

Don't Drop Out

Ram (James Swartz)

2010-12-04

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1577>

Jacob: Hi, James. How is it going, travelling all over the world? I still have fond memories of Doro. What a great time!

I met your friend. He lives literally next to my workplace. It took me a 30-second walk to visit him during my lunch break. It turned into a two-and-a-half-hour break. ☺ We had a good rapport and I expect to see him another time soon.

I'd like to ask your advice about the following: during the retreat I was all fired up about self-realization, and at other retreats it is almost always the same. As soon as someone speaks Truth, I'm all ears and participate actively in the discussions and practices like meditation. But now I'm at home and the desire to actively do a spiritual practice is hardly present. It feels as if I'm wasting precious time and opportunity.

I have asked myself if I am really interested in Truth or that I'm just fleeing life. But there is really something pulling me in the direction of Truth. On the other hand, my actions are not in accordance. What can I do to get the fire more burning?

(By the way, I thought about applying for one of those three-year programs from Swami Dayananda. Although it seems wonderful to me to put all my attention full-time to it (almost a dream come true), I'm not sure if it is the way for me. I have to admit that my girlfriend is one of the reasons not to go that way. But I do feel that it is beneficial for me to work with others.)

~ Thanks in advance and all the best, Jacob

James: Hi, Jacob. Very nice to hear from you. Why would you want to escape from the world? It seems you have a very good life. You have your health, a good job, a girlfriend and a spiritual *vasana*. I don't think you should do something radical like take that three-year course. I think you would regret it. This kind of thing is only for people with a certain temperament who have virtually no worldly *karma*. I think you should stay where you are and make the life you have more spiritual by being grateful for what you have and doing your work as *karma yoga*. Slowly dispassion will develop and things will drop off automatically. You can't force growth or maturity, no matter how much you feel the spiritual call. At the same time you should gradually make more and more time for meditation, scripture study and self-inquiry. I teach many people who have regular jobs. They report good progress. It is good that you feel this impulse for freedom, but you need to be smart about it, not emotional. I think you tend to be impulsive and emotional. It is okay, but you need to really think about the consequences of things. If you jump the gun, your life will become very unpleasant. The spiritual world is full of people who are trying to escape from their lives. They don't get enlightenment nor do they have happy lives. Have you completed my book yet? If you have, I suggest you get the video set and watch them slowly. And then reread the book. If you can get off work for a couple of weeks, come down to India and hear the Vedanta again. I am going to be giving teachings for two months from December 15 to February 15. I think you should stick with the Vedanta and not hop around.

~ Much love, James