

The Impersonal View



Introduction

The journey from personal identification with the body and mind to the recognition of impersonal, pure being is a profound shift in understanding that has occupied the hearts and minds of spiritual seekers for centuries. This shift is not merely conceptual but experiential, transforming the way one perceives and interacts with life.

At its core, this journey is one of disidentifying from the body/mind constructs and realizing that one's true nature is impersonal awareness, untouched by the limitations of personality or ego. The consequences of this realization are far-reaching, leading to non-judgment, equanimity, and deep peace, aligned with "just what is" appearing. As we will explore, this pure being is peace itself, impersonal and free of any agenda, just as is expressed in Walter's books "*Take Heart, Seeker*" and "*The Temple of Silence*".

Throughout this article, we will explore teachings from ancient sages, contemporary nondual teachers, and excerpts from Walter's own poetry and haiku, which express this transition from the personal to the impersonal. As we journey together, the invitation is to question deeply and ultimately recognize yourself as the unchanging awareness behind all experience.

Chapter 1: The Illusion of the Personal Self

The first obstacle to realizing our true nature as impersonal awareness is the deeply ingrained belief in a separate, personal self. This sense of self arises from identification with the body, mind, and their myriad experiences. The ego claims ownership over thoughts, emotions, and actions, creating the illusion of separateness.

Ancient spiritual traditions such as Advaita Vedanta and teachings from the Upanishads repeatedly emphasize that this sense of individuality is a temporary phenomenon. In the *Ashtavakra Gita*, we find the instruction to simply "*observe the mind's movements but do not ride along with them*" (Ashtavakra Gita 1:4). It is through this observation, without identification, that the false notion of a personal self begins to dissolve.

Walter echoes this sentiment in his poem "*Missing Person*" from "*The Temple of Silence*":

*"I have looked for him
in every dark corner
in every isolated recess
and have found no one."*

The dissolution of the egoic self is not the loss of anything real but rather the shedding of an illusion. What remains after the ego dissolves is the recognition that we are not the body, not the mind, but the awareness in which all these experiences arise.

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Chapter 2: Self-Inquiry—Who Am I?

One of the most direct paths to disidentifying with the personal self is the practice of self-inquiry. Sri Ramana Maharshi, a great nondual sage, emphasized the simple yet profound question, *"Who am I?"* This question is not meant to be answered with the intellect but to direct attention back to the source of all experience: the pure awareness that is ever-present.

Walter captures the essence of self-inquiry in his poem *"Tracing Back"* from *"Take Heart, Seeker"*:

*"My mind too is known and here is the key
what knows my mind is what I must be
I trace my way back and abide in that one
which reveals my essence, a radiant sun."*

Self-inquiry invites us to trace our way back from the mind and body to the awareness that knows them. As this inquiry deepens, it becomes clear that awareness is always present, unchanging, and unaffected by the passing phenomena of thoughts and sensations.

Chapter 3: The Consequences of Impersonality

As one begins to recognize themselves as the impersonal awareness, certain qualities naturally arise. One of the most profound is non-judgment. When there is no longer identification with the personal self, there is no need to defend or protect the ego's beliefs and preferences. The world is seen as it is—neither good nor bad, but simply unfolding.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna instructs Arjuna on the importance of performing action without attachment to the results. This non-attachment stems from the recognition that *"I am not the doer"* (*Bhagavad Gita* 3:27). When one is no longer identified as the doer, the mind's tendency to judge, criticize, or cling to outcomes fades, leaving only peaceful acceptance.

Walter captures this impersonal perspective in his haiku from the *"Nondual Haiku"* collection:

*"the doership sailed off
pride, guilt, shame, fear, the cargo
no one waved goodbye."*

Non-judgment arises naturally from the recognition that the personal self is an illusion. Without identification, life's events no longer carry the same emotional charge, allowing one to remain peaceful, regardless of the external circumstances.

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Chapter 4: Abiding in Pure Being

As we shift from the personal to the impersonal, we begin to experience life as pure being. This being is not something we attain but something we recognize as always present. Pure being is not concerned with the fluctuations of the mind or the body. It is impersonal, peaceful, and all-embracing. In his poem *"I am I"* from *"The Temple of Silence"*, Walter expresses this impersonal recognition:

*"I was never born having always existed.
i borrow my seeming existence from I.
I was/is/always will be there.
i forgot i am I and seem to suffer in ignorance."*

This recognition that "I am I" is the cornerstone of nondual realization. There is no longer a separate "I" that is born, lives, and dies. There is only the one, impersonal awareness that underlies all experience.

Chapter 5: Living Impersonally—Aligned with ‘What Is’

When we no longer identify with the personal self, life becomes an effortless flow. Actions arise spontaneously from the present moment, untainted by personal desire or fear. This is what it means to be aligned with "what is"—to live in harmony with the unfolding of life without resistance or judgment. Walter encapsulates this alignment in his poem *"Oh How We Shine!"* from *"The Temple of Silence"*:

*"Engaged yet resigned
perfectly aligned
without resistance
OH! How we shine!"*

To live in this way is to live in peace, fully immersed in the present, free from the burden of past and future concerns. This is not a state of passivity but a dynamic participation in life, guided by the impersonal intelligence that animates all things.

Conclusion

The journey from the personal to the impersonal is a journey of profound liberation. As we disidentify with the body and mind, we come to rest in the awareness that we are beyond all form and name. In this realization, the world is seen as it truly is—an expression of the one, impersonal reality. Through self-inquiry, non-judgment, and a deep alignment with "what is," we live as pure being, free from the limitations of the personal self. This impersonal awareness is peace itself, and as Walter writes in *"The Temple of Silence"* from the book *"The Temple of Silence"*:

*"Allow everything to be
as it is and come to see
to enter there is no cost
nothing of value could be lost."*

In this place of impersonal awareness, nothing is ever lost because nothing was ever personal to begin with. This is the unfiltered view—the view of life as it truly is, beyond the illusions of separation and limitation.

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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”*.