

# The Dream Doer

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**Petra:** Hello, Sundari! I hope that you and Ram are well. I have no doubt you are happy.

If you have time to respond to my question about crazy dreams, lovely. If not, I'm sure that *Isvara* will give me answers when it is time. It's all good.

**Sundari:** Good to hear from you again, Petra. We are both very well, thank you. I hope you have settled in to your new life after your epic move. Not an easy thing to go through!

**Petra:** Through the miracle of ShiningWorld, I know who I am and am working out the self-actualization piece. Or rather watching myself work it out. Chronic migraines smack me around a bit and test my dispassion, but they have their place, so I let them do their thing.

**Sundari:** Great attitude. *Nididhysana*, or self-actualisation, is where it's all at, and without it freedom is not that free. Purely cognitive understanding of our true nature as awareness is not enough; the knowledge has to translate into the life of the *jiva*. It is fascinating watching the *jiva* rid itself of the burden of its "stuff," not always a fun process to go through, even though we know that *moksa* is not about perfecting the person. The person will always be limited as it is part and parcel of the apparent reality; it is *mithya* – even though its essence is awareness. I get headaches too as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident in my youth. Chronic, or any other, body pain will test our dispassion, no doubt about it. It is not easy to maintain a *sattvic* mind when the body is suffering, but it can be done.

*Moksa*, or non-dual vision, is complete and permanent understanding of how the field of existence operates and how you relate to it as awareness and as the *jiva*. A *jivanmukta* by definition will have resolved all its conditioning through contemplation, assimilation of the knowledge and transformation of its habitual patterns (*vasanas/samskaras/pratibandikas*, i.e. its conditioning) through self-knowledge. The transformation of habitual patterns through self-knowledge is the essence of *nididhysana*. You are on the right path, and your move has clearly accentuated this process.

**Petra:** But to my question. All my life I've had dreams of almost reaching either a high, forested garden or a beautiful, blue ocean. I had a terrible longing to get to those places and either didn't have time or couldn't find the way to get to them. I would wake up before I could figure it out. Ah, so excruciating. Must I seek even in dreams?

They stopped for about a year, but picked up again since I relocated to Madagascar a month ago. Last night I had another "seeker" dream. In it, I asked my friends to go to a forest park with me, but then I wasn't satisfied with it, although they were. I felt claustrophobic. I saw a high place I wanted to go to and convinced them all to go with me.

As we were leaving, for some reason I started dancing and “saw” the universe in the dance/music. I realized you could only “see” the universe when you dance. The last thing I remember thinking was, “Oh, for God’s sake, those ecstatic dancers are right!”

So I don’t know if that was resolution or not. Does the dreamer also need to self-actualize? That doesn’t make any sense to me, as I am beyond all those states. Is it just *vasanas* winding down? It’s fairly painful to the dreamer, let me tell ya.

As you have time, any thoughts you have would be appreciated.

**Sundari:** Yes, you are beyond the *jiva*, its stuff, its dreams and all states of mind. All the same, cleaning up all the *jiva’s karma* and conditioning is as painful to the dreamer as it is to the waking state entity because they are one and the same, experiencing different states of mind. The apparent reality and the three states the *jiva* experiences, waking, dream and deep sleep, are all *mithya*. A dream within a dream, you could say. The *vasanas* that condition the subtle body all come from *Isvara*, the causal body, or in psychological parlance, the unconscious. These *vasanas* operate awake or dreaming, but not in the deep sleep state, as the “personal” unconscious is subsumed back into the causal body. All dreams are the result of the *vasanas*. Some dreams are nonsensical and have no bearing on anything; just the *gunas* playing out. But in some cases, you could say that *Isvara* is teaching you something. Your dream of the self longing for itself, trying to overcome the dissatisfaction of the feeling of separation it feels, is pretty common for many, especially spiritual seekers. The drive for wholeness is built into the program by *Isvara* and is stronger than our pathology. The self longs to end the painful delusion of separation from itself.

The self/body-mind-sense complex is one seamless entity. There are no actual divisions in it. Everything affects everything all the time. We use the three-states teaching, not to describe the three bodies, states and experiencing entities, but to eliminate them as self and reveal the fact that the self is free of all three. The teaching eliminates them by the rule of variable/invariable factors. Variable factors (the three states and their respective experiencing entities) can be dismissed as not-self, leaving the invariable factor – awareness (me) – standing alone.

