

Egolessness Is Not Enlightenment

Sundari (Isabella Viglietti)

2012-04-06

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/324>

Ramji: Dear Isadora, I have been inundated with emails since fame came, and my wife Sundari, who is a realized person, has graciously offered to help, so I asked her to reply to this one. I read all the emails she writes carefully and see to it that that they are pure Vedanta, so you can take her words as my words, which in turn are just the words of the self.

~ Love, Ramji

Isadora: Hello, Ramji. *Pranam*. Thank you for your email. I am definitely looking for self-knowledge, as there really has not been much bliss here to sidetrack me, *samsara* just drags me down! My whole search has been around the knowledge aspect, but as you say, I am stuck believing that a life-changing experience or moment when it all becomes clear is needed in order to recognise the knowledge that I am limitless, ordinary, non-dual awareness. I am looking for this experience. I think this is where I am going wrong.

Sundari: Yes, that is correct.

Isadora: Prior to receiving the email you sent me below, I began rereading the Ramana part of the book and contemplated on the feeling that I see the self as an object. Distancing myself from every feeling, thought, emotion and experience, in a moment I became awareness, I was awareness with no experience occurring, no bliss, no emotion, a simple and pure observation was occurring of what was happening around me. All this was very subtle though I was awareness and everything else as a happening observable by me. This lasted for a few days and then began to wear off. This is the first time that the need to seek completely dropped and I was ready to just live life, I was full and complete, but as I say, it wore off. I am not sure why it wore off, but the result has been that I can see how nothing can get me there, no effort, no meditation, so now am a bit stuck and feel a bit deflated, to be honest, as I am not sure how to proceed next.

Sundari: What you experienced has a technical term: *samadhi*. There are two basic *samadhis*. The state you experienced is called *savikalpa samadhi*. You experience *vikalpas* – thoughts and feelings, etc., from the position of the self. Consequently each *vikalpa*, each perception, has the same value because they are all just you, awareness. Just as all plates and cups and saucers are only clay, all perceptions, experiences, etc. are known to have the same value.

The other *samadhi* is called *nirvikalpa samadhi*. In this *samadhi* the mind is free of *vikalpas*, so there is no experience. When this state ends, you can only infer that it happened.

In both cases there is a collapse of the ego and you know your true nature as non-dual and one with everything. The problem with *samadhi*, which I call “experiential

enlightenment," is that when you come out of this state, you return to Isadora, with her life, her *karma* and her *vasana* load. Isadora still experiences and interprets her life through her particular *vasanas*. Until such time as her *vasanas* are attenuated or neutralized and you know with certainty that you are not the doer, the show goes on as before, so to speak. There are no shortcuts in the apparent reality. Most people who take the experiential route are looking for a way out or a shortcut.

There is only the "long-cut"; inquiry has to continue until the mind is purified. When your personal ignorance (*avidya*) of your nature is removed through self-inquiry *maya*, the macrocosmic mind, is still there and still conditions your subtle body. It is its nature to do so, and this will go on eternally because the self is eternal. Realising your true nature as the self is the easy part. Actualising it in *mithya*, the apparent reality, is the tough part.

When you are clear and the knowledge that your true nature is unchanging, unlimited (and therefore non-separate from everything), awareness is hard and fast, no further experiences of non-duality are required to convince you, although they may still occur. Life goes on as before and you will no longer seek anything, as you are what you are seeking. You will know who you are all the time.

Isadora: I have since reread Chapter II, and contemplate as often as possible, "I am free and full," so am feeling a bit fuzzy, as if I just need to take one deep breath and Isadora will completely dissolve... leaving Me... (I wish 😊).

Sundari: Being a householder and doing your duty in the world is a tough job at any time. It is especially hard to lead a contemplative life when children need taking care of and bills have to be paid. See everything as *prasad* and know that the knowledge itself will do the work. Keep asking yourself with every thought, word and deed who is thinking, speaking, acting here. Are you Isadora or are you awareness?

In your statement above, which I is talking? If you are free and full, you are the self and the self is never fuzzy. Only Isadora is fuzzy, and you are not Isadora, you are the self experiencing Isadora. She is an object in you, awareness. She will dissolve when you see that she is just an inert reflection of you, like the sun that gives its light to the moon.

The important point here is that egolessness is NOT enlightenment. You say that you are just hoping Isadora will dissolve. It is a shame she won't, but she will be with you for the rest of your life. She can dissolve, but what kind of dissolution is it?

She is like a mirage on the desert floor: when you look at it, you know it is not real. However, it definitely exists or you would not be able to see it. So Isadora will exist, but as the self you will know she is not real and therefore her problems will not be your problems. She will continue to do what she has to do according to her *prarabdha karma*.

Isadora: Should I continue as per your email below or would you recommend something else?

~ Much gratitude and love, Isadora

Sundari: Definitely continue as per Ram's recommendations. Continue your *sadhana*, know what your *svadharma* is, follow it faithfully, and most importantly, practise *karma yoga*, especially on your feelings. This means that you will know that your thoughts and feelings come from *Isvara* and you have no control over them. The only way you have control over them is seeing them as the self sees them - as a mirage.

~ *Om* and *prem*, Sundari