

Is Anybody Sick?

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Ram: The way to think about the “healing” thing is that nobody is sick.

Rupert: Meaning the self is never sick ?

Ram: Everything is the self. The self is never sick. Sickness is a state of mind based on the idea that the world and the mind are real. But how can you heal something this isn't real? Healing is putting someone in an environment – the healer's presence – where they feel safe enough to think differently. When they relax it is possible for *Isvara* in the form of the “doctor's energy” to flow through the psychic nerve channels (*nadis*) that are blocked and provide a sense of relief. The *shakti* heals.

Because reality is non-dual, there is no time, space or cause and effect. Everything that is apparently happening is happening simultaneously on apparently different levels. As the self shines, the mind thinks, the emotions feel and the body acts. However, *Maya* makes it seem as if time, space and causation are real. Because we live in the *Maya* world, Vedanta uses concepts appropriate to *Maya* to lead us out.

So when we say, for instance, that thoughts “cause” emotions, we don't mean that in reality they are different, we mean that feelings and thoughts are just two ways of looking at the same thing, just as time and space are two ways of looking at the world. For instance, there is a wooden chair in front of you, and if you are asked what you see you will say that you see a chair, even though you may just have truthfully said that you see wood. The chair and the wood, which exist simultaneously in the same locus, are not separate.

So when we say that *sattvic* thoughts are “born of bliss,” we mean that there is no difference between bliss and *sattva*, only an apparent difference. By the grace of *Isvara* the bliss of awareness appears as the *sattva*. But when you hear that they are “born” of bliss, you are motivated to seek *sattva* because of the promise of bliss. It doesn't take a lot of work to see the wood, because you are already seeing it. It just takes a few words to point out that your knowledge is only partially in harmony with your experience. You only say “chair” but you could just have well said “wood.” Or you could have said, “I see wood in the form of a chair,” which is complete knowledge.

When you experience a feeling you are also experiencing a thought. The thought is the “wood” of the feeling. So to solve an emotional problem you should not focus on the feeling, which is not amenable to knowledge, you should focus on the thought, which is. This is a fancy way of saying that all emotional problems are thought problems. So if you want to feel good, think thoughts that “cause” good feelings.

Inability to appreciate this truth accounts for the fact that the healing world, for instance, is like a permanent stay in the hospital. People do leave it, not because they are healed, but because they are cured of the idea that generating good feelings to get rid of bad feelings doesn't address

the real issue – the thoughts producing the disease. If someone is lonely and you hug them, the loneliness goes away momentarily but returns shortly after the hug ends. The real cause cannot be solved by an emotion. Only knowledge works.

Or alternatively, they don't ever leave the hospital.

Rupert: Got me stumped with that one. So the body is doomed either way and don't stress about it?

Ram: It is and it isn't. The body is the way it is because of the *samskaras* like alcoholism, sex, drugs, money, etc. They took lifetimes to put in place. So once the healing session is over the *vasanas* come roaring back and the body is sick again. The only "permanent" solution is to develop healthy *samskaras*. It is highly unlikely that this will happen in the Native American world, because the whole environment is *tamasic*. Most people use "medicine" to get relief.

Rupert: So taking the larger picture towards doing healing work and letting *Isvara* sort it out?

Ram: It's the only way. There is only *Isvara*. We are instruments only.

Rupert: That approach definitely takes the doer out of the equation. It's really the same approach as doing a ceremony. I don't take credit if someone gets what they asked for. Nor do I take the blame when they don't. The misidentification of the self is even more pronounced when someone is facing a physical illness. They don't want to die and they are willing to "try" anything, including asking God to heal them.

Ram: Yes.

Rupert: There was a young lady who came last night, 32 years old. She has a very aggressive form of breast cancer. I asked her if she was willing to believe that she could heal. She said yes, but also asked is it okay if she has the opposite thought. That maybe she should accept that she is going to die.

Ram: She definitely should. Everyone definitely should, sooner rather than later. Death is looking over our shoulders the day we pop out of the womb. If you don't make peace with it, too bad.

Rupert: I got the sense that it wasn't the type of acceptance that comes from being at peace with whatever comes, rather it was the ego being tired of not getting its way in life and looking toward this illness as a possible solution.

Ram: If your life's a mess and you haven't a clue about how to fix it, death is an appealing option. No blame. You'll be back one way or the other.

Rupert: She had a hard time even uttering the words “I want to be healed,” which is why she was there. I did the best I could to convince her it was okay to ask to be healed, and that she had a choice in the matter, in terms of thinking positively and cultivating the desire to live. But that choice meant looking at her life in a different light. And that life wasn’t just for getting what we want, but also giving and being a blessing to the world.

Ram: Yes, the key is your words “looking at her life in a different light,” meaning from *Isvara’s* point of view.

Rupert: The *Vedas* should say there is no purifier like self-knowledge... and mortality.

Ram: Yes, indeed. Self-knowledge is the death of the separate self. I “got” the mortality business when I was 28, living in a cave on the banks of the Ganges River in India, and saw what I thought was a log floating past. I looked more closely, and it was a corpse on which was sitting a crow dispassionately picking out the eyeball for lunch.