

## Experiencing the Witness State (*Sakshi*) as a Baseline for Therapeutic Work

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा |  
कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च ||

"The same Deity remains hidden in all beings, and is all-pervasive and the indwelling Self of all beings. He is the supervisor of actions, lives in all beings, (He is) the Witness, the bestower of intelligence, the Absolute and devoid of the (three) gunas."

- Shvetashvatara Upanishad S1 VI11

***Sakshi* (Witness)** pronounced "Sock she" means 'observer', or 'witness', and also can refer to the inner ever-present consciousness of the 'Supreme Being'. It also refers to a witness who will give a testimony, or bear witness to the truth of observation made in a moment in time. The word, *Sākshī* refers to a sense of pure unbiased awareness; and gives notion of the meditative sense of awareness that is able to witness events occurring in the world but without bias or involvement. Swami Rama would refer to this state as being like a lotus flower with its roots in the mud, but its flower above the water. Witness consciousness is similar in that a yogi can be in the world yet remaining above it. *Sakshi* objectively observes all thoughts, words and deeds without interfering with them or being affected by them. Panini states the term indicates a direct seer or eyewitness (Panini Sutras V.ii.91). *Sakshi* as well refer to Ishvara the witness of all in universal form.

### Exploration

Sit or lie down: observe the body. Observe the movement of the breath. Observe the thought process. Step back from the thoughts mentally and observe the silence within yourself as best as you can...

See if you can find the sense of watcher and that which is watched. It may be fleeting. It may come and go. It may be an ever-resent deep experience. Or something else.

Observe yourself as you open the eyes. Look around the room. Notice what you notice. Observe your mind. See if you can keep the witness state as you become more active. Observe all there is to observe. When you are ready, face inward into the circle.

Please say your name while remaining in the witness state as best as you can.

Namaste.