

# Ignorance Fades and Rips—Doing Happens

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Again Thank-you for your last correspondence with me. Here's an update:

Am reading the Essence of Enlightenment slowly and daily. Am on Chapter 5. Am listening to James in the car from YouTube through the Bluetooth as I drive as well. And I drive about 40,000 miles a year, so it's a lot of good quality time.

Sundari: Hello David, good to have your update and happy to hear that self inquiry has become your primary focus.

David: There're points where my thoughts feelings actions or words just drift away, and I just stay there and there's no pull from anyone, anything including my experiential jiva self. It doesn't happen when I'm active but I am most complete there. Then there's times when I just know I'm not my thoughts feelings actions words body thing but they are doing things and there's a faded pull from them although they are there. Then I go back to being the subtle body-mind thing again that annoyingly controls me completely although a lot less often. And it goes back and forth.

Sundari: The process of 'tuning in and out of awareness' (or flipping backward and forwards between the self and jiva perspective) is quite common for most inquirers. It can go on for months or years; there's no telling. When the mind is continually exposed to the scripture, self-knowledge starts the process of dislodging ignorance from lifetimes of accretions in the mind, which are kind of like the slow piling up of sedimentary rock. Ignorance is hard wired and there is no rushing the process because this is no easy task. Of course, one is never 'in or out of awareness' because awareness is prior to and beyond space and time, but we have to have a starting point for the purpose of self-inquiry. The way you use the words "me, my" and "I" indicate that you are discriminating increasingly as the self, although apparently not all the time. For instance, you say "controls me completely". Who would you be referring to? Awareness can never be controlled, only obscured by ignorance. Only the mind or jiva can be controlled by ignorance. Every time you hear yourself using the words "me, my" and "I", press pause and ask yourself "which I is talking here?" Does it refer to the jiva identified with the body/mind, the jiva who knows it is awareness but does not know what it means to be awareness (indirect knowledge) or is it the jiva that knows it is really awareness and knows what the means (direct knowledge)? It always one of the three options although it is always the self speaking, either in self-ignorance or self-knowledge.

David: It seems that when I'm doing, I'm more lost, and when I'm contemplative I'm more found. Or when I'm more active I'm more driven by the causal-subtle-gross body and when inactive am more awareness although I know all is awareness.

Sundari: Here the way you use the word "I" refers to the doer—the one who contemplates, is found or acts. Awareness does not contemplate, is never lost and never acts. When the mind is controlled by the "I am doing or have to do" thought, it is completely extroverted, turned away from the self, towards objects. When it is still and contemplative, it is turned inwards, towards the self. The aim is not to stop doing because that is not possible—the jiva will experience and do until the day it dies. The aim is to neutralize the "I am doing/have to do" thought. As a beginner, the practice of karma yoga (the consecration of all action to Isvara with the knowledge that the results

are not up to you) lessens the pressure of the vasanas and the weight of doership. It is the most important of all spiritual practices. But, the longer karma yoga is practiced, the more it becomes just pure knowledge. No matter what one is doing, contemplating, meditating or acting in the world (even not doing is a doing), doing arises from the knowledge that you are not the doer. Doing happens. You could be very busy doing whatever you need to do or sitting in silence meditating, dispassionately observing the doer doing or meditator meditating/contemplating. Nothing touches you, awareness.

David: Is it correct to say that there's experiential awareness where awareness takes the form of the thoughts-feelings-actions-words-body versus awareness which is more of an observer of experiential or immersion awareness where all the nonsense is no longer there?

Sundari: This statement is not very clear but yes, in essence, if I understand you correctly. Awareness plus thought is experience. Awareness minus thought is the observer, awareness. Awareness does not think or act but makes both possible. No experience can take place without awareness but awareness is not the experiencing entity. It is the knower of the experiencing entity, is unmodified by the experiencing entity and sees the experiencing entity as itself. "All the nonsense" is the mess the mind is in when it is identified with the body/mind and takes it to be real. To be free of the mess means that one has understood the conditioning that runs the mind in light of self-knowledge and is no longer in bondage to experience (identified with the body/mind). Remember that freedom is the ability to discriminate you, awareness, from the objects that appear in you. As I pointed out to you in our last exchange, objects whether gross or subtle (likes thoughts and feelings) are anything other than you, awareness.

David: I seem to be in 3 states.

