

ShiningWorld



Shiningworld Newsletter

December 2014

Hello Everyone,

This is the last Newsletter of a very full and busy year which has brought with it many changes for Ramji and me as well as shiningworld. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful festive season with all the very best for 2015. We would also like to thank all of you who have so generously given of your time, your financial support and your love to keep the show on the road. Shiningworld has grown in leaps and bounds and is now reaching thousands around the world setting many free of suffering.

At last Ramji managed some time off to relax after teaching multiple seminars virtually back to back. We finished off the year with two in South Africa, Cape Town and Johannesburg. The satsang here is alive and well and we will be returning to teach again next year.



We are currently taking a breather on the coast north of Durban, enjoying the sea and the sun. The ShiningWorld logo above was taken from our balcony on the day my granddaughter arrived. It seems a fitting symbol as we have the dawn of a new Shiningworld as well. Ramji has experienced most things in life but being a granddad...albeit somewhat removed...is a first ☺! It has been a beautiful experience for both of us to meet the new soul and witness the self in this tiny form. I sing

mantras to her and can feel the self respond, even though the subtle body is not very developed yet.



James is all set to leave for India in less than two weeks after great anxiety about Isvara in the form of petty officialdom granting him a visa in time! Fortunately we have just received it. Durban has the biggest Indian population outside of India and the grueling experience we had at the Indian Embassy was reminiscent of the complicated and baffling machinations of India itself, wading through endless and pointless reams of red tape. Unfortunately I will not be able to join James as officialdom in the form of the US Embassy has granted me the final interview for my green card a week before I was booked to leave for India and will retain my passport for some time. I will be sad to miss the teachings and all of you. We have over 80 bookings so far. With late registrants and drop-ins the sanga will probably top 100. Before the seminar starts James will be shooting a film with a professional film maker, Tom, from Germany, on Bhakti, decoding the symbols of worship that make India such a fascinating place.



New Website <http://www.shiningworld.com/now/>

Several months of hard work sorting out many issues with the new website has kept us very busy. Although the basic design is great the web designer made some mistakes and did not do all he was supposed to do. Fortunately a fellow Vedantin and professional web guy, Dan from Southern California, stepped in and saved our bacon. He is rebuilding the website from the ground up. Thanks, Dan we are most grateful to you! We apologise to all for any difficulties encountered navigating the new website. We still have the old website up. If you cannot find what you are looking for on the new website, look on the old one:

<http://www.shiningworld.com/top/>. We are confident that the new website will be fully operational within the next month or so. We welcome anyone who finds glitches or has suggestions on improvements to write to:

Mail to: inquiries.shiningworld@gmail.com

Request for Help

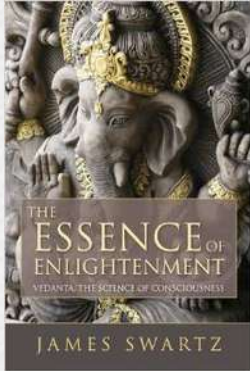
We need assistance with transcription as we have several projects underway that have stalled due to the volume of work involved. If anyone would like to help with this, please contact Vishnudeva urgently:

Mail to: inquiries.shiningworld@gmail.com

What's New

New Publications

James' new book **The Essence of Enlightenment** has finally been printed. It is really excellent. It is written in a simple easy-going conversational style and is



especially suitable for those for whom English is a second language (Europeans take note!). It expands the discussions on karma, dharma, values, Isvara and Jiva that are presented in his best selling **How to Attain Enlightenment** and, with his usual wit and clarity leads the reader step by step through Vedanta's time-tested comprehensive body of knowledge.

The book was financed by generous donations from **Ben de Silva** and **Greg Pickworth**. James and I thank you. Shiningworld thanks you and the world will thank you too! We are waiting for delivery so we cannot say exactly when we can ship...definitely before Christmas...but please order from Shiningworld. We will send out a notice when they arrive...probably within a week!

Panchadasi



James is very excited about his commentaries, inspired by Swami Paramarthananda, of Vidyaranya's Panchadasi. He's up before six every morning pounding away on his keyboard on the fourth draft. Panchadasi is perhaps Vedanta's most well-organized and sophisticated text. It is an analysis and discussion of certain famous Upanishad mantras. Its teaching on existence is second to none. Its fifteen chapters are divided into three sections: discrimination (*viveka*), Illumination (*dipa*) and bliss (*ananda*). The way it looks it should be in the bookshop within the next month. Keep your eyes peeled!

New Search Function for Satsangs

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new Shining World Satsang Database. You can now search by keyword, teacher, topic, or any combination of the three. This is a big leap forward as it will make the teachings much more

accessible. The satsangs from the old website have not all been added yet, so be patient...there are over 2000 to move! We have posted a video tutorial on the satsang page that introduces you to its features.

<http://www.shiningworld.com/now/satsang/>

Free Videos

We are celebrating the 100th posting on U-Tube of James teaching. In fact we are up to 102, a grand old age! Here is the link to the video posts:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/shiningworldvideo/videos>

New Videos

We have several new videos in the shop. We recommend James' latest teaching of Vivekachudamani in Cape Town, South Africa. It is his best so far.

<http://shop.shiningworld.com/>

Next Webinar

We will be holding the next webinar for the 7th chapter of The Essence of Enlightenment on Sunday the 14th of December at 17:00 PM GMT+2. You can find the answers to the questions on Chapter Six below and the text of Chapter 7 with questions below.

