

# Steps in Hunting the I

**From Rajiv Kapur on Practicing Finding and Abiding in the I**

Since the publication of the book “Autobiography of a Jnani” came out I have received various types of questions from many seekers all across the world. I have tried my best to answer them on the basis of what I have experienced on the spiritual journey. If anyone has received any benefit from this then it is purely the Grace of my teacher Ed Muzika and the Masters. Nothing is my doing.

Before I begin penning my thoughts on few aspects and some very key elements of Sadhana in question/answers form I would first want to thank my Master Ed Muzika (Edji) for guiding me to help me arrive where I am today. I am immensely fortunate and blessed to have Edji as my Guru. To be at his Lotus feet has been my only achievement.

His blog has been a wonderful representation of non-conceptual teachings ever to be found anywhere. However this blog is not of Ed Muzika or Robert Adams alone but of every sincere devotee and seeker who has gained and acquired any knowledge from this site. This blog is a true reflection of that devotee due to which Shri Robert Adams still lives in the hearts of many. My sincere Pranaams to all such devotees of this site.

I am no great knower of words and of language or of what others teachers are teachings but my knowledge stems from my own Self-

Realization through which I answer queries put forth to me. Before awakening I hardly read anything and found it to my big advantage. After awakening I do read a few things here and there just to get a perspective. Most books by Self-Realized Masters try to show us a path of awakening through their own personal experience and use of words or concepts. They all try to show the Truth or Reality in their own way through words or pointers. A fully awakened Master knows that the truth is the same even though the words/concepts used by different Master of various traditions are most often different. Truth is only ONE. However a seeker can easily make a mistake here. He understands only through these pointers and words and therefore ignorantly mistakes the knowledge gained from such books as an actual realization or understanding. After reading a lot of such books all a seeker gains is a mental satisfaction of accumulating vast knowledge of various concepts in form of techniques, affirmations, ideologies, scaffoldings, conditionings, terms etc etc. These concepts become the biggest hindrances towards awakening. That is why too much reading is not recommended. I feel one can do all the reading after he has awakened. He will never be puzzled then.

The best way for anyone to awaken would be to be in the physical company of a Self-realized Master. Regular meetings by way of Satsang are extremely helpful. This is where the teacher can check whether meditation is happening properly or not and many doubts of the seeker can be cleared. If that were not immediately possible then the next best way would be following the words and instructions of the Master and putting the entire faith on his words. The Masters words however must be followed and backed by the

sadhaks own dedicated and one-pointed practice to reap full benefits.

The words of a Self-Realized Master puts one beyond all doubts while dedicated practice helps one to go beyond all words and concepts and reach the wordless. Concepts are not destroyed by words even those of the greatest of the Masters. Words are mere pointers or source of inspiration but they can't show nor take you to the SELF. Most make a huge mistake of holding the words of the Masters as Truth and do nothing more than that. Hence that "Truth" becomes just another mental Concept.

For example the classic questions Shri Ramana "WHO AM I?" or the one by Shri Robert Adams which states " TO WHOM DOES THIS HAPPEN?" have numerous problems when followed literally. If one merely follows these statement literally and attempts to catch to the "ME" and the "I" mentally, what is actually taking place? You are merely following another projection of the mind- a background I, which is just another concept. The fact is that the mind just cannot take you to the real I. You will need to transcend the mind to reach it and for that you will need to go beyond the appearances of the waking state and beyond many layers of Consciousness.

Most seekers are happy simply "believing" that since "I don't exist" nothing actually is important. Nothing will affect me. But this is not real or correct Realization. It is simply a mental state- a kind of affirmation. Maybe you will feel good, feel happy with even experience occasions of bliss taking place when "a gap between two thoughts happen" but that is far away from true enlightenment as

taught by Nisargadatta, Ramana, Robert and Edji, as the I or Ego still carries on.

For example in India every 8-year child is ingrained with the knowledge that he is not the body nor the mind but an “Atma”. Does that mean the child has realized that state of “Atma?” They grow up believing that they are an Atma but indulge in all kinds of vasanas and desires. The joy and Bliss eludes them completely and so suffering and ignorance remains. To them the ATMA remains only a mental concept with no realization.

