

## How do I know if I am Enlightened?

Hi Ram,

It's a long time since our last contact. How and where are you and how's life going? I guess you will come to Europe soon.

I see you nearly every day online but there's nothing to ask. But today a question which I had for a long time came up again.

But first, thanks for writing your book. It's very clear, well written and gave me some new insights. I recommended it to some friends and the feedback is similar. I have the feeling I should soon start to read it again.. and again.. :-) So thank you..

For my question. As *moksha* is not an event or experience, how do I know I "reached." The search can stop for several reasons - even laziness.. :-) In the second chapter of the Gita Krishna talks about *sthitaprajna*. But it's easy to be even minded and calm if life is running smooth. If there are no catastrophes in my life, how can I know now how I would react then? If there's no fear in my life now how can I be sure there won't in the future? Mmh...

Thank you and greetings from sunny Italy,

Stephano

Hi Stephano,

Things are just fine. Fame seems to have struck. It is Bhagavan's will. What to do. I am in Portland, Oregon now and will be here for the next two months. Yes, I will be coming to Europe on September 2. Now to your question.

This issue is whether or not the lack of fear and the calmness of mind are the result of circumstances or whether it is the result of knowing that you are the self. It seems from your statements that you think it is conditional, that if circumstances changed you would not be peaceful and happy. But maybe not. Only you know. It may be that because you are a *dharmi* and do everything right you have a high degree of *sattva*. I see it when I look at your aura. Steady *sattva* is almost the same as *moksa* because it reflects the bliss of awareness so faithfully.

A enlightened person's mind is not always free of fear. Fear and desire come into the minds of the *jnanis* as a result of slowly fructifying *prarabdha karma*. The *jnani*, however, does not take his or her state of mind to be real. He or she knows that *rajas* and *tamas* are the result of the *gunas* and have nothing to do with who he or she is i.e. awareness. For a *jnani* it does not

matter if life is smooth or rough. He or she knows that he or she can deal with it confidence because the sense of self is immediate and never leaves.

In any case even if you are stuck in *sattva*...I am not saying that you are...it is not the kiss of death. Often *dharmis* have better lives and more relative happiness than *jnanis* who do not purify their minds. So the nature of the mind can be an indicator of *jnanam* or not. In fact one of the signs of a *stithya pragna* is laziness although not all enlightened people are lazy. Look at Swami Sudhananda. He is a bundle of rajas. Ramana was lazy as hell. Why? Because the sense of doership is gone. He or she does not stop seeking because he or she is lazy. He or she is lazy because the seeking has stopped. It is not correct to say that he or she quit seeking. The seeking just stops when it is clear that you are whole and complete, that nothing can be added to or subtracted from you.

If you are attached to the results of your good actions because they have afforded you a good life, then you are not a *stithya pragna*. If you could get drunk and have some hot sex and waste time watching dumb movies and you would not feel any less virtuous, then you are a *stithya pragna*, although you do not have to do those things to prove that your happiness is not the result of *poonya karma*.

To repeat: the absence of fear may or not be a sign. The real mark of enlightenment is confidence. You know that you can handle anything. So you do not care what happens in the future, good or bad.

I hope this is helpful. If I am passing through Milan I will let you know and maybe we can meet. I have been having nice chats with Janice lately.

Much love,

Ram