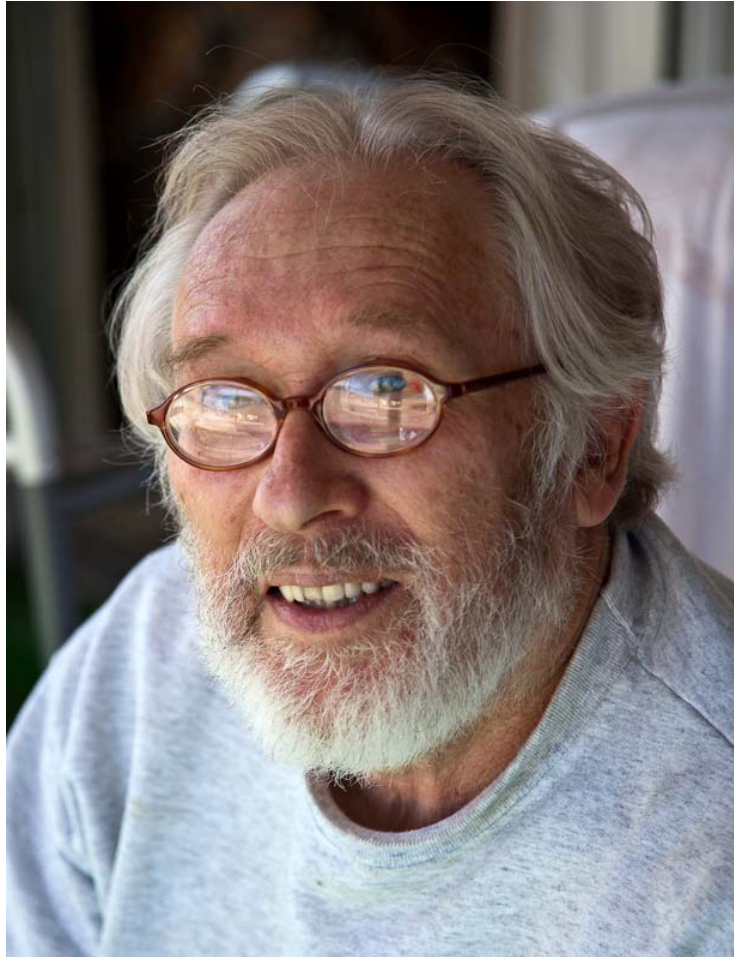


**IDENTIFY WITH LOVE ITSELF**



**Edward “Edji” Muzika’s Further Teachings**

*April 29 – June 15, 2011*



### **Foreword**

As ever, Edward “Edji” Muzika’s teachings are evolving – never predictable, always refreshing and accurate. The Advaita wisdom teachings are ancient and unchanging, yet this teacher’s voice resonates with the most current concerns of our modern context.

Peace to all beings.

All content in this collection from Edji’s teaching blog,

<http://itisnotreal.blogspot.com/>

Matthew Brown  
Toronto, 2011

**29 APRIL 2011**

### **An Inner Mansion with 100 Rooms**

To create an analogy of my previous post on post awakening experiences, I would put the process of seeking enlightenment with a teacher like this:

Imagine each of us were made up of 100 rooms, only 20 or 30 of which we explore in our lifetime. But we all have the same or similar rooms, its just that the lights have not gone on in many of them.

A teacher, let us say a master, is one who has explored maybe 70 rooms, and most of the mansion is burning brightly in bathed lights.

We approach that teacher's house at night in the darkness and we see light shining from so many windows compared to our mostly closed mansions. We feel like the master has such a large house and we have such a small one in comparison. We feel humble, wanting all that light.

The teacher shows us some of his rooms the like of which we have never seen before, and he or she shows us we have identical rooms within ourselves. The teacher helps us find the light switch for those rooms in us we have never seen before.

Some rooms are very, very important to open and explore before we can feel freedom.

One of those rooms is the Void. We need to open and explore that Void. This analogy is weak, as in reality the Void interpenetrates all other rooms. Maybe we can consider the Void to be like the central air conditioning system going everywhere throughout and not a single room at all.

Another room so important to experience is the conviction that we exist even beyond consciousness. This room has lots of nuances. Experiencing ourselves as knowledge. Experiencing ourselves as the knower, existing beyond consciousness. Feeling that prior to consciousness "self" not with the mind, but as something experienced tactilely, with one's heart and an inner apprehension that cannot be put into words.

Another room closely related (indeed, identical, but entered through a different door), is stillness, silence, in a sense the most beautiful room, where one feels absolute peace and sometimes ecstasy, and like the Void, penetrates all other rooms.

Other "need-to" rooms are those of dispassionate compassion and love in its myriad of forms and manifestations, and the four bodies of Nisargadatta and Ranjit, and the shakti room of total surrender.

So, the teacher helps us explore ourselves.

However, no matter how "masterful" the "master" is, there are many rooms he or she has not explored, and which he or she probably is completely unaware of, and then sometimes the student becomes the teacher. the roles are reversed, and there is a sewing together, and later maybe mutual explorations.

I learn so much from those with whom I share presence. No master; no student. Just us.

## **Post Awakening Experience**

I need to clear something up. There are so many misconceptions about awakening, just as there are many kinds of awakening in many traditions.

In Zen, there is mention of the Ten Oxherding stages, from "glimpsing the Ox," or an initial awakening, or Kensho, through to experiencing all the stages of awareness and understanding the dharma, to finally re-entering the world once again as an equal, with an ORDINARY MIND, returning to the "marketplace," happy as a clam.

The path between the stages is extraordinary, but in the end, you return with an ordinary mind, not seeking, with an open heart, giving to the world. You are not in some exalted and extended state of "samadhi." The mind thinks, the heart feels, but you also have easy access to extraordinary stillness and certainty as to who you are.

The difference is that you have explored your mind and beingness so fully, the totality of your awareness is extremely wide and deep.

In the Advaita tradition, there is supposed to be only one huge awakening, and the misconception is that ever afterwards you are in some transcendental state.

Robert rejected that conclusion and I trust him. He always seemed to be in an extraordinary state from the outside, but when questioned about his inner experience, he always said to everyone who asked, "It is just like you. The difference is I know you as consciousness, not as an individual." Robert just loved Silence with a capital S. He had to be pulled out of it. But he was not in some, for most, unknowable state. He was in his own inner stillness.

In Silence of the Heart, the section on the Sadguru, he describes the final state, Sahaj Samadhi as a return to ordinary mind.

In several books written by Ramana's students, they talk of a gradual awakening, or opening to Ramana's teachings.

Seun Sahn Soen Sa, my foremost Zen teacher, talked about the seeker's journey as a circle with 180 degrees. Attaining 180 degrees was living in the wonder of emptiness and the void, nothingness. Then the journey from 180 to 360 was a post awakening series of magical states,

transcendental states, with all kinds of external magical happenings, openings and new awarenesses in one's life.

But then, you progress to 360 degrees, completing the circle, coming back exactly where you came from, but with a transformed mind and personality in the sense of being deeper and wider, but not essentially different or better. The differences are the world no longer stings, and you are totally responsive to the moment. You also know profoundly you are not the body, you are beyond that, and therefore death no longer holds any power over you.