2015 Teaching Calendar

We have finalised the 2015 Calendar for those who wish to plan early to attend seminars. <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/index.php/events>

New Satsangs

Ramji and I have posted our new satsangs for this last month. We do not have that many as the new system we have instituted for replying to emails rotates who writes back, so look out for all the other brilliant replies from all our shiningworld writers in the old and new satsang sections of both websites.

Theme for this month:

Is Isvara My Daddy...Or, Not...?



Vedanta attracts mature people who are mostly qualified for self inquiry. However, some still require a bit of growing up spiritually. It seems their knowledge of *Isvara* needs a bit of work. There are those who see *Isvara* as a big Daddy or Mommy controlling their lives, someone to be propitiated for various reasons...usually to make problems go away...rather than as an unsentimental impersonal force that metes out karma according to *Jiva's* choices and the actions that flow from them. James and I have recently emphasized this teaching on *Isvara* which has been received with mixed responses from different inquirers. Most embraced it immediately, a few found it challenging. It is a controversial topic because people want to be free but at the same time they are so identified with dysfunctional patterns that the ego resists the knowledge.

Isvara is Not the Boss ...



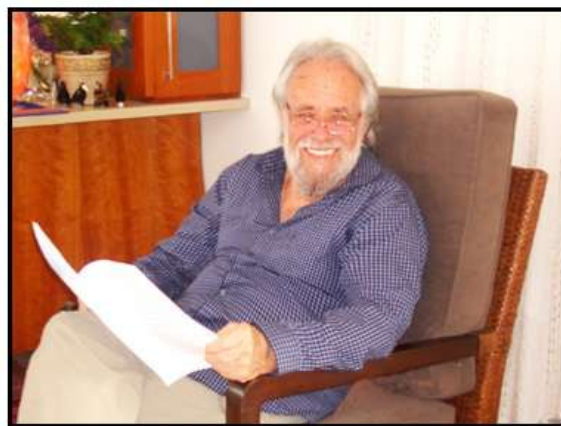
The *jiva* is part and parcel of its environment and subject to *Isvara's* universal laws...up to a point. But this does not mean that the *jiva* is dependent on *Isvara*. The *jiva* is really the ever-free *paramatman* and as such it is free of *Isvara*. So *Isvara* is not the boss; you, the self, are. Without you, *Isvara* can't boss anybody. To control *Isvara* you need to move from the idea that you are a victim/slave/devotee of *Isvara* and claim your power as the ever-free self so that your actions establish new patterns in the Causal Body that force *Isvara* to transform your Subtle Body and therefore your life in line with who you really are. You will wait forever for your freedom if you leave it up to *Isvara*.

Isvara does not add or subtract value to your life. It simply facilitates karma that *Jiva* creates. *Isvara* does not condition you; you condition *Isvara*. Although the self is passive, it has unlimited power to act; it rules *Maya*.

Isvara in the role of creator is awareness plus *Maya* and *Jiva* is awareness plus the five sheaths. So if you are awareness you can say YES and NO! to *Isvara*. It takes discipline and determination to live this way, to not fall into helplessness and *small-self* self pity. Binding *samskaras* are not going to go away by saying that they ‘belong to *Isvara*’. If you want to be free of the *jiva*, it is a mistake to believe that you must “surrender everything to *Isvara*” and absolve yourself of responsibility. As the self one does not surrender to anything, not even to the self, because you *are* the self. Surrender is not an action; it is a function of knowledge. As the *jiva* one surrenders to the self as the only teacher until such time as the knowledge is firm that you are the self and *not* the *jiva*. It is a mistake to believe that everything that happens or does not happen happens by *Isvara*’s ‘will.’ *Isvara* does not have a will. *Isvara* is just the rules of the cosmos playing out.

Think and act from the point of view of the self. Both *Isvara* and *Jiva* are *mithya*. They are not real. If you want real freedom don’t confuse yourself with *Jiva* or *Isvara*. When *Isvara* presents opportunities, you need to assess what you want to do with them. What *Isvara* presents is not always what is best for you. *Isvara* delivers *dharma* **and** *adhama*. Look at what is presented and see if it leads to joy and freedom and peace...or to just more of the same.

Functioning from the self’s point of view rather than from the *jiva*’s point of view is self actualisation. This does not mean that you can change the rules that run the apparent reality, enlightened or not. Freedom is following *svadharma* and *dharma*, thinking and acting from the self’s point of view so your life reflects the freedom that you are.



James teaching in Cape Town



Two Awarenesses

During the perception of an object light is always involved and it is commonly understood that a second light is not required to illumine the first light and the object, because we know that the first light is not an integral part of the object. There is no need to duplicate the first light's function. So to experience ourselves we do not need a second awareness or a new experience of awareness. We only need the capacity to separate the objects...including the 'me' that I think I am...from the consciousness in which they appear. Separating your reflected self from you is discrimination, the only way to freedom...which leads to

Vasana Management



And on this topic we thought you might enjoy this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uk2h6Xwx3dY>

If you were here not to be here, you would not be here.



The belief in experiential non-duality is called Yoga. Yoga is duality (*dvaita*) by definition. It takes the self to be real and the world to be real. Liberation for dualists (*yogis*) involves gradual elimination of the world until only the self is left. If this is true there is no *moksa* for *yogis*. For *moksa*, you need to understand that the world and the self are not in conflict. If you want experiential *moksa* you need to perfect *nirvikalpa Samadhi* but nobody wants *nirvikalpa Samadhi* because if you experience it, you cannot experience your life. *If you were here not to be here, you would not be here.* You cannot avoid life. Additionally *Samadhi* ends at some point and requires effort. It is impossible to exert effort endlessly so the *Samadhi* will cease on that account.

