

You Don't Know Me

Who am I? Who are you and who others may think you are, these are questions that grow early in our life experience of identification and discriminations and our developing ego.

What we “are” is a constantly changing set of manifestations of karma. Karma being actions applied to the energy of formations. Just as we recognize vast changes in our selves over time, we can truly say that we are no longer the “person” we once identified as a self only a short time ago. This is also the case with every person we “know” such as parent, sibling, cousin, neighbor, work associate, or complete stranger. The experience we associate with all our relationships is a collection of impressions of habit energies we carry along through time/space. Those habit energies instantiate and disappear constantly, with or without observations, in others just as they do in our selves. To “know” someone is actually a false statement and a very misleading idea of the world we live in.

The truth of life is that we are in constant movement of our karmic engine, modifying, investigating, observing, and surprised by our collective experience of self. In other words, we are constantly finding out who we are, without ever attaining a complete idea or definition of that very search. So, if we never “know” who we are, how can we expect others to do it for or about us?

This is one of the fundamental questions of Buddhism. And the proposed answer comes by way of profound insight into the nature of “knowing”. By intuitive reasoning and self observation we can come to witness a process of collecting habit energies that we identify as characteristics, colors, shapes, etc. What we know is simply a collection of impressions; impressions we maintain as identification and hold as permanent attributes. Of course this is the process of ego and solidification, which is truly necrology as it self-destructs just as quickly as it appears, as it is a death of living, a living and constantly moving process rather than a static thing. It is this process of identification that entangles our experience of life as a struggle to remain and hold, against the massive flow of energy, karma, and living momentum, from which arises all our various stress and anxiety. Our “goal”, so-to-say, is to life in the flow of the momentum of manifestations of all aspects or potential of life from our inner perspective as well as our experience of our environments and others. Buddhism proposes that this shift in experience would overwhelm our habit energy of maintaining past experiences as though they are current. Holding on to past as though it is current is our very cause of stress and anxiety. Focused on the amazing ‘reality’ of constant flux, change, and momentum completely emancipates our mind of the preoccupations of false imaginings of the past as though current. This habit energy is taught, inculcated, and ‘written into’ the fabric of our societies and families.

Mother, daughter, father and son; wife, husband, and on it goes. So many words to hold and compartmentalize our relationships with self and other from past to present. What if we could alter our minds to engage with our relations through an observation of their suchnesses (an ongoing process of “being” or instantiations of potential in a stream of experience). To take the idea of mother for instance, as a person whose tendencies and trajectories in life are nurturing to our well-being and motivated of compassion for us and for others as a suchness of her being, rather than a quality required of her and possessed or owned by us. That those “qualities” (suchnesses) are to be found in all sentient beings and just as desired and admirable. This could free our mothers to be their own person and free our loaded expectation of their responsibility to our ego and identity to become a deep and abiding respect for her being.

Something to consider as we discover each moment in our own experience of life.