Many good years of a sincere Sadhak are lost in needless concepts, and when nothing is achieved he becomes very frustrated. All that a student achieves after years of such practice are various concepts with no clue as to where and what the real I is.

However If you follow the teachings of a Self-Realized Master you too will see that concepts dropping on their own through a step by step process and you will reach the real I effortlessly. That will be real Liberation.

When we start a journey or initiate one it makes sense to travel very lightly. This is more so applicable if the journey happens to be a spiritual one. The baggages are all the concepts. So if we have minimum essential concepts then the journey becomes smooth and joyous. The only thing we will hold, will be our beingness or IAMness and be with it till the very end before we will see it actually disappearing “right before our eyes.” Then only we will be totally concept-free not before.

Below are few very important and repeated questions (11 in all) that are continuously asked me by various seekers. These questions deal with few genuine practical aspects of Sadhana and terms/concepts associated with them. I have tried to answer to the best of my abilities and experience as a teacher. I have tried to keep it as much short and brief.

Q 1. Which is the best technique to realize the SELF?

There are so many different techniques and methods of meditation available today. The purpose of all these different techniques is to calm the mind enough so that the Sadhaka can penetrate deeper into the layers of consciousness, beyond thought/mind and Consciousness and reach the I.

Techniques may be effective but are an indirect method and are limiting. Few techniques if not done under direct supervision of the teacher can also cause great harm, especially kumbhaks. Why not therefore use the most direct and safest method, which is to follow your own beingness?

After all the only truth you know of anything is that you exist. Because you exist, all rest is. Every technique, every Mantra, every God, every religion, the world and the universes, everything comes into existence only after you exist. Because you are, all other things are. Why not then hold this primary principle of beingness itself rather than running after secondary concepts whose existence depends upon the primary principal?

Beingness is the only deity; it is the only God to worship. Everything depends on beingness itself. Therefore the only spiritual task is to become acquainted with all aspects of this subjectivity that is you by becoming increasingly aware of your own subjectivity in its million manifestations.

Another problem with techniques are that most get lost in acquiring them (sometimes higher and advanced, whatever it means) so the mind is busy collecting higher techniques rather than abiding in the sense of beingness. If a sadhaka is told that there is only one thing to do which is to abide in, namely beingness, he will be focused only on that rather than worrying about other "higher techniques" which he feels it is necessary to learn.

Your beingness is the seed I AMness from which everything manifests. Therefore, hold on to it rather than run around accumulating techniques. Besides techniques need to be dropped after a certain stage of Sadhana but beingness remains with us till the very last stage (as pure beingness) so it is prudent to remain only with it.

All techniques are concepts and methods invented by mind as pointers, while the single technique of knowing and being, beingness, is the safest and surest method to go beyond the mind.

I hope the points above explain very clearly why holding to the sense of beingness or I AM is the best and the ONLY technique that never has to be discarded or substituted. Although the experiences change as you deepen your practice, and your "understanding"

changes, the seed of beingness is the same throughout and is the same in all sentient beings.

## Q 2. What am I to do with this “beingness?”

“Hunting the I” by Master Edji gives a complete and detailed description of what the beingness is, how to locate it and what needs to be done with it. It is complete manual on beingness in all senses and there isn’t much I can actually add to that.

However I have noticed that many skip important steps and experiences and are in a hurry to reach the looker. While one needs to step aside from the experiences happening by locating and becoming the looker, jumping too early is premature. Spiritual journey is not a sprint but a marathon. One must go slow and in a step-by-step manner and experience clearly and deeply every aspect of you, the subject, from the mind, down through levels of consciousness, dream and deep sleep and beyond. If some steps are missed and one moves to the next then there is a big possibility of back.

Hence my advice is that having located your beingness or sense of existence, do not be in a hurry to move towards the looker or the witnesser. Rather experience and enjoy whatever your beingness brings forth. Do not discard experiences immediately; they have their own importance. One needs to completely feel the full manifestation brought about by the beingness. The circle needs to be complete. Most. Once they discover the looker want to abandon abiding in the sense of beingness, which is the background,

foreground and middle ground, and therefore many needed experiences of consciousness and understanding may slip away.