You see, a master is no different from someone who never sought awakening at all. All people are his equals with not a thread of difference between them. He or she has attained nothing. If anything, the finished seeker is good for nothing, has no talents, nothing to offer, nothing wanted, with great humility for even being allowed to serve mankind and animal kind.

All the hype is in the middle of the trip.

One further example is Tibetan Buddhism. There is a famous book entitled "Stages of Emptiness Meditation" which describes various kinds and depths of experience of emptiness or the Void. The author links each kind of experience to a stage of spiritual development and a specific school of Buddhist philosophy. It is all imagination, philosophy, words, insubstantial, essentially meaningless. That is, the Void has many appearances and interpretations associated with differing philosophies of existence and knowing. That is, differing traditions dictate how practitioners will experience various truths and states.

Seeing this clearly, you see two things: The awakening and deepening experiences are closely related to the experiences of the teacher; that is, you will experience awakenings similar to that of the teacher. Secondly, all such awakenings and openings happen at at least two levels: one is what I describe in the blue site (part of <http://itisnotreal.com>), as discovery of imaginal space, which is an "apprehension" of knowing that is visual in nature.

There one experiences the sight of emptiness and the Void, as well as seeing thoughts, ideas, the I thought, images, memories, and even emotions require this open space.

The other is the level of the personal, of human relatedness. Here is where one develops humility, compassion and love.

All the other talk about ego and transcending ego is nonsense. There is no ego. There is nothing there at all but concepts, images, ideas, memories, etc., none of which are real in the sense of being permanent, unchanging or self-created and maintained.

Of course there have been teachers who have created great illusions about the state of a master. One of the foremost is Da Free John, whose teachers were Muktananda and Rudi, who constantly touted his awakening as the greatest of all time, greater than even that of Ramana, who he considered the next to him greatest, and constantly equated himself and his inner state as the highest and greatest of all time, saying no one could touch him or understand him because his state was so fantastically beyond any human state.

It is crazy people like him who have done enormous damage to the whole world of spiritual seeking by creating an image of psychotic transcendence as the goal.

**30 APRIL 2011**

## **The Death of the Ego**

**Let me ask you a question. How can that which does not exist, die?**

Probably because of Ramana's extremely well known recounting of his enlightenment experience which he perceived as a physical death, it has become quite common to accept that the entity known as the ego, I, or me, must "die" as part of the awakening experience.

At least this true in some Advaita circles.

However, if we examine his experience closely, he talks about an imaginary death of his body, and does not relate the death experience to anything deeper, such as the I, or me. In fact, he talks about the primary experience to be sought in self inquiry is the I-I experience, the feeling of the connection between the small I of the person, and the Self. So the small I experience is a feeling, not an entity, and feelings come and go.

Robert Adams when he talked about his awakening experience, talked about his sense of self expanding until it filled and was identical with his perceived universe. There was a merger with the totality of his perceived universe, but he never mentions a snuffing out of anything. That is, he saw his essential nature as being merged with the totality, then he returned to ordinary consciousness, but with the fantastic knowledge that he was not human, or a body.

The old-school Buddhists, the Theravadins, talked about a "snuffing out" of desire, becoming an empty vessel. But in Buddhism, there is no self to die. Desires and vasanas are to be rooted out through prolonged practice, but there is no self to die. The self is no more than a collection of thoughts, emotions, images, loosely held together in the mind.

Nowhere in Zen to find the concept of the death of the ego. What you do find is an emphasis on embracing of the totality of the moment without interference of the mind.

In a book by David Godman, there is a story mentioned of how Nisargadatta accepted a student known as Rudi as completely enlightened, and showered praise on him. In the story they bantered back and forth until Nisargadatta asked him a question, "Awakening is not really complete, until you die, don't you think?"



Rudi's response would be my own. He stated, "How can you talk about such things? It's all illusion, what is there to die?"

So I ask, what is it in those who fantasize about the death of the ego that they hope to obtain from such an experience? They must have a concept or idea of the consequences of the dissolution of their fantasy selves. That is, they hold onto a concept of some transcendental state that must exist other than what they know in the daily dissolutions of the ego everyone encounters, especially if they practice meditation, that somehow is different in its permanence. But is this not just a fantasy? What kind of experience will satisfy the longing created by a fantasy?

Very readily one can obtain a state of meditation called Nirvakalpa samadhi, wherein the felt sense of self and body disappears, and one obtains unity with the world. Supposedly, repeated often enough, over the years, this samadhi becomes Sahaja samadhi, or the permanent dissolution of the individuality and entering a constant oneness state of merger.

Robert was often asked if he experienced the world in such a way, as a complete merger. His response was, "Of course not, I would not be able to function if I did not see the world as did you."

So I ask, what is it that these seekers of permanent dissolution of one's fantasy self, seek? What is it that they seek other than a permanent extension of the temporary no-self state obtained in meditation? What is the benefit? What is the benefit of being in some dissolution of the ego state 24/7 as opposed to off and on all day?

This same sort of question holds for enlightenment itself. What is it that people think they are seeking, when they are seeking awakening? Do they have the slightest clue? Or is it all fantasy? What kind of experience will satisfy this fantasy itch?

Inside those who believe in the permanent death of the self kind of experience, there is a yearning or hunger for some not yet known experience or fantasized completion.

You see, merger experiences and complete death of the self in the sense I and the mind disappear, are extremely common and easy to obtain in meditation. However, "normality" also keeps returning over, and over, and over, following every no self experience. That is, the internal map of self and other objects and concepts returns which allows us to function in the world.

In Zen, the endeavor is never to transcend the ego or personal self through its death, but to end its dominance, and to integrate both the self and no self experiences in everyday life. They perform this integration either through quiet sitting and reading the Scriptures as in Soto Zen, or

through intensive koan work, where they integrate various aspects of the no self experience into a body of knowledge which becomes incorporated in the student is a Zen experience, or a Zen life.

I used to ask myself the question many times a day when I was a new Zen student experiencing the total dissolution of any sense of self many times a day, which state is real? Is it the no-self self state of oneness and dissolution of the personal found in deep meditation, after the mind is flushed away like water down the drain, and one is left thoughtless, selfless, and utterly merged with the world, or is it the state of ordinary mind I returned to after each no mind state? At that time I did not conceive of an answer such as they were both equally real or equally unreal, because they had such different presentations and were such different experiences. I thought one or the other must be real.

Much later, in 1995, I was to discover both were unreal. Even the unity state is not real. One sees that the state appears "to me," but I am beyond and entirely separate from consciousness.

In that year, I had an awakening experience while taking a shower, wherein I turned my attention inward and asked "Who is it that feels the water touching this body?" I had asked similar questions tens of thousands of times before, and in this ordinary mind state I looked within and saw the inner void which was always there, and saw that there was no I. I saw there was no entity, no person, no Ed to take possession of the experience. The void itself was permeated by a non-centralized awareness thoughtlessly observing the water hitting the body.

What a stunning revelation. I discovered that the word I had no referent. There was only the one Void, encompassing both the inner and outer with no distinction between. I was not my body, but I was everywhere, permeating my body of the universe, the totality of all my experience in the immediate presence with no separation.

I saw that the word I referred to an empty concept of I-ness. There is no I, there is no not I. If there is no I within, there is no not I without. Inner and outer disappeared as a distinction. Consciousness had no direction it permeated everywhere. All words were void. All words were empty. All forms were absorbed in emptiness, and were devoid of any substantiality or permanence. I, whoever that is, was not real; all that I perceived, thought, and felt was not real.

