Ingrid: Hi again.

I understand that when there are no thoughts in the “head” the mind is sattvic, so it is not emptiness.

Ted: Correct. There is no such thing as emptiness, because something can’t come out of nothing.

Ingrid: That is why I just assumed it is called a sattvic mind, since this is the only word I have known for it.

Ted: Fair enough.

Ingrid: The mind was just silenced one day, like a curtain or roller blind went up, taking the content of “mind” or thoughts with it.

I might not use the word “mind” correctly, but different than you use it, since in Norwegian I use mind (“sinn”) differently than the English-speaking world. I am using it more for just the activity that is of the head, in a way, or mental activity, not the heart and soul, etc.).

Ted: Okay. Of course the question is, how is the “activity” of the heart and soul known? By the intellect. So, in essence, all mental activity amounts to the same thing anyway.

Ingrid: The day after, I noticed I just sat there happily looking out on the sky.

I had no urge to do things, like the air had gone out of an inflated balloon, so I understood this was related to the disappearance of thoughts the evening of the day before (on Krishna’s birthday, funnily enough, I will always remember).

I talked with a student of Moji. She interpreted it as the “Buddha-mind,” that this was enlightenment or I was now a Buddha. I was not really satisfied with this, because I did not know all the answers, still having questions about enlightenment, the world, God, etc.

And I got help from a jivanmukta to see I was the knower not much later, so I was not self-realised before that.

Ted: Your assessment of the circumstance is sound.
Ingrid: I just wonder about different terms. I feel free. I am not this. I know that I am not the mind or mithya.

I know it does not make a difference what it is called. I just see there are no thoughts and very rarely do I observe anything there.

Ted: Where? In the mind?

Ingrid: I told this to the jivanmukta I mentioned, and it seemed like he did not believe me. Is this not what all self-realised beings are experiencing as sattvic mind?

That there are no thoughts. I mean it. There are rarely thoughts. I thought this was the normal sattvic mind that is necessary to self-realise.

Ted: No, as I explained in my previous email, thoughts are not a problem. Wrong thoughts are the problem – all the erroneous notions we have about ourselves, all the notions that arise due to our identification with – not association with, mind you, but identification with – the body-mind-sense complex. The self is never affected by the condition of the body-mind-sense complex or the character/quality of its experience. Once you realize that the self is always free (i.e. not bound by) thoughts no matter whether thoughts are present or not, then you – the jiva you appear to be – “becomes” free as well.

Ingrid: To be honest, I am just speaking from my heart, not previous thoughts. And then I see Ramana has written something about this, that the mind is pushed down into the heart, in a way.

Ted: Ramana is speaking figuratively. From time to time he offers visualizations that give one something to concentrate on in meditation. A famous example of this is his comment that the self is located on the right side of the chest. These are just helpful aids to focus the mind, and in that way make the mind sattvic.

Ingrid: And I did this process on my own. I heard many years ago out of thin air that I should know God with my heart. And I moved consciously down into my heart. I started to live from my heart, speak from my heart, like taking an elevator down and staying there.

Ted: If such visualizations help calm the mind and give you mental focus, then they are valuable.

Ingrid: Later, I met a person that thought me to be quiet since I went to a one-day satsang, guided by Ramana from the other side to this satsang. I am clairvoyant and clairaudient.

I had not even heard of Ramana before 14 days before I met this person at my job.

And then I started to be silent on my own, having a silent retreat at my cottage by the sea,
witnessing myself not identifying with mind.

Then some months after, my mind went suddenly still.

*Satsang* in March or April. Silence in summer. Blank mind in September and October. (I do not remember which date Krishna's birthday is.) Then knowing I am the knowing before Christmas. All within eight months or something.

I just try to learn different terms, to be able to know Vedanta and to understand if I meet others that have this experience of blank mind. So is this word on M that means dead that I sent you just a *sattvic* mind or is *sattvic* mind referred to with more thoughts as well, but just being predominately *sattvic*?

**Ted:** A *sattvic* mind has little to do with the absence of thought, though most thought-free experiences occur in a *sattvic* mind, the experience of deep sleep during which the mind is totally *tamasic* being a notable exception. A *sattvic* mind is essentially a mind that is not agitated by binding *vasanas*, and thus can remain calm, peaceful, cheerful and focused.

**Ingrid:** But if I do not want to teach, can I just stop reading? And live happily ever after?

**Ted:** I don’t know. Only you can answer that. Are you free on dependence on objects for a sense of well-being? If you have an unshakeable sense of being whole, complete, limitless awareness and nothing can gets in the way of the sense of being totally okay no matter what happens or how the body feels or what the mind thinks, then you are free and can definitely stop reading.

**Ingrid:** I like to read, but it is not necessary, is it? These *vasanas* will go, will they not, if I live a good life with *karma yoga*, etc?

**Ted:** It is not necessary to read if you have fully assimilated the knowledge. Until then, I would recommend dwelling on the teachings until you are as fully convinced that you are limitless conscious existence as you once were that you were a limited human being. If you have already assimilated this knowledge, then you are done.

**Ingrid:** I love the teaching, but think it is so much arguing and so much misunderstanding and positioning, so it is not fun.

