

The Doer Doing Non-Doing

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Sundari: Hello, Rodney. My apologies in the delay in getting back to you, I have been a bit snowed under lately! I have replied in brief below, but there is not much to say other than I am so happy for you that you are on the right path and have the correct attitude. If you are sticking to your *sadhana* and applying the knowledge to every thought word and action, the doer will be negated and the *vasanas* will burn up. It takes dedication and constant vigilance. If you do not have a devotional practice of some sort, I would strongly advise that you start one. Even though your self-inquiry is a devotional practice in itself, it is a great help in negating the doer to have a practice that is symbolic of this, even if it is just lighting a candle. However you relate to the self, the self responds because it is you. Chanting and prayer are very good too. I know you have a martial arts practice, which is a great discipline too. Our next newsletter will have devotional practice as its theme, as it is so important and many people do not understand this.

Rodney: Hi, Sundari. I can see why this stage can be very tricky. When one is aware of the self, and the self knows it is all there is, naturally that means I won't feel the need to do anything. Since I am free from desire also, it's not that I don't need to do anything, it is that I don't want to do anything. When the self is realized in this apparent reality, the above is brought to the foreground. It seemed that the understanding from self was brought to the fore, and then it looked as if there is a mixture going on. I am trying to explain this accurately. It isn't as if my ego is taking itself to be self-realized. Though honestly, without the guidance of you and the *satsangs* at ShiningWorld, I know that this would have been the case.

Sundari (previous email): What you say is accurate. As I said before, the effects of ignorance take time to be eradicated by self-knowledge. It takes total dedication and constant application of the knowledge. James calls waffling between ignorance and knowledge the "firefly" stage: the knowledge flickers on and off. With dedication to self-inquiry the light of knowledge will stay on. Use any of the practices that help you most – like applying the opposite thought. Understanding that one is not the doer is most important, but to get rid of that notion is hard. Vedanta is a methodical teaching, designed to set you free, if you are qualified and your desire for *moksa* is strong enough, it works.

Rodney: I believe this 100%. Why? Because so much has changed since I began talking to you, only a matter of weeks ago. Neo-Advaita isn't Vedanta. I don't know what the heck it is. I suppose it is useful, in a way. Perhaps along the lines of meditation, as something preparatory. Yet Neo-Advaita, for all its independant label, has much of the individuals' personal identity mixed into it. Learning Vedanta in an easy-to-understand way like ShiningWorld has been teaching is superb. I feel very safe in the hands of all you guys also. And trust your wisdom.

Sundari: Yes, Neo-Advaita has its place, but it does not have a complete teaching. It tells you that you are awareness but does not know how to teach how to get to this knowledge and how to

apply the knowledge in daily life. So it negates everything: God, the individual, the world, values – absolutely everything. It just does not work, as you have found out yourself. The apparent reality will not go away no matter how much you deny its existence. Suffering born of the effects of ignorance thus remain.

Thank you for your trust, it is well-placed, as we do not teach our opinions or our own experience, even though everything we teach is confirmed by our experience. Vedanta is an independent means of knowledge, that is why you can trust it.

Sundari (previous email): *Jnana karma sanyass* is the Sanskrit term for the complete negation of the doer, not doing. *Moksa* does not mean that you have to give up action. It means that you have fully assimilated the knowledge that the results of your actions are not up to you. It is surrender of the idea that one is a doer. To fully understand this, you need to understand *Isvara* and the *gunas*: what makes up the field. Experience/action is under the control of *Isvara*, the macrocosmic *vasanas*. I highly recommend that you order Ram's teaching of *Panchadasa* in Tiruvannamalai this last January. It is a brilliant text on *Isvara* and the field – and Ram is at his very best. You can order it at the website.

Remember this: you cannot give up doership because the one who decides to give up the doership is the doer itself! There is only one self and it is free from action. Either you know this or you don't. This is called *vidvat sannyasa*.

Rodney: I will order this within a few days. Wow, there really is so much more to do, to assimilate.

Sundari: Good – and yes, indeed there is!

Sundari (previous email): Vedanta is not just about realising who you are, it is about understanding how to use the tools to work on yourself. This knowledge should be taught or it will not work, because your ignorance will interpret the teachings. The ego will convince you that you can do it alone, that you have got it. If one goes off half-cocked because one is emotional, impulsive and egocentric, you will not find *moksa*, not that way.

Rodney: My ego got in the way of *savikalpa samadhi*. And when I wrote to you I really did think that was the end of the journey, not that there is any journey. It is almost as if I felt there was nothing more to do once I understood the self. Self-realization, I mean. It's obvious this was the self looking at things as opposed to Rodney. It is a little tricky. And without the guidance from you, I would definitely have gone the wrong way with this. God, I can just imagine it now: I'd have ended up wearing white robes, sporting a stretched smile like James talks about and proclaiming enlightenment to the masses. Ha, ha!

Sundari: Yes, it is funny, but also not so funny, because this is exactly what many so-called teachers do.

Rodney: Thank you for clarifying that! Sundari, with realization it is understood that self is all there is, nothing is needed or indeed can be given to self. This is with me constantly, without effort. It does though seem “stronger” at times, I suppose when my mind recalls it. Yet it is not a mind thing! There is still the issue of experience and the desire for it. Oh, it is greatly reduced, almost nonexistent, yet I do feel hints of this. And I expect that without attention, it could grow once more, like a snowball, if left unchecked. This is normal?

~ Warmest wishes, Rodney

Sundari: Yes this is normal. As self-knowledge starts to take hold in the mind it attacks the ignorance, which is obsessively resistant to it. With constant application of the knowledge though, the mind has to give in, the doer gets negated and the *vasanas* are rendered non-binding. Understanding how the *gunas* function is of utmost importance. I am sure that you have read it, but I have attached my article on the *gunas* to this email. Read it again and keep referring to it. With this knowledge, you can deal with anything that *Isvara* throws at you.

There is nothing wrong with meditation; it is a wonderful tool to calm the mind. If you enter into it with the *karma yoga* attitude, not seeking *moksa* or any other experience, it is very beneficial, an aid to self-inquiry. Remember that in managing the *gunas*, making *sattya* your goal is very important, and meditation is a great aid to that end.

Well done, Rodney, and much love to you.

~ Sundari