

# Macrocosmic Rajas

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**Bill:** Hello, Ramji. I hope you are well. Here things are totally magical and I continue my *sadhana*.

A strange set of apparent events occurred. I would like your feedback.

I often use dance for exercise, and this last Saturday I took the time to go to my place of practice. There is dark energy there, and I recently stopped going, but this day I went anyway. I should have listened to my guidance and left when a client from my practice came in. I have a policy not to dance where I eat or eat where I dance... if you know what I mean. But I did not listen. I thought if I could keep my distance I would enjoy my exercise. As events unfolded, that would not be the case.

I was looking around the room and I noticed a man and a woman dancing together. They appeared to be playfully hitting one another. I took another look and that play to me seemed to be more serious, at least that was my interpretation. As I watched, it got more intense and without even thinking I walked over just as he hit her in the face and I angrily grabbed him without a thought for my own safety. I wanted it to stop. What happened afterwards was not so important.

My question is: What happened to me? Without even thinking, something took me, literally carried me the fifty feet between us instantly in an angry state to stop what I saw as abuse – because that is my job as a therapist. But the whole event seemed “otherworldly.” This is not quite the right word.

Is this a waking dream... or a dream awakening? Please elaborate, if possible.

**Ramji:** Hi, Bill. A very interesting event. “The Bill” (remember, the real you is unconcerned awareness) has a strong moral compass. He is in a helping profession and has a predominantly *rajasic* temperament. In Vedanta terms, Bill would be classified as a “*dharmi*,” someone committed to following *dharma*. When he saw a perceived injustice, macrocosmic *rajas* took over. When this happens it is like going unconscious. You are there as the self, obviously, observing what happened, but Bill, who is just a thought in you, awareness, is wiped away by the powerful energy. “Impulsive” is a word that goes with *rajas*. When he goes, his memory is wiped clean and his discrimination goes. The *rajas* becomes the doer and Bill is powerless. It goes to show that, as the *Gita* says, “the *gunas* are the doer.” *Rajoguna* is characterized by desire and anger and pain. The perceived injury caused a feeling of pain, a strong desire to remove it, sprang up immediately (along with a sense of righteous anger) and Bill acted without thinking. Events trigger core *vasanas*.

All small irritations are caused by *rajas* too; one acts unconsciously, but there is not a complete loss of control and memory. The mind and body will be agitated and one will feel frustration. *Rajas* is the curse of *Kali Yuga*, the modern age. I have *rajas*, but my predominate personality type is *sattvic* and I am firmly identified as awareness, so in that situation I would not react automatically. I may have acted – or not – depending on a careful evaluation of the situation, but The Ramji would not disappear, because knowledge, not *dharma*, is my core issue. It makes me cool

under fire. In the Vedic system I would be called a *jignasu*, someone committed to knowledge, not a *dharmi*. The interesting thing about a person who has a predominately *rajasic* temperament is that *maya's* other strong power, *tamas*, works side by side with it. *Rajas* is projecting *shakti*, energy, and the other power, *tamas*, is concealing *shakti*. *Tamas*, psychologically speaking, is responsible for denial.

I have a number of friends who are evolving out *rajas* into *sattva*. Personally, I hate *rajas* unless it is very consciously directed to worship of the self. Wherever there is pain there is *rajas*. Anyway, when I am with them and the *rajas* is predominant, they often become irritated and find themselves caught up in a series of thoughts and actions that they would not have consciously chosen had *tamas* or *sattva* been predominant. I have a strong teaching *vasana* – it is part of the *sattvic samskara* – and sometimes call attention to the fact that my friend was under the spell of *rajas*. And almost invariably the person will deny it. The denial is automatic, like in the Beatles song, “You say yes, I say no.” Even if I carefully reconstruct the events and the person’s reaction, they will disagree. This is typical of *rajas*. I don’t get into an argument with them, because I know very well that the *tamas* has clouded the memory. The defensive reaction is brought about by the *tamas* – the person can’t see what energy was playing, because he or she was so fixated on the events unfolding. So the *rajas/tamas* complex has these two components: attack and denial.

Mind you, this is all unconscious, so it is very difficult to change. You can change it, however, if you wish, by developing *sattva* through inquiry and prayer, *karma yoga*, etc. In its discussion of the *gunas* scripture talks evolving out of *tamas* into *rajas* and out of *rajas* into *sattva*. Since my book and website made me “famous” I have noticed some unwanted *rajas* activating in my unconscious. It is like I am evolving backwards. I say “like” because I am not evolving backwards, first because I am awareness and it does not evolve. And second my core psychological structure is firmly situated in *sattva*. Why the occasional bouts of *rajas* then? Because of the *samasthi vasana*. *Samsathi vasana* means “the group mind.” For all of my adult life I have been a loner, firmly in control of my destiny. But now that I have accepted fame I have lost some of that control. It is okay. I really don’t care who or what is in control of my mind – this attitude is the fruit of self-knowledge. In any case, now the group mind functions in me occasionally as “my mind” to some degree. As I said above, the curse of the age is *rajas*. All groups these days, including spiritual groups, which ideally should be *sattvic*, are infected with liberal doses of *rajas*. So sometimes I experience intense *rajas*. I don’t take it personally, however, because I know it is just *Isvara*, the group mind, working through me.

Anyway, I didn’t mean to run on about this, but I think the “three *gunas*” teaching is the most brilliant psychology on the planet insofar as it is very simple and elegant and explains everything. Your email inspired me to write about it. One more thing to know about *rajas* is its power to produce a sense of self-righteousness, but this is another story.

~ Love, Ramji