ED MUZIKA
The complete online dialogues

This is a one-file reference archive containing all the emails between Ed Muzika and various spiritual aspirants published on the web. It is articulated in two sections: *Part 1* contains the old discontinued page named "Stump the Ed" found at www.itisnotreal.com. This section contains emails written between 2005 and 2006, until the creation of a separated blog. *Part 2* contains the full archive of said blog present at itisnotreal.blogspot.com and will be updated as new material is published. Relevant post comments by Ed are also included.

This file is reformatted and optimized for printing on A4 sheets. The left-side space is wide enough to allow ring-binding. Ed's paragraphs are in a bigger italic font, with a vertical line on the left side. This allows Ed's contributions to be easyly identifiable even in a black and white printout.

--Julius

Revision:	**2**
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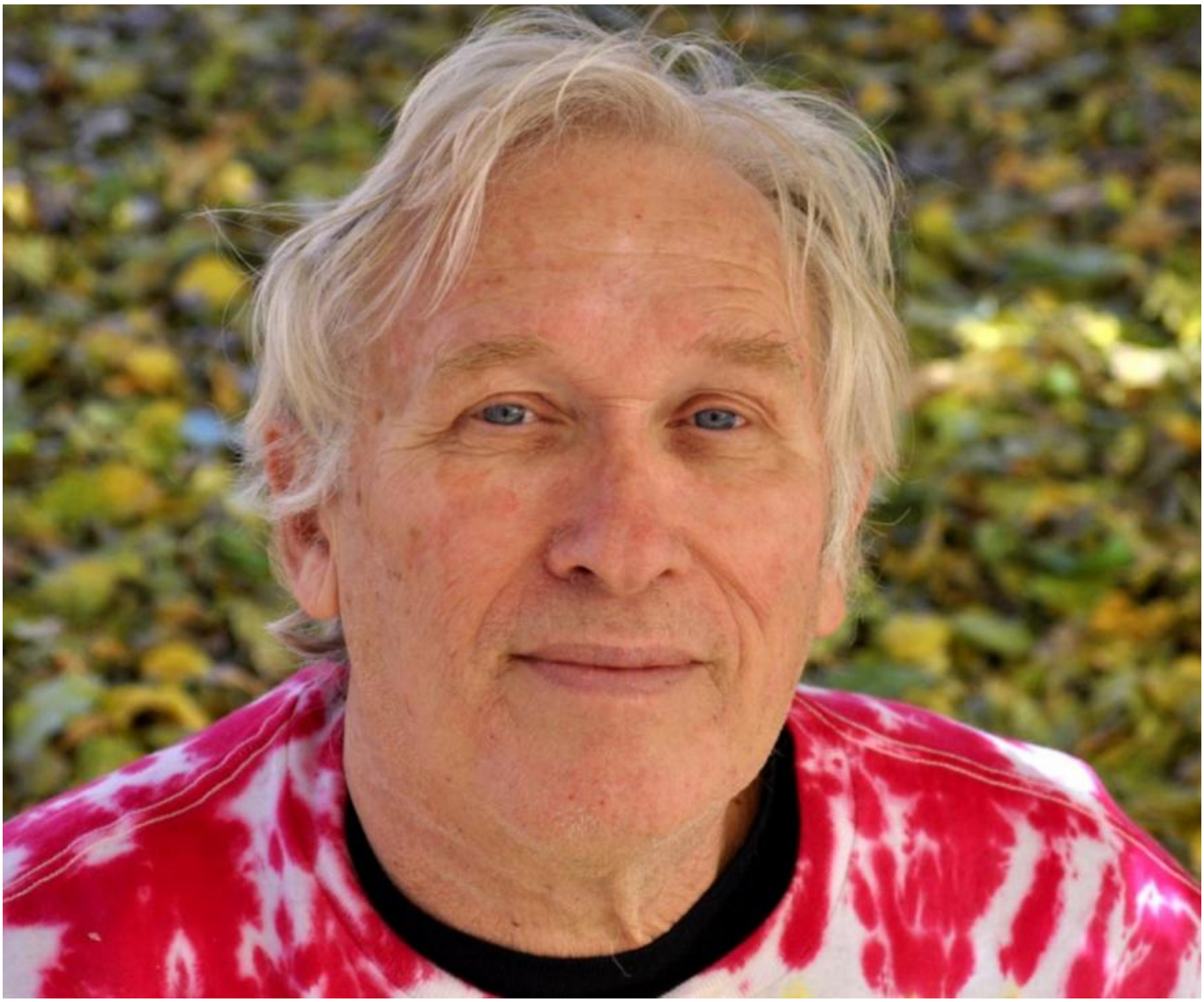
Contact Ed: satsang.online@gmail.com



Part 1

(Part 2 contains the new blog. Jump to part 2: [click here])

Stump The Ed

(The below were questions and answers from some years ago. They are mostly directed to the problems of beginners. Current and more advanced Q&A can be found on the associated blog www.itisnotreal.blogspot.com.)

> *At the end of Satsang, Robert opened a question and answer session which he called, "Stump the Guru.". He would start off by asking, "Does anyone have a stupid question?" Naturally, a lot of stupid questions were asked and answered. Sometimes though, there were questions about how to practice, how to practice self-inquiry, or how to work with some major problem in an attendee's life. Many of these Q&A sessions appear in the transcripts elsewhere on this site.*
>
> *One frequently asked question was how his teachings compared with those of So and So, or as Rajneesh would say, "Etceterananda." Regarding this, Robert usually said nothing. Once in a while he say, "Not really," or, "It is only appearance (that they were similar or different). He wanted to have his teachings stand alone and have the student respond to him only without reference to a third person, which essentially would start a philosophical discussion.*
>
> *He wanted to eliminate intellectualizations which might satisfy the mind for the moment, but eventually would result in ten times more questions about comparative philosophy.*
>
> *Consider this an online Stump the Ed. I will try to answer any questions to the best of my ability. Of course, I am not Robert, so these are my answers.*
>
> *My own personal view is that many times self inquiry in the form of asking, "Who am I," is not beneficial. Sometimes it is the wrong practice at the wrong time. As I said about Soen Sahn, there is no 38 regular method or style that fits all the people all the time. True self-inquiry is difficult-very difficult, and premature for most aspirants.*
>
> *Then again, most people on a spiritual path are not interested in enlightenment, but rather in how to make their lives better or better deal with pain and sorrow. Their interests must be served as much as those who seek enlightenment. Yet, to a degree, what aids attaining one goal also helps the other.*
>
> *From my viewpoint, the beginning of spirituality is learning internalization, abiding in consciousness rather than in "external" objects of consciousness, or even more importantly, in thoughts. This is only the beginning. Now you have to abide there for a long time and the inquiry grows more subtle.*
>
> *Inquiry can mean merely abiding in the inner light of consciousness, doing nothing. Inquiry can be more active, such as Robert's instruction to seal for the source of the I-thought--that is, where does the thought 'I' come from and go away to.*
>
> *Personally I think this is a waste of time, because it gives the inquirer a false sense that the I comes from some space, some center or some point in consciousness. This gives consciousness a form--space.*
>
> *Rather than look for the source of the I-thought in the inner 'IMAGINARY' space--for that space is the stuff of imagination as is consciousness itself--look into the felt sense of I, that which gives I a sense of existence. I am alive. Where is this sense of aliveness? The is what Nisargadatta urged, look into beingness, I-Amness. This has no space. It cannot be located because space is in it.*
>
> *Anyway, ask away.*
>
> *Feel free to email stupid questions or smart questions to satsang.online@gmail.com.*

The questions will be edited and disguised so no one will know who asked, unless the questioner wants to be known.

August 16, 2005

Hello Edward,

I have been reading your web page, "It Is Not Real", with an intense fascination now for several days. What I am drawn to are your recollections of Robert Adams. I have read his book, "Silence of the Heart" several times, and the past few months, I have been carrying this book up to bed, then back down the stairs in the morning, then I open it and read it throughout my day. I carry it around like it's my teddy bear, or security blanket. It has certainly been like an anchor to my sanity, or peace, or whatever fleeting moments I can grasp in the midst of this intense activity I have embarked upon.

At the age of 45, I thought this body could pull off this big activity again, but actually, it's the mind I am watching with a constant attention as it goes from the observation of the "I" and back to the business of attending to a construction project.

I was amazed as I read your description of your moment while taking a shower when the "I" was totally revealed to not exist whatsoever. I have been running this search for the "I" over and over again. It is to me a desperate activity that has resulted in only fleeting moments of passive relief. Edward, is this personal inquiry, this search for the "I", truly the most effective thing I can do??

If I knew this was going to create so much difficulty and suffering, I certainly never would have embarked upon such an adventure. But I know what Robert Adams would say... "To whom do these difficulties come?" Then I would answer... "They come to me." Then... "Who is this me??" "Who is this "I"? This inquiry seems to derail the intensity of the immediate thoughts, but then within seconds, my brain can slip back into the same track and then the thoughts and fears and doubts arise again. Edward, is this all I can do? This has been a very turbulent and worrisome time for me of late. I feel like the universe is really revving up and devouring me! "

I feel a bit like that moment you described when Robert was staring at you and he said... "I am cooking you." That's how I feel lately, like the universe is cooking me. The heat is on really high now and the suffering has been more intense unlike any time I have ever encountered.

Tom

August 18, 2005

Hi Tom,

I hear deeply your turmoil. You already know the source. As Robert would say, your mind is not your friend. Other sages say mind is your enemy. I say mind is a good thing to waste.

You ask whether there is anything else you can do beside self inquiry via "Who Am I?

Mind is added onto you. Mind is thinking. It has no power if you get prior to mind, such as when you can consciously sink inward into your body. You are not your body, but sinking into your apparent body will get you away from the surface turmoil and thinking that seems like it engulfs your head.

If you can sit motionless for a few minutes, sink your mind backwards into your abdominal area. In Zen, this is called the Hara. If you can sink back into the Hara, and are making some progress, at a point you will feel like you are becoming completely stupid. Your mind will he hard and dense like a brick. All of the thinking and worry will congeal into a dense mass and no thinking will come out.

At some point, depending on your intensity and perseverance of practice, suddenly, without warning, something wonderful could happen and your mind will wash away. I can't tell you more or your mind will try figure out what I mean and try to make it happen; unfortunately, that will keep the mind in charge. You don't want that. As it is, this effort will be a mind-directed, but allows you an enter into the experience of the inner vastness.

I will be blunt. This kind of crisis will happen over and over until you can find a way of going within.

It is not an easy or short a process. There are many ways inward. This is a short cut just for you because of where you are in turmoil. When life calms down, then you can practice "Who am I or whatever" more productively. Consider sinking into the gut as a medicine for your ailment.

The "Who am I" question is another method for turning the attention inward. A highly recommended method. My feeling though is that the method I described is more effective for where you are. Who am I is fraught with the danger of intellectualism. There are other dangers associated with too much effort in self-inquiry, because effort takes you away from a relaxed state where apprehending your true nature is possible. Sinking into your belly is a far less dangerous way to go within when you first try to go within.

As Robert would say, "What is the worse that could happen?" Well, I could lose the house. "So, what is so bad about that?" I could lose all my money and have no security. "So, what is so bad about that?" I could be thrown out onto the street living out of trash cans. "So, what is so bad about that?" I could die. "So, what is so bad about that?"

Perspective.

Take good care of yourself and all living things,

Ed

August 18, 2005

Hello Edward.
I want to thank you for your contributions and suggestions regarding my well-being. A most potent thing you said. "Mind is added onto you. You are before mind." This is so entirely true, and becoming more and more obvious, that for today, I will remember that and this will allow my thoughts to quiet. You know Edward, all of this commotion is passing by lately with such ferocity that I am see-sawing up and down within moments of panic... and then a deeper peace than I've every imagined. Your suggestion to drop into the abdomen, just bury into myself like in a fetal position... that actually takes more effort than to simply observe the thoughts and wait for the latest wave of panic to roll out! So... I am just going to have to stick with the words of the wisest teacher I've ever encountered, Robert Adams.

On page 38 are these words... " "Because you think the personal I exists, you have to use Self-inquiry to lead you to the place where you realize the personal I does not exist. It never has, and it never will. Yet wouldn't it be wonderful if you could just sit down and realize all this in a flash and become free? We'll not allow ourselves to do that for some reason. We want to play the game of overcoming. Again, who has to awaken? It's all a pack of lies. How can the Self awaken? The Self never went to sleep. Do you not realize who you are now? You're not a mortal human. There are no words to express what you are. You have to find out. So you practice. After all, who does the practice? It's your body and your mind. If you can remember that there is no body or mind that exists, then there is no one to practice. So while you are practicing, remember that."

I love the way he puts it in such a no nonsense, practical way.
Somewhere else in the book he says... "Do not think of enlightenment or awakening, or being liberated, or finding a teacher who can help you. You are beyond help. No one can do anything for you." All of this is becoming more and more obvious. Finding your website at this moment in my life got me very excited, and then I fell into some kind of self-pitying delusion that maybe Edward Muzika can actually "help" me... as if there is any help out there or an ointment to rub onto me that will fix what needs to be repaired. Edward... I am happy we made contact, and I think it helps... but what in the hell needs to be helped?? I think you know what is going on here with me, and I am watching this mind flipping about like a trout out of water. So, write again if you have a moment. I'll write again and tell you what's up. I really like knowing you are nearby.
The first lines of your website.... "If you seek God, Enlightenment, or self-knowledge, you are a rare one, both blessed and cursed by the most difficult of all seeking." Yes... I am blessed and cursed. You know what's happening here and sometimes I just want to scream and throw a fit. It's like the mind is launching an all out attack now, because I am finally observing its every move and watching it with dispassion. It's like breaking up with a girlfriend. You know the relationship can't go on anymore. It has to come to an end but I know it's going to get really loud and ugly as she is insulted that I don't need her any more. Thanks for reading and listening, Edward.
Write me any old time if you like.
Tom

August 20, 2005

Hi Tom,

Good to hear you are progressing. If you want to watch your mind, that is fine. But who is watching? The watcher and the mind are identical. The mind splits into two parts, the watched thoughts and the watcher. So watching the mind is still dividing the mind and you are left as mind entertaining mind.

Therefore, a dilemma. What to do?

Relaxing back into your gut is easy and gets you out of your head, thinking and splitting. No effort is involved. It is a relaxing effort, because the head energy and tension pass away.

Otherwise, keep going straight ahead.

Take care.

Ed

August 21, 2005

Hello again Edward.

I guess I am confused. I have been diligently pursuing Self-inquiry, and this always seem to be like an activity of "watching." Being aware of thoughts arising and then, instead of reacting to the thoughts, simply asking... "to whom do the thoughts arise?" But it hasn't been a permanent place to rest, either. It just seems to be a temporary way to distract the mind from the present assault of thoughts. I haven't really been able yet to "relax into my gut" because it seems like a mental activity, too.

I like the way you say that the mind can become as thick as stump. or whatever. I guess I am just about ready to let anything happen here. This is a very profound statement... "the watcher and the mind are identical." When I hear Robert, or Ramana, or Papaji say... "be silent" is this further progress in that direction? To rest the mind in the abdomen? I really want to avoid any mental or intellectual stimulation. These brains we have aren't really very smart, you know? Can you give me any instruction on how I might ease the mind towards my inside?

Thanks you for anything you can say that might help. And you may certainly use any of my letters to you if you want to create another chapter to your website. This would be a beautiful way to help others to see. I am feeling a very nice and lovely vibration right now just thinking about being instrumental in helping anybody else. But if you could write me back with a few suggestions, I would be most grateful.

Tom

August 22, 2005

Hi Tom,

Any activity is of the mind. Any. Watching, self-inquiry, sinking.

Self inquiry points you inward. Watching assumes you take the position of inward and watch the outward workings of thought.

But the I that is watching is still a phantom, it is not real. You are taking a position in the not real.

Feeling yourself sink back into your body is also a mind effort. But it is very easily accomplished. More difficult is opening the inner eye, but that comes later.

What I am giving you now is from my own experience. Robert never had to practice to get where you want to go, although you cannot as yet know where you want to go.

But the watching you are doing assumes the position of a visual watching of the mind meaning consciousness is stuck in the head. This is like a bad cold. The head gets stuffed. The body is much bigger and can take the stuff out of the head. Moving consciousness down into the body is an exercise just for you. You have a thought-cold.

This exercise also opens the inner eye. The visual consciousness disappears after a point in this exercise.

One expedient device is to imaging a cube of butter on the top of your head, and your head heat causes it to melt and flow down your body into you abdomen. Let it collect there with your consciousness.

Robert taught self-inquiry as a generic method for everyone, but he gave specific instructions for those with specific needs. Ultimately Who Am I transcends the body or mind because consciousness is neither. But solve the thought cold first.

Sinking consciousness into the body shuts down thinking. You will become very stupid because thoughts stop. When thoughts stop, the I disappears because I is just a concept, a word. This opens you to experiences that will transform you completely.

Ed

August 23, 2005

Hello again, Ed.
I've read your last letter several times now and am concentrating on the effort to move this "thought cold" down into my body. That's a good description to term this malady. It has truly been like a virus lately with me. Would it be true to say that since everything is unreal, then like in a dream, I can just imagine that I've got a thought cold, and a body, and I can just imagine that I am moving this virus down into the body? All of this seems like a dream... the body, the thoughts, the panic, the peace. I don't know what to do
or how to do it, so I guess I will just imagine that this trick is something to work with and I will remember to do this through today and the days to come, ok?
It's kind of like the self-inquiry activity. I do this because I read about this in Robert's book, and I've read of this also in Ramana's teachings. So, hopefully, I pursued that activity. I'll try anything, I guess. I just want to awaken. So Ed, do I just imagine that I am transferring thoughts out of my head and down into my body? So far, it hasn't been really easy to do. It's like I've got to create a scenario that this condition exists, then I somehow imagine that I am working to move thoughts down into the body. Could you write me back and tell me if I am getting stuck on something. By the way... thank you so much for all of your efforts lately to write and offer some guidance.
Tom

August 24, 2005

Dear Tom,

Don't make an effort out of it. That means the mind is searching for answers. Don't move the thoughts, thoughts follow where the attention is. Now your attention is in the eyes and head. Be gentle. Don't use the inner visual sense to do anything. Feel into your gut; relax into your gut. Move under the covering umbrella of disturbing thought.

If this does not work, you have two alternatives. Continue with the "Who am I" inquiry, or work to open and expand the inner eye. The latter is difficult and takes a lot of time. But we have to manage your thought cold now, because with the turmoil it is hard to make progress. Going from thinking and the inner vision of watching thoughts or looking for the I, go into inner feeling, the tactile sense to get before the thinking I.

The tactile sense is as big a trap as "looking" for the non-existent inner I because the mind is involved in making the practice effort. But both take you away from being thinking to the

background consciousness of empty space in which thinking happens. As of now your do not know this inner space, visual or tactile. Get to know inner consciousness. Calm down. Sink into your body. It feels like falling backward into an abyss, but it helps.

September 4, 2005

Dear Edward,

I found your website just a few days ago, and since then I have been reading it every moment I have. I guess I am a spiritual seeker for a long time having intense periods of seeking, and other times just sinking into life's duties again. I am married, have 4 children and am a yoga teacher. During my search, I "discovered" Advaita just a few months ago, and for some reason I am attracted to it.

I have many doubts and I am very confused and mostly I think it is time for me to find a teacher. I do all the work alone. Just reading, and practicing (not so much) - I also know that when I will be ready the right teacher will show up.

I have also lost interest in many things in life and many people I used to talk to (we just dont share the same issues any more), and other things I used to do. All I want is to be left alone, have time to read and be quiet. All this make me feel lonely. I am not depressed , I know that - I do all the things I have to do with my family and as a teacher. But I am a little lost, my mind is thinking too much, but at least I am aware of it.

I think that until I will find a teacher, I should stick to one practice for a while. So I read what you said about opening the third eye and I think this would be a good place to start now. Can you please tell me how to do it? For how long? whatever you think would be helpful.

And yes, I know I am asking stupid questions, but I cant help it.

Thank you for the site and for your honesty. My English is ok I think, thanks to Israeli school system. But if there is something you didn't understand, let me know.

Thank you again,
Michal

September 4, 2005

Hello Michal,

I am very happy to hear from you. You have done the great work of bringing life into the world and nurturing it. It sounds like you know it is time for you to begin your final work.

Being quiet and by yourself is very good; the more time you can do this, the better.

Yes, the old will fall away. You feel alone because you have changed. You are used to the comfort of being around people with chattering. The chattering no longer comforts you. You understand that.

Mind is like the wind-blown waves atop the sea. Your energy and concentration is in those waves. You know that. So, how to get deeper where the waves do not move? As Robert would say, your only freedom is to turn within. But what does that mean?

As a yoga teacher, you may already have inner vision; your eye may have already opened. If so, we will move beyond that.

Can you turn your vision inward? Does this mean anything to you?

If you close your eyes and imagine your outward looking now turning around, does it feel as if you are looking inward? This sounds so very simple.

You see, so long as I can remember, my entire universe is pervaded by light, a transparent light that penetrates and surrounds all phenomena, including my imaginary body, imaginary mind and imaginary space. I only vaguely remember what it was like not to have that.

So I have to know what you see, when you turn your sense of looking outward, into looking inward. Do you see anything, or are you caught by the direction to turn within and are aware only of your mind thinking what the instruction means?

Be as precise and accurate as you can be. Is there confusion about how to turn inward? Is there only impenetrable darkness? Do you see light? Where is the light? What is its color? Or, can you see already see everything? Is your inner space as open and lighted as your outer space?

You have to be careful so as not to waste time. Opening the inner eye is a preparatory exercise only, not at all part of the traditional way Advaita is taught. Opening the eye is just one way of getting to know your own consciousness. Self-inquiry, Atma Vicharya, asking "Who Am I?" is another. They just work at different levels.

Ultimately, there is no inner space, nor outer space. There is no difference between them. You might say they are both imaginary. But, you don't know that yet except as an idea.

Being a yoga teacher and having the idea of an inner eye and inner vision means something to you. It may be your specific way of surfing in consciousness. It may not be. You need a way that is natural for you.

Let us explore this together.

Take care of everyone, including yourself,

Do you mind whether I use your letter or not on my website? You ask a wonderful question and I think you are ready for a journey. Other people may see your question and you theirs. Then we are all together on the same journey.

Ed

September Letters

September 8, 2005

Hello Edward:

I keep returning to your website like a moth to the candle-light. And I keep ordering and reading/hearing Robert's discourses. I keep at letting go the "I-thought" all through the day. Lester Levenson's Sedona Method which you must have heard of is of tremendous help to me at emptying out the shenanigans of that curious engram.

Thanks for the suggestion of reading the Ashtavakra Gita, I do that too.

Just wanted to send my gratitude once again to you and then onto Robert.

Warmest Regards,

Dino

September 9, 2005

Dear Dino

Do you mean you release on the Who Am I question? That is, you were caught on it?

If so, that is interesting. If so, what are the results?

Edward

Septmber 9, 2005

Hi Edward:

Thanks for your question.

Lester Levenson was a contemporary of Robert Adams and some
tell me that Robert and Lester had their school/ashram about the same time in Sedona. Were you there too?

Lester Levenson says that the "I" Thought of Ramana and Robert, Is basically the three fundamental desires of "wanting approval","wanting control" and "wanting security". Indeed, all thoughts of the I-thought, upon inquiry, would be a result of the above three wants.

These wants in turn are caused by feelings and a physical clutching in the chest or stomach area and Lester's "Release Technique" is a getting in touch with the "want" and then letting go of the "clutch".

I think you have spoken of a similar technique to one of the questioners on your website.

I have found that it is a powerful and rather speediest method to quiet the mind and with the clarity it gives I find my self functioning in the world with terrific abundance and ease. It is a meditation with your eyes open in real time.

Robert of-course provides more understanding about the "I" thought and Consciousness. Lester too was a Ramana disciple and his philosophy dovetails perfectly with Robert's. I find each complementing the other in helping me on.

I am a physician in active practice with a wife and 3 children.

Thanks as always. I'll stay in touch and pick your brain again and again.

Warmest regards,

DINO

> *September 10, 2005*
>
> *Hi Dino,*
>
> *Robert and I came to Sedona after Lester died. It was Lester's students who sponsored us coming out. I never moved to Sedona and I explain why in the section dancing with God.*
>
> *I was much impressed with the Sedona Method. I took a seminar with Pam when she was coming to Satsang to see Robert a few times.*
>
> *Robert was not much impressed with the technique although I do not see how they would conflict. They would, of course operate on different levels.*
>
> *Lester's on a more physical level and Robert's aimed also at the destruction of I by seeing it as a conceptual construct.*
>
> *Lester's technique would be more consistent in terms of unraveling tension with a Samadhi state. I am going to have to think about it.*
>
> *When you have time, tell me more about yourself.*
>
> *Thanks,*
>
> *Ed*

September 11, 2005

Dear Edward,

Thank you for your prompt response.

There is not much to say about myself:

I was born into a Hindu Brahmin family in Zanzibar, E. Africa. Came here to go to college and have stayed on since. My interest in things spiritual perhaps goes back a couple of life times. I have searched hard and long-since early childhood: power of positive thinking, psycho-cybernetics, est, NLP, scientology, Bhagwan Rajneesh and finally now, Lester and Robert. I think that Lester's technique provides a physical, experiential way of stilling the mind and I have achieved much headway by using it. Robert on the other hand gives the sharp, intellectual understanding of the experience of advaita.

After receiving your last e-mail, I re-read your accounting of using Lester's technique and how it helped you experience a Satori of sorts. You are a lucky man-your labours have been rewarded !!!

What you experienced later was built on this? Can you now sustain the Peak Experience you speak of ongoingly?

Could you suggest anything else I could look at?

Thanks, Edward, for your kindness about my case.

I am grateful.

Warmest regards,

DINO (DINESH)

September 12, 2005

Hi Dinesh,

Your past sounds a lot like mine except I became a psychologist. At least a real doctor can help people.

I thought Lester's release method genius. I liked it and used it. However, the using can be endless. I cannot see the releasing coming to an end. Maybe it can; it appeared to work for Lester. That is, situations that arise are endless; therefore, if you do not find the core problem, the releasing can go on forever following each situation. That is, how do you get from the periphery to the core?

I was around the Sedona people for some time, even those quite close to Lester. On the whole, they were not very nice people. I do not want to go into it more. So, I judge the method by the results.

Remember, Lester's concept of what the I is, security, etc., is just a concept. Unless releasing can release one from releasing, the method and person practicing it are still time and mind-bound.

My way was Zen and Advaita. Thousands and thousands of hours of meditation and hanging around Zen masters, gurus and Robert.

My overriding practice for 20 years was Who Am I, even as a Zen monk.

I do not suggest that as a first practice because there are so many things that can go wrong.

It is only after I stopped practicing anything that anything happened. When all was forgotten and I was no longer actively seeking I.

The acute rush caused by the two awakenings lasted about a year. It is not accurate to ask whether the peak experience can be maintained because each moment is new and no experience is more than momentary. It is more accurate

to ask how long did it take before the apparent I could reenter the world? About three or four years. Yet, it is only during the past six months that I have felt I could come out and actually help anyone.

It is just different now. When active, I am just like everyone else. When still, the apparent world I know disappears leaving just infinite space, infinite light and in that matrix, the sensations that create knowledge of the body/mind. The body/mind's existence is only knowledge, concepts. There is no "real" existence.

However, even this is still a disturbance. Even the highest samadhi or highest knowledge is added onto me. The whole world, sleep, deep sleep, waking, pain, pleasure, etc. are added onto and do not touch me.

This is the secret of Robert's greatness, and which he gave me. Most people stop when they attain the unitary mind, the no-boundry mind. They think that is enlightenment and that is the end. It is not. There is one more step to see that even the unitive mind is not I.

If I were to do it over, I would not have wasted my time trying to find out I did not exist, but I would have found myself a saint, such as Rama Krishna and devoted myself to loving and helping all people, animals, sentient beings. This is what has been happening to me for the last eight years. I made the choice 40 years ago to follow the way of sages instead of saints, now I go the other way.

Take good care Dinesh. Your profession alone is extremely important. If you can act each moment helping people, animals, all sentient beings, that itself brings the highest close.

Thanks for the questions. It is questions such as yours that help me articulate my experiences in a way that I think I can help others. Feel free to ask more.

Ed

September 12, 2005

Dear Edward:

Whew !! Your note was so insightful. Thank you for pointing out that the root problem with the Sedona Method is the Releaser and that releasing endlessly as I have been doing for the last three years just reifies the " 'I' thought " with each cycle of letting go of the lack of approval/control/security.

Yes, Edward, I see that for the Releaser (who is now bound to releasing), the trap is sprung - as it is for the follower of any other dogma .

You have pulled away another rug from under me. As Robert says, there are no accidents. Now all that is left for me is to just rest in that Profound Ignorance, keeping aware that my ground of being is senior to all motions, mentations and transactions of the 'I' thought. This is still an intellectual exercise but I have enjoyed some restfulness these last 24 hours--releasing had become like a job.

One more question: After losing your apparent 'I', you say it took almost three or so years for you to re-enter the world. How does one function in the mean-time ?

Did the enlightment state still allow you to hold down a job, pay bills and such? Lester says it took him almost 20 years before he could re-enter the world and that he had to watch a lot of TV to get his first tear that enabled him to come back.

Thanks. Don't let me become a pest. Robert had once said too many questions about the Silence State bummed him out. I hope mine don't do that to you.

Warmest regards.

DINESH

September 13, 2005

Hi Dinesh,

I've been off in the fake world for a while. Sorry to take so long to get back to you. Do not worry about pestering me. This is my life's work: helping people find themselves.

Yes, you understand the core is the releaser. But there is no releaser. Once the releaser goes, he is discovered to have no existence. He is and was a phantom, a creation of thought. There is no releaser; there is no releasing. When this is known, all effort disappears, except to get up in the morning. Of course, so does the mind, body, etc. disappear too.

Concerning "coming back," each person is different. Ramana took many years because it happened unexpected to a little boy who had no clue. People like me who had been in void meditation or prancing around in the inner world of self-illuminated emptiness for years, when the awakening occurs, we have been circling the cup, so-to-speak, for years. So coming back was not so different from the process of going away in the first place. After I met Robert in 1988, everything began to fall apart. Part of it was the spiritual touch of a master who was trying to take all comfort, security, understanding and arrogance away, and part of it was that I was not paying attention to the world anymore, so it did not pay attention to me.

I was quite out of it between when it happened in 1995 and I finally was able to return to "productive" work in 1999 or 2000. That was a very dark period. In fact though, I was quite out of it between 1992 and the experiences in 1995. Then, out of nowhere, as these things do happen after the enlightenment thing bites you, I was offered a job making a fairly good living doing that I had done for years before Robert, namely forensic psychology. This I could do standing on my head. For the life of me, I could not have done something new that required attention.

Even now, it is very hard to pay attention to the apparent world. Even surfing consciousness, which I had done for so may years before awakening, has lost its sparkle.

The sole reason I am continuing involvement at all is a desire to help others understand who they are and to get free and my deep commitment to taking one small part of the world a place of caring and comfort. My comfort comes when I can help others and when I see others helping still others.

Most people do not want to get free, they want more of whatever they are looking for. I can help them with that too.

I have no choice in this. I am impelled by my past, my situation, my training, my relationship with my teacher and with consciousness.

Therefore, ask anything you want.

Ed

September 9, 2005

Hi Ed,

Sorry I could not reply earlier and thank you for your reply.

When I close my eyes I see nothing most of the time. Sometimes I see a small white light, and then it is gone. I know I should not look for something, and not try to hold on to it, but many times I try to do this anyway. Sometimes I see unfamiliar faces for short moments. But almost all the time I feel vibrations.

Actually, when I first started sitting I had a very strong and frightening experience. I felt like I was going to disappear, a strong vibration was moving down through me or moving me down, and I remember trying to stop it, and I did. I think that today I would not do this, I even don't know what was it, but than I was afraid. So now I can feel vibration everywhere, not so strong and not moving down. Just a movement of energy. When I try to be in the third eye, I feel a vibration there, sometime I feel pain.

At the beginning I would stop, and the pain would go away immediately, then I tried to stay with the pain, same thing it will go.

About the thinking process, sadly I must say that I am thinking almost all the time, I have a strong and stubborn mind. But many times, when I have no intention to stop the thought (I know that I cant stop them), things are just happening through me. Many things that I say, or simply

know are not coming from me. I know it.

So, my practice is not strong, sometimes I practice, sometimes I do not, and usually not for long periods. (I will attend a 4 days meditation in October with a Tibetan monk who will visit Israel). I also tried a few months ago after reading Ramana Maharshi to concentrate on who I am, but I was just hearing my self saying it. I think that you are right about me wasting time.

What do you think is the right practice for me now - at least for a while, because I feel that I am jumping too much from one practice to another, and the constant reading that gives me real inspiration is also a place to run away too, hiding from the real work.

Thank you so much

Michal

September 11, 2005

Dear Michal,

The vibration you feel is Kundalini. Usually you can feel it moving up and then moving down. Sometimes it moves up through the spine and then down through your forehead and face.

Sometimes it moves up one side of the spine and down the other. Sometimes you might feel blockages somewher ein the spine.

Following the Kundalini is one way to get inside yourself under thinking. But it is an intermediate practice from the Advaita point of view, which would be O.K. by itself, but you might not know when to stop and move on. It is easy to get distracted by Kundalini type experiences as they are quite dramatic, absorbing,and make you feel as if your are advancing and that your practices are bearing fruit, but ultimately make you miss enlgihtenment.

On the other hand, some teachings make Kundalini everything and never advance beyond ecstatic experiences, lights, strange powers, controlling the body, etc. and knowing and loving consciousness, such as those of Self-Realization Fellowship.

Opening the third eye is a little more advanced and can take a long time, but less can go wrong than chasing the Kundalini. In fact though opening the third eye will focus the Kundalini towards the goal of expanding the inner light. When you feel any energy movement up the spine, when it reaches your head, focus its energy on the spot of light you see. That will help it expand.

Read my section under Practices and the first chapter of Dancing With God.

You might want to look at the section on microanalysis also, as it is good to teach your students as a guided meditation to open their inner world and get them acquainted with the concept that neither body or the sense of I exist.

To determine what practice is right for you, you have to know what is it you want. What are you looking for?

If you are looking for something that helps you to the final goal of enlightenment--liberation--most quickly, you should practice either asking "Who Am I? or doing sitting meditation doing nothing. The latter is difficult to learn correctly. You just sit and watch everything until even the effort to watch disappears. This is called "Shikantaza," and is the essential practice of Soto Zen.

Asking "Who Am I?," is similar to a Rinzai Zen Koan, a question with no verbal answer. It is easier than just sitting doing nothing because there is something to focus on. With Shikantaza there is nothing to focus on and you become acutely aware of the chaotic mind and wan to stop. This practice is best practiced in a monastery of an urban center where you can have uninterrupted practice for days at a time.

The "Who Am I?" question is a universal practice. Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Hindus, Buddhists use it and have for three thousand years. The story of such a practice is found in Kapleau's Three Pillars of Zen, the chapter on Basui.

On the other hand, if you want something that can both take you to liberation and bring more peacefulness and make you a better yoga teacher, practice opening the third eye and illumine your inner world. This could take six months to a couple of years. However, it could take another ten to twenty years of sitting in the illumined Void of pure consciousness before awakening comes.

This, of course, is painting in very broad stroke and would vary a lot between people. You might find Shikantaza easy from the beginning.

So, you need to decide as to what you want, at least at this moment.

If you practice is open the third eye, read the section in the Practices and the Dancing with God sections on my site. The small white light you said you see, that is what you want to concentrate on. You need to expand it until it fills the universe. You can change your mind some day, but not before your inner world is properly illuminated.

Grasp hold of either the Who Am I question or opening the third eye.

Then go straight ahead. Do not look side to side. Do not read so much. Do not distract yourself with doubts. Do not wobble. Just spend all the time you can following the practice you chose. Read yourself instead of books.

Robert said it all. Persistence is the key to make everything happen, eithe rin the inner world or the outer world of the waking dream.

Choose. Once you choose, stick with it as if your life depended on it.

Ed

September 22, 2005

Dear Edward,

I am so happy to hear from you. yes, this is what I have been waiting for, and many thanks for your advice. It is very rare to find people like you who only wants to help, nothing else.

I read the Practice section, as well as Dancing With God and I will read them again. I will take your advice to practice opening the third eye, and I understand I will have to be patient. So thank you very much again, I will let you know every once in a while how things are going. It is O.k with me to put my name on my letters if you wish too.

take care,

Michal

September 29, 05 from David

Dear Edward,

Great cat photos! I wish I weren't allergic to them. They're such beautiful animals. We have a neighbor cat, Bagels, who comes and sits outside our back door sometimes until I come out and see her. She's a little feisty but has a good heart. I enjoy our quiet time together.

Thanks for the information on Robert too. I think your site has the only photos of him on the Internet, and the stories you tell of his relationship with you is heartwarming.

Have you ever thought of starting a kirtan/chanting group? You could work in a bit of Robert's teachings before and after each session. Those who were sincerely seeking peace could come could come to you later for guidance. The others could just chant. Just an idea. If you're ever in Kansas, you're welcome to chant with me anytime. I don't play harmonium and don't always sing on key, but I've got a few decent CD's, and Robert could keep time for us.

Thanks for being who you are, whoever and whatever that may be. The really good news is that you are here, breathing in and out each day, and offering your love and friendship.

Blessings,

David

September 29, 05

> *Dear David,*
>
> *Thank you very much for your supportive words. Makes me feel putting up the website was not in vain.*
>
> *I would love to start a chanting group but found those with just CDs or tapes not to be self-sustaining. You need musicians and singers to keep a group going.*
>
> *In the past, I had a Satsang with tape chanting. My wife is an ex-opera singer and she sings like an angel. However, it was not enough to sustain.*
>
> *People came to Satsang with a curiosity about Advaita and Buddhist teachings, but could not sustain interest in them because people who want to go below the surface are rare.*
>
> *Many of the curious ones had no desire to chant, and chanters had little desire for teachings. I am not a promoter. I don't have the mentality to go out and start a Satsang or chanting group with tapes. I'd rather be by myself and have minimal involvement in the world unless there was a strong motivation to teach. Robert was forced to teach because his illness made work impossible.*
>
> *For now, this website is it. If people want to come or if locals find me, it may happen.*

> *Thanks for the thoughts once again.*
>
> *Feel free to ask any questions you might have about practices, where you are emotionally or spiritually, or any questions about Robert and his teachings.*
>
> *Ed*

From Paul

September 29, 2005

The question: What should (?!?) I be doing with the rest of "my" life?

If there is a "size 38 regular answer" to that question, read no further and please share that answer. If you need to know more before answering, read as much as you need to (or can stand).

I lost interest in the world at a relatively young age, if I ever had any to begin with. I was always bright, but had little/no ambition to excel or get that great job. In fact, I have never had a job that I liked.

After an eight-year stint in law enforcement, I went to law school (age 34) and then worked for 15 years at a public housing agency (evicting poor people from public housing, mostly, as I used to tell folks when they asked what I did). I was laid off from that job, to my relief, two and a half years ago and have not worked since. I am now 57 years old.

About the only constant in my life has been, since I read Siddhartha at age 22, an interest in things spiritual. For the first 20 years or so this amounted to only reading occasional books (mostly zen). There was then a period of fairly "serious" involvement with vipassana. In about 1990 I discovered Advaita through Catherine Ingram at a Ram Dass retreat. Catherine moved to Portland, where I was living, shortly after that and I went to her satsangs regularly for a number of years. There were two or three retreats with Gangaji after that (along with a few Ram Dass / Krishna Das retreats – I love chanting) and most recently a few weekends and retreats with Pamela Wilson. My wife and I also made a trip to India (first time for both) last winter and went to a Ramesh retreat and spent time at Ramana Ashram. (We were also at the coast when and where the tsunami hit, but that's another story.)

Anyway, although Pamela has actually encouraged me to start giving satsang here locally, I don't feed remotely qualified to be doing that and have never felt that I have fully "gotten" what the Advaita teachers talk about. At best, I feel only "half baked."

I would very much like to go be with a Ramana or Poonjaji or Robert Adams, but they're all gone now. Is there anyone now living that is in the same class and who is "accepting students?"

Although I "handle" doing nothing much better than most, I still feel the need to do something. I know Robert has said not to worry about such things, because those people without jobs are unhappy because they don't have jobs and those that have jobs are unhappy because they hate their jobs and what will happen will happen. But I do "worry" about what I "should" be doing.

At least one teacher, Ramesh I think, I know recommends working even if you don't have to because it occupies the mind and leaves less for needless worry about unimportant things. (I suppose, actually, that all worry is needless and everything is unimportant.)

A random thought upon reading this description you wrote about Robert: "Usually he remained quiet, sitting in the background, taking everything in. At lunch or dinner, everyone else would talk about all kinds of things, and Robert was mostly ignored, quietly eating while everyone else entertained each other in animated conversation." This describes me exactly, although I'm sure not for the same reasons.

So… any help / insight / direction you care to offer would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your help and for your web site.

Paul

> *September 29, 2005*
>
> *Dear Paul,*
>
> *I love your question and honesty. Give me a couple of days to weigh an appropriate answer as opposed to knee-jerk stuff. I have a lots of crappy reports and deadlines I have to meet now. In a short answer re teachers, no, I know no one that is alive that is of the same caliber as Robert or even Soen Sahn. However, I know nothing about the current generation of teachers. I stopped*

looking at teachers soon after I met Robert. Even before I met Robert I had more or less stopped. I had read Prior to Consciousness by Nisargadatta and felt no need thereafter.

I never knew about Robert either until he happened to me. So to speak, he appeared out of no-where. He always said the great teachers are never publicly known. Of course there is that old saying, maybe crap, maybe not, that when the student is ready, the guru will appear. Perhaps that means when you are ripe, any Tom, Dick or Harry will do.

Ed

September 29, 2005

Hi Ed,
Yes, I'm getting that sense, more and more, that if there is a "great" teacher out there now, he's (or she's) probably not well known. I guess I was kinda hoping that you knew about this teacher and would direct me there.

I was just (re)reading your piece on "Our Mission, Our Work." Sounds like you're trying to unsettle my comfort in Robert's words regarding there's nothing one can do to make things better in the world because for every "better" there is a corresponding "worse." Especially since I sit here with a certain "power" (being a lawyer and all) to try and right some wrongs. But that's a whole 'nother discussion about whether taking action causes more pain overall than it alleviates.

There is one sentence in that piece which seems important but which needs some editing: "Robert used to warn everyone not just be self-involved as part of their work to become enlightened." Could you help me out with that?

Thanks again for your help.

Paul

September 30, 2005

Paul,

I felt compelled to respond to your last email now.

I was 50 when I had my experiences. I had done nothing else but seek enlightenment from 1968. I did everything. Tens of thousands of hours meditating, studying with seven or eight Zen masters, most famous, and a few other spiritual teachers, all of them the old school, not the American wannabes.

I heard them talking, lecturing and lived with them face to face from 1968 on. I knew most of them did not have it. One can tell about these things when you are at it long enough.

After this realization, after trying for 25 years to understand the Heart Sutra, the Ashtavakra Gita, etc., I knew that I still had not attained. I understood, but had not attained. You know exactly what I mean.

All of those I met understood Advaita, but from my view, had not attained. In fact, after Balsekar and Poonja, knowing has become synonymous with attaining. However, they are as different as night and day. You know that.

So, here poor Ed had tried for umpteen years and had all kinds of amazing adventures in the outside world and the inside. But, I knew I had failed to attain.

At some point, I gave up. I recognized if I were ever going to get it, it had to come to me, I had done everything that I could and I had failed. This was maybe 1992 or so. I had already been with Robert four or five years. At first, I surrendered to Robert and that did not feel right, so I just surrendered altogether. Whatever was to come was to come. I gave up hope. I abandoned the task. So it was for two or three years.

I was fortunate because at that time I had money and could spend lots of time with Robert doing nothing. Then enlightenment came and for another five years, I still could do nothing. There was no

need. The doer's doing, died. Not only did I not care anymore, but the sense of ownership disappeared. I mean I was making money again and struggling to be in the world, but inside, I didn't care anymore about getting anywhere, becoming a teacher, etc., I just wanted to take care of my kitties and stop all the other animals being killed, and help others in ways I considered helpful, like giving money or clothes to the homeless or donating money to charities, doing feral cat TNR (trap, neuter, release), etc. Let me tell you, I got into a lot of trouble with "authorities" by maintaining feral cat colonies in a wealthy neighborhood with City Hall connections in Santa Monica.

These kinds of actions are still the focus of my attention, such as reform of the various municipal shelter systems, helping individuals in various ways, etc. This website teaching thing has just snuck up on my during the past five months.

I would suspect there is nothing you can do except see the impossibility of getting enlightenment from your own efforts. This goes against the teachings of a hundred traditions who counsel to practice hard. Seung Sahn always encouraged harder effort, but he never advised what effort or what goal except to get a clear mind. He appeared to mean that by struggling to answer his koans, that could be achieved.

You cannot do that anymore. You are too embedded in the human world and disappointed that the efforts you have made have failed you. This would almost certainly undermine your self-confidence in attaining, which is good.

As to finding the right teacher, a great teacher, looking for one is still part of the same trap of seeking and making effort.

Here is the key:

The secret is silence. If you can get infinitely quiet within yourself, a deep, deep quiet, realization will come (maybe better to say might come). Of course, that requires you have given up seeking altogether and that is almost impossible for a life-long seeker. You can try to enforce silence by watching your mind or seeking the source asking Who Am I, but at some point even these techniques you have to give up. Yet, it is still a very good idea to try, but lightly, gently, with no expectations.

On a practical level, you could do what I was doing before it happened. Work as little as possible. Spend as much time as you can alone. Do not read too much or watch TV etc., or at least allow the habits to die down. With your spare time, do whatever work that makes you feel happy or content if you can. That helps you calm done and lighten up inside yourself.

Importantly, listen to sacred music as much as possible. I highly recommend Muktananda tapes as most others that I have heard are crap and Muktananda tapes are a staple. They are hard to find. Perhaps you could find tapes by his disciples, such as Nityananda or Shankarananda. I believe Nityanada has his own tapes now, but Shankarananda not. But for me, it was the music. Maybe it is genetic and comes with the name Muzika.

You might want to keep looking inside to find the "I" using the inner visual sense. I never did stop doing that. For me, it was like breathing. All that I saw was the illumined space-like void of the mind, and I saw that always, like staring into the eyes of God..

You might gently use the Who Am I question, but very gently, quietly.

As much as possible do nothing. Doing nothing is hard for most. Maybe for a lawyer, it is even harder. (Put your own lawyer joke here.)

Then whatever happens, happens. Maybe you'll never get it, so resign yourself as did I. About the time I resigned, I decided if I were not going to get it, at least I'd do good in the world and I turned towards compassionate action. This turn has continued and strengthened after awakening. I have become a Dudely Do-Right, do-gooder. So what? It feels right. My every action is to help others and animals. The Buddhists call this becoming a Bodhisattva, a vow to save all sentient beings.

Don't get caught up in the Logical Ass paradox, unable to do anything because all options are equal. Instead of following your head, follow your heart.

Regarding what Robert said, he meant that a large majority of those who single-handedly fight for their own enlightenment, about others and their needs. In that self-involvement, they dry up and become dust. They need to become juicy. Forget the self-oriented search and help others too. There is a wonderful sense of relief of escaping our self-centered bag. He warned us of this trap over and over and told stories of those who failed because they never made the change from self-involvement

to helping others. He also told a story of one guy he met who refused to chant, figuring it was un-Advaita-like. Robert convinced him to at least try to join in together-action as Seung Sahn put it, rather than stubbornly refuse. Robert said when he gave in and chanted, he liked it, and apparently had a deep realization soon thereafter.

As St. Paul said, "Remember to take into account the concerns of the weakest of your brothers and sisters." So be it.

I hope that helps. I know where you are. I don't think you are far away. So give it up if you can. Actually, it is probably impossible to give it up until you have hit your own private bottom. The last step is beyond mind or effort. You, as a seeker and doer, cannot get there. So give it up.

The best you can do in terms of effort is slow down, listen to sacred music, read Nisargadatta and Robert only, but not too much. Once in a while read the Ashtavakra Gita or the Heart Sutra or read Ramana. But gently.

Good luck,

Ed

September 30, 2005

Hello Ed. I just wanted to say hello and reach out, give a tap on your shoulder. I greatly appreciate your website, your life story, your great friendship with Robert, and the attention you have spent sharing some words with me. I know that all experience is constant change, and so, I can report that my crisis of tension and bewilderment has become less so in the past few weeks. Still, there is no doubt that my awareness of my being is in a highly sensitive level and I watch ever so closely everything that is unfolding.

I am not very peaceful. The friction is ever present. But this friction is very much like a grinding wheel that has been wearing away a great many bad habits, sensory daydreams, old fantasies, and just a bunch of crap that I used to give importance and energy to.... these interests and diversions have been blasted out of my life. I do not have any energy to expend and my follies are becoming REALLY obvious now.

I can't read the news or watch it on TV. Just a headline on the internet, something like... "20 dead in car bombing"... makes me feel weak and diminished. I don't want to know any details. And more and more, all of these events feel like they are happening within me. Like every event, every experience, is as though I am creating it. It is very much like intellectual masturbation, all I am doing is playing with MYSELF!

Last night, as I slept in my bed, I had a very intense dream and "real" experience as I was focusing upon the search for the "I" and it felt as though I was coming to the big, final realization of no "I" to be found. Then, I "awoke" in my bed and pursued this search in the wee early hours of twilight until I placed my feet on the floor and began another day. This house building project sometimes scares me silly. So much to think about, so expensive, so much time it will take and so much longer to go. The "doer" is turning slowly on a spit. There is so much to "do" that maybe this is the cosmic experience that will explode the "doer" and the "I" or reveal their non-existence. I am watching. I can't help it. I don't know if watching is another trap, another delusion that creates more mental activity. I don't have the energy or the wisdom to discern what is wasteful repetition or a healthy place to abide. I don't know what to do.

I just wanted to say hello and tell you that I feel better by having a little contact with you for your wisdom and awareness. There is no one I know who I could speak to. But as I write these words, I think that there is NO ONE ANYWAY. I just want to KNOW that forever so that I live that reality. To really live it and know it and not just think that this must be the conclusion. Thinking doesn't work very well anymore.

Tom

October 1, 2005

I don't know what to tell you Tom. You almost steadfastly refuse to try to get under thinking, sink into your body or lie on your back and do nothing. You do seem better off than a month ago. Something is working.

You seem to know that quiet is good and doing nothing is better. Follow your own advice and do as little as possible and seek the I very gently. That is, just a gentle turning within.

PS: Sell the house if it is causing such problems.

Ed

October 7, 2005

Dear Ed

I just wanted to say thank you, to you and your website. It has a big impact on my being. (sorry my english, its not my native language). Since several weeks I am coming back to your website and I am really astonished. Due to the visit I have bought the book from Robert "Silence of the heart" and when I started reading, it was kind of breath taking, page by page. Something is going on now...

My spiritual path started five years ago when I studied Krishnamurti (which I still like and occasionally read). But he never gave real practical hints like the others (Ramana, Robert, Nisargadatta) on how you should proceed....Then I went through ZEN Studies and Zazen but I am also kind of "cold" with it. The ZEN books didn't break my mind either and I proceeded to Ramana Maharshi, which book (Be as you are) guided me off totally different.

And now this book from Robert is a kind of top of the top books I ever read. It starts to break my mind. Words are useless, its just a big thank you to you and your contribution.

Regards,

Sven / Central Europe

October 8, 2005

Thanks Sven for writing.

Yes, Robert was that way in person too. I never met anyone even remotely like him even though I have met dozens or even more of the most famous gurus and teachers. Zen left me cold too.

There are other techniques on my site too that some find beneficial for attaining a quiet, no-thinking mind.

Feel free to write or aks questions.

Ed

NOTE: SOMETIMES WHEN I GET EMAIL, IT COMES IN A FORMAT THAT MY HTML EDITOR DOES NOT LIKE AND IT APPEARS AS BELOW. I FIDDLE WITH VARIOUS TEXT EDITORS BEFORE PUTTING IT INTO MY HTML EDITOR AND IT STILL DOES NOT WORK. TO DEBUG THESE LETTERS AS ABOVE MIGHT TAKE TOO MUCH TIME AS I ALWAYS HAVE OTHER DEADLINES TO MEET. --ED

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Feel free to write or aks questions.

Ed

October 9, 2005

Dear Ed
Thank you for writing back. I have a question which I cannot answer
myself.
When I lie on bed and relax, I'm happy breathing into my Hara. As I do
When sitting in Zazen, which I do once in a while for meditation, but on my own (not with others in the Zendo hall...I gave that up) I can then actually activate or go through my chakras, meaning concentrating on them. On all seven. I feel a kind of vibration. Thats ok and it feels nice. I feel a kind of power going up the spine until the top of my head. So far so good. But to me its more like a body-game.

What for? Is it needed on the "path"? I have an almost constant little vibration above the eyes (outside) and with the eyes closed I can often see the white little light, as it was also described and written by Michal in the other letter. The last week it happened, that I was able to see with closed eyes the wall in my bedroom, but only for half a second, but I can repeat it. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

I read you article about the inner light. If I don't see the inner little white light while I am relaxing with closed eyes, I can see other big white bubbles, sometimes it looks like circles, moving on all sides around and I can force it down to the chest but not further. What I'm seriously looking for is being enlighted (I know its sounds stupid). That is what I honestly want. But I am asking you which of the two ways I should more focus on, if I continue with my body-game (sorry the expression but my English vocabulary is limited) until I reach a certain capability (to do what?) or shall I leave this and simply continue with the "I" questions, which I personally very like because of my more intellectual mind.

I just finished reading the book from Robert, for the first time, and I have to tell you that I never read a book in my life which goes that straight into my heart, I had to cry at the end. Out of nowhere, it wasn't even emotional, I guess. It was as if he would have been with me, so closed, so deep. As a former bookshop owner I have read many books in my young life (age 39) but this one, very special. You know, some books talk straight into your heart others don't. I know I shouldn't read to much. I'm working on it.

I also like it to be alone, since a long time and I have not been watching TV since ages (we don't have one) and I do not read newspapers, because
I am already beyond that because I don't care about the world since a long time, in a sense. Since I started reading Krishnamurti five years ago, my life has changed completely, which I very much like. By the way, I am married and have three kids and my wife is doing a 100% Job and I take care of the kids who are 2, 4 and 6 years old.

October 10, 2005

Hi Sven,

Yes Robert speaks to the heart. Since you have affinity with him and me, stick with the "Who am I?" question. It is a direct path to enlightenment. Read also the Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi

and Prior to Consciousness by Nisargadatta. In fact, you might want to stick just to Robert and the Nisargadatta books, as Ramana can be confusing.

The energy thing, Kundalini, will continue to happen anyway. You are experiencing powerfully the beginning stages.

The Kundalini and white light will open your inner world to complete transparency to the infinite light of the self. It is an exciting phenomenon, which gives feedback that you are making progress spiritually. While it is not a dead-end, it can distract you from finding the absolute stillness necessary for the final enlightenment. Indeed, as long as you think there is a you making progress, it is a distraction.

I recommend this meditation to many, because I do not think they will stick to meditation unless they have that immediate and direct feedback.

There are a whole bunch of Tantric teachers for whom this kind of practice is their only practice along with chanting, such as Muktananda. It is a powerful method but limited, as is the understanding of Tantric teachers who have only attained the 'consciousness is everything' stage.

Just ask, "Who am I?" in the way Robert teaches as well as Nisargadatta.

I think it might be a good idea if I were to write a commentary on Robert's works as I already have in the introductions to his talks on this site. I should also write a commentary on Prior to Consciousness. Both will happen only down the line when I get free of my current editing work.

Write with questions when you have them.

Ed

October 7, 2005

Dear Ed

I just wanted to say thank you, to you and your website. It has a big impact on my being. (sorry my english, its not my native language).

Since several weeks I am coming back to your website and I am really astonished. Due to the visit I have bought the book from Robert

"Silence of the heart" and when I started reading, it was kind of breath taking, page by page. Something is going on now...

My spiritual path started five years ago when I studied Krishnamurti (which I still like and occasionally read). But he never gave real practical hints like the others (Ramana, Robert, Nisargadatta) on how you should proceed....Then I went through ZEN Studies and Zazen but I am also kind of "cold" with it. The ZEN books didn't break my mind either and I proceeded to Ramana Maharshi, which book (Be as you are) guided me off totally different.

And now this book from Robert is a kind of top of the top books I ever read. It starts to break my mind. Words are useless, its just a big thank you to you and your contribution.

Regards,

Sven / Central Europe

October 8, 2005

Thanks Sven for writing.

Yes, Robert was that way in person too. I never met anyone even remotely like him even though I have met dozens or even more of the most famous gurus and teachers. Zen left me cold too.

There are other techniques on my site too that some find beneficial for attaining a quiet, no-thinking mind.

Feel free to write or aks questions.

Ed

NOTE: SOMETIMES WHEN I GET EMAIL, IT COMES IN A FORMAT THAT MY HTML EDITOR DOES NOT LIKE AND IT APPEARS AS BELOW. I FIDDLE WITH VARIOUS TEXT EDITORS BEFORE PUTTING IT INTO MY HTML EDITOR AND IT STILL DOES NOT WORK. TO DEBUG THESE LETTERS AS ABOVE MIGHT TAKE TOO MUCH TIME AS I ALWAYS HAVE OTHER DEADLINES TO MEET. --ED

October 9, 2005

Dear Ed

Thank you for writing back. I have a question which I cannot answer myself. When I lie on bed and relax, I'm happy breathing into my Hara. As I do When sitting in Zazen, which I do once in a while for meditation, but on my own (not with others in the Zendo hall...I gave that up) I can then actually activate or go through my chakras, meaning concentrating on them. On
all seven. I feel a kind of vibration. Thats ok and it feels nice. I feel a kind of power going up the spine until the top of my head. So far so good.

But to me its more like a body-game. What for? Is it needed on the "path"? I have an almost constant little vibration above the eyes (outside) and with the eyes closed I can often
see the white little light, as it was also described and written by Michal in the other letter. The last week it happened, that I was able to see with closed eyes the wall in my bedroom, but only for half a second, but I can repeat it. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

I read you article about the inner light. If I don't see the inner little white light while I am relaxing with closed eyes, I can see other big white bubbles, sometimes it looks like circles, moving on all sides around and I can force it down to the chest but not further. What I'm seriously looking for is being enlighted (I know its sounds stupid). That is what I honestly want. But I am asking you which of the two ways I should more focus on, if I continue with my body-game (sorry the expression but my English vocabulary is limited) until I reach a certain capability (to do what?) or shall I leave this and simply continue with the "I" questions, which I personally very like because of my more intellectual mind.

I just finished reading the book from Robert, for the first time, and I have to tell you that I never read a book in my life which goes that straight into my heart, I had to cry at the end. Out of nowhere, it wasn't even emotional, I guess. It was as if he would have been with me, so closed, so deep. As a former bookshop owner I have read many books in my young life (age 39) but this one, very special. You know, some books talk straight into your heart others don't. I know I shouldn't read to much. I'm working on it.

I also like it to be alone, since a long time and I have not been watching TV since ages (we don't have one) and I do not read newspapers, because I am already beyond that because I don't care about the world since a long time, in a sense. Since I started reading Krishnamurti five years ago, my life has changed completely, which I very much like. By the way, I am married and have three kids and my wife is doing a 100% Job and I take care of the kids who are 2, 4 and 6 years old.

October 10, 2005

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There are a whole bunch of Tantric teachers for whom this kind of practice is their only practice along with chanting, such as Muktananda. It is a powerful method but limited, as is the

understanding of Tantric teachers who have only attained the 'consciousness is everything' stage. For Muktananda, there was a great emphasis on spiritual experiences, such as seeing the Blue Pearl, experiencing bliss, having saints come and talk to you, feeling love for everyone and the experience that the love flows from the self. However, all of these experiences are just happenings in consciousness and you are not that.

Just ask, "Who am I?" in the way Robert teaches as well as Nisargadatta.

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Write with questions when you have them.

Ed

October 11, 2005

I have not exhaustively read your website…so I hope my question is not to redundant….I have a teacher whom is simply my hatha yoga teacher…from my 2nd class I have had something happen to me almost every class out of the ordinary which I later discovered was kundalini symptons….I had no idea at first what was going on…anyways…. Also, I have had many meditative experiences in his class so I continued to going to class despite feeling very confused, disoriented and alone….he is rude to me and he makes an effort to upset me by disturbing me when I am in a good meditative state…..at first when I started having kundalini experience I was so freaked out that I asked him what was happening…he told me I was breathing improperly ….. recently, I stopped going to his class because the kundalini was causing me to have so much energy in my body that working and functioning normally was impaired…..I have only had one conversation face to face with this teacher and about 3 phone conversation…each time he acts like he doesn't know what I am talking about….. I know that he knows more than he is letting on….my question is how do you know if a teacher is guiding you or just playing ego games on the energetic level with you….I was willing to put up with anything but only if it is worthwhile…I could never tell if this guy was simply playing with his powers or if he truly values consciousness for the sake of consciousness….it drove me crazy for a while because my experiences were pure but my experience of him was not really pure…he seemed out of control on all ends of the spectrum…also the Rajaneesh …I noticed that you said he was enlightened ….how do you explain his out of control behavior ie. Drugs, abuse of devotees, and his perversions….

Cedar

October 11, 2005

Hi Cedar,

Your yogi sounds not very advanced. He may not have awakened his own Kundalini. Does he ever mention Kundalini experiences in his classes or does he only teach poses and talks about abstract things like love, God, health, etc.? If he has not awakened his own Kundalin, your doing so would likely embarrass him knowing you are going where he has not.

Yoga teachers and gurus are a dime a dozen. Dump him. Get with someone you can trust and can explain your experiences. Really, listen to me. Otherwise you can live for years trying to guess whether he is a jerk or he is infinitely wise. If he were advanced, he would be teaching far beyond Hatha yoga.

As you know, I have just added explanations of Kundalini experiences both in my Ed_online section, and also a new page, "My understanding."

Yes, Kundalini experiences can be very frightening, but also exciting. I had them for years with little guidance, except for a while with Zen Master Kapleau. He told me not to worry. I did worry though. In any event, I am still here.

The Kundalini is awakening, so to speak, in you. It will work its way through your appearance body until some day you will realize you have no body and you are not the body. In the meantime, you are scared. Don't worry. Relax for now. The experiences are just outside of your frames of referrence. When I had my experiences, there was precious little in print about the whole range of Kundalini experiences. I am sure there is more now.

My advice is just to relax and watch it happen. The relaxing is the frightening part, because you have to trust where Kundalini and consciousness are taking you, who does not exist.

Kundalini is really only a beginners or intermediate stage. Some stay at that stage all their lives and progress no more.

I never knew Rajneesh face to face. I only saw how he presented. His movements, expressions and teachings are all consistent with an enlightened person.

Do not be too concerned with his actions. There are many explanations and you will probably not accept any.

Part of being enlightened is being able to step out of all of your conceptualizations, such as moral, immoral, self-destructive, teaching, etc. Of course the danger then is that you start doing harm to others if you go too far. This does not mean the jerk is not enlightened. It only means he is becoming a jerk. This will were off.

Part of the way he acted may be teaching liberation by getting away from the norm of human interactions. Personally, I think this was part of his trip.

Part of his actions may be he didn't care anymore about life and whether he lived or died. Nisargadatta was this way as was Ramnana. By this I mean there may be a level of self-destructiveness and not wanting to be in the world of appearance anymore.

Add in any more parts you want.

You hear the negatives from those who judge him, but did thousands stay around him because he was a pervert?

Get out. Don't torture yourself. Dump the chump and find someone you can trust and will explain Kundalini experiences to you. You must already know the theory, but the experiences scare you. No need. Be happy.

Ed

October 11, 2005

Hi Ed, I have been totally fascinated by your website. I did spiritual practices on and off for 25 years - Transcendental meditation in the 70s and Siddha yoga in the 80s and early 90s.
About ten years ago I became disgusted with guru oriented spirituality and spiritual trips in general. I asked myself a lot of questions for a while and then just walked away from the whole thing. I totally stopped doing spiritual practices and just forgot about it. All I attained was disillusionment.

Sometimes I follow a link to a spiritual site, but it always seems either silly or nauseating. So your website has been a real shock. I can't believe that I am doing this but I've decided to ask you some spiritual questions:

1. At the end of your "Introduction to Meditiation" page you wrote, "You come to the table with it, or you do not." Are there certain types people who are more likely than others to awaken? For example, people who were on some path and who were great meditators, or who had lots of spiritual experiences, etc. People like UG Krishnamurti, Bernadette Roberts, and Suzanne Segal just awakened spontaneously.
Maybe at the other end of the spectrum, some people have no chance of awakening, even with good practice

and a good guru. What do you think?

2. When I was in Atlanta my wife and I fed some feral cats that lived near our place. Especially one that became "our cat" and learned to come inside to eat, although we could never get closer than 3 feet away. She brought her kittens to us when they were old enough and we started taming two of them. After 2-3 months we trapped them, got
them neutered and released them. A few days later we went away for 2 weeks. We never saw them again and we are sure they died. My wife was very upset beacuse if we hadn't made them dependent on us they would have survived. I told her that they benefited from the love and care we gave them for a few months. Otherwise they would have remained totally feral and uncared for. Do you think that's
correct? Or would they have been better off without us, living as feral cats without human love and care?

3. Writing about your first awakening you said, "Science, like the history book, is part of the dream, creating a structure for the images. Nor did the rest of the world, out-of-sight exist: Not
France, not Russian, not Cleveland." Are you from Cleveland? I grew up in Cleveland Heights. Just wondering.

Thanks for this remarkable website.

