

Action in Inaction: I Am Not the Doer

Ram (James Swartz)

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William: Greetings, James. Goodness, it has been quite some time since I've written, although it feels like only the blink of an eye. I have received your own occasional group dispatches with great interest though, and have been glad to know that things are continuing to unfold around you in such fascinating ways. You sound quite "busy," although I assume things are sort of doing themselves!

James: Yes, it is somewhat I imagine it might feel like on a magic carpet, floating here and there without effort. For the last forty years I just plodded along out of the limelight, humbly doing my "thing," but in the last couple of years those tens of thousands of small actions seem to have coalesced into a veritable fountain of energy, and my life, which stayed hidden beneath a moist blanket of obscurity has suddenly, like a mushroom after a rain, burst into the public eye, and (if I was a doer) I would say that I was quite busy. But not really. It is fun. New opportunities come every day and I can pick and choose where I want to go – as long as I am willing to pontificate a bit of Vedanta here and there – although that does not seem to be a requirement either. I have become a "presence" in the eyes of others, although I was that all along in my own eye, it seems, and I need do nothing more than "be" to grease life's wheels. In short, life is just grand.

William: Life over here has been busy as well, but ever-ripening in the truth. There is somehow the feeling of simplification despite the busy-ness, not in the sense of having fewer and fewer things to do, but rather the feeling that there is in fact only *one* thing being done regardless of how many different tasks are being done. Then even that one thing is arising within a vast field of not-doing. Meanwhile, I keep hearing people talk about simplifying their lives and they seem to mean literally trying to do less or trying to live smaller-scale. But when they do less or live smaller they still seem complicated; it is as if the simplicity is superimposed by a complicated mind rather than emerging as the simple fact of being. I didn't understand this before. I am sometimes doing more, other times doing less, and it all is starting to feel like the same simple thing... sometimes a "big" wave, sometimes a "little" wave, but always just a wave. I don't know if that makes sense. Anyway, you must now be preparing for India – I wish you safe travels within that "wave" and many rich, beautiful encounters!

James: Oh, yes, it makes perfect sense, William. I love the way you write, the clarity of your mind. There is a beautiful verse in the *Bhagavad Gita* that speaks to this issue: "The one who sees action in action and inaction in action is indeed wise." It is like sitting in a train and feeling as if one were moving when a train on adjacent track pulls out of the station in the opposite direction. Doing more or less is only a problem if you think you are the doer. But as you say, the doer is just one tiny factor in a grand field of energy that is animated by an eternal unmoving presence that is one's own self. This vision only arises in a relaxed, uncomplicated mind.

In any case, thanks for writing. I think of you often and wonder what is happening. I'd be interested in your feedback on the book.

~ *Om* and *prem*, James