

Not Acting Is an Action

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Martin: Hi, James. Thanks for asking about my situation. I'm sorting out the difference between *dharmic* intuitions and *vasanas*, if that makes any sense.

James: It depends on what you mean by *dharmic* intuitions, Martin. *Dharma* just means what is right in a given situation considering your nature and the factors at play in your environment. There is no reason you should not act out your *vasanas* if you keep within *dharma*. Krishna says, "I am the desire that is not opposed to *dharma*." It means your *vasanas* are meant to be worked out. This is how you become successful. If you work them out with the *karma yoga* attitude they will be purified.

Martin: The sorting of "what I want" contains moments of confusion and clarity, which is immediately questioned. I do resist the idea that recognizing I am the self should merely provide me with a revised capacity to "engage" (freely) in the dream world of activity and desire. That's it?

James: What else are you going to do but act out your desires in the dream world? There is no other option. Your desires are in the dream world and Martin is in the dream world. If you know you are the self you are not bothered by Martin's situation. It is fine as it is.

Acting out your desires has nothing to do with whether you recognize that you are the self. You are acting out your desires whether or not you know you are the self. You are acting out your desires now. Everyone in a body is acting out their desires. I think you are just confused about what desires to act out. If you don't choose to act then you will just run off the *vasanas* in place now. As Krishna says, "Be not attached to inaction."

Knowing you are the self has nothing to do with the dream world, Martin. I think you think it should change your *karma* in the dream world for the better. But it will not. It may change how you handle your dream *karma*, but it will not change the *karma*. As I have said to you twenty times, *karma* does not care if you are enlightened. It just keeps coming. To change your *karma* you have to do *karma*. There is no other way. If your self-knowledge does not give you the confidence to do what is necessary, what use is it? It is just intellectual knowledge.

Martin: Do you think it's possible that what feels like a "calling" to a particular life vision/path, which resurfaces with an associated experience of apparent clarity, is doing so because it should be engaged?

James: It is possible, but by no means certain. The problem here is that you are trying to rely on some kind of intuition to make up your mind about what you need to do. But it is very easy to misinterpret intuition. And intuition may tell you one thing

at one moment and something else at another time, hence the confusion. So it is not reliable. It seems to me that *tamas* is clouding your intellect and because of it you are afraid to act for fear of making a decision that will not work out favorably.

The problem with not acting is that not acting is an action. If the situation calls for it, then it is *dharmic*, but if the situation demands action, then it is *adharmic*.

~ James