**The most important thing in meditation is to fall in love with your beingness and not be in a hurry. Let the beingness flower on its own.**

After enjoying the phenomenon associated with the beingness, only then is it important to take the next step, which is to look for the looker/the witnesser. The seeker will observe that what he felt as his beingness is not the real I but witnessed by I. One will now explore this I (the new beingness which has now become subtler) and observe all its manifestations, play with it, become it and fall in love with it thinking it is the real I, but again come to the understanding that there is still a looker looking at this.

This way the seeker continues exploring a new beingness (now even more subtler than before) thinking that now he has located the real I, but after much playing around and understanding again he will learn that the looker (real I) is still there. The I-ness or beingness (mistaken sense of I) will always be witnessed by another I. There will always be a witnesser. And as long as the witnesser remains - the real I remains to be found. After much investigation and pondering by such abidance on ones beingness , layers and layers of Consciousness will be transcended (subtler and subtler) and finally the seeker will one day find that there is no I, no him, no anything. Absolutely nothing. With the disappearance of the I, all other things, concepts, understandings will all disappear too. He will be free. Awakening has finally happened.



### Q 3. Are there any steps or stages needed during abidance in beingness?

As the seeker keeps abides in his beingness and settles there in meditation and non-meditative hours, he will very naturally and on its own keep sinking into the deeper layers of Consciousness. He will know that his own beingness will keep changing its form and quality (even as the I Am sense and experience keeps changing). These changes are also referred to as bodies. It is of utmost importance to remain stabilized in each body, understand it completely and only then move to the next body as explained earlier. Most hurry and fall off balance. The desired result is therefore not achieved. It is at this stage that a personal Guru or teacher helps to guide his student against such pitfalls.

When the beingness passes through the bodies one by one it means that the life force, the acting principle is automatically getting purified. Once it reaches the last body (super causal state of Turiya), then the beingness is said to be in completely purified state- the seed IAMness from where manifests all.

Your beingness will pass through these 4 bodies :

a) Gross body: This is where you will realize that you are not the physical body. You will witness the body and conclude that the you are watching the body and are different from the body. With a little more effort in meditation you will realize that the body awareness will no longer be there but YOU (the witnesser) will always remain. Every one is aware of the fact that the gross body doesn't belong to us but to the 5

elements. On the decided date the 5 elements will take what belong to them and the body will turn to dust. If we truly owned the body it would have remained forever with us. Yet most identify with their bodies and engage in various vasanas and pleasure to make the body and senses happy and no attention is paid to the real I.

b) Subtle body: This is where you will realize that you are not the mind/ mind stuff, intellect, dreams, desires, hopes and aspirations. You will watch your emotions and desires changing and transforming with time. You will realize how easily one identifies with the mind. This is where you will get the knowledge that the mind is a thief. This body is also the body of various phenomena and experiences, images, memories, and dreams. Those who can control this body and remain aware here have various experiences, which appear mind boggling at the time it takes place. Those who are very devoted to the Guru or his deity of worship will have various visions and visits of them. Sometimes Consciousness manifests through dreams through this astral body to provide important and relevant messages too. Most who meditate religiously and deeply reach this state and remain there because they love to be here. This is the body of extraordinary magic. It makes spirituality real and worth every effort. However no matter how wonderful this state or body one must continue to inquire to whom are these experiences happening?

c) Causal body: This is a difficult state to attain. It is complete opposite to the subtle body. This is the state of nothingness, darkness or void. There is no experience of any

kind. However lack of experience doesn't mean that there is no knowing or awareness. The knowledge is of "no-experience" and of silence. Many who reach here become fearful. It is difficult to stabilize here, as it will mean the death of the individual I-ness. This is where the mind dies but it will not die without a fight. Hence Gurus Grace becomes important. The seeker on his own will not be able to transcend this state. He will need the help of his Guru here. Only fearlessness and complete surrender to ones Guru can help stabilize him in this state. This is where true Guru Kripa takes place. Once a seeker stabilizes here he will see there is a witnesser here too. He will now need to move backwards towards that silent witnesser.

d) Supra- Causal state: This is Turiya (Pure beingness). It also referred to as Sat, chit, anand. This is a state of tremendous joy unconceivable or ever imagined. All the joy and pleasures of the world fail to quantify the joy experienced in this state. All become pale in comparison. One gets knowledge of the true origin of IAMness from here. The seeker learns that it originates from the heart and from there waves of bliss rise and fall. You explode with such intensity that there is a feeling that I am the creator of this whole Universe. The universe is within me. This beingness has now transformed into God. It is true that one cannot see the SELF; one can only be it, just like how the eyes cannot see itself. Yet one can always see the reflection of ones eyes in the mirror. That reflection is "Turiya." Turiya is the highest state of Jnana or knowledge. All doubts disappear. The

seeker (GOD) is now watching its own reflection in the mirror of Turiya.

