

Fish at Times

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2103>

Oliver: Hey, Daniel, I was wondering if you meditate? Is meditation a must? Is it just self-enquiry? Specific time you do it?

Sorry about all the questions! You've got me pretty interested in your take on Advaita. Thanks, man!

Daniel: Hey, Oliver. It's not my take on Advaita but the non-personal revelations rooted in *Vedic* scripture. Great to see that you have the Vedanta *vasana*! ☺

I'm assuming that when you say "meditation" that you're referring to sitting down cross-legged like Buddha under the bodhi tree. Meditation is very useful in preparing the mind for the application of self-inquiry. It's a good tool in getting the mind calm (*sattvic*), which is the necessary environment for the contemplation of self-knowledge.

But it's important to know how to meditate and what your motivation behind meditating is. Many people get into a hamster-wheel-of-a-habit whereby they just use meditation to cope with stress. This is fine...but this won't serve you if your goal is *moksha*, aka liberation.

Understand that meditation does remove stress, but it does not remove the cause of stress. *Karma yoga* removes the cause of stress by exhausting the fears and desires that produce stress.

It should also be noted that meditation as a program, a discipline, doesn't really work if the *karma yoga* attitude isn't in place in your daily life. Meditation is no different from any other activity done to achieve a specific result – unless it is practiced with *karma yoga*. Here is a link that briefly touches on the topic of *karma yoga*: NonDoodle.com/funny-truth/beautiful-karma-dharma-yoga.

A practice such as meditation is a tool to aid self-inquiry, but it does not equal self-inquiry. Unless one has realised that one is not the meditator but the one who knows the meditator, meditation can keep one stuck for years trying to have an experience of the self, which many meditators do have, but the problem is the identification with the experiencer/meditator is still there. Unless the knowledge that meditation is designed to impart is fully assimilated – i.e. "I am whole and complete, non-dual awareness" and not the meditator – the experience ends because it was just that, an experience.

Now assuming that you are exposing your mind to the teachings of Vedanta, when we meditate we want to shift our attention from the one who is meditating to that which sees/knows the mediator and meditation, coming back moment by moment to "rest" as awareness.

Actually, you are never not resting as awareness. So perhaps a more appropriate way of putting it is that you momentarily acknowledge your true nature as limitless awareness and contemplate on what it means to be this self-lit-unchanging-unborn-unconcerned-deathless-non-dual awareness.

Remember, no experience can take place without you, awareness, and because as awareness you are actionless, no special experience is required to experience the self. You are always experiencing the self whether you are in meditation or not.

Oliver: Do you perform *bhakti*?

Daniel: *Bhakti* naturally flows when self-knowledge is reflected and appreciated. The very fact that you have written this email shows that you have *bhakti* for the truth. How beautiful.

Oliver: Also, are you a vegetarian?

Daniel: I eat fish at times.