

# I Am the Crystal

Ram (James Swartz)

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**Dick:** Dear James, thank you again for the *Mandukya* and commentaries. A question keeps coming up during reading, like the analogy you give of the crystal near a rose which appears red. Is the *jiva* an *uphadi*?

**James:** Yes. It makes the self think It is a person.

**Dick:** During the practice of inquiry in the last months, it's like having seen through the relationships of the past decades, also the various ambitions at different stages of life so far, and even confronting the fact that if these were now my last moments, what would still have not yet been done? As I feel all these things, it's like being able to almost "absorb" them, horrors and highlights both.

There was the fantasy that if "I" just do this much more work (fill in the blanks as to what kind) then "I" will have finally made it! And the huge relief, to the point of utter mental, emotional, exhaustion - there would be no more to "do" - ever again. Then I keep seeing this person, in me, in the future, apparently happy and contented, yet now I see them also exactly the same as me right now!

**James:** Yes. There is no doer, and therefore nothing to be done. Nothing actually ever happened. The world and the *jiva* was, is and always will be only a dream.

**Dick:** Incredibly, nothing, zero had or has changed. Or will. Oh, my God! This can't be, yet I know it to be true. It was always true. The driving hunger to be more, to do more is all still there but just kind of "suspended" as if someone has stopped an old film in frame and I can walk around that me, even ask it questions, like, "Who are you? What are you?"

**James:** "Suspended" is a great word to describe the doer. It's like an insect sealed in amber for all eternity, a peculiar specimen.

**Dick:** It leads me to think that the me I thought I was is the colour in the crystal. As I see now that I am the crystal, the colour is still there but it is not the crystal.

**James:** Yes, indeed. Dick's color bleeds onto you.

**Dick:** But where exactly is here? It is like seeing the crystal clear, being the crystal, empty yet full of all that stuff swirling around. Time has literally stopped in this way: the illusion that "I could develop," then "get there," then say, "Hey, guess what? I have changed," and (pointing then to that guy back there) yet without "that guy back there" still being here now as well is hilarious. What a shell game I believed for

so long and would still do had it not been for Vedanta and your teaching.

**James:** One never ceases to be amused at the antics of the dream *jiva* when one discovers that one is an uncontaminated crystal. *Maya* is a great wonder!

**Dick:** Right now I do recognise the self in all others; 90% of what bothered me previously is practically gone or just rendered inert most of the time; I find an incredible, natural compassion that is just there and totally obvious, even with people or stuff previously (intensely) annoying. I can still get out of sorts shortly, but I know why this is and just stumble on until it goes. I acutely feel if I start down a road of any kind of deliberate negative emotion, it just clogs everything up and is quite unnecessary.

**James:** The electricity is off but the blades of the fan are still turning a little.

**Dick:** Where I feel a resistance and have some trouble is now making a “magical leap” from here to creating something more out of this than it is, like that this self is also a “huge limitless universal self.” Honestly, it seems it does not need to be, or am I wrong? If I focus on the ideas of the teaching, the beautiful precision of it, the gratefulness I feel, the sense of unassailable emptiness, the being able to breathe finally with life, the feeling of life passing through without hindrance anymore. That is the best description I can give so far.

**James:** There is no magical leap, because the doer is not a real doer and there is nowhere to leap to. The “huge limitless” self is the ordinary, ever-present you. We are burdened with spatial and temporal metaphors which create a sense of duality when we speak of the non-dual, ordinary self. “Limitless” is a very misleading term. A better word is “unmodifiable.” The self sees/experiences, but it is not modified by what it sees/experiences. The *jiva* colors it, but it is not contaminated by the color. You can’t wipe the color away, because it isn’t there in the first place.

You have to give yourself a nice pat on the back, Dick. Grace is earned. You stuck with it and now you enjoy the fruit of inquiry. If you won’t, I will. I respect you a lot for your devotion to the truth.

~ Love, James