

Let the Doer Do

Ram (James Swartz)

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Terry: Hi, James. The question is, on the one hand, you often tell people not to worry about their *vasanas*; all we are in the apparent reality is a bundle of *vasanas*. Things can't be any other way; people act according to their respective natures. On the other hand, you tell people that not indulging in *vasanas* is the way to go because it creates a *sattvic* mind.

One moment you say the *vasanas* are not a problem, because they are in you and do not belong to you, the next moment you say get rid of them. I understand that it is a level confusion between doership and non-doership. When one understands one's real nature, self-knowledge does the work, not the individual.

And yet we fall into a grey or subtle zone where letting go of the *vasanas* is both the result of self-knowledge and a certain individual voluntary resolve (*sankalpa*) to let self-knowledge do the work.

For example, you say you are awareness and as such you have no problem with your famous "fat man" yet you say that you are engaged in a continuous fight with him to the end. It is a very subtle paradox. Please shed some light on it.

Otherwise self-knowledge is dissolving the line between knowledge and experience. I once saw *samsaric* life as a conflicted dog-eat-dog paradigm, but now there is an ineffable cotton-like softness of being that absorbs the aggression. Brutality is overcome with softness, duality absorbed in non-duality.

James: Dear Terry, the purpose of Vedanta is to expose the relationship between *satya* and *mithya*, the apparent and the real. Owing to years of "either/or"-think the intellect is easily stymied by this fundamental paradox, life's fundamental duality.

Awareness embraces both the "is" and the "is not." When you know you are awareness, you are free to be the doer. You stand apart, yet are free to be involved. Here is a beautiful verse from the *Upanishads*: "Two birds sitting in a tree. One eats the sweet fruit, the other looks on." You care and not care simultaneously because you are neither the witness nor the doer.

You express this paradox very well when you say we fall into a grey or subtle zone where letting go of the *vasanas* is both the result of self-knowledge and a certain voluntary *sankalpa* [resolution] of the individual resolve to let self-knowledge be the primary motive.

The "snake and the rope" story happens in twilight – the grey zone – because life is a grey zone. It will never be midday here. It is okay. This world never resolves, dissolves, into light. It needn't dissolve, because you are the light illumining the twilight of the mind. It is enough to see. What we see is only what we see. It is not us. This tiny effulgence that we are, brighter than the light of a thousand suns, near yet far, is enough. What is real never ceases to be and what is unreal never existed in the first place.

Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds. We do not need to be consistent. The “clean the mind” teaching is for the doers. The “let the mind be dirty” teaching is for the knowers. Both the doer and the knower are in you. Let the doer do and the knower know. The twain meets in you, the one who sees.

~ Love, James