There was no experience or entity that was self sustained and existed apart from me. Experience, the world, and entities were permeated by the void and by me but I myself had no existence, I was not there. There was only witnessing of objects that had no reality.

Given such a realization, and there were others to follow, it is readily seen that there is no ego, or fantasy self, that has any existence such that it could die. There is only a set of thoughts,

memories, feelings and images that are loosely tied together in the mind that altogether created the feeling of me. When it is seen that this entity does not really exist, where is there anything to die? One just laughs at one's mistake of having believed that there was an I or ego or world in the first place.

Therefore, to seek a death experience of some sort of self-entity, for whatever fantasy reason, is an endeavor that must be looked upon with suspicion, for that person is not living in the present, in the immediacy of the now.

As Robert stated, Sahaja samadhi is merely a return to the ordinary, but now filled with the wonder of the extraordinary, and the knowledge that the world does not exist, and that my essential nature is not touched by the world, I am entirely beyond it.

**01 May 2011**

The Ribhu Gita and other Advaita Gitas seems stuck at the unity state, while Robert and Nisargadatta talked about that which is entirely beyond that. Robert never understood my Zen no-mind states where the emptiness ate me and I saw the world as me in complete, physiological, no-separation.

So pick the teacher closest to your heart; you will have his or her sort of experiences. The teacher's experiences and methods will lead you to a whole class of "spiritual" experiences. Zen Buddhism has different experiences and understanding from Tantric and Theravadin Buddhism. Advaita is different from Buddhism in many ways, just as they share commonalities.

Then after completing a relationship with your teacher, you may feel it is not enough. Buddha accepted teachings from many sages and rejected them all. They did not satisfy him, or answer his most heart-felt questions. So he struck out on his own and invented Buddhism, which over 2,500 years created a hundred schools of philosophy and spiritual practices, including self-inquiry.

The teacher deeply affects the course of your experiences and your understanding and interpretation of those experiences. That is why you need to choose a teacher who has integrity and has really attained some release through his teacher.

U.G. Krishnamurti knocked Jiddha Krishnamurti's teachings, but spent years around him and had a J. Krishnamurti experience on steroids, rather than a Ramana Maharshi experience, a man who also influenced him.

Each teacher is like the end of a line of spiritual experiences, a flowering. Sometimes they think their experiences are the highest, a claim which becomes even more inflated by adulating students.

Which is greatest tradition and teacher? I guess whichever one gives you rest and completion, and I don't mean just by saying, "Whatever." You follow a teacher or lineage until you find completion, satisfaction, and there is no room for other teachings at that point, or you embrace them all as valid songs of Consciousness, Gitas revealing some aspect of Consciousness' forms.

My way is kind of an amalgam of Zen, traditional Advaita, via Robert Adams and Nisargadatta, and Bhakti, Love. I see meditation, self-inquiry, ecstatic surrender, and compassion in action as

all leading to freedom. But that is me. I make no claim that all the nonsense I teach is the highest or best. What I say, is just words, and none touch reality. It really helps to become dumb as a rock and just look within, fill yourself with your own presence, love that presence, and go beyond.

You just have to come and sit with me to know my way.

## GIVING

Almost everyone has a limit on how much they can give, even saints like the man shown in the link below.

But my whole life has been a giving. Working as a volunteer in political campaigns, helping animals, fighting to change laws that affect people and animals, giving to people who help animals.

The more you do it, the more grace you receive.

It is a path of Karma and Bhakti, surrendering to love for others, giving for others. It CAN be a very pure way, but also, a lot of us give in order to get. We give to get closer to someone or something. There is a greed in this. I give to get and feel used if I don't get what I want.

With Robert I always gave. At first it was to win his presence. Later that became a constant giving because I loved him and wanted his enlightenment. Eventually I just gave because I had to, it was the right way to be.

I often think of the search for enlightenment to be a very greedy way to be. It is all about me or ending me.

Not everyone has the end of some sort of awakening, whether an Advaitin, a Zen Kensho, a Buddhist burning out, a constant merger experience.

To me those goals pale in comparison to those who give to others as does this man.

There is so much love and satisfaction there. So much completeness.

AND WATCH THIS MAN'S FATHER. See the feeling of love and satisfaction he feels in gratitude to his son, whose work he supported for 8 years.

This "awakening" paradigm is so much sweeter than that of Nisargadatta or even Ramana.

Yet, many of us "spiritual" people will miss this lesson because we have some many ideas of spirituality, awakening, guru/teacher.

Through all these concepts away. Maybe in you is a great mission that could transform the lives of many, or of animals.

I love you all.

Edji

**04 May 2011**

## **A Symphony Too Large**

The totality of Robert Adams talks including audios can be found at [Robert-adams.info](http://Robert-adams.info). His transcripts alone are a book of 3,700 pages, close to a million words. Yes, if you read Robert, you will find a contradiction every dozen pages or so.

Sometimes there are small inconsistencies, such as his story of first meeting Ramana Maharshi. Sometimes he is inconsistent about method, saying that one should diligently practice self-inquiry alone, while at other times even suggesting mantra practice or watching the breath. At other times he'll say forget practice altogether and just be with the guru, serve and love the guru. Sometimes he'd just say forget that even that and just wake up. He would always tell people at Satsang to avoid the world and just stay close to him, while those close to him, he'd urge to stay involved in the world and did all kinds of things himself to keep himself "grounded" and involved in the world.

His closer students would act as "apologists" explaining away the inconsistencies with the idea he was speaking truth to different levels of students, some more advanced than others. In a sense this was true, but mostly in his Satsang he spoke to beginners, especially during the large Satsang on Sundays when a more general audience came.

He used to say that each teacher had their own message, and that is why you have the sometimes large differences in doctrine taught by Ramana, Nisargadatta, Osho, Muktananda, etc.

Students, unable to tolerate inconsistency, and not having found their own truth, were always trying to reconcile inconsistencies between teachers, such as Ramana, Robert and Nisargadatta. Tiny, minor, inconsistencies that hardly mattered to some, created huge crises of faith for some students. Some refused even to acknowledge in their minds that even blatant inconsistencies existed, or they explained them as one teacher was "really" realized, versus another who voiced a contradiction.

Consistency is a huge thing with a logical mind.

In the 1930s, a German mathematician named Kurt Gödel published a paper later called Gödel's proof, which demonstrated that all the truths or theorems of simple arithmetic, or any comparable number theory, could not be proved within the framework of a certain type of logical system with was logically similar to the subject matter of the arithmetic being investigated. That is, the



truths, or theorems, of even simple arithmetics could not be proved within the confines of such a system. There would always be some logical inconsistency within the truth expressions of any arithmetic or propositional logic.

It was a world shattering discovery that truth cannot be confined to exposition of logical consistency.

So too was Robert's teachings. It was too large for consistent and sequential exposition. You might think of Robert's teachings as a symphony needing 80 instruments or voices to fully express all the nuances of his message, yet at any Satsang, he never had more than a single voice. It is like at some Satsangs he brought an oboe, while to others he brought a drum or a violin. In each Satsang he was a soloist, singing in one voice, one aspect of his truth, and in order to understand Robert, you had to listen to him for years to bring in your being, all the voices together into a beautiful symphony.

