

Nididhyasana* Never Ends for the *Jiva

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Haley: *Avidya* is still in the projection here! I am working away at discrimination, but until I am further along in the *nididhyasana* phase, teaching will remain a great idea. I pray every day for burning desire and clear knowledge.

Sundari: While it is true that there is a definite “shift” in how one sees life and relates to objects once the knowledge is firm, it is also true that the *nididhyasana* stage never really ends for the *jiva*. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Macrocosmic ignorance does not end when *avidya* ends, and the *jiva* is always limited by it (although no longer conditioned by it) even though its essence is known to be limitless awareness. The fine print on the enlightenment certificate is that there really is no “post”-*moksa* stage **for the *jiva*** even though **you** are *moksa* and not the *jiva*. A common myth in the enlightenment game is that enlightenment is another object to obtain and when it is the *jiva* will be different, better. But it won't be. It will still have its *Isvara*-given character and tendencies, it will still be a pain in the ass sometimes and it will still suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, feeling joy, pain, loss, grief as well as the constant bliss of self-knowledge.

Awareness, the bliss of knowledge, does not feel like anything (even though it makes feeling possible) and does not try to change *Isvara*. Even knowing that as awareness you are beyond *Isvara* does not alter the fact that the *jiva* is subject to *Isvara*. What makes the world of difference to the *jiva's* experience is the hard and fast knowledge that none of it is real: not the empirical world as it is (*Isvara srsti*) nor the *jiva* and its subjective world of experience (*jiva srsti*). The *jiva* never stops experiencing. Self-knowledge reverses and ends the experience/experiencer (subject/object) split. Inquirers still identified with the body-mind (ego) think that awareness is something they will experience “one day” when knowledge obtains. As a finder you know that you are the non-experience witness, or awareness, making it possible for the ego to experience awareness – 24/7. Life in the apparent reality is all awareness apparently under the spell of ignorance, experiencing itself but ever free of experience, **full stop**. There is only one experience seemingly broken up into many discrete experiences. There is only one eternal *jiva*, and it never leaves the apparent reality. Awareness gives rise to and enlivens all objects, but is always free of them.

As Vedantins we never stop “working” on the *jiva* even though we do not censure it or expect it to change. Of course we follow *dharma*, personal and universal, without question; but not because we want to improve the *jiva* but only because we want a peaceful mind. *Jivas* enlightened or not can still get up each other's noses!

So one could wait forever to take a stand in awareness as awareness if you are waiting for *nididhyasana* to end. And if the *jiva* is projecting and it knows it is projecting, is it projecting? The subjective reality never ends for the *jiva*. It will always have its particular way of relating to *Isvara* which will be unique to its *vasana* filters. The difference will be that a *jivanmukta* knows when it is projecting, instantly dissolves the projection in the knowledge and is instantly free of it. Thus it does not create “new” *karma*. It keeps its *karma* like a little dog on a very short leash, right in front. No *karmic* drag, ever. No unfinished business or drama. There is never another

person involved in its interactions and transactions in the world of objects/experience. The *jivanmukta* knows **in the moment** that it is transacting only with itself because there is no “other.” There is only awareness.

Haley: Thank you for the correction to my testimonial and feedback... funny you mentioned that particular line because in first writing it, the words were “all that is left is awareness” – and that also didn’t feel right. I think “revealed” is more accurate. I’ve attached a corrected version. I’m glad you will post it; always happy to make a contribution!

Sundari: Yes, I knew you knew. The most important aspect of writing or teaching Vedanta is using the correct terminology. All words have an implied and ostensible meaning, and one has to be really clear about both to teach Vedanta, which is an oral tradition and teaches by the implied meaning of words.

Haley: I loved hearing about your early years in Africa. I too look at the history of the *jiva* and think, “Wow! How did I get here? Life is amazing, all these *maya* projections creating this fantastic changing world!”

Sundari: Yes, life is pretty amazing! James has been nagging me to write my life story in light of Vedanta for years, but I just don’t have lift-off to start that project. It is all a veritable *guna* stew of experience. Although it seems like there are many *jivas* having such diverse life experiences, there is really only one experience, one story, one ego, or *jiva*, appearing as a great big movie on the screen of awareness. A fabulous trick of light!!

Much love to you, Haley.

~ Sundari