

# Ninety Days into Vedanta

Arlindo Moraes

2017-04-21

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3285>

**Frank:** Hi, Arlindo. I bought the *Vedanta Full Set* and have been practically immersed in the teachings for 90 days so far.

**Arlindo:** Hi, Frank. That's the best way to do it.

**Frank:** I have completed *Self-Inquiry* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, and was extremely motivated and excited at first. It seems to have calmed down a lot of *rajas* in me.

**Arlindo:** Yes, Frank, exposure of the mind to the teachings on self-knowledge does that – it converts *rajas* and *tamas* into *sattva*. With a larger predominance of *sattva guna*, the mind becomes calmer and clearer, and assimilation of the teachings increases.

**Frank:** But now that the news has sunk in somewhat that the joy is not in the objects, I feel stuck in a rut.

**Arlindo:** At first it may feel as if some old companions are missing. Before you got the good news that the joy resides in your own self, you were used to living on emotions derived from the excitement of striving to get or avoid things and experiences in life. That may have become your lifestyle, the very purpose of life. But now you know that there is no point in running after things, because objects are value-neutral. Welcome to the club, Frank. 😊

**Frank:** For some reason, I'm not motivated to do anything. I still get "angry" when things don't go my way. I just observe the anger and try to neutralize it by taking my feelings and the situation as *prasad*, which is working slowly to make me more dispassionate.

**Arlindo:** It may be that, before, your main motivation was to do actions to get and experience; now a shift is happening and your value for objects of experience is turning into a value for understanding and knowing. For knowledge, you do not need action. Knowledge is a by-product of contemplation and inquiry. Anger, as you know, is an object, and an uncomfortable one for the *jiva*. So it is a good idea to take it as *Isvara's prasad*, while discriminating you, awareness, from *Isvara*, *jiva* and the anger. And keep going back to your Vedanta videos, your new passion, your great desire. The desire for knowledge is the only desire that produces freedom, while all others will bind the *jiva* to objects.

**Frank:** I am not sure what I should be doing at this point, because life just seems pointless. This feels like depression but, as I say, there is this kind of okayness with

it all, but a distinct giving up on life right now.

**Arlindo:** That's the price you have to pay for maturity: you will have to stand aloof, knowing for yourself that life as it is seen and lived in *samsara* is total insanity. You will need a little time to adjust to your environment with new associations and lifestyle. You cannot have self-knowledge and keep doing the same stupid things as before. Depression is predominance of *tamas*, and *tamas* paralyzes the mind. Kick-start the mind again! Expose your mind to and contemplate the teachings over and over again – and you will have some of that *tamas* converted into *rajas* as you get moving towards your goal. Yes, you need *rajas* in order to find the proper emotion (energy in motion) to move on with your understanding.

**Frank:** I'm aware that this is *tamoguna*, but I don't know what to do about it. I'm observing it, trying not to make it about who I am, but trying to understand that it belongs to *Isvara*, this whole body and mind belongs to *Isvara*, and I'm happy to just wait for death, to be honest (LOL).

**Arlindo:** Everything in creation belongs to *Isvara*, but let's not use it to justify our dissatisfaction. Self-ignorance produces suffering. Self-knowledge produces freedom, joy and contentment. Knowledge and ignorance are objects brought about by *maya/Isvara*. *Jiva* is also a sentient, animate object. Everything in *maya* is almost as good as nonexistent, but yet it can be experienced by *jivas*. So it does not help the *jiva* to deny its existence and the responsibility that comes with the gift of life in this apparent reality.

**Frank:** I'm just wondering if this is what is supposed to be happening. I've very much taken the attitude that I feel James and Sundari has to the world, which comes across as "all very nice, but we don't really care what you think," which is very admirable because there are so many people looking for objects and projecting their issues onto James because he is so genuine about everything. Anyway, so this is how this *jiva* is faring at the moment, and I noticed that it is of some concern to me and wanted to get your advice.

**Arlindo:** My advice: keep doing your good work, Frank. You will experience no regrets. There is nothing like Vedanta, and James Swartz is a great teacher. Hundreds have realized their true nature in association with him. It just takes a little time at the beginning for your *mumukshutva* to grow to a point of no return. The teachings will do the rest. Stay with it as often as you can, and if needed focus on *karma yoga*. *Karma/dharma yoga* = knowledge about *Isvara*. *Isvara*-knowledge is a great purifier of the mind. You will need a very subtle and pure, contemplative mind in order to contemplate and know that you are the free, limitless, actionless, ordinary awareness.

Good luck, and feel free to contact me at any time.

~ Much love, Arlindo