

LETTING GO OF GENDER

Q: I'd like to ask you a question about gender: Do you remember a time in your journey when you released your attachment to being a woman?

Linda: Yes, it was close to the end, and I remember the moment it happened. It was in the monastery in Japan . . .

The men in the monastery used to go out begging every few days in the warmer months. The women would stay in the monastery. We would stand in a row as they walked out of the gates chanting, and we'd have to bow to them. One day one of the monks stopped and bowed deeply to me and smiled . . . there was such respect and love in that single bow. In that moment I fully accepted being a woman – which meant I also let go of my personal attachment to being a woman. It was a very beautiful moment . . . I felt more feminine than I had ever felt, but not in a personal way. It was more a primal feeling of the male and female energy coming together. It wasn't like I was an individual woman – I was just female. I think I'd always had some resistance to being a woman. I just gave in to that completely in that moment. It was an incredibly primal feeling of being female, and with that came the letting go of it – of not being any gender, but being part of the whole. It was an acceptance that I wasn't special .

There were lots of times leading up to that when I'd be sitting in meditation and there would be no recognition of being male or female, or anything like that. But this was a demonstration, a realisation in me – a very deep letting go. I had been limiting myself by my resistance to being female. Now, there's no attachment to even being a body, so that's one step beyond being male or female. But at the same time I think I'm more feminine than I used to be because I don't resist it.

We have to accept everything. Essentially we're all the same in the deepest sense. When you realize that, it's amazing. There's no clash between anything - whether it's male and female, or anything else.