

# Guna Management

Ram (James Swartz)

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**Bob:** Hi, James. I have read many of your *guna satsangs* but it still seems my understanding isn't deep enough. As the self I am beyond *gunas* but the apparent person is always subject to them, and occasional confusion results from an unidentified *guna* manifesting itself, and usually it's connected with an object. I could "bypass" the *guna* teaching as the self and just discriminate self from not-self but somehow this makes it seem as if I'm missing out on an important tool for mind management.

**James:** You can do both: use it to discriminate the self from the mind and to manage the mind.

**Bob:** I understand the *guna* teachings that I've been exposed to but a detailed knowledge of their manifestation and management escapes me. I know what I don't know. 😊

**James:** Yes, our next book will be a detailed unfolding of the *guna* teaching but it seems to me that all you need to know is the energetic feel of the *guna* manifesting at the moment and knowledge of the values associated with it. If you keep your goal in mind then you can dismiss the value. If you value desire (*rajas*) or fear (*tamas*) the *gunas* have a hold on you. The idea that you are "missing out" is *tamoguna*. If your life has become more livable since Vedanta - which it seems it has - then you are managing the *gunas* properly.

**Bob:** As far as "Bob's bipolar" goes I think he should become a "*guna* master" because for all his life he has been a "*guna* slave." This was the reason I was so interested in the personal "moral" inventory early on, which really was directly related to identifying, managing and neutralizing the *guna* influence. I don't think that this perceived deficit is preventing "enlightenment" or my "progress" but I feel it's important knowledge for me to have available for when people approach me for help, which occasionally they do. Only through consistent monitoring can the *guna* influence be ascertained, as life triggers the *vasanas* that remain hidden until the reaction exposes them and the *guna* of which they are an effect. Any action that can be found to be somehow emotionally-related or -based "reaction" rather than an intellectually-based logical "response" is always suspect.

**James:** This is true, and very well articulated.

**Bob:** I discovered I (reflected self) had *vasanas* I didn't even know I had because some are never apparent until a reaction is experienced that's directly connected to them.

**James:** This shows that your *sadhana* is working. As you clear one *samskara* it reveals another underneath. It is patient work. At some point you give up on it and go for the self.

**Bob:** Do you ever intend to produce a direct, detailed *guna* teaching that includes definition, recognition and management ?

**James:** Managing them is just being aware of them and changing the behavior that produces an unwanted *guna*. The *gunas* are common knowledge for everyone. Just look for areas of your life where there is conflict and avoidance, and clean them up.

**Bob:** Thank you, James. I sure wish I had more direct contact with you so I could talk with you more frequently. Even a casual text chat would be great. Maybe we can Skype sometime? How much would that cost as a donation?

**James:** When I get to Spain we can Skype. I am very busy now getting my last little ducks in line for my annual migration to warmer climes. The end of next month will be good. The seminar will be over and we will be settled in for the winter. It seems you are doing just fine, Bob. The donation is up to you.

~ Much love, James