Vedanta Teaching Course:

Answers to Lesson 6, Beautiful Intelligent Ignorance

- 1. From the non-dual perspective of the self alone, the world and the Creator of the world do not exist. Non-duality means that reality is 'not-two' so there cannot be both a Creator and Awareness at the same time. You can have awareness or a Creator of reality is a duality but not if reality is non-dual. So if you look at reality from the non-dual perspective Maya does not exist. However, if you look at it from the dual perspective, it does exist, because it is impossible to explain the experience of duality that we all have without the presence of Maya. So Maya makes the impossible possible. It is difficult to understand because Maya and the self are a 'both/and', not an 'either/or.'*
- 2. It is not located beyond the world because reality is non-dual. The world and the self are one. It is located in me, awareness, because reality is non-dual, hence there is no other place for it to be located.*
- 3. Because nothing can be known unless awareness is present. If Maya is present awareness is present*
- 4. Milk transforming into cheese is a real change (parinama). Milk appearing as cheese (vivarta parinama) Maya produces an apparent change.*
- 5. Because, owing to Maya, consciousness and thought exist in different orders of the same reality. They are not contradictory. So thoughts do not have to be removed to attain freedom.*
- 6. Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Sattva provides the knowledge, the blueprint/program for the creation. Tamas provides matter, the substance out of which the objects in creation are shaped. Rajas provides the energy to transform the matter into the forms.*
- 7. No time. The creation is instantaneous.*
- 8. Because it is beyond perception. It exists in potentia. It is known by inference. By observing its effects...the subtle and gross objects...we infer a cause. Effects do not exist without causes.*

9. *Because they are illumined by awareness. Creation is a combination of awareness and matter.*
10. *The factor is Maya/mithya, the objects that present themselves to awareness. The objects are mithya, apparently real, and they depend on awareness but awareness...reality...does not depend on them.*
11. *Discrimination of awareness (satya) from the objects that present themselves to it (mithya).*
12. *Tamas and Rajas. Tamas casts a shadow over the Subtle Body preventing the reflection of awareness in it and rajas projects the objects which we take to be reality.*
13. *Because it is unconscious. Maya causes it.*
14. *Vedanta. A means of self (snake) knowledge.*
15. *Because the 'I' awareness is free of thoughts, feelings and actions.*
16. *The Subtle Body.*
17. *Because what we experience is an appearance. It seems to be real but it isn't. Therefore it is important to question what happens.*
18. *Interpretation of past experience i.e. our conditioning.*
19. *They extrovert it, causing it to modify according to what is happening in the world. They cause attachment and bind the individual to the world.*
20. *It is composed of several constellations of vasanas which are called samskaras. It controls your behaviour, the roles you play and the way you react to the world.*
21. *If you don't your mind will be continually agitated.*

22. *It produces suffering.*

23. *(a) Non-injury. (b) Non-duality*

24. *Because my personal values are often in conflict with what a given situation demands.*

25. *The law of karma. It is a source of frustration because it delivers results that are not always in harmony the results I want.*

26. *They are programmed by the Causal Body over which it has no direct conscious control.*

27. *Because it makes the Subtle Body feel helpless, as if it is not in control of its destiny.*

28. *Because it simplifies the immense amount of data streaming into the Subtle Body from the sense making it easier to respond to life.*

29. *It may foster a sense of overconfidence, self righteous invincibility, gullibility, and fantasy.*

30. *Because it produces many biases that cloud the mind and make discrimination difficult.*

31. *Reprogram the Subtle Body.*

Chapter 7 - The Ordinary Person

The Individual and the Total

In the last chapter we discussed the macrocosm, *Maya* and *Isvara*, the Creator of the field in which awareness appears as objects. This chapter discusses the microcosm, *Jiva*, the individual and its relationship to *Isvara*.

Definition of Jiva

The *Jiva* is awareness with a Subtle Body. *Jiva* is an eternal principle, not a specific person. It is actually pure awareness, *Paramatma*.

The eternal *jiva* has three levels of knowledge. (1) There is the *jiva* who thinks it is a person. This *jiva* is often called the doer or the human being, the one identified with objects. Humans who don't know about awareness are called *samsari's*, because they are completely caught up in the web of *samsara*, the apparent reality. (2) The *jiva* that knows awareness but does not know what it means to be awareness and is still controlled by its *vasanas*. It is sometimes called a self realized *jiva*. Vedanta says it has 'indirect' self knowledge. (3) The *jiva* that knows it IS awareness, what it means to be awareness, and whose *vasanas* have been neutralized by self knowledge is said to be a liberated or enlightened *jiva* (*jivanmukta*). The Bhagavad Gita says it is a person with 'steady' wisdom who is described in the last chapter. I call it a self actualized *jiva*, a *jiva* with 'direct' knowledge. The liberated person, the self realized person and the *samsari* have a common identity as awareness

The one eternal *Jiva* manifests sequentially as three individual *jivas* according to the state that it experiences:

1) As the waking state entity. In this state its mind is totally extroverted. It is hypnotized by duality. It chases and consumes experiences because it is controlled by its *vasanas*.

2) As the dreamer, the 'shining one,' awareness with a Subtle Body, *illuminating* the dream state. The Subtle Body is turned inward in this state. Dream experience is *vasanas* outpicturing. Both waking and dream state *jivas* are experiencing entities. In the waking state *Jiva* identifies with the doer so the doer is generally not seen as an object, although during an epiphany it is often objectified. In the dream state there is also identification and the doer/ego, may also appear as an object illumined by reflected awareness, the Subtle Body. The dreamer may see the waking *jiva* going about its business, walking, talking, eating, etc. The dreamer is similar in some respects to the waker but enjoys unique powers.

