

How to Get Enlightened in Meditation

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Seeker: Dear James, I've transcribed a section of your talk in Tiruvannamalai 2011 on the *Gita* from *Meditation 1*, Chapter 6. I'm copying it here as I found it useful and maybe others will too:

“In meditation, the meditator is making an enquiry in the inner world. The self is the one who's watching the meditation. Meditation is creating the conditions where it's easier to discriminate the self from the objects appearing in the self. Liberation (*moksha*) is *atma anatma viveka*, understanding the difference between the self and the objects.

“In meditation, I don't have physical objects to worry about. I only have subtle objects to worry about. When we're meditating you can 'see' or 'feel' or 'hear' the silence, which is an object You can know it.

“You'll see the sounds coming into the silence and disappearing out of the silence; you can see your thoughts coming in the silence and out of the silence. If you have an important experience, then you'll feel emotions generated out of that experience appearing in the silence and disappearing out of the silence.

“So you have two objects in meditation; you have the silence and the mental activity appearing in it. And there's a third factor there too. The third factor is me, the witness of the silence. If you see or experience or know silence, you can't be silence because you can't be what you see.

“In meditation, there are these three factors all the time. Meditation is sitting still and sorting out how the silence is known. Where do I fit into this scenario? Who am I?

“If you're the one sitting in silence, you are not free because the silence is bigger than you. It encompasses you. But ask 'Who sees the silence encompassing me. Who sees my body sitting in the silence?'

“It's recognition of that awareness as yourself that is freedom (*moksa*). That's why you can gain *moksha* in meditation, assuming that you're looking for the witness and you're **not** looking for a particular experience. If you're looking for a particular experience in meditation, you will miss the one who's witnessing the experience, the one who is always free of the experience.

“No matter what experience you have externally or internally, you precede and survive every experience. A particular experience appears and is witnessed by you; it stays for a while – witnessed by you – and then it declines and disappears, but do you disappear when the experience goes? No.

“You just remain as the witness and the next experience appears, persists and declines. So the awareness that's constantly there, the knower, the witness, the seer – that's me. Identify with it and you are free because it is limitless. It's permanent, it never goes or comes. By contemplating on this, you will get the freedom that comes with the knowledge of who I am. It is the same when you extroverted and running

around in the world but you won't notice it there. It is easy in meditation.

“From the *jiva's* point of view, meditation is a direct means of burning the *vasanas*, ameliorating your negative tendencies, because hold onto **the silence, which is the self reflecting in a pure, meditative, sattvic mind**, and you forego the *vasanas* which keeps them from connecting the senses to the objects. Therefore, they die. Sit in meditation every day for thirty minutes, even an hour. It is good for you.”