

AMODA MAA – Awakening is not an Experience

There is a quiet but persistent assumption on the spiritual path that awakening will arrive as a particular kind of experience. It is imagined as something clear, perhaps even extraordinary—an unmistakable shift into peace, or bliss, or a sense of unity with all things. And so, much of the search becomes oriented toward the anticipation of such an event.

Yet this assumption, though rarely questioned, is where much of the confusion begins.

All experience, by its very nature, is transient. It arises, it takes shape for a time, and it passes. This is true of the most ordinary sensations, and it is equally true of the most profound and expansive states. No matter how beautiful or meaningful an experience may be, it does not remain. It cannot be held. It does not define what you are.

If awakening were an experience, it too would be subject to this same movement. It would come and go. It would begin and end. And what begins and ends cannot be the ground of being. It cannot be what you essentially are.

So there is an invitation here to look in a different direction. Not toward what is appearing, and not toward what might appear in the future, but toward that which is aware of all appearances.

What is it that knows experience?

There is something present that does not come and go with the changing flow of thoughts, sensations, and perceptions. It is here before an experience arises, it is present as the experience unfolds, and it remains when the experience fades. It does not become more present in moments of clarity, nor less present in moments of confusion. It does not depend on what is happening.

This is not an experience in itself. It is that within which all experience takes place.

And yet, the habit of seeking persists. The mind continues to look for something it can recognize, something it can claim as a result, something that confirms that “this is it.” In doing so, it subtly reinforces the sense of a separate self—the one who is seeking, the one who is waiting, the one who hopes to arrive at some final point of resolution.

This movement is very natural. It is deeply conditioned. But it is also what keeps the simplicity of what is here from being clearly seen.

For what is being sought is not hidden. It is not distant. It is not something that needs to be created

or attained. It is already present, quietly and effortlessly, as the very condition for any experience to be known at all.

Awakening, then, is not a movement toward a new experience. It is not a peak, not a state, not a refinement of perception or an expansion of energy. It is the simple, direct recognition of what has always been here, overlooked because attention has been drawn to what appears rather than to that which knows the appearing.

This recognition is often far more ordinary than expected. It may not carry any particular sense of significance. There may be no dramatic shift, no sense of attainment. And yet, in this ordinariness, there is a profound clarity.

There is just this—this aware presence, already here, already whole, already complete in itself.

It does not need to be maintained. It does not need to be returned to. It is not something that can be lost, because it is not something that comes and goes.

It is what you are.