

Rajas and Meditation

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Isaiah: Dear Ramji, in the course of inquiry all of my longstanding and raging hard-ons of desire for wanting to do art, music and film have become limp, flaccid and impotent. They no longer obtain. There are no ambitions left in my life (and it feels better than having ambition). However, there has been one inclination that has remained throughout it all: to teach. Because really, if the only meaning in the world is me, then why not just talk about myself? Nothing else has any allure. And really, even though it is just an object appearing in me, I love Vedanta, not just because it works, but because it obviously stands head-and-shoulders above other spiritual paths. It so logically and easily peels back the mass of “spiritual” bullshit that accrues in the mind to reveal what was always there. Why it is so obscure I have no idea.

So that being said, I’ve had my shingle printed up advertising my supreme wisdom, skillfully Photoshopped a halo around a picture of my head, and redubbed myself Sri Sri Krvinanandaji Maharaj. I’m currently working on my website. 😊

Ramji: Ah, yes, first enlightenment, then fame and fortune!

Isaiah: But seriously, what I really was thinking was this: (1) continue my small duty at work to maintain my meat suit, (2) keep my head down and continue inquiry and study, (3) try to LEARN how to teach and see if I can even do it effectively. I’m not saying I can, but I’d like to try.

I don’t have a cave or forest to retreat to, but I’ve got a really simple life and a pretty quiet room in my house where no one bothers me. I’m just going to keep listening to your teachings and studying Vedantic texts. If you have any pointers, will you please let me know?

Ramji: Sounds good. You will be a good teacher because your understanding is very clear, and because you have passion for the topic.

There is not much to it apart from observing the person’s doubts and applying the appropriate teaching to the doubt. You need the overview – the whole *mandala* of *satya* and *mithya* – the chart – in your mind so you can pinpoint doubts and work down from the self or up from the world. Use the organization of the teachings in my book as a template. Don’t worry too much about Sanskrit. You need just enough to intimidate the student(s) with your knowledge. :-) You have my blessing.

Isaiah: And finally, I have a couple of questions:

1. When the *avidya* of who you are is removed, are there lesser or different forms of ignorance that are then rooted out of the mind by continued application of the knowledge?

Ramji: Yes. The effects of ignorance continue. Ignorance is an orientation. When I go to England I almost always nearly get hit by vehicle even though I know full well that they drive on the left. But the tendency to operate on the right is still there. So remain vigilant and use the knowledge until the mind dies. It will become automatic after a while and no conscious effort is required because you have established the *vasanas* for the right orientation, i.e. functioning as the self, not as a person who knows the self.

Isaiah: 2. When *jnana yoga* and *karma yoga* are in place, is there really anything else that is useful for the purification of the mind?

Ramji: No. There is only knowledge and experience and those two cover it. In fact *karma yoga* is just knowledge. It does not require conscious effort except at the beginning when there is a residual sense of doership.

Isaiah: 3. After you know who you are, is meditation still useful as a tool for purification of the mind?

Ramji: Only in the sense that it is a *sattvic* activity. Knowledge and the *yogas* purify the mind. Meditation steadies it. Having said that, if you have a *rajasic* mind meditation can eliminate it once the meditation *vasanas* are established. Often knowledge alone is not enough to control a very *rajasic* mind. There are stubborn *jnanis* who suffer the effects of *rajas* because they refuse to meditate for some strange reason. *Rajas* is an insidious state of mind. It comes with a lot of hidden *tamas* in the form of a kind of stubbornness, a refusal to change. *Rajas* almost invariably comes with a kind of arrogance, a feeling that “the way I do it is the best.” *Rajasic* people are their own worst enemies. They resist meditation because they are so addicted to doership and action. They are always worried about something. It does not seem like they are accomplishing anything. This is why we prescribe *karma yoga* for *rajasic* types. Eventually their minds calm down, but it is a long, hard slog. If a *rajasic jnani* is very intelligent, he or she will almost invariably shun meditation as a waste of time. They prefer action – teaching, writing, etc. My *guru* was a good example. He was very *rajasic*, and he suffered a lot from it. But he didn’t care, because he felt that accomplishing things was more valuable than feeling good. I meditate all the time. It looks like I am very busy writing when I sit in front of the computer, but I am not. A *rajasic* person would think I am *tamasic*, but it is not true. I am sitting in the silence, enjoying. I save my *tamas* for sleep. I hold my mind on the self and let a little energy drain off in the form of Vedanta-thoughts. My mind only gets *rajasic* when a *rajasic* mind comes into my energy field. Then I have to battle with it. I am not nice when *rajas* is operating. I truly hate *rajas*. It is so painful.

Isaiah: Well, I hope your world travels are going well. May minds be open to the knowledge. And if they aren’t, well, that’s okay too. 😊

Ramji: Yes, everything is going very well. We just spent a week in Amsterdam. It was great. Yesterday I took the bullet train to Switzerland, did a *satsang* last night and tomorrow I will be in the Tichino Alps. Sundari went to South Africa to visit her

daughter yesterday, and I will join her at the end of September after a couple of weeks in Berlin. Life is grand.

~ Love, James