These powers are inherent in the dream state and do not belong to the dreamer.

The events appearing in the dream are just waking state events that have become *vasanas*.

3) As the sleeper in the deep sleep state. The sleeper is 'almost enlightened' because it experiences the limitlessness and bliss of awareness but lacks knowledge of what it is experiencing owing to the absence of intellect in deep sleep.

The Subtle Body disappears in deep sleep state as does the Microcosmic Causal Body, the personal subconscious which belongs to the *jiva* and produces the *jiva's* karma. The deep sleep state is defined as a state with no mental activity. It is the same for everyone because the personal subconscious is dissolved into The Macrocosmic Causal Body when the waking *jiva* sleeps. Deep sleep is the presence of *Tamas* alone. *Rajas* and *Sattva* are dormant in this state. There is no sense of individuality in this state because the Subtle Body of the individual is not there to be conditioned. The Macrocosmic Causal Body, another name for *Isvara*, is the deep sleep state.

Although the nature of both the *jiva* and *Isvara* is awareness, both the *jiva* and *Isvara* are inconstant factors with reference to awareness. *Jiva* is inconstant because it changes from state to state and because self knowledge removes the notion that it is a limited entity, revealing its nature to be pure awareness. *Isvara* in the role of creator is inconstant because logic and scripture...which is just science...informs us that it disappears at the end of the creation cycle; whatever is created will be destroyed. *Isvara* in the role of creator is eternal with reference to the *jiva* but not with reference to pure awareness, the constant factor.

The dream state has two aspects: waking dream and sleep dream. It is called the *pratibasika* state, the subjective state of reality. It is *jiva's* creation, a *vasana*-induced interpretation of reality. It is not created directly by *Isvara* although the raw material...the material elements and other *jivas*...on which *jiva's* interpretation is based belongs to *Isvara*. Ultimately both *jiva's* interpretation and *Isvara's* material is all *Isvara*, but to arrive at that understanding...which is tantamount to liberation...the *jiva* has to understand what belongs to it and what belongs to *Isvara* so that it can be free of both itself and *Isvara*.

Knowledge to Prepare the Subtle Body

The Subtle Body is the instrument of experience and knowledge. Awareness is not an experiencer or a knower. It becomes an experiencing knowing entity when it is associated with the Subtle Body. A *jiva* does not know who it is because wrong knowledge brought about by *Maya* clouds and disturbs the Subtle Body to such a degree that right knowledge cannot establish itself. Therefore, it needs to be prepared to receive and assimilate the knowledge.

As we have seen, an individual *jiva's* fundamental problem is a scattered and/or a dull mind: extroverting *vasanas* focus panoramic non-specific awareness into a narrow beam of attention and cause it to hop more or less uncontrollably from one object to another. When our minds are extroverted we gain unsatisfying snippets of experience and diverse bits of knowledge but, lacking an overarching vision to integrate them, peace of mind eludes us.

Stage 1 - Ignorance

And when an individual has lived for long out of the knowledge of the light of awareness, a secondary problem develops: a structural distortion takes place in the Subtle Body which compromises its natural geometry. A healthy Subtle Body is conflict free because the three inner centers, the intellect, ego and the mind are united in the pursuit of a particular goal. But when the pressure of the extroverting *vasanas* becomes too intense and persists over time, inner conflict develops.

If you find yourself thinking one thing, saying something different and doing something else you can be sure you are out of *yoga*, union. You are not 'together' to use a common expression. If you know something is wrong but you do it anyway, you are out of *yoga*. In a healthy Subtle Body, the Intellect rules the roost. It stands apart, offers sage counsel to the doer and refuses to identify with unhealthy emotions. If it plays handmaiden to the ego or the emotions and provides them with clever rationalizations and justifications for *adharmic* behavior, it means the Subtle Body is out of *yoga*. Or if, believing that emotions are the problem, the intellect over-analyzes everything to such a point that it

becomes paralyzed concerning action and loses itself wandering in exhausting layers of mental abstraction, the Subtle Body is unhealthy. If you believe that feelings are more valuable than ideas and find yourself longing for love or more 'meaningful' and 'moving' experiences, your Subtle Body is unhealthy. If you act impulsively without concern for your feelings or the feelings of others, the Subtle Body is out of balance. If you stubbornly refuse to accept your lot, it means your Subtle Body needs work. If the war between your spiritual side and your material side is keeping you up at night you need *yoga*. And finally, if you are always trying to get a feeling of 'connection' with people or your work, or anything else for that matter, it means you are out of *yoga*. *Yoga* yokes the three centers to the self.

Vedanta doesn't cook up a lot of fancy psychological terms for dysfunctional behavior and give you a nice complex to add to your problems. Nor do we send you off with a pocketful of pills to set you right. We proscribe *yoga*. Mind you, *yoga* is not for seriously disturbed individuals, schizophrenics, manic depressives and their ilk. Seeking is a more or less benign neurosis and *yoga* works well to cure it.

Conventional psychology pokes around in the colon of the past looking for clues to your bad feelings. Presumably, if you can discover the cause it will cure them. But we say that negative emotions stem from a single cause: you are not getting what you want. The logic behind this statement is obvious: when you are getting what you want you feel good and you stop seeking. We do not chase objects when we feel good. We enjoy what we have. Please remember, 'objects' means people, situations, feelings, thoughts...literally everything other than you.

