2. **Life as a Torrent:** When the "me" no longer obstructs the flow of life, existence is experienced as a torrent—vibrant, abundant, and dynamic. The trickle of self-concern is replaced by the vastness of being itself, unfiltered and unbound.
3. **Fulfillment Beyond the Self:** True fulfillment arises when we align with something larger than the ego. This could mean serving others, creating selflessly, or simply abiding in the recognition of oneness. In this way, life ceases to be about “getting” and becomes a celebration of being.

Why the Ego Resists Liberation

The ego does not want what nonduality offers because it sees liberation as a threat to its existence. Letting go of “What about me?” feels like annihilation to the ego, which thrives on separation and control. This resistance is subtle. The ego may disguise its self-centeredness as noble pursuits, spiritual seeking, or even acts of generosity. But as long as the "me" is at the center, the ego remains intact. True liberation comes when the illusion of a separate self is exposed, and the "I" is recognized as consciousness.

Living as Consciousness

When the “What about me?” thought dissolves, the realization of the true “I” transforms life. This is not a conceptual understanding but a direct experience of living as consciousness itself.

1. **Selfless Action:** Actions arise spontaneously from the whole, without the interference of a separate self claiming ownership. This is not sacrifice but freedom—acting without attachment to outcomes or identity.
2. **Oneness with Life:** The distinction between self and other vanishes. Serving others, expressing creativity, or simply being present becomes a natural extension of what you are.
3. **The Simplicity of Being:** The ultimate fulfillment lies not in doing but in being. Awareness, which is untouched by the concerns of the "me," reveals itself as the source of peace, joy, and love.

Conclusion

The thought “What about me?” reflects the ego’s relentless preoccupation with preserving its illusory identity. For most, this thought dominates life, creating a constricted existence defined by **Me, My, Mine**. But for those who are ready to surrender this thought, a profound shift occurs. In the absence of “me,” life flows abundantly, like a torrent that was always present but obscured by the dam of self-concern. This surrender is not the loss of life but the recognition of its fullness.

The true "I," realized as consciousness, is already whole, requiring nothing and lacking nothing. Living as consciousness is the liberation from the illusion of separation. It is the discovery that what you are is not the person, not the story, but the timeless awareness in which all arises. In this recognition, the question “What about me?” fades away, leaving only the boundless simplicity of being.

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Invitation to the Temple of Silence

A Non-duality Zoom Group

Dear Friend,

You are warmly invited to join the **Temple of Silence**, an online Zoom group dedicated to exploring the essence of non-duality. In this gathering, we focus not on personal stories but on gently turning our attention to the boundless awareness that holds all stories and experiences within it—our true nature.

The Temple of Silence Mission Statement: *“The Temple of Silence Zoom group offers a decentralized space where friends gather, some seeking to realize their true nature, others resting in its recognition. Discussions focus less on fleeting personal stories and more on the reliable, wholeness of our True nature. Questions are welcomed, and when attention drifts into mental narratives, it is gently redirected to what never comes and goes. In this open space, all are invited to knowingly experience the oneness that underlies all appearances.”*

When: Open meeting on Wednesdays at 10:00 AM Eastern Time on ZOOM

Meeting ID: 935 829 6350

Passcode: tos

The Temple of Silence Zoom Group is not a therapy group, and there is no charge to attend the meetings. This document is part of “The Temple of Silence - From Knowledge to Experience” article series and was created as a public service. For those new to nonduality, this series of articles offers clear guidance into this profound understanding. We hope the content resonates with the deeper truth within you. We look forward to your presence in our next gathering.

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Please visit www.beingwalter.com for more nondual articles, poetry and information regarding Walter’s books *“Take Heart, Seeker”* and *“The Temple of Silence”*.