

# The Ridiculousness of a *Jiva* Relationship

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**Robert:** I was reflecting on a conversation Susan and I had recently. I was writing and inquiring when suddenly the ridiculousness of it all came to me. This ridiculousness appears as a multi-headed snake showing a different form of ridiculous depending on the perspective taken.

A *jiva* relationship identified with the *jiva* cannot work, cannot be a platform for *moksa*, and to think it can is ridiculous.

**Sundari:** Dependence on a relationship to make you whole or give you something you believe you do not have will not work if freedom is the main aim. *Moksa* is about freedom from dependence on objects, so if *moksa* is what you are after the need for a relationship will stand in its way. The love issue is a big one for most inquirers and many people who have realised the self get stuck there. This is usually one of those fetus-in-the-womb type of *samskaras*: it has to work its way out. Very often, like in my case, *Isvara* sends powerful experiences which work to do the job of ending the need permanently. One has to be ready to give up the need for the "other." If not, this *samskara* will keep popping up and will take great vigilance and constant inquiry to dissolve.

**Robert:** A *jiva* relationship stated to be based in self-knowledge, which states the relationship cannot continue because of the shortfalls of an apparent *jiva* personality, as that the personality is cast in stone, therefore cannot change or be different, is not rooted in self-knowledge. To profess so is ridiculous. In this case *jiva* is fully identified with its own likes and dislikes, not self-knowledge.

**Sundari:** What you are saying here is not very clear. You seem to be saying that your relationship with Susan was based in self-knowledge, yet she ended it because of the shortfalls she saw in Robert that were "cast in stone" and that this means that she is identified with her likes and dislikes and thinks Robert is real.

A relationship truly based in self-knowledge is not like any other relationship. It is not a transaction between two people, because it is understood there is only one: you, the self. There is no need whatsoever for the so-called other to fulfil any needs, so likes and dislikes are neither denied nor indulged. That said, the *jiva* is the *jiva* and it is accepted as such, with its apparent nature. Both parties respect each other's *Isvara*-given proclivities, and should issues arise, which of course they do, they are instantly dissolved in the knowledge. There is no time lag here and no new *karma* is created. So there is never a desire to change the other, because the other is known to be the self. Nor is *dharma* ever transgressed, because peace of mind is the main objective.

Unless self-knowledge is firm and the *jiva*'s story has been neutralized by knowledge, a relationship will still be fraught with drama and unpleasant *karma*. If one is in a relationship and wants to continue, the only way to proceed in this case is with the *karma yoga* attitude, making a commitment to seeing the other as the self

and worshipping them as part of your environment, i.e. *Isvara*.

**Robert:** If self-knowledge pervades in a relationship, it is known the *jiva* is not real, it comes from *Isvara* – is not who we are. Love that is rooted in the self identifies with the apparent other as the self, holding the “other” *jiva* in the same awareness as one’s own – not real.

**Sundari:** Correct. Love that is “rooted in the self” is known to be who you are. Love is not a feeling or emotion. It is your nature as awareness. Loving “another” as the self is paying attention to them. One does not love what one does not pay attention to. This attention does not involve obsessive monitoring or judgement nor is it emotional. It is responding appropriately to what transpires in your environment on a moment-to-moment basis.

Through discrimination the opportunity is created to identify with objects in a different way, thus allowing the *jiva* to make different choices and thus construct a new narrative that is as unreal as the first, yet has totally different apparent outcomes.

Discrimination is the essence of *moksa*, and without it freedom is not possible. As important is dispassion: non-attachment to results. With self-knowledge one understands the nature of the field and the *jiva* who is part and parcel of the field.

*Moksa* is not about making the *jiva* disappear; this is not possible or necessary. *Moksa* is about understanding who the *jiva* is, taking its nature into account and responding to it and its environment as the self. This means one always follows *dharma*, one’s own as well as universal *dharma*. For instance, if *Isvara* is asking for a particular response and one is not paying attention because likes and dislikes are in operation, one will suffer the consequences. So, yes, the contact one has with objects when self-knowledge has obtained is first as the self, meaning non-dual, i.e. one sees only the self and second as the *jiva*, never confusing the two.

In addition, what is also important for the *jiva* is seeing to it that the *jiva* has noble work for the mind and not indulging in gratuitous unnecessary explorations into the past.

**Robert:** Am I on the right track here??

**Sundari:** You are doing well, but you need to let the past go. Rehashing it as a way to deal with life is like having your feet encased in concrete and trying desperately to walk. Why make life so hard for yourself? Take it easy, be kind to Robert and let him be.