I am going to take a small detour from the tradition at this point because there is one non-traditional idea that makes a bit of sense and helps to understand the subjective 'self,' the Subtle Body. When I say non-traditional I mean that it is not mentioned in the source texts. Actually it was cooked up in the last one hundred years and found its way into the Vedanta world but I will let it stand for now.

If the three inner centers, the mind (emotions and feelings), the intellect and the ego are out of *yoga* it stands to reason that there would be a dedicated *yoga* for each center. Therefore some say that devotional *yoga* corrects emotional

problems by converting emotions into devotion for God, knowledge *yoga* corrects thinking problems by teaching the intellect how to discriminate between the self and the objects appearing in it and karma *yoga* takes care of the ego, the doer, by revealing the nature of action and converting the individual from a subjective to an objective view of life.

However, the texts only mention two '*yogas*' or paths, action i.e. experience and knowledge. The topic of devotion is covered extensively but it is never considered to be a unique path because devotion is common to every willful endeavor and because all the rituals, including the mental rituals that evoke devotion, fall under the topic of karma.

In any case, the base *yoga*, the *yoga* without which no other *yoga* is worth a hill of beans, is *karma yoga*. It takes care of your bad feelings by purifying *vasanas* that extrovert the mind and cause it to pursue objects. Good feelings are not a problem for self inquiry unless they are thought to belong to objects.

Karma yoga works on the ego. When an unenlightened person says 'I', he or she means the ego, the doer. The doer is playing against a stacked deck. It thinks it is inadequate, incomplete, limited and separate from the objects that present themselves to it and it seeks to complete itself by obtaining said objects. When it gets what it wants it feels adequate and complete. This much we know. Its pursuit of objects is in terms of subtle and gross actions. Since *karma* means anything that moves or changes, action includes thoughts and feelings too.

The Doer-Enjoyer

The doer's basic psychology is laughably simple: it does what it does to enjoy the result. When the desired object is obtained the doer switches to enjoyer mode until the enjoyment wears off...as it does...whereupon it shifts back into doer mode and pursues other results that it hopes will give it pleasure and restore its sense of satisfaction. The doer, irrespective of the age of the body, is an eternal child. It wants what it wants when it wants it the way it wants it...or it gets upset. Depending on its perceived successes and failures it is either an eternal optimist or a grumpy pessimist. It does not know that there are no bad outcomes.

In the best of all possible worlds the doer's approach to life would not be unworkable but unfortunately *samsara* is not the best of all possible worlds. Even an infant, whose situation for enjoyment is more or less ideal in so far as loving parents constantly pander to its every need, often in an attempt to satisfy their own sense of incompleteness, learns very quickly that the world does not produce the object of its desires on demand. Its reactions set the stage for predictable emotional patterns that dog it throughout its adult life.

Vedanta psychology depersonalizes suffering. Let's not pretend that any of us are unique psychologically. It is impossible to be unique because of the way *Maya* structures reality. *Maya* is lazy and very conservative. It does not invent a special psychology for every human. One size fits all; one Gross, Subtle and Causal Body functions the same way in everyone. Our psychology works for anyone because it applies to everyone. Getting the ego to accept this fact is another story altogether, owing to its sense of specialness. We don't say you aren't unique. It is true that no two snowflakes are alike...but they are all just snowflakes. Uniqueness gets you nowhere. It means nothing. It is pure vanity. We say you are snow.

The ego is little more than its desires and fears. There is nothing particularly wrong with it and (apparently) nothing can be done about it. Desire is a bad feeling. It is a statement of lack. Forget the romantic view. There is nothing romantic about wanting. It is the most boring and commonplace of emotions. Desire is suffering. The Buddha's whole teaching started with this fact.

Stage 2 – Desire and Fear

Desire is unconscious. You don't wake up in the morning and think 'I should want something.' You wake up wanting something. You plot your actions...your day... according to what you want or what you want avoid. Perhaps you don't plot at all. Perhaps you are just mindlessly impelled to act. Desire is related to what you value. You desire what you value.

Desire and fear are the same thing. They are ignorance in action. My wife calls them the 'terrible twins.' I call them 'incestuous bedfellows.' They are always

wrapped in a warm embrace. When I fear something, I want to avoid it. When I desire something, I fear I won't get it. For instance, the fear of dying is the desire to live. Desire is a single current of energy that is with us always. Seen from one end it is positive and from the other negative. Fear is a negative desire and desire a positive fear. It only remains to be seen how to deal with it. As one of our premier texts says, "It is an intractable foe" although it need not be. *Karma yoga* is how we deal with it.

The desire-ridden ego faces many inconvenient truths, two of which stand out. In the first place, sadly it does not realize that it can remove the desire without having to foray into the *dharma* field to obtain the object meant to remove it. If you have doubt about the desirability of desire, Vedanta calls your attention to the fact that *an object is desirable precisely because it removes the desire for it, not for its own sake*. Second, it is regrettable that the *dharma* field, which is meant to supply the desired objects, is not terribly concerned with whether or not Mr. Ego gets what it wants when it wants it the way it wants it. In other words it is not a doting needy parent. It is quite fickle. It can fulfill your desire, ignore it or give you a good whack.

In the fullness of time it more or less gives me what I want if I act appropriately... or not...but the 'fullness of time' and 'more or less' are not concepts that a needy wanting ego particularly appreciates. I want it and I want it now!

This situation sets the stage for a dysfunctional personality. An important fact about desire, which everyone should know but which many are loath to consider, is: desire alone is not enough to produce the object you want. Yes, it sometimes seems as if the wanting manifested the object, but it didn't, except indirectly in so far as it motivates you to do the appropriate action. Out of desire actions are offered into the *dharma* field and then forgotten as they wend their way through it, interacting with the various objects...people mostly...obtaining in it. When the field produces a result it seems as if you somehow have a powerful 'magical' connection with the field...but you don't. You have a logical, not a magical connection.

