

You Cannot Gain More *Sattva*

Sundari (Isabella Viglietti)

2014-04-11

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/43>

Stanley: Hi, Sundari. Thank you as always for your reply and boundless kindness.

Apologies for the slowness of my reply. I've had an exhausting and challenging week at work.

Sundari: It is a great pleasure, and no apologies necessary. ☺

Stanley: I was thinking about your suggestion of hooking up with some Aussie ShiningWorld Vedantins. I'd definitely love to. I would prefer to hold off for just a little while as I want to remain unrelentingly focused on the inner journey at the moment.

Sundari: Any time you are ready. Or not. Just a suggestion.

Stanley: But I think it's very important for me to return to the world in some capacity. Don't worry, there are no grand desires to be the next Super Avatar!!

Sundari: Yes, indeed. Best to let *Isvara* lead!

Stanley: I've lived in total isolation for 15 years (from age 20), not physically, as I have always worked full-time and had plenty of people-interaction but I have totally shut myself off from almost everyone and never discuss any of the deeper topics of life. Most people just aren't interested, as you know.

I do have two people I openly communicate with: a close friend who is very interested in spirituality and my brother who is a conscious being on his own journey to freedom. And increasingly I have really enjoyed having those strong and honest relationships in my life, and have learned much from them.

Sundari: The rare ones, yes. Apart from James, of course, I have this with my daughter, and we have the privilege of a window into the life of many extraordinary people (like your good self!) all over the world.

Stanley: Perhaps writing to you was a recognition that I should be interacting more. I'd love to check in with you every so often. I won't be peppering you with questions, as I have none to ask.

That is not to say I am finished with my journey to freedom. I am not. But you and James, and the other ShiningWorld teachers, have already provided me with every possible answer I could ever need. I know that anything not understood is just a result of a mind still requiring purification and

more application of the knowledge.

Sundari: This is the beauty of self inquiry, it is really the nature of the mind and there is nothing more satisfying to it. We are still at it – we never get tired of it because it is the highest *dharma*.

Ah, yes, the *gunas* all have their own particular upside and downside! And we all have a predominant *guna*. An excess of *rajas* or *tamas* is tough, but it is the work of liberation to dis-identify with them.

Stanley: I really did have a monumental amount of *tamas*. My causal body was just a solid block of ultra-dense *tamasic* granite, so I knew what I was up against when it came to purifying the mind.

But *tamasic* granite is no match for Vedanta. Each day, literally, a little *tamas* goes and a little *sattva* gets added and the knowledge firms. I rarely lose discrimination now and accordingly identification and attachment to ignorance-based thought has greatly reduced. The subtler topics are increasingly making more sense.

Sundari: The interesting thing is that we cannot gain more *sattva* because it is the nature of the mind; out-of-balance *rajas* and *tamas* are the real problem-makers when it comes to ignorance and the attending suffering. When we render the binding *vasanas* non-binding, the pressure of the *gunas* diminishes until they come into balance. We need all three *gunas* to function in the apparent reality. When *rajas* and *tamas* are brought into balance, *sattva*, which has always been there, becomes the *guna* platform from which you live your life.

I have just written a book on the *gunas* relating to health, diet and lifestyle issues. It is the forerunner of our book on the *gunas* which we have in the pipeline.

Stanley: I was a reasonably smart kid and got through primary and high school pretty easily but when *tamas* really kicked in, in my late teens and early 20s, it so severely polluted my intelligence that I was not able to use it effectively, and it was all I could do just to hold down a basic job. So I really, really recognise the power of the *gunas* and I am grateful that you focus on it so much, and I know the challenge involved in purifying the mind. The primary request I make during prayer is for the *tamas* to be removed and converted to *sattva*; this has worked extremely well.

Sundari: Just focus on the binding *vasanas* which are *guna*-generated and *tamas* will come into balance; *tamas* cannot be converted into *sattva*, just obscure it. If you want less *tamas* you need to bring in some *rajas*, like doing something physical.

There is nothing more eloquent than self-knowledge when it is working in the mind – this is why we say it is only self-knowledge that removes ignorance, not anything you do. When the intellect gets it, the neural networks reform and it becomes more and more subtle and refined, able to wield the knowledge. This is how *Isvara* uses the mind to unfold self-knowledge to the intellect and to impart it.

Stanley: I was explaining what I know about Vedanta to my friend mentioned above (he studies *A Course in Miracles*) and while doing so I was just so captivated by how ingenious Vedanta is. I already was captivated but I had a renewed appreciation of it while talking about it.

And in a sublime irony, I am becoming a slave to the very methodology that grants freedom. And I love it.

~ With love and gratitude, Stanley

Sundari: Yes, we know what you mean, we feel that way too – but slavery to the self is not slavery because as the self you are both the slave and the master. ☺

~ Much love to you too, Sundari