

Self Actualization (Nididhasana)

Part of Vedanta's *nididhasana* stage, a stage that includes ongoing meditation of the teachings, is acceptance of the world *as it is*. It's easy to read the news headlines and get sucked into the world's drama. It all seems so real and tragic! We complain to ourselves and to others about the incompetence and disfunction at government's highest positions. But what do you expect when 99.9% of the world is driven by forces they're not even aware of? Blame it on *karma* and the *gunas*. Blame it on *Isvara*. This is not *jiva's* show, after all.

A sign of a mature being is one who has dispassion for society. Why? Because ultimately, he or she knows that it's senseless to worry about something you have no control over. As much as we wish for the world to be different, we just don't have control over how it plays out. Even leaders of state, with all their influence, are limited in what they can do. At the end of the day everyone must play by *Isvara's* rules. For every action there is a reaction, and every *adharmic* thought or action in this world has its price. It's called *karma*, and it works.

Jnanis know that this world is just a karma matrix and that the ultimate goal for all human *jivas* can only be *moksa*. Everything we do, consciously or unconsciously, is for freedom from limitations. We may pursue a better paying job to be free from debt or pursue a relationship to be free from loneliness. As *jivas* we pursue objects and experiences for happiness. It's only by the power of *maya* that I fail to see that the happiness I seek lies within me and not "out there."

The richest and most powerful may generate great envy among society but it's all just a passing fancy—here today, gone tomorrow—leaving the *jiva* broken and disillusioned when the experience dissipates. Those who lust for more money and power are trying to fill a hole they can never fill. On the surface it seems glamorous until one recognizes just how discontent these *jivas* really are. No amount of profits, property or pretty friends can make them happy.

Society's idea that power and riches is the apogee of success, is just a belief. It's a bizarre conjecture that says riches and power bring absolute security and absolute happiness; and most of all, that with absolute power and riches "I" will be complete. It's *maya's* most irresistible trick. Money and power are like a pleasure-inducing drug that requires a greater and more dangerous dosage each time in order to experience the same high again.

This is, of course, is a description of *samsara*—a system built purposely to frustrate *jivas* and ultimately, break them down so they might get a glimpse of the truth. We have to ask, where's the envy in that? What appears to be a cruel setup is just *Isvara's* way of pointing the *jiva* toward freedom.

So by practicing *nididhasana* we stay focused on the teachings and let the world be as it is. For reasons we'll never know, *Isvara* has created this strange, virtual classroom for the self to discover and learn of itself. The world is a school and you don't get to graduate until you learn the name of the game: *moksa*.

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