

THE EGO IS NOT THE PROBLEM

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2016-12-16

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3109>

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No Doug, the ego is not the bad guy that needs to be destroyed. But an ego operated by self-ignorance is a small problem. Such an ego, is inevitably operated by an unconscious mechanism that attempts to compensate his sense of smallness, incompleteness and inadequacy with arrogance. Arrogance, in this context, is the desperate attempt to prove to himself and others that Jiva is adequate, satisfied, complete, and not in need of any teaching/teacher. He wants validation and recognition but last thing he wants is to be taught the scriptures.

But an ego operated by knowledge understood the big picture – he knows that all players are governed by Maya-Isvara like puppets on the string. He knows that we are all creatures born out of ignorance, and that there is no point in denying, justifying, blaming or covering up a fact that is not under its control, but Isvara's. He/she stops behaving childishly and just like Arjuna did, he declares to the scriptures in the form of the teacher; "teach me!"

Question 2: What is your relationship and responsibility to Sylvia (wife)? is it a karmic connection or a spiritual acknowledgment? how do you view that?

Hi Doug. Dharma is a complex subject. It is not like; "black&white" – "either, or".

As a husband, I am very much aware of my Dharma towards Silvia, as well of my Dharma as the son of my father – or as the father of my son among others. Dharma is best defined as "the most appropriate response to life's situations." Every stimulus requires a timely response. If our response is in harmony with the Dharma of the situation, it will produce punya (good) karma. If it is not, it will produce papa (bad) karma.

Look at the situation between myself and Silvia: Isvara has assigned me with the Dharma of teaching the Vedanta scriptures to a few friends. If at any time this Dharma of mine as a teacher conflicts for example, with my Dharma as her husband I will need to respond to the situation from the prospective of my highest Dharma/value. Undoubtedly, my highest Dharma is to teach the scripture to those rare souls wanting to liberate themselves from samsara. Why? Because that Dharma goes for the benefice of more people.

All connections are karmic – they are based in causality; cause and effect between Jiva and the world. But we could call a karmic connection to be, "spiritual" when it is a connection between two Jivas side by side supporting one another other to "attain" Moksha or Freedom. And to some extent my 25 years' relationship with Silvia has had much of that element.