

What Self-Realization Is Like

Ram (James Swartz)

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Marian: Dear Ramji, thank you for sending me new *satsangs*. It is wonderful that you are back in the West and reachable. I did want to write you earlier, but I am getting a bit lazy with emails.

My life is sweet and stable. Since last summer I have been studying the *Bhagavad Gita* by Swami Dayananada as you suggested. I am now in Book Two, first half. He gets the message across quite clearly: the self is not the doer. The moment I feel I am the doer I have lost the track – but so what?

The confidence that I am the self, no matter what the mind thinks and the feelings feel, is getting more and more stable. It is a bit shaky when I am tired, have a cold or have to do so much, but the shaking doesn't last too long. I just remember that I am the self. Yes, the knowledge I am the self surfaces quickly.

Ramji: What I like about this paragraph is that you edit yourself as you are writing. This shows that the knowledge is working every moment. The change to the knowledge surfaces quickly, for “I remember that I am the self” contains an important understanding. Remembering that one is the self is quite different from the automatic appearance of the knowledge “I am the self.” In the first case there is doer. In the second there is no doer.

But this subtle point should not obscure what I consider a very important issue. You say, “The confidence that I am the Self, no matter what the mind thinks and the feelings feel, is getting more and more stable.” To me the operative words are “no matter what the mind thinks and the feelings feel.” You have truly grasped the meaning of “I am the self.” You are absolutely correct: it does not matter what the mind thinks and the feelings feel. It has nothing to do with who you are. People wrongly believe that enlightenment feels a certain way, that one's experience is always blissful and no negative or bad thoughts will ever come into the mind. The mind is just that part of the self that was hidden from the full radiance of awareness for a long time and it has some negative tendencies – that is all – they have nothing to do with you. Enlightenment is steady wisdom.

Marian: Of course I prefer a *sattvic* mind, when inspiration and openness prevail, but even if it is *rajasic* (and it is a bit less *rajasic* than it was) or *tamasic* (it does happen but rarely), it does not really matter.

Ramji: I also appreciate your understanding of the *gunas*. I do not think there is a more valuable knowledge for monitoring and transforming the mind than the knowledge of the *gunas*. Yes, it does not matter from the self's point of view – which is your point of view – what the mind is doing. But it does matter to the part of the self that lives in the world. The more *sattvic* it is the more the whole creation benefits.

Marian: I feel fine, saved, free, relaxed and normal. I am easy to deal with. Thank you. You have a stable place in my heart, even though it is not my heart and who are you anyway?... the self, that which carries me through the day. I feel held. It is a good feeling. It is not spectacular, but it is stable and a great gift.

Ramji: In the *Bhagavad Gita* Arjuna asks Krishna what an enlightened being is like. Krishna should have read Arjuna your letter to me.

Marian: I understand emotional patterns better and people seem to get what I am saying quite easily. I understand better than ever the value of purifying the mind. Unless there is a pure, relaxed, open mind people don't understand what I am talking about. But it does not matter. They feel something anyway, something open and spacious, something that relates to their innermost longing, so they start chanting and meditating and they begin to purify their minds as well.

I did quit smoking last June and only have had a few smokes since then. The grip has gone. Not smoking helps me to notice imbalanced *rajas* and so I feel tiredness more... which is good for me. I still delegate a lot of stuff, but there is more to delegate.

Be well. It would be nice to see you. Will you come to Europe this year?

~ With love, Marian