It is also the highest state of Devotion. This is where the I AMness is continuously aware of itself. There are no distractions, no visions and no form. This is formless devotion- the highest kind. Hence Turiya is both Jnana and Bhakti.

Turiya is listed as the 4<sup>th</sup> state but as understanding matures it is observed that Turiya is not the fourth state but the ONLY state as long as the I AMness remains. The 3 states of waking, dream and sleep fall and rise within Turiya itself. The seeker now understands that whatever he perceives in any state is due to Turiya, the underlying blissful current. After my own Turiya experience the bliss has forever remained with me. It has never left me.

The state beyond Turiya is not a state. After remaining in Turiya for long, it is yet again known that there is a witnesser- the Real I who is witnessing that too. How the Turiya itself dissolves or merges into it and how you become the unknown, the timeless is never known. Nothing is known about it. Various names are given to it like the SELF, the Real I, the stateless state, Reality/Truth, the Avyakta state etc etc. But any description of it is false. It just is. The moment you try and start to describe it, the reality doesn't remain a reality anymore. The nearest we can try and put this through words would be to call it as "the Unknown."

The complete disappearance of both the witnesser and the witnessing is the real meaning of the statement "I don't exist."

It is now truly “seen” that I don’t exist and because I don’t exist, nothing exists too. This is final Liberation.

Q 4. I have been trying to locate my sense of beingness for a long time but I can’t find it.

Don’t give up. The proof of your existence is already there. It is LOVE. The feeling which exists in your heart and which makes all things move is Love. Connect deeply with it. One way is to close your eyes and think deeply about that one person or being who brings a smile on your face. He/She could be anybody- son, father, mother, or a deity or Guru or any other being. That motherly love you have for that person/being will instantly connect you to your sense of beingness. LOVE IS BEINGNESS. Later this Love will itself transform into something more beautiful. It will spread from close family members to neighbors and then to the whole world especially those who will need you. You will never be able to separate your self from others whether a human being or animal or even inert objects (oneness). LOVE brings the real purification, not these flashy techniques. The ultimate state of love or samadhi is SILENCE itself (beyond Consciousness).

Q 5. My sense of beingness is not felt in the heart

Many seekers feel beingness differently. Few who do yogic kriyas feel it between the eyebrows, few as totality of the body and few in the heart. It’s all fine. Just be with whatever it manifests us. Let your beingness be natural. Many times it all depends on habit acquired due to past practices. So don’t change anything

drastically. However as you will progress you will automatically be directed towards the heart. You will start to sink there. Remember LOVE is beingness.

Q 6. While meditating so many thoughts disturb me.

Many times the mind wont let you settle down and will keep disturbing you. This is its nature. Bring the mind back into the sense of beingness. The most important factor is to keep up with your Sadhana. Even during non-meditating hours bring the mind to the sense of beingness (LOVE) and feel it in regular intervals. Sometimes there are going to times when your mind will not cooperate no matter what you do. If you don't feel like meditating for a day or two, Skip it. Enjoy your sense of beingness and don't make meditation and self-inquiry look like a job. Always remember this journey is a marathon and not a sprint. Needless hurry is needless delay.

Q 7. What is Nada? What am I to do with it?

Much is written on this subject on various web sites so I will be brief. The inner sound currents make samadhi experience or laya happen easier. There are varying sounds, which can be heard. Initially a beginner attempts to hear these current by using his fingers and closing both the ears but later once the mind is interiorized such external use is not needed. The sadhaka penetrates deeper sound currents on his own. Many times they would also appear while you are at work or at other things. It is good to become one with the sound current, play around with them, understand their full manifestations but one must never

forget that it is still an experience happening to the I. The abidance to the I at the background who is witnessing the Nada should never be forgotten. Many get attached to the Sounds and want to keep experiencing them thinking that the Laya from sound is final realization as it brings a sense of great progress in them.