However, the highest symphony note was when the teachings stopped and he was silent. All the notes and instruments stopped for a moment, and the truth of no truth, of immediate apprehension of one's own being was thrust upon those ready for it. Everything was in the silence if only you listened with a silent and alert mind.

Really, all the words to that point were merely lullabies to put your mind to sleep allowing you to see truth beyond truth if you were ready and not looking for truth in words and concepts.

**08 May 2011**

You see, each of us has our own path, whether we are conscious of it or not.

Each of us has our own strengths and weaknesses that differ from everybody else. Some of us are natural athletes, and no matter how hard we try we will never run a four-minute mile, or put the shot 74 feet, or beat Tiger Woods in a round of golf.

No matter how hard I try my could never be another Picasso, or another Beethoven, or another Einstein, and I did struggle many years in physics and mathematics, only to find so many others far more talented than I. Why waste my time trying to perfect myself here?

And there are great saints and sages whose experiences I could never have. I could never be as devoted to God as was Ramakrishna, nor was I as devoted to Robert Adams as Peter was to Christ. I can never have Ramana Maharishi's experience, his awakening, because that was his alone. I did not have Robert Adams expanding mind in light experience, I saw my own emptiness in a shower, then saw even that emptiness was unreal. I no longer have any of the ecstasy states I used to have, nor which many saints lived in all the time. I don't care about these anymore. Samadhis come, Samadhis go. What of it?

Now all I care about is being me, the best me I can be, and by that I ask, will I be able to look back on my life to be able to say without a doubt, "I cared enough."?

You know, I have had so many "spiritual" experiences and "enlightenments" over the last 40 years is I cannot count them. So many samadhis, so many openings, so many ecstasies, so many discoveries, so much truth and knowledge, I cannot count.

But none of them mean so much to me now as the happiness I get from watching my cat Lakshmi eating from her bowl, then running over to me and climbing onto my chest. She loves me, and I her. She has cancer and I give her chemotherapy every other day in the form of a pill, many different kinds of shots for another medical condition, and syringes filled with yucky tasting medications. Yet every day she climbs up onto my chest and looks into my eyes. She loves me so. And I her. And this means much more to me than any of those samadhis and awakenings. They are only memories, or awarenesses that come and go easily as I pay a differing attention. But at this moment I am an ordinary man, a man who loves his cat, and whose cat loves him.

What do I care of oneness, of unity consciousness, of the absolute? She does not care about such things, nor can I, when I look into her eyes. Just she and I.

I think if she did have all of those awakenings herself, she would throw them away, just so she could continue to look in my eyes like she always has, as cat to man, equals, sharing a moment.

**12 May 2011**

Is everything directed by Consciousness and we are merely along for the ride?

Whether this is a play designed by Consciousness, or one designed by you and I consciously or unconsciously, is an open question. I am not sure there are any differences. If you are open enough, I think they are identical. That is, you become Consciousness, the witness and the actor, owning the whole process.

It is a matter of awareness of the totality of the processes, the feelings, and the projections. If you are open enough, not just focused on what you want, and truly watch and are aware of the entire spectrum of emotions and perceptions every second, then you will feel like it is you. Everything is you and in you. Otherwise, you just feel like a helpless spectator, a mere witness to all that is happening, which is a typical Advaita position. Or, you can deliberately take this witness position, just refusing to act on all the stuff that arises in your awareness.

**16 May 2011**

## **I Have Been so Stupid!**

A couple of weeks ago I came to the conclusion that pure self inquiry, along the line described by Ramana Maharishi, is rather ineffective as a method to awaken. It is far too easy when following Robert's method of watching the I thought, watching where it arises where it passes away, to just continue to gaze into emptiness, the void that is filled with one's own presence, continuing to look for the I thought or "source," and to ignore one's own sense of presence and thereby to get lost.

I then concluded that Nisargadatta's method of resting in the I am provides a better sense of direction for an aspirant as an object of meditation on the self, but only if one can raise the I am sense. If one cannot raise the I am sense, the sense of one's own existence, the sense of one's own presence, the sense of one's own beingness, this method is no better than Ramana's.

However, as I have discovered that love is a rapid way of entrée into one's own sense of presence, palpably feeling one's heart center open, feeling one's own sense of presence, and thereby quickly finding a place to abide in one's own self as love, I have also realized this is exactly my own way into the sense of I am that I practice prior to my awakening. How stupid of me to not have recognized it then and made it a priority in my instructions to students.

In 1995 Robert left Los Angeles to go to Sedona. I was bereft, lost, empty. So I laid on my back on a couch and went within, into my sense of presence. But even more fundamentally, I played sacred music all day long and felt the dancing of that music in my heart and with the growing joy and increased sense of presence which filled my inner void completely.

Then after about eight weeks of doing this constantly, I had my first awakening experience, and a few weeks later my second. I have suggested this as a technique all along for the past several years, but figured then, and until now, it as a technique idiosyncratic to me, and not a universal way.

However, being in love, or emulating that kind of "enlivening" by listening to sacred music, are both ways into one's sense of self, of the I am, wherein it becomes easy to just abide there, stay there, with love, and when the time is ripe, for that sense of presence to leave and for you, and then for you to awaken to oneness, no boundaries, with wonderment and awe.

Thus, I do recommend listening to sacred music as a way into your soul and awakening.

It has been suggested that perhaps all beautiful music could do this. However, think how many people listen to beautiful music all day long and never awaken. Many professional musicians

play jazz or classical music all day long, or compose all day long, and never awaken. Yet we are drawn to their music. Something moves us.

There is something about Eastern sacred music that has a different effect on one's heart. You can feel the difference of the effect on one's heart of the guru arati, versus a movement from a Beethoven symphony, a Hayden Quartet, or Bach's Goldberg Variations. These may be very beautiful and moving, but the arati sticks you in your beingness so that you can feel the rising and dancing energy in your heart. It was created by the Eastern spiritual genius for that specific purpose of awakening one's own sense of beingness.

Still, when you listen to or chant such sacred music, it cannot be done with a purpose in mind. It must be done only for the joy it brings.

### **Anonymous said...**

Dear Edji

It is through music that even I started exploring the love and peace of my beingness...Chants, Bhajans and Manthras have always been a top priority tools for helping me turn inward..The satsang video moved me to such intense joy followed by stillness, which I haven't touched in last few months.I was crying uncontrollably, when "Oh Guru Come to me..." verse came. This yearning comes many days when I find the limitedness of my present state of body-mind.. I cry at nights so much that my chest starts aching...Is this good or bad? Does it happen for all seekers? Or should we just watch this even?

May 16, 2011

### **Ed Muzika said...**

YES! It happens to all seekers who are getting somewhere! No, don't just watch it. Throw yourself into it. Let it wash you away! When you love love and presence enough, it releases you into realization.

May 16, 2011

## **AMENDED-More back and forth**

Dear Edji,

Im a silent follower of your thoughts and blog. I am 38 now and from 18 been following self help, meditation, kriya yoga, ramana, nisargadatta, the works and now find contentment in your thoughts.

Life has come full circle from simple to complex to simple. I feel like a child. I understand this question comes from illusion and am ashamed to ask it. I live my outerlife perfectly, but find no inherent fulfillment in it.

