

Assimilated Self-Knowledge

Ram (James Swartz)

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Tony: Dear James, before I begin, a few biographical details which might help: I've been following Vedanta teachings for about three years, attended a seminar last year in Goetz, Germany, with you and have repeatedly been studying several of your recordings for the past two years.

Several things have happened recently to me on the conscious/mental level which I feel the need to share with you, and if possible get some assessment about.

A few days ago a thought popped into my mind during a meditation sitting: I am identical to reality. Since then things have shifted around for me somewhat drastically regarding how I'm interpreting my experiences. For example, everywhere I look I seem to be seeing me!! If I sit and have lunch with my son: it feels more like the self is sitting to lunch with itself and having a conversation with itself. Repeatedly when I look at strangers passing by in the street, I have the absolute certainty that I'm looking at myself. This happens also with inanimate objects and objects in nature.

I also have the feeling this is really just the beginning and a lot of integration work is yet to be done. I also feel that I have a pretty big *vasana* load that needs to be worked out. Things still keep popping up but they seem to have a once-removed feeling, they're not so urgent/pressing/binding/tormenting as they used to be.

I'm very curious as to what you think about all this, and what you think I should be looking at and concentrating on in applying the knowledge.

~ Yours, Tony

James: Hi Tony. Well, aren't you a lucky guy! The thought "I am identical with reality" that arose during your meditation is called the *akanadakara vritti*, the vision of non-duality. It is the knowledge of your identity as awareness. It seems to be a result of the assimilation of the teachings of Vedanta that has occupied your mind for the last few years. I say "assimilated" because of the effects you describe, the experience of non-separation from objects and the once-removed feeling are symptoms of the assimilation of self-knowledge. The sense of absolute certainty is very fortunate too; it means that the assimilated knowledge is firm, *stitya pragna*, to use the Vedanta term. Let's see how it goes but it looks like the end of your seeking. You have been very diligent with your inquiry and it has borne fruit. Good for you.

At the same time, you rightly perceive that it is the beginning of a period of purification of the *samskaras*, old patterns of behavior built up before you assimilated this knowledge. It should be a relatively straightforward process if you stay with the knowledge and/or the knowledge stays with you, which I think it will. Don't change anything you are doing spiritually, i.e. reading the texts, watching the videos, meditating, etc. Don't be eager to get rid of old stuff; it should just work out on its own. And for God's sake don't tell anyone you have cracked the code! I got a sense from seeing you that there were some *tamasic* habits that might require a bit of work but basically you are good to go. So stay vigilant and let life unfold according

to your *prarabdha karma*.

~ Love, James