Jerry

October 11, 2005

> *Hi Jerry, nice to hear from you.*
>
> *Regarding the coming to the table. Yes, I believe there are some who no matter how hard they practice or what they do, they will not get it. Sometimes, as Robert said, because they are too smart. Their minds work well and they rely heavily on it. Obsessive compulsives I would think would have a tough times.*
>
> *Some others may get it and then reject it because they don't like it. They want to go back to where they came from and the local self reasserts itself.*
>
> *Others get it without trying.*
>
> *But there are time honored techniques that even if you don't get it, it is not a wasted life, such as constant meditation with no goal of enlightenment, listening to sacred music, hanging around spiritual communities, becoming a monk or nun, and mostly, learning how to love and take responsibility for your world. That is always heart-warming. One abbott of a Los Angeles Sri Lankan temple said "Buddhism is a way of life." True. It can be a beautiful life, especially if you are a monastic monk and the whole community takes care of you (Sarcastic aside).*
>
> *Concerning the cats.*
>
> *Do not be too sure they died. It is quite possible though. Usually cats are more resilient than that. It depends on how old they were when they were neutered and how soon thereafter you abandoned them. If their mother was still around, she was feral and could still teach them how to survive. If the mother is gone too, they may have re-located.*
>
> *I am trying to comprehend why you left them for two weeks without making arrangements. Neighbors could feed them. Pet sitters are all around; you can find their cards at vets' offices. If not that, you could have boarded them for two weeks.*
>
> *If you cared enough to take responsibility for their lives, you should not have abandoned them. Now you are trying to escape your guilt by thinking you gave them a good life for a few months. That does not wash. Would you say the same about a child you fostered?*
>
> *Your wife was wrong also if she thought you should not have tamed them and taken responsibility in the first place. That too is cruel. We are all our brothers' and sisters' keepers.*
>
> *However, if she meant you should not have taken two weeks away without providing for them, she is dead right and you are dead wrong. Then again, she could have made arrangements also.*
>
> *It sounds like you two went three fourths of the right way and then stopped. Why?*

Now you need to pay the price. Adopt some cats from a shelter. Adopt another feral colony, they are all around.. Join Alley Cats Allies.

Regarding Cleveland. Yes I am from there. West Tech High, Case-Western Reserve University, B.A., M.S. and BS. I could not wait to leave Cleveland.

You have spent 25 years traveling off and on the path. Get back on it now. Do not waste your life playing. Take whatever spiritual potential you have and make it work. Do not waver. Pick a direction and go. Be strong and be direct.

Ed's note.

I think readers may be confused ove the differing advice I give different people. Here is the explanation.

I have been practicing every conceivable meditation, chanting, visualization, psyhcotherapy, psychoanalyis, and hanging around gurus trips, from very different traditions for 27 years before I attained the two stages of understanding. I wasted a lot of time traveling exciting paths that were dead ends or distractions. My main practice was always "Who Am I?" even from the beginning. Secondarily was the Kundalini thing and thirdly chanting. However, both Kundalin and chanting are long and tortuitous paths with many distractions and it is easy to get lost.

When someone asks me a question, I listen to where I think he/she is coming from and respond in a way I think most helpful for that person at that time. Like I said, I hated the single technique, 38 regular approch.

There are several ways to get to enlightenment.

The opening the Third Eye, the awakening the Kundalini approach, is quite exciting and provides positive feedback making one feel there is progress. In a sense there is progress. The mind opens up and the personal self disapears. The inner glow of pure consciouness reveals itself. One can then swim or surf in pure consciousness. There is no body, no world, no effort, no mind.

This pure consciouness is not still and silent, but a high degreee of silence is necessary to become one with it. It is energetic and always moving and flowing. This is pure consciousness upon which a network of thoughts creates the world, body and finally the I-concept. The world and I take form out of the network of thought imposed on the ever flowing, no-object consciousness.

This network of thought is not a function of your brain, but a function of consciousness. You are not a body with a brain imposing a world on the Mind of God. The Mind of God is All and is you. The thought network creates an apparent reality of you separate from the world. In fact, you are the Mind of God.

The other approach is the "Who Am I?" question. It internalizes the apparent mind looking into emptiness for the source. The process splits the mind into the seeker and the ultimate sought, which is the source of consciousness. Soon there is nothing but pure inner space with a non-perceivable "looker." One is witnessing consciousness. At some point, as with the Third Eye opening, one realizes there is no I, and there is an explosion of sudden awakeing. The split mind is unified.

The Kundalini approach works because the mind becomes more and more refined and transparent and no I is found. At some point the explosion of realization occurs.

With the "Who Am I?", at some point the conceiver realizes there is nothning but emptiness, the Mind of God, the great, lighted space of empty mind. One concludes there no I, recognizes that I, is just a thought, a part of the network of thought. This conceiver is the split-off watcher; and the resolution of the "Who Am I?" question is a unified mind, and you, who are consciouness, floats freely, without boundaries in the unity mind or Mind of God.

This is the point I am trying to get people to.

The next step, transcending consciousness itself cannot be sought. Consciousness and the secondary web of thought cannot conceive of or acheive that which is before it, or, prior to consciousness. This

can only be achieved when the mind becomes totally silent, which for me, occurred in the transition from sleep to waking. Both the sleep world and waking world are added to me, the Absolute. All Advaitin teachers talk about the transition between waking and sleeping as where realization most often occurs.

The sleep and waking worlds, as well as surfing, free-flowing consciousness, the Mind of God, is not the Absolute you. You are before and greater than even the mind of God.

This is the best conceptualization I can give of the process. Any conceptualization will lead you astray in the sense that unless you have had the experience and lived it for a while, you can only understand from your level of spiritual growth and the ideas attached to the path you travel, whether Zen Buddhism, Advaita or Shavism, and your own deepest spiritual experiences. You can never understand a teacher's teaching until you have attained enlightenment youself. Then everything he or she ever told you becomes clear, transluctent, and the biggist Eureka anyone can attain. This eureka shatters the mind unlike the little eureka's of mathemeticians or phsyicists.

However, attaining enlightenment means nothing. You have always been the Absolute; you, as a separate self, or even as unified consciouness, just do not know it. Therefore, if you can get rid of the seeking bug, your are already cured of the disease of seeking, which is both a curse and a blessing, and you can be yourself in the apparent world, which is where even the greastest Avatar returns to.

Please understand this. It is far better to be loving and acting compassionately than attaining any kind of enlightenment. Acting compassionately is not just self-involvement as is self-seeking, but other-involvement, which also releases you from illusion as you walk in the totality of consciouness and will some day also attain--maybe.

Ataining enlightenment eventually results in the explosion of the loving, compassionate nature of consciousess in you, the Boddhisatva nature of pure consciousness. This is where you will go in the end. Why not start there?

I want to save you time. I don't want you to run out of time before either you attain enlightenment, or give it up to become a saint.

I hope this explanation helps some.

October 12, 2005

Dear Ed,

I discovered Robert's book a few months ago and then, not long after, your website. Robert's book has meant so much to me and it was with great joy that I found your website. Thank you! I have loved exploring every part of it -- the memories of Robert, your own journey, your concern about and love of animals (which I share, evidenced by my fur covered furniture!). I have found information in different parts of your website, including the "Stump the Guru" questions and answers, that have been very helpful, which leads me to a question . . . well, at least a sharing.

After years of self-inquiry (which for me has truly been the right path) about a year ago there was a spontaneous opening in which the words "the inside is the outside and the outside is the inside" came through and simultaneously a direct experience of the absence of "me". The sensation was that the internal space that had previously been occupied with "me" was somehow no longer there; instead there was just "Isness". The witness was still there observing with great wonder and awe (that sometimes would tip into a feel of hilarity) that somehow everything was all of a sudden different when nothing had changed!

Another part of the shift was that in meditation I kept feeling as if I was about to fall asleep even though I wasn't sleepy and sleepiness has never been an issue for me in meditation. It was like a brief period of "drifting off". (I did not know at the time about the importance of the period just before sleep and just after waking up.) This was accompanied by a strong energetic sensation in the body, mostly in the mid back, although sometimes it would spread. As this sensation became more and more part of my experience in meditation, I found that, to some extent, I could make it last a little longer by what I called "falling into it". It still didn't last very long but the more I could "fall into it" the more the energy would spread.

At some point (I can't remember the chronology) the sensation in meditation changed to something that, to myself, I described as the beginning of a sunrise – it was like the sun rising for a brief time only to stop rising. This lasted for months. Then, inexplicably, one day as I sat in meditation for an extended time, the body became

more still than it seemed possible – there is no way I could will it to be that still – and there was the usual beginning of the feeling of sunrise but then the sun kept rising! The experience was one of utter stillness and peace. When I opened Robert's book and read his words

Daylight breaks
The mind is stilled
Silent, at peace
Movement nil.

I was stunned. That is exactly it!

What is happening now is an ever deepening fall into silence in meditation and an ever deepening willingness to turn attention to silence when in the world. There has recently been the wonderful discovery that in the world instead of trying to counter any thought deemed "not good" by a thought deemed "good," it is possible to turn attention to Silence, to the Mystery, to get off the back-and-forth of duality – that any concept is equally flawed – to be free of duality means not following any thought at all. The experience when this happens is like falling completely in love with It All, including my own humanness -- what I have labeled flaws, oddities, inconsistencies included!

There is a feeling of wanting to reach out and connect with you even though, now that all of these words have been expressed, I don't seem to have a specific question. You probably wouldn't believe me if I said I was a person (usually!) of few words. I appreciate the opportunity to be in communication with you.

In gratitude,
M.

October 13, 2005

> *Dear Patricia,*
>
> *Things are unfolding for you in a perfect way. When the sleepiness comes, don't try to fall into it, you will fall into it all by itself which will allow you to come out on the "other side" as often as you want and often when you are not expecting it. Then not only will there be the knowledge you are not, along with the understanding there is no inside-outside or duality of any sort, you will directly experience no-boundary consciousness, and become the Mind of God.*
>
> *You need no instruction from me or anyone else. You are doing fine. Go straight ahead.*
>
> *Robert would have been very happy to know you.*
>
> *Are you a student, faculty or staff?*
>
> *Ed*

October 13, 2005

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your reply. I am on the faculty at XXXXXXXX University. At times my job has felt totally incongruous with following my "spiritual path". Over the last few years I have felt like the pilot of a small plane watching as the plane loses altitude with the falling off of one part after another. Now, (flying just a few feet above ground!) I have simply let most of the worry go and I am doing what I want to do – be a good teacher – and not doing what, in truth, I simply can't do anymore, conduct research, write scholarly papers, etc. Until my next review, all is well (smile!). I have a sabbatical coming up in 2007 and want to spend the year at Arunachula. I need to come up with some sort of justification for being there but I am sure some idea will come. After that, I will see what life presents – I cannot imagine that I will be in academia much longer.

I am actually going to Arunachula in Feb. for 3 weeks (my first visit to India). I do not teach then and will use some of the time (although as little as possible) to investigate sabbatical possibilities. The draw to Arunachula is very strong – the iron filing to magnet image is pretty accurate. A few years back, after being introduced to Ramana, I began to pursue self-inquiry. It was the right fit from the start. At some point, I read something that Ramana had said that made it apparent to me that a more pointed effort would be useful so I began to pursue self-inquiry with a new level of intensity. I was sitting in my bedroom one day during this time when, all of a

sudden, I saw the emptiness that is what Is. Great terror arose and there was a spontaneous inward calling out to Him for help. He appeared and when I looked into his eyes the terror was instantly replaced by the most indescribable peace imaginable. I was sitting on the edge of my bed and when this occurred there was a feeling as if I was wearing a silk garment next to my skin that slid off of the body and pooled around me. It is hard to know what more to say because words fall so short but I share this event so close to this heart because I know you understand.

Patricia

October 13, 2005

> *Perfect!*
>
> *I normally counsel people not to go to India because the sight of poverty and death is so striking, and India is only pro forma spitual like Thailand is Buddhist in form only.*
>
> *But with you it is different. I am happy that the process is unfolding so natually and gently for you. Perhaps some day you will be a great teacher and save many people from suffering.*
>
> *Say hello to Geneshan when you get there. He is Ramana's nephew and publisher of the Mountain Path.*
>
> *Ed*

October 13, 2005

You know, this heart does burst with compassion for all beings, including this being, who are trapped in an illusory world in which love exists only because there is an imagined condition of not love. My only wish is to break completely free of the illusion, to become the Mind of God. As Ramana said, "Let whatever is to be, come to be."

I am in a Department of Human Development which is my training. I must admit, I say this feeling little connection to it at all. My only connection is to my students but that connection has virtually nothing to do with the content of what I teach and everything to do with the opportunity to be in contact with these lovely young beings who, with a little encouragement, are very eager to engage with an adult who is interested in who they are, what they think, what they care about. These conversations quite frequently touch upon the very things you and I have talked about – a kernel is sometimes planted.

I would say that the process has unfolded naturally for me. There is an ever stronger feeling of simply being carried. I am not so sure about the process always being gentle, however. I have felt scoured, scraped, emptied, burning hot, barely able to function . . . but the tastes have been too big to turn from.

I hope I have the chance to meet Geneshan. If I do, I will say hi.

Patricia

October 19, 2005

Dear Ed,

There is a question that has been in the background for quite awhile that I would like to put out to you. It has been so persistent that it would be a relief to at least try to find the words to pose it.

One interpretation of the words, "the world does not exist," is that when one sees that the mind can only perceive conditionally – one thing must always be in relation to another – then it can be said that "the world does not exist as we think it exists." Consciousness is only One.

Similarly, the words "there is no birth and there is no death" can be understood to mean that when we are born consciousness animates these forms until these forms no longer contain this animation (death of the form). There is no birth and there is no death because that which has animated the form (consciousness) is unchanged by appearance in any particular form. There is only consciousness, only One.

But if one contemplates how form can arise from emptiness, how visible can arise from invisible, how movement can arise from stillness, the interpretation changes. What appears to be form/visible/movement (all in the play of consciousness) truly does not exist – is only illusion – nothing ever entered anything to create animation. What appears to be form is truly only emptiness – emptiness is all that Is. Words become totally futile – silence is the only possible expression, expressing itself.
Thanks,

Patricia

> *October 20, 2005*
>
> *Patricia,*
>
> *You need to go beyond all three.*
>
> *There is a fourth interpretation and I am sure a fifth, sixth, etc.*
>
> *# 4. Neither form nor emptiness exist. Both are phenomena. Emptiness, as the absense of form, is still dependent on form as part of a duality.*
>
> *Emptiness can also be described as phenomena directly. I perceive emptiness and stand in front of it in awe.*
>
> *Anything in existence is added onto me, I am before all existence, any phenomena, any quality or lack of quality.*
>
> *That which is before existence can never be known, conceived or have any qualities whatsoever, neither emptiness not lack of emptiness, neither form nor lack of form (common desription of emptiness.)*
>
> *Ed*

October 20, 2005

Dear Ed,
Can that which is before existence be "known" in deep silence?
Patricia,

> *October 20, 2005*
>
> *No, it cannot be known. It is before knowledge. It can never be the object of knowledge or knowing. Knowing is superficial.*
>
> *You can BE the absolute and from the position of the absolute see that everything, phenomena, emptiness, knowledge is added onto you, has nothing to do with you, and cannot touch you.*
>
> *With that experience, you can walk away with the knowledge that you are not that, 'that' meaning everything that at any moment you thought yourself to be.*
>
> *No matter how you try to understand this riddle, you cannot. You need to go beyond it and become the absolute. Then everything is "explained."*
>
> *Ed*

October 28, 2005

Dear Ed,

I was delighted to stumble upon your website. I didn't know such a thing existed.... I'm very grateful that you've taken the time and put in the effort to produce it. My name is Jason. I am 37 years old. I've been bedridden off and on for 11 years due to chronic health problems. (not that any of this matters... just "story-line") (smile).

I've been a "seeker" (boy, I've come to hate that term) for ten years or so.... after having experienced a three day "awakening" (for lack of a better term) and realization of Who I Am (more correctly, who I am NOT). It "SEEMED" to go away, and I've been "searching" ever since. It's been quite frustrating to say the least. I KNOW (because I experienced it) that I can't "lose" the reality of who and what I have always been.... but it seems to have been obscured again after those three days.

Anyway, this isn't about my life story. (smile) I've read just about everything out there in the "Advaita" world. (and it's a world that seems to get more crowded every day.... there are so many "teachers" now... it's all a confusing morass of concepts.... who to believe, what to practice, WHO is doing the practice (laugh), etc.) The one constant I have had in the past six years or so has been Robert. My only "connection" with him has been through the two "Silence Of The Heart" books. There are other teachers I love (such as Ramana and Nisargadatta), and I read their words (along with a lot of "contemporary" teachers). But I keep coming back to Robert over and over. I have a deep "respect" for being such as Ramana and Nisargadatta. But with Robert it is different. I feel a HEART connection to him. Like I said, I respect the other teachers, but I feel like I "love" Robert (I don't know how else to phrase it). I've often heard it said that everyone has a teacher that is THEIR teacher and whom they resonate with. I feel, that for me, that teacher is Robert. It's a source of deep sadness to me that I was never able to meet him.

I contacted Pamela Wilson some years ago (without knowing that she had known Robert). She has been very kind to me over the years and last year I was able to meet her in Calgary (I live in Canada). Pamela always said that she was going to send me a picture of Robert.... but due to her busy schedule, she never got around to it. I was wondering if you had a scanned picture that you could send me of him? I've only seen a few pictures of him (I know he didn't want his picture in his books and things). Actually, until I saw your site, I had only ever seen ONE photo of him. (It was the one that is on the wall behind your cat Bodhi). I had that as the wallpaper on my computer for a couple of years, until my computer died and I was never able to find the photo on the net again. Pamela always said she was going to send me a photo of him smiling..... which he apparently didn't do a lot of..... she said that some of the photos out there made him look "mean and scary" (not her words.... but something to that effect) and that he really wasn't at all. (smile) So.... if you have any photos (especially the one behind Bodhi) that you could email me, I would greatly appreciate it. If not, I understand totally.

This letter to you is not about trying to "get" something. But it IS about expressing to you (someone who understands) how much Robert means to me and how happy I am to have found your website. I've only begun reading your site... but believe me, I will read it all. Thank you Ed for all the work you've done on behalf of bringing Robert's work to the world. It has changed my life and I never even met him. All I have is a REALLY worn out copy of Silence of The Heart with which to prove my devotion. If you have the time and inclination to write back, I'd love to hear from you. If not, thank you again and I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Jason

October 29, 05

Dear Ed,

Sorry to write again so quickly. I hope I'm not bothering you. I've been reading your site and all I can say is WOW. I honestly thought I had read everything under the sun in the Advaita world and had heard it expressed in every conceivable way. Obviously, that is not the case. In reading "The First Awakening" section of your site, I found myself being blown away. Your "shower experience" is very close to what I experienced ten years ago, although mine was not quite as profound or all pervasive... and certainly (judging by the fact that I once again feel like an "I") not as long lasting. But it was the same in many, many ways. You do an absolutely amazing job of describing these things. Anyone who has read or written about this subject will attest to the fact that it is almost impossible to put these things into words. And of course, the words are not the thing, but I really appreciate your way of phrasing your experiences and insights.

I also, for the past couple of years especially, have found that I can't get or stay interested in anything. I used to be a singer/songwriter (and I guess I still am in a way) and used to love to read novels and watch movies. But in the last couple of years nothing seems to hold any "charge" or "interest" for me. I've tried to explain this to people close to me and the best I've been able to do is say that "nothing really has any IMPACT.... things just seem to slide by in my life without leaving much of a trace in memory or having much meaning". At first I thought that people had stopped producing interesting movies, books and TV shows.(laugh) Then I realized that that wasn't the case at all.... it was ME that had changed. I don't mean to claim that this is the same as what you experienced prior to your awakening experience, but there sure seems to be similarities. The most profound thing I've read on your site (and I'm still in the process of reading) is this statement..... "There is only One, and that One is not real". That is incredible!!!!!!!! I've never heard it expressed like that before. So much of Advaita seems to imply that yes, "you" and the "world" and the "ego" and "thoughts" are not real..... BUT that

there is a "something" (a God, or Presence or Oneness) that IS REAL and is "watching" the unrealness of the rest of it. So a "person" keeps looking for the Real in the midst of all the illusion. When you phrase it the way you do above, it pulls the rug out from underneath the whole thing. If even the great and venerable "One" is NOT real, it's pretty much "game over". (smile) Like I said, I hope I'm not bothering you. There just aren't a lot of people to talk to about things like this. I appreciate your "listening".

As I said previously, if you feel like writing back, that would be great. If not, I understand. By the same token, if you would rather me NOT write to you.... let me know.... no hard feelings.

Jason

October 30, 2005

Hi Jason,

Glad to meet you and read your beautiful letters.

I used to go with Robert when he picked up his mail at the Post Office in Canoga Park. He'd get letters from seekers all over the world.

Robert would sort through the mail looking for the personal letters from people like yourself. He did not just open the letter and read.

He was very texture-oriented. He'd run his fingers along the top of the envelop as if getting a feel for the writer'ss vibrationsions. Then he'd carefully peel back the envelop to exposue the letter. Then he'd smell the letter. After that, I never knew what happened to the letter or how Robert would respond, except that he'd mention one or another at Satsang. Robert would usually dictate his answers to Mary Skene or another close disciple to respond.

Your letter had a curious "feel."

On one hand you seemed to express a sense of loss for your three-day enlightenment experience and at the same time, you did not want anything from me except a picture of Robert and to tell me, and perhaps through me, tell him by proxy, how much his teachings meant.

This shows a profound state of development.

The experience washed through and over you, but you got it. You attained the knowledge of what you are not. You know that anything that you experience, perceive, conceive, is not real and is not you. That knowledge is enlightenment; it does not require a constant dialogue of the sort, "I experience that I am not."

It does not matter whether the experience lasted a day, month, a year or was permanent. It happened, you got it, and things are and will continue to unfold for you in a way you'll never understand and understanding is not necessary or desirable.

One of the greatest Zen Masters of all time was called Joshu. Joshu lived to be over 100. One day in a talk when he was in his severties, when talking about enlightenment, he said that he had had 17 major Satori (enlightenment experiences) and thousands of minor ones.

It is so with most seekers; there are enlightenment experiences and enlightenment experiences. They go on. They progress; They seem to regress when actually they just change directions. Don't worry. You got it! You know you got it.

Robert spent a long time traveling up and down India to clear up doubts and deepen his understanding.

Nisargadatta also, in his final lectures, talks about a progressive forgetting about himself that was still going on almost 50 years after his awakening.

So never worry in this respect. You got it. I hope you understand this. Whatever is happening now is a natural unwinding or that which was wound. Nothing may seem to happen for a long time, then all of a sudden lots of things start happening.

I talk about my two-stage enlightenment because I had two experiences closely related in time with the same general conceptual frame, that is, Advaita/Buddhism. This is an arbitrary division. It could be a nine-stage or a no-stage process. It is just words, chattering, concepts.

The chattering within consciousness appears to create the world, the body, the self. Parts of the chattering die down for a while and "we" say we experienced there was no self. Another part dies

down and we say the world is less exciting or boring. Even the concept of enlightenment is just a chattering within consciousness. All that there is, is this "talking" in the field of consciounsess, which gives the apearance of a reality to no one at all. Its all very mysterious how it works.

However, more practically, do note that your chattering is dying down in many different areas in the same way Patricia talks about her experiences, and with it the ending of participation in large areas of the waking dream.

Take good care of yourself and of every person and creature who seeks your presence.

Ed

(Ed's Note: After you have your first Satori, one deep enough to know down the tiniest part of your being, that You Are Not, you might say that the lamp of enlightenment is on. Even if you go no further, you have escaped the terror of death. What you are cannot die. The body and mind die, but you are not that. Those things are added onto you. They do not touch you.

Then, after a few years (or a lifetime of deeping that understanding), you can rest. There is no more need to practice. You can just stop and the process will carry you along.

At this point you can stop, sit on a bench, watch the birds, play with your grandchildren and have no more concerns or obligations--if you want.

However, you, as an apparent entity, or what Balsekar calls the "mind-body apparatus" (I love that phrase because it says so much so awkwardly), can, so to speak, at that time, do God's work and help the world come to enlightenment, or at least try to make the world a better place. The Buddhists call this the Boddhisatva attitude: Knowledge of noumena and phenomena is endless, I vow to fathom it all; sentience beings are numberless, I vow to save them all, and two other vows I can't remember now. I reduce the latter to "I am my brother's keeper."

Those who do not turn to help others are called Arhats, perfectly enlightened, but finished with the world. These are the cold fish Robert speaks about. Their presence helps the world by their sheer existence in mysterious ways, and also provide an example that escape from birth and death is possible.

There is an eternal, post-enlightenment, resting place that you can dwell in even while in the most strenuous Boddhisatva activities. One is an Arhat, but also a Boddhisatva: enlightened and removed, yet compassionate and active.) This is where I invite seekers to go with me.

Robert was one who could sit on a bench all day. However, Thich Tien-An had that same sort of peacefullness, but could also prepare sermons, work in the temple garden all day, or spend the entire day painting a house or preparing the hottest soup one can imagine for the general temple lunch on Saturdays.

But know, no matter what your apparent pain and suffering, you are beyond all that. It is a trivial game you, as an apparent mortal, have been forced to play, which you can refuse to play, either by turning within and seeking your true self, or by having tasted enlightenment, knowing it is all a mirage, thereby transcending it.

November 3, 2005

Hi Ed,
This is Cedar again…I emailed you last week…. I was hoping to avoid a lengthy email but it seems unavoidable…I come from a family background (3 generations) of incest, violence, neglect, and povery…..so I have had to work hard to not be a totally messed up and a total dysfunctional person(this imaginary me could have lived in a constant nightmare)…when I say messed up I mean living a life that is unnecessarily difficult like being with a man who beats or torments me…and having very distorted views on this relative reality….(when I was 30 years old) I starting having spiritual experiences through my therapist (whom I didn't know was a transpersonal psychologist)….my cells were melting….I felt myself go into altered states… etc… this lasted for a year of me having all of these experiences that I had no concept for at all… …I had never had any interest in spiritual matters or no prior exposure to anything remotely mystical…anyway in a round about way it led me to a book about Ramana Marashi in a bookstore (I happenstance pick us book up while in a bookstore and instantly knew that he was responsible for all these experiences I had….it turns out that my transpersonal psychologist had

visited Ramana's ashram several times) and another teacher named John DeRuiter in Canada…(have you heard of him???- …I have absolute faith in Ramana but I don't have absolute faith in John…however I understand John's teachings)…I loved Ramana but I couldn't really make any mind sense of his teachings at the time….I have picture of him and I have every book I could find at the bookstore on him, but I couldn't even begin to do that self-inquiry (it was inscrutable)……so I tried to do what John DeRuiter said to do from his tapes and books and I became very depressed to the point that I was suicidal…at this point, I decided that I was not balanced enough to do deep spiritual practices(when I say deep spiritual practices I mean dismantling the ego and the mind) on my own…. …there are some things that I continued to do on my own such habitually surrendering but I don't aggressively try to dismantle my ego and mind on my own……the thrust of this email is …after reading and/or listening to Ramana, John DeRuiter, and Nisargadatta I felt that I if I do anything at all that wasn't actively dismantling the mind/ego or I was cheating and being disobedient…..so for the longest time I just didn't do anything at all like hatha yoga, meditate or any "lesser practice"…..however, I am a person that is fairly unbalanced from the start and lesser practices make me more balanced…so eventually I decided that it was better to be an unenlightened and calm, peaceful, more open, more compassionate than to be an unenlightened stressed, tensed, angry, withdrawn, short-tempered person(which is how I am if I am not doing one of these "lesser practices")….. I feel like their teaching is the advanced Calculus class and I am still in the Algebra class ……anyways I do read Nisargadatta, Ramana, and (recently I got Robert's book) daily…I love reading it but it doesn't necessarily help me with my tension and stress and unbalanced emotions like the other "lesser practices" do….when I do Hatha yoga I go into meditative states where I feel like a beam of light and I feel peaceful and healed…it is so nice to have a relief from the chaos, turmoil, and anguish my life has entailed… …Ramana advised against hatha yoga so I didn't do it for years but when I started doing it … …it completely transformed my life from a mess to balance….so anyways I wrote this long irrevelant email because I want to know more about the meditation you call illumination…my yoga teacher does a type of illumination meditation with us in class and I can really feel my body light up…it is so lovely…..if you can tell me more about it and/or where to find out about it please do….I have read your website exhaustively….and I love it …thanks for your time, effort and patience……CEDAR

November 4, 2005

> *Hi Cedar,*
>
> *Thanks for the background. It helps me understand you better.*
>
> *By all means continue to pratice as you are with Hatha Yoga, therapy, etc. You are doing well to be reading Nisargadatta, Robert, etc.*
>
> *Trust your instincts here.*
>
> *Opening the Third Eye is described in several places on this site, mostly in the online Satsang section, but also in Practices. Some day I am going to have to make two guided meditation tapes on the Infinite Light of Consciousness, or Opening the Third Eye, and also on the microanalytic analysis of the phenomenal package we falsely believe to be ourselves.*
>
> *A quick review: Turn your vision inward. It feels like crossing your eyes and looking within the head region. Look for any light. Concentrate on the light as much as you can.*
>
> *Do not do it while laying down and going to sleep. I did that while laying down for a couple of days, and I could not sleep for a week. Preferrably do it in a good sitting posture. If you do it lying down, it becomes a habit and you remain awake and alert when you want to be sleeping.*
>
> *As the light becomes steady, it will expand naturally. Gently push it downward through the neck, torso, gut, legs, etc., into the ground. The Kundalini experiences will get stronger at that time. You can go with them, or merely witness the process, and continue stretching the light downward into the ground and upwards above and around the head. The light will also expand outwards.*
>
> *At some point the light will encompass everything. Then you will know that you illuminate all phenomena. Your inner light, the light of Consciousness, creates the world of physical light and form. When the light of consciousness becomes the primary focus of your attention, while the world and your body/mind are secondary, then you are on the verge of a great enlightenment experience; but still, it is not enlightenment. Even the light of consciousness is not you. You are before and greater than that.*
>
> *Keep your eyes a little bit open when you meditate, otherwise you will begin to dream and sleep. You want to get under the dreaming deadness and sleep, and restrict sleeping until you lie down.*

Keep meditation and sleeping separate. At a point they will seem to be identical, but sleep happening in meditation is you getting before and beneath the mind. They are not the same but will feel the same unless you have a specific posture for meditation, such as a yoga posture or sitting upright with back straight.

This is more than enough to know at this point.

Good luck.

Ed

PS: If you want to find out someone who articulates this self-discovery of yours, read any of Ken Wilber's early books, such as the Atman Project or No-Boundaries. I talk a bit about this veiwpoint in my section called "Psychoanalysis." However, Ken's understanding is true only if you accept you are human. Ken's knowledge is from human point of view. However, the human point of view is pure fantasy. I am asking finally, as Nisargadatta asks, look at the world--and you--from the viewpoint of the Absolute. Then transpersonal psychology is seen as just another set of concepts, or chattering, within the illusion.

November 4, 2005

"If you do not love animals, you will never go anywhere in spirituality. If you are getting anywhere, you will not eat them. It just works this way. It is a sign of refining consciousness."
You do know, that Nisargadatta used to eat meat, right?
Biont

So? Exceptions do not disprove general rules. Of course, if there are enough exceptions, one might have to revise the theory.

One might also note that Nisargadatta, at least the later one, was not notable for his compassion, as was, for example, Ramana or Robert.

Nisargadatta is wonderful for his razor like logic and powerful style, but he never made the turn into Boddhisatvahood. He remained an Arhat.

In my case, I ate meat sparingly, and with great guilt before my experiences. About a year later I stopped eating meat altogther. With that decision I felt I progressed five times faster. I felt light and existence felt effortless.

Ed

NOTICE - December 18, 2005

You noticed there has been no activity on this site as of late. The reason is the the Los Angeles animal welfare community has managed, with great difficulty and with a lot of civil unrest, gotten rid of the wicked witch general manager of Los Angeles Animal Services. The guy wasn't bad, he just did not have any animal experience and the incompetent staff, protected by civil service, got him down. The mayor had animal activists following his events all over the city. In any event, a new guy from NYC is coming in, Ed Boks. He has a good reputation and some success, so we are guardedly optimistic.

In the meantime, I have gotten a lot of letters, some to whom I have been able to respond and others not. I'd rather wait for a break in the crap happening here to do it right and give the writer my full attention.

Some of the letters are fantastic and I can hardly wait to share them.

January 2, 2006

New For January 2006

I have found two sites dedicated to the propagation of the teachings of Ranjit Maharaj and his teacher, who was also Nisargadatta's teacher. These are fantsatic sites. The sadguru.us site has a collection of the most beautiful Bhajans as chanted by his students in an informal setting. The other site is sadguru.com in India. Both have long translations of Satsangs of Ranjit, as well as sell books by Nisargadatta and Ranjit. I cannot recommned any sites of greater value. When I read Ranjit's words, I just swooned in devotion to the long linneages of teachers who gave us this knowledge. Knoweldge and devotion-awe merged. Some of the Bhajans are as moving as the Muktananda CDs that are so hard to find. Besides, these are free to download and were sung in the presence of the Guru.

Robert only started teaching when he could no longer work because of Parkinson's Disease. I had always thought it would be this way with me also. At some point, I would not be able to work and would be forced to make my life's passion, namely grasping the ultimate knowledge, the teachings of Advaita and Zen, my source of worldly support. The world would kick me out, so to speak. In fact, the process of constructing this site has kindled in me the desire to once again leave the world totally behind and absorb myself in teaching as I did as a Buddhist monk in the 1970s and later as a teacher at various University of California extensions and at the College of Buddhist Studies.

My line of work within the Grand Illusion is editing psychiatric evaluations, reviewing medical records to better understand a medical case, as well as rebutting reports written by defense psychiatrists. It can be a lot of fun, but requires a LOT of thinking and time wasted in words. Recent "reforms" in workers' comp are changing the face of forensic psychology in California, effectively destroying the safety net that Workers Compensation has provided injured workers since 1913. Basically, the insurance companies are not paying claims, meaning doctors do not make money, meaning they don't need my services, meaning I need to do something else.

One of the reasons I have not taught before now is that making a living doing what I do is fantastically easy. Working 15 hours a week provides all the money I need.

Secondly, I just didn't feel like doing it. I have started Satsangs in the past, but it is extremely difficult to find students that want to hear true Advaita, let alone understand it. Then too, those who seek ultimate knowledge tend not to have a devotional bone in their bodies. Very few like chanting. Satsang without chanting is like a classroom. There is no spiritual energy, no love. I hate it.

Many years ago, as I write elsewhere on this site, I was named the First American International Teacher of Chogya Zen. Quite an honor. I spent several weeks visiting masters and temples. But when I returned to the US, I found the actual, day-to-day process of "building a practice" at a large Los Angeles Korean Buddhist temple was all too much marketing within a cultural setting. I just could not do it. The cultural Zen elements buried the clear teachings and teaching became pandering. Therefore, teaching did not happen then.

Robert is among the greatest I have ever known, and he never had more than 35-40 people coming to Satsang at a time. He never made more than $1,100--$1,200 a month from Satsang. Running a Satsang is exhausting. Meeting two or three times a week, preparing talks, as did he, and going to lunch and seeing all his students when they needed help, being on the phone with students all over the world, is exhausting. Robert didn't really like doing it. He shrank from it. I feel the same way. I don't like being in the spotlight of attention. I am really quite shy. Also, the pay is bad.

Therefore, I am going to change the face of this site, keeping a lot of the personal elements that led me to build it, but to place more emphasis on teaching meditation, chanting and other methods, as well as finding the highest quality texts, music and meditation aids so that I can become yet another

spiritual shopkeeper: another Americanized Deepok Chopra. Maybe I will see aromatic holy sand from the sacred beaches of Santa Monica.

People tend to want objects more than knowledge, and knowledge more than realization. Therefore, all of my pandering will be to objects-people, and I can then spend my time teaching those with a strong desire to know the Absolute and who have the blessing of spirtual advancement to take the teachings.

Whether to take the next step of starting a local Satsang, that is a different matter. I don't know.

Keep those cards and letters poring in.

Late December to January 6--letters from Frank

Dear Ed,

Thank you for a wonderful site. Thank you for taking the time to respond. I sent that off last night and have only just taken the time to fully explore your site, and felt completely overwhelmed with tears. I was especially moved by the stories on your site and especially your compassionate and helpful responses.

This response is a personal story, but a bit long so if you do not respond or read this I do not mind.

I had only vaguely heard of Robert Adams before I came across your site. The only other teacher I have read to talk a bout the total non-existence of everything is Stephen Jourdain in his book Radical Awakening.

I find I am at a peculiar place in this life

My early background was in science before I did medicine. I took up psychiatry but took an instant distaste to it though I still persevered in it for four years. Finally I found psychotherapy more to my liking. However the mind/body dilemma was the centre of my intellectual focus. Finally I found someone an ex MIT professor of neurobiology by the name of Humberto Maturana whose explanation I found acceptable. It is not a common understanding it goes by the name of Autopoiesis Theory or the Biology of Cognition. Love is one of the central concepts. For some years I followed him around the world going to his lectures and tutorials. One of the key sayings or aphorisms is "The World, Language, and the Observer arise simultaneously and together." After years of gruelling intellectual effort I got it, intellectually that is, enough to explain it and give talks on it.

Then one day I was in a bookshop casually flicking through book picked up at random called "I Am That" by Nisargadatta Maharaj. I found almost the exact same statement. I was aghast when I found out that he came from a peasant background with no formal schooling. Most of that he wrote in the book was so clear even though I couldn't understand much of it.

That was the beginning of my search, entailing as it did trips to India reading avidly about everything spiritual and Advaita and following Andrew Cohen around the place for a few years. In the end I found this dissatisfying because he seemed to be so preoccupied with himself.

I was at a loose end after that until the beginning of 2002 when I came across a teacher on the net who ran an internet chat group. They held gatherings once a year to meet together. He was so like me in but he knew more than I did, and spoke of love in a way I had never heard before. Three months later my dear son, whom I loved more than anyone else died tragically in London. I felt as if someone had picked me up bodily and thrown me into the void. I disappeared completely for a while and was looked after totally at the gathering by a group of people (hitherto strangers) who showed me such love and compassion that I had never before known. I found that Love and Grief are two sides of the same coin and learned the enormous gulf that yawns between intellectual understanding and the living of life itself.

After a trip to Aranachula last year the group broke up, riven with internal conflicts, although I am still occasionally in touch with the teacher. I found that meditation happened to me, I did not have to do it.

I can sometimes see for miles with my patients as if looking our over the whole of humanities pain feeling everything so deeply yet loving it so much but not being in it, removed from it.

Another thing has happened beyond me to fathom. I have had a female friend for years. We have always gotten on so well no problems at all. She is very quiet and lives a quiet life just an ordinary sort of person.

Over the last few months when I look at her and she looks back I feel myself disappearing, and I have to look away. She just smiles and keeps on looking at me. She says that she has noticed this too and thought we should just let it happen and not do anything about it.

I also found she has always had an interest in spirituality.

She says she has always so much love in her life.

I have no formal practices except for daily walks in the park.

I'll get Roberts book.

Many thanks Ed.
Frank

> *Thank you Frank for taking the time to write.*
>
> *It is clear that not only are you a great Bhakta, but also have strong Jnana, a very good yet difficult balance.*
>
> *Hopefully you will be rewarded with a great enlightenment.*
>
> *You practice appears to have taken on a life of its own. If you still need a teacher, he or she will come.*
>
> *Regarding Language, the World and Observer, it is not as simple as simultaneous arising. Please read Nisargadatta's Prior to Consciousness; it is much deeper than I Am That.*
>
> *Also, you will want to get hold of "Amrut Laya" by Nisargadatta's Dharma brother, Ranjit Maharaj. Ranjit is more traditional and not as incisive as Maharaj, but delves deeper into the theory.*
>
> *Regarding the melting, it is a good bi-product of Bhakti and may lead to a more general merger with the entirety of your phenomenal universe; but despite its power, do not pay much attention, as it is still an external phenomenon and a distraction.*
>
> *We both are alike in the sense of being psychologists, but I had to give it up because it only deals with the personal for most people, and only 1 out of 20 or so want to go deeper. It is hard to remain on the surface of language and image with non-deeply-spiritual people.*
>
> *You may want better to associate with more spiritual people and provide psychotherapy with them and help them go deeper than the personal--if you are not doing so already.*
>
> *Please continue writing.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear Ed,
This melting thing is so astonishing. This distraction is so apparent especially when my friend is such an attractive woman as well. So easy to get distracted. I never knew she knew about this but she does. She just smiles. But Ed, my family think I am going off my tree! And they are jealous. I see love everywhere. Had this peculiar experience when I went to a restaurant with some friends and fell hopelessly in love with everyone there. Could see everything they were up to and just loved them. Man this is not just mental. I was turned on! Nuthin to be done I spose? I never ever thought that all the sage's poems and raptures were ever anything but allegorical and metaphorical. Boy did I miss the boat there! Thank God there is someone else there who knows about this stuff. Otherwise I would be totally lost Probably am already anyway. Love to you
Dear man.
Frank

> *This unity energy has grasped you strongly. You have no choice but to go with it and see where it takes you, distraction or not. The ecstasy of human love only last a few month to a couple of years. You will have changed and when you restart your practice you will be more mature and focused.*
>
> *I am no one to give advice in this area as I was very frequently distracted in this way. It is hard to differentiate between sexual love and divine. In fact, both are illusion, but a fragrant one.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear Ed,
All along I had thought that the world of concepts an abstractions in which we think and live, was maya, leela.
And that being present to life as it happens was all there is and was the original state itself.
Just realised that that too, is leela.

Nowhere else to go now.

> *Frank*
>
> *The Original State also does not exist.*
>
> *Nothing exists, not even nothingness or the absence of nothingness.*
>
> *Ed*

Ed,
Guess I'll get back to chopping water and carrying wood.
Dear Ed,
Just want to say some things to you dear man.
But for the life of me I have no idea what to say.
Except undying gratitude.
Frank

> *Thanks Frank, you are very gracious. Please just continue to chop water.*
>
> *No kidding. Keep me informed of what is going on.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear Ed
Just want to say some things to you dear man.
Oh Ed Man oh Man!
It is 3:00 a.m. here.
I was listening to a mantra and suddenly I seem to have been torn apart by such convulsions of rapture I seem to can hardly stand it.
My glasses have fogged up.
Man
Do you hear this?
That is all I want
To hear
So close, we are
Love Frank

> *Magnificent Frank!!*
>
> *You have realized the bliss of chanting!!*
>
> *This is truly the Ananda and love you have sought, in its strongest and most potent form. Go with it where it takes you. This is just the beginning. There are many, many experiences yet to come!!!*
>
> *Ed*

The following is from an Un-fan Zen student:

david876123 <david876123@btinternet.com wrote:

Ed, i wonder if i could BEG you to stop writing about some zen masters the way you do. I'm thinking particularly about master maezumi and master seung sahn. I'm sure it's not intentional.....forgive me, but i feel you slander them dreadfully. You seem to hold up your opinions as 'truth'. But can a mind mired in dualistic notions judge one that is not?

Please consider again the wisdom of master seung sahn when he told you you think far too much.

Gassho

> *david*
>
> *I do not know what slander you talk about, nor would I be convinced to do anything from a "begging" letter that attacks me. My opinions and experiences of Seung Sahn are my own. He is a great teacher, just not mine.*
>
> *If you have a different version of "truth" about either men, tell me about it. Tell me fact, not your opinion, which, it appears, you believe is not opinion, but truth.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear ed

I believe the point i made was obvious. I was inviting you to consider the foolishness of allowing your mind, which your own words show is mired in dualistic notions, commenting, in public, about the merits and demerits of true zen masters, whose words show that they are not constrained as you clearly are. I believe that your actions could influence people away from true teaching.

To me, this seems like the behaviour of one who wishes to set himself up as an authority and thinks that denigrating real teachers is a way to gain credibility. I find this truly lamentable.

Gassho

david

> *Hi David,*
>
> *You do yourself a disfavor by idealizing "real masters." Even the greatest of them is no greater than you. They are nothing but your creation.*
>
> *You also do yourself a disfavor to think that finding Seung Sahn or Maezumi to be human is denigration or slander.*

Dear Ed,

In my earlier correspondence i merely pointed out the rather uncontroversial understanding (in zen terms anyway) that i don't believe a lesser consciousness can judge a higher. That is what you were doing.....your own words attest to the veracity of what i say! Now, if you want to quote the heart sutra to me, go ahead, as long as you know that you didn't embody it when you were evaluating (very publicly, i might add) those two realised masters.

In your other point, it was not their ordinariness as human beings i was denigrating, but YOUR criticism of them because they didn't conform to YOUR notions of what they SHOULD be like. You, therefore, were the one that was was holding the assumption (albeit perhaps unconscious) that they should have been more than 'human', as you put it. Or else how could you criticise?

This is all rather obvious, surely.

gassho

david

Guess I won't be getting a Christmas card from david

January 10, 2006

Hi Ed - just came across your website.
Thank you for sharing all of that - especially the book written by Nisargadatta Maharaj.

May I check with you my understanding:

(1) I understand that awareness / consciousness is the closest that words can come to describe what we are. Many suggest that that consciousness is universal rather than personal. But that awareness / consciousness is related to a particular body / mind mechanism: - "my" awareness experiences different things from yours; awareness arises with a body / mind mechanism and disappears when that body / mind mechanism dies.

Consequently my understanding of the meaning of "univeral consciousness" is that the underlying nature of that consciousness is the same. And that consciousness is the essence of the building blocks of manifestation (atoms, electrons - ultimately energy waves - or as Nisargadatta called them, the "five elements"), and manifestation cannot be without consciousness.

(2) Nisargadatta Maharaj talks of consciousness being time-bound and so also unreal; and ultimately if one "stabilises" in pure consciousness it will eventually lead you beyond consciousness. Is it possible to expand on that - or is it just beyond words?

Thank you.

All the best,

Ven

Hi Ven,

You could say this is true. But it certainly is not the final truth.

What you are has nothing to do with consciousness.

Consciousness lights up the world, creates the world and is the world. That is, it is all the 'stuff' out there, including the body. But it is also the inner stuff, the sense of I-AM, thinking, the inner sense of feeling, taste, touch, etc.

Consciousness itself, in any of its phases, objects or form, has nothing to do with you as the Absolute, your True self. That cannot be known. It is never an object to be viewed or discovered in awareness. You can know nothing of it. No quality, no taste, no vision, no awareness, no space, no time. All these are parts of consciousness.

Awakening occurs in the moment you see that nothing that happens in consciousness has anything to do with you. To make distinctions between pure consciousness and other kinds, is a mistake. These are concepts only. All of this discussion and techniques are only concepts, wind whipping through an illusion.

Mahraj's advice to stabilize in consciousness really means to stabilize in the sense of I, or I-ness. Personally, I think this a wonderful exercise, as is asking "Who Am I?" Both get you to the source, although they feel like different techniques. He is giving you a tool to hang your hat on.

However, the link between dwelling or focusing on consciousness or the sense of I, is very complicated as there are levels of understanding that may or may not be revealed through this practice. The way Maharaj presents it, is in a cause-effect conjunction: do this and that will happen. Things are not that simple.

As powerful as he is, Nisargadatta should be absorbed, not listened to. Get what you can from his talks. If his practice advice seems reasonable to you and not too perplexing, do it. If not, don't. He is the guru, as was Robert to me. Drink him in, don't think him in.

Ed

January 10, 2006

Dear Ed

I am coming back to you because I have a question. I more often have dreams during which I am conscious meaning during the dream I can tell myself, oh this is a dream. What has started as well is that when I take a nap the body
kind of falls into sleep but not my consciousness (mentally I am still there, somewhere in nowhere's-presence). Kind of difficult to explain, but the easisest way to say it is; I am falling into sleep (the body) but can keep holding the rope of consciousness.

Is all this another step towards no-mind land or what does it mean? As I have nobody to talk with about this experience, sorry to bother you with this story, hope you don't mind. And I wish you and all your cats merry christmas and lots of love for the new year.
Kind regards

Sven

January 10, 2006

Hi Sven,

This is a very good state. It is sometimes called lucid dreaming.

One becomes aware that the sleep state being observed, the phenomena, is not real. It is mearly mindstuff flowing out of an infinity of thought. That infinity of thought is also exactly the same as our everyday reality, or the waking dream.

Be aware that the dreamer is not touched by the dream. Be especially aware during the brief moments of transitioning from the sleeping dream to the waking dream, that neither touches "you." You, as the absolute, are not touched by either the dream world or the waking world.

However, you need to realize that lucid dreaming itself is still winin the realm of consciousness, and it is that realm you must ultimately transcend. If you get caught by state of lucid dreaming, you fail to learn its lesson.

Good luck. Stay with this state if you can.

Ed

January 12, 06

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your answer.

Can i ask, if everything is unreal, an illusion that doesn't exist, and we have no choice in what we do,
why is it necessary to do anything in the world, or to help others - or indeed to teach this understanding?

If we are just an appearance in consciousness, isn't it irrelevant if we are suffering or unenlightened, etc
Doesn't this then impy that there is "someone" to be liberated, or helped in any other way?

Also, do you have any advice / recommendations for a seeker on the path? I have read all I can - Nisargadatta, Ramana, Krishnamurti, Osho, Poonjaji, Balsekar, Robert Adams, some zen, etc etc. I think I understand as much as I can intellectually - and I am convinced that it is true. And I know I need to stop reading - but it is addictive! I'm gradually circling back to the first three in that list and trying to focus on just one book by each. And I try to remember that I do not exist during the day - but it is sometimes difficult when one gets caught up in work!

Any thoughts?

Thanks in advance,

Ven

> *Ven,*
>
> *Exactly right! It is not necessary to do anything. Yet, you have no choice but to be in the seeker's pickle. Your central core illusion, as Balsekar calls it, the body-mind mechanism, will continue, even after enlightenment. However, then you will be free of its effects because the illusion will be exposed. The "you" you talk about disappears entirely. This is Moksha, blowing out of the I, enlightenment.*
>
> *Keep reading Nisaragadatta. He is the clearest of all three. Krishnamurti is too much a distraction as his focus is entirely different. Focus on the single text: Prior to Consciousness by my second guru, Jean Dunn, a long time disciple of his. it took me 6 months to read it both the first time and the second. Each chapter smashed my mind. Perhaps you will have this same experience; perhaps not.*
>
> *Also, read Robert's book, Silence of the Heart. It is far softer and more homey. Robert didn't have Nisargadatta's sharp edges. He was far more heart and even his Bhaktic expression was warmer and softer. He hits a different part of your beingness. It is strange that so many talking head types loved Robert because he was a Bhakti in his own way and all that the heads wanted was knowledge. Yet, in his presence, they forgot all that and just beamed in his presence.*
>
> *Also, get chanting tapes form Shanti Mandir and maybe the Hari Krishna sect (ISCON). Listen to the chanting as much as you can. Don't stop reading if it grabs you. You can't go wrong reading either of them. Just add dwelling in the self as a conscious practice, try to find where the I-thought arises and listen to sacred music. Sometimes the practices will fall away be themseleves; sometimes you need a teacher in order to escape from practices. You can not know ahead of time.*
>
> *In fact, the whole process of trying to become enlightened is an illusion. Yet, when it happens, the illusion exposes itself.*
>
> *In my own opinion, following the "I" thought inward is not that helpful. Enlightenment is finding the I-Thought to be an illusion. Following it inward, in a way, makes the thought more real and concrete. The best is to read the sacred texts that scream the ultimate truth, listen to sacred music, and hang around great beings.*
>
> *Ed*

January 14, 2006

Hi Ed,

Dear Ed,
My body and personality is identified as "George", and I reside here in Albany, New York. What can I say? I discovered this website this past week and have thoroughly enjoyed learning about you, Robert, and my SELF. Up til this point, it feels as though life has just been pain. Back in about 1993, while living in Maryland I stumbled

upon a book by Krishnamurti. It ruined my existence as a human being :-) I was naïve enough to think life was going to get better and easier for me. The opposite happened. Everything fell apart. Misery and compulsiveness took hold.

The ego loved the new concepts it had aquired. Oh boy! Now I was really going to be a greta man, blah blah blah.... It has been dawning on me that I really have not understood a thing. Rather than getting depressed, I have had some moments of genuine laughter about it. Some fantasy was playing in the mind yesterday, it brought tears to my eyes and then I smiled, thinking "there it is again". The ego astounds me!!
Its ability to morph itself into any conceptual framework is beyond comrehension :-) It is really coming down to this for me, when I am thinking, that is NOT IT. What is" it" then? Anything I think is NOT it.
Can I fully absorb this to the point where the thinking stops? Why does thinking continue even though it seems absurd? Is the aim to stop thinking or only see thinking return to its proper place in the larger scheme? Is it possible to be at peace while a stream of thought is passing before me? or, is this just a first stage in spiritual growth? Is there a time when the thinking really stops completely?

I have been listening to some Echart Tolle lately and some of his words have been sinking in. For example, I have discovered that I have been trapped in my head for years. I forgot about my body. I was only "conscious" in my head, at least partially, whatever that means.. When he says "Be present" it has an effect on me. The simplicityof it for some reason turned on some light bulbs. I have been struggling with compulsive behavior for a very long time and it seems to manifest as craving in my lower abdomen and chest, as if there is something trapped. The behavior temporarily "satisfies" the craving, only to see it return.
It has been a vicious cycle. I have been stuck!! All of my spiritual readings have done nothing to end it. Who wants it to end? I struggled also with the morality of it all. I felt like I was doing something wrong and "should" stop. But I was not stopping. I now realize that stopping has nothing to do with morality. It has to do with my peace, or lack thereof. I want happiness but am not bringing to myself through this behavior. In fact the behavior is preventing me from moving on. It started when I was a young boy and became deeply rooted. It was the only thing that brought me relief from my agony. The behavior itself is not important. It is the purpose it serves - numbing pain. I have been escaping for years, unable to just look at it and feel it totally. What is this craving? As I just let it be yesterday morning upon waking, it transformed into a peaceful flowing "feeling" throughout my body. I smiled. Was this an illusion? It was as if something unlocked the cage or removed the pressure stuck in the mid section. When the pressure was released the sense of craving was gone(except this time it happened without acting compulsively). It then passed and the craving has again returned, but not with as much intensity.

Anyway, I don't know if this made any sense or if I am being clear. I fully relate to the feeling of not wanting to work and be a part in this worldly madness. I left a career as a broadcaster 3 years ago and now work as a chauffeur. The long drives give me plenty of time to be reflective, although it can also get very tiring and tedious. I'm now 38 and assuming I live a "normal life span", I'm not sure what I will do on this planet. It is just great to know that there are great souls "out there". It gives me the strength I need to just take the step I am on. Does the day come when the steps are gone? Are there any steps at all except this one?

Thank you, Ed

Your friend in New York

George

January 14, 2006

> *George,*
>
> *You remind me of me in days gone past.*
>
> *All the thoughts and states you are going through I went through. You are burning with your seeking. That is good.*
>
> *You need a teacher. First a Zen teacher to teach discipline and then your true teacher whomever that will be. I am sure there are good teachers in N.Y. Kapleau is no longer alive but I am sure he has good teachers there. Seung Sahn's centers are everywhere.*
>
> *Go find a teacher who will guide you day by day. This can do nothing but help you.*
>
> *Keep me informed. There are no answers to your questions because your questions will continue indefinitely until you are enlightened. Any answer would be stop-gap.*

If you find someone as a teacher, let me know what he is like. Stay away from women teachers as they will distract you too much and you are already too distracted.

Read Prior to Consciousness by Nisargadatta until you find a teacher.

Keep me informed.

Ed

January 15, 2006
Ed,

Thank you for your kind reply and concern. This search is so strange. My first "teacher", Krishnamurti (one I never met, I only know him through readings and video), said that no guru was necessary. When I first started reading him, something in my heart said that he was not just a regular human being, there was something he was saying that hit me deeper than I had ever been hit. How did I recognize something in him that I felt I did not have? How weird! Up to that point I had gone to churches and flat out rejected everything I had heard. I could not "prove" it was wrong. I just knew in my heart. I also had been inundated with psychotherapeutic gibberish and 12 steps to nowhere.

Now comes along this other man that I admire, Ed, and he tells me I need a teacher :-) He may be right but somehow I'm not sure I "need" a teacher. To be honest, it has been something I have hoped for at times but all of the teachers I have admired most are dead – Krishnamurti (even if I asked him to be my guru he would have flat out refused), Ramana, and even Robert. Frankly, I think you would be a great teacher but I'm here on the east coast so it is not very practical. I'm going to fish around based on your guidance. It will only work if I trust a person in my heart. If not, I will not stay with him. It certainly can not hurt to find some good people to be around. Good advice by the way on staying clear of woman teachers :-) I was one step ahead of you on that one :-)

This evening, I purchased the Heart of Awareness. I will order prior to Consciousness.

From what I have read of Krishnamurti and Ramana's lives, it appears as if they lived what they taught. Of course, I never met them personally so I could never feel that presence directly. I'm sure they had some quirks. One thing bugged me about Nisargadatta. His abruptness seems a bit odd but there seems to be some serious inconsistency. In a certain conversation he told a student to give up his addictions. What about his addiction to nicotine? If he has transcended the desires of the body, then why the habit? I believe his answer went something like this. I am paraphrasing. "The addictions are of the body. They are not mine". Is this not a duality. A "Free Self" and an addicted body mind!

I guess it just bugs me that he remained a chain smoker. I know Robert said that an enlightened person would not hold onto a drug habit. That feels right to me in my heart, just as my own habit feels wrong in my heart - not wrong morally, but wrong in the sense that it is slowing my progress. Perhaps the habit itself is not the primary issue but the entire ego complex that it is part of. The desire for the habit to go away is yet another desire. As long as I keep thinking about - for it or against it - the complex stays in place. Perhaps a good teacher can point me in the right direction as to meeting this challenge without escaping from it. For all I know, it will never arise again. In fact today was very peaceful. I was alone all day and felt very happy to just be as I am. There was very little wanting or needing of anything. One of the secrets is to not think about it when it is not there. This is one thing I was struggling with, always worrying when it was going to come bite me again. This seems to be diminishing as the error in that thought is being burned away by just being present, in the moment. I AM!!! That is it.

Thank you again, Ed, I will start looking around and will let you know if anything happens - even though, in reality nothing happens, right? :-)

George

George,

Yes, nothing happens. I suggested a teacher because your thought structure and questioning is not focused.

Don't worry about Nisargadatta's addictions or what Robert said. You are not enlightened yet, so don't worry about a post-enlightenment understanding. Take step one before worrying about two or three.

You have to realize that generally a teacher's broad statements are to the middle denominator in the audience. Sometimes he answers questions from a far more advanced student. The teacher is providing an appropriate answer for the level of questioner and will vary, just as Newtonian physics and Einsteinian vary.

A teacher will focus it as you will concentrate on his teaching being true or false, not X, Y, and Z and how they are the same or different. Ask many questions, see if the answers gel for you. Nothing any teacher tells you is the truth--only concepts.

Time after time students would come to Satsang and asked questions about what Ramana meant about X,Y,Z, and how that different from Rajneesh, or some such. Back then Nisargadatta was not popular. He would best try to answer the question, but often the questioner was persistent. He had a sticking point, an intellectual doubt and Robert would gradually teach that the question's strength is only mind stuff and you have to go deeper than mind.

It will be extremely rare for you to find a good teacher from the get go. Go until you find one you trust, at least a little. Tell me about him. I will tell you whether he is true or a phony and by that, I mean not advanced.

Ed

Ed,

Which is first, the chicken or the egg?
Here is a blip from Ramana:

"Self can be without ego, but the ego can not be without the self. Egos are like bubbles in the ocean. Impurities and worldly attachments affect only the ego; the Self remains pure and unaffected. When the individual goes, the desires also go."

I assume this means ALL DESIRES - even the desire to be enlightened or achieve happiness, or whatever. As the ego grabs onto the above concept, it says "ok, now I must go so that I can be the Self, balh blah blah".
This is still ego, nothing has happened at all. It is more ego spouting. or it says "I must let ago of all my desires so I can get enlightened....". More ego, or "I must not think about letting go of my desires because then I am just desiring the end of desire....." More ego!! Or, "I must go to a Zen monastery to discipline myself to let go of desire.....then I can gain happiness and enlightenment, after years of brutality...." False!! Ego!! It is another direction of the same entity. These are all thoughts, nothing more.

Who or what sees all of this taking place?

Does the individual go first, then the desires? Or is it simultaneous? Obviously, it is simultaneous. Then why make any effort at all to stop desire? Does it take effort to be the watcher? What makes the effort?
The ego right? Then if this is observed, who is observing the effort of the ego? The effort is the ego.

Is this a joke? I've been at this for years and this is where I am - nowhere!! :-) Why would I have to get a teacher or go to a monastery? For what? Am I not the self here and will become the self in some Zen combat? if I walk through sub zero temperatures barefoot, will I gain what I am?

Upon reading your experiences, I was clearly not going to follow that path. Maybe this was a tactic you applied to "test" my alertness, I don't know, or maybe you really see me as a beginner who needs help, I don't know. What can I know other than my presence and existence? This guy named Ed has appeared in my consciousness. Am I just playing with words here or have I comprehended something deeply? Who is asking this question?

Who is it that lacks discipline? What is discipline? Is discipline living in a pattern? Is it following authority? Is it brutalizing the body with postures?

Even these profound meditations you had as a Zen monk vanished. Did they build strength? Who went from weakness to strength? The mind?
Is this all a game I play? This seems absurd. Can anything the mind says be trusted? Even when it poses itself as a

wise man trying to help me? It is weird how I actually get sucked back into identification with my problems. Who's problems? Who is identified with what?

For a while last night I was very worried. I was going to have to take a long and difficult path through teachers and zen monks to reach my goal. Why did I ask for any advice? is that not already an admission that I am a little pea in a pod?

Yes, the body and mind have problems, attachments. Sometimes there is severe identification, then suddenly clarity will come in the midst of madness.

If a teacher appears then so be it. Effort to make it happen just doesn't feel right to me this morning. It feels like another distraction on top of the one's I already have.

Maybe we will have a back and forth about this. I will certainly listen to anything you say. I'm not being belligerent, really. It is strange how I walked into a situation and now I am wondering what I was looking for in the first place.

You know this is no personal attack. I really enjoy reading your material and have no clue whether you are "enlightened" or not. That does not matter in the final analysis. It will keep falling back on me to live as I see fit. If our conversations are part of that, then so be it. if this fades away, then so be it.

Thank you for your patience, Ed.

George

January 17, 2006

> *George,*
>
> *I do not assume you are a beginner, but it is quite obvious the torrent of question means you have no focus. Everything is doubted. This is good, but…*
>
> *In philosophy there is the hypothetic mule (called the "Logical Ass) who thinks about everything--all sides so to speak--and then does nothing, because thinking of all alternatives leaves no room for action.*
>
> *As Seung Sahn would say, you think too much. You need no-thinking mind. Do you believe that? You must get before thought in your everyday consciousness.*
>
> *How to do this?*
>
> *Two ways: sink deeply within, such as following the I-thought to the source, or finding a teacher to butt heads against.*
>
> *No matter; you must see that where you are is no good. You have to make an action. You are stuck.*
>
> *When I say in my Zen section at some point you must get serious about what all this searching, God, the Absolute, etc., mean, I mean to be serious, you must be able to follow one question deeply, not 100 questions shallowly.*
>
> *You have so much thinking and questioning that you get distracted before you can go deep.*
>
> *Settle down. Relax, go within, or find a teacher you can argue with. I always did, no problem. But I only got somewhere after I stopped arguing with Robert after spending 4 years together. Before that, I had 25 years of questioning teachers and getting nowhere.*
>
> *I am not asking you to repeat my mistakes. Maybe you should do to a Zen center in Fiji instead of a frigid mountain. But in Krishnamurti you found support for your endless doubt. What worked for him is poisoning you. Each person is different. There are no perfect 38 regular teachings or practices.*
>
> *How to break through that doubt and become completely confident? This is a different question than you are asking. You are asking outside questions when you need to ask inside questions.*
>
> *Do as you will, but making an effort to break out is as good as making an effort to go within. But now you are stuck.*
>
> *Flip a coin: seek without or seek within, but move.*

Ed

January 18, 2006
Ed,

I do not know what came over me. The torent was like a child having a temper tantrum. I feel embarrassed.

Anyway, when I was not able to hear sanity from within, I was able to hear it from without.

George

Don't feel embarrased. It is quite good you could catch yourself.

Very good.

There are many pseudo-teachers who would give the interpretation that the ego is trying to preserve itself. But this theory adds no knowledge. It means nothing. Ego, mind, practice, are all concepts.

Just know you caught the distraction.

Ed

I must apologize regarding the chaos that is this call and response section. I am getting quite a few letters, and usually in the form of several back and forth letters in an email. It is difficult to separate the questioning letter with my response given the date of your letters and my responses and the dates of the emails. Therefore, I am sure there are redundancies as well as answer to questions that have not been asked so far as readers are concerned.

January 17, 06

Dear Edward,

I want to thank you for your website. It makes me feel, I'm on the right track. But this track seems so long and I'm so exhausted ...
(English isn't my mothertongue, but I hope you can understand me.)