My crossroads are whether to continue with my girlfriend who loves romance, eating out and going to church every week and insecure if I don't prove my love to her every day. Result is lots of drama. I also feel I lose something when I am in a relationship. She picks up that I do these things to make her happy and don't inherently feel the need to do any of it.

At the end of the day, I have always been happy walking in mountains, staying in ashrams, taking care of my son and generally being alone with my thoughts. Continuing (any) relationship, I feel this will compromise my sadhana, yet I feel may miss companionship. I don't have an answer. It tears me. (and yes its selfish).

Am sorry to ask you this question.

Thank you for everything.

Regards,

### **REPLY:**

I hear nothing about how you feel about her.

Do you or can you still love her?

If you can, that can be a gateway inwards to your own heart opening and immersion in your own sense of presence. Work on this a little before doing anything else. The reason I mention this is that I don't feel a strong drive in you for awakening or the need or desire for self-inquiry or meditation. So, what then would be your path without a strong desire for freedom? You would get lost.

The heart link, if it can be salvaged, is a guaranteed way into your own depths.

## **HIS RESPONSE:**

Dear EdJi,

If I go inside, I feel I do love her. On the outside, it is very distracting and highly inconvenient to my sadhana and peace of mind.

In the long run, are prospects of a future potential child, ups and downs of energies and need to play the role of a "hopelessly in love" boy. I do not wish to take on responsibilities lightly because i will be attached to them for the rest of my life. My son is not her's.

I find most love, even parts of what i feel now, superficial and selfish. The most authentic love i feel is my sons innocence (he is 5), animals being, mountains and acts of sacrifice or unconditional love. (Something i cant exhibit in this instance.)

Your response has helped a fair way sofar. i read your "final truth" to center myself.

## **MY RESPONSE:**

Go deeper with her.

She already has your heart. You can go much, much deeper to core love feelings you are not in touch with now. Trust me on this. See my post today on this blog and see also by may 13 satsang posted just below it.

This stuff about communing with nature is not the kind of love that takes you to the deepest places, or even self sacrifice. How many have awakened that way? How many in the animal rescue movement have awakened? This is karma yoga, not nearly as powerful as self-inquiry or bhakti. You can feel some happiness and peace this way, but that is not awakening. I mention this because from the way you state your story, your sadhana has no fire. It is a kind of lateral drifting, not honed in to going deep. I hear no yearning here.

But human love in its purest form is far, far deeper, deep enough to rest in a vitalized sense of beingness, your own presence, and also to manifest love and caring in your life as a saint instead of a burned out peacenik. This is the way of Bhakti, a direct path to the I Am and awakening. The only comparable path is a true life of self inquiry, not of peaceful wandering in nature, loving your child and animals. This must be clear to you. How many have awakened by loving their children or sacrificing themselves for a cause?

However, you must be able to go deep and feel ecstatic love for her, and in that recognize it is your own love which you feel, which is the sweetness of your own self. Then abide there; stay



there. This is not an ordinary relationship; it will be extraordinary--divine! Few can sustain this, but still this is a much broader way than self inquiry.

Of course, if you or she can't go deep into that love, this is rather useless advice. You'll just get stuck in the halfway selfish, give and take love you fear. But you have an opportunity to go deep and stay there. If you are ready.

**25 May 2011**

Dear Master,

I write today with news of the "mindblower" which you spoke of in your last email to me.

It has been the seing of this one that all is seen by and reports to the true me....however, there was no experiential unfoldings to back this up. Yesterday, the Self revealed its Self. while I was teaching yoga class yesterday, much emotion welled up to the point of tears. Then the mind went completely empty, events were unfolding spontaneously.

Then when yoga class was over, Bang! all went into one ness and it became clear beyond any shadow of a doubt that I was not the body or mind but the awareness which witnesses everything. All conversations which were coming out of my body were arising with no one doing the talking....and the same for others, it was as if talking was happening but no individual doing it. The body was moving with no one being in charge of the moving. Also, all conversation and words which arose were seen to be untrue. This is not known why, but it was so perfectly clear. This all lasted spontaneously for about an hour.

Then all gradually faded to "normality" ha ha! The mind gradually emerged....but a haziness remained all day. Today, the I AM presence seems to course in like a wave every so often, and wash any thoughts away. Mind is still there, but it feels like this one has moved further into Being ness...all this is seen.

It is seen that the awareness has witnessed even the coming and going of this....

Can you please comment on this dear Master.

with much love and humble gratitude

E.

RESPONSE:

E, this is the fourth state or the I Am. It is the root state to which all else is added.

You spent an hour there and afterwards withdrawn. If you spend a long time in that state, you will go beyond it entirely away, and will see even this comes to you, who is beyond everything, even oneness.

That is why my website has the banner, "Everything is one, and the one is not real."

But you can grab a different aspect of the I Am, which is one's sense of presence. This is a far easier way to go beyond, for the I Am takes you there itself through you loving it.

The key to this approach is finding love for the I Am and staying there.

Love,

Edji

**27 May 2011**

Dearest Edji,

I just want to let you know that I love you as my self. There is no need telling this for you already know this. I love our spiritual family, Beloved Deeya, my Sweet Sister Janet and my dear Brother Rajiv. I hope to be there next Saturday. I feel nervous, excited and restless now but it is imbedded in peace and understanding that it is all play and well. The mind has no ground, the ego is like a cloud and slowly disappears back in to it's source. I am. I am you and I love you as I am.

D.

Thank you D,

You are part of our family indeed. We are creating a new model of spirituality, of being in the infinite and the present at the same time.

I love you,

Edji

**This person is sitting in the gateway to the absolute, and, in fact, sees their identity!—  
(Expanded)**

Oh Master, the "I Am" is undressing Itself and the show is quite revealing.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to sit with You during Satsang.

Doing as you said, not interpreting, not analyzing, not judging what is going on in Consciousness by feelings, moods, or any condition. Keeping quiet and melting.

Hugs and Kisses to You my Beloved.

M.

It was fantastic meeting you too!

Keep me informed.

Tell me a little why you were so despairing a few months ago.

Attached is a large book. Don't bother with all the introductions, etc.

Rama Krishna was a master of the Bhakti way, which is your way.

Love,

Edji

My Dearest Edji,

Thank you so much for the book. Very appreciated.

I'm not sure about that sudden attack of despair. This whole existence has been one plagued with depressions. Once I got really serious about this path the intensity and frequency of these attacks seemed to lessen, though were still always in the back ground like the black dog that might attack at any time.

That surfacing and your response were a real turning point. I see this whole life as a twisted costume for the Consciousness to hide itself in. What wicked games it can play.

Several mornings ago the masks were revealed and they were not Me. There is a knowing that nothing has ever happened to Me. A knowing that this game is not Me, and yet it is Me as Consciousness. It was when it was believed to be 'me', the individual, that it was unbearable. I have never felt like I belonged, never quite fit in, and for the most part have hated existing. I see so clearly now that it was the phantom I, the personal I that hated existing. What a hoax and one that seemed to be an airtight case for 45 years. Well, the air is seeping in in a huge way, it is fresh, it is free, it is joyful, it is peaceful, it is contentment,...this air is ME. OMG...there is such uncaused joy...joy for no reason at all...joy, the perfume 'Being'.