Sundari: You are never in any state David. As awareness, you are the knower of the three states, but you are never "in" any of them. They are in you. The three states are waking, dreaming and deep sleep. All states of mind take place in time and end in time and have no bearing on you, awareness.

David: Although in my doing- the pull of causal-subtle-gross body seems to have faded. Sort of like a pair of jeans originally bright dark blue but after 100 washes the fabric has faded to light blue and is starting to rip.

Sundari: Good analogy in a way. The fabric of ignorance rips and fades with the constant application of self-knowledge to the mind. It is the best detergent! Now if you had said: "Although in doing" instead of 'although in MY doing," you would have been closer to the truth.

David: Also- there's times when the inside of my chest area talks to me and I talk back to it. There's a conversation. It happens when I'm more Sattvic. There were a few times I felt so loved I just cried and cried. These conversations don't happen more than a few times a day but what is that? Whatever it is, feels like home. But it's also not happening all the time either. But there is a strong pull towards this conversation. Do you know what's going on? Is it moving me closer or further from Moksha?

Sundari: It is home and it is love loving itself, talking to itself. The chest area or heart center is a physical approximation for the emotional center. Vedanta refers to it as the 'Cave of the Heart,' where the self is experienced shining in the koshas. This love is called *parabhakti* and it is your true nature, meaning consciousness. It is limitless satisfaction...*parama sukka* is the word used

in the texts. Tapping into it often brings forth powerful emotions because one is tapping into the nature of the self. Awareness is also called *parama prema svarupa*. *Parama* means limitless; *svarupa* means nature and *prema* is the love that makes love possible. In its presence, all other love, which is an effect of parabhakti, comes alive. Human or spiritual love, no matter how pure, is dualistic, a transaction between a subject and an object, a feeling of love, for example. When I know I am awareness, I am *prema*, limitless love. This love is knowledge because awareness is intelligent. *Prema* is permanent when the doer has been completely negated by self-knowledge. It will come and go until self-knowledge has obtained permanently in the mind.

Many inquirers confuse happiness or peace of mind with always feeling blissful. This is a big enlightenment myth. The bliss of self-knowledge is very different from experiential bliss, which is not a feeling, although it often generates feeling. When moksha has obtained in the mind one may and usually *does* feel experiential bliss regularly, but one does not depend on it because you know *you* are the bliss. Experiential bliss is an object known to you and you are always blissful, whether or not experiential bliss is present. In fact, you could be sick, in pain and half dead, broke, jobless or stuck in a situation you do not enjoy but cannot change...and be totally blissful because who you are is not influenced by what is or is not going on around you. You feel blissful regardless of what is going on in the mind.

David: I am practicing Karma Yoga which is radical acceptance to me. Try to effect change perform actions to do so but when my doing doesn't work out accept it as the will of Isvara.

Sundari: Correct, but accept all results, 'good' or 'bad' as the will of Isvara. True freedom comes from seeing all results as equal.

David: I am practicing Bhakti Yoga which is radical unconditional love to me although it seems they overlap each other.

Sundari: You are right. Karma yoga is really bhakti yoga because one consecrates all action with an attitude of gratitude and devotion to Isvara, taking all results as Prasad—a gift.

David: And I am practicing Jnana Yoga, which is the continual discrimination of the ego (is the ego Jiva?) from awareness with a settling into awareness by distancing from the thoughts feelings actions words body.

Sundari: Excellent. If self-knowledge does not translate into the life of the jiva, what point is there to it? Freedom is for *and* from the jiva, after all.

The ego is the "I" thought wrongly associated and identified with objects. The technical name for it in Sanskrit is *ahamkara*. The ego is the thought that limitless non-dual consciousness (you) is a limited separate entity called David. This thought gives rise to the idea that you are a doer: the one who experiences, is incomplete and needs objects to complete it. The ego is just a fear thought. There is no such thing as an ego in reality; it has no existence other than as a thought arising in you, awareness. All egos function in the same predictable way; in fact it can be said that there is only one ego and all *jiva*'s share it, unless and until they know what their real identity is awareness. Egos do actions to get what they want or avoid what they don't want. It is programmed thinking and the resulting actions that arise from the playing out of the *guna* generated *vasanas*; in other words, ignorance.

Much love and gratitude towards you and James.

You are most welcome, David.

Om, Sundari