Perhaps it would help to define the waking state entity *viswa*, and the dream state entity, *taijasa*, seeing as you seem to think they are different.

1. *Viswa*, the waking state entity – in this state the mind is totally extroverted. It is hypnotised by duality. It chases and consumes experiences. *Viswa* appears in two forms: (a) free of identification with objects (a *jivanmukta*) or (b) as a doer (*karta*), or “person,” identified with objects (a *samsari*). Both a *jivanmukta*, a liberated person, and a *samsari*, a bound person, have a common identity as awareness.

2. As *taijasa*, the “shining one,” awareness with a subtle body, illumining the dream state – in the dream state the subtle body is turned inward facing the causal body, the *vasanas*. The experiences the dreamer has are just experiences of the *vasanas*. *Jiva* is not present in the dream state in the same way that it is present in the waking state. In the waking state, *jiva* identifies with the doer, so the doer is not identified as an object. It is thought to be the subject. In the dream state, there is also identification, but the doer/ego can also appear as an object illumined by *taijasa*, awareness reflected on the subtle body. For instance, in the dream you can see the waker going about its business, walking, talking, eating, etc. The doer/ego is a dream

doer/ego similar in some respects to *viswa* but with unique powers, like flying, being in two places at once, etc. These powers are inherent in the dream state and do not belong to *taijasa* although in normal dreams it identifies with them. The doer/ego and the events appearing in the dream are just waking-state events that have become *vasanas* outpicturing as dream events.

The dream state has two aspects: waking dream and sleep dream. Both aspect of the dream state are called *pratibasika*, the subjective state of reality. It is composed of the *jiva*'s creation (*jiva sristi*) and is an individual's interpretation of reality. In the dream state (whether the *jiva* is awake or asleep) *vasanas* influence how reality is interpreted by the *jiva*. *Isvara* provides the raw material for the interpretation, but not the interpretation itself. Ultimately it is all *Isvara*. But to get to that understanding – which is tantamount to *moksa* – the *jiva* has to understand the two orders of reality: *satya* (that which is real – always present and unchanging) and *mithya* (that which is apparently real – not always present and always changing) so as to discriminate awareness from the objects that appear in it. Whether the *jiva* is a awake or asleep, it makes no difference.

If there is a loud noise in the room when you are in the dreaming aspect of the sleep state, you wake up because the sense organs, temporarily detached from the sense instruments, register the sound and extrovert the organ. It is not that the sense instrument, which is in the physical body, does not receive stimuli from the world when you are dreaming. It is part and parcel of the world. But for the stimuli to reach the mind, the sense organ, which is in the subtle body, needs to be extroverted. When you are dreaming the sense organ is introverted, turned toward the causal body, and so it experiences the momentum of its past actions (*prarabdhakarma*) as the dream world. It does not experience external sense stimuli. But it can experience sense stimuli as *vasanas*. You can smell, taste, touch, etc. in the dream state even though the subtle and gross sense organs are not active.

As long as the body's environment is relatively quiet the mind stays introverted, but if a persistent or dramatic stimulus takes place in the external environment, the sense organs extrovert and you wake up. The process of waking, however, is gradual, although it may not seem obvious. The sense organ does not just "turn around" instantly unless the stimuli is very dramatic – someone kicks you or the alarm goes off – but as stimuli from the body begins to demand more attention, the dream mechanism incorporates it into the dream as a kind of signal for the dreamer entity to extrovert and become a waking entity. The physical body does not get involved. It is inert. *Isvara* knows that the body needs attending to and generates the idea of urinating in the dream. Remember, this whole drama is taking place in *Isvara* which permeates and governs the changes from state to state and every change in every state.

So, in conclusion, basically the waking state and the dream state are essentially the same, the doer is the same entity, except the sense organs are extroverted in picking up the "external world" for the "waking state" and introverted into the "dream world" for the dream state, meaning there is mind activity still going on for both. There's only the "appearance" of a "world" when there is some mind activity. That means that in deep sleep there is literally no mind activity at all, which is why there is no experience of an "apparent" external world, no dreamer and no dream world whatsoever.

**Petra:** A lot of "stuff" I hadn't expected to come up did come up when I made a big life change (the move to the Island). I thought I'd gotten good at my *karma yoga* practice, but it definitely highlighted some areas I need to work on. It's alright. I needed the homework.