My name is Mathias and I'm 25 years old now. Maybe this seems to young to feel exhausted from searching, but this "searching for the truth" never was only a hobby - it is my life. I was 11 years old when I "accidentally" opened a book about philosophy. Wondering why there is something instead of nothing and asking questions about life and death began even earlier. At this young age reading and asking questions about such things was mostly fun, but later it became more and more serious. With the age of 14 years I received my first book about buddhism. I was deeply impressed. I wanted to know more about that, because deep inside me I felt that this is my way. Now I own hundreds of books, booklets and articles about buddhism and advaita-vedanta. Most of the time (for years) I was reading and thinking about these things only to answer my questions at an intellectual level. But then (maybe very late) I noticed that such an intellectual understanding is not enough and that I won't come to an end with trying to understand at an intellectual level. It gives no peace to me and there are always doubts because this understanding has no base in my own experience. It's only words to me - very interesting words, but only words. I wanted to know the truth behind the words, so I tried to meditate, at first breathwatching and then "body sweeping" (vipassana meditation). Maybe I was too impatient, but short after I begun I had the feeling that these methods are wrong

for me and that I was looking in the wrong direction. Later I asked myself "Who am I?", but I did it the wrong way I think, because it was to formal and the "answer" came in form of intellectual knowledge like "There is no I anyway, so this question is missing the point" or the answer came in form of doubts like "I don't know if there is really an I, so I can't answer this question". Because
of that I don't use "special techniques" any longer. I try to simply observe myself. With "myself" I mean the person "Mathias" - the only "I" I know. I discovered what Douglas E. Harding calls "headlessness" and that I'm playing "the face game" all the time. I can't see my own eyes. If I move the arrow of attention 180 degrees around, so that I look inward instead of outward, then there is nothing to see there. No eyes, no face, no head. Absolutely nothing. There is only a "void" so to speak that "contains" all the perceived things. Although there is nothing to see if I move the attention inward, it SEEMS that there is someone in there. It's "Mathias". It was not easy to detect, because it's nearly transparent. But it's there all the time. It is an image of "myself", of my body, especially of my head and my face. I can't SEE my face, but this image of my face is there. When I speak, laugh etc. then at the same time there is this
image "speaking" and "laughing". Because of this nearly transparent self-image it seems that there is someone in there who is observing and doing all these things. I don't know how to describe it better. Sometimes when I wake up from deep (dreamless) sleep this self-image is not there or it is there but seems not to be me but only an image. No one is there at this time. Then a strong fear arises or even panic and "Mathias" is back again. Even if I'm awake it seems that sometimes (for a split second) this self-image is seen through or want to vanish. It scares me to death everytime. But I can't stop looking inward. I want to know for myself.
I never had a normal life and I never really wanted to lead such a life. I was always full of fear and most of the time I feel bad. I was in therapy for years because of an "anxiety-disorder" and "depressions" but to me it was clear that my problem cannot be solved this way. Maybe my mind is ill, but I don't care any longer. That is the way it is. I don't feel strong enough to fight against outer circumstances and against my "personality". I was doing this for years and it was useless and exhaustive. I don't like it to be anxious and depressed but these feelings are stronger than my attempts to get rid of them and I feel better when I don't "touch" (fight) them all the time. I know them. That's enough for me at the moment. I feel a connection between "beeing anxious/depressed" and "not beeing enlightened". This is the "persons life". Maybe there is a life WITH the (anxious and depressed) person "Mathias" (self-image) after
"enlightenment", but I don't want this life "AS" this person going on any longer.

I'm sorry for writing you so much text. But this is what I wanted to say. I want to share my experiences with someone who is awake. Maybe you can say me what do you think or feel about it. Do you have an advice for me?

I thank you very much for reading this letter. I would be happy, if you find the time to answer me.

Mathias

January 18, 2006

> *Mathias,*
>
> *I am shocked. Your story is almost identical to mine. I read "In the Woods of God Realization" at age 11, and my first Buddhism book, Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation at age 13 or 14.*
>
> *Your practice is perfect. Perfect!*
>
> *Depression and anxiety are of the mind, it can continue long after enligtenment. But you are not the mind and you will realize it. Depression does not touch you.*
>
> *Much of the anxiety you fear is regarding your sense that you will realize no one is there. There is no one in control to protect the personal "you."*
>
> *Does staring into the Void fill you with awe?*
>
> *Read Nisargadatta's Prior to Consciousness by Jean Dunn. Just that one for a while. It is his deepest book.*
>
> *If you don't get much from that, read my own teacher's "Silence of the Heart" which is more Bhakta oriented.*
>
> *Listen to sacred music, it will fill the Void with bliss making the automatic movement less taxing and more joyful*
>
> *Most chanting tapes are crap: too Indian.*

Get some from Shanti Mandir, teh Hari Krishna's or Self realization Fellowship.

I do not know your life circumstances. If you are not already leading the life of a wandering monk or Sadhu, think about doing so.

You are very advanced and will have a great enlightenment. It may be a week away or ten years. I was in your state for at least ten years before realization.

If it is in you, you may become a great teacher some day. Go for it.

I will help as much as I can. But do the music.

Where do you live? What do you do?

Love,

Ed

Dear Edward,

I ordered "Silence of the Heart" some days ago when I discovered your website and "Prior to Consciousness" after your advice yesterday. I will look for the music too.

Sometimes it is not easy to find the right words, especially in English. I don't know how to say what I want to say in the right words. But I will try it, even it sounds terrible.

Yesterday, when I read your answer I was a little bit shocked too. I was happy about your fast answering and happy to read that my practice is OK. I do what seems natural to me. But last night I couldn't sleep at first because I had to think about your words, that I "will realize". At this moment a strong fear arised. I had trouble to breath in a normal way. It seemed to me that the automatic breathing mechanism wants to stop and that I had to breath in/out intentionally in order to stay alive. After some minutes it was over and I wondered (like always) about my fear.

You asked me if staring into the void fill me with awe. Yes, sometimes. But most of the time looking inward feels somewhat "dry". There is the desire to look inward but it seems that this selfimage is blocking the "view". If I turn the arrow of attention 180 degrees around, nothing is to SEE but at the same time it seems as if there is someone in there. It is like "seeing" my own face from inside. It's not really a seeing, because I can't SEE my own face. It's an image of my face made from thoughts, from memories about my reflection in the mirror and photos of me. This inner selfimage is so close to "me" and so transparent that I can't perceive it as an "object" for long. And then it seems as if the person "Mathias" tries to look inward. Even if I realize that this is only an image it seems that this image is "me". The
sense of touch is strongly involved in this selfimage too. It seems that I can feel my face and my head AS face and AS head but this is only part of the image. What is felt as "head" and "eyes" appears like a "backstop" when I'm looking inward. It seems like the "looking" or "viewing" is attached to this imaginated "head" and therefore it seems that "I" am looking with and AS that body. It's not easy to describe.

I'm not leading the life of a wandering monk or Sadhu, but sometimes I think about doing so. I live in Germany and work in an office. I hate it, but I don't know what to do at the moment. Most of the time I feel unable to go to work and to talk to other people. It is unthinkable for me to lead such a life for long. I'm not made from stone and sometimes I really miss other people but I want to be alone most of the time.

I will think about an anti depressant medication. Until now I refused it. But maybe this was wrong.

Thank you!

Mathias

What you describe, I have never experienced. I had a similar one, for years, wherein with 180 degree inwards, I'd see a dark and awsome inner Void, the absolute rock core of immovable presence. It felt like me and some far greater than me at the same time.

With enlightenment, the sense of a separate presence left.

you have strong family ties?

It would be helpful not to be alone in doing all this. Even if you do nt have a teacher, go to a Satsang in your area where you can chant and meet with like-minded people. This helps some, but not a lot. Generally Satsangees are not too open with their experiences.

Keep in touch.

Sorry about taking so long to get back to you. It is chaos here with deadlines.

My website will be changing everyday.

It is going somewhere, but I do not know yet where.

I believe what you are experiencing is due to the intensity of your practice and I would say to keep on doing exactly as you are doing.

Do you also have afternoon involuntary periods when the mind autonmatically turns inward?

Where in Germany do you live?

What do you do?

Love,

Ed

January 26, 2006

Tess my grandaughter aged 4. We went to the park. She got on the see saw. She said. Hey Poppa the whole world is rocking, the trees are rocking, the grass is rocking everything is rocking. Smiles of laughter on her face. Then we went to the slide. She said Poppa the whole world is sliding, the trees are sliding the grass is sliding. Same with the swing. Then she put her shoes on. Looked at me and said. Poppa. You know the world is putting its shoes on too. How did we ever forget?
Love Tony

January 2006

Dear Ed

I like the new style of your website and your "face to face". Congrats. You
are very clear comparing to others which are not.

I am a bit in an odd situation or my mind wants to tell me that this should be the case. I'm practicing Kyudo which really leads me into a no-mind state and I enjoy doing it twice a week with a small group of people and a teacher
being capable seing the matrix. For my body-mind apparatus it is also much more comfortable than Zazen. But odd is, hat deep under, my heart ist attached to Advaita Vedanta and their style of teaching like what Nisargadatta and Robert did. When I read "Silence of the Heart" for the 2nd time, I knew that the close relation I have with this is beyond words. In the book Robert says that fastest way to proceed is, Self-Inquiry (which I daily do), being with a saint and sitting in satsang. Unfortunately we seem not to have any Satsang activity in this country I am living. So I just continue my Kyudo practice and sit alone daily for myself whenever time
allows it. The worse is when you would like "to sit in silcence" with others but you can't because there is no such ctivity here.... Is there any difference whether I sit allone or does it have to be in a group? In a long
time perspective? I have given up reading books about Vedanta because "finally it is all the same". Robert's books is the only one left which I occasionally read a few sentences. After this book, to me there is
absolutely nothing more to be said because it is all so clear, no more words nothing more at all, just silcence. Just continue Kyudo and sit alone?

all the best and thank you for your being there

Sven

> *January 22 , 2006*
>
> *Hi Sven,*
>
> *Glad to hear about your excellent progress. Don't worry, we all have doubts up until you get very close to awakening.*
>
> *I do not know what Kyudo is. If it leads you to a truely no mind state, it is an excellent practice, although I still prefer just sitting in silence and doing nothing in terms of practing. This is called Shikantaza in Zen and Mahamudra in Tibetan Buddhism.*
>
> *Sitting in a group is far more powerful. It adds group energy.*
>
> *That you have stopped reading is very good, although the desire to read almost always retruns, even after awakening. Robert was always reading books by saints and sages.*
>
> *I wish I could be there to help you. If you have a group we could do a very expensive telephone Satsang.*
>
> *I do think there is a way to set up Internet conversations if there is a high-speed connection at both ends, such as the DSL I have. This, of course, costs nothing in addition to the equipment.*
>
> *It is important to have chanting. I have re-written my "Practices" section. A lot is there.*
>
> *What country are you in? Sven sounds Swedish, but I think you mentioned being in the Netherlands.*
>
> *Ed*

January 29, 2006

Ed looks as if I might be in the US in the near future. Sanfrancisco, Ashland Wisconsin and Indiana probably.
Would like to meet.
Love,
Tony

> *Glad to. Looking forward to meeting you too.*
>
> *January 29, 2006*

Ed Man my man.
Oh man.
You speak so eloquently of Jean Dunn. One of Nisargatta's devoted one's.
Have some books of her's I do.
Here's the thing.
Another present at his (Nisargatta's) satsangs was Jeff Massons Mother.

Jeff was Professor of Sanskrit at Harvard. Then did his psychanalytic training at Toronto University. Got to see that Freud was about facing regards to sexual abuse.
Wrote a book called "My Father's Guru".
Nailed Dr. Paul Brunton he did to the wall with that one.
Then was repudiated by the psychoanalytic community and he came to settle in NZ
Where I met with him and his mother through an extraordinary set of circumstances.
Oh man

Love you I do
Tony

January 28, 2006

Respected Sir,
Three days back I read Roberts' book, Silence of the Heart and the very next day I came across your website in Google. I don't think this was coincidence . I would like to thank you very much for your website and writings.
I am from India and am a Kriya Yogi with an interest in Advaita.
I have been studying - Be as you are , I am That and Silence of the
Heart for past few months.
I would like to ask you some doubts and would be grateful if you can
answer them -
How should we proceed further with the study Robert's teachings.
Do you have anything more to share regarding his elucidation of the
technique of atma vichara.

Thank you
Rishikesh

> *January 29*
>
> *Hi Rishikesh,*
>
> *Please tell me a little about yourself and the Kriya Yoga you practice. This helps me understand where you are at to best answer your questions.*
>
> *I have only love and respect for someone who devotes his life to knowing God or Absolute knowledge.*
>
> *I was initiated into Kriya Yoga in about 1956 or 57 by a disciple of Pamamhansa Yogananda. It is so long ago I barely remember.*
>
> *Is it not a purification form? Or, is it more a branch of Raja Yoga, as Yogananda, I believe, was a Raja yogi.*
>
> *Robert too was initiated into Yogananda's lineage when he was very young, maybe 16. I think it is called the Giri order.*
>
> *Love,*
>
> *Ed*

February 1, 2006

Respected Sir,

I am terribly sorry for taking time to answer your reply. Reason is , that email problem was actually on my side. I have been trying to migrate to another email service.

I am 28 yrs old based here in India, Bombay. I am a doctor and unmarried.

Actually I was trying to frame my doubts properly. I was around 16-17 yrs old when I came across Yogananda Autobiography and Bhagawan's biography by Arthur Osborne. A few years later I tried practising Advaita but entirely on my own with few written books and without any guidance.

I was told that Yoga might be a better option to develop concentration initially. I always thought that Advaita would be my final goal at later stages of my life.

I received initiation into Kriya Yoga in 2003 , my Guru was from a traditional kriya lineage of Sri Panchanon Bhattacharya , a disciple of Sri Lahiri Mahasaya.He has since passed on. Kriya Yoga is basically a Kundalini meditation technique. We are required to chant OM at each chakra moving up while breathing in and moving down while breathing out.

I also go to a place which is somewhat similar to Baba Muktananda once in a week. My mother is a follower of this place. We are required to chant Om Namaha Shivaya once a day for 10-15 mins. It is derived Siddharudhswami where Muktananda lived early years of his life.

Interertingly around that time I came across 'Be as you are' and Nisargadatta Maharaj, so that has lead to some confusion.

I always thought that Yoga is more of a astral level sadhana while Advaita is a causal level sadhana.

I got 'Silence of the Heart' a few months back and it is simply mind boggling.

I had contacted the the other Robert Adams website, but I found it a bit bureaucratic (no disrespect) It is my gut feeling.This is a bit like Yogananda's SRF who claim to be the only people authorised to teach kriya. I know from personal experience that this is not true.A few months back I read a beautiful story of Robert about some person who was not in Advaita but was his follower and getting amazing experiences. A few days later that article had disappeared.

I eventually decided to pay for the online course and very next day I came across your website which looks more authentic< I took this as Robert's guidance.

I wanted some guidance from you as to how one should proceed in such a situation

How do we make these paths compatible and move hand in hand ?

Was Sri Robert a proponent of no-effort needed like Balsekar ? Both Ramana and Nisargadatta seem to have recommended intense while some of their followers say - You are perfect here and now ?
What is the way to approach this and what did Robert have to say on this ?

As of now whenever I practise meditation, I just try the technique as explained in David Godman's Be as You are Chapter 4

If you have transcripts maybe you could sell them to me.

Can you please tell me your opinion about Balsekar and Robert's meetings with Nisargadatta ? I have yet to meet Balsekar although he lives in the same city. Your explanation of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj was the best I have ever read.

You are extremely fortunate to have Sri Robert Adams so well.

Thanking you

Rishikesh

PS I am living in Dahisar , a suburb of Mumbai and Nisargadatta Maharaj Samadhi is about 10 mins from my place.I came to know about this only a few months back although I have lived here for my entire life. It is a relatively unknown place.

> *Hi Rishikesh,*
>
> *You ask many important questions. In fact, yours would be enough to fill a book, and that is good.*
>
> *As I mentioned, both Robert and I were initiated into Yogananda's lineage and Kriya Yoga. For me, after a while, it was just a dead end. I doubt Robert paid any attention to it at all, if you read my biography of him at "Robert's Story."*

I have posted on my site answers to many of your questions, especially the Muktananda page under the "Practices" page.

I talk about my own Kundalini experience under Zen and then under the Kapleau pages.

I also talk about it under the bliss of chanting and meditation.

So please read these first and re-ask your questions.

Also, there are eight of Robert's transcripts on my site, his eulogy, as well as two articles I wrote for two journals.

Practicing self-inquiry may lead to the development of Kriya and other frightening Kundalini phenomena. I talk about those on the pages mentioned above.

Regarding answers to specific practices, I also answer many students who have practices such as yours.

Nisargadatta is different from Ramana. I think Nisargadatta's teachings are a little higher, but I suspect Ramana was talking to less advanced students than Nisargadatta, but that Ramana passed on higher teachings to more advanced students. I know this is what Robert did. He said in the highest teaching, even consciousness is an illusion. Ramana talks of enlightenment as the identification with Atman, which is not as advanced as identification with Brahman, which is beyond consciousness.

Also, Nisargadatta himself is confusing that way. Sometimes he talks about the same thing as Ramana, and at other times takes a different position. Once again, he is addressing each student's level of understanding. Naturally, seekers will find this confusing; I did.

Self-inquiry is both easy and difficult. The basic techniques are outlined in my practices section as well as in the meditation sections.

Robert too speaks at different levels. Confusion is going to happen at except to the more advanced seeker. Confusion and doubt have to be eliminated before one can experience the highest. This happnes either with the purest practice or by the grace of the guru, who is you.

I have not wanted to be in the position of retail selling of spiritual knowledge. However, Robert did sell his book silence of the Heart and also a correspondence course of one transcript a month for $60 per year.

Love,

Ed

February 1, 2006

Hi Ed,
I happened to find your site about Robert somehow. I never had a chance to know him, even though I read some of his satsang transcripts long ago.
Anyhow noticing this section, I think I would take issue with a few things you say here:
The two most important practices in the Zen-Advaita traditions are keeping the company of saints and sages; the other is to practice the introversion of consciousness to find the true self, what Ramana Maharshi and Robert Adams characterized as following the I to its source. Keeping the company of saints and sages means being in their physical presence and hearing what they say. Their words can pound deeply. Secondary, yet very important practices are chanting and various forms of internalizing, self-exploring meditations.
What is the point of all this?

Eric

February 1,

Dear Eric,

> *What is the point of what?*
>
> *Introversion? Self inquiry? Having a guru? Chanting?*
>
> *Robert recommended them all. So do I.*
>
> *What is it you do not understand the point of?*
>
> *99.999 percent of people will not awaken spontaneously. Of course, awakening itself, in a sense, is pointless.*
>
> *So what do you find pointless?*
>
> *I am curious.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear Ed,

There is no technique leading to self-realization. So what is the point of selling techniques?

There is also no realization of the self in introversion of consciousness. It doesn't solve any particular problem at all. It does not lead to any higher or final or other state. I feel it may lead to some bit of delusion and error as well as disconnection from others though.

However, I am not criticizing chanting and the bhakti path as I do not regard these as techniques with an end. Bhakti is its own fruit as Narada says. Moreover, one cannot make an effort to "do" bhakti. It either arises spontaneously as pure joy or love, in which one is not "doing" it, or it does not.
As I recall from what I read earlier today, did Robert not simply offer whatever he had to give? I seem to remember reading that he found fulfillment of whatever he had realized in giving to other people.

Eric

> *Eric,*
>
> *Robert gave people what he thought they needed. If they were depressed, he'd try to heal that. If they wanted techniques he gave it. If material things, he gave it. Love, he gave it. I don't know whether he found fulfillment or not doing this; he had no choice. There is no free will here.*
>
> *However, he gave everyone the same general technique for self-realization: Following the I-thought to its source, or just sitting in silence.*
>
> *A guru is most important for most. Ramana had self-inquiry. Nisargadatta advised to focus on consciousness. These are introversion techniques.*
>
> *Whether Introversion of consciousness leads to separation from others is not important. Escaping from the horror of the illusion is important.*
>
> *So, what about you? You question me and I told you what I think. Tell me about you and your certainty.*
>
> *Ed*

Hi Ed,
Briefly, because I don't have much time to answer everything just now... my own experience is that bhakti opens one's heart and that the path of the Guru is a bhakti path. But I don't believe that it is something one necessarily chooses. It may just unfold as one desires a Guru to show them the way. And then the Guru appears.
However, in this regard, when I critique introversion of consciousness, what I think I am more specifically critiquing is a certain tendency to withdraw from having thoughts or perception of objects into a state of no-thought/no objects, or a tendency to desire entry into a state that one is not already in. This may just undo itself at some point in the desire for experience. I cannot really say, because I'm sure everyone's experience is

different. But moreover, I know that there is no more truth in withdrawing from objects than there is in the experience of the world.

Among seekers who tend to get involved in ideas about Advaita, it seems that it becomes very common to seek in this way and try to contort the mind and the body and such into some state that is thought to be the final state. And there is no such thing. So, from that point of view, I think all this effort is fruitless, whether it is by Ramana's description, or Robert's, or anybody's, of what that is and how to get there.

I mean, ultimately, you are actually no better off going to work, or sitting at the bar, or playing chess, or being a guru, if you are actually looking for the medicine of undoing the ego. If consciousness is truly unqualified, or limitless, then the appearance or form is no more an illusion than its formless attainment is. This is what no-qualification actually means. It is endless possibility, and so, inconceivable, meaning that it cannot be grasped, or held onto, acquired, or attained. You cannot already be other than who you are.

Nevertheless, many people get into "doing" advaita these days in some way or other. I'm not sure this is what it was meant to be like. To me, it all seems silly. Also, because the tendencies I notice in this sort of seeking can take people away from other opportunities, can take them away from developing themselves in various ways, can isolate them and make them reject or neglect the material world, or their minds and their ability to reason and think about things. I'm talking very basic common sense. I don't think this is necessarily a good idea, to go about thinking that everything is an illusion because some tradition says it is. That tradition could be wrong.

There is also probably a great deal to learn from brain/neuroscience of late. Especially as it affects perception and behavior. Because not everything that we can be conditioned to think of as spiritual necessarily is.

I am very interested in everything that you have written about Robert mostly because I like biography, and I like autobiography. I had read Silence of the Heart, and I have a very good feel from those dialogues how Robert conducted his satsangs, as well as the few bits about his earlier life and how he finally went to India and met Ramana Maharshi after his brief time with Yogananda. There is not a tremendous amount of material available about personal experience with Yogananda, and I found what Robert had to say most interesting, I suppose, because he was not necessarily a devotee of Yogananda. Also, from what I have read, Yogananda was not necessarily a devotee of Ramana Maharshi, but was, in fact, rebuked when he met Ramana because Ramana said there was no way to offer teachings to masses of people through an organization due to their individual samskaras.

I do know that Sri Yukteswar did send one of his disciples, Satyananda, to see Ramana Maharshi after his death, and that S. remained there at Arunachala for the rest of his life. And also, from some of what you had offered on the website, I am interested in what Robert had to say about Ramana Maharshi, as Robert was there himself.

Eric

February 2, 06

> *Hi Eric,*
>
> *Questions:*
>
> *Is any of your concerns about introversion or self-inquiry just speculation and critique, or does it arise from personal experience? Did you try it and got into trouble; did you guru advise against it; did someone you care for try it and turned away from you?*
>
> *Why the hostility? Don't say you are not because it is obvious. Or is it fear?*
>
> *You do anything but self-inquiry.*
>
> *You read biographies about Robert and Ramana and their lives, practices and teachings. Yet, you do not look at you.*
>
> *You talk about brain research but do not look into your own mind.*
>
> *You had a guru, which you call a Bhakta thing, love, but you do not say anything about it or you. You talk as a theory, an observation, followed by a lecture.*
>
> *You believe the world is real, because that it is not, Advaita, may be wrong because it is tradition. But, according to that, in your mind, it may be right. That is why you read Ramana, Robert and Yogananda's biography, but do not look at your mind.*
>
> *You talk about common sense, meaning materialism, things to do in life, other ways to develop. It is true self-inquiry leads to an end of all that. But is that bad?*

> *What development do you think you missed by following a guru, or, just hypothetically, if you were to look at your mind?*
>
> *Where are you in all this lecturing?*
>
> *Ed*

February 2, 2006

Dear Ed,

Just wanted to drop you a line and say that I've really gotten a lot out of the online satsang letters you've been posting lately. In the exchange with "Eric" you just posted, it looks like you've got your hands full!!!! Wow, I sure don't envy you, having people "assault" you with opinions and then almost expect you to somehow DEFEND Advaita. Strange how Advaita (or what passes for it in recent times.... such as the success of Eckhart Tolle) could possibly find itself in the same position as every single "religion" to ever come forth on the planet. Although it's clearly NOT a "religion", I can see it breaking into factions and the devotees of one teacher at "war" with those of others. That is already happening. I guess the ego can pretty much "co-opt" ANY teaching.

One of the funniest (and in a way, saddest) experiences I've ever had was joining an "Advaita mailing list" years ago. Everyone seemed perpetually angry at each other and worked up and bound and determined to get THEIR personal perspective across. They would say things like "The Tao that can be spoken is not the true Tao" and "anything we say just amounts to more concepts", etc..... but THEN they would go on arguing their viewpoints over the course of days and weeks and hundreds of emails with each other!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It would be hilarious if it wasn't so insane.

After reading your allusion to the "other" Robert Adams website, I went and checked it out. I assume you mean "the infinity institute" or whatever they are calling it. I haven't seen it for a couple of years. It's really changed. How can anyone claim "ownership" of Robert's teachings for pete's sake? And it DOES sound like they are referring to YOU when they say things about "other sites not endorsed by Robert", etc. It would almost have to be you.... it's not like there are loads of Robert Adams sites out there! It makes them sound petty and afraid and I would THINK make it LESS likely for a person to purchase Robert's material from them. The whole thing is just one more indication of how nutty the Advaita world is getting. I'm sure it's no surprise to you, because you've been around teachers and devotees and organizations for many many years and have seen all the fighting and arguing and abuse of power and back-stabbing that goes on. That type of thing IS a surprise to ME however. I've never been involved in that world, and my experience of the "Truth" (as limited as that may have been) has been so completely self-evident and OBVIOUS that it would never even OCCUR to me to try to convince someone else of anything or allow them to dissuade my own "knowing".
And you aren't doing that. You are avoiding "arguing" with people or trying to convince them of anything. So I just thought I'd drop you a line and let you know that, in my humble opinion, you are doing a fantastic job of responding to each and every person who writes you.
And that CAN'T be easy!!!!!

Keep the faith my friend.

With much gratitude,

Jason

February 2, 2006

Eric's Reply #1
I don't need any of this conjecture where you turn my questions back on me; this is what most satsang leaders do anyway. All I said was that there is no point to all this egoic effort because the nature of the inquiry cannot free oneself. The reason I raise questions about introversion is because I consider it a waste of time. You have been

in ashrams, as you have said. Do you consider all the people that you see in many of those places to be well? My experience is different, and many will disagree. But there are very subtle forms of coercion and control of what one can think and do in these environments and often not healthy in very simple relational terms. And many people who are there are not necessarily thinking clearly no matter what they may be telling themselves. But this is almost never addressed.

Eric's reply # 2, same day

You actually think you are enlightened. That you have attained something and you can give it to others. Is that not delusion, Ed?

Eric

Eric's reply # 3, same day

Ed,

I realize that this does require me to address a few more points.

Last night, I re-read what I wrote to you, because I wanted to see if there was anything I wrote that came across as angry in that email. I concluded that it did not, even though my questions were pointed, and I let it rest. I didn't expect that you would write back to me. I thought that probably you would either take or leave what I wrote. Either way, I really don't care. But of your questions, while you may want to ask "is this is my experience or conjecture," it is pretty clear to me that most people base what they believe or assume on experience, as I do. Very briefly again, the problems that I see arising from Advaita, have to do with positing experience in the world as an illusion. What this leads to eventually is mental illness and dysfunction, or a sort of psychosis, because all of our experience of language and of communication is based in the world and in the body. There is no frame of reference other than through the mechanism of the body, period. There are huge problems with positing any sort of unreality to the very mechanism that allows anyone to function relationally with other people. I think this has more to do with the way our brains evolved to use language. If you don't believe me, look at what happens when you fall ill. You cannot function in the same way. If you haven't noticed, what most gurus or contemporary teachers of advaita are actually doing is playing a game of one-up-manship based on their delusion that they have attained something that makes them (as individuals, egos) absolute. It is about power, on one level, but probably on the most basic level, so that those getting involved with any teacher do not realize that this is how the rules are defined. Secondarily, and related to this, is my interest in biography, and for these reasons. Most gurus or teachers who present a public face do so by withholding what they do not wish to be known of themselves, because they want people to believe that they have some secret knowledge. The lie around this becomes apparent of course when other facts are known later, as was the case with Yogananda, if you begin to look at what information comes out much later, and in his case fifty years after his death. And I have looked into that thoroughly. The man was a liar and was deluded, and did everything he could to avoid accountability, but he did have good intentions which he believed in very strongly. Part of this may have had to do with the fact that he was a Bengali who lived in the west for most of his adult life and that he experienced much of the prejudice of this culture in the U.S. during the time he lived here from 1920-1952. But I don't excuse him for this. There are too many things that don't make sense when you begin looking very closely. If you are a psychologist, then I assume that you must know all of these things, or else that after 20 years as a psychologist, you decided that psychology was all bunk and that advaita was true. The problems I see arising from most of these situations around gurus, ashrams, secret spiritual teachings, and recognition of absolute reality, all have to do with secrecy and power, because it is on those levels that people are taken advantage of and duped while their lives are often wasted in pursuits that do not benefit them or anyone else.

On the other hand, I do still strongly feel that there is such a thing as true bhakti, but that experience or understanding of this (or of the actual traditions in India) is often never integrated well enough with the mind and individual ego to cut through what are otherwise delusional assumptions and ideas. This has more to do with its emotional basis, and because of this, bhakti can influence people to follow emotional whims more than reason. Sometimes there is good reason to do so and listen to what is felt, but otherwise not necessarily. I have never found any guru or teacher who actually gives any comprehensive explanation or teaching around these issues, mostly because everything is idealized about their traditions. Most gurus may believe or want to believe that they are doing good in their work and in the world, but I don't believe that is actually the function of the Guru, to do good. And even so, if there is any true function of the guru, I still don't feel that it would invalidate anything I have said here at all. Do you?

Eric

February 2, 06

> *Eric,*
>
> *It is quite obvious you are angry and not even aware of it. See Jason's letter.*
>
> *You responded to my reply with three replies in a few hours, which means something ticked you off.*
>
> *Again, you say nothing about yourself and present an "objective" monologue blasting most everyone. You did not say anything positive about anyone or thing.*
>
> *You talk about power, psychodynamics, etc., but where are you? Why do you care about Yogananda? Why do you care what Robert thought of Yogananda or Ramana? How does that affect you?*
>
> *You do not recognize that your judgments are opinions only.*
>
> *With your attention exclusively pointed outwards, any inward journey will seem pointless.*
>
> *Ed*

February 18, 2006

> *I had a hard-disk crash 2 weeks ago and was absent my computer. Sorry if I have not returned many of your letters, but I will soon get to them. I want to dwell on one item as a generic reponse to many letters I get about Kriya Yoga.*
>
> *I get many questions from Kriya Yoga practitioners regarding how to awaken the Kundalini energy and have experiences like I talk about in my "Kapleau" section under Zen.*
>
> *Robert and I were both initiated into Kriya Yoga, Robert (1946) directly from Sw. Yogananda, and me by a student in Detroit in 1956.*
>
> *I don't think Robert ever took it seriously as his starting point was the end point that Kriya and Raja yogins hope to attain some day.*
>
> *But Kriya yogins must be very clear about where they are going. What is the purpose of Kriya practices? If it is to awaken the Kundalini energy, what end does that serve? Is awakening that energy an end in itself, or just a marker towards another greater end?*
>
> *Of course the final end, as Yogananda's organization name attests to, is Self-Realization, or God realization or unity with God.*
>
> *With this in mind, we need to understand the place of Kriya practices.*
>
> *Remember, Robert balked at such practices and asked Yogananda, "What is the point of these practices, they have nothing to do with self-realization."*
>
> *In fact, most Kriya practitioners know this, but feel they must start somewhere. Kriya is practical and there is quick feedback that makes one feel as if there is progress.*
>
> *Self-inquiry, as advocated by Ramana Maharshi and Robert, would be boring to most Kriya practitioners.*
>
> *The other problem with self-inquiry is that many do not understand the instruction of turning inward; their inner space has not been opened and the vast lighted Void of consciousness is not accessible to their mind.*
>
> *In situations like this, awakening the Kundalini is VERY important. However, the practices I advocate are opening the Third eye (of mind), and thereby learning to look within to be able to follow the I-thought.*
>
> *This practice, explained in the Kapleau section as well as in "Practices" is extremely, extremely powerful. It will light up the Kundalini in a way lesser practices would take years—if ever.*

Unfortunately, it is easy to get caught up in the awakening Kundalini experiences and become distracted, as did I. Muktananda's who way revolves around the experiences from awakening that energy.

But, it is a dead end. One would have to practice Kundalini for several lifetimes to reach the purity where in spontaneous realization if possible. I use the term "several lifetimes" only as an analogy. I mean, you will never get self-realization by its practice. It is a preliminary practice, a beginner's practice.

Also, Kriya practices as advocated by Yogananda do not require much work—a few minutes to an hour or so a day. Nothing much will come out of that. Awakening the Kundalini as well as more direct practices, such as self-inquiry, or especially opening the Third Eye, are far more quickly attained by intensity. Practice 5-6 hours a day of meditation, opening practices or self-inquiry will awaken that energy ten times more rapidly than tepid Kriya practices.

You also need to recognize that awakening the Kundalini is not always a pleasant experience; the movements of the energy up and down the spine and through the chakras can be painful and other experiences, quite frightening. It is good to have a teacher around at that time to dispel fear.

Of course, you can just push on in your practice and go through it alone, but that requires great courage. Also, once the Kundalini is awakened, it will stay awake, at least for many years, even if you stop it.

Therefore, be forewarned as to what you will be getting in to.

Then again, I ask, where are you going with all this? What is it that the practices are for? Where are you going? You must become very clear about this.

If you are aiming for self-realization, you probably will never get it through Kriya Yoga. It is a beginner's practice. However, beginners generally do not know where they are going. Terms such as self-realization or unity with God are just vague concepts that one may aspire to, but concepts that do not provide guidance. That is, what does self-realization mean when you do not know what self is? What does unity with God mean, when your knowledge of God only comes from reading books by Rama Krishna or someone like him?

Book learning and reading the sutras will NEVER result in self-realization. Your mind must grasp for itself, directly what the Self is. This is realization. It cannot be obtained through books, which are dead words, a thousand years old, but only through the live works of a living guru and your own self-inquiry.

However, I say this clearly, once you attain enlightenment, everything, Everything I state above is found to be not true, illusion. All of the above is only meant as a "pointer" to that which is beyond mind, knowledge, book reading and spiritual practice.

Once you attain, you will find there is and was no I to attain. 'I' is an illusion. It never existed and does not do so now. But Kriya practitioners are far from this knowledge generally.

Therefore, it is far better to seek the self and penetrate into the inner Void to find self-knowledge than all of the physically-related practices. As Robert said, anything that involves concentrating on the body, its experiences, even Kundalini, just makes the body more real. You need to transcend the body, go beyond the body and realize the Self Absolute.

Note

I have been preoccupied with making a living for the past six weeks and have fallen dreadfully behind in letters in and replies out.

There have been around 120 inquiries.

If you sent me an email and didn't get a response, please send it again.

I list a few below. All are late February-late March.

March 1, 06

Hello Ed;

First I must thank you for your website. It takes a lot of compassion and patience to do what you do, but again, I guess we are not the doer and only the means for the doing. I also apologize if my words are obscure and not clear. I was never good at putting things in words especially what comes from within.

I don't really know why I am writing to you for I have no specific question and have dropped all mental effort to understand. I don't know where I am on this so called path, but there is surrender to what is, and the way it is, which also includes my spiritual understanding. I am only left with a will to continue expanding, to go further and that seems to be enough to create a movement towards it. These few sentences are not meant to gain gratification from others either, for the need for that seems to be fading as well.

I was listening to Robert Adams voice on your web site tonight and it touched my heart the way his book did. I too seem to see the world and my physical body as only superimposed images. Form seems to be noticed by the formless within. This form, to me at least, includes the physical body and its movements, sensations and thoughts, and other physical bodies. When there is identification to the form, the clarity of the formless subsides under a veil, but the veil is not a result of thoughts but only identification to those thoughts, and to me that points to some desire underneath. The form and the formless don't seem to be separate but are rather joined and is one, both playing their part in this divine comedy. And then, there is without a doubt, what can not be put to words or described which is prior to form and formless, and all arise from it. Is this what some call Consciousness? When there is complete stillness, there is a presence, if it can be called that, just prior to it. Is it possible that one can merge in to that presence? Do I make any sense or am I really off the track?

I realize how busy you must be, but I really appreciate a response and if not I still thank you for your compassion towards seekers. Funny, I started the letter with saying I don't have any questions and I just realized I am throwing a bunch of them at you.

With gratitude;

kk.

> *Hi Ken,*
>
> *That presence you perceive is not you. It is still an object within consciousness, and even consciousness it not real. Nothing. No thing. Even when it appears to be an unchanging absolute, it is still an object.*
>
> *Nothing, not even God touches you.*
>
> *Ed*

Silence of the Heart found its way into my home and I found my way into your website.
I'm still exploring your site, but I have been reading "Stump the Guru".

"Stump the Guru" questioners obviously appreciate you, your website, and the opportunity to dialogue.
As I read and re-read their writings, I sense that some of them are really feeling despair.

There appears to be so much worry about "thoughts".
Do we really need to annihilate, exterminate, or obliterate our personal thoughts?
Do we really need to be so obsessed with thinking and not thinking?
Aren't thoughts anything more than a vehicle of Spirit?
The power is never in the thought.

Isn't it true that concentration (One-pointedness, Truth, and Principle) is an expanded state of consciousness and not a contracted one?

Doesn't it come through the principle of relating all things rather than through the mistaken idea of excluding anything?

So why exclude thoughts.
Isn't the better practice to exalt all items-bodies-things (thoughts) to Spirit?

Material vs. spiritual manifestation
Perhaps the confusion and despair sets in when we think of items-bodies-things as being material.
Knowing this is not really so (that materiality is only dream, illusion, etc.), we then try to deny these items-bodies-things by not thinking about them.
After all, materialization is not spiritually a fact.
But spiritual manifestation is very real.
To quiet the personal mind and the body is good.
To think the thoughts of God (Spiritual Facts) is good too.
Respectfully,
Kathy

> *Kathy,*
>
> *Thoughts are nothing more than mind itself. Thought or mind is the world.*
>
> *When thought subsides, the identity shifts to that which is before thought.*
>
> *In a sense, thought it the enemy. It keeps the mind moving which prevents it from subsiding in the self.*
>
> *Controlling thought is a first step. Once the mind is entirely silent and still, more so than 99.9% of the human race will ever know except in death, the Absolute rises as foremost. Then, thought can come and go as modifications on the Absolute.*
>
> *Yes, thought is the enemy.*
>
> *To say that thoughts are is the vehicle of spirit is a complex philosophical statement. Get before the statement. Why do you want to keep the mind?*

Ed
If I think about nothing (no-thing), I am still thinking.

If I attempt to not think or to stop thinking, then I will first have to think about not thinking. So now, I'm continually thinking about not thinking in an effort to stop.

If I control my thought, I am still thinking. But now my focus is on Oneness, Principle, Absolute Truth, Spiritual Facts. And my effort is to make the thought - Knowing.

Thought or mind is the material world. But let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater.
Isn't it true that I AM perceives-conceives ideas now ad infinitum.
These ideas (thoughts) have no purpose, power, meaning, or substance.
No idea is more important than another idea and they are never connected.
These ideas have no value to Consciousness.
I AM conceives ideas because It can.

I AM Purpose, Power, Substance, Being, Knowing.
But I AM never My idea, I AM never in My idea.

Do i have to stop thinking so I AM can be all that IT can be.
Do i have to stop thinking so Intelligence can know.
Do i have to stop thinking so that God can be more aware of Itself or It's ideas?

To get before the statement [thought is a vehicle of spirit] -- do you mean to concentrate on the formless state?
I was simply trying to convey that thoughts, words, and deeds are the vehicles that "carry" spirit into manifestation.

When anything is made plain, we are enlightened about it.

Respectfully,

Kathy

> *Kathy*
>
> *You are in a difficult place. Very.*
>
> *You need to begin to master your mind. It has had free-reign too long.*
>
> *You don't even know at this point how to look within.*
>
> *I do not want to waste your time learning beginning techniques. Therefore, I will teach you two:*
>
> *Try to look inside and find from where thoughts come, and from where they go.*
>
> *Do not let your mind come up with all kinds of questions about thought watching thought, splitting of mind, why should you do it, etc.*
>
> *This is the mind trying to protect its own existence.*
>
> *At first, you will be able to look only a short time before getting distracted or falling asleep. Persevere.*
>
> *It will be extremely difficult for you.*
>
> *In fact, it might be good to just look for where one thought arises and passes, which is the I-Thought.*
>
> *The other practice is found on my site, called microanalysis. Alternate the two.*
>
> *You mind is too distractible at this point to get anywhere. Therefore, you need to learn how to focus and the I-thought or microanalysis is the way.*
>
> *Persevere.*
>
> *Ed*

March 1, 2006

Hi Ed,

First off, thanks for putting together such a wonderful site; I often troll the net looking such sites, composed by those who have apparent genuine realization, then freely give of their understanding and experiences. So thank you very much! :-)

My reason for writing is to ask you if you are able to do distance Darshan / shaktipat upon me? As you have talked about your awakening and from my own experiences, I intuit your integrity and realization. You also speak of Robert 'cooking' you with his energies and assisting you in your own awakening. So I was wondering if this is possible or something you would consider? Perhaps if I sent you a digital photo, you would move into a Samadhi state of absolute realization and connect with me via the photo and pour fourth a 'cooking' of energy?

I am aware of the various theories / models for and against such a request and possibility, but, it doesn't hurt to ask does it ;-)

Just a little about me, I have spent over ten years in serious spiritual pursuit (I am 32 and a philosophy undergraduate, almost finished and hoping to go onto a Ph.D. meditating every day and night, with methods

from most all known traditions, with some good progress. I feel I am close to 'critical mass' or letting go of the ego into permanent realization of unconditioned awareness, but, like you, it seems like contact with a genuinely realized adept would be most helpful.

I now am working with emptiness meditation, where as for the most part I have worked with Kundalini type methods, similar to your third eye meditation and tantric Kundalini yoga.

In kind regards,

Thomas

> *Hi Thomas,*
>
> *Normally I do not give blessings or Shaktipat because there is no sense of I as doer or bestower.*
>
> *The Kundalini experiences have 98% disappeared so I am unaware of how I could do Shaktipat.*
>
> *Robert never gave it, as he felt this was only a body-level thing which made the body-mind more real rather than less.*
>
> *However, if you are willing, we can try. Send the photo and we will set a time to sit together.*
>
> *My suggestion is that if you are doing an emptiness meditation, you should continue. Remember, inside and outside are an illusion. With awakening you realize you are not the body nor does it exist. Therefore there is no inner or outer.*
>
> *Therefore I suggest that even when you are peering into the inner emptiness, try simultaneously to be actively aware of the "outside," in order to make both unreal.*
>
> *Where are you studying philosophy?*
>
> *Study of philosophy will much slow down your attaining, but might help a lot if you become a teacher.*
>
> *Ed*

Hi Ed,

Thanks for getting back to me! :-) I gotta run off to uni right now, but as a tentative arrangement, how about Thursday 12 or 1 pm, Australian time. It is Monday 10.30 a.m. as I right this. So Thursday for you would be 8 or 9 pm Wednesday evening for you, I think? We can confirm as we get closer, but I am free on Thursday noon.

I will write again tonight when I get home. Thanks for giving me your time and kindness!!!

In kind regards,
Thomas

Hey Ed,

Phew.... I got cooked well truly that time around!!! ;-) First thing I noticed was my Kundalini awakening, with intense heat in sushuma around the level of the solar plexus. The heat then progressively spread upwards, right up into the brain and crown very intensely. That was the first time that kind of intense flow with its accompanying heat moved up into the brain and crown; usually it is much less intense in the brain and crown area. I ended up sweating a lot and went into deep trance and experienced a unitive experience where I felt like I was an ocean of 'oneness' and bliss, expressing at various levels of energetic vibration.

So as you can see from the above, I had 'oneself' experience, so was not able to achieve the No-self state like the other day. Unfortunately, I was exhausted from work and uni, so fell asleep during the meditation. Some however have theorized, that if one goes into a Samadhi state, but then is unable to bring memory of it back

into the waking mind, it appears as sleep to the one having the experience; I don't think that was the case with me though. :-) In any case, I am very grateful for your assistance :-)

Ed, do you have any more advice you would like to give me for the further development of my path to awakening?

In kind regards,

Thomas

> *Now that the Kundalini has reached the top of your head, you should expect soon that when it rises to there, it will start to come back down through your face and chest into your heart.*
>
> *Ed*

Hi Ed

How are you doing? Just wanted to drop you a line to say that something

wonderful happened on March 13th. While I was reading an article,

Suddenly something occurred that I understood there is no observer, just pure insight in everything, everything is being looked at straight, without any interpreter (ego) in between. I started to laugh for a long time and it all felt so funny.

Since then, (I) am constantly in this no-mind state which is very peaceful und silent, No disturbing mind with its endless talks in the background. Just peace and silence in my head. You know what's funny? The article I read when it happened is from Jiddu Krishnamurti, "Pure Observation" was the title of it.

How long can it last? Only God knows or how Balsekar would call it "thy

Will happen".

Dropping into reading a few lines in any of the Advaita books is, these days, like eating desert. It's all so obvious. Even reading only occurs when it has to happen.

Much Love and take care, you do an excellent job with your website

All the best

Sven

> *Great! Try to hold onto it. By that I mean, try not to get distracted. Stay by yourself. Take a few days off from work. Be alone. Nurture it.*
>
> *Ed*

March 26, 2006

Hi Edward,

Thanks for having this great site for all of us. I have found it very inspiring.

I have been thinking lately of going to India, to visit Arunachala. I have also been reading that Bhagavan did not recommend for people to travel to India, since the Self is everywhere. What is your thought on that?

Thank you for your time.

Daniel

> *Daniel,*

Do not go.

A have always advised against it. It becomes a tourist thing; learn India and its culture, spend time at the Ashram. Visit famous gurus. See the poverty and death.

Then people come back, often with some parasite or another, tell me about how hard India was psychologically, and at the same time, how moving and spiritual it was. Yet, they come back with nothing except how moving India was.

It is no more than a tour. Take a cruise boat to Alaska instead.

This is not what you want. You will waste time getting to self-knowledge. You will not find it at an Ashram. If you are ready, there is a teacher waiting for who probably lives within ten miles of you. You will find him/her. In the meantime, look within and find the emptiness, the formlessness within which all objects manifest, including the object "I," which is only a mental object. When it goes, you get everything you are looking for and even more.

That's my take.

Ed

July 31, 2007

Someone very close to me died a few months ago. I knew then that I was not beyond attachment to her. I have not much been attached to being alive. When she died, I felt that last attachment was gone. But, six months later here I am.

For further dialogue go to this site's companion blog:

http://www.itisnotreal.blogspot.com

End of part 1

Part 2 contains the new blog

ED MUZIKA

itisnotreal.blogspot.com
All Posts since the beginning

It Is Not Real
This is a blog companion to the website http://itisnotreal.com. email questions to satsang.online@gmail.com

From Susan:

Dear Ed,

I just sent you a big email at your other email address. I hope you still get it. It's weird, I'm late for work and was turning off the computer when I was prompted to check email. There you were!

This might sound strange, but does Robert still have the means to communicate with me? I haven't talked/prayed to him for years. But, he is very strong in my consciousness today. Telling me..... nothing is connected, quit smoking, etc. I really need guidance now and have been praying to every master I could think of for response. Robert was not one of the beings I prayed to. Do you think I still have a connection to him and to trust him? I really adored Robert, even though I met him after his body died.

Anything that could give me hope right now, would be great. Thank you again for your site, Ed.

Susan

> *Hi Susan,*
>
> *If you place faith in Robert, you are placing faith in yourself. No matter what appears to be happening, it will be as is ordained. This is an external matter, smoking and life problems; Robert was only interested in helping people find themselves. Yet, those who concentrated on him came out alright.*
>
> *He is always present.*
>
> *Ed*

Dear Ed,

I don't understand. Why would he care about me? I never met him personally. Yet when he told me to quit smoking this morning I knew it was a strong "force" that was responding. I immediately put the patch on. On another note....Do mean to tell me that everything is preordained? I try to follow Yogananda's teachings about asserting my will and nothing ever seems to come of it. It has been so difficult for me spiritually. If I knew everything was already set I would be able to relax. Is this how you live? Can I still place faith in Robert even though he doesn't have a body anymore? I'm sorry. I know these questions sound immature, but I really get confused. I have great moments of bliss sometimes and then I KNOW this is an illusion, yet I can't hold onto those moments. I guess I need some reassurance. I am so grateful for your site. I can feel you really knew him and what he was about.

Susan

> *Yes Susan, everything is pre-ordained. As Robert said, "Everything is ynfolding as it should." He said the only freedom is to turn within.*
>
> *Robert loved everyone, even though he knew that they did not exist. They did not know they did not*

exist, so he was trying to show them their true selves beyond existence.

Don't worry too much about not smoking. Robert said to pay little attention to the body. he said only have a non-spicy vegetarian diet, little or no alcohol--only that really helps.

Robert as universal love aspect of Self loved everyone as Self. Do not worry, all is well, all is well.

Ed

Dear Ed,

I cannot tell you how happy this has made me! My conclusion is there is nothing to worry about then. I have enjoyed your web site for the last hour and am quite embarrassed as it dawned on me I was talking to an enlightened being. So thank you for being blunt and telling me the truth. I don't know what happened that I deserved to find you, but I can only say all these years of meditation has paid off today. You are a true blessing. Robert is awesome. I thought he dissolved into non-existence or something. May your days be blessed with more and more bliss!
Susan

Dear Ed,

Did Robert ever tell you what it was that if he told everyone they would beat him to death? Thanks. Susan

Susan,

That even Consciousness does not exist. What you are is even beyond Consciousness. That is, consciousness, the self-illuminated Void is still something perceived, and by whom? That whom is untouched by anything, including consciousness.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 7:21 PM

15 June 2006

From P

Good to hear from you. No plans for travel this summer. I plan to go back to Arunachula for a longer time – maybe 6 weeks -during Jan and Feb. My plan is to spend the summer getting my house ready to put on the market so that by winter I am out of the house and into some cozy apt that is easy to leave. I do not know how to explain my strong desire to return to the mountain, but it is certainly there.

P

By all means return to it. It sounds like you are not done there yet. Of course, Ramana was never done.

Thanks for the heads up about the new transcription. I am eager to read it! I continue to listen to the other 2 CD sets frequently. My hour commute gives me a lot of opportunity! What can I say in response to those CD's? Every single thing that is thought/felt/spoken/ believed/perceived etc., is illusory. The world is only the mind's interpretation. Minus the interpretation, there is no separate one, no world.

> *The world is not the mind's interpretation. The mind IS the world. The world is thought only. That is why it is called a dream. There is not something the mind interprets which becomes an illusion when interpreted. You might say mind obfuscates pure awareness.*

With the seeing that there is no separate one, there is the seeing that there is no control. Somehow, when there is a slipping into what feels like a direct seeing of this Truth, as opposed to an intellectual understanding, there is such immense peace, stillness, love, joy – beyond words. And yet, there is (mostly) a barrier to the direct experience of Truth and a frequent falling into bouts (short but intense) of despair and depression, seemingly out of nowhere. There is a pulling into deeper and deeper stillness in meditation and an unshakeable disinterest in "the world."

> *Yes, yes, good, good. Abide in yourself as often as possible. Self inquiry is only inverting attention to a hypothetical source; but even that is misdirection. There is no source and no manifestation. No inner, no outer. That is mind only, and mind is not real.*

My draw to Ramana, years ago, was so profound. Connecting with Robert, and you, and more with Robert through you is beautiful. It feels like such a gift.

> *We gift each other. Robert would be happy.*

Hi Ed,

A couple of weeks ago I had two dreams on back-to-back nights that really had an impact. In the second dream I was milling around with a huge number of people getting ready to run a marathon race. I decided I had better use the restroom before the race started so I looked around and located one just a few yards away. I asked a couple of people whether they thought I had time and they assured me there was more than enough time. So I jogged over and as soon as I had closed the door to the restroom, a woman started to pound on the door wanting in. I hurried and was pulling up my pants as she was shoving her way in. When I got outside, I couldn't believe it; there was no one there. The race had started without me. I looked down the road and could just barely see the last runner.

There was this rock solid knowing that instead of running the marathon, I was supposed to go find a spot to sit and not move. The feelings in the dream were devastating -- deep hopelessness and helplessness. There was no way to compete, much less even catch up to the other runners. And how could it be that one moment you think you are running a marathon and the next moment you know for certain you are supposed to sit still until, who knows? And what good is sitting still, and all by yourself?

Anyway, I am telling you all of this because, "It's All A Cosmic Joke!" is the perfect answer to that dream. Something heavy carried from the dream lifted in the reading. There has remained some level of attachment to at least limping along in the marathon; and that lessened. I love Robert's directness and humor. His words were just perfect. And so are yours in the Introduction. Thank you!

P

PS In the last email I didn't really mean that the mind interprets something that becomes an illusion when interpreted. I meant that the mind interprets that there is something when there is nothing . . . and therefore obfuscates pure awareness. (If this clarification of what I meant is not accurate, I would love to know!)

> *Your ego sees its own end but does not comprehend that it is liberation.*

Dear Ed,

When I was at Arunachula I slept, at best, half the hours I usually sleep. I was always meditating by 3:00 am. There was this energy that seemed to replace my need to sleep. Last night I read your email a few minutes before I went to bed. I woke up in the middle of the night with the same energy I experienced at the mountain and was up the rest of the night. It's still with me. Ramana spoke through Robert, Robert speaks through Ed. I feel much joy in hearing that you will begin Satsang! How perfect that you are the vehicle for this transmission

in ever growing ways!

As for the dream I wrote about in the previous email, I did have a sense that there was a specific place I was supposed to go sit. My sense was that it was on the ground under a tree . It was a pretty vague sense though. My resistance was so great in the dream, I did not move; I just kind of stood in place, paralyzed.

P

> *P,*
>
> *It is like this. When you wake in the morning and the dreams begin to disappear, it feels like cobwebs in your mind are leaving. Same with daydreaming. You come out of it and it feels like you were coming out of a mental fog.*
>
> *So is it with awakening. It feels like the clouds of sleep, of mental fogginess, of ignorance are lifting. In all cases, that fog, the conceptual mind so to speak, is the apparent objects of dreams or of the world.*
>
> *There is nothing except these thought forms or thought like forms. They are the beginning and end of existence. There is nothing in existence except for thought.*
>
> *But, there really is not a mind. There are just thoughts, mental space cloud forms of ignorance which are the objects of dream and of the waking dream world.*
>
> *To say anything about pure consciousness is a speculation of the mind, which itself does not exist. Even consciousness, pure awareness and all that are just concepts before you attain.*
>
> *Then you see that ideas, concepts, images are all that anything in "reality" is and therefore, everything is unreal and mindstuff.*
>
> *When Ramana talks about Consciousness like he does, it is because people needed something to hang their hats on; that is, using concepts to end concepts.*
>
> *But, it is not the final truth.*
>
> *There is only thought and you are not that. Those thought forms comes to you and lie on top of you so to speak, but you are not that. It, the fog of concepts and images cannot touch you.*
>
> *That final truth comes to you and it is inexpressible because it is far beyond anything revealed or imagined by thought. Thought is but a poor reflection of Self and as such, cannot comprehend that which is far beyond it and greater than it.*
>
> *I am not sure if I expressed myself well, or if I misunderstand what you are trying to say.*

Dear Ed,

Thank-you for this email. I know what you express is the final truth. I would like to try to tell you something that happened about two years ago. I was driving to my favorite bagel store across town one morning, (thinking of nothing more profound than whether I was in the mood for a poppy seed bagel or maybe a cheese bagel) when, completely out of the blue, there was this feeling like I was in a tiny rowboat about to be completely consumed by a gigantic wave. I wanted desperately to get out of the way but it was totally impossible. There was an inner voice that said something like “You are now going to know what is true – you sincerely want to know, so you will know.” My body started to feel very strange, like it wasn’t really there, and, as soon as I parked in the parking lot (only about a minute or two passed) I completely lost all body awareness. I was taken (for lack of better words) on a journey through “everything” – all of the universes – and was shown that nothing at all was there. An impossible paradox to express but, that’s what was shown. It was like I was traveling through something that was nothing –completely empty sameness -- on and on and on, seemingly at great speed. I was given a tremendous amount of knowledge but I have no memory of the specifics other than nothing exists, despite appearances. When I came back into body awareness, I felt profound despair, depression, fear. At first I had no memory of anything in this life but I knew I was supposed to know. (I have wondered if this is how people with dementia

feel.) My mind struggled frantically to find something that would make the world come back. My oldest son's name came up and then everything in the world came back very quickly. The ego had a memory again and the world was back in place. At some point I got out of the car and walked to the bagel store. I passed by another form and, even though there was this deep confusion and despair, there was also the most amazing feeling of utter love for this form (no memory of any detail of the form). This experience has been the backdrop of everything ever since. I know that this is an experience expressed by an experiencer but, so goes the boundaries of _expression.

The fogginess you wrote about feels very true – just more (albeit fading) objects of mind. To follow this fog analogy – it feels as though there have been breakthroughs when the fog is not there. At these times, there is just awareness – like there is no container – just awareness without a boundary of a separate "me." Not a "me" perceiving something that is separate and not "me." At these times everything is exactly the same as it has always been but seen as completely different. But these experiences are always fleeting. Are these truly experiences of the fog lifting – if it comes back, did it ever really go away completely? Is awakening always something sudden and lasting or is it possible for the fog to slowly lift and then be permanently gone?

Thanks,
P

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 7:38 PM

From Susan,

Dear Ed,

I was reading your online satsangs. Some are quite invigorating!! (i.e. Eric's)
Here is my question: If the presence with me is still an object in consciousness then I can only conclude that no matter what "I" perceive in my pursuit of the Self, it is not obtainable because it is not perceivable? Or....the gap in between sleep where there is no perception is something that will awaken in this body/mind? Help!! After I really felt like someone was watching me yesterday, something happened to really scare me. I got scared that no matter what I did, I couldn't become Self-realized and that I will have to just be quiet and dissolve. I'm terrified of not existing. Susan

> *Susan,*
>
> *You will need to articulate your questions more clearly and in detail. There seem to be three questions jumbled together.*
>
> *Here is what I think you mean. No, the Self is not attainable because you are the self, always have been, always will be, before and after life. You should just rest in yourself. Then, one day, the I-thought disappears and you become the totality of consciousness.*
>
> *However, consciousness is still perceived; the self-luminous Void is still perceived. Who is perceiving. If you seek this, you will reach the no I thought state--maybe--definitely if you persevere. But, it will come unexpectedly.*
>
> *The next step, recognizing that everything, including the screen of consciousness is unreal, happens when you pass from consciousness, to sleep, to dreaming and find these states are only thought stuff on you. YOU, cannot be perceived.*
>
> *So the best practices are either self-inquiry to find no-I-thought, or to do nothing except rest in yourself without seeking.*
>
> *At this point, this is only philosophy for you. Don't think about this stuff because it is a distraction. Just abide in yourself and all will become clear. If not, you will become a not-self-realized philosopher.*

Thank you. You cleared everything up for me.

Susan

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 9:31 AM

From Charlie:

Hello, Ed ...

I found my way to your Website vial a post on a Google group, "AdvaitaNow" which I enjoy ... I also have a website and just linked you. Your _expression of That which is utterly inexpressible rings the bell here :-)

A question? I sense from some of your writings that you feel there IS a place for "practices" on this path of non duality ... I was with Wayne Liquorman for 2 years, and since have been with "Sailor" Bob Adamson and spend time listening to his and Tony Parsons' CD's ... before that I was on a "traditional" path (TM, Siddha Yoga) and had a Guru (Baba Muktananda, then Nityananda, then Gurumayi....) I see that we share that 'connection'!

I suppose though my experience is my practices help a lot in reducing suffering where the "Who Am I" inquiry seems to just be a mental looping back on itself, I don't really know what or who to trust! Can you say any more about the practices and the final dissolution of the false sense of a separate "me"?

I like the honesty I feel on your pages.

Thanks!

With Love,

charlie

> *Charlie*
>
> *Good to hear from you!*
>
> *Right now I have some documents to get out but I will look at your site.*
>
> *Ramana and Robert had only one main practice, the who am I. I did that for 18 years without attaining although it was necessary.*
>
> *Practices depend solely on where you are and what blockages you have in your practices.*
>
> *Tell me more about your practices and who you are as an apparent individual; i.e., your biography.*
>
> *The even better practice, from my point of view, is the sitting, doing nothing, except staring inwardly to the empty self, the self-luminous Void.*
>
> *If you cannot see that, you should practice opening the third eye. Directions on my site.*
>
> *If you were in a center or monastery, things would be easier; with diligent practice of who am I, you could attain the first glimpse of your true self in six months. Of course, I was practicing Who Am I in sitting meditation 8-10 hours a day and most of the rest of the day while trying to function in the world.*
>
> *Read my practices section as well as my biography section and pick a practice that seems right.*
>
> *Robert and Ramana attained without practices so they do not speak of them—much.*
>
> *Take care and write,*

> *Ed*

Hi Ed

You said, "The even better practice, from my point of view, is the sitting, doing nothing, except staring inwardly to the empty self, the self-luminous Void...."

Yes ... sitting quietly, Being no Thing. Lovely. Then questions arise and subside in the empty Space-Of-Awareness

The question of Practices can also be answered for a mind by the inquiry, of course ... (Who asks the question?)

So: As you asked about "me", though there is a knowingness that there ain't none such, there still appears a questioner and a seeking some "final Bang!" and so it goes.

The Understanding is clear. But still a persistent sense of an "I" that seemingly OWNS the Understanding persists ... a subtle feeling, inchaote yet undeniable, a very faint thread of "Two-Ness" seems top persist ... hence the continuing investigation! ... Mu ...

Are you by any chance the guy who told Ramesh Balsekar that you meditated 8-10 hours a day at Henry Dennisons' place? I digitized all of Ramesh's talks for Wayne Liquorman at one time as a "seva..." amazing stuff ...

Anyway ....

I also knew and loved Nityananda, who gave me the name Ishan ... lived in the Santa Monica Ashram 2 years, Jan 1983 - March 1985. We must have met! :-)

But there is little desire here to focus on any story ...

My website and blog have a lot of my favorite teachings and Links, perhaps if the spirit moves you to, you can explore and offer your comments and insights ...

I will do the same on your pages as you suggested. Though I am quite happy with the Ishayas' Ascension, I am open to all pointers...

Much Love and Respect,

Charlie

> *Hi Charlie,*
>
> *Great site!!*
>
> *Yes, abiding in the awe of the Void. This is preparatory. I knew there was no I for 19 years before I really knew there was no I. I practiced both Void seeing, doing nothing and Self Inquiry. But, like you, I found following the I stupid as I knew there was no I.*
>
> *Then, one day, it happened, and that subtle sense of self disappeared. But it was not so subtle. It blew me away. The clouds of thought dissipated and I was awake from the illusions of thought-like entities, as the sense of mental sleepiness with the I-thought was destroyed.*
>
> *I do not know what blocks you, except, probably, like me, you think too much. Robert said I was too smart (stupid) and had a hard time not having the mind come back.*
>
> *Write,*
>
> *Ed*

Umm. OK ... i have NO idea what is going to come out ... tap tap air blows TV Golf in BG well ... go Tiger ... yay

Mickelson ...

what is the block to "final Seeing?"

> *I can think of two: looking for final seeing; not looking for final seeing. The latter is th ignornance of normal people, the former, of the abnormal seekers. I had stopped seeking and was just hanging with Robert. NO SEEKING AT ALL. My fate was put in his hands. I had complete faith.*

Could it be as simple as the thinking there is a block or any "final seeing"?

> *Yes. This is part, as you are still seeking because you know you are not, but know that you know not.*

I don't know.

All I REALLY know is that. I don't know. And then there is at times a sort of quiet malaise ... not really what i would call suffering ... i went through pleny of that, though, until Ishayas' Ascension came along i had serached the internet for safe and painless methods to kill this organism ... and I still have a preference that life end sooner rather than later ... hope seems like a really bad idea, that the notion that there could be a better future is SO out of mental ignorance that it rarely gets entertained. For a long time I was in a deep despair. Now the worst that happens is a short few moments of anger or sadness ... or a subtle sense of hopelessness. That hopelessness might be a GOOD thing :-)

> *What you call malaise, I call wisdom. As Robert said, who wants to live a thousand years brushing the same teeth, eating the same food, etc. I am a living dead man and so are you. Yet, so far it has not brought you peace, maybe you have not had the I thought exploded. Reobert saiud looking at the I thought makes it stronger. Find the source. The source is emptiness, the Void. Yet, there is no Void nor Not-Void. Both are appearances associated with the I-thought.*
>
> *One day I looked and the I-thought had blown up. Maturity???? The result of 19 years of Who Am I practice???? Robert's grace??? Not giving a shit anymore because I knew it was not mine to attain???*

Sometimes there is longing for final release from the mortal coil still ... and yet I honestly don't have the balls to kill myself. I part of me still wishes I could do that ... I wouldn't mind living a while longer but I do NOT want to eb around when the money runs out; I canot work (too physically run down, lots of ailments, somke serious) and Soc Security does not begin to cover bills even for a frugal life style.

> *Robert said old age is when things begin to get interesting.*

BTW if you want to use any of this rant please feel free

Anyway, let's see if there is more to rave on about.

I am Nothing. I know that I am nothing. No Thing.

And has THAT become a subtle NEW "me" ... a "spiritual identlty...?"

> *Yes. Precisely. The knowledge is your new identity. But that is not the GUT EXPLODING Experience of No-I-thought. Give it up. Pet your faith in Robert if you will. I still feel his presence. Faith brings relaxation and a mind uncrowded with seeking.*

Hmmm

Tony Parsons repeats that there is no hope, because, it is not there is nothing that will ever bring forth the Big Bang ... it is worse. It is that There Is No One.

"Sailor" Bob reiterates, "There is no person." That is clear as a bell. Look for a me and all I find is Absence. An Absence of the Presence of a sepaRATE "ME."

But as yet there is NOT that "Absence oF THE ABSENCE of that Presence" ... as Ramesh pointed ... to The Absolute Stateless State ...

This feels done for now.

Thanks for asking that I write.

Love,

c.

Ed

Well said, Ed ... this feels right on

there is Resonance ... with Bob, Tony and now Robert ... I too feel his presence permeating all you express ... it's lovely ... many thanks!

Love,
c.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 9:49 AM

From Susan:

Ok. I practice Transcendental Meditation. I sit quiet for 30 seconds then I say a mantra. The next thing I know it's two hours later. I just snap back into body consciousness. The TM teacher told me that it was a black hole in my consciousness that consciousness was trying to heal. That doesn't feel right. Whenever I come to I have this great urge to go back to that place. I actually look forward to it.

> *Black hole, schmack hole. He is full of crap. This is a much lower teaching on the level of body-mind. Dump the Mantra too. It can lead to a temporary Samadhi state, but not the lasting one where the mind becomes absorbed in the self.*

Thanks. Ed, you have helped me so much in the past few days I would like to send you a donation. You cannot imagine how much stress you have relieved me just by talking with me and reading your web site. Please send me your address. I won't take "No" for an answer!