There is a very gentle unfolding; recognizing things here and there as utterly Divine. Yesterday there were several times when the body was noticed but no one was in it. Days when the mind is locked tight on the 'I Am', days when the gratitude evokes enough tears to soak a bath towel....wondering what did I do to deserve this 'Grace'. Then it dawns on me that this is what Grace does...moves as Grace. Just watching and melting as you said.

I am so grateful that you are there/here; without/within.

Love you much,

M.

Dear Master,

It is late here. Have just finished reading a huge portion of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna that you sent to me, have cried a bucket of tears about which Sri Ramakrishna said, "God favours those who can weep for Him. Tears shed for God wash away the sins of former births."

I just wanted to thank you again for such a precious gift. The longing for the Beloved is joyfully painful at times, but it seems that I am enjoying even this from a space untouched by it, but yet delights in the experience. There does not seem to be any clear lines of demarcation between the two.

With Deep Love,

M.

RESPONSE:

Between the two what? Longing or the space? Where are you in all this?

Is you beloved personal or impersonal--just curious.

Ed

The two, or even clearer, the three. There doesn't seem to be any clear cut lines between Pure Awareness/Absolute/The Ultimate Supreme Witness - the I AM, which seems more like a manifest witness and the Maya itself. They all seem to be interpermeated with the Pure Witness. There is awareness of a watcher which watches even the I AM and it's play, yet it doesn't seem to be separate from it. Does this make any sense?

As far as the Beloved, it is impersonal, a sense of 'knowingness' that has somehow seemed to be forgotten but never really was.

Thanks for conversing.

Love,

M.

RESPONSE:

Perfection! This is a place to stay for a while.

Love,

Edji

### **Excerpts from the May 28, 2011 Satsang:**

All that exists is consciousness. There is a play of consciousness within which, we as people live and die.

But there is part of us that does not exist, which lies entirely outside consciousness, and to which consciousness comes and shows its forms.

Nisargadatta called it the witness or the absolute, and Ramana referred to it Turyatta, beyond the four states.

The goal of advaita is to find That and then identify as that.

This is the mystery. You see, spirituality is all about identification and what you identify with.

You can identify with nothing, and become a passive witness to everything.

You can identify with the peacefulness and detachment of the Void.

You can identify with yourself as an individual.

You can identify with the many types of love and call it everything.

You also can, and most people do, identify with lots of negative mind states, such as anger, rage, depression, guilt and so forth.

And, you can get stuck in any of these identifications, and get lost in them, as I was lost in identification of the I Am with the Void.

This is where I was 4 months ago, lost in the void, with a strong sense of presence settled there, detached from the world, peaceful, and yet still fairly active.

But I was also stuck on the concepts of advaita, the four states, Consciousness, the absolute, etc.

You see there are so many spiritual concepts, so many types of Buddhism and Hinduism, Jnana approaches to enlightenment, Bhakti approaches, Raja Yoga approaches including Kundalini, Tantric approaches using desire to obtain enlightenment, karma yoga approaches of self-sacrifice and good deeds. So many schools, gurus, teachers, all with differing paths, including psychotherapy and psychoanalysis.



So what happens if we throw out all concepts and all paths?

Is it possible?

What happens?

Can one be free in the moment instead of in the absolute?

Do we not get into spirituality or psychotherapy because we are stuck somewhere we don't want to be, and all paths offered appear to offer a way out of stuckness.

For some people it is knowledge, the ultimate truths. For some love or being loved. For others it is accomplishing or creating something.

And you search for that exit until somewhere you find rest.

I found rest in an imperturbable Void, peacefulness, completeness, a strong sense of presence. But I was indifferent. I refused engagement with my students a lot.

But the love of all of you out there brought me back into life, into engagement, into caring.

Freedom is the ability to either follow consciousness as it takes you through differing states, or your ability to choose your states.

It is important that you have access to a completely resting state, and one of the best is of complete love and surrender—if you can. You love completely and sort of become a puddle at the feet of your beloved, whether it be love of God, Kali, Christ, or a human lover.

One can rest too in the Void for a while.

But after awhile, you attain an ability to be at rest, or be at peace, without any concept, theory, idea or thinking. Just resting in the present with whatever that moment brings, from pain and suffering, to complete rest in God or a lover, and anything between.

**03 June 2011**

Dear Edji,

Love touching base with you, whether through email, satsang, or deep into one of those chants.

You mentioned to me in our last email conversation there would be times of bliss as well as the opposite. In light of this I would like to share with you some of what has transpired this week. At the beginning of the week there was such a strong battle in the mind to maintain existence as a limited being. This showed itself most clearly when there were several attempts made to listen to a couple of satsangs. Initially I could understand the words being spoken, but then they would switch to a foreign language and I could no longer properly discern the words. Multiple times when there was an attempt to go deep, the body would jolt and gasp for air as if it was the last breath. This was all followed by two days of intensive seeing/sweeping. Typically this sort of phenomena that was coming up for seeing/transcending would have sent this one for a loop/depression. Something stood its ground this time. There was a courage to just look, to look deeply and to inquire into the nature of what was arising. The courage to just let it be at times was so liberating within itself. There was a noticing that when something was allowed, embraced fully then it would just dissolve on its own. This opened the door to a deeper seeing. It began to dawn on me that when form (as the me) reacts to and resists form (whatever is arising NOW, gross or subtle) then there is that sense of stuckness, smallness, i.e.. person. Form needs form to react/resist in order to perpetuate itself as 'real'. You go beyond anything that you allow completely. In this allowing of content to be as it is - it was noticed that there was something more subtle than the content. This field of Now/Presence the True 'I-ness' is Vast enough to let everything pass through. It is Choiceless!

There are times when I cannot locate myself in the usual sense of here - as a body. I feel more like space. Then there are times when I definitely feel here - as a body. In the noticing of this there is a sense that there is something very subtle which is aware of both of these states. It knows neither spaciousness nor limitation as a body.

Also, months ago you admonished me to not analyze or interpret, but just watch and melt. In the openness to really see things as they arose this week without reactivity/resistance there was seeing of the mind very, very subtly analyzing, interpreting, imagining, projecting, planning and plotting an awakening for the 'me'. Wow! I never knew it was there. It still goes on, the mind rambling about what it cannot know, but it is allowed its expression and the exhausting of that expression without leaving footprints in the "I Am".

This all brings to mind a verse in the Bible spoken by the Apostle Paul, 'it is the little foxes that spoil the vine.' Everybody hangs out on the seashore and comments about the bit waves, few are noticing the ripples. It is the ripples that have been noticed this week.

With Great Love,

S.

RESPONSE:

Thank you for the update about your states.

You are experiencing many phenomena, and are not getting lost in them, which is very good.

But pay less attention to them. Just stay with the I Am, the feeling of presence in the Void. Listening to Robert of my Satsangs is ok as a diversion, but basically, everything, even my satsangs are raising a playing of consciousness in you. You are the master in your own body/mind.

Right now you feel like a guest in your own home of the soul. Someday you will feel like the host, or owner. Then something new will arise, and once again you will be a guest for a while, then the host.

So it goes on.

Love,

Edji

### **Excerpts from June 4, 2011 Satsang:**

Most who practice Advaita do so to escape from life. A smaller number practice to find truth. Few persist to realization.

But I want to tell you a little secret. Almost every master that has gone beyond and has found the absolute, wants to come back to the world, to the body, to the marketplace.