I have a fairly temporary status in life right now. I guess we all do. I'm waiting (island-time waiting) for a yurt to go up in a very rural town. I'm temporarily housed, temporarily employed and mostly broke – I don't think that part is temporary. From the perspective of a "normal," it looks odd. I was doing well until fear (*tamas*?) fueled by loneliness, migraine weirdness and the long-distance anxiety of family members threw me off my dispassion/discrimination feet. It took me three weeks to get back into the *sattva* groove: happy and content. Three unpleasant weeks.

**Sundari:** If you want to test your likes and dislikes and how much fear runs your life, a good way to do it is to make a big life-changing move! Better have the *karma yoga* attitude as your guiding principle or life could get especially challenging and rocky. These moves never work out the way we expect them to. Accommodation is the name of the game. As Chinmaya used to say: "It is much easier to accommodate to *Ishvara* than to the *jiva*." And how true that is.

As the *jiva*, no matter how dispassionate we are about big changes, the subtle body has to make many readjustments, which of course will trigger old, repetitive psychological stuff as well as "new" stuff you never knew was lurking in the shadows of the unconscious. Expect this – bet your life on it. The body is an incredibly conservative instrument and the *vasana* load that makes up the subtle body (self-realised or not) will have to readjust to a new environment with new subtle and gross input. My daughter recently went through this process; she has a new baby, had a very comfortable life, beautiful home on the coast, great friends, great life career taking off – the whole thing. *Ishvara* turned her life upside down, and she found herself living in Dubai, looking out of a 50-storey building in the middle of a concrete jungle, no friends, single-parenting, husband busy all the time, no work, etc. I encouraged her to face it and take it because, sadly, growth never happens in our comfort zones. And huge growth has taken place for her, but it was hard; my heart went out to her, and it goes out to you too.

**Petra:** In any case, based on your explanation (assuming I understand it correctly), the dreamer was working it out too. It makes total sense. And the message is to get back and stay in the flow, respond appropriately and let God handle it the way you know you should, Murphy. It always works. Just sit back, relax and watch the show.

Hopefully, I interpreted that right. If not, I am happy to be schooled! Even if I'm wrong, you still helped, and I thank you!

**Sundari:** You got it, Murphy. ☺ Let *Ishvara* do your life for you and trust that all you need is always right in front of you. Whatever appears, love that. Take it all as *prasad*, like the movie it is. And so, if it does not work out, there will be other options. I would not bet on being broke as a permanent condition. "Broke" is just an idea, not a statement of fact. You can never be broke, and in truth as the *jiva* you always have *Ishvara's* trust fund at your disposal. Maybe you have little money now, but that can change. As Krishna says, "With a heart that knows no otherness, put your faith in me and I will take care of all your getting and your keeping."

Loneliness is harder to deal with than having no money, although together they pack a mean punch. Loneliness is the belief in the absence of the "other." Remind yourself that you are never alone, because there is nowhere you are not and there is no such thing as the "other." We experience everyone in the mind, even when it is so comforting to be able to love and hold those we love. Things will work out as they work out, for better or worse. But you will always be the

same. People are not here to please you; they are here to work out their *karma*, as are you. I truly hope all does work out for you but the main thing is that you see whatever happens as part of your *sadhana*. You are right on track and doing great!

**Petra:** Oh, Sundari, if you'll pardon my foul language (I swear like a sailor), what a fucking awesome response!

Hah, of course I was thinking of them as separate states without knowing I was thinking of them so! Silly me. Thanks for catching that.

And I remember you mentioning you have headaches. Always sorry to hear of a partner in head pain. It goes me hope, however, that you are able to maintain your dispassion. Much respect to you. That's no small thing, in my book.

Thank you for sharing your daughter's story. That also gives me encouragement. That sounds like a pretty brutal shift. My thoughts are with her.

Your email was fantastic and I'll read it about a million times before the end of the day (a slight exaggeration). I thank you for it. I'm sending you a virtual hug. I should just hug the next person I see and figure it counts as a hug for you. Won't they be surprised!

**Sundari:** Ha, ha! You made me laugh. ☺

I am delighted to hear that the *satsang* helped and I look forward to hearing more of your journey.

Much love and many blessings to you. May the knowledge continue to zap all ignorance and may *jiva* Petra live free and happy and secure in her unassailable and unchanging self!

Thanks for the virtual hug, I got it!

~ Sundari