I feel it is complicated to ask so much. I think people argue and are positioning themselves as if trying to be good at Vedanta. Or better. And that when I ask something, they often do not answer directly but about something else, because they think I ask questions to be enlightened and that I do not understand. I just ask to be able to help others if needed.

I feel like stopping talking, just being myself and answering if needed. But I need to educate myself to understand this to help others, probably. I do not want to teach to be teacher. I can be if *Isvara* wants me to. But I do not need that. I just am happy in the moment and thinking more that Vedanta is a system to be understood so I can answer. I just trust God and feel complete.
Ted: Fair enough, Ingrid. If you understand, you are not obligated to teach, and arguing is a
waste of time. Vedanta is simply something to be known. There is no use arguing about it.
Present the truth, and if the student is qualified, he or she will get it. If they don’t get it and
sincerely want to get it, then you can tell them about the yogas or spiritual practices through
which they can cultivate the qualifications. If someone just wants to argue, however, then there is
no point. Abide in your knowledge and let others be as they are. There is nothing wrong with
being a samsari. The only drawback is that a samsari suffers. But it is only up to any given
person when he or she has had enough of that and seeks a possible means of alleviating
suffering.

Ingrid: Yes, I do reside as myself although objects appear, like thoughts. I do not identify as
blank mind or thoughts or feelings. These are not pure awareness. I see all as myself, but
knowing I am not that world but this is-ness. That (as the universe) is me though. There is only
one experience, which is eternal but changing mithya.

I understand you say a sattvic mind is without binding vasanas. When the head is blank there are
no thoughts, I witness. Yet I can witness feelings. There must be a lot of vasanas or what?

Ted: Two things are worth mentioning about vasanas.

First, vasanas are habitual tendencies. They are not all bad. There are habits that foster our
spiritual growth – for instance, a vasana for self-inquiry. Vasanas are only problematic if they
cause us to become dependent on objects for our sense of well-being.

Second, you will always have vasanas. Vasanas are the only reason you are inhabiting a body-
mind-sense mechanism. When the vasanas allotted for experience during this lifetime are
exhausted, you will die. Again, vasanas are only problematic if they bind you and cause you to
depend on objects for your happiness.

Ingrid: To be accurate, I am aware that there are thoughts. For example, I was waking up from
sleeping a short while, and then I could witness there is, like, something that is having
identification as the person.

And I see it and recognise it as this jiva’s way of thinking, but seeing it is not me, since I am free
of it. So I do see there is not always emptiness.

Occasionally, thoughts arise and in stressful situations I do notice there can be identification with
fear and also with other emotions. But it passes quickly. I tend to forget quickly.

I noticed also that, while a person said it was good that my career went well, I do not identify with
that she believes, it is improving, etc. It is as if I do not think of getting better, as in “climbing”
upwards, as if it was something linear to become better at in the “future.” I can be happy when
things are going well, but that is because it is fun.

I am concentrating on doing a good job when I do work, but I do it to earn money and help out. I
do not do it to have career. It is of course important to earn money to provide for yourself, but this
identification with the outer rat race that people tend to be identified with seems to have totally
stopped.

I do not see it as improving the “outer” so much, as if since I see there is no time I am no longer thinking linearly or striving in that sense that people do to become something. I am.

I guess this is the positioning I notice all the time, that as persons there is much competition. Probably it is the desiring I speak of. And that I see drives people so, as I mean it is easier not to speak, because I feel since everything here is seen as dual everything is interpreted and also paradoxical.

You must certainly notice how you can say something and it is impossible to express, because you are not something that can be expressed.

And what you observe cannot be expressed in words in an accurate way. Maybe it’s easier in poems, that one comes nearer to truth then in poetry.

It must be why sages are often poets. Anyway, in any way of expressing, you cannot be expressed. You see the duality of the meaning you are about to express, and you are neither. And you understand it will be interpreted in another way than you mean.

I just hope I can understand others myself. It is as if silence is the best way of showing it.

I know ego is this that writes. I am seeing writing.

I just need to express this to someone. I write very lengthy emails. I know you are busy and have a lot to read and answer. You do not have to answer this, since I do not ask anything.

~ Ingrid

Ted: Your understanding is sound. You are limitless conscious existence, not an object. Thus no words can define or comprehensively describe you. Still, words can be used as pointers, which is how Vedanta uses words. Words cannot accurately define or describe what you are, but they can negate all that you are not. Once this has been done, the self stands revealed in its already existent, but most often overlooked, glory.

Also, as you say, you are not a doer. Nevertheless, you are associated with an apparent person. There is nothing wrong with playing that role to the hilt. Enjoy life. Just don’t get attached to objects.

I’m sure you already know this. But a common mistake I see people make is that once they realize the world is not real, they want to give up playing in the playground, so to speak. Vedanta is not about denying experience or running away from the world. It is simply about understanding what is real and what isn’t, what will last and what won’t. That way, you don’t expect an ephemeral objects or transitory experience to provide permanent fulfillment. Rather, when you understand that you are already whole and complete, that you are always okay no matter what the body-mind-sense complex may be experiencing, then you can enjoy what life offers and aren’t demolished when it passes.

~ All the best, Ted