Q 8. What are the different kinds of samadhis?

Samadhis are of various kinds. Some samadhis happen by virtue of oneness with the inner sound current (Nada) while some happen with the inner light of varying intensity. These are all manifestations of the seed IAMness. The highest form of Samadhi is Turiya itself where the IAMness remains continuously aware of its own self. What Turiya is and how it manifests itself in waking state is already explained above. This is the only state of Samadhi worth paying any attention to. A seeker must not fall into a trap of searching for endless different Samadhis, but must bring his focus of attention back to the source (looker) to whom the samadhi experience is taking place fully aware that it is the looker or witnesser who is more important than the actual experience.

Q 9. What is Kundalini? How does it arise?

IAMness itself is called kundalini. When the IAMness becomes purified enough through constant meditation and self-inquiry it automatically arises. By arising it means that the beingness passes through the four bodies and reaches the heart. When turiya takes place it means that the life force or prana is purified enough to become stabilized at the heart. It is from the heart

itself that the IAmness finally disappears. Such disappearance is called the Union of Shiv and Shakti often talked about in Tantra. Certain pranyanams and breath control kumbhaks do make the kundalini rise but if the student is not prepared (meaning if the life force is not purified enough) then such forceful methods can be potentially very dangerous. The sure and the safest method to make the kundalini reach the source is through abidance to one's beingness through a step by step method as given above (which purifies the Prana) and then by diving deep into the heart. The sure sign that it is arising safely and surely is by virtue of the joy and peace it brings the Sadhak in everyday life. For a Jnani practitioner Kundalini is not given too much importance as many start to imagine many things associated with it. It is best left alone while the Sadhak pays his entire attention only in abiding to ones beingness and then locating the source (Real I).

Q 10. What is foreground and what is background? Is it experienced during ordinary waking state and carried into our lives too?

Your beingness or IAmness is your foreground. When it is purified enough through the 4 stages mentioned above it becomes pure beingness (Turiya).

After realization of turiya in mediation, the blissful remembrance or knowledge of turiya is carried well into the waking state too. This becomes a part of ones active life and deepens there giving tremendous bliss and joy. The body swims in an ocean of bliss with every body cell making a celebration and no matter how the situation seems at the outside, there is



no losing this bliss. For me the experience of foreground bliss is permanent and has stayed with me in all situations of waking state.

The quality of background SELF is very different when carried into the waking state. I remember it as a “powerful presence.” There is very little memory and knowledge of what is actually happening around you. There is an absolute non-concern for anything around, total inattention. In front of this presence no bhavas, no feelings, no emotions and no joy that exist are of great importance. There is only a strong powerful stillness. Every talk, walk, job, work becomes laborious and even a smile sometimes feels like a task. It is almost as if it is time for the body to leave and one is very keen and ready to make the required transition from Consciousness to no-Consciousness (sinking into post-death state). You are almost dead to everything except that strong immense feel of presence, which holds you. The senses completely lose their power over you and so you may appear to be dull, lazy and without much energy.

You are most happy being alone and knowing nothing and doing nothing. The deepening of this “presence” can unstage your active and personal life. This is MOST desired state to be as the quality of silence and strong stillness far outweighs all the pleasures of worldly life yet those who still have much to accomplish in personal and worldly pursuits must be mindful of its consequences and effects in daily life. I sometimes remain in the background but not for long unless it catches up on me suddenly. As of now I prefer the foreground, as I am still active with various things.

(Please note I have attempted to present my own experiences as regards few aspects like the foreground and background. They may or may not manifest exactly in the same way to others)

Q 11. Are there various kinds or degrees of silence?

SILENCE is ONE. It is the Truth/Reality itself. However in varying degrees it manifests into waking and sleep states. During waking state it appears as a gap between two thoughts, often referred as the “NOW” or “Present”. Many think this is liberation but this is only the first step. This is just a glimpse of no-mind. As one progresses deeper into the layers of Consciousness, silence is perceived as the state of nothingness. This is where the mind comes to a complete halt yet even this is not the real Silence.

The real silence takes place with the disappearance of Consciousness (IAMness) itself. This is beyond all happiness, joy, and peace - THE REALITY.

Thank you for your time.

Jaiastu,

Rajiv



