



That Which is Looking, by Adyashanti

Only when you turn attention to awareness itself, there isn't anything behind it. That's what returning to the source means. It means that nothing is next. There's nothing behind it. With a thought there's always something behind it. There's always the awareness of thought. So awareness is behind it. With a feeling there's always something behind it. With the conditioned tendency there's always something behind it. There's always awareness behind everything that's perceivable. Everything that's thinkable. There's always something behind it: namely that awareness. Spirit. To 'look within' doesn't mean to look for something really amazing to happen. To look for the states of consciousness to change. That's not what look within means. Have any of you looked within like that? I've spent so many hours looking within that way - not thousands, tens of thousands of hours looking within. And I was looking ... the same way we look outside. You know, like we're looking for something. And so you look inside. It's a great teaching, but then what do you do? You tend to look for stuff. Look for really groovy spiritual stuff to happen. Right? It's the same looking. It's not really different than looking for a million bucks, or a hot looking guy or gal or success. It's just looking for inner stuff. And there's a world of inner things and experiences, just like there's an outer world of things to look for. But the inner world, it's not any more real or significant than the outer world. So to look within doesn't mean that, to look within in a way that you're looking for something. Looking for a treasure. It means to go to the root. And the root is the looking itself. To turn within is to turn to that which is looking. So that we find out for ourselves that there isn't anybody that's looking! Looking is looking. There isn't someone there called 'me' that's behind awareness that's aware. Awareness is aware. It's the opposite: I'm not aware; awareness is aware of me. And this is quite a shock when you really come upon it! This is really 'one without a second' as Ramana (Maharshi) used to say. That the self is one without a second. Without a second means: nothing behind it. No deeper return to go to. You've returned to your natural state. In Zen we used to call it 'taking the backward step.' We (generally) want to take the forward step: to pursue, to seek, to find. But the backward step is very simple ... return to what you are. Till that flash of recognition dawns, that awareness itself is what you are. Just like the flash of lightning in an empty sky - a spontaneous flash! The easiest thing in spirituality is for it to become complex, instead of simple. But this is a very simple thing which is why it can penetrate so deeply. So quickly. So immediately. --Adyashanti

