

Getting "it" and losing "it"

Anne: I'm feeling bored with what we are doing right now. I want to actually do this work, rather than just describe what is happening for us in this room. I want to do get into my fixations. I want to see how I'm fixating, and how to avoid this.

Peter F: Can you see that you are fixating right now? You are creating that this isn't it. Actually you can see from your mood and the way you are holding your body that you are stuck. Given the general mood you are in, whatever you say, it will be an expression of the feeling that this just isn't it.

Anne: Yes. I can see that. I know that I'd like things to be different, but just wanting it to be different isn't changing anything. And you're right. I do feel stuck with this.

[Pause]

Peter F: You seem to be wanting me to do something. It also feels as though you want some attention directed specifically towards you, in the hope that something will then shift.

Anne: Well yes. I do.

Claude: I'd like to ask if ...

Peter F: Please excuse me interrupting. We will come back to your query. But I'm just wanting to observe Anne, that you are already poised to interpret WHATEVER Claude is about to say as "more boring description". At this moment you are predisposed to interpret whatever you hear as less than relevant. In other words you are predisposed to create that "this isn't it."

Anne: Hm, yes. Well, I prefer what you are saying now. This is more like what I've been wanting to do. I'm finding this useful.

Peter F: Perhaps. But now you are starting to move in the opposite direction. You are interpreting that this is it, or at least that this is closer to how things should be. Your experience is suddenly lighter. You don't feel particularly stuck at this point. In fact, in the absence of any obstruction this could evolve into an experience of ...

Anne: I've got it. I just got it. I've got what this whole process is for.

[Silence]

Henri: What happened? What did you do?

Anne: Nothing.

Henri: But you must have done something. You seem so certain and clear.

[Silence]

Henri: So what is it?

Anne: I don't know. I can't say what it is. I can't describe it, but I've got it.

[Silence]

Henri: But if you can't say what it is, how do you know you've got it.

Anne: But I have got it. I know. There's no need to know what it is. I've just got it. There isn't anything to know.

Henri: But what about the Zen saying Peter sometimes quotes, that "the moment you think you've got, you've lost it."

Anne: You can't take this away from me because in fact there isn't any IT. There is nothing to lose.

Michelle: But it still seems to me that you are saying that this is it, because you like it. Before, when you were feeling frustrated and bored you said that that wasn't it, and now you are obviously feeling great, so you think that "This is it."

Anne: This has got nothing to do with what I want. In fact I don't want this. It just IS.

[Silence]

Henri: I'm feeling uncomfortable right now. I'm not finding this very helpful or interesting.

Peter F: Your reaction isn't really surprising. When we think that someone else has got it, generally either of two things can happen. We can feel that we want it too, in which case we validate the experience. Or, we can negate the experience by dissociating from it. If we latch onto the experience-if it feels highly desirable-then we want to know what it is and how it occurred, in the hope that we can participate in the same experience. We start asking: "What is it?" and "How did it happen?" just as some of you have done. Alternatively, if we feel that we can't participate in the experience, we may try to invalidate it. Our jealousy can lead us to express indifference, or even to negate the experience by suggesting that "they just think they've got it", or that they are just fixating on their experience. Henri, you began by wanting to join Anne in her experience. To some extent you were basking in the afterglow of her breakthrough. But now that you feel you can't personally participate in it you are expressing disinterest in what has happened for her.

Henri: I can see that.

Anne: I'm just thinking. I could lose this. I'm wondering if there is a different experience that is completely invincible.

Peter F: Be careful! (Laughing) You can't afford to think like that.

Maurice: My understanding is that enlightenment is permanent.

Peter F: You have to be very careful who you listen to right now.

Anne: What do you mean?

Peter F: If you take Maurice's suggestion seriously and begin to participate in his construction, your present experience will very quickly dissipate.

Anne: So what should I do? Who should I listen to?

Peter F: I'm just pointing out the consequences of the different interpretations you could take on board.

Anne: I already feel that something has been taken from me.

Peter F: But you say that as though you have no role in it. If we hang onto something for long enough, it is bound to shift at some point. In fact, the moment we judge that it is valuable we have already distorted the original experience which lay beyond any judgment of good or bad, desirable or undesirable.

Extracted from a course held in Switzerland. Except for Peter F (Peter Fenner), the names don't correspond to actual participants in the course.

*If you are interested in the **Radiant Mind Course**, a **Free Audio CD** interview is available of Peter being asked about the Course, what the unconditioned mind is and how people can tell if they are experiencing nondual awareness.*

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