

Haters Want to Hate

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2019-01-06

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3772>

Gisella: I have been really vigilant since the teachings on the *gunas* last year, doing the *karma yoga*, and it has made a big difference to understand how *rajas* I can be. So I have been much quieter, mostly happy just because I am, even with all the family drama. I know I am the Self since the first time I met you in India, the teachings gave me clarification, but now I must be even more vigilant, as I am very emotional again. My mother really is dying, maybe days or weeks this time, and the cancer is in the brain. I am fine with all that upset about her and we have talked about her death together and are very close, loving and sad, but I have to work alongside my sister, who hates me, which she has more or less told me this year since coming back from the retreat.

There is no reason I know of for the hatred. I really have always looked after her, but anyway she does. I can feel it. I am obviously sad, I love my mother and I also know she is eternal as well, but dealing with the hatred is something else and I am not doing very well with it, it's getting to me, I am just trying hard to avoid too much conflict. I am reaching out to ask you both because there may be another way to handle this.

Sundari: Hello, Gisella. I am sorry to hear about your difficult life circumstances. It is not easy to lose a parent, even when you do know that nobody dies. We will still miss the physical person and feel the loss of their closeness. I send you strength and courage to deal with it, clinging fast to Self-knowledge without a doubt.

What is behind hatred is almost always jealousy, comparison and envy. It comes from what I call the "voices of diminishment," our inner judge and jury. We all have that voice, as long as we are identified with the body-mind, because we believe we are inadequate and we live in fear. Envy is one of the most common and unreasonable impurities, a pernicious form of duality.

It exists because the world is vast, filled with millions of entities that provide myriad opportunities, real or imagined, for self-demeaning, comparative judgments. Jealousy and envy are transformed anger and usually lead to depression. They are produced by a sense of lack brought on by comparison to someone you think is superior in some way to you.

It is unreal for this reason: I am never jealous of the whole person, only some aspect. He/she is more intelligent, beautiful, wealthy or popular than me, or whatever. The fact that I would like to be like this person shows that there is some sympathy for him/her, but that is hidden from the envier because *rajas* projects the mind outwards and *tamas* denies it is doing so. Perfect combo!

Jealousy is an unwarranted reaction to the apparent nature of reality, which is non-dual. It is completely without merit. It is a projection that masks an insufficient appreciation of my own nature as the Self and the abundance of good qualities that spring from it. A Self-realized person is never jealous, because they are mindful of their fullness, so there is nothing to be envious or jealous of. How can you compare yourself to anything when you know it is all you?

The triumvirate - jealousy, comparison and envy - are very big enemies of peace of mind because they fragment it until all discrimination is lost. It starts with comparison, which evolves into jealousy:

“I want what you have,” which then becomes envy, which is “I want to be like you.” Envy becomes rivalry, which is “I want to beat you,” competition. And lastly, hatred: “I want to destroy you.”

When envy has gone so far, there is no going back. Haters want to hate because it relieves the pressure of their internal pain. There is no possibility of rational discourse at this point, and the hater will turn everything around and project it onto you.

The insecurity your sister makes you feel is more than likely your mind conditioning to the fear that is behind all hatred. Haters can seem very powerful and they are usually masters of “gaslighting,” which is a form of psychological manipulation, a condition of extreme duplicity that very fearful people employ to dominate and control others they actually fear.

Gaslighting is designed to sow seeds of doubt in a targeted individual, making them question their own memory, perception and sanity. Using persistent denial, misdirection, contradiction and lying, it attempts to destabilize the victim and delegitimize the victim’s belief. It is an attack on your character by a manipulator, often about things you have supposedly said, done or not done. When you respond, they turn the tables, denying their subversive attack with reverse psychology, eroding your self-confidence and creating doubt. It is a very effective strategy unless you have the rock-solid self-confidence that comes with Self-knowledge and apply *karma yoga* vigilantly to your emotions very diligently.

In situations such as these, *karma yoga* means you immediately give over your emotional reaction to *Isvara* instead of acting on it, which neutralizes it and removes the power over you from the manipulator. This is the only way for you to deal with the feelings your sister evokes. She wants power over you and is using hatred/fear to get it. Don’t fall for it.

We sometimes get attacks like this ourselves from people, very seldom though. When it happens to us, the attacker never has the guts to attack us directly, to our faces, which we could respect, as we are always open to listening to anyone who writes to us. We have just had one recently, and it was textbook manipulation from a very angry, sad and damaged individual. When I turned the tables on he/she and said I would be happy to reply to any questions or field any insults, but only face to face on Skype, the ugliness really came out.

These people are psychological cowards who feel powerful only when they can attack anonymously. Their projection and denial go nowhere with us, as we are immune to psychological manipulation of any kind, and their powerlessness infuriates them even more, so their attacks get more desperate. Their capacity to insult is equal to the hatred they have for themselves. It’s really sad and pitiful to observe.

Your sister is at least attacking you directly, though that does not necessarily make it easier, because she is your kin. Your only recourse is to remain steady with *karma yoga* and not respond to his hatred, understand that it is only fear, nothing else. And you know what fear stands for: False Evidence Appearing Real. Love her anyway, but don’t try to placate her, you will be wasting your time and playing her game. It

would be wonderful if we could just give haters love and they would capitulate to it, but they despise you even more for this, as they see it as weakness.

A culture of hatred has reared its ugly head much more visibly now that we live in the “age of information” ushered in by the internet. It has inundated us with so much information that most can no longer tell the difference between opinion and fact. Worse, it allows gratuitous grievances to be voiced as legitimate obsessions and gives prejudice and hatred the veneer of ideals - with the potential for huge public validation, which of course small, fearful people desperately need. And there are many very small people “out there”! It seems like there is more of it now because it’s so in our faces, but actually, it has always been there, just not so obviously, ignorance being what it is.

Your situation is not an easy one, Gisella, I feel for you, but what the teachings state clearly is that everyone is the Self, even the haters. Non-dual love makes no distinctions and accepts that *Isvara* is both *dharma* and *adharma* woven fine. Duality has to function that way or the game would be over. This is an imperfect world, but it is still a very beautiful world, never forget that.

~ With much love and light, Sundari