

Forget Relationship, Cultivate Spiritual Vasanas

Ram (James Swartz)

2003-02-19

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1701>

Ram: Dear Miranda, I read your email with interest. I am glad that you are enjoying my autobiography and that you are started meditating more too. Concerning your question about how to develop a spiritual *vasana*: you cultivate it by doing your practice – learning not to rush, meditating regularly, studying scripture, praying, etc. It does not take long to start noticing results and that makes you work at it more. It is always a bit of a chore when you start because the worldly *vasanas* tug against you, but once you start tasting peace it is easier to forego the habits that agitate you. Yes, you are right about observing the *vasanas* as they come up and thinking about them. This is the core of the practice. By “thinking about them” I mean contemplating whether or not the fulfillment of the *vasana* will produce peace. For people with very active minds like yourself it is always important to understand that the results of your actions is not up to you – so you can enjoy what you do without the worry for the result. If you go to a party to meet someone, you need to just enjoy the party and see what happens – not to be checking out everyone and feeling elated when you meet someone or depressed when you don’t. Whatever happens, you take as a gift from the universe – which means that you assume that the self is working for you and knows what you need, and that what you are getting (or not) is what you need. One should cultivate an attitude of glad acceptance. There is no sense wanting things to be different, because they are not going to change just because you want them to. So what has to change is one’s attitude.

Miranda: Some relationship stuff is coming up again. I am still influenced by the acculturation that makes me think that I have to have a relationship, and I guess I want one. Sometimes I feel lonely about this. Do you think that I have a *vasana* for relationships and that is why they seem to be important to me? Am I going against a *vasana* by not being in one? Or is it all just acculturation?

Ram: It is very normal to want love, Miranda. I think that “relationship” is a code word for love. Everyone has this need. But love is not always available the way we want it – so it is important to learn to get and give love at every opportunity – in everyday situations. This way one becomes satisfied and the need for a “special relationship” becomes less important. The best way to get a special person is to be full of love. If you are empty, people will stay away because they do not want to be responsible for fulfilling your needs. It is just too demanding. And to be full of love, you have to feel right about the way you are living. When you are satisfied that you are taking care of yourself properly, the mind relaxes and the love that you are comes out – and attracts people. When you are stressed, all people see is the stress and how unavailable you are (because your mind is so wrapped up in the stress), and they are not inclined to want a relationship with you. So the key for a spiritual person like you is to be happy with yourself. When you say that you “should” do something (for your *sadhana* – like the diet, meditation, etc.), you should do it – not put it off. This way you get power, self-esteem and the motivation to stick to your program.

The other point is that the reason you are not in a relationship is because you have a

vasana for being alone. This is why you are alone. Yes, you are going against the *vasana* for relationship because the *vasana* for being alone is more powerful. So one needs to think about this *vasana* – what values are behind it. Yes, it is acculturation but there is no law saying that it has to be the way the culture, which is wrong on so many things, says it should be. In a way, the spiritual path is about examining every little thing you have picked up along the way, holding it up to the light of truth and either keeping it or discarding it. In this case, the “light of truth” is whether or not a certain belief is conducive to peace – and this relationship *vasana* is certainly not conducive to your peace of mind. This does not mean that there is anything wrong with it. But it does suggest that the way you view relationships needs looking into. And this involves honoring your feelings on both sides of the issue.

It will be good to see you again – how the time does fly – I think fondly of my last visit and need to tell you that I had a very nice time. Thanks for being you.

~ Love, Ram