

Dear Ram,

Thanks for asking. I am doing OK. I have identified a few doubts that block me time and again. Let me ask them to you. This is the state of affairs happening with me these days: when the mind is not sattvic, agony is experienced. When exciting and happy events don't happen the mind protests because it is experiencing boredom.

I can clearly find out when the mind is not interested in diving deep and dwelling in that doubtless state. I have stopped giving it much attention when it plagues me with doubt. I stay quiet because all this "mind-stuff" has got absolutely nothing to do with "me". But when this "stuff" goes on I feel sad that the mind does not stay steady and without doubt.

Looks like no more counseling can help me. The method is known but the mind is unwilling.

Ram: I hear what you are saying but blaming it on the mind is tamasic. It is best just to say "I am unwilling". You can master the mind.

Sundaram: Maybe it is time to be patient. I need some aspiration to keep me from identifying time and again with this body-mind complex. For now, that aspiration is just the "confidence and peaceful feeling" that I get when the understanding of who I am is clear. But still, it seems very complicated and totally out of my hands.

Ram: Another tamasic conclusion. I disagree. Don't give up. Take control. There is a difference between resignation and offering it to Bhagavan. There is no point wanting it to be different. It is what it is, just let it go. Say, "I banish you!" and really mean it.

And this is where I see the need of sadhana, although I don't actively do any practice. Instead I am fond of people who have acquired good siddhis (psychic powers) and use them for keeping the people around them happy. It sounds like a good way to spend life.

Ram: I recommend a good sadhana program below.

Sundaram: Like, don't you think that such people have a good show of entertainment around them? They help others sometimes, openly declaring that their siddhis did the work or sometimes they help in secret without making a fuss about it. That's a new way of living and serving other life-forms isn't it? Is this what a good shakthi follower is supposed to be there for? There are many cult/saint-lineages in India for these things right? Apart from their teachings, they do help innocent, disciplined people during their difficult times.

While I am alive it would be good to help others by acquiring siddhis and when the time comes to die, this body just goes. Nice entertainment isn't it?

Ram: When I want entertainment, Sundaram, I rent a DVD. Boredom is tamasic. If you follow Ramji's incredible specially tailored Vijay siddhi sadhana program outlined below you will get rid of the tamas.

Sundaram: DESIRES are going to be there. It keeps the universe running the way it is. Why not just play the game and then exit? But the difficulty is in getting the confidence and a clear picture of who we are, so that we don't be a spoil-sport when the moment comes for us to quit the role (body-mind life).

Ram: You have a confidence problem, Sundaram. I give the solution below.

Sundaram: Please tell me your opinion and comments about this. And also, if you think that it's OK to focus on acquiring siddhis, then tell me how I can go about it.

Ram: OK. I do it below but I bet you aren't going to like my program. It's a grade B movie and I think you want a blockbuster.

Sundaram: There is a slight ego-glorification when siddhis are acquired but it should be OK if they are readily relinquished at the time of exit from life. This happens only if I am careful about who's in control, and what 'I' am exactly, all along the way.

Although it only makes sense to be clear and stay in my real self, where desires are seen as mirages, I cannot overcome this urge to improve my aura like a typical saint of olden days. A note may be said here: I am far far away from sainthood as well, as tamas and rajas control me in every way possible now :-).

Ram: I guess you'll just have to get to like those pesky gunas since they seem to be here to stay.

Sundaram: I wish Guru's grace would completely change my life for the better. I get very excited to see how a helpful Guru's siddhi works miracles in a person's life, changing things around him.

You might start to think now that I am one really confused hopeless individual here. Well, you are right. And I am asking the SELF to throw some light and clear out things here. Please reply with whatever occurs to the SELF in Ram.

Ram: If you know you are confused are you confused?

Sundaram: Waiting for SELF to reach out and clarify with its light,

Yours,

In Ignorance.

Sundaram

Dear Ignorant hopelessly confused siddhi-wanting individual,

Listen up! Here are the SELF's healing words which should be balm to your miserable soul.

I liked your letter, depressing as it was. I'm impressed with the objective way you chronicle your troubles. You are very big and small self aware.

I completely agree with your suggestion that a good solution is to help others, but I don't agree with your idea of how to do it. I think your self awareness is very good but I think your small self obsession, taking your tamasic feelings to be so important, isn't good. Getting out of your own life and making a contribution to the world is a good way to get the spotlight off you.

But the idea of acquiring siddhis is not the way to do it. Siddhis come without effort when your mind rests in the self. They are not something that one should try to

cultivate. And if you do want to chase them, to be successful you will have to quit your job, leave the world and do some very serious tapas with an amazing amount of patience. The patience you need to cope with what seems to me is a pretty good life (look around you Sundaram. My god, this is India. Misery abounds. Think about how comfortable and cosy you are and how with just a little different karma you could be mucking out a sewer in your bare feet or servicing twenty disgusting horny men a day in a brothel) is nothing compared with the patience you need to bring your mind under control. And even then there is no guarantee that the helping siddhis will come. You may just get cranky and egoic like so many of these tapaswallas.

I think the desire for siddhis to help others is really a desire for some kind of miraculous cure for your own existential malaise. And the idea of waiting to help until you get siddhis and are a saint sounds pretty fishy.

There are no miraculous cures, no quick fixes. This is all spiritual superstition, romantic stuff they write to fill up the hagiographies of saints. Do they ever do a lifelong follow up on the lives of those who have received miraculous cures from saints? They never do. Why? Because when one problem is solved, another pops up, a problem that is generated from within the individual. To be happy you would have to have your saint in your pocket on a keychain twenty four hours a day and pull him out every time you get a little anxious or depressed. Miraculous thinking is tamasic.

I suggest that you just do something practical to help someone in need. No big story, just walk out of your office onto the street, see some misery and bring some joy to the person. You don't have to give money...I don't recommend it...just your time. Pay attention to someone else. That is all. Try to understand who they are and what they feel. Developing empathy for others is a good way to develop empathy for yourself. Your suffering is a luxury, Sundaram.

If this is too radical a suggestion, sit still and someone in your office will come who wants something other than business related stuff. Help them. Or some family member. You must have some boring uncle or silly auntie who wants something from you, someone you always ignore. Or some poor relative you're afraid to talk to because you think they might ask you for money. Or some stupid cousin who wants to go somewhere with you. Just be present and pay attention to them. Keep it small. This is a real siddhi. If you want to glow like a saint, act like a saint right now. Give of your self

until it hurts. The power will come. But for God's sake don't take to sanyass, head for a cave and sit like a yogi to get powers. You will definitely regret it.

Finally, this idea that you will get these siddhis and then let them go when you die is ridiculous. If they are good powers why relinquish them? In any case they don't belong to you anyway. Siddhis belong to the self.

OK, Sundaram. Those are my words of wisdom for today. Take care of yourself and let me know when you get the shakti. I'll come for your darshan! You don't know how much suffering us siddhas undergo saving the world.

Yours in tough love,

Ramji