

The Process of No-Process

Shams Martínez

2015-05-05

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/2152>

Conrad: The applying of the knowledge to the mind, inquiry, continues on a daily basis, becomes more and more a state of mind; this is experientially reflected in a slowly growing sense of transparency/being aware and of deep/calm joy.

Also, for the experiential part, apart from moments of real contact with some dear friends and family, there is less contact in a social/emotional way to people around, and I can see that this is in fact quite okay, a part of the process. Partly connected to this noticing of this kind of isolation, anxiety still happens, mostly when waking up, although disidentification of it (letting it be, just seeing it, realising it is not Me) seems to become a bit easier.

Shams: That's fine. Actually, "*aratih janasamsadi*," the lack of craving for company, is a *dharmic* value itself, as the *Gita* says. Dayananda explains: "This is not a value that calls for hatred of company. Company is not bad. It is not that one should dislike being around people. If the people are there, fine, be happy in their presence. But know that you do not require people to be happy."

In fact as the mind gets more *sattvic* it almost always happens that automatically lots of friends stop visiting you, and you don't feel inclined to maintain old relationships. That is because the ego is less projective and the mind is more silent, which is kind of uncomfortable to *rajasic* minds because they cannot keep building their stories and projecting negative emotions around you.

So it's good news.

Conrad: Does the Vedanta tradition until now (as I suppose, but forgot if I already read about it) speak about the releasing of fear, as a phase in/indication of the process of liberation?

Shams: Thinking of liberation as a process could be confusing. *Moksa* is just having the hard and fast knowledge, "I am the self". From the self's viewpoint there is no process, since the object of knowledge is immovable and surprisingly it is the same as the subject, you. When the texts refer to something like a process or stages they're talking about the mind. Processes and phases are not just a feature of the mind, they are the mind itself. When there is no process or no changes of phases, there is no mind. In the case of the removal of *avidya*, the mind goes through a process of becoming qualified for the teachings, then gets in the process of assimilating them and, finally, of applying them. However, liberation is not for the mind, but from the mind. Therefore, the mind is not the focus of the seeking. A pure mind is not an end but a means to an end.

On the other hand - the fruits of liberation are for the mind. So in relative terms, the mind will get "liberated" (from the idea of being the subject) and will see changes in the world according to its new perspective, since its relationship with other objects will be modified due to the absence of ignorance about its true nature. Anyway, the

term “process of liberation” is still not the most advisable one. I know you actually know this, but it’s a fundamental part of inquiry to keep putting attention on ideas and words that are not always exact.

As for the question itself, I don’t remember any fragment from the scriptures about the “releasing of fear” as a topic, but there is a lot of advice about *gunas*, desire and *vasanas*. The psychological views on the texts are not shown as parts of a process of liberation, but as parts of a process of purification of the mind. And as we said, a pure mind is not an end, but a means to an end.

The *Gita* says: “When the mind is pure, fearless and focused on the silence, continually contemplate on the self.” Sure, but a mind absent of fear doesn’t equal liberation. A mind absent of fear could facilitate inquiry a lot. But liberation doesn’t necessarily mean that the mind is free of fear. Liberation means that you know that fear doesn’t have anything to do with you; you are free from fear, as you are free from the mind.

I don’t know if I correctly pointed to what I mean, but the main reason I want to communicate this is because I think that your mind is still very preoccupied about phases, indications and evidences, which are just objects in you and are very far from the true goal: just knowledge.

Conrad: Also, could you comment on the aspect of “enlightenment sickness”? Having more understanding here would be of help.

Shams: Enlightenment sickness happens when the ego co-opts the position of the self. As James teaches: “Ego is just an identification with the body-mind entity. It happens in the intellect. It is tricky because it identifies with whatever appears in the mind. It even identifies with the concept ‘I am the self’! It is a ‘concept’ at this stage because until it is really owned and firmly known, it is only a meaningless statement.”

If you you think that more clarity about this topic is needed, please read the chapter about it in *How to Attain Enlightenment* and ask me your specific questions.