Sad to say, the field is only interested in you in so far as your actions contribute to or contravene the aggregate desire of the field itself. And what is that desire? It is to maintain the integrity of the field. Magical thinking is a huge impediment to self knowledge and the spiritual world is rife with it. It is caused by *tamas*, ignorance, and manifests as laziness. It is a quasi-criminal impulse, an attempt to avoid hard work by beating the system. It is a fantasy cooked up by an ego that has somehow convinced itself that it is special and entitled.

In any case, for *karma yoga* to work the ego needs to understand that the principle the field uses to deliver results is not the gratuitous desires of individuals for specific results but the needs of the total. In so far as one's actions contribute to the needs of the total, action will generate a good result and in so far as it conflicts with the ever changing needs of the field it will deliver unwanted results or no results at all. Constant vigilance is required for success because the needs of the field are constantly changing. Failure to take the needs of others into account is a sure recipe for suffering. The essence of *karma yoga* is consideration for the needs of the field, meaning your physical and psychological environment.

One of the symptoms of excess desire is impulsiveness. Because complexity and uncertainty are the nature of the *dharma* field, a healthy Subtle Body is restrained and deliberate with respect to action. But when there is excess desire owing to an acute sense of insecurity, one often forays into the day completely unprepared for the very situations that one needs to resolve. You discover that you forgot your credit card when you get to the supermarket or two photos when you made an application for a passport. You were so eager to tick that item off your endless 'to do' list, a list that never shrinks no matter how fast you dispatch the chores that populate it, that you burst out the door unprepared.

Another symptom is an excessively refined sense of obligation. Yes, it is important to discharge your duties in a timely and appropriate fashion but if you find yourself saying that you "have to" or are "supposed to" do things that are not in any way required for the basic maintenance of life, you need *karma yoga*. This symptom is extremely common in so-called 'developed' societies, where luxuries have become necessities. You may feel you 'need' backup backup backup hard

drives because you feel obligated not to lose a single stupid video clip, one you will never watch again. Or you can never throw away even broken and useless objects...waste not, want not! Your cabinets, closets and drawers are so stuffed with the flotsam and jetsam of the consumer society that you can't move in your own flat. You can't stick with your list when you get to the supermarket...the impulse items cunningly displayed at every turn literally jump into your shopping cart. You think, "Life's a bitch. I need to treat myself; I'm worth it." Or you don't even think, your hand just grabs an attractive package. If you feel bad because you 'could have' got an extra t-shirt had you just stopped at the closeout sale on the way home from work when you already have thirty shirts, know that you need *yoga*. Obligation is just a fancy socially acceptable word used by the insecure to dress up desire.

Stage 3 - Anxiety and Control

Anxiety is another form of desire and the constant companion of Mr. Ego for a simple reason: the results of its actions are not up to it. Why is the ego subject to anxiety? Because desire is unnatural. If something is natural it is welcome to stay. But something that is unnatural is always an unwelcome guest. This is why we know that bliss is the nature of the self. If bliss was unnatural you would immediately try to rid yourself of it when you start feeling good. You don't. You cling to it tooth and nail. But when suffering comes...even the pettiest irritation... you immediately try to get rid of it. Happiness is natural. Suffering is unnatural. If you are suffering, you don't know something important about yourself.

In any case I am anxious because the longer the field waits to give me what I want, the more I suffer. If I feel insecure and want my husband to tell me that he loves me, I am afflicted with anxiety. If the bills are mounting and my paycheck doesn't come for another month, I am afflicted with anxiety. If I don't care whether the bills are paid I will not have anxiety on that account. People can even become anxious over the idea that they are anxious! How can I get enlightened if I am anxious? When is my enlightenment going to happen?

One of the most obvious symptoms of this stage of the disease of ignorance is the issue of control. Anxiety breeds a need to control outcomes. In fact all negative emotions unconsciously tend to be manipulative, none as obvious as anger. Nobody likes conflict. Fear and anger are particular dominating energies that radiate far beyond the confines of the physical body. People in close proximity to an angry person, particularly those who are easy going or who have low self esteem will tend to accede to the demands of said person simply to avoid unpleasantness. To find oneself in a relationship with a fearful angry person is to tread in a minefield. One small mistake and the whole field explodes with anger. Once an undeveloped and unloved individual sees the benefit of these emotions, he or she may take advantage of them and become consciously manipulative. Conscious manipulation of others is sign that the natural structure of the Subtle Body has become seriously distorted.

Stage 3 - Anger

The third stage, anger, proceeds logically from the second. You will be pleased to know that you can stop blaming Mom and Pop, the church and the state, the media, or your big nose etc. for your anger. The cause is very simple: the *dharma* field is not giving you what you want. When desire is obstructed, it turns to anger. It does not really require a big event...your husband runs off with his secretary...to trigger it; it can be something very simple...a driver who is slow to respond to a green light...or just the idea that you are not going to get what you want. Anger is very destructive, although it has its upsides too. In the right situations it can actually help you achieve what you want...although using anger in this way is not advisable owing to the long term effects on your health; the molecules of this emotion wreak havoc with the body. Not to mention what it does to your relationships with other conscious beings.

You will probably not have failed to notice that everything in life comes through others. Therefore it pays to develop loving positive relationships, at least with the people to whom we are beholden ♫. But anger definitely needs to be managed. If it is not managed properly it will destroy you. *Karma yoga* a stress and anger management tool.

