

Mind and Destruction of Mind

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Arlindo: Is self-knowledge equal to *moksa*? No, Robby, self-realization refers to knowing that you are awareness. It is a firm understanding: "I am the light of pure consciousness and I am free – not conditioned by *mithya*." This direct understanding produces a great sense of freedom from most desires and fears, but some of those deep-wired pieces of ignorance may still survive self-knowledge. The self-realized at this stage may feel at times confused because he knows that he is the ever-free awareness but he/she still suffers a sort of knowledge lapse and finds himself thinking and acting from self-ignorance. Nothing to be worried about, because with the constant exposure to the scriptures and application of its knowledge those binding *vasanas* will dry up, i.e. self-ignorance will be neutralized by self-knowledge to produce the end result, which is self-actualization.

You see, what happens when you see ignorance surfacing in your mind and you apply the *satya-mithya* discrimination: "I am not my *vasana*, my ignorance; I am beyond, 'other than,' *mithya*." Those pieces of ignorance will begin losing energy because you are denying them food (your attention or belief that you are your thoughts and feelings). It is a special diet – you give no food to ignorance.

Things in *mithya* are not like black and white. Being a constant flux of changing appearances of phenomenal objects, you cannot really find a borderline between them. Literally speaking, there is no such a thing as mind and then destruction of mind, or a clear-cut line between self-realization and *moksa*. It's more like the colors of a rainbow: you do not see a specific color disappearing to become another. It is a gradual change.

Self-realization or self-recognition is a sudden phenomenon, *moksa* is gradual. When Ramana talks of the destruction of the mind, he is using figurative language; it makes it more interesting or dramatic than literal language which simply states facts. Mind does not get killed at all! It only gets conformed to knowledge rather than to ignorance, and since ignorance is hardwired it takes a little time for enlightenment fructify as *mosha*. If it does not fructify, chances are it may develop into enlightenment sickness.