

There Is No Higher Self, There Is No Ego Self

Ram (James Swartz)

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Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/1786>

Candice: Dear Ram, I think the *satsangs* are great! I've always loved your *satsang*, but now I am finding it exquisite... clearer and clearer.

Ram: I'm glad you appreciate them. It has been frustrating that you are so resistant to actually taking what I say on board, although perhaps you think you are quite open.

Candice: Yes, from my perspective, I have thought that I have been quite open to you... more than to anyone else, ever. I certainly don't intend to be resistant... and I regret any problems I may have made for you. It's not personal. My habit of thinking has been that I am responsible for my own unfolding, i.e. "Work out your own salvation with patience and thanksgiving" - a typically Western approach - and one of the tools I've used is to follow my gut, with a lot of faith. I have aimed for honesty and integrity within myself, and when I haven't "known" or understood, I have thrown myself onto the mercy the universe. I have just been moving through life taking it one step at a time, finding my way through the grace of *Bhagavan*. My thinking was that to follow someone else's lead without confirmation in my gut would be dishonest, and perhaps dangerous... a view well-formed before the idea of the *guru*/disciple relationship was introduced.

I can see that this is a limited view. What I have noticed in the past is that I feel literally sick to my stomach to follow someone's lead when my own innards are saying something else. I have thought of this as a question of being true to my own self... and I see now that it might have as much to do with fear and attachment as anything else. I guess that's the point, isn't it? If your viewpoint is limited, it makes sense to go with a larger viewpoint if it is offered.

Ram: I'm not sure exactly what you actually mean by "mine" but it sounds like you think perhaps that you have to adapt it to how you are and take what you want or interpret it according to how you want to interpret it.

Candice: No, that's not what I meant... I really would like a brain-to-brain download. When I said, "I guess then it wouldn't really be mine," I was not expressing myself clearly. For a moment I was thinking it would be just information, and I was realizing that information wouldn't be enough without the experience of "knowing" the truth through an inner unfolding, seeing clearly. Both are necessary, and I think this is what you must have experienced with Swamiji... you were so receptive that you experienced the truth in your being as he was giving it. I would love to have been sitting with you for the last seven years and "sucking up wisdom like a vacuum cleaner" like you did with Swamiji. I'm sure that I would have "evolved" more quickly.

Ram: But this is not really how it is. If it is truth, it goes right in and the changes start from that moment. It is effortless.

Candice: Yes, I agree. Sometimes the truth goes in and plants a seed that doesn't sprout right away or perhaps the soil is not rich and the plant will take longer to become strong. Can you really know the degree to which you've influenced someone?

Ram: An example would be my teaching on non-violent communication. It was so direct, obvious and easy, but you did not accept it.

Candice: I don't think I understood it.

Ram: I think this is probably because you are deeply suspicious of suggestions that come from others.

Candice: You might be right... suspicious in that I haven't trusted that many people have had a larger point of view. I haven't been interested in taking on many ideas of any person I've ever known until I met you.

Ram: Perhaps you think the things I say are criticisms.

Candice: Yes, sometimes I do. But I am willing to look and see if what you are saying is true. You are the only person I would tolerate speaking to me as you do - so openly and honestly.

Ram: Sometimes people's desire for liberation is not intense and needs to be cultivated. It sounds like you are starting to cultivate it more.

Candice: It's a desire for understanding... and the space to look again, as I'm not so preoccupied with anger and confusion I was feeling for the last year, since you threw that dart into my balloon of projection.

Ram: There is no separate self, no Candice. There is only this universal question and answer.

Candice: When I hear this, it is like cool water moving through my mind... it is so beautiful. I haven't really gotten it written in my mind yet... it comes and goes.

Ram: So I wrote that one on *rajas* for you hoping that it might provide extra insight, thinking that maybe by putting in this way it would have more impact.

Candice: Thank you! I have "gotten it" in a way that I never have before, and am looking at it daily. And yes... re resistance to getting right down to it, you're right. I feel stalled here in relative comfort... but it's not my nature to be satisfied with the

status quo...

Ram: I encourage you to keep at it, although whatever you do or don't do is fine with me.

Candice: I guess I'm not quite believing that this is true across the board, though I do believe that you will still love me, because that is your true nature.

When I said "I am unchanging," I meant that I notice that I, the Self, am witnessing myself as Candice... though I do not yet understand how the Self and the self are one... that has been a major question for years... still unanswered... how the absolute and the relative selves relate...

Ram: The whole discussion above could be thrown in the rubbish because it is talking about a you that doesn't even exist. As you state clearly here, "I am unchanging... therefore what do you need to do on any level?" The "Candice" bit is just a dream. She is just the sum total of your *vasanas*. And the *vasanas* conflict with each other, so you feel conflicted. At one moment you want security and at the next moment you want freedom. This would make you an insecure person one moment and a free person the next. One moment you feel compassion and the next you feel anger. Is one you angry and the other you loving? If you identify yourself with the content in your mind, you will be completely confused.

The statement in the scripture that the self is non-dual means that there are not two selves, a changing Candice and an unchanging Candice. This may not be how it "feels" to you, but if you feel this way about yourself, it means you are lacking in discrimination. If you are two selves, which one is the "real" you? This is something that I think you should consider. Keeping up this two-self idea is the problem. When you said, "I am unchanging," that should be the end of it. You should stick with that because that is the truth. But the moment some desire or fear comes up, you lose your sense of solidity and become the unstable. There is only one self. It is your awareness. In your awareness feelings and thoughts arise. They cannot arise unless there is awareness, but awareness is always free of them. This is how you should see yourself. When a fear comes up know it for what it is. Say, "That is a fear arising in my mind. It is an object. It cannot be me. It is not a self."

Anyway, this is something to think about. As for me, things are just fine here. There are many festivals going on and the energy is quite high. I particularly like the chanting coming up from the Seshadri *ashram* today. It is the *Rudram* and the chanter is really enjoying doing it. At times like this, I think I could live in India. Anyway, I know better. In an hour there will be some God-awful noise that will completely disturb the peace. Take care of yourself. I love you.

~ Ram