

An Actor in a Play

Ram (James Swartz)

2010-05-18

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1476>

Manfred: Dear Ram, how are you? I hope you have been well since we last spoke.

I received your book about a week ago, and I have to say it's extremely helpful. I didn't realize how big it was going to be! It's really great though, it definitely seems to have everything an aspiring seeker needs to know.

Last night I had a bit of an epiphany in which, for the first time, I understood what identifying with the self is all about. Life is just a play! I've heard it said before obviously, but I didn't really understand. Last night, I felt like an actor on a set, and all the people around me were performing in the same play. But the crazy thing was there was just myself, performing all these different roles with impeccable skill. When I talked to somebody or looked at somebody, all I saw was myself looking at me, but with a different body. Because all these people were just myself playing these roles, it struck me as hilarious that I would ever take what any of them says seriously because nothing is ever personal when you're an actor in a play. The words come the same as in normal life, but there is a qualitative difference in the way the words are heard.

In the same way that listening to people changes, the way I perceived physical reality changed as well. I saw everything as a prop in the grand play of life, and this made me laugh as well because the desire for objects does not occur in a play. The actor plays his role, and his character may want a watch, for example, but the self, the real identity of the actor, couldn't care less, because he knows it's just a prop and not real.

Because of this realization I felt a great non-attached love for everyone and everything, and that it would not make sense not to love them, as they are me and I them.

Unfortunately, this realization was only a taste, as I was high at the time, but I definitely feel this has been a turning point. The difficulty is not in knowing who you are, the difficulty is pushing through all the conditioning that made you believe you were the character instead of the actor, or in this case the self.

I guess the reason I want to share this is to make sure I'm on the right track. This seems like progress, but I have no one to talk to this about who actually knows themselves, so checking with you is always the best way to be sure. ☺

Ram: Hi, Manfred. Yes, you are on the right track. Definitely. The only thing to know is that you do not have to see it like that every minute of the day. Just knowing that is how it is is enough. When you discover you're identified with something, bring that experience and the knowledge that is contained in it back to mind and it will set you straight. Using the idea that "the world is me but I am not the world," that is it just a play of consciousness, in tandem with the idea "I am awareness" when you notice that your mind is agitated, is all you need for now. Keep it up. Your understanding is very good.