

Did Gangaji's Mind Stop?

Ram (James Swartz)

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Mary: Dear James, after I saw you at *Conscious.tv* last week, after something you said, mind disappeared. Self was seen and known as peace, freedom, love, this essence also was tenderness itself. I don't know how long this lasted, because when mind came back it felt as if I had tasted eternity, but it was seen that It could not really be put into words.

I just got your book and I want to sign up as a student!

James: Okay, Mary, consider yourself signed up. I am glad you said "a" student, not "my" student. Vedanta is the teacher, not this apparent person James. But he will do his best to help you.

Mary: A couple of days ago I got really mad at my sister. Anger is not something I have expressed often. I have seen it do so much damage, but it had been present inwardly for a while and it just came out. While it was going on I experienced a freedom from fear and it felt good to finally set some boundaries. But the day after, the mind was churning with self-doubt, and the superego, a term I learned from Gangaji, was checking again and again whether this was a bad *karmic* event I was responsible for, etc.

James: Nobody is responsible for anger. By the time anger happens it is too late to take responsibility. All you are responsible for is how you relate to it. You don't want make a story about it, get angry or depressed because you are angry or depressed. At the same time you can look into the cause and see that it is just frustrated desire. And then if you step back a bit more you can see that there is no reason to want things with your world to be different. They would be different if they could be, but they are what they are because they cannot be otherwise. So you accept it - the way your sister is is the way she is. She can't be any other way. She is just the result of her conditioning, and nobody is in charge of that.

Mary: Today I feel more acceptance with myself and her for being who we are. I also accept the end of my hope towards a deeper more intimate connection together as humans. In the heart it is present here anyway, but there is so much denial and unwillingness/incapacity on her part. I also feel more acceptance today for my anger. She has never had a problem expressing hers. Still, there is some confusion around it, as someone who last week when dwelling in that Space where in an instant I saw through the illusion that had been such a sticky, tricky pattern for me with my sister for the last three years, and I did not even feel forgiveness towards her; all there was was compassion for both of us and the truth of the oneness that we really are.

James: That's right. This is the knowledge that comes when you see the truth. Good for you. It is all about gladly accepting what is.

Mary: I feel that from an early age I remembered the oneness, and it has been painful for me to live as a human in relationship to others. I was often able to excuse others for their behaviour because my goal was to always try to see the bigger picture, etc. but this superego of mine always tried hard to hold me up to high “spiritual” standards. The strange thing is that now that I am getting close to a real breakthrough after a long life of searching for truth – I am 60 – all my so-called dark feelings are also showing up. Is that part of the process?

James: Yes, indeed. The human mind is a mixture of light and dark forces. It is the way nature is. It is called duality. You do not have light without dark. When you see that you are beyond your mind, the mind is exposed for what it is. That is all. As long as you want to be light and not dark, you will stay identified with the mind. There is no way out of it when you want it to be different. In fact it is the mind that wants it to be different from what it is. The mind wants to be free, but it is keeping itself bound by trying to be something that it isn't. You are not the mind, as you can see from your experience. So let the mind be. Let it be beautiful when it is beautiful and ugly when it is ugly. If you stay out of it, its perverse desire to be different will gradually unwind. But if you feed it by wanting it to be different, its perversion will remain.

High spiritual standards are just a way to frustrate yourself – as you have discovered. There is no perfect Mary. You are not Mary. You are already perfect. You cannot be different from what you are on any level, either as Mary or as the self. You are what you are on both levels. When you accept it, when you love yourself warts and all – that is freedom. And you can't really do that until you understand the nature of reality. And when you do, Mary – if there is such a person – will relax. Spirituality is not about living up to ideals. There are enough saints in the world. Vedanta is just the science of reality. It reveals reality.

Mary: Gangaji was my first introduction to Advaita two years ago and I have had experiences of oneness with her, but in a dream of her a couple of months ago, we both sat in lotus pose, facing each other. Then I got up to leave and I kissed her on the forehead. Prembuddha told me about you a week ago and I wonder now if I was saying goodbye to her. Something resonates here with your profound approach to freeing the mind. Gangaji suggests stopping all mental movement. I was not able to do that, but after listening to you the mind stopped out of its own accord.

James: If you have a large field and a horse in the center, and you build a fence around the horse to keep him from wandering, he will always be restless. But if you take away the fence he will relax and stay where he is. Trying to stop the mind is foolish. This is a harmful bit of ignorance masquerading as wisdom. It has been foolish for thousands of years and it will always be foolish. It is wishful thinking, a fantasy. I wonder if Gangaji's mind stopped when she discovered that her husband was cheating on her and everyone said she was a fool for pretending that she had a real relationship with a known philanderer.

At my website *ShiningWorld.com* there is an article on the home page on the left side. The link says, *From Shankara to Kalki Avatar: An Essay on the Impending Demise of Neo-Advaita*. Gangaji is the reigning queen of Neo-Advaita. It is okay, but it is entry-level. There is no methodology, no practical way to actualize non-duality.

There is a whole chapter in my book that explains the limitations of Neo-Advaita. Your first lesson as a student of Vedanta is to get my book and read it carefully. Be sure to start from the beginning and proceed slowly. You need to sign on to the logic that is unfolded there. Take your time. It is not an easy read, although you should not have difficulty with it. Once you have read it, please write to me if you still have questions.

Mary: I'm very, very grateful for this glimpse of self.

James: The time is right. You are a mature person and you are ready for more, so the self is moving your forward.

Mary: For a long time I also have had a deep desire for a teacher that is available/accessible to someone who has very limited funds, so how can I study with you in-depth without having to travel the globe? Will you come to Holland sometime?

James: It so happens that I am shifting my base to the South of England and will spend many months a year in Europe, so we can meet. I have several good friends like Prembuddha in Amsterdam, so I will come there too.

Mary: Thank you and happy to meet you!

James: Likewise, Mary, all the best.