

Now It Comes to the Finding

Ram (James Swartz)

2014-09-14

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/636>

Marcel: Dear Ram, I just can't express in this email how grateful I am that *Isvara* made me encounter you and Vedanta. Since I have read *How to Achieve Enlightenment*, I haven't touched any other spiritual book besides the *Bhagavad Gita Home Study Course* by Swami Dayananda. I'm so glad the search is over, but now it comes to the finding.

As you said in your *Atma Bodh* talk, it is not too hard to understand that you are pure, limitless, actionless, unconcerned, ordinary awareness. The hard part is to be confident in this knowledge all the time.

What I notice is that the confidence changes throughout the day. Sometimes I am really worried about the things that go on in life and the results of my actions. As I told you in my last email, I run a nursery for heather plants besides my regular job as a sales rep. But then there are periods where I am really relaxed and know that I am not the heather farm, nor will it end life if this business goes south. It is the same with my relationship.

I suspect that this appearing and disappearing of confidence is due to the *guna* that is operating at a particular moment. Is that true?

James: Yes, indeed. When *rajas/tamas* is present, fear takes over and steals your confidence.

Marcel: How can I establish confidence permanently? It is so hard to inquire when there is anxiety and fear and the feeling of incompleteness. Then I ask myself: "Is this feeling permanent and unchangeable? No, it will leave and therefore it can't be me." But feeling confident is impermanent as well. Just now while writing this I recognize that I am mistaking emotions for knowledge. Hmmm...

James: Yes, your emotions are doing the thinking. You, intellect, informed with the knowledge of Vedanta, should be doing the thinking and telling your emotions the bad news, i.e. that love and money don't remove anxiety.

Two values need to be examined: security and love. It seems that you are not really convinced that life is a zero-sum game, that there is no external solution. So you need to contemplate on the zero-sum teaching more until you are 100% convinced that security and pleasure don't work.

Marcel: So what is it when I am able to sweep fears and anxiety aside with confidence? That I am pure awareness? Is it an emotion based on knowledge, or merely an emotion?

James: It is an emotion based on *wrong* knowledge (see above).

Marcel: And since all my thoughts and emotions are coming from the *vasanas*, confidence probably comes from there as well. How can I tell knowledge-based confidence from emotion-based confidence?

James: Confidence doesn't come from the *vasanas*. Confidence comes from trusting the knowledge that you do not need anything to be happy. It should become the most powerful *vasana*. The way you make it a strong *vasana* is to take a stand in the knowledge "I need nothing. I can't lose anything," when the emotions create doubts. It is hard work, but you can do it if you are committed.

Marcel: Dear James, I guess I'm giving you a hard time with this confusing email. If you want me to rewrite it, no problem, I'll do so. Thank you so much in advance.

James: No, it is not confusing to me. It is a common problem. Just don't believe what you feel. Believe the truth: "I am whole and complete. I need nothing. I am love. I have so much to give. I am the only secure thing. I am always present and I don't change." Feelings are fleeting and fickle.

~ Love, James