Anger is not socially acceptable for obvious reasons: it is a violation of *dharma*, which is based on the mutual expectation of individuals. You don't want to deal with angry people and people don't want to deal with your anger. Anger is violation of life's most fundamental *dharma*, non-injury. You may define violence in physical terms...fair enough...but anger is injurious both to others and to yourself. Non-injury as defined by Vedanta is in terms of 'thought, word and deed.' So imagining that you are somehow spiritual because you don't eat meat or beat your children while showing anger to others...or even thinking angry thoughts...is definitely hypocritical. I find it extremely peculiar that angry people will behave with consideration toward strangers with whom they have no personal connection and yet dump their anger on family and friends with whom they have to relate on a daily basis.

Denial

Anger is not socially acceptable and it is not acceptable to Mr. Ego because it contradicts its own good opinion of itself. So what do you do with it? You either dump it on others, which doesn't work well, or you suppress it, which does. Temporarily. When an uncomfortable emotion is suppressed it becomes part of your 'shadow' to use a term that has been in vogue since the days of Jung. In our language it retreats to the Causal Body, the Subconscious. The Unconscious...the Macrocosmic *vasanas*...belongs to *Isvara*, the Total Mind. But the Subconscious is your own personal Causal Body; a little corner of *Isvara's* Causal Body...a 'subset' is perhaps a reasonable word...where your personal *karma* is stored. *Isvara* is a wonder indeed! It is amazing because it keeps track of your actions and tailors the results of your actions to you, never confusing your karma with the karma of the other eight billion other individuals whose karma it manages. Shadow is a good word because shadows conceal, just as repression conceals your anger from you. It is 'sub' conscious, meaning not known. Anger is *rajas* and repression is *rajas* but *tamas* is behind them both. Repression is *rajas* because it takes energy to keep the anger away from your life so it doesn't mess things up. *Tamas* is denial. Because you do not think of yourself as an angry person you have to hide this fact from yourself.

What a mess we have already...only three steps into the convoluted psychology of the ego. Though the Causal Body 'contains' good and bad *vasanas*, it is not a container in the usual sense of the word. If you have a jar you can stick valuables in it and bury it in the earth and nothing will come out until you dig it up and unscrew the lid. But the unconscious is not this kind of container. It is a porous; what goes in comes back out. You can't see how it works...that is why I am describing it...but another sad fact is that nothing about you is hidden from the awareness or from the world because others can easily see your anger, But it is hidden from the Subtle Body 'you,' the person you think you are...owing to *tamas*, denial.

But your subconscious is also a container in the classic sense because negative emotions accumulate. Every time you express one...believing that you are working it 'out'...it works right back 'in'. You reinforce the *vasana* itself. So your tendency to get angry remains, even increases.

Projection

How do you hide the fact that you are a dysfunctional person? *Tamas* helps you conceal it; then it teams up with *rajas*. *Rajas* projects. So you blame something or someone. It really doesn't matter who or what. What matters is that you believe that something other than you caused you to be the way you are. It is 'YOUR' fault! Nothing is your fault except ignorance. And ignorance is not something you can blame yourself for. It is working behind the scenes twenty four seven...while you somnambulate.

This is where the victim enters the drama, stage left. See how far away from our self we have journeyed...and we are still midway through the tragedy written by the greatest poet of all times...Madame Ignorance. Master Flaming Mouth has now become Mr. Poor Me, a victim of whatever. And it is little wonder that at every stage of this tragicomedy our self esteem takes another hit.

When we talk about anger we are talking about the structural Subtle Body distortion that produces more or less not stop existential suffering. Small occasional eruptions of anger in diverse circumstances are understandable and do

not disqualify an individual for inquiry. But if a predictable set of circumstances produces an urgent need to have even small things a certain way, instead of taking care of the anger with *karma yoga*, you have a problem. *Karma yoga*...which we have yet to unfold...does not offer specific anger management techniques. It is a 'global' approach, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Another symptom of this stage is extreme busyness, a hallmark of modern life. It goes undetected as a psychological problem because society considers it a virtue. Alcohol, drugs, sweets and fat-laden food are medications of choice when *rajas* is predominant. Irritability, insomnia and self-obsessed righteousness around the topic of action are symptoms of excess *rajas*. If you believe that things should be done a certain way and that the way that you do them is only way, know for certain that your Subtle Body is firmly dominated by *rajas*. If you think none of this applies to you, think twice, *rajas* is always accompanied by an equal measure of *tamas*, denial.

Comparison - Matsarya

As we have indicated when consciousness appeared in the form of (apparently) conscious beings and those beings became more complex, it eventually evolved the intellect, permitting them to make choices. It is wise to carefully consider all alternatives before one acts. But when the Subtle Body is conflicted, its discriminative function becomes perverted and it is delivered squarely into the hands of *rajas* (agitation and stress) and *tamas*, (inadvertence and sloth), further miring it in duality. Most animals evolve rudimentary pecking orders based on power. In these systems physical strength and aggressiveness determine one's place in the group. But humans have elevated the concept of status to a fine art. When I was young I lived in the Philippines for a short time. I was color blind and thought Filipinos were too but before long I realized that one of the most important parameters for distinguishing one person from another was skin color and I soon came to realize that Filipinos...and later every group on the planet...calculated skin color in microtones. If you find your house in disarray for weeks

because during a remodel you cannot determine what shade of peach you want for the dining room walls or you have to spend thirty minutes in the supermarket aisle to determine which of the eighty types of shampoo would best suit your hair, know that your Subtle Body needs a bit of *yoga*. If you find yourself evaluating your daily progress toward a fitness goal or a financial goal or a spiritual goal (am I pure and holy yet?) know that your Subtle Body needs a bit of *yoga*.

