

Suicidal Thoughts

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Simon: James, I have been kept awake with great agitation and suicidal thoughts several times over the last few weeks. I'm clear that these are not my thoughts, they have been brought on by a Scientology technique I've started practicing.

I don't think these will cease if I just stop the technique (I've tried).

These certainly seem to be troubled (and sometimes malicious) spirits.

This has taken me way too close to my limit for comfort.

Is there any Vedanta wisdom on how to deal with this situation?

Thanks!

James: Yes, there is Vedanta wisdom on this topic, but it is so simple that you might not appreciate it: they are just thoughts brought on by a *tamasic* state of mind. They are objects known to you and therefore have nothing to do with you at all. So just ignore them and turn your attention to the self – the knower of the thoughts – when they arise. Tell Simon that they are not real. All they mean is that your mind is dull. There is nothing wrong with you, nor are they portentous. I am forwarding this email with your email address to my wife and she will send you an article that ties negative thoughts about one's self to *tamoguna*. The solution is to transform the *gunas* using the knowledge of Vedanta.

Sundari: Hello, Simon. James asked me to comment on your email. First of all, if you are seriously interested in peace of mind and freedom from limitation, I suggest you abandon any Scientology practice. It is not our place to tell you what to do but we can tell you that Scientology is not a valid means of knowledge for liberation – it cannot free you from ignorance of your true nature and can only prescribe practices that take the mind and body to be real, and consciousness an object to obtain. It borders on dangerous cultish brainwashing. I am not surprised that these negative thoughts have arisen in the mind as a result of the practices you have been involved in. "Malicious spirits" arise from the subjective unconscious reality of the mind and are no more real than any other thought that passes through the mind.

Secondly, if you know that these thoughts do not belong to you, that is a good thing, as they arise from the macrocosmic causal body (beginningless ignorance), which is governed by the three energies in creation, *sattva* (peace of mind/clarity), *rajas* (projection/desire) and *tamas* (negativity/ dullness,/denial). Suicidal thoughts arise from *tamas* – which, like all the *gunas*, is one of the impersonal energies making up the apparent reality and everything in it – including "your" *vasanas* (likes and dislikes). Here is a brief description of two symptoms of *tamas* out of balance with *sattva*:

Suicidal Thoughts

These thoughts can be symptomatic of very deeply suppressed psychological issues that have not been addressed or healed. They are highly negative thoughts produced by the suffering experienced through the identification with the body-mind and the unpredictable nature of *samsara*. It is possible that the mind is in so much pain (*rajas*) that it seeks to end it by ending the life of the body-mind. In a way it is a strange attempt at survival because beneath these thoughts is love for oneself – and the desire to experience this love by ending the pain the mind is in.

These thoughts can sometimes also arise in a predominantly *tamasic* mind not particularly traumatized – even if committed to self-inquiry – before self-knowledge has obtained. As you have reasoned, these thoughts do not belong to you but neither does any other thought, positive or negative, like seeing the thoughts as “malicious spirits,” for instance. While this may help to some degree in objectifying the thoughts, it does not ultimately help to dissolve them, because it does not identify their origin, *tamoguna* – the causal body.

Suicidal thoughts can also arise from existential boredom; again, deep *tamas*. Like any thought, they can be negated by seeing them as not-self, but this is very hard to do without an independent means of knowledge to subject the mind to capable of producing self-knowledge, such as the teaching on the three *gunas*. Scientology definitely does not provide a valid, independent teaching on anything. The *guna* teaching explains perfectly how and why the mind is conditioned and also supplies the means to mitigate and remove ignorance by rendering the binding *vasanas* non-binding, producing peace of mind.

Negativity Vasana

When the mind has had to overcome extremely damaging and destructive programming as a result of difficult *karma*, very often the default position of the mind is negativity, *tamas*. It goes mostly unnoticed, as the abnormal has been normalised by the mind. To rise above this heavy blanket of *tamas* that covers the mind usually requires a Herculean effort, which more often than not cannot be sustained. Occasionally there may occur a spontaneous bursting through the clouds, but even that never lasts long and often leaves the mind feeling worse than before because of the seemingly ephemeral nature of happiness. The only permanent solution to this is self-knowledge.

I suggest you use the search function in the *satsang* section of the website to help you understand how the *gunas* function and the typical thoughts, feelings and actions that arise in the mind as a result of the predominance of any of the *gunas*. Any heavy, dull and negative energy originates from *tamoguna*. James has covered this teaching in all of his books, which is called *triguna vibhava yoga*.

Feel free to write if you need more assistance.

~ Om, Sundari