Please let me know if ever you hold Satsang. I will fly out. I live in NC right now. But, I don't care where you are. You are the only one who has been able to make me understand many things that have been ailing me the past ten years. I feel this is a blessing from Robert. I have been with a few saints and had a horrific experience with Sai Baba. I have always had an affinity for Robert's teachings. I'm not much into prayer or trying to will myself out of karma. I am quite uninvolved in things (that's a nice way of saying lazy!) and like things simple. Once I was told by Sri Karunamayi that this is my last lifetime. I couldn't stomach the thought of having a body again. So... I hope she is right. I don't have much faith in people unless I can experience their teachings for myself. Robert has always pulled through for me. Once I went to California to be in Satsang with Nicole and his daughters after Robert died. It was the funniest thing, but I saw the tongue on his picture stick straight out at one of his devotees. I thought the poor thing was going to pass out. It is sometimes good enough for me to know there is a Being who loves and cares. If there is anything that you need or I can do for you, please let me know. I'll try my best to get it.

Susan

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:07 AM

16 June 2006

From Susan:

Ed,

Have you ever had a time when you had no ambitions, weren't happy and weren't unhappy either? That breathing seemed even a chore? If so, how did you come out of it? My friends joke that all I seem to do is breathe and meditate. My family doesn't speak to me much because I just can't seem to get too interested. I am a complete introvert who has always been spiritual since I was a kid. I do care about people, I just don't get involved. One of my friends says I'm tamasic. (Ayurveda's term for too much water in the body). I just don't seem to feel too much progress inside. I applied to Yogananda's Fellowship to get the lessons. Maybe they'll help. What do you think? Susan

> *Hi Susan*
>
> *Again there appears to be a mixture of questions and feelings.*
>
> *Have no ambitions and being neither happy nor unhappy seems like a good things to me, that is, withdrawing from the world. Good for you.*
>
> *But when you say even breathing seems a chore, that sounds like depression. I don't know. I'd have to see you and talk to you to see if I see depression there. Depression is best treated with medication, far more effectively than psychotherapy or meditation.*
>
> *The withdrawal, not speaking, being an introvert; all those sound great to me.*
>
> *As to Tamistic, screw that; that is someone else's theory and they don't even exist. They are your fantasies.*
>
> *Feeling no progress is good because where is there to go? You already are you, and that's all you have to do, abide and rest in You. That is what you are doing, going inwards.*
>
> *Regarding Yoganada. Forget it. Robert left Yogananda when he was 18 because Yogananda wanted him to go to Ramana, because both had awakened when very young, spontaneously. Robert said Yogananda couldn't wait to get rid of him because Robert knew al the exercises Yogananda recommended were at a very low level. I too found SRF rather empty after two years or so.*
>
> *These are lower teachings. Forget them. If you are attracted to Robert, go for it. Jnana and pure Bhakti are the two highest ways.*
>
> *Besides, you can't be that withdrawn. You got married didn't you? You may be withdrawn in that relationship, but you did get married. Lots of withdrawn spiritual types never get married.*
>
> *Don't forget singing either.*
>
> *Ed*

OK. I just wanted your opinion on this because I get scary quiet and my friends find me boring. I'm not depressed however, I do like to sing and take care of elderly people. That's what I do for a living. But, I have been known to sit still for as long as I can get away with it. Maharishi told all of us to stop taking medication because it prevents you from transcending. On another note...none of my spiritual practices are bringing me any joy any more. I just enjoy quiet, solitude, sunshine, flowers and animals. My husband wants me to get my Siddhi initiation next month and I don't want them. I guess breathing becomes a chore when I get aggravated I can't be quiet for as long as I want. Thanks again for your help. Susan

> *Well you are boring. So what? Robert was extremely boring to anybody but the rare ones who got what he had to offer.*

If you want, take the initiation to please him/them, then don't bother with it. It's no skin off your back.

Being quiet is the key. Most people have to struggle to get quiet

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:29 PM

17 June 2006

From Ken:

Hello Ed,

First I must thank you for your website. It takes a lot of compassion and patience to do what you do, but again, I guess we are not the doer and only the means for the doing. I also apologize if my words are obscure and not clear. I was never good at putting things in words especially what comes from within.

I don't really know why I am writing to you for I have no specific question and have dropped all mental effort to understand. I don't know where I am on this so called path, but there is surrender to what is, and the way it is, which also includes my spiritual understanding. I am only left with a will to continue expanding, to go further and that seems to be enough to create a movement towards it. These few sentences are not meant to gain gratification from others either, for the need for that seems to be fading as well.

I was listening to Robert Adams voice on your web site tonight and it touched my heart the way his book did. I too seem to see the world and my physical body as only superimposed images. Form seems to be noticed by the formless within. This form, to me at least, includes the physical body and its movements, sensations and thoughts, and other physical bodies. When there is identification to the form, the clarity of the formless subsides under a veil, but the veil is not a result of thoughts but only identification to those thoughts, and to me that points to some desire underneath. The form and the formless don't seem to be separate but are rather joined and is one, both playing their part in this divine comedy. And then, there is without a doubt, what can not be put to words or described which is prior to form and formless, and all arise from it. Is this what some call Consciousness? When there is complete stillness, there is a presence, if it can be called that, just prior to it. Is it possible that one can merge in to that presence? Do I make any sense or am I really off the track?

I realize how busy you must be, but I really appreciate a response and if not I still thank you for your compassion towards seekers. Funny, I started the letter with saying I don't have any questions and I just realized I am throwing a bunch of them at you.

With gratitude,
Ken

Hi Ken,

That presence you perceive is not you. It is still an object within consciousness, and even consciousness it not real. Nothing. No thing. Even when it appears to be an unchanging absolute, it is still an object.

Nothing, not even God touches you.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 7:35 PM

19 June 2006

From Anonymous:

Hi Ed,

I just read through all the questions and answers on "Stump The Guru." Besides enjoying it very much, I noticed that the last date on the list of questions was May 26/06. Today is June 10/06. I was going to ask you some questions but I was thinking that perhaps you were too busy. I mean, this site came known to me, here on Vancouver Island, and you've got your own life, etc, how could you possibly answer my questions? So, let's make this simple: are you still available to answer questions?

Hope you are well,

Anonymous

> *I have been pretty busy dealing with animal stuff; however, I am now getting back to my real business of teaching about Robert and reality.*
>
> *From now on, Stump the Guru with be posted on* http://www.itisnotreal.blogspot.com
>
> *So shoot.*
>
> *By the way, there is a new post on an entire Robert audio talk on my site entitled "Cosmic Joke."*
>
> *Ed*

Hi Ed,

After much seeking, in one form or another, over the years it seems like I haven't gotten anywhere. I can see that maybe I've made progress in some arenas and in other arenas it's debatable. In the spiritual arena, how does one take the measurement? Am I supposed to suffer less as I approach the truth, the real Self, Nirvana, or whatever? Is there even a sense of progress? Is it like mastering a musical instrument, where it is quite clear that one's abilities gain in clarity, strength, technique, interpretation, etc? And it's easy to measure - a piece that I could play not before, I can now play well.

What about this spiritual path? Should I be able to say, for example: hey, look, before I couldn't resist giving in to my anger now I don't give in. If that is the case, I'd be hard pressed to say that I've made progress. And if I can't see progress, where do I get the will to continue? I wish that I could be like you or like Nisargadatta in having faith. He had faith in his teacher as you did in yours. That seemed to make all the difference in the world. I don't seem to be able to rest anywhere, doubt seems to arise all the time. I haven't been able to find that faith that can persist through adversity. Any suggestions? Thanks so much for this website.

Cheers,

Anonymous,

> *Hi Anon*
>
> *You are not there yet, but are getting closer to where you can Begin to surrender.*
>
> *When you know without question that you cannot attain, you'll be ready.For that which is seeking, is exactly the one unable to attain, because That (Your True Nature) is far beyond the mind. The mind cannot grasp it. The mind is a wisp that flows from it. IT cannot be attained through efforts of the mind.*
>
> *Only when the mind rests, such as in surrender or perfect meditation, will "you" get it. Then you will realize there is no you, never was, and the apparent seeking of you, perpetuated you.*

Wait. It is all unfolding the way it should.

Ed

Thanks Ed.

What you write feels right to me and if you were here you would have heard a sigh of relief.

That line in the Heart Sutra, "there is nothing to attain," has always jumped out at me when chanting because it seemed incongruous. Here I was sitting and chanting - to be honest - in order to attain something, something I thought I didn't have.

Is there a pathway to surrender that you could recommend I practice?

Thanks so much for taking the time to respond to me.

Anon

Well, we are talking on two different levels. Robert used to ask us and go out and give things to people, especially homeless people or help animals. The latter is my particular practice. It builds momentum. In other words, practice compassion and kindness. He said, in the end that was all that mattered. Nisargadatta says mostly the same thing in the little booklet I have up.

The more important sense of surrender is doing exactly what you will be doing soon: Take a very close stock of yourself. Settle down. Ask yourself, "What the hell am I doing?"

"Obviously, it hasn't worked. I have done everything I can and I am even more confused and less at peace." At some point, you give up. It happened before I met Robert, but much more profoundly after I met Robert.

But really, slow the mind down and take a very objective stock of yourself and what and why you are doing. Question it. What do you want? Has anything worked? "What the hell am I doing here?"

You'll see. Maybe a teacher will come, maybe not. It really does not make that much difference because you don't exist. Whether you know you don't exist or not, is sort of a moot point.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:34 PM

From Daniel K:

Hi Ed,I enjoyed browsing your webpage. As an avid collector of Siddha Yoga history, I've always had a great interest in the succession period. Like you, I believe that those of us who would be involved with this path should see the whole truth, or, at the very least, see what Muktananda wanted everyone to see.

Unfortunately, as I'm sure you know, Siddha Yoga recalled most copies of "The Passage of Power," and so I have never had the chance to see it. Which brings me to the main point of this email: Would you be willing to sell your copy of "The Passage of Power"? I'd understand if you don't want to part with your only copy, but maybe you'd be willing to make a copy of your copy? I'm not looking to pay an outrageous fee for this, but if you're willing to sell it for a reasonable price, I'd be interested.

Thanks,

Daniel

Hi Daniel, Where do you live? You can come see it but can't buy it. It is a third maybe fourth generation copy anyway, and very hard to see. Also, I am sure the tape has degenerated even more over the years. Shanks and I were quite close during that period when he was in SM. At the time I

was head of security for both Chid and Nit. You might wan to TRY to get one from Indira Dawson, known now as Josey. She set up the Santa Monica Ashram after Muktananda left LA in 81. She is a good friend.

Hi Ed,

Thanks for your quick reply. I live in the Greater Boston (Mass.) area. Is that anywhere near you? I appreciate your offer to let me come see the tape; hopefully, we're in close enough proximity for that to be realistic. It must have been quite a trip being head of security during that time! :) Daniel

Sorry Daniel, I live in the porn capital of the US, San Fernando Valley just North of LA. Indira (Josey) and Shanks are your best hope. It is an o.k. tape, just shows a usual ritual. It is of very poor quality. Yes, being head of security was a wonderful experience: intrigue, greed, personality conflicts and thousands of worshipers of two who did not deserve worship.

Shanks was a buddy during that time. I saw him stalked while I was driving him. Satsangs were cancelled because of threats and unknown people were filing in for Satsang, and there had been previous disruptions. Hanging around with the swamis was a great show, but utterly illusory. I learned nothing but continued to go for the chanting. I have stories about it somewhere on my site, but sometimes links are broken.

Ed

Hi Ed,Oh well, so much for viewing it at your place. I will try contacting Josey and Shanks. By "Shanks," I take it you mean Swami Shankarananda?

Yes.

Since you were so intimately involved during that time, maybe you can tell me a few of the things I had hoped to learn from the tape (and probably many things I WOULDN'T have seen on the tape!). After Muktananda gave Nityananda his name, it wasn't until several months later that he designated Chidvilasananda as co-successor, right? Did he ever publicly say, "She will be my successor," the way he said it of Nityananda, or did he only mention it after a group of swamis asked him about it?

Although both were ordained at the same time, Nityananda alone was named his successor. She bitched and moaned to Baba until her conceded. He did mention it in a public ceremony later. Of course, since she was his translator and de facto spokesperson, most everyone assumed, as did she, that she would be a successor. There were many, many of his 100+ swamis that were very disappointed they were not named his successor, or at least be given their own fiefdom around the world.

Another thing you have to realize is that Siddha Yoga or SYDA is a family business. Chid and Nit were more or less adopted from one of Baba's close friends. Thus, he passed it on as a family business. At the time of the transition, it was obvious to everyone that their understanding, despite his years of badgering them, training them so to speak, their "knowledge" of the Self was still just words-philosophy. With Chid it seems this holds even today.

Nityananda is far more of what one expects as a guru. He was—when I knew him—sort of bashful and under-spoken. As a matter of fact, Shankarananda appeared to be Nityananda's spokeperson at most events—Shanks, of course, being an intellectual and not-bashful.

Several years ago, SYDA released a "history and theology" of Siddha Yoga called "Meditation Revolution." That book made it sound as if Baba had always indicated (in private, at least) that Gurumayi would be his successor, and Nityananda was more of an "add-on" later on. But the way you describe it on your website makes it sound like it was the other way around. As far as you know, was Gurumayi also being talked about as a successor prior to ~1980, or was she really just added on at the last minute?

> *Everyone knew Nityananda was Muktananda's teacher the moment he gave him that name. He had never given anyone the name of his beloved teacher. Chidvilasananda was not only not an add on, but was given equality by her alleged extortion.*

I wasn't around during that time, but I've visited the ashrams of both Gurumayi and Swami Nityananda. I see what you mean about SYDA being illusory, with all the expensive bookstore items, putting celebrities up front in the programs, scripted "experience" talks, etc. However, I did not get that impression from Nityananda's ashram, and I found Nityananda himself to be very sincere.

> *Yes, the difference between the two are as night and day; Nityananda being the day. As I write, Robert tunrnd Muktananda down when Baba wanted to make a pact that they'd work together to build a world-wide organization.*
>
> *Just out of curiosity, how did you get to be head of security? I thought SYDA did a better job of keeping the non-"die hards" out of their inner circle!*
>
> *It took them a while to realize I was a Siddha Yoga fake. I had had a lot of celebrity bodyguarding experience before Muktananda. I also was on Muktananda's original security staff when he was in LA. Therefore, the powers that ran the LA Center at the time they came, figured I was best for the job. In fact I loved it. I was enamored with power at that time and Siddha Yoga had unbelievable and palpable power. I was a Kundalini junkie. Besides, because I was close to power, I got the perks of power.In other words, I was 16,000,000 miles from self-realization at the time and was there for strictly for emotional fulfillment.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 12:03 PM

From Marcella,

Hi, Ed:

I just found your website last night and I'm really enjoying reading it. Thank you for sharing your experiences and the insights you have gained over your years of searching.
I met Muktananda in 1980 and remained in Siddha Yoga for 17 years. I did
experience a great deal of good stuff around Baba, but in latter years I went to centers solely for the chanting. The CoEvolution Quarterly article about Baba had a lot to do with my distancing myself, and I just despised the politics of "the Foundation."
The chanting, though, was blissful, and I miss it a lot. I was a drummer, and believe me when I tell you there is nothing quite like drumming for rockin' out during the chant. :-)
It's interesting -- having Baba for my guru is a lot like having a beloved
father who you later find out is a rapist. I still love the guy to pieces and feel that we were "meant for each other" in this life. But jeez-o-man, I wish he could've been better behaved! I have a mundane hate for the way he
treated his devotees (esp. the females) and for his idiotic power games. Thankfully I have always felt close to Bhagawan Nityananda, and that has helped a great deal.
I have been trying to regain my spiritual "feet" for the last nine years,
and I think things are moving along for me. I was thrilled to see your recommendation for a translation of the Ashtavakra Gita – Ashtavakra *rocks*!
So my silly question (after such a long intro, please forgive) is: Do you
have a similar recommendation for a translation of the Bhagavad Gita? Byrom's work is so lovely, I'd be very happy to find something similar.
As an aside, I entered the SY Ashram in Ann Arbor just after Shanks left, have heard many, many stories about him, and have met him once. He called me a "bliss bunny", which could be because I was giggling madly when we met...Anyway, just another little link that makes me want to find out more from your website. I look forward to (sort of) making your acquaintance!
Thanks for your time,
Marcella

Hi Marcella,

What area do you live in? I want a chanting Satsang too. Robert loved chanting.

I love Baba style. Thought he was a spiritual lightweight though. Shanks and I go back to his 1978 Center on Mariposa Ave. in LA. We were quite close for many years, especially after the breakup of Chid and Nit. There was war going on here in LA between the two. Harassment, stink bombs, being followed, threatening phone calls, etc. Greta stuff, I loved the drama.

I don't know which translation is as good as Byrom's of the Ashtavakra Gita.

I haven't read much traditional advaita in years either, just Nisargadatta and Ramana. But as Robert said about Nisargadatta, the latter added his own touch. Which is somewhat different.

That was why I went to Satsang too--the chanting. Baba was a fool.

Write often. Come here, have Satsang with us.

Tell me more about yourself, what you do and where you are.

I look forward to meeting you too.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:38 PM

From Thomas,

Ed,I've been enjoying your site for Robert Adams! Thank you!

My question is:'Who' is the one that does the 'practices' that are being suggested in his and your writings?

thanks,

thomas

This is precisely the question to ask. Who am I who is doing practices?

It is for you to answer, no one else.

As Robert said to one of his disciples in a dream:

"Only you can know your true self, no one else can do it for you . . . nothing else matters but this!"

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:44 PM

From Susan:

Dear Ed,

Did Robert ever say how to behave with daily living? Should we just stay in the Self and eventually there will be joy? Thanks. Susan

> *No Susan.*
>
> *He said "Leave the world alone, it is not yours to take care of." Only be yourself; rest in yourself. Enlightenment is an add-on.*

So if enlightenment is an add-on and I take it I can't do anything to force it, then how do you stop the cycle of birth and death?

> *Birth and death are only in your mind. A philosophical concept.*
>
> *Not even you exist, so how can you be born or die? That's what liberation is all about; not becoming immortal, but knowing you are not mortal because you are not a thing--a body that lives and dies.*

Oh. Thank you.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:38 PM

20 June 2006

> *NOTICE:*
>
> *I am still not getting all communications directed to me. The "Contact me" button" on my main website: http://www.itisnotreal.com, appears sometimes to work and sometimes not.*
>
> *The best way to contact me is at ed_online@sbcglobal.net.*
>
> *Keep a close eye on the main website as I am adding new talks by Robert and other updated information on a weekly basis.*
>
> *If I have not responded to your email within a day or two, resend to the ed_online@sbcglobal.net address*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:58 PM

From Dayna:

Hello Ed

I wrote to you a while back, couple of months ago. You gave me the boldest replay and it was a shocking relief. I couldn't believe what you wrote at the time but I took it to a great... what is the word... well it was the best thing any one had ever said to me. You said

“None of this is happening to you; what I am is untouched, and that it is my mind that is embroiled in the pain, which is only a concept, and that there is no me to do anything I am already complete, perfect, beyond the world and existence.

This was very helpful. I still read it time to time.

O n your site you speak about the importance of a teacher (I thought to be impossible for me to find in this city). shortly after being emerged in your site for awhile I found a site that welcomed me to telephone sessions Spiritual Healing Fellowship so I've been doing The Course In Miracles since I already had it and read Joel Goldsmith.

I find the Christian terminology difficult at times but this has been a help towards transcendence, I think. Sometimes I have felt so afraid and have felt extremely depressed. Is this usual to experience such confusing lows on journey to freedom?

Truth is truth I know, but why is it coming from you feel warm and cozy, and his feels like much work is to be done. It doesn't feel good or comforting but I think it's a help. How does one know they've found the teacher suitable for them? Is it the dying daily that is so uncomfortable?

He's assured me it's okay and the ego is stronger than ever now. I know he has awakened though it may be an issue of being incompatible. Geez even talking about it makes me tense, should I walk from this teacher??

Anyway, I feel more crazy than ever, but meditation is good, though it's starting to feel like a pressure compared to before. I don't enjoy it as much as the beginning, I'm sorry to have become so negative all of the sudden.

I am.wanting that peace again. Now I am a "seeker". Listening to The Cosmic Joke... I love. Really needed to hear it, I was really beginning to take things way to seriously.

Thank you thank Ed! Thanks for your web site! it has brought much much comfort!! Thanks for reading my story, it became quite a letter.

Love,

Dayna

> *Hi Dayna,*
>
> *I am sorry you feel so much confusion. This is normal if you have no teacher or if you have many teachers and are caught between their varying concepts. Many teachers, like many books, will lead you nowhere.*
>
> *If you felt comfort from what I said, this might be the teaching style for you. It will take you to the place of ultimate peace and happiness.*
>
> *I am not familiar with the course in miracles, but from what you say, it is a low form of teachings that will never bring enlightenment. If your present teacher says you ego is stronger now that ever before, he does not understand and cannot help you at all. You have a spiritual friend so to speak, not an enlightened teacher.*
>
> *I'd like to suggest to you to get Robert's first book, Silence of the Heart. If that brings you some peace, then you know the way of Jnana is your way. If this is true, get his second book and read Ramana Maharshi little book, "Who am I." By this time you will know.*
>
> *When you find your true teacher it may take some time before you know whether he is yours or not. It took me a couple of years with Robert, but I had known my true path was Jnana from 1968 until the awakening in 1995. I was particularly dense. It may not take you so long.*
>
> *In the meantime, tend to your child, he or she is your teacher for now. Whatever meditation you are pursuing now is probably incorrect unless it is to turn your attention inward instead of outwards into the world. This is best accomplished by asking yourself, "Who am I," and looking inward to find the source of the I thought.*
>
> *In fact, looking inwards to find the source of any thought is a proper way, but the "I thought" is the beginning and end of all thoughts.*
>
> *You may not find this suitable for you ate this point because of your untrained mind. If this is the*

case, practice the opening of the third eye meditation or the microanalysis meditation. Even this sort of mediation you may not think possible, but it is the final mediation, so why not start with the final meditation. I assure you will have doubts and confusion along the way and this will persist until your mind becomes focused. It is not easy, it will be a chore. Then sometimes it will feel extremely easy and no chore at all. It will feel like you have done this exercise all your life. The experience changes, but who you really are is beyond the experiences.

I cannot really advise you too much in an email, because I would have to see you and talk before I had a better feel for your "presence."

I would suggest walking away from your present teacher unless you are terribly spiritually lonely. If you want, you can call me from time to time. I will give you the number in a separate email.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:03 AM

From Michael:

Ed,

I'm reading "Silence of the Heart" for the second time now, and it's strange how entirely new meanings/insights come up the second time around . . .

Anyway, I focused today on the "I Am" meditation that Robert recommended as "very powerful." He said: "I can guarantee you this. If you can practice I Am for one day, just one day, all of your troubles will be transcended." Wow! Quite an endorsement! So I'm giving it a shot.

What are your thoughts about this practice? I note that a student questioned the practice as one of "using" the mind instead of "getting rid of" the mind, but Robert responded that only a few students were mature enough for self inquiry.

A related question: at one point you state that everything is preordained, except we have the freedom to look within. But it seems odd that there's this little corner carved out of existence where free will still reigns, while everything else is preordained. And who is the one who will exercise this free will, anyway?

Very glad to have discovered your site!

Michael

Hi Michael,

Regarding the I-Am meditation, just try it for a day--100% trying. Set aside a day and see what happens. No need to ask me. He is not asking for a three year commitment.

Regarding free will. There is no free will. But the apparent person has apparent suffering and can make what appears to be effort.

So as long as you see yourself as a person, do the practice.

Ed

Ed,

Cool -- just the answer I needed. Been doing the meditation today -- admittedly with less than 100% effort -- but something clearly is shifting. A while ago I went on a laughing/crying jag triggered by something I read in

"Silence," but could be the meditation sort of set me up for it.

Anyway, I plan to keep plugging away at it. (And since the "person" sense is still with me, I think I can actually make plans.)

Thank you!

Michael

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:30 PM

21 June 2006

From Peter who saw Robert at one of his last Satsangs:

Ed,

You have a great site! Thanks.

I had the opportunity to see Robert once only, at a satsang shortly before his death. At that time he could hardly speak, but did manage to recite 'Freedom' over and over into a microphone.His words just kept pealing like a clear bell for the following few years, over and over. Very lovely. Freedom, freedom, freedom.

He was quite weak. Very difficult for him to speak. From having watched my father-in-law die of Parkinson's, it was clear that the end was near. I loved the way it both touched him and did not. Was very glad to have had the opportunity to be there for an hour. Robert stared hard at me for some minutes, so I closed my eyes. Everyone stood up at the end as he left. But as I was um, absent (how else to say it?) after hearing 'freedom' repeatedly.

I failed to notice until some somewhat angry looking person nudged me rather forcibly several times to get up and stand out of 'respect'. Ha! Perhaps being (much to my surprise) absent, was insufficiently respectful.

Got some ugly looks too from someone whom I found out later was Robert's wife. Ho ho - what a giggle!

Where do you live?You are in LA? Peter

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 12:44 PM

01 July 2006

From an old friend:

Ed,

So nice to hear from you!

There is a story I would like to share with you about when Dimitri left the body. It happened like this: I believe this event took place in the month of October.

On one of the days that I give Robert a massage, instead of doing it in the morning, he had asked that I do it in the evening. I think this was because Nicole had the carpets cleaned. So I came over in the evening and Robert was given a massage.

Right after I finished, I heard Nicole yelling out that Dimitri did a pooh on the freshly cleaned carpet. She was quite upset about it. I came out of the bedroom, picked up Dimitri and told Nicole not to worry, that Iwould clean up the mess. I took Dimitri outside and placed him on the ground. I went back inside, cleaned up the pooh, and then went outside to bring in Dimitri. When i picked him up, he felt heavier for some reason. I left him inside the spare bedroom and went to pack up my table. Robert was sitting in the living room, waiting for his dinner. Then I heard Nicole scream out, Dimitri left the body! Dimitri left the body!

I rushed out to see what she was screaming about and lo and behold, Dimitri wasn't breathing at all. I tried

picking him up but he was completely dead-weight. I felt for a pulse but there wasn't any. I put a mirror under his nose and there was no sign of breath. Immediately, Robert came over and looked at his dog lying on the floor. Robert picked up one of his paws but it flopped back down. Nicole was a bit hysterical, and I felt extremely bad, because i was the last one to handle Dimitri. But, given Dimitri's already weak physical condition, I wasn't surprised that he had died. According to the vets, Dimitri should have passed on months ago.

We left Robert alone inside the bedroom with his dog and that's when I noticed that Robert did something to the dog's head and I didn't think anything of it, so I went back inside to collect my table and bag and to wait around to see what he wanted to do about Dimitri. Seconds later, Nicole came rushing in taking me by the hand and lead me back to where Robert and Dimitri were. What I saw bowled me over.

Dimitri was sitting on his haunches, gazing up into Robert's eyes, like he was completely alert and energized. Then suddenly, he fell to the floor and blood seeped from his nose. For almost 30 seconds, Robert had been giving Dimitri a transmission, even after Dimitri had already physically died.

I asked Robert what had happened, and he told me that Dimitri's spirit needed a little help on its way. And that he would never have to be reborn -- his karma was complete -- he was liberated. Tears streamed down the sides of my face, as i truly witnessed something miraculous.

The following morning, I took Dimitri's body to the crematory. Robert showed no emotion, as I knew he wouldn't. As much as he loved that dog, he knew that no thing is ever born, and no thing ever dies. That following Sunday, we had satsang and Dimitri was prominently talked about. Robert and Dimitri were like one in the same. I remember when Robert face moved to Sedona, I used to see him walking Dimitri along the West Highway 89A.

Ed, just keep on doing what your are doing, and tell people the truth about Robert -- he was the Mysterious Sage as you had so eloquently described.

The strangest thing occurred on the night before I learnt of your website. Sunday night, I had a dream about Robert. He was dancing with Nicole, and she looked beautiful, peaceful and happy. I walked up to Robert, all excited and happy to see him, and then he began dancing with me, he looked beautiful, like a holy man, his eyes were bright blue, and clear. We danced and I told him how happy I was to see him again. And then, someone came up to him, telling him that it was time for him to go. Robert said to me, "before I go, I want to write something for you". He found a sheet of paper and a pencil and in his Robert Adams handwriting style, wrote: "Only you can know your true self, no one else can do it for you...nothing else matters but this! He handed me the paper, and then he said all is well, he took Nicole by the hand and left with the man who was waiting for him. I woke up and it was 6 in the morning. I stayed awake feeling so exhilarated. We had some visitors who were devotees of Papaji's who were staying with us, so getting up before everyone else did and sitting in quietude was heavenly.

Then yesterday morning my husband, G., sent me your web address, telling me that he had found it looking at different spiritual sites. He said he saw the name Robert Adams and immediately opened your site. We both sat and listened to the audio streaming of his satsang. Well, I can go on and on about Robert, because I believe he has ever left.

It is so lovely to connect with you again, Ed, after so many years have passed. I really like your website and will spread the word to others...

Love,

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:02 AM

22 October 2006

I'm back. I've answered a lot questions in the past few months, but little that was new. Therefore, I added nothing to this blog. I have added five new transcripts of Robert's talks on a page entitled Robert Adams-3 on http://www.itisnotreal.com.

Start sending questions again; I can answer now.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:07 PM

20 November 2006

Satsang in Los Angeles

For those of you in Los Angeles, I have been meeting with people face to face on an individual basis off and on for a few months. Not that I don't enjoy it, but I've got a limited amount of energy to do this, and a more effective way for me is to have an informal satsang, where we just get together and you ask questions. If pople like it, we will have chanting after a while.

I have two times in mind, either Wednesday evening about 7:30 pm or Sunday morning, 11:30-ish. Of course, there is no charge.

When Robert had satsang, we had twice as many people on Sundays as Thursdays. But satsang was a 1 pm, which sort of kills the day. I thought earlier might be better.

This would be in the West Valley--i.e., Chatsworth-Canoga Park.

You will be required to bring chocolate chip cookies. If you are interested, reply to ed_online@sbcglobal.net.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 6:39 PM

November 25, 2006

Daily I get many emails from seekers who have questions. Most of the questions have answers that can be found by reading my site or this blog or Robert's talks.

Usually my answers are short now and contribute little for a general audience.

Below is an exception. It is a deeper question.

Hi M, good to hear from you.

Let me comment between your lines.

Hi Ed,There is somthing about your site, perhaps the pictures of Robert, that has me back time and time again, like a moth to the flame.I am a Family Physician in XXX, and a "seeker", who has partaken too many times in the spiritual buffet. The sad thing is that intellectualy i know that there is no me and nothing out there. That and a token gets you a ride on the Adviata bus (which doesn't exist either).

Intellectually is not enough. Seeing there is no I with your whole being is world shattering. Not at all intellectual.

On my current "path", i have been following the teaching of a young sage named YYYYY. He had no guru, but 3 months after quiting, after a year of intense spiritual practice, enlightenment happened to "him". He is a gentle being who seems to live to teach. He combines the path of the heart and mind.

This is how it happens; it sneaks up on you when you are not practicing, but you need to "practice" intrensely before that.

At one satsang, in total surrender there was a dissolution of everything, and a 72 hour period of "expanded consciousness".

> *Good as such, but not enlightenment. Enlightenment "begins" when you "see" there is no I.*

Ed, i realize that "i" have no control, and Awakening happens to "no one", but your practice section seems helpful. When i look inward- through the third eye chakra, i "see" light, but there is nothing for it to illuminate. Almost as if my head were empty (is it?)

> *This is perfect. A great first step. Now, if this is stabilized, try to sink into your sense of existence--the felt sense of I Am--totally the subject of all experience. This is not spacial, nor inner-outer, but the subjective pole of you vs. the world..*
>
> *The emptiness you see illumined is your true narure so to speak, but the small I must be destroyed before you can be one with it,*

What should this practice lead to? Also, since "who am I" seems to infer there is an "I", What thought or phrase would you suggest in it's place, and when to use it in meditative practice.

> *Use I exclusively. You must understand deeper than understanding that there is no I. Don't look at the I, look at the source of I. Ask who is seeking the I and asking the question "Who am I?"*
>
> *Read Ramana Maharshi's early books exclusively--and Robert's. Advaita must sink deeply inside. Get tbe Collected works of Ramana Maharshi. Practice compassion every moment; practice humility; continue helping others--that is, act like a saint.*
>
> *Hang around gurus. Question your teacher about who and what he is, and what he has that you don't. Have him explain his subjectivity. Don't let him get away with Advaita talk.*

Thank you for all your work and effort to make Robert's work known to the world. Thank you for your kindness to animals.With Much Love,

M

> *Thanks M. Keep in close touch as questions arise or progress is made.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:07 AM

25 November 2006

> *More on Inner Space and Self -Dialogue with M*

I seem to feel Roberts energy (Shaktipat) from looking at the picture on your website. Although i assume that his body was not well at the time, his Presence is remarkable.

> *True, I did not appreciate it as much when he was alive. My mistake. He let me be his only friend as opposed to being a devotee, so maybe I missed something in that.*

When i go to the space through the third eye, besides emptyness, there is an almost giddy feeling of bliss. Right now it seems to block all other experiencing, except for ego thoughts, which come and go, sometimes pulling me out of my focus.

> *Does the bliss feel like happiness or more like body comfort? If the former, you are doing fine. If the latter, it will pass.*

Besides more practice, do you have any pointers to help me sink into the sense of existence you spoke of?

> *Several ways. One is to look for the looker while inside your inner illumined space.*
>
> *The other is to mentally fall backward into yourself. That is, imagine you are sinking into your basic self, devoid of anything else.*

Just as a side note, are you familliar with the work of Dr. David Hawkins? I wondered if you had any dealings with him in Sedona. Do you subscribe to his practice of callibrating levels of consciousness using muscle testing? I'm curious as to your thoughts as a Psychologist, if you are familiar with his writings.

> *Never heard of him. Levels of conciousness and muscle testing is a fraud. Stay away from him and his writings if that is his method and teaching.*
>
> *No levels; no body; no muscles.*
>
> *NO BODY AT ALL!!!*
>
> *Concentrate on the body and you make it more real. Instead concentrate on finding the source of your being, and that becomes most real*

.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:16 PM

26 November 2006

> *More on practice and compassion.*

Dear Ed,

From where i am coming from (albeit illusory) you are not only Robert's friend, but as evidenced by your wonderful website based on his teaching, maybe his greatest devotee. Yours is one of the few websites by a truly Enlightened Soul, extolling his Teacher, while downplaying his own long, difficult journey, and obvious wisdom. I salute you.

> *Thanks Mike, that you said that is touching. Hope you never meet me and find out how flawed I am.*

Thank you for taking interest in my practice. The bliss i experience seems to be in the form of happiness, which lasts for a while after getting up from meditation. i am excited to try your new suggestions of looking for the looker, and falling backwards into oneself.

The experience of the awareness, which i experience by realizing that somthing is aware of my thoughts, feelings, beliefs and personality feels glassy and transparent, keeping me contained in what is clearly "my awareness" and not beyond.

I hope i am not a nusiance to you. If i could return the favor to you somehow, let me know.

You will never be a nusiance to me. You are more advanced than I think you think you are. Write often. You are not a burden.

With Love and Gratitude,

M

The best you can do for me is to become a totally compassionate soul, helping everyone and everything. being a shepherd for all sentient beings.

Robert said that is more importance than enlightenment. I agree.

Muktananda's daily Jyota se Jyota chant includes the phrase:

Kindle my heart flame with Thy flame.

Do that for others.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:00 PM

02 December 2006

Third Eye meditation--
the Vast Illumined Void of Awareness

Dear Ed.

My experience with the Third Eye Meditation is getting deeper, more peaceful and unlike any other meditation practice that i have tried. Before, the illuminated space felt like the inside of my head. Now is is much more spacious, and sometimes intensely bright. It feels clearly separate from my thoughts. I have not been very sucessful in the exercise of falling backwards...No sensation of falling, but i keep trying

The search for the source of my awareness, simply seems to end with the awareness that I, or something is aware. There is a strong sense that it is "I" that is aware, but in looking for "I", awareness associates "I" with my body. The preception of the awareness itself has a "glassy" and spatially limiting quality, but is brings with it brief periods of bliss.

That seems to be the limit of my awareness. How would you get this to expand, or follow the awareness to it's root?

With Love and Gratitude,

M

Excellent!

Forget the falling exercise. Go with what works.

It is good enough to just stay in the sense of expansion for the moment. Do not force it otherwise it becomes ego reinforcing.

Just abide in yourself. Do not be in a hurry. This will be enough.

Something is aware means you perceive are aware of it (the "awarer") as an object, which is a mistake. The "awarer," the subject, will never be an object. You are the subject and can never grasp yourself; you can only be yourself.

Keep steady. The danger is you will move very rapidly for a while and then stall, feeling as if you took a step backward, which will be disheartening.

Just abide in being, your existence, in stillness, in the light of consciousness. The rest will take care of itself.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:52 AM

16 December 2006

The Epitome of Practice

Hi Ed,

I've just found your site today and read some of the information there. I have read many authors of what is called "The Absolute". People like Walter Lanyon, Lillian De Waters, Joel Goldsmith, Anonymous, Mary S. Watts etc...
The basic core of their teachings is basically the same as Advaita and many on your site like Ramana Maharshi, Nisargatta Maharaj.

On these I have ordered some books from Amazon to learn more.
I have also found about Douglas Harding about two weeks ago, which lead me to the others named above (Ramana and Nisargatta).

As for your site, I found it in an MSN groups.

The ONLY thing that interest me is ENLIGHTEMENT. That's it! I'm 62 years old and searched all my life since I was around 10-12. A lot of frustration accumulated.

But in the last 4 years, I found all these authors and finaly feel I am at the core of Truth. "I AM" The only book I have presently is "The collected Works of Ramana Maharshi" by Arthur Osborne. Not always easy to read, adding that I'm a french Canadian doesn't help, although my English is pretty good...well I think it is!

In that book, a lot of emphasis is placed on Self-Enquiry. I've meditated for over 40 years, didn't get much out of it. So Self-Inquiry seems a pretty good way.
My logic is that...I AM ALREADY, IT'S HERE NOW. I only have to learn how to WAKE UP to what I AM. Why in the world should this darn thing be so difficult.

It resides in "dying daily," to the ego. It should be easy.
I wrote because of this quote below that I've just read on your site. Since I haven't read everything...this is probably one of those "stupid question" (LOL).
There must be a common thread with all these enlighted Ones. Something that is similar for all of them in reaching enlightement. Self-Enquiry seems just that, but this quote below doesn't encourage me.

QUOTE: ""My own personal view is that many times self inquiry in the form of asking, "Who am I," is not beneficial. Sometimes it is the wrong pactice at the wrong time."

Eager to read you on this.
G

G,

Please listen closely. This is very important.

You have practiced much meditation so your mind is strong. You should understand what I am about to tell you.

First, you are not your body. Understand that and believe that if you can.
The body, if you do my microanalysis meditation, is seen to be empty, having no existence except as an image of an integrated "thing." This is not a reality, but a concept and a mental image. There are sensations and perceptions if you imvestigate your own perception of "you," but nothing to hold it together except an image, an idea, a thought.

Nor are you consciousness, because conciousness as traditionally used, is consciousness of something, an object, whether of the body, thoughts or of the world.

You are the Awareness that is at the root of consciousness. You are formless, eternal without boundary. All the world is consciousness including all thoughts and even more, the sense of I and the thought I .Yet, these are gateways to realizing yourself.

What you are is deeper than that.

When you watch thoughts, you must know that the watcher is deeper than thought. The thought is an appearance in consciousness.

Now, how do you become aware of yourself as awareness?

It is not by practicing who am I so much as dwelling in the subjectivity--the source--in Absolute awareness. The Who Am I practice is done to ever more closely make yourself aware of the First Person, ultimate awareness without an object.

Which means to rest in the quietest part or your being. Turn your attention inward into your sense of self, of existence. Do not pay any attention to your body or thoughts. Don't watch them, don't think about what you are doing or speculate what absolute awareness is.

To make this more believeable, read The Path of Sri Ramana Maharshi by Sadhu Om. I am afraid what you find in most books about Ramana is not written by realized people and therefore, their translation is not correct. That is why I never changed even one word I thought Robert said from the tapes I had. His tapes were not always easy to understand because our recording equipment was very primitive before 1993.

Ramana himself wrote two books of the highest value: Who Am I? and Self-Inquiry. Theyt are very short.

I undeestand there is another highly recommended book called the Garland of Gurus Sayings by one of his greatest studens.

Of course, there is the book by Robert Adams, Silence of the Heart and the transcripts on this site.

Then too, read the Ashtavaka Gita. Read both over and over. Do not read anything else. You must choose just one way. As you know, following many practices and listening to too many teachers only creates confusion.

Abide in yourself as awareness, ever hour, everyday you can, and you will attain enlightenment. Many will say enlightenment cannot be attained because there is no I. True, but you must go deeper to understand this, and to understand thaT there is no consciousness either.Consciousness too is just an idea.

> *Good luck, stay in touch--write often as problems arise.*
>
> *Ed*

Post Comments:

nonduel said...

Hi Ed,

Just found your site "again". I had written that email which you published on this blog.

many little things I didn't quite "get" then. Since those emails, I've gone through a lot of reading, Sri Ramana, Dzogchen Buddhism, back again to Ramana and lately Sri Nisargadatta. Particularly the I AM compilation on the web from "Pradeep Apte".

I've just read your enlightement experience.

There's document written by a Sri Ramana's devotee called "Self-enquiry, its method and its fruits" it's a short description on the experience of Self-realization. I can send it to you if you do not know it.

A few questions, if I may. The question about the need of a guru.

In your experience, I gather that Robert had something to do with it. Like many others, the presence of the guru helps the devotee sink in Silence. Just how important is it to be in the physical presence of a realized Sage, and/or being in contact with one.

The question of the "witness".

I mostly practice being in "I AM-ness", beingness, the feeling of being, by turning my attention towards this "me", towards myself. Doing this stirs a reaction. Like a subttle inner vertigo-like feeling, or dizziness. I've also experienced some inner vibrations in the body and even in the head while lying in bed in the evening.

This is my main practice presently.

The sadhana of turning the attention on this I Am-ness, it occured to me that when I am doing this, and attentive to Being, there has to be "someone" doing the "looking", paying attention. And that is the Self.

Do you then switch the attention on the "witness", the looker?

This is long enough for the moment.

December 21, 2008

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Yes, the witness is the one watching the I Am feeling, or so the theory goes. You can look at the witness, but it is a strain. Stay with the feeling of presence. Soon enough it will disappear by itself.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 12:00 PM

31 December 2006

There are two interesting sites you might want to visit.

Michael James is the translator/editor of Sadhu Om's Path of Sri Ramana Part I and II. I have read Part I and find it in complete agreement with Robert's more advanced teachings on how to practice. Michael has started a brand new site and has a free PDF version of a book he wrote online as well as two other Ramana-related books. I recommend this site.

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Charlie Hayes is a man of boundless energy. The illustrated PDF version of the third "edition" of Nisargadatta booklet should be available there. Or, I can send it to you by email.

www.awake-now.com

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:18 AM

06 January 2007

Psychotropic Medications-

-

I have a new question. I have suffered from severe anxiety and panic attacks for most of my life. I am currently taking low doses of a sedative to basically keep my mind "even". At this point, I'm not even sure that I could maintain even the bare minimum of concentration required for any type of meditation without their use. My question is this: Do you think that the use of such sedatives (xanax and the like), would or could somehow prevent one from attaining Realization?

No, neither anti-anxiety or anti-depressive meds would prevent self-realization. They affect the body-mind and you are not that. You are far beyond that. Only attend to your own sens eof being or existence.

Please don't consider this medical advice in any way, shape, or form. I know you're not a doctor, and I'm not asking you this question on the basis of whether or not I should continuing taking the sedatives.

But I have a doctorate in clinical psychology and was trained to be a psychologist even though not so licensed. I am well aware of the effects of many psychotropic medications.

Your answer will have no impact on that, so rest assured. However, I would like to know if there is any possible effect on the attainment of Realization with their use. Eventually, I will stop taking them. What I was hoping to do was to conquer the fear beforehand, much like Bill W. or whatever his name is (the founder of AA), only stopped drinking AFTER his experience. I still have other fears that surface that I work through, so it's not as if I'm completing avoiding working through that.

I emphasize meds will not affect enlightenment. Even alcoholism does not. These are of the body. You are not the body. There will be lots of changes before and after enlightenment. Do not worry about where you are now. Where you are now, what you are doing in terms of eating, meds, drinking, etc., will not impact your enlightnment. Of course, doing without bad habits helps, such as eating meat, too much alcohol, etc.

I know there are some like Ram Dass who claim to have attained some Realization with the use of psychedelics and the like. So, I would assume that since the body isn't me, nor is the mind, etc, that the use of these medications to enable me to concentrate at all wouldn't have an effect on Realization, but I don't know for sure. Thanks in advance.

No effect whatsoever. Still, not eating meat, cheese, eggs, etc. does lighten the mind a lot for some reason. I felt a huge rush of increased self-esteem and lowered guilt when I stopped eating meat

many years ago.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 9:18 AM

07 January 2007

.
Dear Ed,

This character is practicing looking into the Illuminated Space behind the 3rd eye chakra 2-3 times daily. Very early or very late in the day seems the most productive. With introspection (microanalysis) it is realized that the Awareness that is present, comes before and observes: thoughts, feelings, emotions, bodily sensations and to some extent "my" personality. I know that I am not any of these, since I can observe them.

Right On--keep going.

Looking from this space into the body reveals only more space. Bodily sensations are sensed to be coming from discrete locations in that space, but nothing solid is percieved in it. Is this what you described as the memory map of our bodies? Continued introspection brings the point home, that all experience in the "ego mind" are observed or experienced only throught our senses, neural net, ect, colored through our beliefs and positionalities and finally compared to past experiences and memories, so we can lablel and catagorize them. We experience nothing directly in the would, so there is no proof that the world is Real, or that even I exist.

Too much conceptualization. All experiences are not observed through our body-mind. Body-mind itself is as unreal as the phenomenal world. Only Consciousness exists--EVERYTHING is contained and only an image in Consciousness.

This being understood, i rest in the empyness and experience the almost blissfull awareness that Awareness is all there is. There is still the sensation of being a separate sense of Awareness,, surrounded by nothing. I do ask the question "Who A I" or What am I? Silence is always the answer.

Rest only in observing the Awareness. Be aware of Awareness. This is Self-Awareness, Abiding in Self.

I have been able to fall forward, but not backwards. It leaves me dizzy and a little disoriented. The experience of falling into a bright sun, as you had discribed did cause a subtle shift in awareness...but still "no cigar" (and no sun tan). No expectation is attatched to this practice...i just enjoy the blissfull escape, but the desire for Awakening to happen is all that i ever think about.

Forget about falling forward of backward; it is a help for some. Juest rest in observing awareness. You are doing very well. Keep it up. Do not deviate.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 1:36 PM

14 January 2007

Falling Into Self

Dearest Ed,

I'm good I am reading Roberts'book and a little 80 pg. book called "the lazy mans guide to enlightenment" by a guy Thaddeus Golas. These are the only books I read, and most comfortable with. I am not doing a dedicated meditation but I like self-inquiry. When I go into meditation, sometimes I get strange flashes of light. I don't know what that is if anything. But I like best just abiding in the nothing. It feels like falling backwards or vibrating. I could ask you a hundered stupid questions but I think they are all pointless anyway.

D

> *Hi D*
>
> *Ask any pointless questions you want. Everything is without a point anyway.*
>
> *Glad you are doing well.*
>
> *Yes, abiding in nothingness is the best.*
>
> *That is exactly how it should feel, like falling backwards into yourself--the first person.*
>
> *The flashes of light are Kundalini expressions, so don't pay much attention to them.*
>
> *Write anytime.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 11:45 AM

15 January 2007

From G and my response,

Hi Ed,

Can I ask about Self-awareness, Being, "I"...all of this. "Self-Enquiry" brings you to the I-thought, which will bring it back to the heart. This will eventually destroy the I am the body, the I-thought...the ego.

> *Don't make it so complicated. I-thought is a fiction, only Am is. Staying in the sense of existence--or the feeling I--will get you to the same place--knowledge first hand that you are beyond the body and world.*

Staying in the self, or Self-Awareness as much as you can through self-Enquiry or through other means, I have difficulties in understand what are the best ways to do this. Especially following the "I" to it's source, the right side of the heart.

> *Absolutely forget the heart. That was a ruse by Ramana to turn people inward. The real inward is not into a place in the body because the body does not exist as an independent entity, rather go into That which cognizes and is aware, the sense of I, or the unformed matrix of Am-ness. Just resting in self, going deeper into silence to its deepest level. Everything in the world is just "noise" added onto your true nature. Some go into that silence by "looking" within, others by "feeling" in, sort of falling backwards into your true self.*

Briefly, How to get the I-Though to go back at the source...the heart.
How to stay in Self-Awareness.

-G.

You don't get the I-thought to go back to the source. Concentrating on the I-thought makes it real. Ask once "Who am I?, look within and do nothing more. Repeat every minute or two. After a while, the minutes will stretch into many minutes. Just keep going. You want to attend to where the I-thought comes from, not the thought itself.

FORGET ABOUT THE HEART.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 1:46 PM

17 January 2007

One more question for the pile. Do you think Robert is as much available for people who never met him as he is for you?

No.

I wonder this but then think, if he is, then so is Ramana and why not just go back to Ramana?

Neither are available except both are yourself. Find yourself and you find them.

Thing is, Robert is easier to relate to because he was American.

Yes. He is easier to relate to but they say the same thing. Ramana works are very traditional and hard to follow for Westreners.

Also, robert speaks on different levels for different people. Therefore, don't ponder on apparent contradictions. Just let the words in and go where they may.

In Silence of the Heart he says that to love and serve the guru is higher and quicker than doing inquiry or anything else.

Right. One hundred times better.

He also said you need to focus on one teacher. Are either of those things possible when there is no body to relate to anymore (especially for those who never had any physical contact with him)?

No. It must be a live guru. He was adamnant about that.

But then there's you. I don't know, are you following after Robert now?

No, his body is dead, mine alive. I do not hold a candle to him. He is as far beyond my attainment as an elephant above an ant, yet we are one and the same. I follow after him as I attend to myself.

That is, have you taken on the same function or do you see it more as maintaining the memory of Robert and to providing insight when people ask for it.

Both and neither. it is up to the student. Robert had no function other than that given to him by others. In his mind, he was nothing, he did nothing; people only thougth he did. I am nothing, neither are you. You don't exist. Be happy.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:46 AM

20 January 2007

Ed,
After a first read through most of the site I just wish I could hang out with you a bit rather than do email. In any case, It might be good to tell you a few things to set the frame for later questions.
For many years I was intensely involved in Siddha Yoga but eventually left it. I didn't miss what you had to say about Muktananda, and I understand and accept the perspective as probably true. But for
me, there was that power that promised transformation. It existed and that's all I knew directly. The promise did not quite live up to expectations, granted. In fact, ironically, my first shaktipat
experience was more dramatic than almost anything that happened later. Do you have any thoughts about any of this, Ed? Thanks, by the way, for sharing all of that information about
Robert. Just knowing such people exist is helpful. John

Ed wrote:

> *I found Muktananda to be superficial. Muktananda et al emphasized experiences, Robert and I, n-experience.*
> *Ed*

Dear Ed,

My last girlfiriend before marriage used to fly down from New York to Sedona once a year to be with Lester Levenson who created the Sedona Method. I've got a bunch of recorded talks that the ex brought
back with her. But I just didn't feel a pull. There seemed to be a big emphasis on things like "financial abundance," which even now on their website is at the top of the list of things that can come
from the method.

> *Ed wrote:*
>
> *The use the sales technique to sell themselves and make a living. They would never make a living on seekers alone. The technique is not bad at all, but I think the followers have to let go of letting go as a technique.*

John wrote:

Since my orientation has always been yogic, it might be a fair question to ask if I have any sense at all of what you're really talking about. Maybe only in a negative way, in feeling some
disatisfaction with that whole pursuit. Well, let's put it this way, what I do understand is what you and Robert are up to is something of a different order from that kundalini yoga path and that it's important
not to confuse the two.

> *Ed wrote:*
>
> *Absolutely. Kundalini is about body, energy and experiences. Jnana is about finding that which preceeds all experiences and the body itself. That is, finding your unborn nature. Like apples vs. mountains (or tablewear for that matter).*

John wrote:

How meaningfully you can get to know somebody this way is debatable, but its better than nothing. Maybe you have super powers and can extract a hologram of my entire life from my words. I used to
believe that gurus had that ability.

> *Ed wrote:*
>
> *If I had the super powers I'd be too lazy to use them except to make money gambling or the stock market so I didn't have to do anything anymore.*
> *Ed*

John wrote:

Ed,
I just got up from meditation. Lately I've been going into it holding some essence of you and Robert in my mind's eye. Af first there's a kind of opening into stillness or neutrality, but then the
shakti rushes into that space with more voltage then I've felt in years. It occilates back and forth like this - a brief moment of stillness then a lot of movement. It's like there is some internal
switching point I've just become aware of that maybe would lead into silence but as soon as I find it.. zap! Epilepsy.

> *Ed wrote:*
>
> *Hi John,*
>
> *Interesting phenomena, I've never experienced that. But, it means nothing. It will pass. It is temporary and has nothing to do with your task.*
>
> *Just feel for your sense of existence, not of the body, but of you, and attend to that.*
>
> *This is really a quite subtle exercise, but the Self is subtle and quiet. Stay there.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:12 PM

Hi Ed,

I read the recent post on having a living guru and your reply.

Boy Ed! You aren't making this easier!

You say that neither Ramana nor Robert are available, find yourself and you find them.

Then you say that it's a hundred times better to love and serve a guru, and that it MUST be a living guru.The problem is how do you find a living guru, and how do you know that he is a Jnani.

> *You keep looking--but not too hard. Attend to your own self. Find the subject, the looker, the listener.*

I know that it is up to the student, but it doesn't make it easier. Enlightened individuals don't say they are when asked about it.Yet it seems to me that those that followed Robert, like you, KNEW that he was a Jnani. Doesn't it make it easier when you know?

> *Of course it makes it easier. But though I was struck by Robert in the beginning, it was well over a year before I really knew and trusted.*

Ramana, Nisargargadatta and some others, those that went to India for example, KNEW they were meeting Jnanis.

No, they heard that from others. Many who stayed with these gurus never accepted them as such. It is all a game anyway; they don't exist and neither do you--not as you think.

What about us here in North America? Do we have to go to India?

I would never go to India for a number of reasons. I met all of my teachers--ALL--right here in the USA and Robert in LA. If you can find a true guru in Los Angeles, you can find them anywhere.

I would not put much stock in gurus who do workshops, seminars, traveling circuses. Ramana, Nisargadatta, Rajneesh, Robert became nailed down sooner or later. You can go see them that do not do side shows, or wait for one of their students to do a side show in your town.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:02 PM

21 January 2007

Dear Ed

I have studied I Am That daily and almost exclusively for about ayear. I want to go deeper in my understanding of this teaching. It ishow I discovered your site. Trying to think of a question to makecontact with you and your web offering, what comes up is the naggingquestion about Nisargadata's smoking and, as I learn from your site,his and Jean Dunn's death by smoking. In spite of the "I am not mybody" and "I am not my mind" consciousness, I find it difficult toreconcile their teachings with this enslavement and bondage and surelyan unnecessarily painful death

Thank you,DKK

Dear DKK,

Feel free to ask away anytime. I am here.
Re Maharaj and Jean's smoking.

You do understand. You have nothing to do with your body or its pain. All bodies are going to die, painful or not.

To a Jnani, the body is no more than an image on a movie screen. Would he care whether a character smoked or not, or died of throat cancer? The Jnani knows he is not the body. He does not care. If his body rejects smoking for health reasons, that's fine with him. If his body chooses to smoke. It is fine with him.

You are making his non-problem into your problem. Only go backwards into yourself and see who you are. Then you will see it is all a joke and that only you are.

Follow the sense of I to the deepest part of your being.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:36 PM

16 February 2007

.
Hi Ed-

I found your site on Robert a few months ago andreally love it. Hearing recordings of his talks is areal treat. My reason for writing you is, youmentioned that somewhere along the line you talked with UG Krishnamurti on the telephone. I am simply curious about what he was like and what you guys conversed about.

I realize your conversation was relevant to you, but UG has really sparked a sort of fire in me. His words seem to destroy everything!! Iremember feeling a bit strange not wanting to read myNisargadatta books so much anymore after hearing UG talk, but I realized more and more he was just an incredibly straight shooter and telling things as theywere.

Nothing even remotely cherished is safe with him!! But these things that are cherished seem to bethe foundations of our own illusions, so basically, UG can have quite an effect. So anyway, if you can recall and don't mind, I'd love to hear what your experiences with him were. Thanks for the time and the website!

Al

> *Hi Al,*
>
> *I talked to him maybe 15 years ago. Don't remember much about what we talked about.*
>
> *But, he sounded like a chatty old-indian man and nothing to special. No bolts of lightning, etc.*
>
> *I understand what his awakening was and can see how it happened. His realization was not the same as mine but is 100% complimnentary.*
>
> *U.G. cannot help you find your way out. He is trying to say the mind is not the way out. Thta was his way of getting out but probably not your way.*
>
> *Find one approach only and go with it. Do the practices, examine your own sens eof existence.*
>
> *Read A Light on the Teachings of Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Ramana Maharshi Part I, both by Sadhu Om. Get them from AHAM.con. Tell them I sent you. The books are cheap. These are great people. And, of course, read Robert. Both Sadhu Om and Robert give you a way out--or so it will appear.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 7:53 PM

19 February 2007

.
Ed,I'm really sorry to take up so much of your time. Your response was, once again, very helpful and right on the mark. I too am "mind-smart" and I find myself wanting to read and study everything without actually doing the work of self-enquiry!

What caught my attention, and what I wanted to ask you about, was this statement....."Practice diligently, but not too hard. Too hard will cause you to lose the way too." Find the middle way of practice.

How can a person practice "too hard"? From the things I've read, such as Ramana and Nisargadatta, they recommend practicing every spare moment of your life and even while doing your worldly work. What you say makes a lot of sense and the "middle way" definitely seems like the best approach, but I was just wondering what you meant by "too hard" so I could avoid that "trap" also

If you don't have the time to respond, I understand totally. Thank you for your replies Ed.All the best to you,

> *A,*
>
> *Long practice is o.k., just avoid intense practice that requires a great use of the will to search for I.*

Intense effort is counter productive, you'll wear out and eventually give up. Also, is causes a lot of body-mind stress which absolutley prevents you from finding the target.

Gently bring the attention back to the sense of existence. If it falls away, don't get angry with yourself.

Pratice as long as you can without stress.

Middle way is better expressed as the gentle and persistent way,

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:32 AM

23 February 2007

.
Question: Can we not interchange the word "fear" and "anxiety", anxiety is a formof fear. I find the word "fear", i.e. (I Am That) an obstacle to "going beyond" being "desire for the false, and fear of the true", what remains? "A sequence of desires and fears and inane blunders," On one page alone and throughout, in the title of several chapters, and implied by Nisarga and Balsekar, that without an intense experience, realization is impossible and what is more intense than the experiencewe call "fear," the reason we run from pain.

Ed:

Please restate what you are saying more concisely.

Forget about what Nisargadatta and Balsekar wrote. They cannot help you to find yourself. They are expressing their understanding. It will not help you understand yourself. Only finding your depest core will solve your confusion and fear. As a matter of fact, the only value Maharaj and Robert provide is a real-life example of someone who has gone beyond. What they say is almost irrelevant and causes promlems for seekers.

Remember, Maharaj said his teacher told him he was not his body, and to only attend to his sense of being. He did little more than that for three years. Then he had the experiences expressed in his little book on this site entitled "Self-Knowledge and Self-Realization."

You can't fingure any of this out with your mind. What you are is entirely beyond the mind. Just look into--feel into--you sense of being. All Advaita teachers advise this route. Only attend to yourself.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 4:52 PM

04 June 2007

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF ROBERT ADAMS

VOLUME I

Edited by Edward Muzika
...

There are at least 250 recorded talks by Robert and about 114 transripts that I am aware of.

The Complete Volume I is almost 1,000 pages long in printed format. I will post here about half those transcripts.

Eventually, a second set of 100 will be published as volume II, and volume III will consist of all the rest plus any others that are sent to me.

In addition, I have a few hundred pages of newsletter articles published before he came to Los Angeles under the nom de plum, M. T. Mind. (Robert had a strange sense of humor.)

Robert was not exactly a disciple in the traditional sense of Ramana Maharshi. He was awakened at age 14 and went to India five years later. But it was from Ramana that he finally understood the nature of his awakening.

Robert was the most unusual man I ever met. He was not of this world. He left no trace. He was unknown and unknowable. He shunned public attention and therefore was little known when he was alive.

He didn't want many students. He said he wanted ten who would teach after him. Because he was ill and could not work, his shunning public recognition left him in relative poverty. He said he couldn't care less, and if it were not for his wife and daughters, he would not do anything.

He'd sit for hours at a time looking out his window at Capitol Butte in Sedona, not moving his eyes or blinking. He was always, as he told me, in Sahaja Samadhi.

Most around him had only the dimmest awareness of his state of being, Turiya, the Fourth State of eternal rest in Self wherein nothing existed as objects away from him. The external world did not exist. Others did not exist for him as something apart, objective. All was Self alone.

He taught only two ways to awaken from the dreaming (imagination, thinking, imagining process, Maya) unreality—self-inquiry, wherein the sense of I, the sense of existence, the sense of being alive was followed inward, down through the false I tied to the body and human existence, to the Great I of the absolute, unmoving Self.

All of his talks attend to these two matters: the world is not real, so leave it alone; your true Self has nothing to do with your body or humanity, and the experience of the root Self is attained by self-inquiry or by complete surrender to the guru.

When you read Robert's talks, it is best to read very slowly and let the words wash through you and trickle down to the lowest level of your being. Do not be in a hurry. Approach Silence in silence. The Self is subtle, so you must become subtle, quiet, watching so that it can take you away, entirely away to the other shore beyond life and death.

Ed Muzika

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 3:50 PM

25 July 2007

Re my problems with Infinity. From Alan:

Dear Ed, thank you for presenting Robert's teachings as direct from his own mouth as is possible. It is clear that you are a true student and direct representitive of Robert and his teachings. It is important for the world to have such a source.

It is sad to see individuals try to own and sell truth that is originally offered directly from the source and not meant for profit or copyright. It so often becomes clear that such actions invariably lead to a false presentation of the original. May Robert's work shine unhindered through all of the unfortunate discord and greed.

I for one value your presentation of your dear teacher, Robert, and his direct and immeasurably valuable teachings. In Truth,

Alan

> *Thank you Alan. I urge all of you contact Infinity and let them know what there actions speak about them. Maybe they will leave me alone or ask me to work cooperatively with them as I have offered to do so many times in the past. Though I do not know the purported 30 year students, I do know Nicole and have been continuously shocked by her actions.*
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 9:33 PM

03 June 2008

The Robert Adams Infinity **Institute**

> *This blog has been inactive for a while.*
>
> *Infinity (1.e., Robertadamsinfinityinstitute.org) threatened to sue my former webhost for hosting the website, www.itisnotreal.com.*
>
> *The Institute is a creation of Robert's wife, Nicole Adams. Nicole has turned Robert's written words, his Satsang recordings, and even all photographs of him, even those taken by me, into her family business and claims everything about Robert is hers to copyright.*
>
> *The itisnotreal.com site was down for a bit. It is back up again with a new webhost. The complete story of Nicole's sordid antics can be found upon opening the site.*
>
> *Nicole Adams, her sidekick Blake Warner, under the banner of the Infinity Institute want to rob the general public of access to the world teacher, Robert Adams. While it is up, the itisnotreal site gives you that access for free.*
>
> *For her, it is a business only. She has set herself up to be a guru. My posting of the talks I transcribed and handed out to Satsang and turned into volumes I and II of Silence of the Heart may be hers or not, but only a court of law can determine that.*
>
> *Silence of the Heart is a WONDERFUL book. Buy it, but not from Infinity.*
>
> *What they offer, outside of Silence of the Heart is not Robert, but a form that they understand, which apparently is a form of Christianity.*
>
> *This kind of nonsense has occurred with every famous dead spiritual teacher, including Rajnessh, Krishnamurti and even Nisargadatta. I hope this stops it with Robert's words.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 10:50 PM

Following the 'I'
A reader wrote:

I can rather easily get the feeling of I AM which I primarily sense in my upper chest and throat a little. The quickest way I can get to it is to follow a pleasant thought to it's source although I think I just realized a day or

so ago that it works almost as well with unpleasant thoughts or fears. Anyhow, once there I can clearly sense the witness and have been working on watching the witness. It's a little tricky switching over from thinking to being and I am wondering if you have more input there. BUT mainly my question is this. The feeling of I AM feels very nice and when I "turn away" to watch the watcher I loose a lot of that nice feeling but I presume that's what I want to do?

S.

> *Exactly S!*
>
> *However, following the false self eventually results in the real self making an appearance automatically without deliberate effort. So I suggest you continue to follow the pleasant feeling self until that burns out by itself. But you know the truth and where you are going, so don't worry about the distraction.*
>
> *You can also look at someone or something and feel your emotional and tidal pull of this object, person or thing, and pay as much attention to your internal body reaction so you see/feel both at the same time.*
>
> *They are not different. You will see that.*
>
> *This is continuing in the feel-good way of being aware of the self as in the thorax, even though you know this is an illusion.*
>
> *You have been asking solid questions regarding practice.*
>
> *By the way, when you do go free, don't get stuck in that freedom as do so many and identify only with freedom.*
>
> *You must always keep the welfare of others in mind and think how to teach them even when you know teaching is a lie from your newly obtained view, and "them" do not exist.*
>
> *My old Zen teacher, Seung Sahn always ragged on this. When people go free, they often just rest in their sense of freedom, and become, as Robert warned, "cold fish." Then they do nothing or they become cold fish teachers with no warmth or "charisma" to carry others across.*
>
> *This is not the end of your practice. You need to go beyond this. Even Ramana had difficulty with this until a second death experience in 1912.*
>
> *This is important. Remember this.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:04 PM

21 November 2008

A reader wrote:

First off, thanks for being available for questions. I recently wrote you so thanks again for the response.

