

## The Dance Between the Mind and Reality

Written by Nirmala  
Tuesday, 06 July 2010 15:19

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*Someone contacted me on Facebook and wrote:*

I read your blog about beliefs and it is true that our beliefs change over time. Sometimes even in one day we may think two different things about reality and how everything functions. But then is there anything objective? Is there any final truth or is everything subjective? What is reality like outside our minds and beliefs? Do we create our worlds with our beliefs and mind? Thanks much.

*I replied:*

These are very good questions. There are several perspectives on the question of what is objectively real, and they all have some truth to them.

One perspective is that the only thing that is truly real is that which does not come and go or that which is eternal. And with this definition, nothing with a form or a name is real. The only real thing is the mystery beyond name and form which is the source of everything. This is a very absolute perspective and it can be very powerful in dissolving illusion and attachments. It cuts through all appearances to the infinite, empty presence at the core of all existence.

Another perspective would suggest that everything is real, that there is ultimately just one thing here and it is very real. Everything is a part of this reality and so everything is real, and everything is connected. This is a more heart centered perception and it can be very powerful in opening up the qualities of love, compassion and acceptance inherent in our awareness.

A third possibility is a kind of combination of the first two. It is possible to realize that there is just one thing and so everything is real, and at the same time discriminate how much reality there is in any experience. Some things have a lot of reality and some things have very little. Even if a thought or belief has some reality, it may not have very much. All of your thoughts fit between your ears, so how big can they actually be? This third perspective is a more practical and functional approach that evokes our capacity for discrimination and effective action.

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These three perspectives are summed up in the famous quote by Nisargadatta: "When I see I am nothing that is wisdom. When I see I am everything that is love. My life is a movement between these two." All three perspectives are true. They all hold some truth, and they all have a place in any complete understanding of reality. Yet none of them contain the whole truth, which is an inherent limitation of words and ideas.

More specifically regarding your questions, I would suggest that there is objective reality and there is also subjective reality, and life is a dance between these two. Reality outside of the mind and belief is pure, empty, limitless potential. That is the biggest truth and yet it is not a final truth since life apparently does not stay as pure potential and instead loves to move through mind and belief into form. It is purely objective in its resting state as eternal, infinite space, and it can become purely subjective when it moves all of the way into the realm of thought that has no correspondence to outer reality, like when we are daydreaming about a perfect lover. Most of the time reality or experience is a mix of objective reality and subjective reality.

The more objective our experience the more substantial, lasting and profound it is, and the more subjective our experience the more temporary and unsubstantial it becomes. Neither one is better or worse, but they are definitely different experiences, and we can discriminate how real or true our experience is. Since our minds are the source of subjective reality, the mind is not very useful in discriminating how real something is. To the mind everything looks equally real, so the mind is not helpful in distinguishing between objective reality and subjective reality. Fortunately, we also have a Heart, which is naturally able to distinguish how real or true an experience is. Truth or reality opens the Heart and quiets the mind, and in contrast something that is not very true or real contracts the Heart and makes the mind busier. You can read more about this capacity for discriminating how true or real something is in the [free download](#) of part two of Living from the Heart [here](#)

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This dance between objective reality and subjective belief is very alive and dynamic. As you mention, our experience can change dramatically in a single day or even a single moment with each thought or idea that pops into our head. And of course it can change even more dramatically in a moment where there is little or no thought and when therefore an aspect of objective reality shines through. So experientially there would appear to be no final experience of truth, but instead an endless unfolding play of truth with itself. What an amazing dance it creates!

Finally, as to your question whether we create our reality with our subjective thoughts and

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beliefs, I would suggest we co-create our subjective reality along with all of the other consciousness here. Our thoughts and beliefs have an effect on how reality appears, which is how this dance of life works: everything affects everything else. So even our thoughts in their limited subjective existence have an effect on everything else that happens.

However, there is still the question of how much effect do they have. Do our personal thoughts create the entire reality we experience? Or is reality also affected by other people's thoughts? And is human thought the only player in this game? What if there are many levels of Being that all have a part in this dance? What about our collective thoughts or beliefs? What about the thoughts or beliefs arising in the mind of God? What if there are an infinite number of conscious forces at work shaping objective reality into subjective experience?

So the answer may be that our beliefs affect reality along with everything else that affects reality. It could be that ultimately the creation of our reality is the sum effect of everything that affects the unfolding of life including our personal thoughts and beliefs. This can put it into perspective that it matters what we think and believe, but it does not matter that much. You can play with the effect your beliefs have without taking them too seriously. It turns out that most of what happens is the result of much bigger forces that we might call destiny or grace.

I hope this helps.

Warmly, Nirmala