

Who is the one that is aware?

We can always step back from our immediate experience. For example, a car swerves past on the inside, we have to brake hard, and nearly cause the guy behind to hit us... so we experience fear, anger, we react - such as shouting - and we take the corrective action. Meanwhile we can also experience all the body sensations associated with this and simply be aware of the anger rising, of the breathing getting shorter and of our blame mindset getting stuck in.

With mindful awareness and sharpness of attention, we can use this stepping back facility helpfully, to see our automated reaction start to take shape, but catch it almost before any response forms. This allows us to make a skilful, compassionate choice.

When in meditation, we can bring attention to the breathing, for example, and while directing the attention we may also notice that there is a thing we call attention.

We may simply observe, or directly experience sensations or feelings, or sounds, from a place of neutral awareness. This is experience without words or thought. What is this awareness. What does the awareness itself look like? What does it like or dislike? Is it kind, mean, critical, angry, amused, tired, quirky? Is it old, young, pretty or ugly? When the driver cuts us up, does it get angry?

story of the terrible accident.... if there is nothing left of us, what it still conscious?

Most of the time we direct attention towards something - out to the table, in to the breathing etc. But what happens if we direct the attention, to the attention? What do we find? Who, or what, is the observer?

Is the observer the 'me' we normally face the world with? Does it have our personality? If not, who is it, what is it?

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