Not sure where I am on any level...I am mostly self-schooled. I live alone.

Ok...I can, in a moment go into deep humility, bliss, joy and love since 2003. Sometimes drooling has occurred due to being so deep in the bliss. When I have had enough bliss (ha)...I can return to mind world. It has matured through the years.

When I sit, or spontaneously, some kind of "expansion" feeling comes into my belly heart area, heart and head. It is like a pulling back or down in the belly, contracting in the belly, heart expansion and top/sides of my head have a pulling feeling, eyes/forehead expand. Sometimes the "3rd eye?" feels like a pulling, wanting to stretch it out. This happens daily, if I allow, and sometimes spontaneously. Mind goes in the background, just being occurs. I don't know what any of this means and have been avoiding any guidance, so I can just be with it and not try to

figure it out.

Since reading your site I felt it was time to ask about this. I have been at the "Who/What am I?" for 12 years and have had many awakenings including "I AM." Still caught out in the mind self but have the choice to be in the "I amness" or bliss.

Can you say where I am at, what this all sounds like to you?

I am most grateful for the guidance.

Respectfully, XXX

ED:

"Not sure where I am on any level...I am mostly self-schooled. I live alone."

> *Good.*

"Ok...I can, in a moment go into deep humility, bliss, joy and love since 2003. Sometimes drooling has occurred due to being so deep in the bliss. When I have had enough bliss (ha)...I can return to mind world. It has matured through the years."

> *Then you are doing fine. You can't ask for much more, even though the process is not complete.*

"When I sit, or spontaneously, some kind of "expansion" feeling comes into my belly heart area, heart and head. It is like a pulling back or down in the belly, contracting in the belly, heart expansion and top/sides of my head have a pulling feeling, eyes/forehead expand. Sometimes the "3rd eye?" feels like a pulling, wanting to stretch it out. This happens daily, if I allow, and sometimes spontaneously. Mind goes in the background, just being occurs."

> *This is just Kundalini often explained as an unbalanced energy process. But you are advanced enough to understand that that explanation is pure bullshit, just words. Don't worry or question it. Ignore it; just let it happen without being disturbed.*

"I don't know what any of this means and have been avoiding any guidance, so I can just be with it and not try to figure it out."

> *You were correct. Do not try to figure it out. Just be with it.*

"Since reading your site I felt it was time to ask about this. I have been at the "Who/What am I?" for 12 years and have had many awakenings including "I AM." Still caught out in the mind self but have the choice to be in the "I amness" or bliss."

"Can you say where I am at, what this all sounds like to you?"

> *Where you are is fine. You are doing well. Just observe, but not too passionately or with too much focus. That would just trap you more into the phenomena, not the final release.*

I repeat, you are doing well.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 4:17 PM

22 November 2008

From a Reader:

Hello Ed,

I enjoyed reading your new article entitled, "My Own Method." After trying and abandoning pretty much everything else, I also fell back on chanting. I wasn't trying to accomplish anything at that point -- I just had an impulse to do it and went with it. It was pretty much the only thing that kept me sane. I don't have much of a musical background, but I still love sacred music from all traditions. Someone once said that music is the next best thing to silence, but really, chanting and silence are exactly the same thing, and there's nothing better than either one.

There's really nothing anyone can do. At some point, the heart just opens and swallows us up. For some strange reason, it does seem necessary for people to put themselves through all manner of spiritual practices and hazing rituals before this happens, but none of those things really do anything except make the story of human existence a little more entertaining. I guess if too many people followed the example of Valmiki (author of the Ramayana) and went directly from being infamous criminals to a great saints, all the yogis practicing tapas would get really pissed off and start complaining to the Big Guy. We couldn't have that.

Yep, practice is absolutely necessary, for no particular reason other than that's how this drama was written: We start as an amoeba, eventually evolve to human form, get depressed, start standing on our heads and uttering mantras, get even more depressed, give up, and find eternal peace. It's a pretty straightforward formula, really.

I noticed that you suggested putting all Robert's talks on mp3 players and playing them in the morning or whenever. I think this makes as much sense as anything and will help some people. My wife loves to listen to Robert and has asked me if I can get more of his talks from somewhere other than the Infinity Institute. If you ever want to sell me an mp3 player with Robert's talks on them that I could give to her, I will take an oath to disavow all knowledge of where they came from if the advaita police ever raid my home and ask whether I got the talks from "authorized '30 year' students®." Or, if you don't want to bother, that's fine too. Everything sorts itself out in the right way eventually.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:42 PM

14 January 2009

MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Below. I get emails from many seekers with different email addresses but with the same surname. I get confused as to who is who because I find multiple threads of email exchanges from different addresses with SOMETIMES similar content. The below conversations are from AL and J, who share the same name. They may well be two, but I answer them as one.

Conversation #1 From J:

As per your instruction, I have been starting my day with the Nisargadatta Gita. Wonderful text. I can say it is helping without a doubt. To what degree, I'm not sure. I'm not sure if degree matters. It has helped me see how far reaching and simultaneously subtle the workings of the mind are. On a few occasions, it felt as if my thoughts, and the energy that goes along with them, melted away, and aside from my eyes, there was very little sensation in the head. In fact it seemed as if my thoughts moved downward internally. And on one occasion I thought I caught a thought springing up from below. I don't put much value in sensation. Should I?

I have begun to grasp the fact that the "I am" is present at all times and it is getting easier to fall back to it at all times of the day. I find myself becoming suddenly less partial in arguments. In fact I seem to have lost the desire to argue at all. This can't be understated. I've always reveled in arguing because I'm quite good at it. But in the limited amount of conversation I've had about "I am" with some close friends, I have observed in them the mind's ability to argue any phrase of words, no matter how true. I've seen this in myself as well.

I feel I've made great progress, yet I feel I don't really have any idea what I'm doing. I'm tired of trying to figure things out, yet I desire nothing else. One thing I can not do is use my memory to go back to the early childhood "I am". Although I don't expect I should be able to do this so easily.

I am learning the value of reading slowly (I've always been a relatively slow reader, last one done in class). It helps to create gaps that make it difficult for the mind to bridge. The mind seems to cycle the last thought until the next one is ready. I am learning to let the last thought drop before moving on to a new idea. My mind does not like this. It makes me want to sleep. In fact this newfound daytime sleepiness is my biggest obstacle right

now. I hope this is some period of adjustment or some form of protest by my mind. I don't want to turn into Winnie the Pooh. I do like to get things done.

I thank you very much for your feedback. I know no one nor can I seem to find anyone in Appalachian Ohio that has had even the tiny glimpse I have had to discuss these things with. Is that a plus or minus? Is it good to seek out others in this? Or is it better to stay put and stay quiet?

> *Answer #1:*
>
> *Jeremy, you are doing very well. Keep going as you are.*
>
> *Seek others out as it is a boon to find them, but do not seek too high and far. They will be close, so don't make a career out of it.*
>
> *You will feel your own correct place and time.*

Conversation # 2, J:

I was reading some of your blog posts, and there seems to be a theme in spiritual matters which I just can't relate to. I almost never remember any dreams. As a child I would remember nightmares, which were common, and there were dreams about girls as a teen, but in my adult life, the amount of times I have awoke with any sense, let alone vivid memory, of what transpired in my dreams I could probably count on my fingers. And all but 2 or 3 of those have been very simple little dreams where I finish a conversation that never got finished in the waking state.

My question is, should I spend any time investigating this, or is this something that abiding in the I am will lead me to in due course?

> *Answer #2*
>
> *There is nothing to be gained by pursuing the subject.*
>
> *Your mind tries to distract you saying "I am bored with self-inquiry."*
>
> *So to speak, your unreal ego is getting frigtened--at least that is the standard explanation. In fact, it is all bullshit. Just don't go down that path, it is a time-waster.*

Conversation #3, J:

Your directness is appreciated. That day I woke up with a remarkable freshness, tried to "hold on" to it, but the mind fought back especially hard, it seemed. I had lots of "ideas" that day.

Would I be right in assuming that any "ideas" I might think I have are just that? What I mean is any idea is a collection of words and therefore of the mind, and therefore at best symbolic of what I'm after? I think I answered my own question.

Conversation # 4, AL (AKA J???)

Ed, my teacher, friend, cyber guru, very own self, dreamed up charachter. It is so strange that after realizing the whole ball of wax emanates from me including the idea of an Ed, a Ramana, and a J., life has collapsed into a very normal humanly existence except one thing, I know its ALL me, whatever I am, each moment just a passing show, day dreams and night dream are the same.

It is funny how every night new charachters from my entire dream existence of 41 years all of the old even childhood friends have been there, almost to remind me of my dreaming capabilities in both states, I cant tell if the fourth state has spread to sleep but it seems with no mind it would not be evident upon so called waking. Things still happen plenty, J. still practices the musical arts, reads bible to our kids, walks dog, grows his own sprouts and goes through nutritional routines, wants to be healthy. It is just recognized as fake and really doesnt matter. When in action (such as at work).. things flow out of J. at breakneck speed with no thought involved, when still... peace and joy prevail.

My question is, should practice of any sort still be pursued, and who the hell would do it? The awareness watching awareness guy recommends practicing until bodily death to prevent the ego from coming back, but really there never was an ego is what is seen here. Also it is clear that my entire life has been nothing but thoughts manifesting as apparent reality, Robert says stay with silent mind and transcend the whole ball of wax, any pointers?

> *Answer # 3*
>
> *You are also AB, no? many times seekers send in questions that have 2-3 email addresses, but sign the email with the same personal name. Assuming J and AB are the same, I am answering both conversations above.*
>
> *I understand where you are. There is no sense of self as an operating entity so you ask who can direct the practice. Apprehending where you are feels wonderful and you feel you cannot lose it. But, you can and will until you become absolutely fixed in it.*
>
> *The fact you ask questions and your mind is filled with thinking means that you are not stable enough.*
>
> *Set aside some time each day, maybe three times a day where you do nothing except be.*
>
> *Go until all thoughts about what i going on die, and you are absolutely fixed.*
>
> *Then, assurance MAY come when you feel yourself die as an entity. Then, some time after that happens, you MAY be finished with practice.*
>
> *When you rest too easy, too soon, you will eventually lose it. You may lose it no matter what "you" do, but then you start again knowing where you have to go.*
>
> *Regarding dreams. It seems your mind does not produce visual images well. That is fantastic for you because it is the visual imaging sense that appears to hold the non existence world together for most. It is the "glue" that holds the illusion together far more than the other senses.*
>
> *Just be careful now, constantly stay in your sense of existence. Don'r get distracted, especially by boredom down the way and the thinking there must be more to this*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:49 AM

15 January 2009

Many States; the "True" state.

A reader asks:

I have been trying to meditate on the "I am" but I am never really sure if this "I am" or my "meditation on consciousness" is not just another illusion. I don't really want to be running in circles forever, so I thought I'd email you about my current states/meditations and see which if any you consider to be the right approach. I am usually watching my mind throughout the day, and have formal sit down meditation, and music meditation at least 3-5 hours a day.

These writings on my states are copied from a diary entry I did earlier today.

CURRENT STATES:

1. Unconscious robot state. This state is kind of relaxing as it is mentally taxing to keep awareness at all times. Anyways in this state I usually just go into robotic critter mode, without any consciousness of speech and actions, self, etc. Is this the state I was always in before my turiya experience which briefly awoken my heart? In this state I almost always catch myself acting as a robot, and will sometimes (when exhausted from meditation, etc) just release and allow myself to become a robot again. It seems like after an intense meditation it's a good

thing (or just easy) to just become a robot again, puts the mind at ease.

2. Forced concentration silent state. This is possibly what is called Laya, I am unsure. In this state I sometimes have such intense concentration it is overwhelming. Brain is mostly silent in this state, and thoughts have hardly any hold over me, they seem like futile attempts of mind. Concentration seems most intense while high on marijuana. The intense concentration feeling almost immediantly vanishes when I let the mind take over again.

3. Nice feeling meditation. In this state I concentrate on the impersonal nice feeling in the solar plexus that breathe seems to bring about (increased oxygen?). This state feels pleasant and when I focus I can continue this meditation without interruption from mind. However when the focus is lost, mind creeps back in until I realize that I fell back into robot mode. I have not attempted this meditation for long periods, or practiced it very long. I hear that if you focus on the heart and its feeling "I am" ? there is a chance it will swallow you up. Is this the right meditation for the swallowing to occur, the nice feeling doesn't really feel like its mine, it just feels like its there?

4. Everyday base awareness. I think I am in this state throughout most the day, just watching what is going on from an objective perspective, especially focused on watching my mind. I almost always catch myself slipping into robot mode and will bring myself back to this base awareness. This state is not extremely pleasant or anything, but it does root you into more of a reality into what is actually going on, rather than constantly day dreaming. Sometimes I feel good in this state, and sometimes I am without feelings until a stimuli (usually a person or animal) produces a feeling in me.

5. Meditating on consciousness? I am not sure if I have the right meditation here, but it seems to me like I am meditating on the mind/awareness itself. Mind is silent and thoughts rarely penetrate my focus. This is hard to explain as I am not really sure what is happening here. Am I tracing consciousness to its source, it sometimes feels this way? Would this type of meditation be right, or is it just another futile effort?

6. Spontaneous attempt of the hearts. This to me is the most genuine state or experience that I have throughout life. It feels as though the heart tries to break loose. Such pure love seems to randomly appear, albeit very briefly. Tears often ensue and thinking of Ramana makes me feel extremely comforted and loved. I would like to think this is turiya trying to break out, but I don't know. Sometimes brain will be like," Yes turiya come please come!" other times it will be fearful of its demise and want to go into robot mode. These experiences of intense bliss cannot be forced. Sometimes I will purposefully think of Ramana, and him saying "everything is fine" but I will have no response (besides an objective part of my personality which says, "you're pathetic, you can't force yourself to care!" It seems like these attempts of the heart breaking out occur most during listening of music, random points in meditation and random points throughout the day. These spontaneous attempts of the heart are probably the only real way to realize the self, but I want to ensure I am doing the right things to increase the chances of these attempts occurring.

7. Sleep meditation mixed with laziness ? I absolutely love sleeping, oh my; it's probably one of my most enjoyable things. I guess not existing is just that much fun! I think I almost always go into deep sleeps, since I hardly ever remember dreams (maybe one every four months). I read in the Nisargadatta Gita that the moment before fully waking up is a good place to catch turiya, and this makes a tremendous amount of sense. Almost every morning I become a little conscious before my mind fully wakes up, I have not caught turiya, but it is a wonderful state where I hardly know anything, I can see it being useful. Often times though enough of my mind appears which knows "this is a good place for turiya, where are you turiya!?"

While I know these random thoughts just appear from nowhere and they dont feel like they belong to me, it's hard for them to go away! I often try and meditate in this state and watch myself go back to sleep. I will wake up, watch, and go back to sleep and then repeat the process maybe two or three more times (very lazy, I've been working a lot lately).

In my meditations I often will ask myself "who am I", "who is experiencing this", "where does this come from", etc. Sometimes there is a genuine curiosity for the answers, othertimes I just don't care.

Basically I do enjoy life, I do not ever really think about my personality and I have seen myself become more child like, and a loss of judgments. Also I have seen myself become much more forgetful and newbish (I guess this is from thinking less, or focusing on the external world less?). Things do seem fresher, and I do seem "more aware." But also things aren't so great. I clearly see that my mind is not really mine, we are not in control of it, is the best we can do just watch our robot selves?

There is hardly anything that really feels like mine, not the nice solar plexus feeling, not the conscious meditating on itself state, and this doesn't bother me, but for the fact that don't you have to hold onto an "I am" to bring about the right conditions? So even though life seems stress free and is for the most part without worries I still know that my true essence is turiya, so I can't help but want to be completely free from this robotic life. I am not sure if I am close, I would like to think so though.

My mind seems often scared of its demise, because it remembers dying once. I often find my mind making up bullshit excuses during meditation, to avoid a breakthrough of the heart, the mind is afraid. As mind does

become kinda scared at times, as it recognizes the severity of its "dying", I think a loving teacher would really help me break out, to show me fully that everything is just fine, but I know that this is already within me, so a physical teacher is not technically required....Even though the turiya experience directly showed me that everything is perfect, everyone is already enlightened I still think it's terribly sad that people are unconscious of it and we are really fucking up this world/ourselves.
A part of me wants to become free and wake up as soon as possible, not only because I am tired of this robot self, but because I really want to help wake up others....

thanks for reading, anything would be appreciated!

> *Reply:*
>
> *It is important to not be fascinated by the passing phenomena, but find the source. There is the underlying identity to whom all this is happening.*
>
> *Be aware that you are separate from and witnessing all this.*
>
> *Then fall backward into the identity that is aware you are not the states you observe.*
>
> *Then recognize you are even before the recognition that those states are not you.*
>
> *The way you are going is exceedingly complex because you are chasing leaves, not retracing the root.*
>
> *The saving grace is you are looking in the right direction with energy and intelligence. That energy and persistence are 99% of the equation. Keep it up!*
>
> *But deep inside you must recognize the seeker in you is That to whom all this is occurring, and therefore, much, much bigger than even Turiya. This is a big show, who is watching it? On the other hand, That is not a thing, nor even a state. It is beyond the world. Beyong waking and sleep and even beyond Turiya.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 7:23 PM

17 January 2009

A reader writes:

Dear Ed,

I wanted to add to my question I sent...and not sure this needs to be added to the online site...up to you...

The Work question... "Is it true?" also stops the mind, like "Who am I?" or "What am I?"

I find for myself that I no longer need to write thoughts. That last night when I thought "I am crazy" I then asked myself "what is crazy?" and found myself laughing. I practice direct asking "what am I? or "what is upset?"..."what is going through this?" or "what is having a stomach ache?" I continually find the answer as no one, nothing, no "I"... peaceful, still, empty, no- thing SELF, always there. I find nothing is ever happening, that all arises and falls away in this SELF that is present, happy, still, silent, like a watcher, observing all phenomena, itself empty but alive, love, benevolent SELF, holding all without preference, hereness, amness, beingness.

Although I do not stay here but return to mind world, I believe I return because of familiarity of old conditioned self.

Anyway, wanted to add this because I wonder if The Work can also bring folks here, although maybe not this self, or perhaps I am cheating myself by not writing it all down and being lazy?

Thanks for the help on all this...feels good to get this all out.

Response:

> *Any strong question stops the mind, but only "Who am I?" or similar help you locate the thread of consciousness that leads back to the source.*
>
> *Is it true only stops the mind and thinking, but does not provide the thread.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 6:37 PM

05 February 2009

Sleeping mind, waking mind, enlightenment.

Hi Ed, You said that you allow for crazy questions. Here's one that has been plaguing me for a over a decade. It would be nice to be rid of it. Here it is. While literally awake, Consciousness, Bliss, etc. are accessible. All of this however, seems to totally disappear when I am in a deep, dreamless sleep. Let me qualify.

When I am waking up from this dreamless sleep, I look at what I am rising from, still half in the sleep, and it seems that there is nothing there, the absence of even a flickering light of Awareness. Instead, there seems to be only a kind of dark blankness and I become afraid that this is what death truly is. Years ago when I was under anesthesia, I woke with the profound sense that what I was rising from is what death really is, a literal and absolute dead blankness.

If Awareness is always here and truly eternal, why would there not be some taste of Consciousness when I look at the deep sleep "state" while still half in it? Now I realize that Consciousness is not a "thing" to be remembered. That is why I emphasize being between the waking and sleep states when considering this issue. The egoic self feels afraid that formless awareness may after all, just be a product of the waking brain, of the unconscious mind and this perpetuates a fear of death that I would like to be free of.

Advaita writings talk all of the time about deep dreamless sleep as that of pure Consciousness. How do they know? If this nagging concern were to abate, I would have a quieter mind. No one I have ever talked to has been able to address this question. Is this going to be one of those unanswerable questions that are free?

> *Answer:*
>
> *THIS IS THE CENTRAL QUESTION AND DILEMMA OF ALL JNANA TEACHINGS, ZEN, ADVAITA, ETC.*
>
> *Not one in 10,000 get this as the central problem, know, illusion.*
>
> *Listen carefully.*
>
> *This is what I first wrote when I lost identification with the body and I saw waking consciousness--I Am--come and go:*
>
> *I am That who is aware of the coming and going of I Am, of consciousness.*
>
> *I am even before this knowledge.*
>
> *I have no attibutes, I am before and beyond all attributes, knowing and not knowing.*
>
> *I am and the world are little things compared to me.*
>
> *Your problem is you still identify with waking consciousness and the body. Waking consciousness is trivial.*

You are That who is aware of being, and then of not-being.

You are That who is aware of being, and then of not-being.

You are That who is aware of being, and then of not-being.

Being and Not Being arise in you. You are That who is aware of their coming and going.

As such, you are That who is beyond both.

This is the liberation.

At this point, just feel the dark emptiness and see what happens. It is only the sleep state in the background. It comes and goes. You are the witness of it coming and going. It is not you; it is a percept. But, when you know it, it has a welcoming nature.

The knowledge that you are not that which comes and goes is the first liberation. What you are is unknowable as an object. You are it, the witness of all. This is the beginning of your real practice after the disidentification with the body.

Next is to tease out all the extraneous added on stuff and find the Fundamental without adulteration. As of now, just take the position of the witness of the coming and going and recognize you are even beyond the knowledge that you are beyond consciousness.

Also, read closely what "Advaita writers" are actually saying. Conscious sleep means only that the thinking mind is not working. Nothing more. The mind does not work in deep sleep. So, what they mean is having no mental workings while awake. This is what they mean by waking sleep.

You have projected a meaning into what they say that they did not mean. But it is their screw up because they are not clear

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:50 PM

07 February 2009

A Reader Awakens

...

The last post was a question from a reader and my responses. The topic was sleep. The exchange is listed in the previous post.

Since then, there were additional exchanges recorded immediately below.

She has awakened. Her experience is real. It is obvious by her comments and questions that she has been wandering in the foothills of enlightenment for some time. This will not be her last Satori.

Now that she has seen clearly who she is, she will need to hold onto it and deepen both her experience and understanding. Remember, Robert spent 17 years wandering around India making sure, as he put it, that "I didn't miss anything." Ramana spent years living in the basement of temples or caves speaking to no one. This is the real beginning of practice.

As Philip Kapleau told me, the initial seeing is like finding the light switch in a dark room. When the light goes on so to speak, you begin to see the wonders of consciousness and beyond.

READER:

Hi Ed,

Yesterday, I witnessed the coming and going of appearances for about ten hours. I saw that all objects are empty of inherent Being, are a reflection of mind and yet in a way, are themselves of Being, of Consciousness, because they are objects or reflections of Consciousness. I can generally embrace this, even though at times I can get a kind of ego rebellion and feel unpleasantly dead. I realize that this feeling is just another thought, an identification with mind and body, and will need to witness this too.

Anyway, here is my question. Although it is clear to me that the object world is a reflection of mind-body thoughts and perceptions, are there not objects or a world outside of the human mind-body that are also reflections of the one ultimate conscious reality? If I see a tree for instance, I can "see" that this appearance includes a product of thought and perception. However, if I tell another "person" about the tree, its appearance and location, it will be recognized by the other as the same tree.

So is there not an illusory reflection of Reality or Supreme Consciousness going on that is not an exclusive reflection of the human perceptual, thinking mind alone and that creates the appearance of a world? That is, is ultimate reality reflecting an illusory world as well as and including an illusory human thinking mind that also creates an image of a world, or is there only the human mind creating the dream of world?

If it's the later, I don't understand it, cannot reconcile the contradiction of the apparent consistency of the world even in light of the mere inferences of sensory perception. For me this makes it difficult to know how to address and live in this world even as a dream.

Thanks so much for being there. Being able to write to you is so helpful.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Why are you doing this?*
>
> *The question is only philosophy, asking epistemological and ontological opinions. This is only thinking. The question is bullcrappy. It is of no more value than asking whether the numbers 2 and 5 have some actual physical existence as a logical set somewhere in space-time.*
>
> *All elements of consciousness are illusion, including your question. There is no human. There is no human mind. There is no Cosmic mind or Absolute. These are just words. There is nothing behind them.*
>
> *You are getting close, don't screw around "reconciling." What is there to reconcile in order to drink coffee at Starbucks?*
>
> *What you are to do is investigate your experience, isolate unadulterated consciousness and dwell there.*
>
> *In any event, you can answer the question yourself and see what it does for you. Ask the question and then say, "Yes there is." Then ask and say, "No, there isn't." See whether either answer helps you in any way. Perhaps you just enjoy feeling perplexed.*
>
> *Have you discovered what the dark denseness experience is yet?*
>
> ***READER:***

Hi Ed, I understand and see that what you said is so. I'll drop all this and go back to dwelling in reality, in true conscious awareness. I started already. I watched the dark emptiness for two hours when I woke up, but it remained dense. When I look at it right now, I sense it as an illusory thought form, but in this next moment, it is lighter and not truly dead. I still don't know. I will look at it through the evening and then again in the morning when the experience of the dense darkness is very strong.

Thank you for the wake up call. I am very grateful.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *The darkness is only sleep.*
>
> *You are always aware of all three states, deep sleep, waking and dream. Everyone is always aware of the dream state always without knowing it. It is the constant movement of thought forms and images I call imaginal space.*
>
> *You are aware of all three states at once. That You is beyond them and has no characteristic they have such as waking consciousness, time, space, objects, etc.*
>
> *Please read the new site very carefully. Most of your questions will be answered there. It is the blue site within the yellow/orange site.*
>
> ***READER:***

Ed, I gasped when I read your response. After looking at the dense darkness for over an hour, I saw that it was of the mind, but did not grasp its nature. When you just said, "The darkness is only sleep", there was complete clarity. That's what I was seeing, a mind-based sleep state!! This clarity is liberating. Yet, I am also aware that I am beyond "this clarity". I am beyond this knowing, yet not separate from it. I am beyond being and not-being, beyond all concepts. I read the new site twice and will continue to read it carefully. I am so very grateful for your guidance.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Congratulations!*
>
> *Don't lose it.*
>
> *Practice.*

READER:

Thanks Ed. New morning. The mind "does not work" in the deep sleep state, so there is the appearance of dense darkness. I am now aware of this as an appearance, aware that this is a mind state that comes and goes and that I am not it. I am beyond all arisings in the imaginal mind. I am aware of this state, yet "have no characteristic of it". In under one week, you saved me an additional ten years of searching, or maybe a lifetime. Thank you, thank you!

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 11:29 PM

16 February 2009

The Reader Loses It Then Gets It Back Again

READER:

Hi again Ed, I know that you want me to dwell in emptiness, in true existence as much as possible. But last night, I was reading Robert's Collected Works and would appreciate your clarification if it's alright. If I shouldn't even be asking this, I understand. It relates to, but is also different from the original question I asked you about deep sleep.

Robert states: "Once you go to sleep, the world no longer exists for you and you are is a state of dreamless sleep. The state of dreamless sleep is like jnana, self-realization, except you have consciousness. But there is no denying that you exist, for when you wake up you say, "I slept well." The state of dreamless sleep is like a person who died. It gives you an idea of what happens to you when you die, so to speak....So the first state of consciousness is dreamless sleep, and you exist in dreamless sleep."

This does not feel true for me as there are often times in which I am not aware that I had been sleeping (only the clock tells me) and so Robert's statement does not for me, "confirm" my existence, my undying consciousness. In fact, deep sleep seems to be the exception to the recognition that I exist. I do realize that my question is also rooted in an egoic fear, in old family history, but it snags me.

In your own writings you say: "Even the deep sleep state is a state of consciousness. The brain, mind and body are shut down during that 'time'. All is forgotten because remembering requires mind. Mind is shut down during deep sleep as is the brain. Both are forgotten. But an underlying tone of awareness continues. Many people after some practice "feel" the presence of the sleep state even when awake. YOU are that which can simultaneously be aware of both waking and sleeping, even though you are primarily the waking state at the time.....There is no argument that can prove there is an observing consciousness or existence in sleep. All arguments that there is consciousness in sleep depend on argumentation and inference. They try to convince the reader that this is their direct experience by inference. This is a weakness of all Jnani-style expositions: he mystery of the deep sleep state..."

What you write is true, isn't it? Unborn existence or awareness cannot be confirmed in deep sleep, the one state free of mind. Awareness in deep sleep appears to have been unquestionably true for Robert as an exception. Still any clarification would again be helpful.

> ***READER:***
>
> *Wow Ed, Thank you for your response. Everything you say is extremely clear. Formless, aware presence ANSWER:*
>
> *Ahh, you lost it. That is to be expected.*
>
> *Robert was repeating the standard Jnana-Advaita argument that just does not wash. It is a ridiculous argument.*
>
> *BUT, you are still looking for a waking-type of awareness in deep sleep. It won't happen. Ever.*
>
> *The question again comes from a place of identification with waking consciousness as the only "real" consciousness.*
>
> *However, the waking consciousness is an artifact of having a body and depends on the state of the body. It is weak, feeble and temporary. Ditto dream sleep.*
>
> *Dream sleep is the imaginal world weakly illuminated by waking consciousness.*
>
> *The real argument is that you are That which is aware of the coming and going of waking consciousness.*
>
> *The analogy I used was a candle flame. The flame itself, if conscious, would not be aware of its non-existence. Only the wick and the observer would be aware of the coming and going of the flame.*
>
> *So too with you. You are aware you are aware now, and you are also aware you will not be aware 12 hours from now.*
>
> *That you is like the wick or the observer.*
>
> *You can argue that it is only the conscious mind that knows it will not be a few hours hence and not something beyond, yet, when you wake up and when you go to sleep you do watch the coming and going of sleep. It is not the waking mind that observes that, it is the underlying consciousness*

associated with having an alive body, Turiya.

It is this recognition that you see the coming and going that creates the knowledge you are beyond all this. You can never see That which is beyond it, but you become rooted in it with that knowledge.

I go one step further than most Advaita. Most take that emptiness and Void they perceive to be that out of which the world and body arise, but the Void is merely another percept. You perceive it. You are beyond by having no property at all, not even void or space, just as when you sleep.

That is, without a body you are nothing at all, not even sentient. You are the witness of all sentience including waking consciousness.

I never asked Robert if he had a waking consciousness with memory at night. I think if I were to ask him, he would say he did not.

You have to lose hold of waking consciousness as being the measure of all existence. It is not."returned". No qualities or properties here, not a mark. This reality is so real, yet of nothing. Also today, I directly saw the made-up quality of my fear. So made up! I heard that people laugh when seeing this, but I never did. Today though, the seriousness with which I had taken this storybook sense of reality made me laugh. I also see that I have always known this true reality.

I do have another question that rises from this awareness.

Last week I wrote this down: There is no separation between mind and no mind, even though mind is a conceptual overlay. Paradox vanishes. Even untruth is of the One and yet not, infused, supported by an emptiness that cannot be described. Thought does not bother me. I engage in the world as a play and though unreal, is loved as the All.

Sometimes however and today, this is noticed: True reality is not aware of anything, not even of dream states. Only the pure, unmarked, absolute reality exists, so there is nothing else to be aware of.

When you have time, can you let me in on any sense of what is going on here? The awareness is different.

Thank you for being there.

ANSWER:

Part of the old you is struggle desperately to stay alive--or this is how it appears.

Actually, there is a loose wheel portion of your mind that keeps spinning out of habit, generating questions and perplexities.

Sort of like having a sore tooth, but after the root canal, something seems wrong without it.

At times you let this process take over and out spins questions and perplexities.

The only light to shed is that this is a pathological part of yourself that needs passive observation and separation from.

It is almost like you just received $20,000,000 and then start asking questions about how two bills seem to have been printed at different mints, have different signatures on them, and different colors, thinking there might be some deep meaning.

You have been searching a long time and part of you would feel lost if there were nothing more to do except sit still.

READER:

Thank you Ed. Your description is so brilliantly clear that I have to laugh. I see the residual habit. I see my endearing toothache. I will sit still, passively observing. I don't mind. The old is not my only choice anymore. Thank you again for your keen guidance. I don't believe you fully know how much you help me.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:58 AM

03 March 2009

Communicating with a Teacher

I get several emails everyday form people asking directions about their practice and often with practices far from what I have recommended or practiced myself. These questions are very difficult to answer because I am not in their skin nor vice versa. We communicate through concepts, words and images, yet there is no common point "Rosetta Stone" whereby I can know that what you mean by "red" is the same as what I mean, or that your experience of "emptiness" or "I Am" is the same as mine was. We just all assume there is some correspondence, and in most instances things seem to work out as if there had been communication.

Therefore when you send a description, unless it is very detailed and dovetails into my own experiential progression on the path, I really can't tell where you are because you are still lost in what I call "Imaginal Space," the inner conceptualizing and imaging processes that fill our inner and outer sense of emptiness with a non-existent world of name, substance and form. That emptiness becomes polluted by the constant mentation/imaging processes.

The trick is to end imaginal space and its contents altogether. The I Am is the core component that arranges and orders that imaginal space giving the world its form and you your apparent body/mind.

But many of the questions I get are on how to proceed to enlightenment from some point inside of the questioner's imaginal space meditation experiences, which are all illusory. It is almost like asking, "In which direction do I need to walk in order to get into the Fifth Dimension?" Well, there is no Fifth Dimension from where you are, there will only be continuity of the illusion unless you want to wake up.

Meditation can only get you to an experience of a very refined emptiness such as the Clear Light Void I have talked about. The I Am feeling, imagining and thinking are in abeyance, and a feeling of the empty and void nature of things is strong.

This is very subtle and peaceful, but is not enlightenment which is a total blowing out of the imaginal space and its contents.

Nothing can show you the way to this true void, true emptiness; it has to happen to you. The best you can do is to prepare the way, that is, practice. Awakening becomes the focus of your attention.

Right now for the sake of communication, using a specific variety of Self-Inquiry which I feel is both rapid and least likely to cause you to go astray, I ask you to download Pradeep's "Nisragdatta Gita" from the Resource page. Print it out and put it in a 3 ring binder. Read 4-5 paragraphs every morning and "ponder" the meaning. Correct meditation then can be almost automatic.

I like his form because there is less likelyhood of getting lost compared practicing awareness watching awareness, or trying to follow the I-thought to its source.

As long as you can feel your sense of existence, you will have a guide. But asking yourself, "Who am I?, and waiting, or sitting trying to be aware of awareness, can lead to losing interest, getting lost, and puts an unnecessary emphasis on void-like or emptiness meditations. I know, because I did this meditation for many years.

After you do this a few weeks, then send questions and we will be a little bit "closer" to being on the same page.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 11:18 AM

23 March 2009

A Reader Questions:

Dear Ed, it was recommended to me by a friend that I contact you with a few questions that I have. I am a 21 year old University of XXXX student majoring in Classics. I am having difficulty understanding the definition of existence in Mind 4 of the Blue website. I understand that since the world is defined by the mind's perception that it has no foundation in reality because thoughts are not real and do not exist. According to the definition of existence provided on the blue website there is nothing that exists because there is nothing that is tangible, and there is nothing that is tangible because perception defines tangibility, and perception is simply a thought, and thoughts are not tangible so they do not exist. This is where I stumble. The suggestion made by this definition that thought and perception are one in the same is true on a biological level. Chemical and electrical signals in the brain and body work to affect thought and perception in a similar manner, but I wonder if it might be incorrect to suggest that sensory perception and thought are no different. In addition it seems to me that the given definition of existence is too narrow. When I hear the word exist I assume it is referring to something that "is," or rather something that "is not a lack of something," although making nothing the subject of a sentence, and making nothing into something that I can refer to seems paradoxical. I understand that what is and what is not depends solely on my perception of it and in that way there is nothing without the mind's perception. Is it possible that the only way to understand non-existence is that non-existence is that which the mind cannot fathom or perceive, and by that definition it is impossible to ever reach a higher state of awareness? And if that were true might it also be true that enlightenment is just another mind state.

p.s. I am aware that I use the word "I" a lot, and I realize the implications of this. But I am not sure how to convey through speech what "I" am thinking.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my ramblings.

Dear YYYYYYYY

For future correspondence can you use a larger type, such as 12-14 pts and break up your questions into separate paragraphs to make it easier for this old mind to follow?

I am not defining thought or the world there. I am pointing out my understanding.

To use an analogy, thought is like a mass that distorts awareness, grabs hold of it, and creates a condition, such as an apparent object. Without the thought to give the formless awareness form, there would no form, no objects, no external world.

When the thoughts are no longer identified with through practice, they lose the ability to create forms including objects. Then they are seen to be unreal compared to the "seer" who is You.

You have the primary existence, all else is secondary to you, impermanent, having no substance. It is a passing imaginal form. You, as a person are as nothing in this scheme, just a passing form.

In any event, this is not a definition. Definitions are between words and concepts. It is more like a description which binds the world to concepts.

Ultimately awareness, the real, whatever you call it, cannot be described or defined. You need to get beyond this bottleneck of trying to understand with words, anything. The mind will never give you freedom. To go free you need to lose your mind.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 8:54 PM

Hi Ed,

I have been seeking for over 30 years but the last 9 were more (or less) intensive.

Many teachers say Consciousness (turya, Brahman, I-Amness, etc,) is the final "goal". Some however say there is that which is beyond Consciousness which is the Absolute Reality. In fact Siddharameshwar calls Brahman the MahaMaya. It is the original illusion. The title of Jean Dunn's transcriptions, both titles approved by Nisargadatta: "Prior to Consciousness" and "Consciousness and the Absolute" speak to the point.

Consciousness may be a step towards realization of the Absolute, but as tourists say about the city of my birth, NYC., it's a nice place to visit but I wouldn't want to live there.

I now have copies in a binding of the talks by Robert Adams from your site. Will take it with me on my upcoming trip. Have already read the 1st two. Also the recording of him "Awareness of Consciousness", I have listened to it several times. Funny though, this morning was the first time all of it got through. Thank you for making these available.

Best wishes, R.

> *To R:*
>
> *Re Maha Maha.*
>
> *Most of the famous gurus have metaphysics associated with their "school." Ramana has Turiya and Turiyatta as does Nisargadatta. Lots of Buddhist schools have their own ontology and epistemology, while Zen more or less has none.*
>
> *Both Krishnamurtis talk of unity consciousness and accept consciousness as a brain phenomena, while the I and you disappear in unity consciousness. They don't go far from that.*
>
> *Robert didn't really have any ontolohy. He'd mention them to entertain people--like me, and then at the end of the talk admit he was pulling their leg.*
>
> *You have to take all if this with a grain of salt. Lot's of people describe almost exactly the same experience in very different ways, and probably more often, very different experiences in similar ways.*
>
> *As long as words are used to communicate, we never know what another experiences. Music, I think, better conveys the experience of another without too much distortion, but sucks at conveying ontology.*
>
> *Therefore, how can you trust what anyone says that their experience means?*
>
> *That is why I just advise people to practice self-inquiry and find their own experience and truth which they can then express as their message.*
>
> *Therefore too, I recommend listening to sacred music. I think those who get it, all get more or less the same experience.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 7:38 PM

02 April 2009

Hi Ed,

Listening to Robert is amazing. I can't even believe the difference between reading and hearing him, beyond even what I imagined.

What is so crystal clear about Robert than one can't pick up on as well through the writings, is his incredible compassion. There is not an inkling of personal judgment in his responses to the questioners, a clear compassion.

Like you said, the real test is in being a loving and compassionate person and the way he is can't be faked. His compassion also comes out in his approach to suffering. While he says that everything is preordained, he acknowledges the need for doing what one needs to do; that is, he doesn't come from belief.

S.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:51 PM

30 March 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:31 PM

15 July 2009

Someone who never met Robert composed this fantastic love poem:

"God, God, God."

Your violin arrived, Robert, but the answers to the equations weren't

forthcoming. Instead … just a deafening symphony of silence. It put Brahms, Beethoven and Mendelssohn – even Narada Muni – to shame. There you were – lost in an imponderable composition that never was, but still went on forever. You saw the Limitless masquerade as the finite and dance in consummate stillness. That earned you an "F." Well done. So … there's no sky, and there's no blue. It sounds like perfect kite weather, Robert. Let's call in "gone for Now" And meet at Warner Park. Play musical chairs around a picnic table with benches? Only you could pull it off. You're completely nuts, ya know – that's what I love about you the most. When the harmonium stops playing, just save me a seat on your lap. Now it's off to India, off to Hawaii, off to Oregon – And back to LA just in time for a cup of chai with Ed and Bodhi. Of course you never went anywhere – where could you possibly go? I miss you. Oh, how I miss you. I was never in your presence, But you were always by my side. Next time, if I don't turn my head and face you, Just give me a little pinch to remind me that it's all a dream. Now the peacock has been fed. Flowers lie on Lakshmi's samadhi, And Dimitri has long since taken his final walk on the waning plane of storied yesterdays. I must have blinked and missed it all. Tell me one last time how everything came to pass, Robert – It's not real, but it's a beautiful, beautiful lie. You say took a lawyer to confession, did you? Too bad the confession of a jnani isn't admissible in court. The magistrate just can't find a box large enough to contain the Infinite. So I guess Reality will have to be our little secret. You're such a mischief maker, Robert. You really had me going. For a while there, I almost listened your words – Instead of drinking all the love you offered in a single draught.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 8:03 PM

26 July 2009

Dearest Ed,

A couple of weeks ago, you recommended I read and ponder Pradeep's 'Nisargadatta Gita' daily.

It was so profound - and obvious! - that it struck like a lightning bolt. My practice and conviction intensified. The 'light episodes' got more intense and it felt like I was being vacuumed clean from 'above' by a very powerful Dyson!

Initially, I felt elated. "At last ..." I thought, "... this would be the source of unalloyed happiness, joy, bliss!"

Well, that's what thought did!!! The original 'I Am' seemed to 'change' and become all fuzzy. It even split off into 'unreal?' bits??

During these 2 weeks, I appear to have been going through a whole range of 'weirdness.' I'm still 'passing out' every day for hours - and come back (it seems) on the realisation that I haven't been breathing. There's a bit of

panic with this and my chest feels crushed empty. I've been boiling hot, freezing cold, my body hurts everywhere - it even feels like there's a wee alien taking footsteps under my skin - and nothing makes any sense anymore. I'm forgetful, confused, can't think straight. I can't talk to anyone either, like I've developed a fear of connecting with people.

It appears I'm literally going to go nuts and/or just burst right open at the seams with the seeming immensity of the 'problem' that I appear to have been 'stuck' on for the last few days (despite intense practice etc.)

There's this total and utter emptiness, desolation, despair, aloneness ... nothingness ... pointlessness. Disappointment. Anger that I've been 'lied' to ... cheated ... that all this time I've been looking to uncover the bliss of my True Nature ... the God within ... and there's absolutely nothing there.

I'm inquiring as to whom all this comes but just seem to be in the same space. Nowhere. No-one there.

It's like I've died to everything ... even to hope itself.

I would sooooo very much appreciate any direction you can offer Ed in what appears to be a very dark time.

I've been calling out to Robert for help and surrendering all this 'appearance' to him. All I'm aware of is "All is well and everything is unfolding exactly as it should." I'm hanging onto that!!

Love, G

> *Your true nature is neither emptiness or fullness. You are beyond both.*
>
> *All these experiences you are having have nothing to do with you;*
>
> *these are happenings in the consciousness you identified yourself*
>
> *with. That emptiness nature is the nature of pure consciousness.*
>
> *The not breathing means your entire being is relaxing and going beyond*
>
> *body identification.*
>
> *What is happening to you over days is what happened to me over a few hours.*
>
> *There is absolutely nothing to fear, you are being liberated.*
>
> *Ed*

Thank you so much for your reassurance Ed.

Love G

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 1:59 PM

02 August 2009

> *Is there interest in starting a Satsang in the Los Angeles Area?*
>
> *Robert never would have started a Satsang except that he couldn't work or drive anymore because of Parkinson's Disease. He jokingly referred to it as his job.*
>
> *However, I miss Satsang, chanting and the association of people with like minds.*
>
> *I live in the Valley, and Robert had Satsang all over LA. Satsang was always on Sunday afternoon at 1 pm and Thursday at 7:30. Thursdays were the "deeper" Satsangs, while Sunday were more general and more welcoming for newcomers.*
>
> *I get emails once a month or so from people who want to know whether we hold Satsang. We don't. But if there were enough interest, it might happen.*
>
> *If interested, email me at:*
>
> *satsang.online@gmail.com*

Post Comments:

sickmoments said...

Hello, so I'm confused and worried.

I'm wandering how the enlightend person is to be productive in the world? They may show others the way, which deffinitly is benificial but what happens if everyone is free? We then must only focus on the basics of living in the physical to be happy. But without that... there are still other things to be done. If I have no motivation to do anything upon enlightenment... how can this be helpful?

I beleive someone said that you must come out of enlightenment to help the world around you. I guess this must be so.

August 19, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *If you go free, you will not worry about who tends the world, and you will then tend according to your personality.*
>
> *Why on earth would this be a worry? How many go free a year? Ten people, a million? So few. Too few to make any difference whatsoever.*
>
> *The neo-advaitins will say there is no you to tend, but indeed there will be involvement in the object world by your object mind/body to some degree.*
>
> *If anything, you should concern yourself if you are even tending now, or is this some part of a continuing derangement of your mind that you must step away from?*

August 19, 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 4:22 PM

29 August 2009

A Letter:
Nisargadatta was my main teaching 8 or 9 years ago and his books were my bibles. And so, I've been doing the I Am meditation since that time. I usually start in the head space on the in breath for "I". Then hold it there and on the out breath allow rest in the "Am"...I also just do shikantaza and focus more in the belly center. Towards the end of my meditations, I will place my hands on the heart and do the "I AM" there and pray for grace/surrender. I typically sit in the morning for 1/2 hour and then in the evening for another 1/2 hour. Sometimes, on my days off, i'll step it up and do a modified sesshin...and sit most of the day...

2-3 years ago, I felt i needed a teacher. Even though i could rest as non conceptual awareness, I was depressed and had a distaste for the world and no motivation to do anything...it became hard to be around family/friends because i felt so divorced from how they saw the world...so, i went to a zen monastery thinking someone would know how to live out this no-self state that i had become stuck in...it was there during a weeklong sesshin that i saw that everything i took myself to be was simply imagination...this quite simply, blew my mind and it came even harder to know how to be in the world after i left the monastery...i then started a contemplative bed and breakfast with my girlfriend focusing on yoga/meditation....this didn't bring in enough $$, so I ended up getting a job working with Alzheimer patients doing therapeutic recreation...this has been a god send and i can do the job with my big toe...but, when i'm not working, i usually just kind of lay around lately...

still, i keep reading what other teachers have read or listen to youtube stuff...it's like, I don't know what else to do...i enjoy just listening to satsangs, but it seems like enough is enough and i feel like maybe i'm still depressed, as there's no motivation to do things...i can have thoughts of, for example, getting a master's degree in counseling, but then, it's like, why follow the imaginations of the mind anymore...i function in my job quite well and don't discuss my spiritual process with anyone there...i am now single and live quietly in a cabin in rural connecticut...i will go see family and friends in ohio, but i can only do quick visits for a day or two...after that, i need to be on my way...i still talk with my old girlfriend, who i could share this process with...i can't imagine being with someone who i couldn't discuss it with...or maybe it would be better....anyway, i'm living a hermit's life and to a degree it suits me, but as i said, things just feel incomplete...

i know this is just my mind rambling, and these questions don't arise when i do the "I AM", but nonetheless, this is what is arising...hope this helps....thanks and take care....P

> *P,*
>
> *You are 99% done. You are doing fine. The sense of incompleteness itself is the last barrier. It is not you. It is not real.*
>
> *Just keep going.*
>
> *Love,*
>
> *Ed*
>
> *Imagine 99% cooked. That is VERY, VERY good.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 3 comments at 6:25 PM

02 September 2009
Letter:

"I haven't become aware of my "True Nature" (whatever that is) although I did have a strange experience once but since it involved a feeling of knowing and understanding all within the fake world I don't know what it was. Yet there is this innate sense that it is true that there is no me. I'm currently at the state where I just see my mind as a freaking nuisance and I feel like I don't know anything anymore.

"I can't even explain why it's so important to me- but I have to know because until then, nothing else matters. I've been dealing with this feeling that things weren't what they seemed and that I didn't belong for as long as I can remember."

"I don't know many authors or titles or the difference between this school of thought or that one and frankly, I don't think it matters within the context of trying to wake up."

> *Ed:*
>
> *Actually, it matters most of all because it is all bullshit. The only thing to pay attention to are instructions on how to practice self-inquiry. That is the core of the two non-Robert texts I sent you: practice and self-inquiry.*
>
> *Here is the rub. Spiritual people are looking for something. They know something is wrong with the world but they don't know what. They search for something, but they don't know what. So they listen to all*
> *the gurus with all the different philosophies and get totally lost. The only way you don't get lost is exploring yourself. Hopefully you get to the point where self-exploration is your own way rather than*
> *trying to recreate the explorations Ramana or Nisargadatta did.*

The last 2 chapters of the Path of Ramana Part I are two of the best on self inquiry as is Pradeep.

Robert is stillness speaking to you through the modifications produced by your mind and should be considered entertainment though you can have wonderful temporary experiences as a result. "The Way" is marked by
these experiences. These are what keep people going. But, in the end, the experiences are not important. The real work is being accomplished through the silence accomplished through going within, and to an extent, Robert's words, or, as in my case, through listening to sacred music. Both instill stillness, silence.

Eventually you get to a place where you are yourself as You after all the spiritual reading and practices are one. By that time you are fully baked and utterly useless to anyone or anything except your cats, whom you serve. But, you will be happy and complete.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 9:16 PM

08 September 2009

Letter:

Ed one more question. Who is it , first thing in the morning, that would try to catch the I as it rises from the self to the brain? What chases and what runs? There was one instance (or maybe 2), very clear, where I became conscious in this gap between sleep and waking up. I was aware of being, but I did not know who I was - just that I was. Also, I knew, without thinking, that I would know who I was when something reached my brain and activated the memories. Was this imagination? Is this trying to catch the I - just a way of saying - try to become conscious before you hit the brain, like I experienced? For there are not 2 I's One to run and One to chase. Terminalogy is such a trap to understanding.

*My **Response**:*

There is no I. Never was an I. I is a concept, a fiction. Same too with Self. These are just all words and concepts pointing to an imaginary existence. I appears to exist because you have the concept that there is an independent subject I associated with the word 'I'. When you see there is no objective you as a separate person that the word and concept I points too, then you see there is no objective external world either. All is you, the totality of consciousness. However, then you will begin to realize that consciousness is quite variable, yet you don't feel variable. You feel independent, free, the ultimate subject to whom waking, dream and sleep come as a show that is not you. You are the unmanifest subject, the noumena. Actually you are the world-show too, but it emmanates from your noumenal, absolute emptiness, and is variable while your true nature is not. So any questions about various I's searching for other I's and other imaginary splits are still the same--all this is just concept. You as an I do not exist. You as the totality that mistaken creates a multiplicity, fundamentally do not exist in existence, because you count existence as that which is perceived rather than that which perceives. It will become clear. Just keep going as you are. You are doing fine. Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 2:10 PM

10 September 2009

Questions from a reader:

1. Does the feeling that is called the feeling of I-am-ness always include a sense of separate selfhood? There seems to be an intimate sense or feeling of presence (or being) that does not however present itself in the shape of an I. I'm not talking about anything advanced-about transcending the "I" or reaching the ultimate subject or anything. I am talking about an immediate, pre-reflective feeling of being. When I reflect on this feeling I can note that it is graspable as mine but the lived experience is not one in which the being of which I am aware is grasped as mine. Now I think there is such a feeling. Does it count as an instance of the feeling of I-am-ness? One reason for thinking that it should count is that the beingness of which I am aware seems (on reflection) to be "mine" One reason for thinking it should not count is that the feeling does not include a pronounced consciousness of separateness. What do you think?

2. You say of Michael Langford's "awareness watching awareness" that it is shikantasa not vichara. Okay, I agree that what he is talking about is shikantasa. But If the self = awareness, why isn't awareness watching awareness a kind of self-awareness, and hence a form of self-inquiry? Perhaps your point is that bare awareness of awareness does not contain the thought "I". That would explain, why on your view, shikantasa's no good for "killing the self." Is this how you are conceiving of awareness watching awareness?

3. One might conclude from (2) that the I-am-feeling requires something like the word 'I'. But Nisargadatta makes a big deal of the wordless I am. His suggestion seems to be that this I am is somehow more "primordial" than the I am that takes the form of mentally voicing the words "I ... am." Is the wordless "I am" different from the wordless "presence" that is not yet the I-am I was talking about in (1)?

4. I take it that: the feeling I am ? the felt experience of the lived body. A potentially confusing thing here is that the felt experience of the body seems to be an experience of being and indeed to disclose my being (= my being as embodied). This might be a reason for describing the felt experience of the body as a form of I-am-ness. Perhaps the sense of my being as embodied is illusory (since the real I is not embodied), but the description seem phenomenologically accurate. There is a lived awareness of embodiment-a kind of bodily consciousness-is there not? Doesn't this consciousness come with a sense of "mineness"? You say: "[m]ost 'I am', subjective first person "feelings" will actually be associated with some form of body identification" - under the rubric of "false selves [that] will deceive all but most diligent." This suggests you think that there is a bodily I am that is distinct from the Advaita-preferred, distinct from the I-am-the-body-idea, I am. Is this your view?

Follow up thought: I had thought of mindfulness of the body (from Zen) as a "good" thing. I suppose that mindfulness of the body ? I-am-body-idea. You can be mindful of the body without identifying with it, can't you? Yet Nisargadatta advocates thinking constantly that I am not the body. This seems contrary to the spirit of cultivating mindfulness of embodiment. Does Advaita say that mindfulness of the body is incompatible with the desired I - consciousness?

5. I can become aware of that which asks Who am I? ("personal" report). Is this "awareness of the witness"? There are places where Nisargadatta associates awareness of the witness with I-am-ness. But this sense (of I-am-ness) seems to be very different from the sense of I-am-ness associated with wanting to be. It doesn't seem connected with a wish to continue existing. It doesn't seem to involve a sense of a separate identity. It may involve distinctness from what is witnessed, but there is no sense of difference from others. Other people don't seem to figure in this form of I-consciousness at all. Is there a witness I am that is different from a personal I am?

All this stuff is tremendously difficult to describe. So I'm not sure that I'm getting the phenomenology accurately. I may be making things more complicated than they need be (occupational hazard). But I've given it my best shot.

Thanks much.

> *My Reply:*
>
> *The mind is quite self-disabling isn't it?*
>
> *Most people avoid real self-inquiry by arguing about terms and concepts used by one teacher versus another and get lost into trying to discover how ultimately they agree, or that one guru was full of crap while th other is the real thing.*
>
> *Here you are using discrimination to effectively halt practice by focusing on imaginary distinctions in experience.*

It doesn't matter what Nisargadatta said or Ramana said about practice. They really only, in the end, wanted an ending to concepts by focusing on practice. But you focus on practice and find the conceptual imaginary distinctions others find in the theories.

First principal:

All experiences are illusion including the sense of I, the word I, the concept I, the sense of amness, and the waking and dreaming experiences as a whole.

Self inquiry is not to find which aspect of the experience is real, or belongs to Nisargadatta, but to see it is all unreal.

Just watch the I Am sense, sometimes associated with the body, sometimes not. It changes with observation.

Just listen to Nisargadatta's pointers, but don't obsess over apparent contradictions.

You want ultimately to submerge in consciousness only in order to find out consciousness is as much illusion as concept.

Nisragdatta had his experiences which he formulated into an ideology, which he then asks everyone to abandon. Ditto Ramana and Robert. A lot of what they say is just entertainment. The essence is practice.

Don't depend on them. You invesitigate yourself by inner observation
in the best way you know how to find your core.

Don't be distracted by techniques or experiences. They are for you to borrow, improve upon or ignore.

Just grasp your sense of self however or whereever you find it and hang on, or sit doing absolutely nothing, and various samadhi's will come to you.

As Seung Sahn said over and over, you must become completely stupid. Real hard advice for people used to using their minds. Robert spent 90% of Satsang providing emotional entertainment, but always ended in talking about self-inquiry's visisitudes, and in the end, silence when all is empty.

You know emptiness from Zazen, but here there is the emptiness as the personal self is lost. That loss is different and more "personal" as you feel it to be YOUR emptiness rather than just a state of emptiness, as in Samadhi, that comes and goes.

As Robert said, "You become totally useless." That is why I like his "Good for Nothing Man" talk best.

It is somewhere on the itisnotreal website and ceratinly in his Collected Works.

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

A strange feeling I've had nagging in the back of my head for a while: what happens to loneliness?
Is loneliness just a part of the ego-delusion? When the realization comes - that there is only one (and then none) - is there not some sense of loneliness somewhere?

I realize this may very well be a very stupid question, but I have to get it out of my head.

September 17, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *No, it is not a stupid question.*
>
> *With realization comes perfect completeness and happiness, which though oft times is challenged by environmental events.*
>
> *Robert used to say life on earth is the lowest hell, and it does become bothersome and can produce anger, etc., but basically, one feels happy.*
>
> *No loneliness. That is you speaking now from a human perspective.*

September 17, 2009
P said...

Thank you.

Even though I sort of understand what you're getting at, I must ask: Why is there no lonelienss?

I realize the contexts of normal and "enlightened" life greatly differ, and that the ego-self is dissolved. But, is it only the ego that creates the emotion of loneliness?
The reason I'm asking is because I can't (of course..) wrap my head around how it would feel to know that "I" am but one being expeienceing itself subjectively.

September 17, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Why SHOULD there be loneliness? I can give the usual answer this is an ego feeling, etc., but this will not end your loneliness.*
>
> *The key is to stop asking questions about the so-called enlightened state and instead find out who you are. Just the practice of self-inquiry, self-abidance, brings (usually) peace which deepens over time.*
>
> *You are letting your mind screw with you and delay your own practice.*

September 17, 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 6 comments at 9:33 PM

16 September 2009

Christian Fundamentalism is only technically part of a religious movement. Actually it is a deep pathology, and as such should be and is exposed. This is far from Robert and Advaita, but worth reading.

http://frank-schaeffer.blogspot.com/

http://www.frankschaeffer.com/

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nC0qHnWsP5k

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 6:21 PM

Questions sent to me by a reader with my answers. Actually, these are exactly the right questions rather than dwelling on special experiences, progress, or "What is the state like?"

1. Are you happier now than before the awakening?

YES, YES, YES! This is the only real criteria of whether the whole search was worth it.

2. Do you wish sometimes that you are in the stage of non-awakened people?

Absolutely not. Too much noise, lack of clarity and a degree of barbarism.

3. Do you find life worth living?

I make do. It no longer matters to me one way or the other. Life really has nothing to do with ME.

4. What motivates you to do things - if anything?

A strong sense of justice and compassion. Feeling the suffering of others and animals.

5. Is there love in your world?

Do you love life or people or yourself? I love every living thing and want to protect every living thing from suffering.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 11:51 AM

24 September 2009

Sir,

Thank you for the info. on your web site. I am not sure if this is meant to be "Stump the Guru" question, but you are welcome to use it there. As a practicing Tibetan Buddhist, I have been "steeped" in the Two Wings, Emptiness and Bodhicitta (Compassion) . So, the concept "Sudden Enlightenment" is quite new to me. I have been pleasantly surprised by what I have learned recently in the Zen world of Buddhism. I have two questions.

1. I certainly can see the Emptiness side of Zen. What I do not see (and probably because I do not know where to look) is the Bodhicitta or Compassion emphasis in Zen teachings. Can you explain to me or direct me to explanations of how Zen approaches and incorporates Bodhicitta in its teachings?

2. In Tibetan Buddhism, the Tulku concept is quite interesting and appears to be quite useful for its potential to identify those, if nothing else, with high probability of great attainment and therefore (if so) ability to guide others to Enlightenment (or Bodhisattva-hood). (Being a "human" process, I am aware that the tulku process has its problems, too.) In reading many biographies of Zen masters, I find little to no teachings (yet) on what is occurring to these Masters during or after transition. I find it impossible to believe that they have no further interest in helping sentient beings but see no systematic teaching to that effect. Is there such a thing in Zen teachings or is that pretty much a "your karma may vary" thing, looking at it from the point of view of us schmucks still in samsara?

You can edit the above questions as you see fit if you want to use them in your "Stump the Guru" blog. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

P.

> *P,*
>
> *Zen in literature has little to do with compassion.*
>
> *By Tulku you mean reincarnated teacher? No such thing in Zen or Advaita.*
>
> *When you go from one tradition to another you should not expect the same concepts to exist in both. That would defeat the whole idea of different traditions. In fact though, most Zen masters I have known were good guys and some kind. But it is not a universal character trait.*
>
> *Ed*

Ed,

Yeah, perhaps I am just trying to have my cake (Tibetan Buddhism) and my icing (Zen Buddhism) and eat them both (without desire, of course). If I might ask a couple more questions: (If you don't have the time or prefer not to address the questions below, I still appreciate your website and writings. I think they are very, very helpful.)

1. So, what is the difference between Zen and Advaita? (I know little about Advaita at the moment. Read Sri Ramana's bio and books recently. Very interesting. Found your site from within the Wanderling Awakening 101 site.) What makes Zen a Mahayana thing and Advaita non-Buddhist, as opposed, say, to Theravada or Hinayana? There are quite a few similarities in those three traditions.

I believe Zen incorporates the Bodhisattva vows into the Esoteric form of Zen. I have interest in "leaving samsara permanently", of course, but have more interest in helping others, such as my family, do so, too. I realize that we are just rehashing samsara every second, but dropping everything, including family, to "get 'er done" seems counter-productive for them.

2. I recently read a note on your web site about "Kundalini experiences" where you noted that, for more info., one should search your web site. I have not been able to locate that area. About 5 years ago, when I was wondering which path to take, I had an amazing vision/dream/experience, which I can only describe as being "touched" (or nearly overwhelmed) by a female "goddess" or female Buddha, or dakini (whatever that is) or something. (No idea who it was, but she was BIG and looked like the Pre-historic goddess carvings of "The Witches of Eastwick". LOTS of femininity.) I am still curious as to what happened or whether there was or is any significance in that event. (Or whether this is just another game played by my ego.) It certainly energized my practice so to that extent it has been helpful.

Other things have and do still occur in my life that keep my practice energized to the extent that the experiences are "new". Practically every night for the last 30 years, I have had and continue to have dreams of what I interpret as "other lives" experiences. Often, these dreams include experiences of dying, of existence in the Bardo, and the heading for the re-birth. Often, a large or significant GURU figure is leading the way. Mostly, the dreams are just of me continuously making a fool of myself. (Bah-ha-ha!) I have only been practicing Buddhism for the last 5.5 years so these started happening way before I ever knew anything about Buddhist cosmology. Ah, well. Life is weird.

Thank you for any and all assistance. I am grateful for your website and writings.

Sincerely,

P

P,

All your questions are about philosophy, experiences, ideas,comparative religion, etc.

None of this has ANYTHING to do with who you are.

Forget about goddesses, gurus, teachings, compassion, going beyond,these are all head trips.

Your only concern should be to understand who you are which can only be found by you through self-investigation.

I attach only one book.

Download it and let it be your guide to self-exploration. Read it every morning for a half hour. Sit in silence after that and let it and your pondering sink in.

Slow down your mind and reflect only on your own self-teaching. You can know all about the subtleties of Buddhist philosophy and be even further away from self realization than a Wall Street stock manipulator. All concepts are your enemies.

Ed

Thank you. Very much.

I will do what you suggest. I hope you don't mind if I modify your instructions a bit. I will do the reading and the sitting, prior to work every morning and after work every evening. (Got two kids in college.) Interesting. Last night and this morning, I read a couple of chapters of a book about Sri Ramana. (Book link at home). His definition of Happiness is interesting. wow.

I know that this body is not "Me" or the "I am". I know that this mind is not Me or the "I am". (Nor these feelings, etc.) I have understood that for a few years. I have only "known" that for a few months. I know (the word "know" is all I have. perhaps "feel" or simply understand) that my universe is "Me" or at least my perception of it is completely created by this current body and mind, and the karma or my previous (and current) mental actions. I originally thought this was (or is) the my holy guru as (I reasoned) how could someone like me provide me with the universe, body, and mind that I have. 'Course, my Karma "could" be my part of the deal. I guess I don't know.
Last Spring, during my morning practice, I "saw" or "became one with", for a very short period of time, "Me". I was a perfect diamond-like essence. It was every color of light, forever. I was very sorry to see that recede.

Again, thank you. I look forward to following your advice.

Sincerely,

P

You need no further advice at this time. Just gently begin the practice of gaining acquaintance with yourself as just consciousness, awareness.

You are doing well.

These are good experiences, but remember being one with I Am is only an experience, and you are not that; you are the knower of the experience.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 6:41 PM

I have returned from Dresden. I was again there for other 10 days. From one hand they were stressful; from the other hand being close to death, seeing how my father and mother died has detached me from the apparent life even more than before. My thought goes almost exclusively towards liberation.

Since I experienced myself as awareness, my practice has become about like that described by M. Langford (AWA). Moreover, I am trying to practice the Tibetan yogas of dream and sleep. I have two good texts about them by Tenzin Wangyal and Namkhai Norbu Rimpoche. What I don't like about the Tibetan sadhanas are the preliminary practices. For example, Tenzin Wangyal suggests to get a close relationship with the dakini Salgye Du Dalma (a goddess) who favors and protects the sleep with rigpa (the non-dual consciousness). I am not inspired at all to create a dual relationship with Salgye Du Dalma; I am inspired by rigpa, non-duality, awareness with no support of any object! Therefore, I think if I go on with AWA, I will be able to go beyond the three states of wake, dream and sleep one day.

Always accepting and respecting your free choice to answer or not my questions, I would ask how you are about these three states.

With love,

Stefan

> *Stefan,*
>
> *None of the 3 states have anything to do with you. Non dual consciousness has nothing to do with you. States of mind have nothing to do with you. Sadness has nothing to do with you. Happiness has nothing to do with you.*
>
> *All that you are talking about are experiences. Experiences have nothing to do with you.*
>
> *You are beyond all that and therefore playing around with these types meditations only take you further from YOU.*
>
> *Only seek YOU. That is, seek the sensation of I Am if you can. Immerse in awareness of I Am. That is the beginning and end of practice. Abiding there eventually brings quietness and happiness too as well as the ending of doubt.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 3:04 PM

Thanks to readers of this blog, as well as people who have followed this story from all over the world, almost 1,000 people have signed a petition to stop Los Angeles County from killing feral cats. However, the main media still is not carrying the story, and County officials still refuse to talk to members of the Los Angeles animal community.