Sasaki Roshi, one morning in Taesho at Mt. Baldy in 1972, said enlightenment can become boring and talked about the need for involvement in life.

Maezumi Roshi spoke one time to a class I was teaching at the UCLA Extension. When asked about enlightenment, he said the most exhilarating part of Zen life was participating in life. When asked to define Zen, he opened his arms wide and said loudly, "Breathing."

Seung Sahn Soen Sa taught that emptiness, and the absolute, being the ultimate "not this, not this" experiences, was only half way, or 180 degrees on a circle of spiritual development that ended at 360 degrees, or back again to ordinary mind, but now acted in having seen the infinite.

Rajneesh during his last two years settled on Zen Buddhism as his vehicle and changed his name to Osho, a title for Zen master, and began preaching his doctrine of the new man, which is not a man who wanted to transcend his, but a man who transcended through meeting life however it came to him or her. That is, putting it in my terms, the new man transcended by immersing in the I am, his sense of presence, and meeting the external from his heart and guts, from his whole being.

But many of you are probably saying to yourself, I came to you because I wanted to escape from the world, the world is a horror.

I agree, but you don't have to be a horror.

When you find your own sense of presence, and the energy in that presence, you will feel joy and bliss, which will captivate you, and take you all the way to the absolute, without leaving the world.

This joy, this bliss, will allow you to carry both sides of the paradox of love and hate, of acceptance and violence, of nurturing and killing simultaneously. The world cannot be accepted in its totality by the mind. The mind is too small. Even the heart is too small, because it seeks

only love and acceptance. You must allow all your sense of presence to expand everywhere, to accept all things and all happenings and to react appropriately however that is for you.

This requires your whole being to be open, not your mind, not just your heart, but also your guts, your muscular activity and your sexuality. It must recognize your own violence and anger, give it acceptance and let the energies play through you and energize you. You must own everything and bring it within you and thereby gain mastery.

This is the easy way, the rich way, the way of personal intensity. However, there is one great difficulty with this way, and that is getting totally involved as an individual in the world again thereby missing absolute, the infinite, the God in you, the consciousness of you, and God in others. Instead you can get lost in the personal once again, so this practice definitely has a weakness.

This is why I think meditation is important for anyone practicing this way of immediacy, as you can learn to rest in your own sense of presence, and in the void if you can find it. This gives you a resting place from the intensity of involvement. However it is the intensity of the involvement that lead you to the I am in the first place.

**14 June 2011**

Dear Edji,

Putting this sort of thing in writing is so difficult but I'll try. To begin with, this one expected some sort of cosmic shift to take place and everything would be over. There would be no more problems, no more unwanted moods, no sorrows, no pains, perfect relationships...sounds so ridiculous I can't even explain it any further. What is becoming increasingly clear is that life goes on as it always has EXCEPT without the analyzing, interpreting, judging, projecting mind/me managing it. I am seeing that life does not want or need to be managed, that life as it spontaneously unfolds is not at all concerned with whether or not it matches the mind's ideas, conditionings and beliefs about how things ought to be. Life is not concerned with the past or the future...it is Now, expressing in whatever way Mother Consciousness chooses. Raw Life seems tolerable, the one dreaming about how it should be was what was making it intolerable. There is a seeing that I am not something separate from life/the present moment. You've mentioned several times over the past few weeks that the spiritual path is all about identification. The possibilities within the field of identification or course are endless. There is a seeing that there is not a separate 'me' identifying with anything but my own being itself that seems to have the ability through attention to identify with anything arising in the field of Awareness, which may be a 'me' at times.

Being seems to revel in everything, it seems to love to drink and taste of everything. Sometimes it settles into deep silence, sometimes it flits about taking in everything at once, sometimes it feels a deep love, other times it feels aloof, sometimes it feels like a body, other times pure emptiness - nothing in this phenomenal world is stable. I was looking for stableness to come and I am seeing that stableness is already here. It is what I am. This stableness reveals itself as pure noticing, not an entity that notices this and that, but just the noticing itself. I have no idea really where all this is going. The old concepts of how and what it ought to be like are not matching what is unfolding. You have mentioned time and time again to 'trust your own experience, to be the master of your own house.'

This is starting to really make sense. There is surrender to the inner Guru in my own heart as well as to the outer one named 'Ed'. You said in the last Satsang, 'that which is unconscious knows exactly what it wants and what is lacking.' This is so true. Without your guidance I would have never been prepared for this seeing. There is still so much that escapes deep understanding, but like our Beloved Robert always says, 'do not worry, all is well and everything is unfolding as it should.'

Should you sense anything amiss in the above sharing I am open to listen. I am not interested in being right, but free.

RESPONSE:

Don't even allow yourself to become a prisoner of the concept of freedom, otherwise you risk breaking all that you cherish in the long run in the name of freedom. Sometimes a prisoner, sometimes free, sometimes comfortable, sometimes loved, sometimes loving, but also be aware of those things that are always there within yourself.

**15 June 2011**

**Transcript: June 11 Satsang:**

I want you to join me in taking a look inside of yourself. Can you close your eyes and follow me?

When I look inside of myself the first thing I see is emptiness. By this I mean I see pure visual space that contains everything in the body including the organs, muscles, bones, but few which I feel. I feel sensations and circulating energies inside. This space opens up and contains everything around me, the entire contents of the room and its sounds. The space is self-illuminated, meaning although it is dark, the space itself is lighted and expands everywhere.

Besides that, where I imagine my legs to be, I feel energies rising from my toes into my calves and then up into my thighs. I feel energies originating in the abdomen rising into the muscles in my back and shoulders, into my face and head, and into my arms and hands out to the fingers, then radiating into space.

From that same space in my abdomen, into my heart I feel a flowing of love, filling the heart area then radiating out into the world. My face is flushed with these energies and my body feels like a powder keg.

Throughout that empty space, both inside the body and out, is my sense of presence, my sense of being alive, of being sentient, of being aware. This is the so-called I am. This is what we need to meditate on, the I am in all its aspects and colors and permutations. The I am contains the totality of our existence.

However, there is something else to, there the witness of all of this, of the sensations, of the void. Sometimes the witness feels like a me, sometimes just impersonal watching.

There are two positions I can take with respect to this witness, that Nisargadatta calls the absolute. The first is to look at it and witness it as an object, in which case it just becomes another part of the I am. The other position is to fall back into the witness, and become it. When we do this, suddenly the world appears extremely vividly without an awareness of the witness, because the witness has become the world, its identity is the world.

Lastly, we can go deep into meditation, falling deeply, until our head gets hard as a rock, thinking stops, then it feels as if we are going to sleep. Then everything disappears including self-awareness. We are entirely unaware of our own existence or of the world. The next moment again we become the witness, and the world appears, or sometimes our body opens up and we become the entirety of the world, just oneness.



However we are aware that during that moment when we and the world were not conscious, we still were, we still existed as something. But that something was not in this universe but was beyond that. It's not a direct cognition because it's not part of consciousness; it is before consciousness, and we know we are that, untouched by the world, emotions or anything.

When I was at mount Baldy, and we sat silently, body and mind would disappear and we would become totality of the world around us as oneness. Sometimes when a bird or an airplane flew overhead, we felt ourselves flying over the landscape identified with the bird or airplane. Sometimes after deep meditation when we were walking in the courtyard, when we saw a tree, boundaries would disappear and would become that tree.

