

Following Desire Back to Its Source

Written by Nirmala
Friday, 17 June 2011 15:03

Q: It often happens that I casually meet good-looking women during my day-to-day activities. As soon as this happens, something registers in my mind, and my equilibrium and tranquility are gone. I believe my thoughts and give attention to them, trying in every way to explore the situation. For hours and days to come, thoughts about that situation come back over and over again, even if the real situation is long gone. It seems I'm unable or I don't want to turn my attention beyond them to the present moment, to my looking Presence.

A: Your experience of being caught up in thought is a very common one. The mind is structured to focus in this way. The antidote is not to change or fix your thoughts, but to experience them even more fully and inquire: How do you know what you are thinking? What is thought, really? What is the benefit or reward you experience from these thoughts? What happens if you just let your thoughts be the way they are? What else is present right now besides thoughts? If you experience your thoughts more fully, it becomes easier to experience everything else that is also present more fully.

It's great that you have enough distance from your thoughts that they don't control your behavior. That distance allows you to not act on the thoughts if they aren't really true for you. By the way, there's nothing wrong with acting on a thought or an attraction to a woman if it is true for you to do so within the context of your life and the particular situation. But when it is not true to act on a thought, then that is an opportunity to explore thought and the nature of your mind.

One way to discover more about the nature of your thoughts is to drop down into the Heart or belly and experience your thoughts from there. This can naturally provide more distance from your thoughts and make it easier to observe their nature as well as experience more of the rest of reality. There's nothing wrong with thoughts, but they are a very small and limited aspect of reality. When we experience thoughts from the head, the thoughts are magnified and made to appear much bigger and more important than they really are. When we experience the same thoughts from our Heart, they appear "actual size," and it is easier to have a perspective on how important and meaningful they are.

When a thought has an obsessive quality, charged emotions or deeper layers of conditioning are probably being triggered. And, of course, in the case of seeing a person you are attracted to, this can trigger sexual desire. Such emotions or desires can be explored in the same way as the thoughts: How do you know you are attracted? What is it like to just feel your desire without trying to get rid of it or satisfy it? What else is present besides the attraction or pull of the desire?

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Desire can be a wonderful doorway into Presence if you follow it back to its source instead of following it out to the object of your desire. By following a desire back to its source, you can experience more and more of this natural happiness and the sweetness of love that is present in your Heart. What a relief it is to discover that you don't need to satisfy a desire to get to the satisfaction and joy within your Being.