

Doing It Right

Ram (James Swartz)

2019-01-08

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3814>

Questioner: I have a question for my Guruji!

You wrote the following: “The five-step process of Vedanta: *karma yoga, upasana yoga, sravanna, manana* and *nididhyasana*.”

Of the five practices, I focus mostly on doing body activities, praying to God to give me strength with my fears and desires, and worship God as soon as I eat, drink and enter a new room or website. I listen daily to you and sometimes read scripture as well.

And I daily do concentration meditation in order to keep my mind sharp and able to withstand difficult situations.

What I noticed in recent times is that I had more conflicts than ever (the upside is that I feel very alive). So as a consequence I will focus a bit more on how I communicate with others, how I use words, whether some harmful words slip in and how others understand what I said.

What I wanted to know now is that I have not felt much fear of death in recent weeks. In fact I look forward to death. I think I have done most what was needed to do in my life. And I don't mind “resting” in my nature and enjoy myself (I think you know what I mean). Mind you, I enjoy life but I don't have many plans left. I resolved painful relationships, I cleaned up most painful and anger parts of my soul and of course I studied and worshipped God/Self. I don't think there is a plan for me to have a particularly big career, nor to have a particularly great relationship with a wife.

There are conflicts in life and there will be pleasures in life. I don't mind either of the two.

I am not particularly crazy about attending further Vedanta seminars or other spiritual seminars, but I am happy when I am there but I know that there will be moments I don't enjoy. And all of that is fine.

I just wanted to know now what you think about what I have written above and if you find anything fishy about my statements above.

James: Absolutely nothing fishy. In fact it seems your understanding of yourself, life and the teaching is very excellent! Good for you. You are doing inquiry properly because you are noticing recently “...that I had more conflicts than ever (the upside is that I feel very alive). So as a consequence I will focus a bit more on how I communicate with others, how I use words, whether some harmful words slip in and how others understand what I said.”

The conflicts have always been there but inquiry is bringing them to light. The second point is that you have put a finger on your *jiva's* challenging aspects and have rightly resolved to “focus a bit more” on your relationship with others. Your *jiva* has tended to be self-absorbed at the expense of appreciating how others think and feel. In the old days, people with this tendency were called “celestials,” meaning not

on this earth. There is nothing special to do except to stay quiet and alert and learn to empathize when you are in the presence of others. You will quickly discover others' sensitivities and how particular words cause irritation. The idea is to focus as much on how they think and feel as you focus on how you think and feel. It is actually love, willing attention directed toward conscious beings.

The other things you mentioned – loss of fear of death, worship of God, concentration, scripture study, lack of ambition for career and marriage (Ramakrishna said the two biggest obstacles to happiness are craving for “women and gold,” meaning pleasure and security), the feeling of “aliveness,” the feeling that one has done most of what is needed in life and the lack of interest in Vedanta seminars – show increasing dispassion, which is the purpose of *sadhana*. With regards to the lack of interest in seminars, I think you have pretty much assimilated the meaning of the teachings with reference to your *jiva*, so there isn't much need for hearing more. However, often that final “click” of Self-confidence comes in the presence of the *guru*, not to mention that it is very nice to meet the most interesting and highly evolved people on the planet. That's one of the major reasons I attend my teachings. 😊

~ Love, Guruji