

Naked Bike Rides

Hi James,

Thanks so much for all your help. Things are going pretty well and I find myself immersed in learning about *advaita*. I have been watching your DVD's and have found a wealth of extra good stuff in them and have been reading the Upanishads etc. I have found that I have more sessions of being awareness throughout the day than I used to and that all that is consolidating more and more.

I have noticed a few fears surface that seem to be somewhat of an obstacle and they seem to pull me back to Maya just when things fell like a big shift is about to happen.

This might sound silly, but I have fears about what I will do if and when I am fully realized and established in self-knowledge. I have a fear I might start trying to run around and tell lots of people about all this 'spiritual' stuff.

James: It is natural to want to tell people. It is not the kiss of death. You will learn how to communicate. If you stick with the Vedanta as a life interest, you will become skillful at communicating what you know.

Jack: I have a fear that I might become a lot more extroverted and start relating to heaps of people and get involved in their lives somehow.

James: If you do, you will probably get burned and quit. Or get successful and wish you were nobody.

Jack: I suppose my fear is the fear of the unknown (because I don't know how it will be at all). I know that in the past (about 20 years ago) I was 'following' my intuition and trying to surrender to the highest and let it control my actions and some great results came and some not so great ones. Besides making a lot of progress at this time I was without the support of the scriptures and a guide, so I didn't know where it was all going and I would sometimes think that I was following my 'higher intuition' where I was just following some suppressed

psychological issue that dwelt in the recesses of my mind. It was very hard to discriminate. I mostly did a good job at working out what to not do. Sometimes though I made mistakes and followed these non-dharmic *vasanas*. The clincher was my intuition telling me to strip off naked and get back to nature by shedding all physical barriers. This worked fine for me as I was out in the 'bush' and really had a powerful experience of being physically reconnected to everything. The part that didn't work so well was that in this state I wandered out of the woods into civilized areas and they don't take kindly to people walking around naked for all the decent folk to see where I grew up. It didn't take long for the police to pick me up and they deposited me in a psychiatric Institution until the doctors said I was OK. I was only there for eleven days, but in that time I seriously came to doubt myself and decided to go back to being a normal person and forget about all the spiritual stuff. Either I wasn't ready yet or I hadn't learnt enough or whatever, but the experience was quite traumatic for me. Especially in the way my family, friends and peers treated me afterwards.

James: I am sure you know now that society is not the enemy, Jack. I was like that too, although I never went to such extremes. One day my guru said, "You are only rebelling against yourself, Ram." That did it for me. I got what he was talking about. You can't get society out of your mind by doing anything. You have to carefully examine which values are not serving you and discard them. It takes a long time to get the society out of the mind. Anyway, if you do it again, they won't lock you up. In Portland, Oregon where I spend the summers they have these naked bike rides which thousands of people do. Nobody gives a damn any more. You can move to Portland and have company. Or join a nudist colony. There are lots of nude beaches too. 😊

Jack: I know that my situation is vastly different now and I realize how misguided (or totally lacking in guidance) I was then, but I still have a fear that if I let go of 'control' of things and surrender that I might do something like that again, or worse.

Ram: It is not possible, Jack. Enlightenment cancels the doer so there is no one to do anything outrageous. You can't violate *dharma*.

Jack: I know that it isn't likely to happen and I will probably just become even more 'boring' than I already am these days, but the fear is strong and seemingly not without some justification. My confidence in myself is really what I need to reestablish I suppose. Anyway I was hoping you might have some advice or whatever.

James: Yes, it is just confidence. It will come. Don't worry about it. Just stick to what you are doing. Let the future take care of itself. And you can learn to enjoy being boring. I am a huge bore and love it.

Love,

James