Conrad: About “experience”: I read or heard (and forgot where) “experience as the ultimate object.” My impression is that this is true, as experience, to me, now, (a) includes the broadest spectrum of processing of the subtle body, as seen from the dual perspective...

Shams: The dual perspective is experience itself. The subtle body, which is the experiencer entity, is an experience too. I don’t know what you specifically mean by “the spectrum of processing,” but there is nothing in the subtle body that is not experience, because duality is experience, and this world is duality. Even knowledge appears in the intellect as an idea: experience!

Conrad: ...and (b) experience happens just “before” the threshold of the merging of object and subject, as non-dual awareness/Me.

Shams: But subject and object are not merged. There is only you, and you are not merged with anything. I don't understand what you mean by "threshold." And before what? Maybe you refer to the kind of threshold that is *maya*. Look at the last diagram on the charts page:

ShiningWorld.com/site/index.php/community/gallery/charts.

The power of *maya* is actually just a belief, an appearance. There is no merging. In fact the idea of merging is an experiential one, easy for the mind to catch as it's used to thinking of everything in those terms.

Experience is due to the believing that there is a subject and an object. As a "threshold" that make one appears as there were two, *maya* implies experience, but there is no "ultimate object," because there is no ultimate experience. There is not a special experience. If you get it, every experience is the "ultimate object."

Maybe I'm not understanding your question, but it seems to me like you are talking about a primordial experience, like if there were a line where experience ends. But every experience is the same. The changes are due to the *gunas* and the bodies, and that still is just experience. One experience.

If you are looking for the root of experience, then your only faithful guide would be knowledge, because every experience is born from the idea that duality is real.

A more useful approach would be to realise that there is only one experience, as there is only one object, called non-self. That non-self is the "creation" of *maya*. The idea that it is real actually cannot be confirmed at all. When you try to approach objects, you only get experiences. It doesn't matter if the object is a table, your body, an emotion or your mind-intellect, you only get experiences, experiences, experiences: non-self, no substance. Not very different from a dream. But who is the witness to all this, who is the one that never changes?

Conrad: About humour: Do you know if this quality is mentioned specifically in Vedanta (and related texts)?

Shams: It is just a local joke at ShiningWorld. Maybe in the future we could create some sacred text about it. 😊

Conrad: I can imagine that this is an aspect of *sattva* (plus some *rajas*?), but, still more, it looks to me to be more fundamental, a direct manifestation of our essence/nature of love/being/consciousness; maybe a mix of "*chit*" (I sense an association here with "wit") and "*ananda*."

Shams: Yes, humour is a fine manifestation of the self. It can be very subtle but, as with any other activity, it can also appear in *tamasic* or *rajasic* minds, as vulgarity and bad taste.

Conrad: "Higher beings": as I understand now, Vedanta does not speak about "greater" beings with a "higher" consciousness (such as angels and their hierarchies, guides, *devas*), apart from the macrocosmic *gunas* and *Isvara*. Is this so? Can you comment? The same question for the "lower," "elementary beings,"

related to *prana*, making, e.g. the growing of, plants possible, apart from the microcosmic *gunas* and *Isvara* (that, as I would formulate and understand this now, must be guided by the macrocosmic *gunas*).

Shams: Vedanta is about you, not your objects. That's also the reason why it doesn't pay too much attention to the psyche and its states (it just gives some directions to clean the mind so it can start the inquiry). The same goes for *Isvara* and the *gunas*. They're just parts of the structure of explanation of the means to an end, not the end. You can learn about psychology, medicine, architecture, cooking, higher and lower beings and even about magical powers (among many other topics) in the *Vedas* that are not meant to lead you to *moksa*. The *Upanishads* (the source of Vedanta) are just a little part of the *Vedas*, which are the oldest body of knowledge about the world (and the self). Fortunately, the idea of Vedanta is that you don't have to learn all these things in order to become adequate, limitless and happy. You only have to know you.