26 September 2009

> *Hello Ed,*
>
> *I'm reading a Robert talk called "Stillness."*
> *I'd like to clarify something if you don't mind. He says that the world is not real, that it does not*

exist and came out of nothing.

Does it includes only the mental projections that we make on our perceptions, or it includes the perceptions themselves as well ? I'm a little bit confused by this statement.

I perceive a lot of objects, colors, people, sounds around me, in a quite unconscious manner, and unless the question "what did you perceive ?" arise, to some extent, if I don't use my memory, there was nothing indeed. Is that the meaning of Robert's statement ?

Ed:

There are no objects without concept. There is no significant difference between perception and conception. Even less are there objects that stand behind perceptions as "reality."

All concepts are part of a verbal mapping of the universe, with an I thought center around which the conceptual world is constructed. When you see the I does not exist as an inner entity, the world as an external entity, as objects, also disappears, and it becomes you, or you it.

You alone exist; you are the totality of consciousness, with apparent objects or without, as pure consciousness. Only you exist, nothing is external to you.

You have to understand, this is only a conceptual truth and thus too is misleading until you are able to step outside of concepts.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 8:02 PM

27 September 2009

Ed,

Much is coming together
So it began with seeing that something is aware of thought
How can I be thought when I am seeing these thoughts??
Really contemplating on that for awhile
Then realizing there was a bigger awareness watching the witness to thought
Hmmm?
So then it seemed that what was watching wanted, was waiting, to be noticed
Like two awarenesses
Ok so now it seemed that this smaller witness was now aware of the bigger witness
It seemed strange that now the attention was now on the big watcher instead of the thoughts of which it was accustomed,
like looking backward at myself instead of outer looking
Like the attention was turned in the complete opposite direction
Then seeing something big
Awareness as big
Encompassing the entire world
So, then noticing that what I am is “consciousness”
That word kept coming, over and over
Then ah ha!
And then yes…I am consciousness
And then aaaahhhhhhh! aaaahhhhhhhhaaaaaa
So, now unfolding even more

This consciousness is one!
Not two
So then realizing as I am in the store tonight, seeing others, that there is only ONE because….the content of what others are aware of is not an identity
It is one consciousness….with thought forms moving through "others"…only appearing to be separate
And seeing quite oddly, and quite humorously, that there is only one
And so also seeing that I am space…
I am not this body as I am the awareness of it
And seeing that there is no self
As I am formless, seeing this, no self
And also seeing that I am love
That this consciousness sees with a "behold" not just void seeing…seeing with a beholding of all as beloved
All meaning all…such as wall, garbage pail, floor, cat, plant, knob
And seeing others as same self
Same
One.
I am mostly aware that I am consciousness…the "no self" slips in and out…haven't seen that as permanent reality but saw in a flash insight.
How can I be anything arises in awareness
So finally
Seeing that there is no meaning to this world, life
Not in a bleak way but that all is just appearing as something out of nothing
Out of one
Out of energy, vibration, one source
Seeing that nothing is happening, no meaning, no purpose
Signs along the road, just words, just appearing with no substance
No life
Wondering if all a dream
Feeling that all is dream, having that texture to it
Will investigate this more
The end for now…
Sandra

> *Sandra,*
>
> *Your understanding is excellent. Now just stay there as you already are doing as often as possible.*
>
> *The silence and understanding will both deepen and eventually the understanding will be discarded as unnecessary because you will be free.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:59 PM

02 October 2009

Hi Ed. Can you answer me a few more questions about the I - that doesn't exist.

In my practice, when I am ,being conscious, of being - what is watching (being conscious) and what is the being?

You say that beingness is mistaken for a personal I, thus generating a belief in a personal I (this makes perfect sense to me). Is beingness what I am conscious of in my practice? Because thats all I am aware of. From what I see in my practice, there is beingness - thats it! But the witnessing of my beingness is a stumper.

The belief in a personal I - the belief being a thought? but where did it come from? if I am not the thinker, then who or what set it up?

I noticed also in my practice - that thoughts arise but I never think! I can identify with the thoughts, but Ed I don't see me creating them - which is a eye-opener, or is it my imagination!

Also I am perplexed by volition and decision making. If I am sitting in a chair, and a thought arises that I should get up, there is an intention to rise, an exercise of will and then the body is off to do what is needed. Who or what intended and willed the body to move?

If I am driving my car, and I come to a stop sign, and I decide to turn left or right - who is making the decision.

I just re-read your first awakening, and it made perfect sense this time. I knew what you were talking about. I know this is all mental, but I believe , at least mentally, that I can understand the idea of no personal I. I think with these directed questions I can at least increase my understanding.

Now if you say that everything, thoughts, volition, decision making and discrimination occur out of nothingness - enacted by a non-locatable, non-peronal doer. Then that means that I am not the thinker or the doer or the one writing this letter - EVERYTHING HAPPENS BY ITSELF, EVERYTHING!

Can't wait to get your response on this!

Thanks,

T.

> *My **response:***
>
> *These questions you ask are exactly the ones Robert asks you to ask.*
>
> *They cause you to turn your attention towards the subject.*
>
> *But then you find the subject is not a thing. It does not exist.*
>
> *Without the subject, there is then no object. Without subject and object there is no inner or outer.*
>
> *There is only one consciousness.*
>
> *This is step one. Stay there for a while. Just rest in that undivided state.*
>
> *This certainly is not the final understanding, but you do need to stay in that place for a while.*
>
> *Ed*

Thanks Ed. Your telling me I need these questions to find my own answer? Whatever you tell me will not solve my problem, I must do that myself?

Always appreciate your help Ed. Thanks.

T.

> *My **Response:***
>
> *Anything I tell you is only words which you will interpret according to your present understanding and past experiences. My words cannot take your mind beyond concepts to grasp what you really are. In*
> *effect, your mind and its understanding are what is keeping you from knowing your "realer" nature. You have to go to the place before your mind arises, empty mind, silent mind.*

That is, search for that awareness before thoughts and even the intent for directed attention arise.

Your mind is the problem. Get to where it has stopped or has not arisen. Any "answers" posted about your question only makes the mind work harder to integrate them into what you already know.

It is all about silence, not answers. This is difficult for the busy mind to accept, and difficult for a busy mind to do, but once you learn how it is the most blissful, peaceful practice you can have.

Post Comments:

RafeStoneman said...

what do you call that which created the appearance of all this... provided the opportunity to be without a sense of doership... what is the name you use to describe that which allows the appearance of the sun?

October 04, 2009

Ed Muzika said...

I would never answer such a question. It presumes there is some THING, and object, that has existence, that which can be captured in thought and named.

I tell everyone to get before that busy mindedness and find out who you are.

October 04, 2009
P. said...

I have a question, though perhaps it's an unnecessary one. I do realize that philosophical matters and contemplations are not really valid, but I must ask: When Robert (and you and everyone) say that the world is illusory - what does that mean exactly?
I'm thinking of the words of the buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna: If there is only one, and nothing else - then samsara must be the same as nirvana - and equally real. But how does all of this add up? Also: the analogy of the rope and the snake seem to imply that they are identical - yet viewed from a different perspective.

Perhaps my question boils down to the parinirvana; "post-mortem nirvana" if you will. Is it even possible to say what occurs after death to a jnana (I realize he does not even exist, but I assume you know what I'm getting at)? Considering that there is no reincarnation, yet samsara and nirvana are one and the same...
Thanks, and sorry for the philosophical contemplations. :)

October 11, 2009

Ed Muzika said...

To P.

I left a long comment to your above question, but accidentally erased it. So I'll leave a briefer answer.

The answer to your first question is gone into detail in the section on the itisnotreal.com website under my shower experience. More briefly, one discovers that the word 'I' does not point to any thing. There is no entity such as 'I'. One sees therefore that the entire concept of a separate I and separate I-sense is illusion.

Now the mind constructs an apparent universe defined and populated by words and concepts that create forms, such as chairs, rooms and our bodies that the mind operates with.

When you see the 'I' word does not point to anything, you see no noun points to anything either. All concepts and names are seen to be empty. With the duality I-world seen through, YOU identify no longer with a body in a world, but the totality of your personal, experiential consciousness, and there is no longer and inner and an outer world filled with objects.

The totality of consciousness is grasped as an emptiness, self-illumined consciousness, and objects are merely transcient forms that come and go. There is only emptiness filled with consciousness.

Later, even the consciousness is seen to be a concept, an understanding, and that melts away too as an illusion.

One realizes that you exist even before the illusion of consciousness.

About the other questions. It appears you are trying to articulate a meaningful question, but it will be answerable only when you can express it in your own terms and not use Buddhist very generalistic terms. Each of those terms you used has many meanings historically and philosophically, and unless you want to spend a great deal of tiem studying Buddhist philosophy and the nuances, the clearing out of your confusion is impossible.

So try to state your question in your own experiential terms rather than general philosophical terms.

October 12, 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 5 comments at 8:33 PM

11 October 2009

A 1998 Yoga Journal article about Robert Adams is now online.

http://books.google.com/books?id=JOoDAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA86&lpg=PA86&dq=ramana+and+robert&source=bl&ots=Xa1vyQerKQ&sig=E-96-_elVfvv4yxzvVlJLfoMmJ0&hl=en&ei=NSTSSsfhAo_-tQOWkLXwCw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=9&ved=0CCkQ6AEwCA#v=onepage&q=ramana%20and%20robert&f=false

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 11:41 AM

Hi Ed

I have been in and out of it lately...yesterday the mind flow stopped again.
I don't usually question myself...I just rest in silence without trying to understand
what's happening...but yesterday something became clear.

There is no difference between "waking", "dreaming" or "sleeping"...
they are passing states. Maybe the mind flow is responsible for them but I'm not sure and
I'm not really keen to mentally investigate it...there is just a feeling of being separate from them.

With the "waking" and "dreaming" state space appears...
in this space the feeling of "me" as a separate entity could appear (if It does I'm aware of it..
I can see it arising and subsiding...even now that It is really weak).
Without a feeling of "me" space prevails...everything is in it...
there are no separate entities...just one space...a passing show that goes by itself...there is no control over it.
But this space is false...it comes and goes...everything in it is false.
The action of writing this email to you is just an appearance in this moment...nothing is really happening.

The funny thing is that during the last months I often thought about how I should conduct my life..
what was right and what was wrong. But It is clear now that there is nobody doing anything...
wrong and right are just concepts...things can appear in different ways but nothing is really happening.
And all this happens (or not happens) just in two states....the "waking" or "dreaming" state...
and when these states subside everything in it disappears.

I feel humbled buy realizing it and feel love but what difference can make these passing feelings
in a false reality? love and hate are worth the same...they are worth nothing.
I don't know what will happen...for the moment the mind is calm and a peaceful feeling prevails.

thank you
M.

> *This is very good. You glimpse not only are objects abd self in the waking and dream state unreal, but the states themselves are unreal.*
>
> *Next you have to turn towards understanding who or what you are in the deep sleep and before birth states.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:08 PM

18 October 2009

Hello Edji, My name is Rajiv K and i reside in mumbai,India. I visited your blog and felt i write to you a few things.I write to one who not only is a disciple of the great Robert Adams but also to the one who himself is aware of "what is",probably the truth as it is.

I know its impossible to correctly describe that state in words and there is no way you,i or anyone can yet i feel inclined to communicate,share and learn from you what you feel as regards the marvelous thing we call "consciousness" or "truth" or watever names we can call it by... The past:

My "journey" began 13 yrs ago when i was first initiated in kriya through YSS/SRF in mumbai.I had a very scary OBE expereince then and each time i would sit i would be pulled in a dark tunnel speeding in high intensity.That time i was just practicing a techinque called Hong-sau.Anyways YSS asked me to discontinue the use of hong-sau and i felt that time they were least bothered about anything except "surrender" to the Guru.Dissatisfied with the response i seeked looking for a personal Guru who could help me with my expereinces and satisfy all my deep spiritual longings.

After much seeking and looking and initiated a few more times with other gurus i finally found the Guru my heart approved of.He was a traditional Guru and very jovial person at the same time.He got me initiated in higher kriyas including kechari mudra which supposedly is of immense importance to expereince higher levels of consciousness.I personally dont feel any of my expereinces would have been much different without kechari,but this is my personal feeling.

During my practices in kriya i had various "expereinces" like OBE,Lucid dreams,heightened awareness,even kevali kumbhak (stoppage of breath automatically for a few seconds which gave immense joy all over each cell of my body) etc etc...But somehow i always felt all this is very delusionary as i set out to "achieve" more and more of this joy and bliss,more and more of these expereinces like OBEs.I felt inwardly i was seeking too much and my heart and mind was still not in rest except a few occasions when i expereinced a thoughtless state...rest of the time i was busy seeking,making whole loads of images of Guru kripas and dreams of Gurus and Babaji.

I felt inwardly i was getting deeper and deeper into a bundle of various conditionnings and beliefs imposed by other chelas who beleived the same.I felt there is something hugely amiss here either in my practice or in my

understanding....All i was awaiting for was to accumulate many expereinces not realsiing that maybe the mind itself was creating them for me... The in-between:

On realizing that probably the biggest barrier are my own beliefs and conditioning's i just couldnt keep going with my kriyas.The very technique,the very teachings i felt were becoming a sort of barrier to expereincing truth as it is for the mind was beginning to reach "somewhere" rather than just "being".I then decided that i shall observe ,simply observe what is going on within and outside of me.I realised that the bliss,peace and thoughtless state returned even without kriya.

The mere "observation" resulted in this.And so i can carry on like this even in waking stage and not only during kriya.All concepts like God,blessings,liberation,beliefs dropped on carefull observation. The "Present" I carry on trying to witness every thoughts,emotions than arise in my mind.I realize that my awareness is growing as i start giving utmost attention to everything happenning within and outside of me.There are glimpses of joy and utmost bliss which prevails around me.

During that time my state is like a man drunk but with extreme and heightened attention.I feel drunk with immense awareness.There is nothing i like to achieve,gain or be.I am just "it" .This is perhaps just "being".I observe everything so clearly ,so bright ,the colors around me are much brighter than usual and sparkle and dance around me.During that "glimpse" (as i call it) the thoughts seem rare, and even if they arise i observe them clearly as they come and go.

There is nothing to achieve,be or go anywhere.Everything around looks so magical and pure like i am observing something new for the very first time.There is no need of Guru or any God during that state.Everything melts. The question

Edji i call the above a glimpse becoz it is not in continuity,it lasts for perhaps 2 to 3 hours a day mostly during the evening time.I cant say i can create the glimpse for it happens on its own...And disappears on its own.Perhaps in the evening i dont have to worry much about my work or maybe there is some other reason.The "glimpse" has happened to me also during the office hours but its rare...Sometimes i feel the desire to be in that glimpse forever too could be an obstacle to be it,maybe.Pls write back your observations and suggestions.I really need some guidance on this.I have written down best i could in words.

Many regards and Pranams,
R

> *What you are experiencing is due to the intensity of your practice. The barrier-creating chattering mind has stopped, and you have pure perception. If you could dwell in this state all the time, that is one form of samadhi. But that "first time" world is still illusion, experience added onto you.*
>
> *If you can formalize your meditation and sit in Padmaasana for about 45 minutes in the morning, you should be able to generate it at will as well as pure oneness states. Most probably this will disappear over time. It is the final state for some types of yogis, such as Krishnamurti, etc. Why don't you go with it and see where it takes you?*
>
> *This is not classic advaita though. In Advaita you focus attention not on everything, but attempt to concentrate on the subject, the sense of I. Advaita unfortunately is heavy with cognitive elements. Don't do that as yet though. Continue to go as you are doing but add at least one 45 minute session sitting facing a wall with eyes closed or half open. Sit as solidly as possible. Tell me what happens.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:30 PM

31 October 2009

This one is rare:

Sir after the initial period of objectless concentration ,awareness is automatically turned within.The body after a few breathing pranayamas isnt felt at all.The body conciousness feels like a corpse,something like that.The body is there but the awareness is within.I become aware of the movement of thoughts,how they appear and how they drop.Many times during witness, the thoughts are not there and i reach a stage of sort of void or emptyness.At that time i observe an expansion happenning at the third eye...a nothingness prevails ,so then there is no object as such except that nothingness.Also i feel during witness stage there is another witness watching the witnessing ,as thoughts appear and identification starts ,that another witness is always watching whether witnessing is happenning or no and brings back to witnessing again....Its sort of complicated to express but it is something like that.Is this the "subject" you are referring too? Actually the period of nothingness or void is too short,the mind interferes and by witnessing it i reach a thoughless state for sometime till mind interfers again.All this while after the body conciousness is long lost,there is one more "witness" who is observing whether the witnessing is happening or no.yes something like that....

Yes, this is perfect understanding. Eventually there will only be one witness. One of the witnesses is merely the mind commenting on the introspection process.

You might, at this time, instead of trying to follow "I AM" introspection, just try to witness the witness. Watch the watcher.

I wanted to tell you also that yesterday i was in the "glimpse" for a full day after my dhyaan...I have already described what it is in that state in my earlier mail.There is much to go further you say but within and outside of me i feel this is it, as i feel a growing connection with everything around me ,just about everything.You said it is a form of samadhi,previous to you my kriya Guru had termed it as sarvikalpa samadhi.But these again are concepts ,but just curious what kind of samadhi you would define this as.sheer curiosity.

What you call the glimpse is the absence of the thinking process. You are intently and completely aware without the chattering mind being engaged. But in the glimpse you are not aware that all that out there in the world is only your mind creation and is not real.

I have no names for the various samadhis. As you say, they are just names and of no import. Even the experience of the various samadhis is not important. In fact, nothing is important, except, to me, to live as a kind and just man helping others, being a shepherd for all physically and morally. You are your brother's keeper. All the rest is only philosophy and illusion.

You are very close to finishing your self-exploration. Therefore I urge you to ripen your understanding and peace, and care for others.

You are doing very well...

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 9:02 PM

01 November 2009

Hi Ed,

I just stumbled onto your site via “stumble”. I picked up a book at the local library called “The power of now”, thinking it was sort of popular science. I had never read a “spiritual” book in my life, less even given the subject any thought whatsoever. Anyway, I seem to know what the guy is going on about somehow. I try “getting in touch with my body”, the first time I ever tried to “meditate” and have some very profound experiences. Anyway after that all my fear and anxiety seem to have fallen away. I’m not skipping around in some sort of spiritual bliss or anything, I just sort of feel nothing matters, that I know/feel something (that I can’t explain) that everything is alright, a contentment.

So, I join this Eckhart Tolle web site, now I just don’t want to sound like a spiritual crazy but most of what’s being talked about I feel is not right. I don’t know how or why I know this but I start writing on these threads about shit I know nothing about and I’m thinking after, “what are you doing, writing all this stuff about awakening blah blah” I bump into your site and realize I’ve been writing about things I just read this morning. About stopping thinking (or how you can’t), the imaginary universe and body, lots of stuff I have absolutely no idea about. I have been writing stuff recommending people do this or that “en contra” to Tolle’s teaching, mad, what do I know?

I like Tolle’s teachings but the more I listen the more I just think he’s skirting around the edge of something, flowery roundabouts, poetic musings. I can’t put my finger on it but I just know he doesn’t have what I want.

Is it possible to know things, you don’t consciously know? I couldn’t talk for 1 minute about self-realization, but I “know” or feel a lot about it. Am I deluded, an over active ego? Maybe, maybe that is it! I wasn’t going to write about my “Meditation” experience because I feel such a fraud amongst all the knowledgeable and savvy people on the internet articulating their experiences.....like you.....talking about lots of different meditation techniques etc.

Well anyway, It was beautiful but also frightening at the same time (or in different phases) I felt myself going inside myself in stages. I got something like a strong electric shock from my toes right through my head each time. Not a nice sensation and each time I had to stop myself coming “awake” out of the whole thing. My body jerked each time, it was a very strong sensation. I could hear the traffic outside so I knew I wasn’t asleep. Basically I just felt like an atom shining in space at the end. I felt like everything had fallen away from me but I was enveloped in (I don’t know what) I can only say that nothing mattered anymore. I was free (no wonder people sound pretentious writing about this stuff!)

I feel I am at the crossroads of something, what should I do?

M.

> *Hi M,*
>
> *I have been away for a while. My mom was very ill--still is--and I am*
>
> *going back and forth between LA and Phoenix and Sedona and will be doing so through November. I hope to see Mary Skene in a few days, Robert’s left hand woman for many years.*
>
> *My intuition is that you are correct about Tolle and most of the neo-advaitins. They have got a tip of the tongue understanding, but no deeper. I admit I have not read any of them, so I am speaking from ignorance. I rarely read anything in the area of spirituality, and if I do, it is usually Robert, Ramana, Nisargadatta, or a few of the old Advaita scriptures like the Rhibu Gita.*
>
> *I admit my knowledge of the neo Advaitins comes from Facebook, email questions, watching a video, etc., but I have never got the impression that any of them actually have practiced self-inquiry as taught by Ramana, Nisragadatta, or Robert, or just went to the teachings of no self and stopped there.*
>
> *Most of them quote Nisargadatta and read he practiced self inquiry by contemplating “I Am” for three years, which, by the way, is an amazingly short time, yet few if any talk about the need for practice.*
>
> *Ramesh Balsekar for example, never talks about practice,and accepts the concept that enlightenment is about the understanding only that there is no I or self. They glomb onto that understanding and attempt to deepen it by just holding onto that understanding. But there is far, far more than this to Advaita.*

The origin of the discovery of No I is an experience of the emptiness of all concepts and forms. It is a state that generates an understanding. Without experiencing that state, the understanding is only concept with no ability to actually change you. You just have new concepts. I describe that state on the http://itisnotreal.com website.

You have to go further and "apperceive" that that state itself is observed by something that is beyond that state, and YOU are THAT. The neo Advaitins stop with an acceptance of waking consciousness and the sense of presence as the final understanding, or experience, and equate that with "enlightenment."

They also love to repeat there is no enlightenment because there is no I or self to be enlightened, but again, this is only concept and only an apparent contradiction.

I think the problem may have started when they read about Ramana's initial enlightenment experience, where he pretended to be dead and concluded that since he was still aware of his waking consciousness, that the waking consciousness was ultimate, beyond which there was no further understanding or experience. Just realize and bathe in the sense of presence.

They fail to realize that what Ramana actually did was to glimpse that consciousness and all that is contains, is different from the body, even though there would be no waking consciousness without a body, nor dream or deep sleep either. His initial awakening would be described in Zen as Kensho--the initial awakening or enlightenment experience.

He also apparently realized there was no object that the word "I" referred to or anyone in charge of his body and mind. He, as observer, was just along for the ride. He stopped using his name, but still spoke of God, his father, ruler of all, more or less as the "other," or God, or Arunachala. There was still duality.

I am not sure he had become aware at that time that he was the only one, the Witness of all, or that the world itself was illusion, and waking consciousness was illusion.

Ramana then spent years deepening his understanding, penetrating through the dream and deep sleep states also, until all consciousness runs out and you are left with the mysterious Witness of all that is in consciousness. All the states of consciousness, all the four outer bodies of yoga are just superimpositions on YOU, the Witness of all. Anything you say about that ultimate state or Witness is absolutely a lie. Nothing can be known. It is not an object. It does not have existence as an object, but it does as a subject which is an ultimate existence as opposed to a conditional existence.

The stories of Ramana's sadhana (practice) during the next ten or fifteen years are legion, sitting in Samadhi for weeks at a time until insects burrowed into his legs causing infections and bleeding that stuck him to the floor of the temple. They talk of samadhis where he was beyond the world for days and weeks at a time.

I never hear about the new gurus spending days and weeks in silent meditation and Samadhi.

As Robert said, "Everyone wants to get in on the act." No one wants to

be a student. I am just amazed by all the web teachers and what they say.

I feel I am at the crossroads of something, what should I do?

M., I can only suggest doing more of the same. Since you wrote 3

weeks ago, I assume you are doing more of the same. Introspect. Try to find the source of your "presence," your sense of existence. If that does not work, just sit in the totality of the emptiness of your consciousness—the world of your waking experience.

Whatever you experience, know that it is temporary and any understanding gleaned is also temporary.

The hardest gate to go through is knowing nothing and being comfortable knowing nothing, being a nobody. None of the current gurus seem comfortable knowing nothing or being nobody. They have to be somebody with busy minds, busy with quotes, poetry, etc., even about knowing nothing. Robert used to say, the great ones, you never hear about.

They just can't let go and be nobody.

Just keep going.

Post Comments:

Ed Muzika said...

I must admit I have read nothing by Tolle or all the others such as Sailor Bob, etc. Therefore my understanding is superficial and should be regarded as mere ranting.

However, what I do see on facebook and other places are people posting snippets of thoughts, poetry, quotes, poems, and nothing about practicing self-inquiry, or asking questions about the different states of consciousness, the witness and the Witness. It is as if they have rejected self-investigation and stopped with an understanding.

Advaita is really, really easy to understand, but to get the understanding into your bones is really hard. It takes some time before it become natural.

That is why Michael Langford's book is helpful for many, it emphasizes the effort and dedication necessary.

Yet many of these people reject Langford just because he advises single minded attentiveness and self-abidance because they say self-inquiry is not possible because there is no self.

It is one thing to know that as a concept and quite another to transcend that sense of presence.

November 01, 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 3 comments at 12:30 AM

I took down my Tolle rant because I don't know what I am talking about. I have not read him or any of the other neo-Advaitins, and therefore don't know what I am talking about. Robert was wiser than I and never talked about other teachers.

My point though was you hardly ever make any progress by reading or thinking. Both engage the discursive mind leading to endless internal and external dialogues.

Isn't it true we read because we lack confidence in our own ability to find and explicate truth? Is it not true we mostly read to confirm what we already think we know? Isn't true that when we read and think, we cannot see ourselves because the focus of awareness is on concepts?

A large part of our spiritual education is to develop self-confidence in our own ability to find our own truth by looking within, and not reading books to tell us what we should be finding there. You have to develop a boldness where you set off on your own to find the truth of your being.

Michael Langford, for all the faults of his book, correctly points out the need to slow the mind down and focus on a very few books to read, and to read them slowly and repetitively. He is absolutely correct. Better would be not to read at all, but to introspect, observe your consciousness, observe awareness and keep quiet.

In a Zen monastery, there is absolutely no talking during training periods. Ramana was silent for many years. Being with Robert was like being with silence all the time. Reading a book or attending a lecture, or writing poetry is anti-silence.

Develop your ability to abide in your own thoughtless awareness. Gradually you will develop an ability to remain with yourself and be confident of what your self-investigations are revealing. Gradually you will become comfortable not even articulating the new understandings that arise in you because you will recognize those understandings are illusory, tentative, passing, concepts only, and you can't capture the absolute in concepts. You can only rest peacefully in yourself.

Limit your reading to the resources I mention on the itisnotreal.com website. You might even want

to limit your reading to two or three books, such as the Path of Sri Ramana, Part I, the Nisargadatta Gita, possibly Prior to Consciousness to blow your mind, or Langford's book.

You need to go deep into yourself, not marvel at the clear expositions of others that merely reinforce your present concepts which means there is no "progress." You are just rearranging deck chairs.

Please, don't waste your life entertaining spiritual concepts or visiting many teachers. Go deep within yourself; observe yourself; observe the I Am if you can isolate that sense of presence that is I Am. Be comfortable with the void-like emptiness. Become friends with the inner light of consciousness. Become aware of the emptiness that contains all. Become aware of the witnessing process. Soon you will see that reading and thinking take you away from your inner peace.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 10:17 AM

02 November 2009

Hi Ed,

I recently fall caught in moments of purest Silence/Nothingness. It is impossible to tell something about it. After them I realize nothing exists; everything one can think or imagine is absolutely nonexistent. A feeling of immensurable peace and sense of freedom rises. Silence/Nothingness comes suddenly, unforeseeably; for example, in a moment of relaxation after a bustling day. I don't know what to do about it. I would have this Silence/Nothingness forever, I feel it is liberation, but I seem the more I try to do--even a too zealous formal practice--the worse the result is. I don't know how to approach to it.

Love,
S

Don't rush. Relax. Just sit in silence as often as you can in awareness of silence or in awareness of your sense of presence. But don't get anxious or try to speed it up.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 3:00 PM

03 November 2009

An email sent to me:

Hello,

I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being. There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep. I am not able to understand this state.

I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance.

I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand.....

On what is this knowing resting then?

My response:

Every answer would miss the point as all knowledge is about existence, objects, phenomena.

What you are is before existence.

You are uncreated, unborn.

His next email:

I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being.

My Response: Yes, this is perfect understanding.

There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep.

Yes, this is how it is usually first seen.

I am not able to understand this state. I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance.

All conceptualizations are only philosophy, empty, transitory, illusion. You must learn how to accept knowing nothing.

I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand.....

Don't you see? What you are is entirely beyond the mind and cannot be captured in words or concepts. There is no need to understand; just be.

New email:

The self or whatever it is..is so un-contrived...spontaneous and self sufficient...that is seen in ordinary moments of just simple being.

No words needed to be...simply are.

When these various states or experiences occur, there is an attempt to understand it..when the experience itself is not requiring that.. :) it also just is... and you have so correctly stated..all explanations are only about the state of existence...and therefore the correct answer in all respects is that ..you are unborn...that shuts any more concept building.

Ed..the clarity that these words you have written, also cannot be captured in words...i can only say..thank you!

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:16 PM

04 November 2009

In 1968 I had completed Master's work in Public Management at Western Reserve University in Cleveland. I had gone to Detroit and studied Economics as a Ph.D. candidate

at Wayne State University. I had also been working as a demographer for the County Cleveland was located in, and at TALUS, Detroit's seven year land use study.

I was sick of it. The County didn't care about accuracy, only lying statistics that supported their claim for federal money. I saw economic theory was mostly empty words and unverifiable concepts—useless. (I am still a Keynsian however.)

I had gotten my BA in philosophy and had always been interested since age 11 in just two topics: ontology and epistemology. That is, what exists and how do we know? Hume and Kant were my Western philosophy mentors, while Ramana and Phillip Kapleau were my Eastern philosophy mentors. I had read Kapleau's Three Pillars of Zen a half dozen times and Ramana's "Who Am I" many more times than that. I still had no clue as to the nature of knowledge or existence and was mostly focused on the best way to practice self-inquiry.

One day, sitting by a window in an office in Cleveland after having performed population projections for 88 municipalities, and having heard one too many lies, I saw several sailboats floating by on Lake Erie. At that moment, I knew I could not put up with the farce any longer. My life was a waste. The world seemed totally out of whack and most people were in lock step with this out of whackness. I just didn't fit. So, I decided to chuck everything and leave on a spiritual odyssey.

I took three books: Three Pillars of Zen, the Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi and The Practice of Zen by Garma C.C. Chang. All three books focused on how to practice self-inquiry.

Subsequently I got a job on several huge Great Lakes oar boats carrying taconite (iron ore) between Minnesota and Cleveland. Later, I took off and flew to visit my brother near Tucson and spent several months living in a small tent deep in the Sonoran Desert, all the while trying to figure out how best to practice self-inquiry.

I found this sort of searching useless. There were too many distractions, especially for an untrained, unstable mind. So I moved to Rochester New York to study with Phillip Kapleau, and later, to Mt. Baldy in Southern California to study under Zen master Sasaki Roshi.

It wasn't until I made the commitment to study under a master that my meditation became focused and revealed results. Kapleau's Zendo was fantastic.

I talk about this in more detail on the website: http://itisnotreal.com.

Anyway, I practiced self-inquiry off and on for 25 years before I had my first awakening as to a true understanding of 'I'. I describe this as my shower experience on that website.

It took me 25 years to fully comprehend what the I-thought meant. (I am more than a bit dimwitted.) What kept me so long is that I spent so much time immersed in the "more real I," the background consciousness that Langford talks about, that I ignored the I-thought, seeing that the 'I'-thought itself had no substance. But I was still searching for a referent for that I-thought, an entity that the I-thought was associated with. I had thought that some day while immersed in that vast internal emptiness of self-illumined awareness, I would find the true subject.

Intuitively, even then, I recognized that that consciousness itself was not me either even during and after complete unity experiences with that background consciousness. The emptiness was still an experience.

It was through all those early years of intense practice, sometimes sitting in meditation 10-12 hours a day for years that I experienced all the Kundalini nonsense and all the variable states of consciousness which entirely inhibited true understanding. It is so, so easy to get lost in experiences and understandings.

Finally, a few weeks after Robert Adams left Los Angeles and moved to Sedona I had my first awakening experience, which was to clearly see that the 'I thought' had no referent. It did not point to any internal entity. I also saw that the I-thought itself had no substance. It sometimes could be seen to appear like the visual floaters some nearsighted people have, like little transparent clouds floating into and out of emptiness. At other times, the 'I thought' (and other thoughts) appeared to be more like focusing mechanisms that aimed attention around in various ways, forming reality by "bending" emptiness into a form. I had focused for years on the emptiness, the awareness that contained everything, and was self-illumined, the light of consciousness, and had ignored the I-

thought itself, and failed to see the import of all the preconceptions and false existences contained in the I-thought.

What was different about the shower experience, was that the sense of presence was gone. I was totally empty of presence, of I Am. There was just a vast space of consciousness, with no inner or outer, and no sense of existence of me.

That day in 1995, I finally saw, apprehended, understood, was blown away by the sudden understanding that emptiness was all that there was: emptiness was all that existed. Eternal, vast space, self-illumined, permeating everything and filled with illusory conceptual forms, and I felt then that I was that. I saw that the I-thought had no referent. There was no I entity that the 'I thought' pointed to. There was no Ed Muzika. There was only space, disparate thoughts loosely connected with each other in a network of thought, and the 'I-thought' was simply another percept floating around in inner emptiness. No I was there; only emptiness existed and I was that.

Then I saw one other thing deeply: the 'I-thought' was what I had considered "subjective," while all other thoughts were "objective." That is, I had taken the I-thought as being me, the subject, inside my skin so to speak, and all other thoughts and concepts, such as of world, chair, map, food, other people, were "objective," and outside of my skin.

*When I saw the 'I-thought' was unreal, empty, **I saw all other words and concepts were also empty. Immediately the world ceased to exist**. By that, I mean I understood (Actually, it was more like an experience than an understanding.) nothing in the world that I saw was real; it was created by thought which made an object out of what is, within an unformed matrix of a vast, self-illumined emptiness which was all that is. There was just one emptiness, pervading all, with no inside or outside and I identified with that.*

This is exactly Ramana's initial experience: the "I-thought' didn't exist as an entity. It was empty, and with that insight, the whole world is found not to exist as we have always assumed it existed, as real, external objects.

All that there is, is the vast emptiness of consciousness, populated by forms which have no inherent existence except as concepts within consciousness.

However, I was later to see that this was only a partial awakening.

I also saw the beginning of understanding that that this emptiness--consciousness--also was not me, it was still an object. I was witnessing it. The 'I thought' was even less me, because it sprang out of the emptiness-void, and disappeared back into it.

Later I discovered that this understanding acquired in waking consciousness, was only true about the waking consciousness. Ramana had not yet gone far enough in his initial awakening (at least according to how he explained it), just as I had not.

One has to see that the waking consciousness itself—the entirety of existence—is unreal, and that waking consciousness, as are the sleep and dream states, are added onto the deepest sense of me as witness.

You-me, the "Real" you and me, lie entirely beyond consciousness of the world, entirely beyond existence. You might say our true nature lies in an entirely different dimension from all observables, including the world, our minds, our dreams and various states of consciousness, and even the emptiness and the void; all are observables and we are beyond them. We are beyond everything, unborn and unwitting witnesses of all that is, which is merely fantasy stuff, making up the play of consciousness.

Robert used to start every other Satsang by saying, "You are not real; you do not exist; you are nothing." Everyone laughed at Satsang--except me, I didn't find it funny, but true. Most everyone there had no idea that he was telling them they were beyond existence

Not only do you need to give up identification with the world and the mind, but also emptiness--the self-illumined void consciousness.

When I announced this understanding to Robert he said I got it. After being with him for seven years I had gotten it. Robert had years earlier told me the real secret, which is that even consciousness does not exist in the sense it had no reality apart from the other-dimensional subject, the witness of all, about whom nothing can be known or said.

You can only BE the witness, who everyone is already, but do not recognize it because they identify with the body or mind or other elements in consciousness.

This is so momentous of an understanding that it is difficult to convey no matter how hard I try, because I am talking in concepts, or pointers, and no one ever knows another's subjectivity and conceptual matrix.

Each of us is a pseudo-person in a pseudo reality until we see through that I-thought network/matrix. That matrix can be relatively similar to the matrix of others in so far as each of us has common upbringings. But if education and life experiences are too different, truly understanding another's world and knowing how to make a transformative impression on that person's subjectivity is virtually impossible.

My body is now just two years younger than Robert's when he died. I feel a weight of time pressing. My health is not good at times. I want as much as possible to make Robert and the understanding he gave me more available to the world.

I have noticed that the quality of questions and seekers now contacting me is far more spiritually "mature" than two years ago. There are more and more people who are "getting it" or on the verge of getting it, and by getting it, I mean going all the way beyond consciousness.

Therefore, I have decided to start teaching in earnest, which may or may not mean Satsang in Los Angeles, but definitely does mean I am going to attempt to clear up all doubts of anyone who has them by making a detailed exposition and explanation of at least (initially) three texts that I consider the key to getting it. The three are: The Path of Sri Ramana Maharshi, Part 1 by Sadhu Om and Michael James; Prior to Consciousness, edited by Jean Dunn, and the Nisargadatta Gita by Pradeep Apte. Later I might add some of Robert's talks.

These expositions will come in the form of lessons covering a chapter or so of each text at a time. Maybe there will be a video post on Facebook or something like it.

Anyway, I'll start in a couple of weeks. My mother is ill in Phoenix and I'll be there for a while and will start when I return.

Posted by Ed Muzika 4 comments at 11:55 AM

08 November 2009

I arrived last night in Phoenix and saw my mom for the first time in two years. She was released from the hospital after an 8-day stay two days ago. She says she feels great. She has a condition that could recur at any time at which could kill her, namely diverticulitis with severe infection and bleeding. At age 92 the doctors refuse to provide survival odds if she had to undergo surgery if the bleeding became too severe.

I brought two books with me in case I had time to begin preparing lessons on Robert's teachings, Prior To Consciousness by Jean Dunn, and Consciousness in the Absolute, also by Jean.

Jean and I had grown to become friends over the years prior to her death. She had a friend in Los Angeles who she visited quite frequently, and whenever she was here, I would see her, usually at a hotel near the Los Angeles airport. We would talk for hours. Our last visit was about two years before she died. She had severe emphysema and the depressurization in the airplane's cabin nearly killed her. The doctors told her that she could never fly again.

During this visit she gave me a photograph she had taken of Nisargadatta along with little book called "Self Knowledge and Self-Realization" by Maharaj. Both are posted on the http//itisnotreal.com website.

Last night I was glancing through her Consciousness and the Absolute book for the first time in several years. She very carefully explains the essence of Maharaj's teachings, which is even more carefully elucidated by Nisargadatta himself in the following 4 pages of chapter One.

As a backdrop I wanted to explain that Robert once or twice a private told me that there was no Consciousness, that Consciousness itself was only apparent, it was illusion. This is precisely Maharaj's teaching. Robert told me that he really couldn't say this public because people would not accept that message. He even joked that people would kill him for that message.

Isn't this precisely true? Are not most of the spiritual teachers today saying only that your essence is Consciousness, Consciousness is all that there is, and calling that beingness? Their message is that the ego is not real, but Consciousness, beingness, is all that there is and is eternal.

In fact, both Robert and Nisargadatta equivocate in these precise teachings. In fact, in both Robert and in Nisargadatta, you can find a little bit of everything, including talks where Robert will say you are Consciousness itself, beyond the mind and ego. At other times, he would publicly say that you are beyond the Consciousness, you are beyond everything.

On introductory page vii, Jean Dunn states concerning Nisargadatta's teachings, "Abiding in the "I-Amness" (or Consciousness, which is pure love), that Consciousness itself will give us all the answers. At the present time, Consciousness is what we are, not personal Consciousness, but impersonal universal Consciousness. In the course of time, the Consciousness will show us that we are not even this, but we are that Eternal, Absolute, unborn, undying."

This is very clear. He is saying your essential true nature is beyond Consciousness. You are beyond Consciousness, beyond the I am, beyond the ego, beyond the body. This is precisely Robert's teachings.

On page 4 of the book itself, Maharaj himself states:

"In deep sleep, Consciousness was in a dormant condition; there were no bodies, no concepts. Upon the arrival of this apparently wakeful state, with the arrival of the concept "I am", the love of "I am" woke up. That itself is Maya, illusion."

"Everything is beingness, but I, the Absolute, am not that."

"Consciousness depends on the body; the body depends on the essence of food. It is the Consciousness which is speaking now. If the food essence is not present, the body could not exist. Without the body, would I be able to talk?"

I will elucidate this understanding later as pointed out repeatedly by both Robert and Nisargadatta, but which is only implicit in Ramana's teachings as expressed by his students. Indeed, you can find confirmation of the same truth in Ramana's teachings if you look at the right books. Otherwise, most of his students identifying the absolute with Consciousness, and even more so, the waking Consciousness.

You might say there are three levels of I. There is the level of the I-word and I-concept, with the assumption and belief that there is an and entity that the concept describes, and that the I-word points to.

The second level of I identification, is at the level of identification with mind and Consciousness, which Nisargadatta calls "beingness," or "I-Amness."

Finally, there is the I as the absolute, completely beyond phenomonality, completely unknowable by the mind, without attribute and even without existence. This is what Western idealist philosophers--and Balsekar--calls the Noumenal, and which I might call the other-dimensional. This is the non-manifest, the unmanefest, unborn subject. Even saying that is to ruin it because you are giving names to that about which nothing can be said, because there are no attributes, entirely beyond existence.

On page 4 of Consciousness of the Absolute, Maharaj states regarding the absolute:

"In truth, your state is one of absolute bliss, not this phenomenal state. In that non-phenomenal state you are full of bliss but there is no experience of its presence. In that state there is no trace of misery or and happiness, only unalloyed bliss."

"Everything is beingness, but I, the absolute, am not that."

If you understand this, you will see this is completely beyond the current spiritual teachings that you are Consciousness and everything is Consciousness. Over the next few months and years I want to explain this ever more deeply and completely, as well as clearly outline what it takes to get there.

Post Comments:

Rich said...

Thanks Ed for taking the time to post this. Reading it inspires some inquiry, which I imagine is what it should do. How can there be existence without consciousness? If I have no real existence, then what is this 'I' and where is it coming from? Strange and yet compelling! Thanks again!

November 08, 2009
Anonymous said...

Hi Ed - Reading though itisnotreal.com I notice many links are broken. Any chance we could see some of the missing pages? There is some very useful stuff there for fellow seekers.

November 09, 2009
P. said...

How would "prior to consciousness" not equate our experience of unconsciousness?

November 10, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *That is precisely the question, isn't it?*
>
> *Do you have an EXPERIENCE of unconsciousness?*
>
> *Aren't you asking isn't this the same as what is our consciousness of not being conscious?*
>
> *This post is asking you really to explore awareness in waking, sleep and dream, not just the waking state. It is proposing that there is something beyond both existence and consciousness, entirely beyond what the new Advaita teachers are talking about.*
>
> *YOU transcend everything. The body and consciousness are temporary.*
>
> *I'll be speking to this over the next months and years.*

November 10, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Regarding the broken links: My Internet provider just moved to new host computers which are much faster, but there has been some degradation of the site over time. I am in Phoenix now with no time to fix it.*
>
> *When I return t LA, I'l see what I can do.*

November 10, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *As to Rich's question, we are talking about that which is beyond both existence and consciousness. That which exists and can be experienced is illusion.*
>
> *Only that which is beyond existence can be immortal.*

November 10, 2009
Paul said...

Would that which is beyond existence (and therefore consciousness) also be timeless? Time seems to be a concept of consciousness. Fun happens fast; boredom lasts forever. (Using reason on the "unapprehendable" [lol] - what do I know?) I read in "I am That" where Sri Nisargadatta said, "When self-control becomes second nature,

awareness shifts its focus to deeper levels of existence and action." That gave me hope for my pitiful meditation skills. Thank you very much!

November 10, 2009
P. said...

I can't realize how something like that could even be "experienced", but I guess you'll get to that in time..

One more thing though: the sat-cit-ānanda (being-consciousness-bliss) is in a sense false, then?

November 11, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Paul,*
>
> *That which is beyond existence is beyond all concepts including time and timelessness, space, eternal, temporary. Those terms apply to experience, phenomena.*
>
> *One question to ask yourself is, "Do the concepts of eternal or temporary, space or object arise in deep sleep? When the mind is not functioning in deep sleep, there are no concepts, no existence, no experience. Where YOU are at that time is entirely beyond experience and consciousness.*
>
> *You have to go beyond experience.*
>
> *The current teachings most often found talk only about you being Consciousness, and Consciousness is all that there is. This s true so far as it goes. Consciousness is all that exists, and you are that, especially in certain types of Samadhi where there is a complete identification with the void—emptiness—that pervades all existence; but that is not the end.*
>
> *In the end, all this happens to you, appears to you, but is not you. It is created by your mind, but you are not your mind. You are beyond mind and its creations. You are beyond consciousness and beingness.*
>
> *This is a conviction that comes when you have practiced a long while and see that consciousness is infinitely variable and changeable, but you, who observe all this, are steady as a rock, unchanging and untouched by the world or your mind.*
>
> *You are beyond all, untouched by time, or even timelessness, because both concepts apply to that which exists. You don't exist! You are beyond existence. Existence applies to the world, not you.*
>
> *Yo can only understand this with conviction when you become nothing.*

November 11, 2009

Posted by Ed Muzika 9 comments Links to this post at 12:34 PM

09 November 2009

> *Yesterday's post was about becoming nothing. It is full of concepts such as phenomena, noumena, consciousness, existence and to the void. As such, it is a complete lie. Concepts can never grasp the real.*
>
> *The point of posting was only a warning not to stop practicing too soon.*
>
> *To go all the way, you have to become nothing, useless. You have to let God or your teacher take*

everything away from you, including your knowledge and understanding, and become nothing.

Most seekers will not do this. They want to be something, and unitary consciousness feels like a good place to stop.

Robert was the Good For Nothing Man. That is why he never had more than 50 people come to Satsang while other teachers had thousands. Only those who were willing to give up everything would accept becoming nothing as a goal.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 8:12 AM

SENT TO ME BY DAVID:

"To go all the way, you have to become nothing, useless. You have to let God or your teacher take everything away from you, including your knowledge and understanding, and become nothing."

This is so true. Surrender means your life is over -- period. The body may continue to be extremely active in the world, but it's a body of ashes, running around in a phantasmal dream world that never was. The Jnani may laugh with the laughing and sympathize with the sorrowful, feast in golden hued palaces or live on the street and search through garbage for his meals, raise a family in the suburbs or dwell in a cave as a hermit. It's all the same. It's an irrelevant non-experience completely devoid of any meaning or consequence. It's not the waking state, it's not a dream, it's not Turiya, it's not real, unreal or any state or non-state that language or thought can describe or point to. It just is ... and it's good.

This sounds absolutely horrible to most people. They can only conceive of the relative happiness or unhappiness that's tied to identification with the human experience. They cling to objects which bring them joy, even though they know those same objects will eventually change or go away entirely, causing them great sadness. They do this because they haven't ever had a glimpse of real, limitless joy, and they don't want to give up the limited happiness they sometimes experience because they don't believe there's anything better.

So, like heroin addicts, people are always looking for their next fix to get them through another day. Eventually, they get sick of it all. They decide that happiness laced with poison sucks -- that it's just not worth it. They don't want to participate in the madness anymore, even if it means giving up the so-called good things. Then they wake up, and experience the real joy of who they are (i.e., aren't). This process takes a long time, yet happens in an instant.

Be well Ed.

David

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:42 AM

SENT TO ME:

Dear Ed, I have corresponded with you throughout this apparent journey. Which ultimately was not a journey anyplace just a tossing aside of my whole imaginary existence. One question, I have always taken pointers about the eternal now to mean there is nothing that seperates this moment from any other moment, only mental limitations (ie clock time). Lately, however there has been a very strong feeling that more than that, the states of waking, dream, and sleep are not linear, but are actually all happening at once, then the mind comes in and seperates them. My experience is that ultimately none of the states are real and the mind kinda lines them up in rotation to keep some semblance of life. Is this more mind stuff?

Yes, your understanding is fairly accurate, although I never got the feeling that my mind was doing the arranging. I think what is doing the arranging lies beyond the mind. None of it is real, but the imaginary body has its imaginary processes which cause fluctuations in

Consciousness. Yes, all the states appear to be similtaneously present. You might be right that it is the mind that is arranging them, but it would not be your personal mind, but a universal mind which you appear to participate in.

The thoughts that come to you are not really your thoughts either, but universal thoughts floating in the void that your specific beingness--body-mind apparatus--seems to pick out and accept as its own.

It is all quite fascinating, isn't it? Nothing is as it seems before penetrating to the deepest level of consciousness and beyond. "Ordinary" people have no idea about all this. If they read this site we'd all be condemned to an asylum.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 10:59 AM

11 November 2009

Edji,
Last night i had a unique expereince.I want to know if my understanding on this is correct or no sir?

Actually yesterdays meditation (which i have send in another mail to you sir)gave me a glimpse that i was oscilating or moving from waking to dream states and vice versa.

So i thought i will try and meditate while in sleep during night time and try and be aware what of actually takes place.So i kept my deepest attention at the void and kept thoughts out and relaxed.I affirmed that i keep my attention as far as possible on the void till i fall asleep.The next moment i realized that i was dreaming bcoz i was with few people chatting. But i knew very well i was actually dreaming this bcoz i could literally will myself back to waking stage,I then would go back to dreaming state again,this time something about my son being in the room but yelling...i KNEW this was a dream too and i could actually choose what kind off dream i wanted. Now in the very dream i was excited of this and thought i will write to you this tommorow itself but then i thought why not visit you too by thought in the dream state as i could do whatever i wanted in the dream state. But then something held me back.I decided i not venture too far.Maybe some fear or something.

Well How i can be so sure that it was not a dream that i was dreaming that i was aware of the state is bcoz i could move from dream to wake on will.Also that very night i had to run around with my son who got me pretty exhausted physically ,he is just 8 and i am 38 but these kids are blessed with more energy so i had exert and had a slight muscle contraction.Now in dream state i was aware of that contraction too...strange but true....i was connected with my physical body in someway...i felt it in my dream state and then i consciously became aware of my waking state and saw yes it was slightly paining...

Then i was convinced i could move in these 2 states...i tried the third time again just to make sure,this time i saw a geometric image at my third eye,it was blazing with bright and greenish glow and i got scared and started reciting "OM" "OM" and then i tried hard to open my eyes and go to waking state but this time i just COULDNT....i was paralysed and then i remembered you saying all this is unreal....i am only a witness...i just looked at it...it dissapeared on its own and i was awake in some time...i reflected on all that what happened....i had all kinds of thoughts pouring and had difficulty to sleep back....but then i managed to remember that all this is an illusion,play of consciousness....its nothing to do with me....and magically the thoughts subsided and i slept to wake up like a normal routine.I remebered everything in the morning.

Sir do u think it is possible to move between these stages during sleep? Has this to do anything with advaite understanding?

,
Rajiv

Rajiv,

My experience is that all states of consciousness are illusionary, and merely happen to me, like clouds passing overhead. They have no substance. These states and experiences don't touch YOU.

Yet, it is important to play with consciousness for a time to understand it has no real substance or existence to you. Just don't take it too seriously. It is play. AND, it is easy to make false discoveries that are refuted a few days later by another false discovery. The only true discovery is all states are transcient, unreal.

It MAY be important for you to do Samadhi on the Void to become one with it for a time. This is the traditional way. It is a continuation of your love of and for consciousness which has brought you as far as you have come.

Remember, you do not exist as an entity, process or thing, and the world-consciousness—is doing its own thing. Don't worry anymore at all about thoughts. Just be aware of the Void and the coming and going of waking, dream and sleep.

This is important:

Every teacher has a slightly different "message," based on his or her education, background and body-mind. Two students can study under the same teacher and have two different messages, such as the difference between Ramana Maharsh and Nisargadatta's messages, or Nisargadatta and his Dharma brother Ranjit.

You are nearly at a point where you begin to write your own book.

Personally, now I find little that interests me in the world or consciousness anymore.

I am left only caring about people who seek liberation, people who are in dire need, and animals, who are helpless to help themselves. I still participate in this illusory reality because I care for all the apparent beings and act as if they were real. What comes out of my mind or my voidness is of no interest to me. It is all illusion—temporary, changeable, without substance.

But, a kitten, who is living in a ditch, cold, wet and hungry; to me, that kitten and her need is my only reality. In the end, the book you write may be very different. I hope though that your book will be filled with kindness and a sense of justice and caring.

You and I appear to be connected on a very deep level as our experiences and messages and experiences seem so similar. You appear to have all the equipment to be a great teacher some day. Do not rush. Go slowly, gently. Be gentle with yourself and others.

And yes, you can move between the various states, but who is moving? You do not move, the states do. If you are consciously acting, it is still the ego playing, not YOU.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 9:26 AM

13 November 2009

SENT TO ME:

Sir after the initial I-thought or rather witnessing of thought is over ,a stream of conciousness is maintained for sometime till a few thoughts disturb it too.This the dark void or emptyness we call conciousness which i had earlier termed "me" ,i see i was identyfying with this earlier taking that to be the subject and thoughts to be the object.But clearly now i can see that the "conciousness" itself is the object.

This is a very important insight is it not? Consciousness is not you. The Void is not you. For years I made a mistake of identifying with the void as me, even though, in a way, I knew better, because I was not one with it. Oneness with the totality of consciousness came and went thousands of times, but was not a steady state.

In Zen, no one was pointing beyond the void. In a sense, the true you who is beyond the Void; what can it be called, or how can it be described? The Void beyond the Void?, or "That which has no qualities, including existence, non-existence or Voidness?"

There are various Samadhis wherein you become one with objects in consciousness, or even the Void. When you become one with the Void, you become everything-oneness. But Samadhis are temporary.

You cannot do Samadhi on the source. The source is already complete, whole and self-contained and entirely beyond the world of objects and consciousness including the Void.

During the course as i was witnessing the "conciousness" itself many times few floating totally irrelevant thoughts would appear and try disturb the state.Especially when i see only the "conciousness" it goes "Ah i see it" ,a thought .So now i witness the "consciousness" and also the apparent "thought" ,this is not an identification of thought,it just meaningless thought which appear and disaapear.So the "one" witnesses both the consciousness and the thought.My question sir is :

1) What do i do with the thoughts which sprang on their own? I can witness the start of them and then they do dissapear but they appear again disturbing the witnessing of the object "consciousness".Many times i can maintain witnessing both the "consciousness" and thought at the same time.Will these meaningless thoughts completely disappear or no?

Don't worry about the thoughts. They no longer have any power over you. Just focus on the sense of "I AM," if you can locate that; otherwise focus on the container of consciousness, the Void-nature interpenetrating all phenomena as the container and background, and then occasionally, try to turn around and catch the subject or witness of the void. This will remind you that you are not an object, a thing within this world.

By being extremely attentive to the field of conciousness ,the thoughts do fade away but they appear again after soemtimes especially when i "have it"
Will these meaningless thoughts completely disappear ever?

The thoughts no longer have power over you. Ignore them. They will always be there randomly as long as you have a brain and body. The brain is sort of like a radio receiver, picking specific thoughts out of the void depending on your past experience and genetics. You consciously have gone beyond thoughts and the power of thought.

The thing about witnessing is that it prevades normal waking stage too, meaning during office work and my walks especialy when i am not engrossed with work, i see the witness of the stream of conciousness and the thoughts which appear and disapear.The witnesser or subject can witness both at the same time,though the thought is powerless, is no more loud ,it is mild ,barely recognisable most of the time,but it still exists nonetheless.

2)I try locating where this subject is ,who is witnessing both but i cant find it anywhere,meaning the witnesser (at the background)cant be traced. The moment i can locate the witnesser ,it will cease to be the subject,it will become another object...sometimes i feel he is at the 3rd eye witnessing the awareness or consciousness and sometimes i feel he is at the heart..You said "watch the watcher" but i cant find him anywhere?

> *You can't watch the watcher, so what conclusion can you draw?*

The observer does not exist in this world or any other! You are beyond existence entirely. You are not part of the manifest world You are not found within consciousness. You are the subject, with no existence in this world. You are utterly beyond all properties. This world has nothing to do with you.

> *This was Robert's message: Don't participate in the world, it has nothing to do with you.*

I read a few stanza 7 to 8 of the Gita ,i get it but i will move very very slowly with it...perhaps 1 to 2 stanzas a day....

> *This is perfect. You are now answering the greatest questions posed by all beings through time. Consciousness---God---is revealing everything to you. There is no need to rush. When I first read Nisargadatta's "Prior to Consciousness," I could read at most a page a day, sometimes only a paragraph. Each sentence was like a hammer blow to my mind. Even the second and third time.*
>
> *Where you are, not 1/1,000 has touched. Don't worry about speed. You are doing well.*

Hows Momji doing? Has the condition improved?

> *She is fine, almost 100% recovered now.*

Many Pranams,
Rajiv

Posted by Ed Muzika 3 comments at 7:49 AM

16 November 2009

I've been wanting to email you for some time now, and after reading your post from a few days about teaching, was finally moved to do so.

About two years ago I stumbled upon J. Krishnamurti. I wasn't a seeker in the normal sense and had no clue about the "seeker culture" and the pursuit of enlightenment...still something in his words spoke to me deeply. Eight months or so later, I watched a dialog with K and David Bohm...at one point Krishnamurti exclaimed, as I had read many many times..."Sir, the thinker IS the thought!" Nothing in my life can compare to what happened at that moment...though I didn't understand all the implications...at that moment I knew I didn't exist as I had always thought. Strangely, about one month later I met my flute (shakuhachi) teacher...one of the first things she said to me was "you are not who you think you are"! I couldn't believe it. Seemingly out of nowhere (a whim to learn the flute) I met someone immersed in Zen for 30 years and with what only can be described as a devotional love of Nisargadatta and Ramana.

This last year has been spent reading "I am That". It is without a doubt the most profound thing I've ever read. Last Spring there were three nights where there was unbroken awareness through sleep...experiences which I've had in years past but never to this degree and never with the understanding of what was taking place...a confirmation that I am not even this consciousness. Recently a rephrasing of the "Who am I?" inquiry popped in my head...suddenly I asked myself "How do I know I am?" This seems to be a profound question, one that takes me straight to the feeling "I am", and one that I can't yet really answer...is this a correct question to meditate on?

I've never had any spiritual practices and have never done any "formal" meditation...my flute teacher is adamant about catching thoughts...looking for a 'core' negative thought...which I have seen...I don't feel ruled at all by

any thought. I'm just watching...from morning till night...I don't feel like "I" am doing anything, yet there still feels like something that should be done...any advice or encouragement would be greatly appreciated.

I feel very drawn to Robert, Ramana, and Nisargadatta, anoughts.d have no doubts about their teachings...just not sure how to proceed.

Thank you so much for your time.

N.

> *To N*
>
> *Thoughts are not important. I think you have already seen all the way through thoughts. Better to concentrate on on your sense of being alive, of existing. Since you are attracted to Nisargadatta, I will send you a very practical guide to self-inquiry by Pradeep Apte called the Nisargadatta Gita. You can also find it on the Internet.*
>
> *Download it, print it out and out it in a 3 ring binder. Read it every morning for a few weeks. Ponder its meaning, and watch your sense of beingness. Then write to e about your experience.*
>
> *By the way, the core thought is "I," and t is neither positive or negative. It is a conceptual pointer towards something that does not exist. When you see the I thought has no meaning, you will become ne with consciiousness. At least that is how it happened to me and many, any others who have written to me.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 5:26 PM

SENT TO ME:

How beautifull You say such words of wisdom....

It is all an illusion. I got that and normally i dont even affirm myself but as you rightly said i kind off played around just to check out a bit.My consciousness took me there in dream state too. But yes it is just a play,nothing at all to be taken seriously...

I know thoughts are an illusion,nothing real...the dream state even though more beautifull and vibrant /colorfull than wakefull state ,i knew in the dream it was unreal and i am slowly getting hints that consciousness itself too is unreal.

I can notice the change in the "love" of consciousness itself now....The stream of consciousness is there, it covers and prevades all but its changing its form....its not always "oneness" now...infact soemtimes its depressing too hehehe....It gets beautifull sometimes but sometimes its not so at all....I check whether its to do with a thought, NO it is not,mostly its just a passing emotion of sadness.grief (now there is no reason for it at all) ,it just is....

I simply observe it ,thats my "being" ,my I-AMNESS...so it is...nothing to do..just pure observation....so i learned that this joy and happiness,the oneness is temporary in the realm of consciousness which i had thought was the state to be always....the "ME" itself is temporary....And i am observing it too,i can feel the sadness,greif,depression in my heart arising even in the state of so called "consciousness" and i remembered your words "This is not Real",Not You...

Well it cant be me if i can observe it right :-)....During that period it is not that i am in an thoughtless zone but its not important ,the thoughts...they are there ,doing the job what they have too....my attention is more on the "beingness" even if it is sadness,depression or joy...whatever....This very moment is "beingness" or I-AMNESS...I touch that...but its not permanent bcoz its nature is duality so now i know....

You had warned me earlier on this and i thought Ah ,i am in bliss,i need nothing....i am This....i am bliss....I am oneness....But now look at me....hahhahaa.....And trying to create means identifying with it,i mean it will involve effort and ego,a struggle for more and more....

Why not just be in that "beingness" itself...Let the consciousness give whatever it wants to give me sir....I remind myself again and again....Be the witness....Isnt this right sir?

Sir you say out of love for me and those who really need you...You have a huge heart and are very kind....The only book i would like to read would be on me,which would have all empty pages...Nothing in them....I want to be capable to read that nothingness in me if possible...The thing to teach would be only to my own self....to serve in any capacity...and to remain worthy of taking the dust of your feet sir....
Many Pranoms,
Rajiv

You have come far Rajiv, and very rapidly, which means you have to spend some time consolidating all the states and understanding to make it permanent in yourself.

The bliss generally passes after a time as it is a function of Samadhi and various types of unitary consciousness. In fact, I found the bliss to be quite distracting and unnecessary.

Most make a big deal of Sahaja Samadhi, unity with the totality of consciousness, which really means the Void. But the source—YOU—are beyond the Void, and Sahaja does not apply to the source. It is a traditional precondition that isn't really necessary.

In the end, after many of your remaining hindrances drop off, you will just rest, doing nothing special, in yourself, no longer making effort to explore or grow spiritually. Your journey and struggle will be over.

At this point, you will either become like something dead with no response to the world which is the fate of some, or there will awaken in you the strongest conceivable sense that you are responsible for the world, for it does emminate from your mind.

You will make a decision to help all sentient beings in any way you can, from offering the shoes off your feet to some homeless person, to risking your life to save an animal. This to me is the real liberation—an immersion into a universal Mother Love.

I think I know which way you will go, and I hope you make that choice, though it will not seem to be up to you. It will happen to you.

I'd like to make one suggestion. This whole unfolding process requires close attention to detail. When you write, please take increased attention to detail as to how you express yourself. Use proper English sentence structure, spelling and punctuation and separate different thought sequences into paragraphs.

If you are going to be a teacher, you need to express yourself clearly for others to easily understand. It is also necessary to cultivate this attentiveness because it is easier in this way to become aware of hidden concepts remaining in your understanding. You need to become precise in expression and deconstructing what others say to you.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:55 AM

SENT TO ME:

Edji, Sorry for writting two mails today.I know much what we communicate should be in silence and in our "beingness" but there are few questions in my mind.One is to do with the "star" sir.... While in dhyaan,witnessing the void ahead of me i sometimes see a dot of light which on concentrating dissapears.Then

some revolving cirlcle of light which expands sometimes or few flashes of bright expanding light.None of these are in any particular order.They appear and disappear. Maybe it is the play of consciousness again but Kriya Yogis give a lot of importance to penetrate the small dot of light.They wouldnt value what you actually go thru during the day ,bliss and love of consciousness ,d oneness,or witnessing process in fact most i knew dint even know what i was going thru...Few would say increase pranayama and few would decrease it and none knew exactly what was happenning to me..Only you explained and finally i understood that the play of consciousness was happenning to me. I did learn from kriya though ,i was practicing it for 2 to 3 hours daily at a strech doing heavy kumbhaks sometimes which i feel resulted in few health problems too...The "results" i am getting by following Advaite are the same as Kriya ,infact much better without the dangers of too much breath control..and many unanswered qustions were resolved too which they had no idea about...My Guru Dubeyji who initiated me in my lineage 5 yrs ago had but he left us very early,we could interact very little and then no one really knew anything apart from the "star"... But sir what is this "penetration" of 3rd eye ? Is it vital for self-realisation sir? many pranams, Rajiv

Hi Rajiv,

I will explain this precisely because it is an important question and the answer is relevant to many people who ask me questions.

In Zen, masters talk about the need to balance Joriki with Koriki.

I forget which is which, but basically the concept is that concentration, or samadhi power must move in step with wisdom, otherwise the attainment is incomplete.

You have generated tremendous dhyan power after five years of meditation practice, so the wisdom of understanding the true nature of consciousness comes easily to you now. Now there is a better balance as your understanding has caught up to your huge bank account of spiritual energy.

Most people who run into Advaita teachings don't practice meditation, and the true meaning of Advaita escapes them because their power of attention has not energized their awareness.

I don't think most of the current teachers recommend intense practice, therefore those who follow them may have strong understanding, but no real attainment. They don't have the transformative energy of samadhi power.

However, one can play around with meditation and concentration forever, trapped in various spectacular displays in their imaginal spaces. Many Buddhist traditions spend entirely too much time exploring various sorts of Voids.

The same is true of the Third Eye. My "eye" was opened within months of starting practice because it seemed natural for me to do so. It seemed as if that particular task was set before me as a natural unfolding. The Third Eye just gradually opened during intense meditation and gradually expanded to reveal the Void nature of consciousness. But you already know that, so there is no need to penetrate anything. But you may want to do so simply to see for yourself to complete your schooling.

There are deeper mysteries you need to unfold yet, and I will help you through them when the time is come. But the Third Eye is a beginner's discovery. You are way beyond that.