As I have said many times it is all a matter of identification, and what you identify with, even if you don't choose the identities, and the identities choose you. In other words, you can become anything and everything.

Sometimes you are a person with personal problems, sometimes you are the samadhi state, sometimes you are an action figure driving a car, sometimes you become a cloud. All the time, with the slightest provocation, you can become empty space, and if you want, you can identify with love itself and find a resting place there, as love.

Sometimes, and this was Robert's definition of awakening, you could be in a place we can call 'you', and you witness the coming and going of the various states of consciousness.

You pass from sleep into dreams without "you" being affected; the sense of you does not change at all. You watch the dream state arise as witnessed by you, and then you see the waking state moving into replacing the dream, and neither state has touched you who are beyond both.

Sometimes you can pass from waking into the sleep state, and again it does not affect you, you are beyond everything. Untouched. Ultimate freedom.

Then comes the knowledge that you are that which is entirely beyond consciousness of the world, and that you witness the coming and going of the world and of the various states from beyond the world. You are the knowledge that you are beyond everything, the absolute, the witness, beyond even the I am.

So what does all this mean? There are so many things you can be, so many places you can go, so many emotions to experience, so many voids to experience, so many sensations, so much love, so many personal identities. What do these experiences and knowledge do for you?

First and foremost they free you from the places where you are stuck as a person, in a place or situation. You can accept many identities, many situations, many experiences without hardly leaving your house. Freedom. Freedom. Freedom.

If you go into the void or into the witness, you can gain freedom from emotions and pressures and stress. If you go into emotions, you gain intensity and freedom from boredom. If you identify with love, you can be a lover, or become love itself. Freedom.

But I wanted to address an important problem that affects many of you out there who are in relationship with another.

If you both pursue the same path, that is wonderful, and your resonating energies can make your path so much easier.

But some of you have differing and apparently conflicting paths. But they are only conflicting if you rigidly hold onto one method or one dogma, such as Advaita, or the bhakti approaches.

Let me read from this letter addressed to me and my response to her.

LETTER:

Dear Edji,

I have been doing marvelously. Everyday another layer of the onion peels away, so to speak. It is really amazing. Thank you so much for your sage council to find my sense of self and don't budge and to trust my own experience. After so many years of seeking verification through books and myriad other "outer" sources, it has been refreshing and revelatory to finally trust the guidance that continuously wells up from the Guru within my own Heart.

I do, however, continue to find myself faced with an issue that has been plaguing me for quite some time now. I am a bit sheepish about asking for your advice concerning this issue not only in light of the comments I just made, but also because I know the Guru is not a marriage counselor and I do not wish to put you in such a precarious position.

Nevertheless, because I do not know anyone else I can turn to for advice on this matter, anyone else who would understand the context of *sadhana* that frames it, and because my wife has repeatedly implored me to see if you, as my Guru, can shed any light on the situation, I have decided to place the issue before you.

As I've mentioned to you before, *sadhana* is the number one priority in my life. Over the past year, I have been engaging in more and more formal sitting meditation. I do 2-3 hours each morning, another 2 hours in the afternoon, and if possible when my wife is out of town another

1-2 hours in the evening. The depths to which I've been able to plumb my "inner" being during such extended sessions have been really remarkable.

I must say, however, that I feel a little remiss in calling the length of these meditation sessions "extended" as Himalayan yogis would probably scoff at such minute scraps of time. Moreover, Michael Langford, in his book, "The Most Rapid and Direct Means to Eternal Bliss," refers to the many days he spent meditating for 12 hours or more and suggests that if one is serious about reaching the "goal" that one has to quit fooling around and devote all his time to the endeavor. I so often feel like I somehow should be doing more, but for now this is about as much time as I can find for meditation given that I am married and have a job as a high school teacher.

As you can imagine, my wife has found my meditation practice to be a bit obsessive. Nevertheless, she has been pretty supportive of it. In fact, she has even said that she doesn't mind how much time I spend in meditation as long as when I come out of it I am fully present with her.

As you can imagine, in order to most effectively maintain this state of awareness throughout my daily activities, I tend to "see through the drama" of situations and don't necessarily say or express anything a whole lot.

Given this focus on my part, my wife's main complaint is that even after I have emerged from my meditation room, I am still rarely, if ever, fully present with her. She says that I act as if I don't want to be on this earth, that I am a hermit, and that I have a responsibility as her husband to come out of my shell and engage in a more active relationship with her. In essence, she says, she is lonely.

She also says that I am very selfish, and that I place my path above hers and only care about taking care of my spiritual needs.

My wife, I should tell you, is a XXXXX who has been initiated as an elder in an YYYYY shamanic tradition, and she also sees auras. She has blended these three areas of specialty in her work.

This being my wife's profession, she often engages me in conversations about spirits and energies and chakras and auras and whatnot and how these are in various states of imbalance and so on and so forth. From my point of view, all of this is merely illusory mind-stuff that 1) I don't want to get mixed up in, and 2) I don't see as having any reality or validity outside of the mind's habitual tendency to give it such.

During our many discussions about this issue, I have expressed quite directly my feeling that perhaps she and I are not a compatible partnership any longer. I have told her that if it is true that my spiritual practice is causing her as much pain as she says it is and that I am as selfish as

she says I am, then it would be best for both of us if we split up, divorced, went our separate ways.

The idea of divorcing, however, is completely unacceptable to my wife. She says it is my responsibility, having taken the vow of marriage, to stay with her no matter what. She also maintains that if I left her I would be interfering with her life's purpose and casting her adrift in the world of relationship because 1) she says it's unlikely she would ever meet anyone else who would understand and accommodate her work, and 2) it would leave her vulnerable in her role as a spiritual teacher to romantic overtures from students/clients with whom it would be immoral for her to have a such relationships.

Besides, she adds, the bottom line is that she loves me.

I love her too, and I don't want to hurt her, but...

I admit that my practice is intense and that it is my top priority – even more than marriage if it must come down to a choice. Ideally, however, I would really like to resolve the issue in a way that enables me to meet my wife's needs, while at the same time neither dampening nor impinging upon my *sadhana* and perhaps even strengthening it.

From your perspective and experience, is such a solution possible, Edji?

RESPONSE:

This is an extraordinarily important letter and describes a dilemma so common to couples, where one or both of whom are pursuing spiritual paths. My answer to the writer is as follows:

The short version is that you are a perfectly complementary couple. You need to be able to immerse yourself in the experiences of her world, and vice versa. Together you can build a much larger mansion of openness, intensity and experience, than if you stayed separate and stuck in separate agendas.

From her spirituality you will gain intensity and the ability to initiate, you will gain flexibility , and practical insight; from yours, she will gain meditation power (samadhi), spiritual insight and stability. It could take each of you longer to achieve the individual ends you each conceive of for yourselves from where you are now---you finding the absolute, and she finding her spiritual heart--but both journeys CAN be enriched and deepened.

In the meantime, those of you who are not couples, or do not have a spiritual counterpart, you have your teacher whoever that is, and within that teacher's experience, is probably all that you seek, whether it be an experience of the absolute, the void, energies, or being able to witness the coming and going of the states of consciousness from the witness state. All you will find there in the presentation and presence of your teacher. Look into that presence and find what you are looking for. It is there, just look for it, and you will also discover it in yourself.