

Karma Yoga, the Only Solution to Loss

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Carl: Hi, Isabella. I have found out this week that my sister is dying of cancer and may have less than two weeks to live. She lives 300 miles from me but I am hoping to be able to go to see her after Tuesday. She is 68 years old and is a devout Catholic.

How can I support her and the family through this difficult time? How can I practise in the period leading up to her death and after?

~ Love, Carl

Sundari: Dear Carl, I am sorry to hear that you have this sad news to contend with. Death is a difficult passage to face, even when seen in the light of self-knowledge, i.e. when one knows there is no death.

As to your question on how to help the family in a way that they can understand, relate to them as they are, see them as the self and serve them in the way that best suits them. Whatever their beliefs are, they are still worshipping the self, even though they may not know it.

There is nothing to “practise” as such; Vedanta is not theory and practice. It is the hard and fast logic that supports all life, no matter what is “happening.” Self-knowledge is the ground of being, so what matters is the spirit in which you do everything. Apart from taking the *karma yoga* attitude, if you want a practice then you can transmit your love and your knowledge to your sister by using the self as the “vehicle” for your communication. You do that by introducing the thought or image of your sister and fill that image with your understanding and your love, your prayers. The self will translate the essence of your love and your knowledge into a language that your sister will understand, bypassing the intellect. In this way your prayers will be received by your sister and her family.

We send you our love and sympathy at this time of apparent suffering.

~ Much love from both of us, Sundari