You need to slow don a little and consolidate your gains or you will lose them.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 9:32 AM

17 November 2009

SENT TO ME:

Thank you so much for you quick reply. I have come across the Nisargadatta Gita but have not read it deeply...I will give it my full attention. I did start reading Prior to Consciousness a few weeks back and it feels even more astounding than I am That...if that's even possible.

Thank you again Ed...I will let you know how it goes.

N

> *Yes, Pointers is more advanced because Jean Dunn's understanding was more advanced*
>
> *Maharaj said of "I Am That," that it was grade school, while Prior to Consciousness was graduate school.*
>
> *Jean was only one of 2 people Maharaj authorized to teach. Balsekar was not I might add. I think Ramesh falls in the category of my previous post, of someone whose understanding was not backed by sufficient meditation practice. I understand near the end he had become quite critical of Maharaj and Ramana both, and may have been abusive of some of his students. I don't know, I only hear rumors.*

Post Comments:

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Robert spent time with Nisargadatta when Ramesh was there. He said Nisargadatta was quite abusive of Ramesh. Often students pick up characteristics of how their teacher interacted with them.*

November 18, 2009
Alexander said...

Oh, i see. I guess Ramesh, for being the retired banker he was, must have been also some kind of a scapegoat for Nisargadatta. Since Nisargadatta obviously was quite livid, to use a nice word, with life itself. "I spit on consciousness; spirituality for me is like dishwater etc."
Did Robert make the observation that Nisargadatta was quite an angry person at the end of his life? (I wouldn't be surprised if that was the case)

November 18, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Yes, Robert made the observation that Maharaj was very rude. He also said Maharaj beat up on Ramesh all the time.*
>
> *I met Ramesh several times before I mt Robert. His book Pointers was like a hammer blow to me mind.*
>
> *I found Ramesh generally very likable, but once in a while very rude to a student, and often his answers appeared canned, as if he had repeated the same answers a thousand times.*
>
> *I found some of his books overly intellectual and they didn't touch me very deeply as did Jean Dunn's Prior to Consciousness, or Consciousness and the Absolute.*
>
> *I find Pradeep's Nisargadatta Gita even more clear than Jean's interpretation of Maharaj's talks.*
>
> *You have to understand, this whole site is my opinion based on coming from 30 years of a Zen tradition, and before that, kriya yoga Yogananda style. Therefore I find some teachers and works more valuable than others, and those who follow this site find it more or less valuable than others.*
>
> *It is all mind and therefore meaningless unless some words are found that lead one beyond mind.*

Alexander said...
Hey Ed, thanks so much for sharing David's mail!

I decided to just ask myself and inquire into "What is perfectly aware prior to mind? (defining mind as all subtle senses including the I sense)" and await the answer.
Let's see what happens after a while, if i can await it. :-)

> *November 20, 2009*
>
> *Ed Muzika said..*
>
> *That question begs an "objective" answer, as "the mind" is totally a concept.*
>
> *Better to make it, What is aware before me, or what is aware before I Am?*
>
> *You need to get to the core feelngs and then beyond, not to a concept.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 10 comments at 9:54 AM

SENT TO ME:

I am not very far gone on the path to enlightenment, it seems I am merely starting to tread on its' outskirts as of yet. Anyway, for now I feel the largest obstacle in my way is fear. Sometimes not even fear - sometimes dread; perhaps a dread of the unknown. A fear that is keeping me from practicing, inquiring or (to a lesser extent, and for what it's worth) studying. I sometimes wish I could leave this "search" alone, yet I'm always dragged - sucked - back into it without exception. Sometimes almost like an unwanted obsession, it seems (to be semi-serious)!

Though it is indeed like I feel that I've glimpsed reality, and now I cannot leave it alone. I do indeed want to find what is hidden yet always present, but fear is holding me back, which leads to this ambiguous relationship to the spiritual search. When reading Robert's "Silence of the Heart" for example, I sometimes get a very intense feeling. In a sense it is a mediative feeling, and in a sense a "dissolving" feeling. That dissolving feeling is often unsettling, and I guess that is the core of my fear. Even practicing locating the "void" within, and being the witness of myself is somewhat unsettling. It feels as if I may venture "too deep" and get lost, whirling down a vortex of angst and confusion; perhaps a fear of loosing my senses?

What too scares me is the "finality" of it all, how when the ego "dissolves" - it's gone. It's a point of no return. What if I don't like what I see? It feels like I'm on the edge of a cliff about to jump. People say I will be fine - yet I can't be so sure. I guess my emotions towards this is neatly summarized in the saying: "Leap, and the net shall appear".

Yet, I am still not able to trust that it will. Generally I'm having a hard time locating the root of the fear. Is it a fear of the unknown, or a fear of coming to the end of my existence? Or are they even synonymous? From one perspective it is a fear of abandoning all that I hold dear, and completely venturing into the unknown. I realize that in one way I am the unknown - and the unknowable - yet it does not soothe my angst. I also realize that nothing could really be said about reality, since it is beyond duality - still I dread what I might find beyond the realms of consciousness. And the fact that I've read about people's experiences with ego-dissolution can initially be very terrifying doesn't really help (or terrifying for over ten years, when reading Suzanne Segal's story: http://www.nonduality.com/suzanne.htm).

Is there anyway to overcome this fear, or at least: how should I cope with it or even relate to it? I'm sorry if gets a bit rambling at times, sometimes it does when my thoughts aren't exactly structured, as is now the case. Thank you,

P.

> *REPLY:*
>
> *Fear ALWAYS has a body component, such as a prickly sensation around the heart or stomach, or a feeling like falling. It is only a body sensation. There is nothing in the fear that can cause you or your body harm. So get to know the fear. Watch it. Welcome the various sensations. You might even begin to enjoy the sensations that many call fear. Your mind is very busy trying to save itself by imagining all sorts of bad outcomes, yet, you are caught in the jaws of the tiger of thirst for self-*

knowledge. You have to go straight ahead. Do not deviate. Also, when you feel the fear and explore the fear for a while, turn the attention more inward and try to find who is feeling the fear. That witness is not touched by fear, nor can it be killed or harmed in any way. Get to know that source. Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 10:21 AM

20 November 2009

SENT TO ME: (Sometimes I get confused about how gmail works and the order of the emails. So, below some emails may be out of sequence or missing.)

Whenever I put attention on it, it is clear that I am totally beyond perception, beyond every experience, beyond awareness itself: awareness seems as the screen for the perception of the 'world' (the field of perception), but I am totally out of it and different from this screen also; the state of non-separation comes and goes but I am not a state. Space, time, existence itself are illusions. All this too, are only concepts.

But...there is not contentment; there are still attachment and aversion, desires, often I am identified with thoughts and emotions, the sleep is normal (I am not counsciouness in dreams and sleep); in Ramana language I suppose, there are vasanas.

It seems to me very different from Ramana and Robert condition.
What is the aim? and the way? What you suggest? What is your experience of this phase?

With gratitude and affection,
L.

REPLY:

I'd like to know better how you got where you are.

I have a discussion on my blog currently that is somewhat relevant.

There are two things necessary for balance: meditation practice which energizes conciousness, and prajna, or understanding.

You may need to start all over again in meditation to build dhyan power.

Robert and Ramana were mostly in meditation every moment, resting in silence. You are distracted by the world, and your ego is not dead.

But, I hope you see that the state you are in is o.k.?

Ed

TO ME:

You are distracted by the world, and your ego is not dead

This is the point! You are right.
Are you saying that ego can die when there is balance between meditation and understanding?

Robert and Ramana were mostly in meditation every moment, resting in silence.

Yes, Thank You! to rest in silence for me seems the key now!

But, I hope you see that the state you are in is o.k.?

I am not in a state: precisely sometime I'm identified with waking state, during night in dream and sleep states, sometime with non-dual state (all is awareness) and sometime I remember I am not any of these states, I am not an experience, a state, etc., all these appear as illusions or films or dreams.
But there is not stability in any state nor beyond!

I am OK!

The only problem seems 'my' identification with these states and the following suffering.

My deepest wish to end this apparent game of identifications...

There are two things necessary for balance: meditation practice which energizes conciousness, and prajna, or understanding.

It seems you are saying that in my case understanding is better than meditation power: so the medicine is rest in silence!

I'd like to know how you got where you are.

Shortly:

In this mirage i am XX, with a wife and a daughter of Y: i teach math in high school in ZZZ.

In 1983 i practice Vipassana (at sixsteen zazen for a while) and after that several types of meditation: kriya yoga, yoga of Sri Aurobindo, awakening of Kundalini power (shaktipat from several masters in particular Anandi Ma). In 1999 I attended my first retreat of Intensive of Illumination where I had my first brief kensho about 'Who I am' and then many others experience of non-duality.

In the last 7 years I practiced mostly surrender to kundalini power and studying Dzogchen and experiencing rigpa (non-dual awareness).
I didn't understand what you have written in your site about 'beyond non-dual awareness' until i had the experience i described to you and you answered so:

This is perfect understanding.

Now, however, you have to make it your own by continuing to be self reflective. That is, now the inner/outter distinction is lost and you must maintain that by resting in the totality of unified consciousness. Then, that you are beyond even this becomes completely owned by you.

Very good work!!

Ed

MY REPLY:

Precisely, you are not any of these states. Not the waking, sleep or dream states. Not the non-dual state. You are beyond all states.
The ego will die when it does. It is not possible to do something to make to die except observe and

> *remain in silence.*
> *Are you able to isolate a feeling of 'I Am'? If so, merely ret and observe I am, and everything will unfold by itself. I am attaching the Nisargadatta Gita, if I have not sent it before. Read it every morning. Download it. Put it in a 3 ring binder. It will help. Dearest Ed,*

L. TO ME:

"Precisely, you are not any of these states. Not the waking, sleep or dream states. Not the non-dual state. You are beyond all states."

Yes, it is clear. All the states are different modes to experience the field of perception, but I am totally out from this field and all the states in it, or of it. The field of perception (=the universe) is like a small leaf floating in the infinite ocean the Mistery of What I am (and everything is).

> *"The ego will die when it does. It is not possible to do something to make to die except observe and remain in silence."*

Thank You very much! this is what i was hoping to receive: a clear answer about ego-death.

> *Are you able to isolate a feeling of 'I Am'? If so, merely ret and observe I am, and everything will unfold by itself.*

For me is difficult and seems a burden to search something like this: every thought and feeling dissolve itself putting attention on it, only awareness remain; but if 'I Am' can be interpretated as awareness or silence than yes, i can rest in silence (or awareness).

> *I am attaching the Nisargadatta Gita, if I have not sent it before. Read it every morning. Download it. Put it in a 3 ring binder. It will help.*

Yes, i have Nisargadatta Gita, thank You very much for your gift and for your words which are very inspiring!

with love and gratitude,

L.

MY REPLY:

> *Yes,*
>
> *I am is awareness or silence.*
>
> *No more is to be done than rest there.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 11:33 AM

25 November 2009

SENT TO ME:

Hi Ed.

My current practice has been "being conscious, of being". But I had been reading Seeds of Consciousness and a student asked Nisargadatta how to focus on the I am. Nisargadatta said focus on the I am means to be in the I am - be.

He said are you not conscious of being right now, student said yes. Master said did you have to focus on it, and student said no. Master said exactly, because you are the I am - attempting to focus on it activates the mind.

Now this got me to thinking, I have been focusing on the feeling of I am - but I have a split the observer and being. So I have tried "just being", and of course the conscious part is automatic - and I sit in being, all the while being aware that I am. In other words the split is very, very small. It is interesting also that there is nothing to hold on in being - whereas the action of focusing on being gives the mind some hold. Now mind you this is not like Shikantaza, because my focus is on the I am, not on emptiness.

What you think? I find in being - I couldn't get any closer to the I am. Don't worry I am still sitting in silence, this way seems to be much better. I just wanted your thoughts on this. I don't want to make any adjustments without your advice.

> ***My Response:***
>
> *You have to focus on being for a while to get a feel for what it is like. Then you can sort of "fall back" into that sense of being and just abide there. The latter is very comfortable. You should play with the I Am sense. It varies in feel and manifestation.*

Post Comments:

Rich said...

you say, "falling back into the observer" and that makes sense. It feels like, as long as I keep "stepping back" and being the observer, who is "all the way back," that is, farther into me and away from anything observed, that I'm on the right track. Is this correct practice, to keep going "farther back" again and again, so long as there is conceptual space?

November 25, 2009

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Yes. The feeling of falling back into the observer is an easy way to abide in one's sense of beingness. But falling back is really duality too. Eventually you must just be.*
>
> *But, without meditation homework, you really don't get a good sense of I Amness or beingness. You objectify consciousness by witnessing it, playing with it, to get a feel for it. Then resting in it is easy.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 5 comments at 1:00 PM

28 November 2009

> *It rained one day when we were in Sedona, producing muted, pastel colors. Other days were overcast, making the red rocks very red. The high point for me is always Schnebbly Hill Road, where I've taken*

hundreds of photos over the years, including a large elk about 6 years ago, The lighting the last hour is always fantastic. The Indian seller was taken on the way to Flagstaff.

***http://picasaweb.google.com**/edwardmuzika/Sedona2009#*

The Sun City 4 Paws cattery is located in Peoria, AZ, a western suburb of Phoenix next to Sun City and Glendale, all high retirement areas. There are over 100 cats here, most not placeable due to disease,
health or behavioral problems. I showed up unannounced, and, as you can see, it is in perfect order.

***http://picasaweb.google.com**/edwardmuzika/UntitledAlbum#*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 10:32 PM

02 December 2009

RAJIV:

Sir I feel the ways of the consciousness cannot be predicted. Sometimes she invites me to be a part of Her, which is oneness and sometimes I observe Her only as a witness. There is a clear subject (ME) and a clear object (consciousness) like today's dhyaan.

I am very careful not to put effort in bringing about this oneness. A thought does come but i am very watchful. Any such exercise of will would be "concentration" and not awareness of the Void. So any effort TO "BE" is actually NOT to "BE". It is still a kind of seeking, wanting to repeat an earlier experience.

EDJI Comment:

Don't be afraid of making effort. A lot of homework is necessary before training becomes effortless. This is the fault of many teachers, requiring no effort. No homework, no effort, means no deepening. Instead they tell students they don't exist and any effort creates a dichotomy that creates a barrier to becoming one with consciousness. Perhaps this will work if you are constantly in the presence of a self-realized being, but not if you are alone.

RAJIV:

The I-AM is the Samadhi state, the pure oneness state. It is in this beingness state that one is introduced to the blissful consciousness. This is the natural joyous state of one being empty of all identification except that of consciousness itself. I am the blissful consciousness.

"I am not Rajiv, not a son, not a father, not a disciple, not a dealer, not a yogi or a jnani, etc." I am what i was before all this identification took place.

I bow at your feet again and again,

RAJIV:

Edji i feel the Master's Grace all the time now. Yes Sir the Oneness remains most of the time now.

During waking stage:

Oneness remains like before. Heavy intoxication remains with 3D effects of objects most of the days. The objects seem closer to me than usual. Thoughts/emotions are unreal now. I find it "hard" to identify with them but i am learning to "act" in front of others just to remain "normal." It is like thoughts/emotions come, i watch and then i decide how to react. All happens quickly but automatically. The consciousness takes care of all that.

I am not practicing watching or being aware consciously, its just happening on its own Sir.

Nothing disturbs the intoxication or blissful awareness, i am watching a new movie show each day. :-)

I really wonder many times what the hell most people are doing, wasting their life over petty issues. They are missing the real fun. This is one thought i can say i usually identify with hahaha...

During Dhyaan:

I sit crossed legged but do nothing. I simply look at the void. An hour and half pass like a minute. The void sticks to my forehead seems closer than usual.

I am beginning to be aware of two states during my dhyaan. One is waking state where i witness the void in front of me and also if any thought intrudes (this is automatic, no effort). In between suddenly i realize images coming from no where, few absurd and meaningless images and thoughts come to fore. I am in dream state. This is the calm dream state. I see it and as i watch it i am back to waking state.
So i now shuffling between dream and wakeful, wakeful and dream states.

Since i observe these states i am obviously not the void, not the wakeful state and not the dream state. So now i try and see what exactly am i? Only the void ahead of me can try and figure out the real "ME," the witness.

But it is like a void ahead of me watching the void at the background.

But as i was watching from the void the attention towards the "ME" is felt at the heart center. The real ME may not exist as an object but is felt as another Void at the heart center. This is where usually the void melts into, meaning i get a sinking feeling like the void ahead sinks within the background void "ME" at the heart. Is it so Edji?

EDJI:

> *This is all illusion. Don't get lost in all this. Pay it little heed. Although this is fun, the understanding is only of appearances, not the unchanging real. Not of YOU.*
>
> *In the end there is only one Void, but it has many aspects. Pay careful attention to the appearance and quality of each void, and whether any "feel" like the subject, the witness.*

RAVIV:

In both the above there is only a void emptiness which is merging with another void emptiness. But WAIT, then i realized the background void cant be ME as i can witness the merging of the two voids. So where am i then?? Am i the one who is witnessing all this merging too??? IS IT SO?

EDJI:

> *Of course! Right now you are realizing this as an understanding, a concept. But a point will come when all states are seen as unreal and apart from you, and you are that witness—the subject.*

RAJIV:

So is it that the void ahead and the void at the background which i considered ME is just ONE void and the real ME actually cannot be known or experienced or even pointed out. In that sense i dont exist. Is it so Master?

> ***EDJI:***
>
> *Yes and no. You are paying too much attention to conceptual understanding.*

On one hand, I will say yes, it is so, and provide pointers toward the final understanding in terms of another conceptual context, which are a separate set of pointers:

The Void exists in mental space and contains all of consciousness, but is not you. This is a property of the subtle body.

Deeper is the causal body, which is a deeper Void; no experience here is possible. Only total not knowing.

You are beyond all that as the subject.

Your only knowledge of your deepest existence comes from awareness of that which is not you; i.e., consciousness, Void, the body and the world. You can only BE that deepest self.

But you have to pass through the causal body yet, and give up all knowledge and knowing.

All that you are experiencing is unreal. It is mind and the play of consciousness. In the real Void, all this disappears. Your mind is playing tricks on you creating all these insubstantial entities and experiences. They are universal experiences, universal forms, yet they are only appearances.

Don't interpret yet about voids and all that; just witness the unfolding of consciousness. You need to get beyond trying to understand the unfolding of consciousness.

When all is said and done, when you complete your training, you are always aware of yourself as the subject, while the world is your emanation. You are aware of yourself as the subject, only because you are still experiencing the world and body. When the body goes, the Witness will have nothing to witness, and the Witness with appear to be no more.

The greatest mystery is that you are not consciousness and the world, but in another sense it is you, it emanates from you. These are two different understandings that are only apparent contradictions. These sentences are both true as appearances, but at different levels.

RAJIV:

"The void exists in mental space and contains all of consciousness, but is not you. This is a property of the subtle body"

Ok all of consciousness is subtle body and what i am witnessing at the moment are experiences of the subtle body.

"Deeper is the causal body, which is a deeper void; no experience here is possible. Only total not knowing."

This is beyond the subtle body and so beyond consciousness itself. So knowing and experiencing is not possible here. But Sir if i do not experience anything how will i know at all this is causal body? Is this similar to a deep sleep state where i can not recollect any experience?

"Your only knowledge of your deepest existence is awareness of that which is not you; i.e., consciousness, Void, the body and the world. You can only be that deepest state"

WOW, I am even beyond causal stage. Edji this looks like a long, long journey to me. Lot of learning and understanding is yet to come.
I know i stand apart from consciousness so i am not that, but to truly "know" the real subject, i will have to go beyond the void and even casual state. This looks like a lot need to be done.

"just witness the unfolding of consciousness. You need to get beyond trying to understand the unfolding of consciousness."

Master i do not want to sound like i am trying to seek reaching somewhere through using effort, but i am very keen to further enhance my understandings regarding the causal body and beyond it. Since long i am only at the consciousness level exploring astral or subtle experiences.

Edji who will lead me beyond and how?

Do i continue watching and witnessing the Void like i am doing at the moment? Is there anything more i can try to get beyond? Do i Put in more hours in dhyaan?

Please Sir your guidance is most needed.

I bow,

EDJI:

> *All that I am telling you is concepts, causal body, subtle, etc.*
>
> *They correspond to different types of knowing or not knowing which are universal.*
>
> *Right now you are in knowing oneness, but that is illusion. Still you have you know it to go beyond it.*
>
> *Next comes becoming totally stupid--letting go of knowing and awareness. It often feels like death--and it is death to the I Am consciousness. But you have to get used to being nothing. Now you are getting acquainted with the nothingness of the Void, but a deeper nothingness means only darkness and not knowing.*
>
> *You can feel what it is like--at least for me--by sitting in Padmasana, and letting your consciousness leave your head and go downward into your body into the belly. Focus your mind in your belly. Deep sleep is another similar state.*
> *At some point, you should experience a "dropping" of your conscious center to the belly, and just before it drops, it will feel like your brain is becoming hard and dense as a rock and your awareness of luminous consciousness will disappear. You will pass through a state like sleep where there is nothing at all. There is no you there. No consciousness, no experience.*
>
> *After your mind drops into your belly, you will instantly become one with everything. All the world will be no different from you. There will be no division between your body and the world. The body disappears and you are the world in total Samadhi. This is your "glimpse" state carried to the ultimate end.*
>
> *That brief period when the mind is dropping, is the state of forgetfulness that you will need to repeatedly experience. The apparent you passes through it, from one state of knowing consciousness, to knowing nothing, and they perfect Samadhi with everything. You know it as a memory of passage.*
>
> *This stage is very important. It must be lived in everyday life too: knowing nothing, not having an opinion or idea. It is one way the world you dwell in is destroyed and transcended.*
>
> *You are having great fun now in consciousness and I don't want to stop it. Just know it is imaginational, not real. Neither is forgetfulness. No state or body is real. It is a function of you, but no more real than a dream.*
>
> *By the way, anything said about dropping the center of consciousness to the belly, is also true about that center dropping to the heart. It is just that the Zen way I practiced emphasized the belly rather than the heart.*

RAJIV:

WOW! You have revealed to me the greatest secret of what means "self-realization" or actual Liberation. Most know that it is unknowing state but you have even revealed How. I am speechless with awe Sir.
One will switch from knowing (consciousness) to unknowing (thru the navel) and vice versa through repeated such learnings and experiences. And then know we are beyond such knowing and unknowing too. TOO HARD TO GRASP YET.

EDJI comment:

Actually, knowing the causal body will happen on its own as the mental experiences are seen through. The belly technique just gives you a method to understand nothingness better and more quickly. It is not essential.

RAJIV:

I intellectually know this now yet i will want to reach this on my own.
You are 100% right Master that i am having lot of fun with Consciousness and still identify with Her. I shall continue to remain in that I-AMness. I shall Hold her tight to me as Maharaj says in Gita and let Her alone lead me there whenever the time comes.

I shall write as i get something new to tell.

I am most fortunate and blessed to know you Sir.

RAJIV:

So a Sadhaka now watches the arising and fall of all these 3 states in himself. And thus knows now that He is beyond them. Is this correct conception??

EDJI:

YOU are not a thing, but something is there. It is the subject, but it does not exist like the universe exists.

The concepts of existence and non-existence apply to the visible, the observable. But YOU, the observer, the ubject, are beyond all qualities like existence and non-existence.

Don't try to figure this one out. You will understand when the time is ready.

RAJIV:

All this learning from you Sir is difficult to comprehend for me even intellectually. I am awestruck with the knowledge you have imparted to me today.

There is so little that i know. So little that those who write books on this subject know. Most Gurus are only talking in terms of concepts and only on the surface whereas what you are pointing is beyond everything one can even possibly imagine.

I used to wonder why you have not made your presence felt across the Globe with so much. But i now realize that this world itself is too small for you. You must reveal to the world all this. Sir for those few maybe, or else they will only wander here and there like i used to.

EDJI:

Yes, these teachings are rare. They are directed towards yogis who have practiced meditation, or Zen students. Most who read this will have no comprehension at all. Nisargadatta learned all this from his teacher and tradition, but spends little time exploring these experiences and issues in his talks. But he must have thoroughly explored all this during the three years after initiation by his teacher. In fact, it is difficult to understand Prior to Consciousness and some of his other books unless you know these pointers.

But Nisargadatta's teacher wrote on all this, as did Nisargadatta's Dharma Brother, Ranjit. I think Maharaj knew it was better to bypass all this instruction, as essentially, in the end, it is found to be

unreal and conceptual. These concepts are pointers from a different time, but they fit you and other yogis who are well aware of the vagaries of consciousness.

In the end, after all is said and done, you can only be yourself. In Zen this was called returning to the marketplace.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 3:04 PM

Downloadable booklet on Self-Knowledge and Liberation for meditators and Yogis:

Ramana, Nisargadatta and Robert Adams, all advised continuous self-inquiry as a practice. Such meditation or self-abidance generates Dhyana power which walks hand in hand with self-understanding and liberation. This booklet contains the essence of the dialogues between Rajiv Kapur and I regarding his journey.

http://itisnotreal.com/Self-Knowledge%20&%20Liberation-Dialogues.pdf

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 5:46 PM

03 December 2009

From S:

Soon after we last spoke I experienced unity consciousness for the first time. Now, as Rajiv describes, sometimes I am one with consciousness and sometimes I witness it. If I'm feeling like a body I can rather easily (most of the time) remind myself that I am not the body and I get back to association with consciousness, i.e. drop the body sense. Soon after experiencing oneness with consciousness, I burnt off the emotional/feeling aspects of bliss that I was experiencing since almost the beginning when you prescribed to me my practice, i.e. grabbing a hold of I am and sinking back into it.

Meanwhile, I have been seeing through consciousness periodically. Most of the times it feels like I'm tunneling through the center of consciousness and what's seen through is purer than pure and transparent (in contrast to my otherwise typical experience of consciousness which is more ether-like and emotionally intoxicating). Soon after tunneling forward so to speak I started to try to bring my awareness to the background of consciousness (as you say to do in your writing). That ultimately lead to a "barreling" back through my gut and through the tunnel (in front) everything became silent-like, devoid, and rather detached from me. A few times I felt I stood apart from consciousness and watched it flow by.

A few days ago I went totally stupid feeling for a hour or so. I didn't know anything. Here I'll mention that my experience of consciousness will now and then fill up with complete knowingness. I was getting ready to email you to ask what I'm experiencing and what to do from here when I read your dialogs with Rajiv, where you described the causal body, and realized this is seemingly what I'm starting to experience. Naturally, I ask for your feedback and recommendation on what to do from here, other than continue as I am.

I have a very intense desire to go beyond consciousness to the absolute. I feel like I understand what the absolute is, or shall I say, what it is not. Intellectually I know it's that which is beyond and no description is possible; I feel like sometimes I can associate with that. Am I simply deluding myself?

Always grateful,

Response:

You are not deluding yourself at all. It is a feeling, but without an awake body being aware, it is not felt. Yes, you can back into it. Become the subject, and on the way, do Samadhi on consciousness as you are doing.

Yes, it appears you are aware now of the causal body. Becoming stupid is VERY, VERY important.

You are doing fine. I am glad you have come this far so soon.

More from S:

I will do what you say. When you write me I ponder over it, over and over again until I feel I understand at the deepest level.

The thought has crossed my mind more than once that my OCD has helped me progress quickly on the path. My mind is very obsessive, and I have used that to obsess over self realization. Moreover, my OCD since childhood has to a certain extent not allowed me to enjoy life as others do; so since association with the mind/body has never been too pleasurable for me, it wasn't that hard to give it up.

I'm in meditation pretty much all waking hours. I'm always at it. In addition to practice, I live a clean life. I'm 100% vegan. Beyond, I eat bland, no sugars, no salt, no spicy foods. Of course no kinds of drugs or alcohol. I do not watch any TV, occasionally part of a movie while sitting with my family. I cut out all reading of news. Only thing I read really is your website (over and over), Robert, and your blog. Lately I haven't had a desire to read much other than your website and blog. Anything and everything I can think of doing to quiet my mind, I do.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 8:21 PM

04 December 2009

Download the Collected Works of Robert Adams, Volumes 1 & 2.
These contain all the transcripts from which the book Silence of the Heart was created through editing. It is a 1.4 megabyte download and consists of over 400 pages.

http://itisnotreal.com/Collected_Works_of_Robert_Adams_Vol_1.pdf

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 4:59 PM

05 December 2009

One February Talk by Robert is now working again; click it:

http://itisnotreal.com/RobertAudioFeb28-01.mp3

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 1:12 AM

08 December 2009

Master,

Last night a dream shook me.

I was visiting a very dark and crowded place in my dream this time. It smelled and had very disturbing scenes.

I saw animals of all kinds ,dogs,parrots,donkeys,elephants,cats,cows,birds all tied together to be butchered Sir. Also there were men too who were tied for the same. They were to be used for food. All of them were crying and yelling and shouting. They were telling us how can you use me for food?

I was devastated.Totally moved. Even as I am writing to you I feel the pain of the animals and the men to be butchered. Many amongst us were buying and I could do nothing to stop them except be in deep pain and cry. I felt no difference between them and me even when I know it was all a dream. Consciousness took me there for a reason perhaps.

You see Edji previous to my samadhis and oneness (since the two months) which are now flowing continously due to Your Grace, I was a Non-vegetarian. After the continuity of these samadhis I automatically reject non-veg food of any kind. I have lost total taste of them and felt vomiting once when I had chicken in between my samadhis.

I never believed in the past that consciousness had anything to do with food but now the rejection of non -veg and this dream makes me feel disgust of my past consumption.

I have no idea of the authenticity of hell or hades but I nearly felt I was visiting a really bad place. For me the purpose of this dream was to emphasize treating men and helpless animals alike. I do not know but it has rattled me to pieces and I am in pain even now.

Do you think Non-veg food should therefore be avoided at any cost in the early stages itself by a Sadhaka and not wait for the rude awakenings later in advanced stages of consciousness like in my case?

> ***Response:***
>
> *You understand now why I am so protective of animals? There is an extraordinary amount of pain and guilt in anyone who kills and eats animals. When you stop, good things happen almost immediately, and it feels like a weight is lifted from your conscience. Yes, being a vegetarian is important. Robert stressed it. He said sex was alright, but eating meat not only held you back, but created pain inside the person who ate meat. Yes, being a vegetarian is of immense importance, not least so to the animals.*

Rajiv:

This is such an important lesson in my life you gave me Edji. You have saved me from hell. I realized later what good is all this consciousness if I can not feel the pain of animals. I never felt so low in my entire life. It was terrible, all that yelling and shouting. All animals were talking in language I could understand very well but I was so helpless. It has shook me completely. Perhaps it was needed but I pray no one goes through what I went.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 12:51 AM

20 December 2009

Just found this interesting website that refers to a meeting with Robert Adams in Warner Park.

http://the-wanderling.com/meeting.html#N300

He mentions me too.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 11:08 PM

23 December 2009

Ed,

I have read this dialogue before, but this time I am getting emotional. The wife says I am a hard-nose, but Ed, this exchange between teacher and student is overwhelming. It is beautiful! This exchange has been answering questions for me left , right and centre. I don't know if you are aware of how much benefit you are to us - but big fella, what you are doing for us is down-right amazing. I could never have imagined, in all my dreams, that I would get to take part in such an adventure. I just can't say thank you enough Ed. Thank you very , very much my friend, for allowing me to be part of your extended family. Just amazing!

T.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:13 PM

28 December 2009

The results of single minded practice:

Hi Ed hope things are good with as I know they are they way there suppose to be.

All is well here. I have told you of my three times of spontaneous sensations of bliss, peace and unbearable happiness. Once with Lester Levenson's recordings and two times reading Roberts Collected works. These sensations occurred when not in actual meditation. They lasted about an hour and a half each time.

Thats when I wrote you and stayed with you and only you and your suggestions. You suggested Nisargadatta Gita which I have been doing almost regularly as well as reading Chapter 8 The path of Sri Ramana which has been on again off again.

About two months ago I felt I reached consciousness for about twenty min and felt No I, No me, No body, Nothing. with extreme happiness and bliss. This has deepened my sittings tremendously. Again same sensation last week for an hour. Throughout the day I am working to stablize here. Interesting enough almost anytime I stop doing anything I automatially fall into silence.

Since the last two months my sittings which I start with listening to the silence then bring in the I am sensation are exactly what you describe in your practice page and what Bernadette calls the unitive mind. This happens almost daily in my sittings as is usually easily found.

I do just stay on your website Nothing else as well as your direction only.I read Collected Works almost daily, the Gita. No tv very little radio and also some Indian chanting at least I think its chanting. I do want to deepen with this and would like to read some more of the powerful books you have suggested, yet I feel being new it may be best I stay here a while for a good foundation. Meditation and homework. I do need to work on homework what are suggestions. I value your suggestions please feel free. Thanks Ed, myself and others here appreciate what you have done for us. Yea I know it is not real! Hopefully I will realize that.

K.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 12:08 AM

30 December 2009

I get maybe a hundred emails a week about practice or other questions. I post maybe two a week. I would post a lot more, but I really don't have the time, and on many, I'd have to post several paragraphs of context, which takes more time.

I am still a working stiff so to speak, trying to write boring medical reviews and reports during the weekdays.

But I feel a special connection with Rajiv because his experiences are so similar to my own along the way. Previously I have felt that connection with other questioners too, but they no longer write.

Here is what Rajiv wrote and my response:

Last night was "terrible" in one way and not so in another way :-)

I was lying down to sleep but just could not fall into it. An hour passed and then two hours passed by. I was getting a bit anxious why thoughts were disturbing me so much. There were influx of various thoughts and I was witnessing all of them. It was all automatic. I could not even let go not watching them. 3 hours passed by and I thought I was nearly losing my mind. A part of me told me it was all unreal yet another part of mind was telling me I was treading wrong in my life. Stop all this practice and be human again, start living in desires and enjoy life. I was witnessing all of these careful not to identify with all this as I knew all this would pass. But it was getting tougher as the night was slipping away. I was starting to get a bit anxious.
I observed I was actually looking deeply at the third eye and watching the flow of thoughts. Somehow I felt watching at the void ahead was resulting in more thoughts. It was me, the void ahead at the third eye and the influx of thoughts and no "meditation" was actually helping. Very strange indeed. Where has all the bliss and joy gone???

For the first time a doubt slowly crept and a fear too. Am I getting depressed?? A sadness filled my heart. It was a very dark night. Nothing seemed to work. My mind was extremely active during the whole time even as my body was tiring with all this. I was feeling frustrated and extremely helpless. The mind was telling me see how others are sleeping well and you are losing every bit of sleep. You are disturbing your set life and of your family.

Yet another part told me do not listen to anything the mind tells me. It was one mind against the other. All of this was thought anyways and I realized that. Even as a witnesser, I was getting engulfed in the war between the two. The void ahead was alive and so was my mind. There was movement and stirring happening at the void ahead and the mind was active catching them. There was no peace at all.

Then suddenly out of the Blue at around 5 am I remembered your teaching. A voice told me stop all this witnessing NOW. Just move backwards to the real Self and stay there. Just Be aware of that state. DO IT NOW.

I turned my attention away from the void,the thought and moved towards the background. It is felt as a totality of the body first and then it is felt as something beyond the body too.

As I connected with that, all thoughts disappeared, a natural joy and sense of happiness and security was felt. It was like a child finally getting to sit on his mothers lap. Such was the sense of security and warmth. The sinking into the background bought about a natural calmness, joy and total freedom from disturbing thoughts.
Next I knew that I was in a dream state,knowing I was dreaming and I was finally happy in my deam too :-). I slept for maybe 3 hours or so but do not feel I missed much of it.

For the first time ever I realized that looking intensely at the third eye exploring the void may not be such a good practice afterall. It is best just to sink backwards and try and BE one with that state. There is tremendous security and stability there. Rest is all play.

Many Pranams.
I bow at your feet a million times,

Rajiv

> *My Response:*

Good lesson well taken!!!!!

Yes, I spent many years exploring the Void, probably as deeply as anyone has explored it. But opening the void to realize the clear light of consciousness only opens space for realization of the emptiness of thoughts and the physical body to be realized in. No enlightenment happens because of exploration of the Void.

Going backwards into the self always seems to bring happiness, even if you can only go back as far as the body sense.

The void is a vision sort of thing, associated with the brain and eyes. The I-sense is not. The I Amness sensation appears to be about the heart center for some, but is really deeper, beyond the body sense.

Good going for you!!!!

Ed

Rajiv:

Ah yes Master. But for you this lesson may never have been learned by me at all. Just moving backwards is all that there is.

I am completely done with exploring deeply at the void.It can play havoc with ones mind and thoughts and with ones being.

It is real bad practice though I am not sure why sadhak still choose to explore them. That may be the problem with deep meditation. Most feel meditation is third eye exploration and are mislead. It is the "beingness" whether you feel at the heart center or as the totality of the body. This is where we all need to abide. This is all we need to reach rather than explore further and further. I am completely done with this.

Ah Master what a lesson you gave me last night.

I always valued your teachings but some understandings come only by direct experience.I went through this very important lesson and nearly nearly lost my mind.I got nearly Mad.

The feeling of beingness itself melts all searchings and seekings. Moving backwards is much safer and secure practice.It instantly puts the mind off. This is such a learning. I am done with all the void stuff for sure. WOW.

After this even if there is no more further learning I will still consider my life worth living.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments at 12:08 AM

Master,
I am undergoing a major change in perspective. As I feel the connection growing backwards towards "ME" nothing ahead of me seem fascinating as before or holding my attention.

Actually ever since the background ME took more prominence, I do not feel the need to witness my thoughts, my body or even consciousness (oneness).BECAUSE IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER THEY EXIST OR NOT. All these are now viewed as ONE consciousness body, thoughts, emotions, lamness, beingness or oneness).

Attention is drawn at the back now and to the consciousness as a whole.And that consciousness as a whole keeps changing from appearing to non-appearing.

So witnessing of thoughts or body or emotions or oneness as seperate from Consciousness is no more there. It is all ONE part of Unity Consciousness which appears and disappears. Consciousness is taking forms as Rajiv,joy,sadness,thoughts,body and even beingness.Infact everything perceivable now is Consciousness and nothing of it MATTERS anymore.

Individually they do not warrant my attention now.They may or not exist.I simply let them do whatever form onsciousness wants to be in.I may choose to even not witness them because how does it matter.

I can not communicate in words Master all this feeling.There is tremendous inward silence and happiness and everything at the consciousness level is noise.I infact get a voice within which is contrary to what the Masters or books in the past has said about Witnessing every thought or about being aware. My feeling says IGNORE all this. Do not even BE. You are not even a "Being".

Till yesterday evening I was in a major depression. There were millions of conflicting thoughts and varied emotions. Doubts filled my mind and fear had suddenly taken control of my being. All I told myself is that all this will pass. This is not ME. There was tremendous darkness and I was engulfed in tremendous grief and sadness.

Today morning has been very different. I feel I have woken up to a new reality. Perhaps there is no witnesser even because witnessing is missing many times and no Being. There is only happiness and peace. Anything else even if they exist or not exist DO NOT matter.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, yes, yes! Consciousness itself is trivial, coming and going, changing, unreal--and One, but the One is not real. When it goes there is complete happiness.*
>
> *I am so happy that you have come so far so soon!*
>
> *Don't lose this place you are. Stabilize and grow there.*
>
> *The not-knowing state will continue to reveal more and more, but in a completely different way than when consciousness was your teacher.*

Rajiv:

Master nothing was possible without You. I am truly happy Now. The depression was probably necessary last evening. Now there is intense sense of security and a freedom from everything including consciousness.
Thank You Master a zillion times

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments at 11:01 AM

31 December 2009

> *I Have seen it all now! The below ad is for a 12-day training to make you a non-dual guru--the next step in your evolution--for only $3,200! Please rush your application.*

[…]

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

I hope this post was just a joke from your side Ed ... if not, what can i say? PAY AND GET ENLIGHTENED..... are we humans truly falling down so much?
January 11, 2010
Ed Muzika said...

> *No joke. We are seeing the triumph of capitalism. As you can see other teachers are rushing in to offer enlightenment at discount prices. Soon it will be down to $800 and enlightenment and authentication patches will be available to all!*

January 11, 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika at 12:06 PM

01 January 2010

I would like to ask You something about the inexpressable truth.
Everything you say and the illusion of you even speaking to me is just
coming from pure awareness itself. Absolutely nothing has any inherent existence.

All those stories on your site must be pure fantasy, and have no truth. All is created
by Self that is trying to get me to sway a certain way to make her (it, whatever) wake up.

I realize you can't really explain anything to me, you can only destroy my mind and dogmatic thought patterns because you don't exist. Everything we are talking about is a lie.

Everything is coming off as unreal to me, and absolutely done with searching for guides outside my Self. I keep having these dreams that transition perfectly into the waking state..

You and I are similar in the sense that our Selves kind of "set us up" to be awakened whether
we wanted to or not.

My only question is, does awakening have to be painful? The emotion is overwhelming!

Thanks.

T.

> ***RESPONSE***
>
> *Hmmm,*
>
> *I experienced no pain. What is your experience and can you locate who or what is experiencing pain? If there is a perception of pain, but NO ONE to whom it is happening, it is just an occasion in consciousness. It seems that you are saying there is still a person experiencing negative emotions or negative physical sensations*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments at 3:55 PM

03 January 2010

QUESTION SENT TO ME:

Hello,

What is the real difference between the I Am and the I? For when I try to abide in being, it "feels" as if the I and the I Am share the same "core", or are identical even. It is the "reference" point to which the I refers, it seems. Is there some "truth" in this, or am I way off?

P.

RESPONSE:

They are the same although at times they will appear to be different. But in the beginning and in the end they are identical.

QUESTION:

What does this mean? I.e. is this relevant somehow?

RESPONSE:

"What does what mean?"

They are identical except during the process of investigation, at times they can appear to be different. At the beginning of the search, the mind is not subtle, so they seem the same. During the search, the mind gets subtler, and some make a distinction between I and Am, and I and I am. Some near the end of the search claim their is only amness.

But at the end, everything is seen to be the same, because what was before observed as distinct from me, becomes recognized as me as a projection.

I am the beginning and the end.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:59 PM

04 January 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 12:04 PM

Edji,
As I sat for evening dhyaan I reached a trance state soon. With attention at the background and witnessing of thoughts
the mind gets interiorized. I reach a state between sleep and conciousness. The mind becomes solid and hard and thoughts are gone. There was a blurred inner experience, a numbed feeling like an effect of a drug.The blurred inner experience tries to deepen and then the beingness was felt like a wave rising and falling in an ocean of my heart.WOW

Any small Noise outside caused intense disturbance at the heart.The noise literally attacked my heart and shook the deep silence. Hence I had to stop at that.

For the first time I felt the beingness as a wave floating, rising and falling in the ocean of my heart. It was a semi conscious state I think.

After the session I felt such intense happiness. I felt crying with tears of joy in my eyes. Every cell of my body was yelling with intense happiness.That was inspite of the fact that a minor crisis of sorts has arisen in my finances yet I feel totally unaffected.

In the midst of turmoil I have only one thing to do: SMILE.
Smile with tears of intense Joy. I felt Master I touched the inner most core of my being today which originates from the heart but extends far beyond it.

Pranoms Master,
Rajiv

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:05 AM

Does anyone read Korean? What are they saying here?

http://www.buddhapia.co.kr/mem/hyundae/auto/newspaper/238/n-24.htm

Secret revealed. Sent to me from Paul Paek

“Introduce the authentic Zen Buddhism to the world”

“I wish to convey the messages of Korean Buddhism to Americans that carries the truths of inner side of humanity whereas the conventional Buddhism is somewhat formal”

4pm on 18th at Jogye Temple, Mr. Edward Muzika is appointed to become the first International Dharma Instructor from foreign country for Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. Ed says “I will disseminate the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism yet unfarmiliar to Americans with customized programs for ascerticism that fit to Americans.”

Ed is the vice president of American Buddhist Congress and he’s been collaborating with the Buddhism of Korea, Japan, Tibet, South East Asian countries and China. He had a special affection to Korean Buddhism after meeting Doan, the chief Buddhist monk of Korean American Buddhist Congress in Los Angeles. Ed expressed his regrets that Korean Buddhism is not introduced to the world and he will give his small help to make the globalization of Korean Buddhism.

Ed and Doan plan to preferment the Dongsan Buddhism University in Los Angeles to a formal four year University and put more efforts to translate the Korean Buddhism books to English.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 1:05 AM

05 January 2010

For some times I have watched many Facebook people trading "verbal" pointers with each other and receiving applauding comments from readers. The quotes and comments are usually about thoughts vis-a-vis appearances of the world, experience as the desiderata of truth, identification with thinking or the body, the impermanence of thought, the deconstruction of the mind, and also about the cognizing and existence.

But all of this is on a superficial level of concepts about mind and reality. It is mind speaking to mind, engaging intellectual analysis of concepts and phenomena.

In fact, no deep understanding or attainment can come from this, because the mind itself is false and consciousness is not real in any ultimate sense.

All the great teachers, Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj, and Robert Adams place extraordinary emphasis on self-inquiry, which also seems often confused with the repetitious use of the query, "Who am I?," repeated endlessly with respect to thoughts and emotions and percepts.

However, this is not self-inquiry. Self inquiry means isolating the sense of I Am, the sense that we exist, the sense of amness, or the sense of I, focus on it, probe it with the mind, and learn every aspect of its nature. By such familiarity we gain an understanding of the experience of I Am, which gradually has to be teased away from the experience of the body and world, which is a false appearance. We must experience I Am, the first person, as ourself, completely without the distortion of the world and body presence, the projected waking world. That is how the personal mind is dissolved, by seeing through the falseness of the world consciousness, the waking mind, the body and dreamworld, not by intellectual analysis of the relation between thoughts and objects, neither of which have "real" existence.

This inward investigation and abiding in the sense of I Am leads to an automatic relinquishing of the world, and an automatic, downwards spiraling into one's true self nature. The deeper you go, the happier you become, making it easier it is to go deeper because of the increasing happiness and love felt. There is a growing love to abide silently in one's self and not turn outside. You become increasingly happy doing nothing but attending to your own subjectivity. This takes the mind deeper and makes it more subtle, seeing distinctions missing before.

But absolutely nothing is to be gained by observing thoughts, except the I thought, or understanding intellectually how thoughts create the false world we observe. This is only philosophizing. Western philosophy dealt with these topics for hundreds of years as do Eastern philosophers still, with no freedom found in such mental gymnastics.

When you go deep into the experience of I Am, at some point the illusion of the world—waking consciousness AND dream mind becomes crystal clear. They are both seen strictly as imagination, and the desire arises to know the real. No analysis is needed or helpful in finding the real, only plunging deeper within.

Therefore the emphasis should be on doing self inquiry in the proper way and sharing with others one's experience while going deeper into the contents of consciousness. You have to go deep into the mind, to the root of you beingness in order to transcend it, and that is done by following, attending to, or abiding in that sense of I Am.

Self inquiry allows the mind to gradually become sharper and more subtle, so that it can tease out reality from unreality, appearance from the self.

I have universally recommended several texts for this: The meditation manual, "The Nisargadatta Gita" by Apte, and The Path of Sri Ramana, Part I, chapters 7 and 8 by Sadhu Om and Michael James. Then again, all of Robert's talks, the 146 available now of http://itisnotreal.com*, all emphasize self inquiry. Robert talks about the various methods of self-inquiry in many different ways in his talks. He never advised doing nothing. Except perhaps being near him.*

Michael James wrote a huge 672 page book covering all aspects of Ramana's teachings entitled "Happiness and the Art of Being" which goes deeply into Ramana's teachings and the practice of self-inquiry. It is important to read this message on reaility (Chapter 4) and Practice, Chapter 10.

I really don't understand the function of throwing "pointer" quotes at each rather than talking about your own experiences in self-inquiry. That would do far more to help others than quotes from someone who deconstructs the mind, or analyzes percepts and thoughts.

Nisargadatta Gita Download: http://www.lulu.com/product/download/the-nisargadatta-gita/3744368

Path of Sri Ramana Part I
http://www.happinessofbeing.com/The_Path_of_Sri_Ramana_Part_One.pdf

Robert Adams Transcripts: http://itisnotreal.com/Collected_Works_of_Robert_Adams_Vol_1.pdf

Michael James: Happiness and the Art of Being: http://www.happinessofbeing.com/happiness_art_being.html#ebook

I would also point out that Michael Langford's book*, follows in this same tradition of emphasizing constant self-attention, although the practice described is slightly different from the methods espoused in the books above.*

Until you know first hand that which lies beyond waking and dream world consciousness, you cannot be sure that your existence is constant, and that YOU are beyond heaven and earth, and life and death.

Then when you see thus deeply into yourself, you will feel the deepest happiness and love imaginable.

The point is avoid talking about thought, concepts, reality, witness, observer, real, unreal, etc., and look within for your source as I Amness, and abide there. This is your sense of existence, or presence. Watch it, play with it, recede into it, abide in it. Then everything will be revealed.

From Michael James book, my own "pointers" quote:

If we are really intent upon experiencing the true goal of yoga, which is perfectly clear self-knowledge, we will not feel inclined to read vast quantities of sacred texts or other philosophical books, because we will be eager to put into practice what we have learnt from a few really pertinent books which explain that simple self- attentive being is the only means by which we can experience that goal. If instead we feel enthusiasm only to study an endless number of books, we will merely succeed in filling our mind with countless thoughts, which will draw our attention away from our essential consciousness of our own being. Thus filling our mind with knowledge gathered from many books will be a great obstacle to our practice of self-attentive being.

Excessive study will not only fill our mind with innumerable thoughts, which will cloud our natural inner clarity of self- consciousness, but will also fill it with the pride of learning, which will prompt us to display our vast knowledge to other people, and to expect them to appreciate and praise it. Therefore in verse 36 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham Sri Ramana says:

Rather than people who though learned, have not subsided [surrendered or become humble or still], the unlearned are saved. They are saved from the ghost of pride that possesses the learned. They are saved from the disease of many whirling thoughts. They are saved from running in search of fame [repute, respect, esteem or glory]. Know that what they are saved from is not just one evil.

Of all the obstacles that can arise in our path when we are seeking true self-knowledge, the desire for praise, appreciation, respect, high regard, renown or fame is one of the most delusive and therefore dangerous, and it is one to which the learned are particularly susceptible. Therefore in verse 37 of Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham Sri Ramana says:

Though all the worlds are [regarded by them as] straw, and though all the sacred texts are within [their] hand, [for] people who come under the sway of the wicked whore who is puhazhchi [praise, applause, appreciation, respect, high regard, renown or fame], escaping [their] slavery [to her], is rare.

The first clause of this verse, 'though all the worlds are straw', implies that those of us who have studied vast amounts of philosophy may look down upon the normal mundane pleasures of this world, heaven and all other worlds as being a mere trifle, and may therefore imagine that we have renounced all desire for them. The second clause, 'though all the sacred texts are within hand', implies that we may have mastered a vast range of scholastic knowledge about various systems of philosophy, religious belief and other such subjects. However, in spite of all our vast learning and our seeming renunciation, if we fall prey to desire for the extremely delusive pleasure of being an object of praise, appreciation, admiration, respect, high regard, acclaim or fame, to free ourself of such desire is very difficult indeed.

The desire for appreciation and respect is very subtle and therefore powerful in its ability to delude us, and it is a desire to which even otherwise perfectly good people can easily fall a prey, particularly if they engage themselves in any activity that seems to benefit other people, such as teaching the principles of religion, philosophy or moral conduct through either speech or writing. This desire is particularly dangerous for a spiritual

aspirant, because the pleasure we feel in being appreciated and respected derives from our attachment to our ego or individual personality – our delusive sense that we are the person who is appreciated and respected.

Posted by Ed Muzika 5 comments Links to this post at 1:26 PM

In contradistinction to the neo advaitins who look inside themselves and finding themselves to both exist and consciousness, declare themselves enlightened, I'd like to refer people to Michael James website.

Michael spent many years with Sadhu Om translating Ramana's writings as well as those by Ramana's core students.

His masterpiece is a monster 650 page book called Happiness and the Art of Being. Other ebooks downloadable for free from his site are the Path of Sri Ramana, Part I and II.

http://www.happinessofbeing.com/

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:08 AM

07 January 2010

Dear Ed,

I have just happened upon your website while reading "Prior To Consciousness". Although you folks seem very far beyond my experiences thus far, it all speaks deeply to me.

I was drawn to read Ramana, Gangaji, Nisargadatta and now you. I would be very interested in your teaching/ Satsang online. Have you started? Also, any beginning help for me would be most appreciated...I do feel as if I could use some *teacher* aid.

I am grateful for all your sharings...and your help with the cats. Really.

All love,

K.

Hi Karen,

Here is what I want you to do. I will be your guide and save you 10 or 20 years if you want to go all the way to complete liberation. I don't ask you to trust me, but to try what I advise for a month or two, and see what happens.

Download the Nisargadatta Gita I am sending you, print it out and place in a 3 ring binder and it becomes your bible. Read it every morning. Ponder the words then meditate on the I Am feeling, the sense you exist.

Do this for two weeks. I want to see if this approach fits you. I hope so. You may begin to feel peace almost right away, and that will mark that it is good for you.

Ed

Thank you very much Ed. I am grateful for your suggested guidance and shall begin.

I will be in touch when it feels right.

Great gratitude,
K.

EIGHT DAYS LATER:

Dear Ed,

Peace. Freedom. Truth.

My experience is the quietest, calmest fireworks. It is as if everything just stopped, someone lifted off the veil and all simply *is*. My seeking in the past had me always engaged in perfecting myself, so busy with some new and special practice. With this, I don't feel the urgency to get anywhere, rather a simple gratitude that it is. I have been deeply moved by Robert's words on your site...simple and profound. Finally my insides say, this is what you know.

Thank you for your offer to guide...I am truly grateful.

I read the *bible* and find that all day long, the Who am I keeps speaking. This is the most quieting practice.

Thank you,
K.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:51 AM

08 January 2010

Written to Me:

Dearest Ed,

My deepest heartfelt gratitude for being an authentic Source for the teachings of yourself and Robert. Thank you for being here as a salvation of insight for the rest of us…the rest of you.

I know that you must be inundated—and I struggle with providing minimal context to ask a relevant question. I refrained from asking you questions, until I felt that I had worked along the path. Often, I would reflect on the question I had…formulate it…and it would magically be answered during the pages I turned that week.

I admire the talent that you and Robert have for articulating all of 'this' in very expressive and relational way with brilliant clarity and such concise terms. I beg your forgiveness for probably not finding the right balance here. I will attempt to provide the minimal context in the hopes of providing just enough to receive some meaningful insight or guidance.

"The Power that knows the way" allowed me to find you in Feb09….and through you, to find the gift of more transcripts and recorded sessions from Robert. Prior to this I had lived on a very limited library of Roberts' and Lester Levensons' original works which required a lot of tenacity and winnowing to find; but they resonated with me. Before I wrote to you, I had poured through both your Orange and Blue websites with voracity and enthusiasm. It was wonderful. I lived vicariously by listening to the blog posts but the level of questions and guidance on the Blog seemed to be well beyond me …or on a different path.

The day I received the USB key, I printed it all and placed it in a 3-ring binder and have worked with it ever since. I know that the instructions were to read it through as an overview first, and then to come back and

read/work through it slowly…a paragraph at a time. Things had changed in my 'life situation' and given the gift of more time during the day, the second approach seemed to speak to me more. Diligently working with it over the next 8 months, I then took 2 months to reflect on what my heart had absorbed and to review 'flagged' pages where a question or confusion had arisen. Synergistically I found solace in listening to the Satsang recordings at night (I would listen through 5 -10 at night before falling asleep to it; or stopping after reflecting on a 'good point' or witnessing a reaction that I was having to a question or the 'drifting' of the group. And because I am an early riser, I would often listen to a number of Satsangs in the morning or abide in the silence, before the rest of the household awoke. I would stop when my cat, my guru of stillness/joy and presence in the moment, would sit triumphantly on top of the open pages…as if to say 'Enough, now it's my turn!'

My question is:

Where I am now, a depth of peace has been added to the compassion and stillness that were already there (must have been work done before). A reverence for all life and a oneness with it has been second-nature to me. Periods of 'mindlessness' are extensive and contiguous—these were present before but not with the clarity of no-thing-ness that pervades the experience now. Having died to the world, or it for me…laughing at the 'things' that used to have a grip or hook for me has come swiftly, with clarity. Much has fallen away. But the landscape is awash in "neutrality"…not joy or endless bliss. Don't misunderstand though—I do experience ephemeral glimpses that bring tears to my eyes and warmth to my heart….but they are fleeting. I emerged to this landscape over a calendar year ago through an experience that you described where you were wrapped in this 'orgasmic' rapture…for me it lasted about 2 weeks until I was able to go more adeptly 'into' the feeling and it instantly dissipated. I have patiently awaited growth or evolvement or an unfolding…but all is still neutrality.

Here, I need to add just one more past experience, that is relevant. When Robert speaks of the joy that is beyond what anyone can imagine…I understand. I have to take less on faith than most. In my youth I was blessed with a glimpse…or a reminder, depending on your perspective. Regardless of the circumstances that led to it, I experienced death….many minutes within a hospital ER…to the point that 'it was a risk' to bring me back. There were many experiences buried within this event but the concise version would be that after emerging through the final defiant/resistant act of the mind-body…there I was above it all…witnessing the entire event…without a 'care in the world'. Language will never express this, but I felt as if a mantle weighing 10+ tons had cracked and fallen off my shoulders…all fear was gone…there was only this enveloping warmth…golden/sparkling/myriads of crystalline light…oneness without distinction…everything was love…everything was joy…all a continuum. There was brilliant clarity there. The experience left me full of laughter, joy and transparency for at least 2 years (very unnerving for nursing/therapist/docs who were administering painful therapy)…and it erased all fear of death for me. Finding my way 'back there' and surrendering my life to 'thy will' has been the journey to date. Suffice it to say, the world won me back over time…wearing me down, when I could not find a path back…or a master….or a guide …in the rural settings of my youth. I conformed to the world, moved on, but remained changed. There are times when 'all is well' is a **knowing** because there is a resonance to this experience and there is a flash of clarity or understanding that comes with it.

Now, awash in neutrality, looking for 'thy will be done' to find me--- a path forward…within the world…but not of the world—compatible with beingness. I work on trusting in spontaneity and only ask for the strength, wisdom, clarity and courage to do what will be asked. In spite of massive changes and challenges within my 'life situation', there is peace and stillness but not this boundless joy and bliss. Although already realized, as we all are, appearing to be adrift in my ability to awaken to the true Self.

Any insight or guidance?

Namaste, Master Ed----gratefully yours, J.

Response withheld pending further info from J.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 11:58 PM

10 January 2010

Hi Ed Good morning. This is S. from Coimbatore, India.

As I have mailed you earlier, reading through Robert's satsangh transcripts is as good as doing Enquiry or dhyana.

I can compare this with what Ramana used to say about Ribhu Gita (reading Ribhu gita is as good as being in Samadhi)...

And, just thought will check with you on few things related to the sadhana.

1. Generally those who follow the path of Raja Yoga / Kriya Yoga don't talk/accept about the Spiritual Heart / emergence of 'I' from the heart on the right side of the chest, as mentioned by Ramana & Robert. They only stress about Sahasrara chakra as the seat of samadhi experience.

Though this is something we can check by our experience & practice, I would be eager to know how Robert viewed this, particularly when he was with Paramahamsa Yogananda in his earlier days before he came to Ramana.And, so Robert must have spoken about this difference in the approach of these schools.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Really, Robert only talked about self-inquiry or beginner practices, nothing about Kriya or Raja yoga. He had a disagreement with Yogananda about all the Kriya techniques saying they were irrelevant. Yogananda then told him to go to India to Ramana. Robert said Yogananda could hardly wait to get rid of him.*
>
> *Robert and Ramana are quite clear though that the spiritual heart does not exist. It is a fantasy just as is the world. Not real. But beginners often need an imaginary focus point, and that's what they gave. As long as people feel they are bodies, it helps to have this imaginary focus point. When your awakening happens, yoy'll see that it is not real, just as the body, world and mind are not real.*
>
> *So, could you please tell me about how Robert viewed this as the Yogi's do attain the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. I also remember reading Ramana where he used to say that Nirvikalpa Samadhi is not a necessery stage before realization.*
>
> *It is not necessary. It is only a temporary experience in consciousness. Only the permanent is important, and nothing in consciousness is permanent.*
>
> *2. Also, not all those who follow the path of Vichara go thro the experience of Heart. Like, Nisargadatta say that he never had the experience with Spiritual heart. So, is that something dependent on individual's practice? Has Robert said anything about experience in the spiritual heart as something that need not happen with everyone?*
>
> *Just as I said above, the heart center is only imaginary as is the body and mind. However, many people experience heart center experiences that motivate them to go deeper. Ultimately though, not even the body exists as we imagine it, let alone the various chakras. You want to go beyond these concepts as opposed to focusing on them, which makes them more "real."*
>
> *If you "see" the world in a new way, devoid of the min's shaping, it is a wonderful and mysterious experience of oneness without center or objects. However, you do need the mindscreen back in order to function as an imaginary entity within the imaginary world.*
>
> *By imaginary, I mean the mind enforces patterns on the formless, and as such it has a practical reality for purposes of functioning. That is what the mind is, a survival tool.*
>
> *But the world perceived without interpretation is a dancing oneness of mixtures of seeing, hearing and tactile senses without easily recognized forms or reason. Mind imposes patterns which allows the body to survive.*
>
> *Ultimately though, the only REAL is beyond consciousness altogether, beyond the dancing oneness world, the mind, the heart or even consciousness itself.*
>
> *Thanks in advance for your reply.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 1:23 PM

SENT TO ME:

Although I've read some religious texts and mythology, I've eschewed 'gathering signposts' or adding 'volumes to

my arrogance…ignorance' as Robert would say—this is one of his statements that resonated with me and made me laugh. So, I could never be a credible teacher in this area…and, alas, I cannot teach what I do not know. So, I'll do my best to answer the questions you have…but I do not possess the 'lingo'…and when I try to express any of this in words….I literally feel as if I've fallen off the world with no point of reference.

I have no formal training in meditation other than I've always been comfortable in silence and stillness; at the side of a babbling brook or alone; I never understood why folks would be un-nerved by it and felt they had to 'fill the air-waves' with chatter, loud music or drinking.

Currently, I do not attribute my 'state of neutrality' to working with this text---it came over time as I let things go, as I accepted 'what is' and persevered to remain in the moment.

The text I've been working with is The Collected Works of Robert Adams (967pdf). The transcripts of all his Satsangs with you, and others. Later, when I began to listen to the audio recordings….I hear your voice from time to time, and you have a wonderful, heartening laugh.

As I worked my way through this text over 8 months, I was not able to read it quickly to gain an overview. It pulled me in, and it seemed irreverent to move so quickly…so, I slowed down. .. a great deal. The pace varied by the degree of 'resonance' I felt with the particular transcript/or written session. I stayed with the printed transcript alone, for the first 6 months…because I am more of a visual learner; verbal learning only reinforces the topic or opens it for my heart to grab onto it in a different way…to see/know it at another level…or to see another facet.

As for my practice and what inner state it yields—I'll do my best to describe.
I wake quickly. I practiced watching for the gap. Shortly I was able to awaken without mindedness or thoughts and I would repeat a few 'I, Am' breaths and then just dwell in the stillness that arose. It is peaceful, quiet with a hint of warmth/welcoming. It is devoid of all else. Depending upon how early I awoke, I would remain in this state for 1-2 hours, or until my kitty-guru would fetch me. Through breakfast—I would remain in this state while being present with my feline guru and celebrating the morning. Once chores were accomplished, I would pick up reading the text where I left off the previous day. I spent every day, 1-4 hours working with the text. I would read a paragraph, reflect…absorb. The stillness would carry throughout the day.

In the evening, I would repeat the 'I, Am' breaths a few times, enter the same peaceful state and stay there for an hour or so. I would then retire, and as I did so, I would reflect/recite…the 4 principles of self-realization of noble wisdom. I am not a creature of habit, actually I love variety (not a rut) and so this was not a mechanical recitation. I worked to find the words…then to cast away the language for a a knowing as my heart would absorb or embrace something to the 'core'. Once I felt this, I would change it to reflecting on something that had seem foreign to me…something that I had gained intellectually from the text but did not have a 'knowing' of within my heart…or this 'I am-ness'. Over time, as programs/concepts/attachments became recognized…and then fell away with mental/emotional detachment from witnessing…the "I am-ness' moved to an experience with the same presence or feeling….but to something no longer named…just pointed to. It moved from the 'neti, neti'…what I am not….to 'out beyond all that I know…sense…feel…any concept….I am THAT." No labeling….no images…no concepts…no mind.

Once I completed this review of the text, I would look over certain areas I had marked and reflect upon them. If there were a 'reaction' to the dialog or question from a devotee, I would probe the reaction through self-inquiry…looking for the root. I then began to retire with listening to Satsang audible sessions on my ipod. Often 5 – 30 a night, depending on wakefulness. I repeat the sessions, let's say July 1992 for 3-4 nights. At this point, when I can nearly repeat it…or anticipate it, I then move onto the next month/set of recordings. Even when I listen to the same talks repetitively, I never start in the same place or with the same talk. I keep mashing or mixing it up.

I do this every day ---I abide in the principles, I-am-ness, stillness nearly throughout the day. It takes an exceptional event to react/pull me out of this state. Even in these exceptional circumstances, there was a stillness and clarity from which came the right action….however, if there were gripping emotions that I experienced…or went into…and then witnessed ' to whom do these come….they come to me…who is this little me…this I that has these emotions…what is the Source this I?" Never answering any of these …reflecting in stillness….it dissipates the emotion. Sometimes I would take the path of self-inquiry, sometimes I would go into the feeling…dive deep into it… to feel every iota of it; this type of 'diving' usually only was needed once….then witnessing, self-inquiry…shining that light on it …evaporated it instantly.

There are no labels…polarities…when everything is awash in this neutrality. There is no thing…no sound…no images…no geometrical shapes…nothing comes to senses or mind. Nothing that anyone else describes or experiences, at least that I've read to date (I don't go looking for these, but run across them in reading). For lack of a better analogy, it's like a cool, foggy, overcast day….beautiful, still and peaceful in its own right; but not the brilliant, sunny, sparkling aliveness of a sunny day with dazzling warmth and vitality. It's peaceful and

still but without the pervading bliss, joy, warmth and enveloping love that I felt the oneness with in my death experience.

