

Karma Yields No Coincidences

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Natasha: Hi, Ted. Thanks again for all you do. You helped me with an issue that I had a while ago, and for that I express my gratitude again.

Ted: I'm glad Vedanta could be of help.

Natasha: Things are going well for me now. I love Vedanta and I'm currently reading the *Upanishads*, beautifully translated by Eknath Easwaran.

I did have another (relatively minor) question for you which has been puzzling me for a while. After awakening, one becomes cognizant of the many (small and big) synchronicities that occur in life. The Law of Attraction people would claim that it's all about manifesting this or that desire. But I'd like to know if Vedanta touches on this subject.

Ted: Vedanta is not at all concerned with manifesting one's desires. Vedanta is concerned with freeing awareness, which is already whole and complete, from its erroneous identification with the apparent limited individual person who harbors desires. Vedanta does not say that the apparent person should not have desires, for desires go with the territory of manifesting as an apparent individual person, nor does it prohibit the apparent individual from pursuing and moderately indulging his or her desires through actions that accord with *dharma*. Nevertheless, Vedanta does reveal the fact that no object of desire will ultimately provide one with permanent peace and happiness, and thus no object or action can ultimately set one free.

Natasha: It makes sense to me that *Isvara* rather than the *jiva* is in charge (so to speak) of what manifests in *maya*. In fact one of the highlights of Vedanta for me is *karma yoga*, where one consciously realizes that one is not in charge of the results of one's actions and thus renounces attachment to results.

Yet, after awakening, synchronicities keep popping up that almost appear like manifestations.

Ted: I'm guessing that by "manifestations" you are referring to the fulfillment of certain desires or the materialization of certain circumstances that are subjectively deemed to be personally fortuitous.

Natasha: Are we just making too much of coincidences in life or is there something more to it? I'd love to hear your take.

Ted: The *dharma* field (i.e. the manifest universe, which is otherwise known as the apparent

reality and is personified as *Isvara*) is governed by a set of impersonal physical, psychological and ethical laws (i.e. *dharmas*) that through an inscrutably complex chain of cause and effect infallibly produce certain inevitable results. Thus any synchronicities or coincidences that seem determined by some mystical “law of attraction” are simply the result of one’s unwitting compliance with *dharma*, one’s having unknowingly contributed to the chain of cause and effect that due to the *dharma*-governed law of *karma* produced the “coincidence.”

Natasha: Many thanks, as always, for all that you do. I love your website and e-*satsangs*.

~ Warm regards, Natasha