Comparison is a useful function but it can easily morph into less benign forms. Jealousy, a particularly dualistic and rudimentary emotion, signifies insecurity and low self esteem. It is "I want what you have." A less honest, hidden and particularly insidious form of dualistic thinking is envy, "I want to be like you." As this tendency ripens and produces more dysfunctional behavior it steps out into the open, becomes obviously *rajasic* and changes into a competitive spirit, "I want to beat you." And as it matures and enters its final stage it becomes totally *tamasic*, "I want to destroy you."

Stage 4 – Delusion

Because it requires a lot of energy, anger is difficult to maintain, although once you get conditioned to it, you feel empty without it. It is bad energy, no doubt, but it is better than no energy. When anger collapses it may feel as if you have suddenly lost your best friend. This means that the *rajasic* response has become a binding *vasana*. There is no better example of this psychological fact than bi-polar 'disorder.' Bi-polar syndrome is *rajas* and *tamas* on steroids. I like the old word, manic-depression, better. It is not a euphemism. Mania is *rajas* and depression is *tamas*. They always go together. To understand it one need look no further than the tiredness that comes after hard work. The mind and body can only handle so much stress...*rajas* is stress. Then *tamas* prevails. A manic person can remain active for weeks on end with virtually no sleep but when *rajas* has run its course he or she will stay in bed in a dark room day and night for equally long periods. Manic depression is a good example of an extreme structural distortion in the Subtle Body. It cannot be treated with *karma yoga*.

A successful person is a discriminating person, one who can make rational choices based on a clear knowledge of his or values as they relate to the world around, the *dharma* field. To discriminate effectively the mind needs to be predominately *sattvic*. You will recall that Maya has three powers: veiling, projecting and revealing. *Sattva* is the revealing power, the energy of knowledge. It can record experience as it is, evaluate it accurately, and make decisions that further the ego's agenda. But this is not possible in stage four.

When *rajas* has run its course, *tamas* takes over. *Tamas* is a veiling, concealing energy. It obscures the light of awareness as it reflects on the Subtle Body. It is responsible for confusion and delusion. Again we are not talking about the occasional dullness that comes throughout the day, a light cloud passing over the mind that causes your energy to temporarily flag. We are talking about a persistently sluggish apathetic feeling, characterized by an inability to make decisions and to do what is required on an everyday level. Suicidal thoughts appear when the Subtle Body is in the grip of structural *tamas*. When a *jiva* is in this is state...keeping in mind the fact that the self is never in any state...you are near the end of a meaningful life. Usually, by this time you are in the hands of the medical profession or lying on flattened cardboard box under the freeway with a needle in your arm. And while medicine may find some kind of legal chemical that excites the brain enough to irritate you to action and induce a goofy smile, you could be fairly said to have arrived at the state of the living dead. Your intellect is completely in the hands of *tamas*. When this happens, with or without meds, you lose your discrimination, enter into a state of advanced victimhood and totally lose your self esteem. The verse in one of our texts that chronicles this slippery side to ruin concludes with the comment...'and the soul perishes.' This state is commonly referred to as the dark night of the soul and usually signifies the beginning of inquiry.

Some symptoms of this state are helplessness, boredom, apathy, mistrust, suspicion, rebelliousness, defensiveness and vanity, a feeling that no matter what you do, nothing works. It is probably not necessary to discuss each in detail but

know that you have more or less arrived at the end of your tether when a feeling of stuckness more or less pervades your life. Your habits chain you and your mind becomes rigid and stubborn. You have no confidence to deal with change but dig in your heels at every opportunity and resist common sense logic. If a habit that formerly brought pleasure starts to bring pain, and you stubbornly refuse to drop it and try something else, even if it is clear that the habit is detrimental, you have hit bottom. If you blithely ignore the messages of change that life sends and react negatively to anything perceived as a threat to your world view, you are ready for *karma yoga*. It is the way you manage and purify these emotions.

Lesson 7: The Ordinary Person - Questions

- (1) The *Jiva* is eternal. What are the three levels of its self Knowledge?
- (2) What are the *Jiva's* three states of experience and why is the waking state entity not real?
- (3) Why is the deep sleeper 'almost enlightened?'
- (4) Why are both *Jiva*, the individual, and *Isvara*, the total, not real?
- (5) Out of awareness *Isvara* creates the material world and the *jivas*. Its creation is objective and value neutral. It just is. What is *jiva's* creation?
- (6) When the waking state *jiva* doesn't know who it is, its mind is not fit for self knowledge. What are the two states of mind that are inimical to self knowledge and how do they prevent it?
- (7) A conflicted Subtle Body is structurally distorted. The three inner centers do not work together. How is the distortion corrected?
- (8) What is the one cause of negative emotions?

- (9) What is the base yoga, what part of the Subtle Body does it address and what does it do?
- (10) What are the two bedrock negative emotions that stand behind all emotions and how do they relate to action?
- (11) Anxiety about getting what we want causes us to want to control the outcome of our actions. Why can't we control the results of our actions?
- (12) What is the rule the field of existence uses to apportion results to individual wanters/doers?
- (13) What emotion arises when the field of existence fails to produce the desired result?
- (14) *Rajas* and *Tamas* working together create two psychological states are responsible for *samsara* i.e. suffering. What are they and how do they work?
- (15) *Karma yoga* creates *sattva*. How does it relate to this psychological condition? And how does it relate to self inquiry i.e. discrimination?



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