

Egolessness Is NOT Liberation

Ram (James Swartz)

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Cindy: I did have some questions I was going to toss your way, but it appears I have found the clarification I sought. You are most welcome to chime in though and affirm, underscore or correct.

☺ I wasn't sure of the Sanskrit terminology until a little bit ago, but now I appreciate that the clarification I sought pertained to the difference between a *jnani* and a *jivanmukti*, between *jnana* and *jnana phalam*. I found something in a Dennis Waite forum where he discusses these, and it eased this mind a lot. I know there are still certain concepts about self-realization, enlightenment, *moksa*, etc. that are lingering in the mind, and they have caused a little confusion and doubt about what has happened with me. Now I am appreciating that there was a certain amount of mental preparation that hadn't taken place before "the shift" occurred when I recognized myself for what I really am, and that a bit of tidying up is all that is needed now. I believe you have talked somewhere about this as dealing with residual thoughts, habits, desires?

James: Yes, indeed, Cindy. If you don't clean up your stuff before you realize who you are you will have to clean it up later. Life goes on, minus the seeking. Spirituality is all about living a liberated life in this world.

Cindy: It just wasn't what I expected it to be, this realizing what I am. I had a conception that concomitant with the dawning of self-knowledge there would be a complete dissolution of any sense of Cindyness... certain desires, perceptions, etc. You know, like a cosmic magic wand is waved and POOF!, the mind is still, desires are gone, etc., all in all a dramatic difference, the Hollywood version of "enlightenment," eh?! It IS different, but not nearly like I expected it to be, because of those concepts accrued over the years, a combination of my colorful imagination and misunderstanding the words, descriptions and experiences of numerous *jnanis* and saints.

James: The biggest impediments to freedom are the very notions about freedom that constitute the teachings in the so-called spiritual world, the total dissolution of the ego being one of the most foolish. The ego does not stand in the way of the self at any point. Consciousness, you, are present whether or not your ego is present. The way you "get free" of your ego is to understand what the self and the ego are. One problem with the idea that egoless is enlightenment is the lack of a clear definition of ego. The ego is just the Cindy as the reflected self, or "I" identified with the body-mind, i.e. the *jiva*. When you know you are awareness, not Cindy, it does not matter much what is going on with Cindy, as you will know she is an object in you, awareness. You, awareness, will be experiencing the ego, with all of its psychology and characteristics, not the other way around. It will no longer matter much what you think and feel as Cindy. You give Cindy free rein to wander as far as she wants to in the apparent reality (*mithya*), as she always comes home to you, awareness. Life goes on as before, although it is very important to be bear in mind that you (Cindy) still have to live in the apparent reality. In the apparent reality, your apparent issues will still operate, there is no escape from them. Realizing your self as awareness is the easy part. Living in the apparent reality as awareness (*satya*) and seeing it to be non-separate from you is the hard part.

Cindy: Anyway, what I am “doing” is much contemplation and reading to dissolve remaining mental gibberish – especially reflective meditation. It is helping tremendously to bring the subtle body into healthy alignment. ☺

If you have any words of wisdom to share, any recommendations, I'd be truly grateful! ☺

James: Words of wisdom #1: it is wise to keep inquiring. Returning to who you are is only the loss of a wrong perspective, not the gain of anything special. The mind will not rest until all its doubts are resolved, i.e. the subtle body is aligned with its true nature.

Words of wisdom #2: stick with traditional Vedanta. You will only get confused if you journey far afield, since nearly everything written is based on one of the many enlightenment myths. My book has a number of definitions of *moksa*, and you should try to understand them all to see if they apply to you. The *satsangs* at my website are very useful. Many enlightened people read them to tidy up the loose ends. The goal now should be to make your knowledge perfect.

Cindy: I hope you are enjoying your travels and busy schedule (I already KNOW you are enjoying yourSelf!). ☺

Thanks again for writing and for “giving” the best gift of all – the love that is YOU! ☺

~ *Om* and *prem*, Cindy ☺

James: You are most welcome, Cindy.