

# Digest Each Page

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2015-09-16

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2318>

*Below is a continued conversation.*

**Daniel:** Hi, Tom. Did you finish reading James' book *How to Attain Enlightenment* from beginning to end and back again? If you've not yet digested each page, then I suggest that that be your core move. It covers everything and will clarify the lingering doubts that you may still have.

**Tom:** I wanted to talk to you about stopping identifying. So I stopped it.

**Daniel:** The nature of the mind is to vibrate, i.e. to think. Identification is the act of thinking. As long as the mind (Tom) is alive, identification will be at play. The key is to identify with the correct thought, i.e. thoughts that are in harmony with the nature of reality. Discrimination is simply the act of identifying yourself as awareness and knowing your freedom from the objects that appear within you.

**Tom:** I can't perceive myself, but I can perceive thoughts, they appear in me and go. I don't change. I feel detached right now.

**Daniel:** Correct. I would substitute the word "detached" with "unconcerned." But I know what you mean.

**Tom:** I stopped identifying with all thoughts, feelings and objects for four weeks. And then I got lost because I identified with a sensation in the body, and it caused Tom to panic. I know I only made it worse... and these past two months I was identifying... it only increases suffering.

**Daniel:** Yes, identifying yourself as a limited object/experience (i.e. Tom) is the crux of suffering.

**Tom:** What I want to point out is that I think I lacked guidance. I didn't write to you then; instead, I went to the Neos, to see if anyone had known something like this. I watched a guy called Nome, he's from *Sat Ramana* (it's a channel at YouTube) and he just sat there, his body clearly in pain, the self not identifying with it at all. Then I started reading Ramana. I think this is where it went wrong...

**Daniel:** I'm glad you escaped the Neo circus.

**Tom:** I thought that I had *nirvikalpa samadhi*. The self was so clear, I didn't identify with anything in my field, from thoughts to feelings to emotions to body sensations. I felt completely "detached"... everything just appeared in me, not having anything to do with me at all... then... I thought it was something quite "special" instead of it being the nature of the self.

**Daniel:** Yes, these spiritual experiences tend to result in a dose of enlightenment sickness. Best vomit out the "special status" bug as soon as possible!

**Tom:** What's awesome is that I saw this all as a passing show, a movie, me being the screen. It's the same way I am now, or how I've always been.

**Daniel:** Exactly. You remain unaffected regardless of what movie is projected.

**Tom:** So is this just a kind of *samadhi* (even though that's also just an object) or is it the purpose of Vedanta to stop identifying with ANYTHING apparently appearing to you?

**Daniel:** The purpose of Vedanta is to offer a means to liberation. And freedom is discriminating the real (*satya*) from the apparently real (*mithya*). Therefore you can say that the purpose of Vedanta is to correct the mistaken identity crisis from "I am limited" to "I am limitless awareness, free of all arising objects." Taking a stand in awareness as awareness whilst understanding the relationship between you and the apparent person plus the macrocosmic field is liberation.

**Tom:** As I'm writing this I see all of this, what's going on with Tom, as objects known to me; just wanted to point that out.

**Daniel:** Yes, Tom is an object known to you. Understanding your freedom from Tom is liberation.

**Tom:** I've read James' book, and I've just been "observing" it as objects appearing in me. I (the self) have just been observing Tom's life. I don't get involved. I (self) see objects appearing in me, thoughts coming and going, and I remain as I am. I do notice there is an (only) apparent tendency for this mind to make something special of it. I know that if Tom just drops that notion, a peaceful life will be his. I see that I don't have to have special thoughts, because all thoughts are observed whether it be a "holy moly, the self" kind of thought or a "plain ordinary" thought. I know without a doubt that my thoughts are not Tom's but *Isvara's*, and I observe *Isvara* in me (Tom just being a thought). Of course I don't know what *Isvara* is up to, so I can take everything with dispassion. I don't know what Tom will do next, as it's not up to him. I just know I'm unconcerned, eternal awareness. It's so weird when you believe time is something "real."

I'm feeling more free of the teaching.

**Daniel:** This is the effect of self-knowledge. It's like using a thorn to remove a thorn. Once the

mission is accomplished you then toss away the thorn. However, you know that your toolkit (Vedanta) is always available to come back to if need be. In this situation it would not be to discover anything (as you already know who you are), but rather used to further ground yourself in the knowledge or to resolve doubts if they cause agitation.

**Tom:** I also see that self-actualization is not a thing to be obtained. Rather it's standing firm in the knowledge that you're awareness as each moment comes. I'm correct in saying this, right?

**Daniel:** You are 100% correct, Tom. This understanding is the most profound one that you've shared with me since we've met.

**Tom:** Because states and things obtained change, and I cannot be that. It's so cool when you see this apparent reality as just a show.

**Daniel:** I like the saying "duality is totally cool if you know it ain't real"!

**Tom:** Now I hope *Isvara* lets Tom see it's nothing special because I'm not "spiritual." Thoughts are spiritual, I'm not.

**Daniel:** Another saying I like is "there ain't nothing spiritual about being spiritual." Thoughts are not spiritual. Thoughts are just thoughts, objects appearing to/in you, awareness. As Tom continues to immerse his mind in the teachings all statuses will crumble. Why? Because this is a non-dual reality and there is only one of us.