Now after leaving the text alone – I am reviewing the passages that I marked…approximately 60'ish that I want to reflect on and ensure that they are heart-felt and not an intellectual learning or concept.

When I'm not working in my career, I fill the background with either silence or devotional music. I had an extensive library of Gregorian chant that I've now complimented with your recommendations (Shankarananda, Muktananda, et cetera). I do not know the words…which keeps my mind out of it…I just allow my Self to BE the music….or to appreciate/attentively listen to the artistry without interpretation.

My final comment, is that I have experienced a different 'I am-ness'…than all of what I've described. I had attended a silent group that gets together around the work of Lester Levenson. The only verbal communication is a showing of a video or audio session from one of his Sedona retreats/teachings. The material was not new to me…but I did experience a higher energy level. Maybe 20 minutes into the silence I was moved to turn my ipod to a particular song and to just let it repeat. The experience made me feel as if the music lifted me to a higher plane…where I was 'in' the music and visualizing the masters that have been important to me….and me with them. The silent period lasted for about an hour (I'm told) but I was oblivious. I came back about ½ hour after everyone had left…having missed all of the chatting as everyone departed. I was so energized by the experience---it had left me feeling as though I was the center of a brilliant, whirling galaxy. Everything seemed different…amplified…but the feeling was enveloping….safe…positive….welcoming…brilliant. It was still no where near the magnitude of my previous experience, but it was beyond the 'zone of neutrality' in a way. I know I had to walk to my car…but I wasn't….it was happening…but it wasn't the focus…I was still enveloped in the experience. But there was a side-effect. I had no awareness of it, until I went to answer the host's question…."we didn't disturb you, but WHERE were YOU?" I went to answer but physically couldn't answer, I couldn't speak. I could hear…although distantly…what I would have said in reply …but I couldn't form the words…. I waved him off…pointed to my watch (pure improvisation) and bustled off. I had to change my plans for the day. I texted changes to folks on my phone and then headed for a quiet place of tall redwoods where I could sit undisturbed. I went back into the experience, but it was not as deep. I totally lost track of time. 6 Hours later I realized it was getting dark and I was cold. When I arrived home, I could speak but with brevity… but it was like I was somewhere else. My guests thought I was toying with them for the evening…but it was all I could muster. The situation required that I contribute to the conversation that evening, but it was mostly through presence and listening. It's been 2 years since this experience and I've not experienced anything like it's depth or side-effect since. I don't know if it is relevant—but…there it is. The experience did make me cautious about where/when I sought this depth.

I hope this helps—I'm not sure if I've elucidated my inner state but I have provided some construct to the practice. I'm still a 'working stiff' myself….but I've found that if I start and end the waking day with 'practice'….it carries me through most of the rest. It helps to set the framework for my 'waking day' and keeps me grounded or centered on what's most important to me.

Thank you for reading it---I will endeavor to answer any questions and will gratefully accept any guidance or insight you can provide.

Grateful that you are here for the rest of us,

> ***RESPONSE***
>
> *I listen and hear you are practicing almost perfectly, and you are going into a state beyond consciousness, or at least beyond waking and sleep consciousness. But are you aware that the waking and sleep states come to you, are added to you and do not touch you?*
>
> *I hear despite these profound states you are looking to recreate permanently an experience that lasted about two years after your near death, and the failure to recreate the intensity of that experience is the cause now of a degree of unhappiness. It is possible that the desiring-anticipation of that state recurring is a subtle sabotage.*
>
> *Robert used to say a time comes when the bliss is no longer wanted or needed, that the silence gives everything. And it sounds like you have entered Turiya and can abide there with regularity.*

Are you happy now or are you waiting for something else?

Think about this for a while before answering.

For a more blissful experiences, the body has to be energized somewhat. I don't know the state of your physical body now, but perhaps some exercise.

Also, I would avoid doing anything except self-inquiry: isolating the feeling 'I am' and plunging into it. Forget thoughts and feelings. They are not important. Don't do the I am breathing exercise for a while, nor reading Robert's talks. Just focus on I Am. Fall back into it; watch it; become it; play with it as you were doing.

Then tell me what happens. I am very interested.

You have nothing to fear. You are like a golf ball rolling around the hole before dropping in. I don't know you well enough yet to say other than what I have.

You are doing everything right, just keep going with the above adjustments

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:12 AM

11 January 2010

Edward,

I have been practicing Kriya for the past 8 years and I discovered your itisnotreal.com website about a month ago. I have concluded that the material on your website along with your suggested reading has began to utterly change “me”. The one thing that I have been primarily missing in my spiritual endeavor is strenuous self analysis. I have spent a long long time meditating and sitting in “stillness” which in itself has had a profound effect on my being. But the ability to be in that stillness and contemplate on “I am” or “what am I”…etc has literally blown my little world apart. My Guru has always said that the most important question we can ask is who am I? But for some reason, I never really held on to this question and gave it a lot of thought until I discovered your site.

I read Prior to Consciousness in a matter of days (I know, way way way to quickly) but I found that my intuition just soaked it up as quickly as I could read it. Every morning now when I wake up I discover that I am different than I was the day before in a very profound way. Things simply are not bothering me any longer. I have stopped having the need to argue with anyone. I can be completing the most mundane tasks or talking about the most boring of subjects and have the same level of engagement as I would with anything else.

The world sparkles with unbelievable freshness. I think that Kriya has helped me greatly in bringing my mind under control, and made self introspection much more powerful. I am literally astounded minute to minute at the simplicity and lightness of everything.

I thought it appropriate to at least give you a heartfelt thank you. It is time for me to slow down and read less and “practice” more.

Sincerely
Caleb

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 5:08 PM

12 January 2010

EMAIL:

Hi Ed Many thanks for the reply.

In fact, I had felt the spiritual heart on right side only when i started the practice of Enquiry years back. Since then, I don't have that experience, though before waking up from sleep, there is that clarity of awareness as Robert always pointed out...

And, as Robert said, that awareness seem to extend for longer duration over a period of time.

We find that the yogis/saintly people who taught techniques like Kriya yoga (say Yogananda or Lahiri Mahasaya) also seem to be realized one's. But at the same time, their teaching contradict what Robert or Ramana used to advocate.

Did Robert ever commented about such Kriya practices as to whether they themselves can take one to Enlightenment as Vichara / Enquiry does?

Love,

S.

> ***RESPONSE***
>
> *Robert said they cannot.*
>
> *The practices are within consciousness. Robert, Ramana and Nisargadatta want you to go beyond consciousness.*
>
> *You can only do that by an activity that is entirely consistent with your true nature, which is just being. Focused activity of meditating on the I Am, becomes just being I Am with complete happiness, peace and contentment.*
>
> *Any activity directed outwards, even on a symbol or mantra, is very indirect. As with Rajiv, such practices can lead to a point where you see all the outward practice are pointless and you decide just to watch consciousness, or seek He/She who you are. So why not start with the end practice, and your object of meditation is your sense of beingness, I Am, as opposed to anything else like breathing exercises?*
>
> *Take the shortcut*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 12:23 PM

13 January 2010

SENT TO ME:

Hello Ed,

I feel depressed, I cannot find an escape to it. I'm not sure going deeper can help me, or I don't know how to do it.

I'm not even able to work.

J.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *The answer for depression is not meditation, but medication.*
>
> *I know these things as I have functioned as a psychologist for over 20 years and a teacher of Zen and meditation for over 30 years.*
>
> *Depression can be chemical in nature and it can be a thought process. Actually, they are closely related. You would not meditate on food to cure hunger, you would eat. Similarly, medication can ameliorate the chemical depression.*
>
> *Go to a doctor and get an antidepressant, such as Celexa or Lexapro, or some of the newer ones which are more costly. Then, after the depression lifts, reengage in self-inquiry.*
>
> *Anyway, keep me informed.*
>
> *Lots of spiritual people will offer their method instead of self-inquiry or medication, but if the depression persists despite self-inquiry, try medication.*

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

dear J,

The sensation or feeling or state that you are calling depression will change, you can be absolutely sure of that! Take comfort in that fact.
What action/medication or whatever you choose to do in that moment will be whatever you deemed as fit....take comfort in that!
You are love dear J....and as the first poster said..hang it there!
And for this moment being shared..a big hug (())

January 14, 2010
Anonymous said...

I wish not acquiesce in on it. I regard as nice post. Specially the appellation attracted me to read the whole story.

January 14, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Depression is a very complicated subject, far too complicated to be explained in a few words.*
>
> *Let's just say mood disorders can be chemical or thought caused, and can be triggered by events, such as a loss, or endogenous, which means there is no external trigger.*
>
> *Some people think spiritual practices can fix depression. Sometimes they can, and sometimes not. Not all mental disorders can be fixed by talk psychotherapy or practices, just as cancer and many organic disorders can't be fixed by talking therapy or meditation.*
>
> *For some reason though, lots of spiritual people believe the mind can cause and cure anything. They are wrong. Mind is relatively superficial compared to the gross body and also compared to pre-conscious beingness.*
>
> *I have written a book on how lots of spiritual people try to use spiritual techniques to escape mental problems. It is in the psychoanalysis section of the website: http://itisnotreal.com. It does not work*

> *well for that purpose. It can work for a short time, but a good many mental disorders, such as anxiety or most depressive mood disorders are best treated with medication and then some technique, such as talk therapy or meditation.*
>
> *Other disorders are harder to cure by any means: schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorders, manic depression and personality disorders.*
>
> *There are lots of professional "spiritual" people out there who will try to sell you their techniques for fixing depression, etc., which may or may not work--but likely not.*
>
> *But medication is very fast, and if the depression is primarily a medical condition, it will begin to resolve in a week or two, and can completely resolve in two or three months to six months. Sometimes you have to try various medication protocols. I am astounded though by the number of spiritual people who fear medications and think they can power out of the depression by some sort of technique.*
>
> *After the mood disorder remits somewhat using medication, then you can do real self-inquiry as opposed to using self-inquiry to avoid depression.*
>
> *Now you posed the question in terms of a hypothetical clinical depression and an "existential" depression. These are not the proper framework for understanding how to get out of a depression. You get out by proper actions.*

January 14, 2010
Anonymous said...

"For some reason though, lots of spiritual people believe the mind can cause and cure anything. They are wrong. Mind is relatively superficial compared to the gross body and also compared to pre-conscious beingness."

"1. Mind is everything. Nothing exists but mind. Mind creates everything, from the atom to the cosmos, from a blade of grass to a grain of sand, from an elephant to a flower and the scent of the flower. Your feelings, objects you see, your body, your aches and pains are all mind stuff. Everything is mind; everything!"

Why shouldn't a perfectly empty mind (including also the unconscious part of it) be able to reflect perfection in every way possible, most likely through bodily health and well being?

January 15, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Seung Sahn Soen Sa died of diabetes complications. Mayzumae Roshi died of a heart attack. Robert died from liver cancer. Ramana Maharshi died of melanoma cancer. Nisragdatta died of throat cancer. Jean Dunn died of emphasema. Thich Tien Ahn died of brain cancer.*
>
> *They all died due to diseases of the body. What YOU are has nothing to do with the body or mind.*
>
> *The physical body has nothing to do with YOU.*

January 15, 2010
Anonymous said...

"The physical body has nothing to do with YOU."

Absolutely, thank you for the reminder!

Just a question for clarification:

Everyone speaks of sat chit ananda these days as the ultimate. Robert and you on the other hand seem/seemed to be and eminate this profound peace. Is that peace the absolute of which Nisargadatta talked about? The "foundation" for Knowledge - and in its course Ignorance - to happen? The Parabrahman or Peace that passeth all understanding?

January 15, 2010

Anonymous said...

You are absolutely right that spiritual practices can't just magically transform people and lift them out of depression or other mental illness. I have met a number of people who meditated or practiced self-inquiry or other sadhana for years but were depressed. Sometimes spiritual practice will help. Other times, it won't and can even intensify mental and emotional problems in some. Medication definitely helps a lot of people, though not everyone.

For about 15 years, my sister, a beautiful and spiritual person, was routinely hospitalized for a mental health disorder. Then, she was finally prescribed the right medication, at the right dosage, and she was never hospitalized again and lived a normal, productive life.

There is still a lot of stigma associated with mental health disorders. Stigma is one of the reasons it took my sister so long to get effective treatment. I think it's important that people don't assume that someone who is mentally ill is somehow deficient if he or she can't escape the illness through spiritual practice. Even the most spiritually inclined people can be affected by mental disorders, and it is not a sign of weakness to seek help through traditional channels like medication and psychotherapy.

January 15, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *The absolute is beyond experience, but the experience of one who knows their true nature is happiness and peace.*
>
> *Right now I estimate that every third person in the world is claiming to be a nondual teacher of some sort, but I have no idea what their internal state is like.*
>
> *If you set the bar low enough, anyone can be a guru.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 10 comments Links to this post at 11:21 AM

20 January 2010

> *Rajiv's great progress: the state of waking sleep, Turiya.*

RAJIV:

Master before I get engrossed in reading the dialogues I would just like to share a few things in the past few sessions of dhyaan and waking state.

When I kept myself totally aside in today's dhyaan I was watching the tremendous effort which consciousness was making, BUT there was no ME. I was allowing consciousness to do what it likes on its own. I then realized that I am NEVER in control of what happens in life or in the session too and that all that what happens is none of my concern. It is consciousness ' play and it has its own intelligence working. Now that intelligence may not be according to how I perceive my session should go or life should go. I let go of every will or desire and decided to just be. I may or may not have watched the proceedings.

I remember after my session was over that it was haphazard, all over the place to start with. It made no sense, no direction but it was the way consciousness decided. I was no party to it. I was only resting letting it do what it wants. The ways of Consciousness makes no sense, no direction, and no method. It was like chaos, total chaos. I control nothing for I am very clear on my position. I have no will. It felt stupid that I didn't wish to do anything at all. I was too busy resting I thought let it do what it wants. After the session was over I only remember that 2 hours had gone like in a minute, it is most NATURAL state to be without will. I recollect a few experiences like sinking taking place, the vast emptiness void, a deep silence, movement ahead into the void

ahead inside, no idea when they appeared or disappeared or how long they lasted because the mind was off, drugged or you can say in a dull sleepy nothingness.

The sinking happened on its own. I got swallowed at a tremendous speed. A tremendous stillness and empty void was experienced beyond experience. It was like the body/mind/consciousness machine switched off after the chaos and turbulence.

They will seem to be an imposition on you. You will realize it makes no sense to fight an enemy, which doesn't exist. It is like a dark room can only give an illusion of ghosts but you know they don't exist. You don't keep the lights on fearing them or start thinking how to tackle them. The thought of them leaves on its own as you go into slumber. They die their natural death. Similarly all thought and play of consciousness have an agenda, they appear and disappear just let them be. They are just pre-recorded tapes, which keep going on and off. That consciousness has a will to make an effort and involves your body and mind but you have NONE. I discovered I was BEYOND WILL and so beyond Effort.

It is consciousness, which plays around with characters and events, and none of this is my doing. I don't create situations nor am I related to it in any way. It makes no difference what consciousness would do for it is not related to me. It only seems like that. Consciousness has nothing personal too it just operates, as it desires with no fixed pattern.

Many of this makes no sense at all. To find sense of what consciousness does is to create a reality out of it and to disturb its workings. All this is just a fraud probably. And to involve us in any of this is to make unreal totally real. To use any will is to make unreal real? Consciousness on its own works and we have nothing to do with any of it.

We have nothing to create, nothing to seek, nothing to destroy, nothing to do with anything around. Consciousness works through the intelligence of the body and mind; we don't have to even watch it. We can perfectly sleep, do nothing and yet consciousness will work with our bodies. We are dead already in a way. The bliss is no criteria, the happiness, joy, peace itself are no criteria, yet it is there in abundance without my asking. I ask nothing. I may or may not be a source of anything. I may or may not have created all this. Having seen through this play of consciousness, I only exist without any apparent will. I am only resting. All that there is, is silence, and all that I am doing is resting. Just resting Master. I AM SIMPLY RESTING ALL THE TIME.

That resting is an experience in meditation when the entire mechanism of consciousness breaks down slows down and eventually stops. Before that they operate at full speed asking you to be party to it. And when you allow them to operate with their own intelligence using no will but just being, it stops and then there is the sweet nothingness and emptiness, the marvelous state of Natural silence.

Master what freedom you have given me is beyond all descriptions and words. Everything fails to qualify what you have bestowed on me.

I bow,
Rajiv
Ed:

> *Yes Rajiv, now you have arrived.*

RAJIV:

:-)
This time Master I somehow knew.
It is an ultimate sense of freedom from everything, from thought, from consciousness, from will and from effort. There is nothing to do but rest and whatever happens is simply not my concern.
Ah Master your Grace made all this possible. Ah if only others can realize that the words of the Satguru is enough, nothing else is needed. Surrender does not mean blind faith, it means forsaking everything for His words, where nothing matters except those words.
Master I bow at your feet a million times
Rajiv
(A few days later)
RAJIV:

Master just got out of dhyaan, again nearly 2 hours gone without "knowing" how. In fact, I couldn't hear the doorbell of my milk man too. So I was surprised how I missed the bell.

There is nothing much to write in terms of "experiences" because the only feeling I was having was that I was aware the whole session. At least that is what I felt. There was nothing more to it.

But obviously I lost conciousness and went into deep sleep because I could not hear the door bells. What is strange was the feeling that I was aware of time and every proceeding happening in dhyaan. In between I was in astral dream plane too but that was all happening on the surface and I noticed very little of them. ME as a background is ever resting.

The little that I could "experience" of that background state was brief periods of intense joy, INTENSE cold thrill happening to my entire beingness and beyond and so nothing much in terms of experience.

All in all nothing was actually happening for whatever that was happening was not happening to ME and so not much attention was taking place to the surface of experiences. The prominent experience I felt was that a feeling that I was always aware and that of a deeper joy and cold thrill taking place in my restful natural state where time too did not touch me. I remembered the experience of cold thrill too as a memory.

> *Edji:*
>
> *This is your true state, beyond everything. You are becoming nothing! This restful state is called waking sleep, Turiya, and will only deepen and mature my dear Rajiv. You are beginning to apprehend your true resting nature.*

RAJIV:

Believe me the only thing I did was never to deviate from your instructions. I believe your words have tremendous transmission powers if only one surrenders fully. Without doubt that was my only plus point. Never did a doubt rise in my mind even once. I sailed through your Grace alone Master.

Master it is my only wish in life now to have your Darshan.

I do not know if you can travel to India or no. There will be no greater pleasure for me than that if you ever come visit us here.

The horse (that is me) who is thirsty for your Darshan will find a way to reach the well soon if it comes to that.

You have quenched my entire thirst and I am sure this too shall be one day soon.

Your servant,

Rajiv

Posted by Ed Muzika 3 comments Links to this post at 11:20 PM

21 January 2010

The Joy Deepens for Rajiv:

Indescribable joy was what I experienced in todays morning dhyaan. Master nothing I write or say can actually describe it. It was like every cell of my body was EXPLODING with joy. There is no way in the world anything can contain such a joy. Every other joy, feeling, pleasure in the past that I have ever experienced FADED in comparison. EVERYTHING that a human being can ever experience or imagine or perceive IS NOTHING as compared to this.

There were periods of nothingness when everything seemed to have stopped like yesterdays dhyaan and then this joy. I have no idea whether I am talking from memory or whether that is my real nature because there is no finger to point. There is no mind to track anything. Again there was awareness yet no idea how so much time passed away.

This time the sinking at the back was in such force that I reached astral too. I felt my physical as well as my astral body BOTH at the same time. I could remain in the two bodies absolutely together. In the subtle astral realm my mind was in full operation but the indescribable joy of causal or beyond CANNOT be tracked, pointed

or traced. It was deeper for me to conclude the origin of the joy except that perhaps the timeless state yielded such a joy.
The stillness and silence during dhyaan tells me "I am wordless and effortless, take refuge here". There is no observer or observed, no witnesser or witnessing, no object, no mind and no time only this RESTFUL JOY which is beyond all and everything.

Ah Master there is nothing to say too.

Pranoms to Guru of all who is making this happen, My Satguru Master Ed.

Rajiv

> *NOTE TO READERS:*
>
> *This is what real awakening is like, not the watered down descriptions given by neo-advaitins who do not recommend constant practice and self abidance.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 8:23 PM

23 January 2010

Dearest Ed,

thank You very much for your blog! all happens by itself; this is now clearer: every thought, decision, action happens without my involvment; it is like everything else in the field of perception: appens by itself, is not chosen by me. In a similar way, it is only identification with body-mind that gives one impression to decide, act and think, but it is not so...
In sitting practice is the same: I do nothing and everything happens by its own; many strong energy movements (kundalini) or thoughts, insights etc. but now I am not involved.
All this has nothing to do with me: the insight that all universe and 'my' body, all perceptions are apart and different from me is clearer: sometime there is unity, sometime no, but all this is Shakti, is not separate from me, but in a way is only manifestation and I am beyond every manifestation.
No experience can change me, or define me, neither joy nor sorrow, everythin is contaneid in me, I am the universe and beyond it. This is not stable, but is clearer.
Beyond what I perceive now there is 'nothing' this is what I am; sometime people and things are made of awareness, but they are only a vision, a perception, and I am beyond. For example You now exist as a thought and image perceveid and nothing else.
Not a feeling of gratitude to You,
Wuld You like to comment?
with gratitude,
L.

> *My comment is that you are entirely correct. You understanding is 100% correct.*
>
> *You just have to stay there and live it to make it yours 100% in every minute of day and night.*
>
> *Ed*

Dearest Ed,

Thank You so much!

This morning in sitting practice, resting without doing nothing,initially there were many thoughts, then energy, etc... but at the same time began a spontaneus movement of attention towards itself, like settling in itself and insights came: all problems come with identification with the world of perception, when one loses interest in

perception universe, then one begins to rest in ones real nature, in itself. Then gradually something deeper, a silence beyond any perception, emerged and began to settle... The miracle seems this losing interest in the world of perception because nothing in it could give me what I am.

This shift from perception to something (silence) beyond it continued all the session: when there is this silence the perceptions are there but are secondary, like in surface;

Counsciousness is my surface, but in the depth I am silence, beyond it: this is true not only in sitting practice, but ever; but until now I was like ipnotized by surface (counsciousness) not noting the depth of myself (silence beyond counsciousness).

What do You think about it?

Homage to You, You are not a thought or image, You are the Reality Itself that I am...

Everyone and everything is this Reality beyond perception...

With love and gratitude,

L.

> *There is really nothing to say except your understanding is perfect. Just stay where you are. The perfection will settle more and spread to all aspects of your being.*

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 12:13 PM

To Me:

Glad I can help.. [with a donation]

I have two rescued cats who are love incarnate! So I very much appreciate what you do...especially the help you are offering with your blog.

On the inquiry side of things...do you plan to hold Satsang in person? I'm really feeling the pull to be in that sort of setting...I'm tired of all the concepts and philosophy...they can be enjoyable, but it just seems like game playing. And the so called 'neo advaitists' all stop at 'beingness'...they say to just realize that "I Am" is a thought and that you are prior to thoughts...well...from what I gather, that is NOT what Nisargadatta was teaching. I have been reading the Nisargadatta Gita and the Jean Dunn books like you instructed...and it seems to me that he was saying even the thoughtless sense of presence is false...that the sense not the thought I Am has to go..is this correct?

Thanks again for all your generosity in these matters.

N.

> *Yes N.*
>
> *You certainly are before the I thought, but you also are before the I AM feeling, and even before consciousness itself! The I Am thought and I Am feeling are different, although often when the whole structure of thought breaks down and is seen through, the sense of presence, or I Am disappears leaving a sense of emptiness. But the sense of presence always returns. It is this sense of presence, or the I Am that has to be seen through, and the root consciousness of Turiya, the unchanging has to be experienced. Then you see that all states of human consciousness are merely added onto you.*
>
> *You have to go to the core of being, the Turiya state, which is the source of all consciousness states.*

Just keep reading the Nisargadatta Gita as a meditation manual first thing in the morning. Reflect on it. Keep me informed.

Thanks again,

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 4:34 PM

Sent to me:

I really enjoyed reading about Jimmy and his battle with the railroad; you asking Mary Cummins for help, Mary making the discovery about the land. I hope it works out for Jimmy and the cats.

Thanks for maintaining the itsnotreal site, and for the tapes and the recent pdf of the dialogues between you and Rajiv. Immensely helpful.

I felt I was making great progress but recently got hit with an illness, anchoring me firmly to the illusion. All mapped out, nothing to worry about. The Robert story that springs to mind is the one about the Monk who says after learning he has to reincarnate as many times as there are leaves on a tree and says 'Thank you lord, just one tree!' Luv it.

All the best mate,

A.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 4:43 PM

26 January 2010

Hello Sir,

I have wanted to e-mail you many times, but something has kept me from doing so until now. I wish to update you on my state, but before I do, I want to thank you for your efforts to help seekers find the truth. It is of immeasurable help to be presented with the quality resources that you share on your blog and your site, thank you for your help!

Since reading the Gita and practicing I feel I have come to a better understanding of what the 'I Am' is and have begun the process of trying to stabilize and identify with it. I have inquired into the 'I' thought and conceptually understand that there is no 'I' to whom the world or thoughts appear, however I have yet to have a direct experience of it's fraudulence, and will continue my inquiry until I discover who this 'I' really is, or rather is not. In other words, the world still appears real to me, but I conceptually understand it's transience and thus unreality. I suppose this also means I have not come to the full understanding that I am not the doer.

I hear the silence now, Sir. I understand what people mean by it's 'ringing' or 'humming'. It's always been there.

During meditation I see an amorphous purple shape the seems to ebb and flow as I relax more and more, until my perception seems to pass through it and everything becomes like purple space, which then eventually fades away. I still sense the body, and witness thoughts while this is occurring. What do you make of this state, Sir? It comes unwillingly, but occurs each time I go into meditation. I know it should be ignored as unreal as all things in consciousness are, but I am just curious since it is reoccurring during each sitting.

On a couple of occasions I have felt as if I am going to sleep but still witness thoughts. I am not sure if this is me falling alseep, and because I am focusing on my 'Amness' that I witness thoughts longer before I actually fall asleep, or this state is a more pure experience of 'Amness'. It has come when I haven't really intended to meditate, but just relax. For instance when I lay outside in the Sun sometimes I doze off, but on a couple of occasions a state like I just described has occurred since beginning to practice.

There have also been periods where I feel pressure in my third eye area. Like someone is pushing their finger on my forehead. This sensation has generally come about outside of meditation, but while in silence. One night there was an experience of it before sleep, and it returned the next morning for awhile before I went to work, unwillingly.

I know that this experience, as well as all others are within consciousness, and thus not bringing me any closer to the truth, but this is what I am experiencing since starting my practice.

Also, I am losing interest in my friends and the world. It is happening slowly, but noticeably. I just feel like I do not relate to my friends very much anymore. I am 23 and, like you, graduated with a Philosophy Degree. Most of my current friends only care about partying and dating, while even my smallest ambitions seem to be waning. I used to be driven to be someone or do something - to make a difference, but it seems rather pointless now. If anything I see thoughts of going into the Peace Core, or an NPO, or NGO to help others. Or going to a place like Mt. Baldy and being with Myself in a disciplined and focused setting.

I have almost cut meat entirely from my diet. I used to eat meat daily, but have only eaten it on two occasions since beginning my practice. I love my cats and all other animals equally and the thought of eating another sentient being disturbs me more and more as I progress.

I was wondering, do you know of anyone who holds Satsang in the Phoenix area? I live in Tempe, and am completely unfamiliar. I know that you are well connected in the spiritual world and that your Mother lives in Phoenix (I hope she is doing well), this is why I ask. If not I will seek one out on my own.

Sir, my life has changed forever. The seed has been planted.
Once again thank you very much for your help. I am sorry if this got to be a bit long.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Seeing a purple shape is good. It means you do not just see darkness. You have some inner light sense. This is associated with the third eye sensations you are having. That is, you are beginning to see inner space, or that which I call the imaginal space.*
>
> *All the world is just a construct in imaginal space. It is a network of conceptualized objects thrown over an undifferentiated oneness underneath the world we appear to see. This shape should eventually give way to an inner "light" that spreads everywhere that you perceive anything. However, this still is not you. It is refined consciousness.*
>
> *Yes, when the inner world begins to draw you in, you do lose interest in friends, family, etc. This is very good. However, since you are so young, there will always be a strong draw for you to participate in the world.*
>
> *However, just doing an activity such as the Peace Corp or helping the world in some organization will not help you much either in terms of finding lasting peace or happiness. That comes when you know in your heart of hearts the ground of your being. That brings complete self-confidence and peace, and that is found through internalization of your mind through self-inquiry and self abidance.*
>
> *Yes, once you recognize a deep love for all sentient beings, the realization comes that eating meat was something you did without thinking about where the meat came from. That is the problem in America. People do not see the suffering, screaming of the animals and the killing. When they realize what is really happening, the urge to eat meat immediately stops. There is a pain and guilt that goes away after meat eating stops.*
>
> *I am glad your live has changed completely. You have also seen completely through the mind as an instrument of salvation. You can't use the mind to get before the mind. I assume you wrestled with Kant, Bishop Berkeley, and all the problems of idealism versus realism, and realized even the great*

philosophers were still captured by mind. You are now going deeper than the famous ones that we know about because they wrote and lectured.

Keep up the effort. Keep me informed of your progress.

I know of no one in the Phoenix area, but keep writing and we will meet some day.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 5:11 PM

28 January 2010

A new book is available for free download. It is the complete edited dialogues between Rajiv and I regarding the various states he experienced during meditation on the I Am sense. It is intended as a meditation guide for those who want to actually experience an awakening. For those who have read the earlier dialogues, this book has a new introduction and an additional 80 pages and additional explanations throughout.

Your experiences will not be the same, but they might be similar. In any event, the explanations given are appropriate for broad classes of experiences on the way to awakening. In this book, the experience of Turiya is clearly described, also known as the waking sleep, as well as pitfalls to be avoided, like pausing at an incorrect understanding of consciousness and the Absolute.

Download: http://itisnotreal.com/Autobiography%20of%20a%20Jnani.pdf

This work brings together the two Jnana traditions of Ramana Maharshi/Robert Adams, and Nisargadatta/Ranjit.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 7:35 PM

Dear Ed,

Thank you so much for your reply to me, Your mum, my dad, illness definitely grounds me for sure. I hope now this email reaches you things have resolved themselves Ed. for some reason I didn't expect one and your message has been
sitting in my inbox with lots of the usual stuff for a long time because I took time out from trawling the webgurus and emails and everything whilst I just spent time letting what I had already absorbed sink in and become
comfortable with that. Just this morning it just occurred to me to go to your website and Boom, there's the autobiography waiting for me! I've read a bit but can't understand much, but I feel it, I feel this guy's passion and pain, it feels like me! Ha. So then I check my email box for Ed, and there you are.

I have been meditating now and again and have the same experiences as before but recently I have been seeing/experiencing a chrome/silver sphere/object penetrate through the nothingness and feel the most overpowering bliss, it's almost too much. I'm also getting these energy spasms during the day, they just seem to come and go. It's not painful it just feels like Whoooaaa..... there it is again. Let me be completely honest with you, it happens when I read something, see something or have a small realisation about something that I sort of feel at one with, or somehow I recognize as the truth (whatever that means!)

Ed, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the time and thought that went into your replies to me

Best Wishes

M.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:07 AM

30 January 2010

TO ME:

Dearest Ed,

A couple of weeks ago, you recommended I read and ponder Pradeep's 'Nisargadatta Gita' daily.
It was so profound - and obvious! - that it struck like a lightning bolt. My practice and conviction intensified. The 'light episodes' got more intense and it felt like I was being vacuumed clean from 'above' by a very powerful Dyson!
Initially, I felt elated. "At last ..." I thought, "... this would be the source of unalloyed happiness, joy, bliss!"
Well, that's what thought did!!! The original 'I Am' seemed to 'change' and become all fuzzy. It even split off into 'unreal?' bits??
During these 2 weeks, I appear to have been going through a whole range of 'weirdness.' I'm still 'passing out' every day for hours - and come back (it seems) on the realisation that I haven't been breathing. There's a bit of panic with this and my chest feels crushed empty. I've been boiling hot, freezing cold, my body hurts everywhere - it even feels like there's a wee alien taking footsteps under my skin - and nothing makes any sense anymore. I'm forgetful, confused, can't think straight. I can't talk to anyone either, like I've developed a fear of connecting with people.
It appears I'm literally going to go nuts and/or just burst right open at the seams with the seeming immensity of the 'problem' that I appear to have been 'stuck' on for the last few days (despite intense practice etc.)
There's this total and utter emptiness, desolation, despair, aloneness ... nothingness ... pointlessness.
Disappointment. Anger that I've been 'lied' to ... cheated ... that all this time I've been looking to uncover the bliss of my True Nature ... the God within ... and there's absolutely nothing there.
I'm inquiring as to whom all this comes but just seem to be in the same space. Nowhere. No-one there.
It's like I've died to everything ... even to hope itself.
I would sooooo very much appreciate any direction you can offer Ed in what appears to be a very dark time.
I've been calling out to Robert for help and surrendering all this 'appearance' to him. All I'm aware of is "All is well and everything is unfolding exactly as it should." I'm hanging onto that!!
Love, D.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Your true nature is neither emptiness or fullness. You are beyond both.*
>
> *All these experiences you are having have nothing to do with you; these are happenings in the consciousness you identified yourself with. That emptiness nature is the nature of pure consciousness.*
>
> *The not breathing means your entire being is relaxing and going beyond body identification to nothingness. It happened to me, to Ramana and to Rajiv. Usually the breathlessness is associated with a "heart" location.*
>
> *What is happening to you over days is what happened to me over a few hours. You feel like there is nobody home to watch the farm, so who is in charge? Right?*
>
> *There is absolutely nothing to fear, you are being liberated.*
>
> *Ed*

TO ME:

Thank you so much for your reassurance Ed.
Love D.

TO ME SIX WEEKS LATER:

My present state...?
I am lost for words. I am overcome.
Wide Awake in Awesome Wonder!
There is the firm conviction of my True Nature, beyond all 'states.' Unborn. Pure.
Time stands Still in Silence. I am continually forgetting the 'dream' of 'me' and abiding in Heavenly Peace.
All is the Light.
I became a 'Lamp Unto MySelf' ... Your Light, Grace, and that of the Masters, Illumined The Way ... Perfectly.
There arose a spontaneous 'pull' to return to the hospice, to comfort those in 'darkness,' with the 'awareness' that 'I' do nothing.
In Reverence, Love and Gratitude I bow,
D.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 12:42 PM

31 January 2010

SENT TO ME NOVEMBER 2, 2009:

Hello,
I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being.
There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep. I am not able to understand this state.
I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance.
I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand.....
On what is this knowing resting then?
thank you ....
n.

RESPONSE:

"I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being."

Yes, this is perfect understanding.

" There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep."

Yes, this is how it is usually first seen.

"I am not able to understand this state.
I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance."

All conceptualizations are only philosophy, empty, transitory, illusion. You must learn how to accept knowing nothing.

" I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and

setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand....."

> *Don't you see? What you are is entirely beyond the mind and cannot be captured in words or concepts. There is no need to understand; just be.*
>
> *Every answer would miss the point as all knowledge is about existence, objects, phenomena.*
>
> *What you are is before existence in this universe.*
>
> *You are uncreated, unborn.*
>
> *Ed*

TO ME NOVEMBER 3, 2009:

yes... absolutely ...

i was just getting down to sending you a reply to the first email once again.. :)
The self or whatever it is..is so un-contrived...spontaneous and self sufficient...that is seen in ordinary moments of just simple being. No words needed to be...simply are.
When these various states or experiences occur, there is an attempt to understand it..when the experience itself is not requiring that.. :) it also just is...
and you have so correctly stated..all explanations are only about the state of existence...and therefore the correct answer in all respects is that ..you are unborn...that shuts any more concept building.

Ed..the clarity that these words you have written, also cannot be captured in words...i can only say..thank you!
n.

TO ME TODAY: JANUARY 31, 2010

Dearest Ed,
I thank you for your love that you share so very very graciously. And I know that it is none other than my heart.
Every word expressed here melts into the joy that I am.
When we had communicated earlier, you had said just be.... :) what clarity in that message. Yes, just being is all that I am. Simply love. Every rising, every expression just me. I am in awe of this wonder that dances in all. No experience is looked for, no state is harnessed. The freedom I am is inexpressible. Tears, joy, no joy.... everything subsumed in this that I am. Even fears are welcomed as magical! I need nothing.
What can I say....when every flower silently points back with love and joy.
Ed...thank you for your kindness... :)
love all ways,
n.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 11:44 AM

Hi Ed,

Thank you for the great book. Well told except to understand most of it you have to have already traveled the road as you so clearly stated. I thought you did an excellent job of direction.

I'm glad you brought up your different point of view about reincarnation. I wish you would reveal more about this as I vacillate back and forth between a view like yours and Robert's.

My experience says you are correct but my intuition says my understanding is limited.
Although this concept is also running out of steam, falling into the whatever it will be will be fine view, and I had a lot of steam!!

"The stillness and silence during dhyaan tells me, "I am wordless
and effortless, take refuge here." There is no observer or observed,
no witnesser or witnessing, no object, no mind and no time only
this RESTFUL JOY which is beyond all and everything."

Beautifully said, sounds like Jean Klein.

Best part for me was your photo at the end. So beautiful, very powerful. It was just like looking at Ramana Maharshi's photographs, there was clear recognition before the mind moved. Compassion incarnate, a beacon of light, the Buddha.

Lots of love and thank you!!!

D.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:09 PM

01 February 2010

As this is being written, Autobiography of a Jnani is being translated into Italian, Hindi, Marathi and now German!

If you do a google lookup, there are over 9,000 references to it already. Wow! Robert works in mysterious ways.

Google translation:
[...]
- Show quoted text -

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 10:01 PM

Beloved Ed, my very own True Self,

It's incomprehensible that there could be 'more' of 'This' ... I am intoxicated in drunken Divine Union. I cannot contain my Self! Yet I am Thirsting for more ... All self consciousness is gone. And I explode!
This Heart is bursting, ripping, pierced - over and over - as if by the spear of the Angelic. Tears of Joy spurt forth as an Infinite fountain.
A 'voice' spontaneously arose from the thoughtless, timeless Silence ... "I Am Christ Consciousness Immanent, I Am Christ Consciousness Transcendent."
I am Abducted by Rapture. Such Glory! Exquisite, indescribable Beauty. And yet Peace, Perfect Peace.
The body is tireless, always 'Awake,' yet incapacitated at present. It needs nothing, but drinks deeply in the Eternal timeless 'now.' This cup has burst and is overflowing with your Grace and that of the Illumined Ones.
In the appearance, 'before' it began to 'empty' out so utterly ... 'before' falling into the endless depths of a despair which seemed to last for eons ... Krishna appeared to say it would come to pass that it would be purged to the very last drop and then, it would not only be filled to capacity, but would be overflowing. I gush in the Ocean of Splendour!
Just as One can only imagine a woman does, when handed her baby for the very first time - there's an immediate 'forgetting' of all the pain and fear of the 'process' as she is Enraptured in Union with the Purest, Sweetest, most Tender Love and Innocence of her newborn infant that is Christ Himself ...
Deep breath ...
Yes, Robert certainly does work in wonderous and mysterious ways! It 'appears' I took a 'walk' with He and Dimitri a while back (during this 'emptying out') 'though there's no recall of any words.

You and Ramana were 'there' just 'before' the 'final' letting go. So there arose absolute certainty that it was 'safe' to do so.
There is such a 'pull' to share this 'wine,' this Light, with those appearing to be in 'darkness.'
Ed, I am suspended in a Love and Trust that has no end. I Bow in Reverence through all Eternity (and beyond!),
In Devotion and Surrender,

D.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:04 AM

Namaste dearest Edji,

I hope you do not mind me calling you Edji somehow it seems most appropriate.

I am so grateful to have found your site and through it you and can not express the gratitude for this grace.

Apologies in advance for length.

I read about Shri Ramana some years back and was looking for similar guidance but did not find it then. Recently I read Be as you Are, this started spontaneous Who am I. This lead me to a state of expanded and then completely contracted consciousness within which was all the universe. These states lasted for minutes. This was the second time this was experienced. I was told that I am not this expanded or contracted state, this led me to the insight that I must be the awareness before awareness was aware of itself. Initially I thought that I was simply regurgitating what has been read however since this feeling things have been very strange, knowing/intuition becoming very strong then the next moment a complete lack of knowing with emptiness nothingness, normal thinking process but no thoughts really sticking. This has been going on for about a month. I can see myself interacting with family, all normal life continuing but with an underlying peace. Complete surrender to Shri Ramana I feel has brought me to you. I also left a previous Guru, whose requirement it was to eat meat at least 3-4 times a week, (which I could not do only eaten twice in a year after being a vege almost all my life). Appreciation for the transmissions and grace received there but once the decision to leave was made everything felt lighter.

You were found and great peace is felt when reading about your journey, Robertji's and Rajivji's journey. Just going onto the site is very peaceful. Reading through the site and Robertji's collected works, what wonderful peace and loveliness felt when reading.

Bit of background:

I was made aware that there is something beyond what is seen when I was about 15, watching a movie Jesus was on the cross and says 'Father why have you foresaken me' this led to tears, and I could not understand why, since then years of misguided direction/courses/teachers and a Guru and i find myself at your door asking and awaiting for blessings.

Whilst pregnant 3 years ago i woke up in the middle of the night and thought I was dead there was nothing there, I had to wander around the house, open the front door and light some incense before I could shake this feeling, this has happened about a dozen times since getting less intense and it feels as though the intense fear almost terror is felt due to a fear of not being able to breathe. The most recent occured last week which lasted about a minute and as it finished there was an instant, Oh my God how can billions of people have to go through this when they die.

I write with a request for blessings, direction and guidance, I would like to go deeper and merge with the divine, please can you suggest what I need to do. Apologies if any ego or arrogance is seen/felt it is not meant at all.

Many many thanks for you and Robertji and Shri Ramana and Shri Maharaj and Rajivji.

L. London, UK

L.

How are you?

I understand you are going through these confusing experiences.

Don't try to figure them out. This will make you more confused and frightened.

These experiences have nothing to do with you. They are just happenings in consciousness and you are beyond them all. Do not fear them. They are nothing and cannot touch you. Your true nature is peace. You are already feeling it growing. That grace brought you to this blog.

Download the attached book. Print it out. Read it every morning slowly. This will become your life. Read it as if God is speaking to you. ponder what it says. Meditate on it.

The focus of your meditation shall become you, not all those experiences which mean little. The peace will grow and spread.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 5:08 PM

02 February 2010

"Hunting the I" is an excellent guide to Self-inquiry says Raviv, and who am I to argue with him?

The link is: http://itisnotreal.com/Hunting%20the%20I.htm

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 11:29 PM

A Tolle-style awakening from reading books: temporary and non-repeatable. Jim Carrey is frustrated because he cannot get his tiny-winy experience back. Why not? No spiritual head of steam. No history of meditation or conscious effort to abide in his self.

Posted by Ed Muzika 6 comments Links to this post at 6:51 PM

03 February 2010

Dear Ed,

Thank you so much for the recent writings. They have helped to catapult my attention (once again) from the dream to the real. I am delving thoroughly into your website.
You have a balanced approach which appeals to me.
My first remembered realization was when I was eleven and realized awareness of awareness…however, it was soon couched in ego attention.
There was a long period of ego indulgences which altered after a substantial realization in 1988. This lead me on a path of spiritual seeking which eventually brought me to read Robert's 'Silence of the Heart' and Nisargadatta's "I Am That" twice. Shortly after that, during a silent retreat, the mind dropped for about 1.5 hours. It was as if the bottom fell out of whatever I thought I was. Whatever supported attention to ego-mind dropped. There was recognition (re-membering) that we are ALL…full empty voidness.
Two weeks later while walking in a forest, the body stopped moving and there was a realization that 'i' had never existed. All this was followed by a state of bliss which lasted for months. However, this was then followed by a very dark period…since, as some teachers say, the opening allowed the vasanas (negative tendencies) to arise, which they did!
For many years I also listened to / followed the California advaitins, as you call them. I see where the admonishment that nothing more needed to be done was taken by the ego-mind as an excuse to indulge once again in its follies. "I'm awake, so I can just do whatever…I have no control over anything and nothing matters anyway"…where attention was focused was not noticed, and I walked a treadmill to nowhere.

Some months ago I found your writings. After reading your experiences with awakening in the shower, I went to the shower and experienced a huge opening. However, it did not persist more than an hour. Whenever I read your writings, my attention is moved to truth, but it always returns to the false (so far).
So, there is a desire to anchor this awareness in Truth. Only in this way can I serve the whole. Perhaps the awakening is coming to all of humanity and there is nothing to "do", perhaps not. Whatever, I feel inclined to give full attention to that which is important which is to focus on Truth and live from what I "know" myself to be. However, it feels like I need assistance to move in this way. There are deep psychological patterns which limit love expression.
Is it possible to work with you?
If so, how do you see it taking place?
I prefer talking, which I can do through Skype.

> *Tom, I prefer email for now.*
> *Yes, Tom, whatever you achieved melted away because of lack of persistence in practice. Take a look at the next post, Jim Carey talking about his awakening after reading Tolle books.*
> *You spend most of your life going outwards. This needs to be balanced by go inwards and exploring inwardly as much time as you spend exploring the world.*
> *So, I am sending the Gita. Download it, print it out and read it every morning. Reflect on what it says then meditate--dwell attention on an abide in, the I exist sense, I Am. Do this again in the evening.*
> *Report back in a week or so.*

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 7:49 PM

Dearest Ed,

Thank You very much!

During this morning sitting, doing nothing, gradually a 'state' began to settle: there is no right, left, up or down, not inner or outer, so spacious and totally open, spontaneous, easy, natural, nothing to do or accomplish; everything is contaneid in it and everything can manifest without disturbing or alterating it; no I or other, indescrivible, totally without concept; thoughts and energy movements, insights arises in it and vanish without leaving trace, nothing remains like wind in the spacious sky, totally unconcerned, so restful, without agenda, nothing to realize...wonderful...
It is clear that I am even beyond this 'state' because it begins and ends but I am That which knows it begins and ends.
This 'state' is so natural and restful that the thought came it is Turiya.
Is it necessary to stabilize oneself in this 'state' to stabilize beyond it?
What do You think?
With gratitude and love,

L.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Stay where you are. Your awakening is unfolding just as it should.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:07 AM

FROM RAJIV:

Master meditation is no more tedious but beautiful now. Meditation time is BEST time of my life. Twice daily meditations happen ON its own. There is nothing to do at all. I have lost describing what meditation is. There is nothing to say Master.

The resting state is gaining prominence over "happenings" or experiences. Since two days during morning meditation I sometimes get engulfed in sparkling light like a clear milky sky. It is most beautiful. But what I am is beyond all that phenomenons. The sinking takes place when thoughts are caught hold off through keen observation but I am beyond all that too. I play around many times and that is why it is such a wonderful thing to meditate. When nothing takes place I simply rest. There is nothing that matters (thoughts or experiences or need of both) except that I am that restful sleepy yet aware entity. Time just passes on its own. It is silly to even want to experience anything rather just lower the gaze and rest. There are times the bliss is torrential but there are times when nothing actually happens yet the calmness,the peace of the inner sleepy Self is ALWAYS there inspite of the mind,consciousness playing its own game at the outside. It is almost like two things taking place at the same time and I the background prominent Self has nothing to interfere with the goings outside. They subside on their own after they have done their bit of dancing around but I am always there blissful as always choosing to watch them or completely ignore them. My will is only one thing which is lower the gaze and settle there. The feelings of bliss are almost like waves settling in the ocean. No one knows how they arise and fall and I dont know or anticipate what form the waves will take.

WAKING

There is a huge change in perspective. I am moving carefree. Honestly thoughts are more since a few days ever since the autobiography was put on the internet but really I do little of what the thoughts want to engage in. Its like the understanding that nothing of this actually matters yet the mind/body engages almost like auto pilot. The intelligence does all and I have no will in that. Its all a movie show and I can choose to watch it or sleep over it. Its best that consciousness does what it wants to do through my body/mind. My natural auto pilot system is taking things seriously where as I know nothing of this has any significance. I smile most of the time these days. It is almost like the real ME is trapped within the workings of the body/mind. I try and not use my will to change the ways of body/mind and rather just take things as they are. But Sometimes I do use my will and change things . But all of this is fun because finally nothing matters yet if we can contribute positively in any way and if that requires using will to do so than why not?

I have very little to say about what and why things happens during waking state yet when I look up I have actually written a lot in words :-). Maybe I am cracking up a bit inspite of all the celebrations within hahahhaha....

Many Pranams,
Yours,
Rajiv

> ***RESPONSE:***

> *Absolutely Perfect!!!*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 9:33 AM

06 February 2010

Dear Ed,

I feel compelled to drop you a note to express my appreciation to you for the information and advice you are providing on your website, and to particularly thank you for the clarification you have provided in a number of areas.

It is greatly appreciated that you have taken the time and made the effort to provide plain, straight forward information as a "how to" among the myriad of literature available regarding self-realization.

As a brief introduction, my wife has been in communication with you since last summer when she got Robert Adams' information from you and, while encouraging me to undertake some of the readings she has been getting over the last couple of years, I have honestly felt a certain internal reluctance to do so as a lot of them seemed to be, for lack of a better term, philosophical discussions without much true direction. A lot of the literature seemed, to me at any rate, to be a bit of a catch-22 situation where they are written by individuals who became self-realized, expounded the wonders of it, but did not really explain how others could attain that state.

I've probably been missing something, but it always seemed to me that, while obviously requiring significant committed effort to 'realize', the overall process should be somewhat simple and straight forward. I think the main problem that I had was a constant reference to abide in the "I" or the "I am", but it never really seemed to be clear to me what "abiding in the I am" really meant.

In accepting that this is all an 'illusion', I have to question how we can abide in something that only exists as part of that illusion? It wasn't until my wife gave me a copy of your article Hunting The "I" and Pradeep Apte's "The Nisargadatta Gita" from your website this past week that I've been able to come to grips with that and recognize that abiding in the "I am" is merely a tool to move beyond the "I am".

To be honest, my background is science and engineering so I tend to have a no-nonsense "cut to the chase" attitude of "where am I going, how do I get there and what steps do I have to take".

Finally, between reading these articles this week, and having two telephone discussions with a close friend in the U.K., D. who has also been in communication with you (the 'D' who was liberated last week), I have a much stronger sense of direction and purpose. For this, I sincerely want to thank you.

I feel that with two excellent resources such as yourself and D., I will finally get the information and guidance I need to join the growing group of individuals that are working towards liberation in this lifetime.

With love and gratitude,

A.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 3:09 PM

07 February 2010

Once I asked Robert if OSHO were enlightened. He said yes. He hardly ever spoke of other teachers. Osho got a bad rap for numerous reasons.

However, the video below shows Osho demonstrating having much the same appearance as Robert: still eyes, still demeanor, and total involvement at the same time, and an apparent radiance of peace.

What he says is true, but coming to that understanding, and finding your way to that completely doing nothing state is very difficult. Osho created a hundred ways for his students to get there. The external trappings we all heard about are nothing. He knew it was nothing. It was his play.

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

What about this?

Osho talks about Nisargadatta:

http://www.otoons.com/osho/askosho_nisargadatta_maharaj.htm

February 07, 2010

Ed Muzika said...

Well, that shoots that theory down!

Actually, that is Osho's opinion, even if a correct quote.

You have to understand that in India each jnana tradition jealously guards its superiority. They all fight with each other.

If Osho didn't like Maharaj, he would not like Ramana either because they are so similar.

Maybe I'll have to read some of Osho's books (No I won't) to see what he is up to. I just judged by his face, his movements, his silent pauses, his voice and his peacefulness.

Peacefulness can be faked, but I don't think that is the case here.

In any event, I could be wrong. This is just my opinion never having met him, just as Osho never met Nisargadatta.

Osho may have thought Maharaj's way too difficult for most, or he could be a complete fraud and fooled me totally.

Posted by Ed Muzika 10 comments Links to this post at 7:00 PM

08 February 2010

Dearest Ed,

Thank You very much (and thank to Rajiv very much) for Autobiography of a Jnani: it is very inspiring.

During morning sitting there was sinking inward, in the background, towards the ultimate witness, towards I, beyond perception:
initially there was a movement of attention, a deep sinking in oneself, but there was like a subtle search, not total contentment; it was as if the body was in sleep but I was aware; at a certain point joy-bliss began to well up strongly and this disturbed the deep sinking, then the bliss went away and then the process of sinking began again; this again and again.

At a certain point a sudden change, there was no search, no sinking, no effort, 'a state' in which there is deep silence, peace, thoughts randomly in surface (or no thoughts), contentment, and joy-bliss came out again, without disturbing anymore. The thoughts come: the joy and peace of the Self.
I rest in Myself.

Bowing to You and to Absolute,
with love,
L.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 8:35 AM

Hi Ed,

I have started reading Birth of a jnani. In the opening you mention :

'There is very little in the spiritual literature about what the subjective experiences are or can be when one uses the **self** as the object of meditation. Mostly we find lectures about that nature of
what is, of ontology and epistemology, and lectures about how to practice, but very little about the path as personally walked and experienced.'

My question is this:

Is this to imply that the very specific road maps used in Therevada Buddhism do not equate to the same landmarks or experiences on the way or, that yogis using self abiding, just haven't been encouraged to meticulously
note every last detail they come across? I ask this because, before I started with 'I am' I was noting sensations and had plotted a nice little path through the various jhanas and nanas. However, since beginning with I am and most notably recently I find 'I am' so profound, I couldn't give a toss about noting sensations.

PS: There still are, I have noticed, specific switches or movements of mind as I sit, it's like the mind just spontaneously moves through different levels all by itself the last flip, turning 'looking at' inward, leaves me quite bewildered as to how to describe the state. When I begin noticing again, I notice my body as a field of energy, I notice my breath, etc and now today, I was wondering how to look at the viewer who is actually viewing what appears to be nothing at all.

Much delight and gratitude
P.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *What do you mean by How to look mat the viewer who is viewing nothing?*
>
> *Can you explain more what you are asking?*
>
> *Are you saying you cannot find the source of looking, the witness?*
>
> *Or are you saying that when you take the place of the witness you see the void?*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 3:25 PM

> ***ANOTHER RARE ONE. I Am blessed to be present at the birth of another Jnani.***

Sent to me:

Existence itself is now meditation, involvement in the world happens with deep witnessing that everything is happening spontaneously, resistance is gone. There has awoken in me the deepest need to relieve human suffering from pushing cars out of the snow, to talking with people about natural cures for their ailments, I cant drive past a brokedown car without stopping to help. There is no longer concern about the body, my diet has evolved to where meat sickens me, fast food sickens me, I only want fresh living foods, clean water etc. Yet all the while these things are happening there is a knowing that its a dream and I am the dreamer.

I'm not choosing to be on a mission to do anything yet there has been a complete metamorphis of the old body mind patterns. Anger is gone, irritability, stress is gone. Yet there is a knowing none of those things ever happened to "me" It feels like there is a space behind the world that knows and watches, yet has no describable qualities, and I am that. Interest....no more like the complete obsession with reading spiritual books, listening to podcasts etc has fell away. Jesus saying we are in the world but not of it says it well.

Yet at the same time the true "I" has never been In the world, yet without the true "I" the world is not. Awareness prevails through the everynight rollercoaster of lucid dreams, then when waking happens it is seen that "I" did not wake up, more like changing the channel on television. The world appears ethereal and light, see through if you will. Dreams are just as vivid as this world, I get hungry, use the restroom, hurt, feel joy, etc yet even in dream its realized that those things are only pictures on the screen of me. Sometimes the dreams are more like movies where I am not even a charachter in my own dreams, just the viewer. Thoughts are nearly

gone, and knowledge of worldly things seems so worthless. Thoughts that do arise are not taken to be of any importance, thoughts of the past are never there, Tv, the net, news, none of these things interest me.

My drive for business has severely diminished, short term memory requires effort. Yet its not empty or nihilistic, it feels like the world is me and I am the world, yet untouched by it. Despite the nonreality being seen through, a sense of compassion and a tremendous drive to end human suffering makes life worth living. As far as the meditation, I gave up meditation after realizing it was a constant chase to get back to certain experiences. I had one where I could feel my heart stop, breath stopped, and it was like transcending this whole plane into all encompassing bliss light, and ecstacy beyond comprehension, its now seen that even that doesnt touch me.

I have started meditating again and its different, meditation within minutes involves loss of all consciousness of this world and a feeling of surfing sceneries in consciousness, one dreamscape after the next, yet different then dreaming, more like something in the third eye. I am unclear what the void is, I don't think I have met it. At this point it feels there is nothing left to be done, should meditation continue?

When I used to meditate more I would often experienc a feeling of sinking into my bed into total blackness and emptiness with no body or room consciousness, those experiences showed me the unreality of the world. The only thing that is missed some is when I used to meditate, sometimes a palpable bliss would radiate from every cell of my body, I was so immersed in love. Those feelings are not as strong, but the peace overrides any real desire to get back to that place. Synchronicities happen around me nonstop, babies and animals are drawn to just be close to me, yet they seem curious. The only thing of real interest to J. is meeting people where they are and if they are suffering, doing what I can to help.
I started with you, then got lost in the neo advaita podcast world, I just could not "hear the message" There was a knowing that I didnt exist, but I had not yet Identified with the real I or Source which was why love and compassion were lacking. You are God with the mask of Ed, and such a blessing, I bleed gratitude to you my friend.

Although the peace and love is steady, the really blissful times are gone. It is seen that those are still just happening to the charachter Jeremy and not me. If you have any further advice I would be honored if you would be so kind as to share it. I realized by Rajivs posts that I was lacking the complete love, devotion, and undying devotion to trust the guru, I neglected some of your earlier advice out of ignorance, because listening to podcasts was so much easier. When I read your correspondence with Rajiv I felt so much love for you, my Sadguru appearing as Ed. I am sorry to have been unappreciative for your grace, I will not make that error again.

Also I realize this is a bit rambling, this is just how things spill out these days, no rehearsal, no thought, just an email writing itself.

Should meditation continue? If so what would you suggest?
Boundless respect and gratitude,
J.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 6:24 PM

11 February 2010

Dear Ed,

Thank you so much for your reply to me, Your mum, my dad, illness definitely grounds me for sure. I hope now this email reaches you things have resolved themselves Ed. for some reason I didn't expect one and your message has been sitting in my inbox with lots of the usual stuff for a long time because I
took time out from trawling the webgurus and emails and everything whilst I just spent time letting what I had already absorbed sink in and become comfortable with that.

Just this morning it just occurred to me to go to your website and Boom, there's the autobiography waiting for me! 've read a bit but can't understand much, but I feel it, I feel this guy's passion and pain, it feels like me! Ha. So then I check my email box for Ed, and there you are.

I have been meditating now and again and have the same experiences as before but recently I have been seeing/experiencing a chrome/silver sphere/object penetrate through the nothingness and feel the most overpowering bliss, it's almost too much. I'm also getting these energy spasms during the day, they just seem to

come and go. It's not painful it just feels like Whoooaaa.....there it is again. Let me be completely honest with you, it happens when I read something, see something or have a small realisation about something that I sort of feel at one with, or somehow I recognize as the truth (whatever that means!)
Ed, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the time and thought that went into your replies to me

Best Wishes

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:38 PM

> *I then asked the previous poster, J. some checking questions, to see if he had indeed attained Turiya and gone beyond to the ultimate witness state, Turiyatta as had Raviv.*
> *He answered all correctly. He was not the void because he knew the void, and all appearances and consciousnesses came and went and he observed them as if they were different channels on a TV. He knew of his ultimate existence by inference.*
> *This is perfect. He stated:*

I cannot be the void, since I know the void, I observe the comings and goings of consciousness in the same way that I can watch a movie, and change the channel. Same feeling of observing, yet different scenery. I appreciate your warning, many times over the two years that we have corresponded, I saw this yet, what I did not see was that I was not Turiya, but the witness of Turiya. My real state can only be known by process of deduction. Its clear I am not the body, not the world, not even the awareness (turiya) because I am aware of the awareness.

You say that I have gone as far as my own efforts can carry me, which of course makes me wonder, is there a deeper evel? I as the witness have observed the body in deep meditation literally disolve, heart stops, breath stops, nothing but cloudlike, indescribable bliss ensues, yet that is not even a constant, however, despite the indescribable bliss.... that made this apparent world seem even more phony! Seeing these many states of consciousness come and go, including Turiya, what could I be but the witness of all things observable? When consciousness is being observed beyond the comprehension of human senses, how can I go deeper? It seems that my true being just is and is the basis of Neti Neti. I have no intention of kissing ass, but with the deepest respect, you are a guru of the highest order. There are many flavors of nonduality today (talk about an oxymoron) but most convince you that you are the I AM or Turiya, I disagree since what I really really am observes the passing of even Turiya....Or am I imagining things?
Deepest Respect for your continued tuteledge and dedication to truth

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *No, you have answered all the questions correctly. You fully understand and have gone beyond Turiya. I had to ask the questions to check first.*
>
> *So few are willing or able to go beyond oneness of Consciousness. They do not ask what happens to the oneness when the body dies. It never pops into their heads to question whether the world continues to be observed through the five sense when the body dies.*
>
> *What I mean is that your awakening is still an unfolding event. It will continue to deepen.*
>
> *CONGRATULATIONS!!!!*
>
> *Deepest Love,*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:14 AM

12 February 2010

SENT TO ME:

Hi Ed,

I had another look this morning. When I am sitting I lose all awareness of my surrounds. There are not thoughts in the mind. There are no images. However, there is the tactile sensation of vastness. I attempt to not attend to body sensations. I notice that attempting is effort and I wonder who is making the effort. I attempt to locate this pure 'looker' by negating these sensory impressions. I notice if I put my attention in the heart area there is no physical sensation that can distract me or perceive which induces a void sensation. I am still aware however of 'looker.'

Upon reflection, because I am aware of a void sensation, I am not that. So who am I? So, I guess this is all nothing.

Your words Ed are very powerful to me. I read your stuff on your site and I find myself falling into this 'dissociated' state just reading them. The resonance of the way you communicate induces shift or development or whatever you like to call it. I'm in it now as I write but I am also very aware of all the minute sensations appearing and disappearing in the body. I'm in this state most of the day and I don't really care about anything at all. Look forward to hearing from you.

P.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Very, very good P., very good!*
>
> *You are aware that there is a looker. You are aware of the Void. You are aware of a sense of I Am. Which is really you?*
>
> *This is your job right now, finding which, if any of them, is the real subject, the YOU, or whether they are all objects.*
>
> *Thus you have to be aware of each, sink into each and see what happens.*
>
> *Good going.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 5:14 PM

13 February 2010

On Sat, Feb 13, 2010 at 7:46 AM, r. wrote:
Edji

Hello. It is 2 weeks since you sent me the manual. A few general observations that became obvious.
I am feeling so liberated and light. Vegetarian way of life feels good (began to eat meat whilst on Kundalini path with last guru's instructions). The self seems the most natural abode. Tendency to yap is so diminished silence seems right and natural.
Feeling connected to Robert and yourself.
Before coming to you I used to have a mild tendancy to avoid being with my children. Not being an absent mum or anything but just busying myself with stuff and nonsense. That tendency is gone I am sitting down with them completely settled within. Nothing big but big difference in the way it feels and they must also perceive the difference.

That is all I can think at the moment. There have been very fuzzy days memory wise and some very clear days and some not so clear.
I am sleeping heavily and dreams are clearer. During the day eyes feel heavy as if intoxicated. Pain in ankles.

Now about the manual and what followed it.

The words drown me deep into the silence. In the begining I struggled to pinpoint the 'I am'. It was, to begin with a sensation in the heart. After a lot of groping in the dark I asked Ramana and Robert to guide me where I needed to be. It came to the naval area but as a centre point of all void. For a day or two I looked into this centre of the void and then read you saying The looking "for" is the problem; the looker is already complete and at rest.

The way it is now I with attention in my stomach with a subjectiveness rather than looking for something or at something. Atleast that is what I think I am doing!

For days I could not put into words to what was being experienced whilst sitting this way. It is completely devoid of any movement of thought or emotion.

On more than one occasions I had hot water bottle burning my feet, got sucked into self inquiry and not only the burning went the 'body sensation' went away too. Movement on the outside is perceived very faintly. Number of times my husband spoke to me and I could not open my eyes, He came and left. luckily he knows me I am mental!

The best I can describe it is as a deep sleep. My body also behaves as if it is fast asleep too, my neck flopping left and right and back. but I am wide awake. The clinging to getting enlightened softening and gone yet the target remains.

I understand that keeping at it is the right thing to do but at the same time it has begun to feel that effort is the most insignificant link in the chain. This enquiry that sucks into itself is more like the labour of love than any effort or striving on my part.

A slight concern about feeling of reassurance that the truth will reveal itself. I fear it might be mind playing tricks. It is wierd and slightly frightening.

Overall I feel peaceful, light and complete than ever before and the 'Kingdom of God' so to say feels closer than ever.

Your ongoing blessings and guidance is so needed. Heartfelt thanks.

namaste

r.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *R.*
>
> *You are shooting like an arrow towards your target.*
>
> *You are begining to feel the Grace of Consciounsness pulling you ever deeper inside. That love and acceptance you feel, is you, discovering you.*
>
> *Your autopilot is working perfectly!*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:37 PM

13 February 2010

Don't waste precious time like this student. Life is brief.

Hello Ed,

Thank you for your website Ed, the talks by Robert Adams are fascinating.

For the past two years I have been studying the teachings of Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj and others. On the recommendation of those teachers I have attempted to practice self-inquiry. Unfortunately, I have not had the sense that these attempts at self-inquiry have meant much, the practice has only confused me and I find that I am not drawn to it, at least at this time.

Instead I am interested in "opening the third eye", according to you the result being the illumination of inner space and eventually an awarness of the "clear light of the void". I am interested in part because of past meditation experiences (doing anapanasati) in which inner flashes of light and clarity occured to me. I have already tried practicing focusing my attention on the light behind the "third eye" since reading about this on your website. Afterwards I felt pleasantly expanded and clearer.

My question is about what this process of opening the third eye means exactly. As I take it from your website, discovering the void is important in the path to realization, after peering into the void the practice of self-inquiry is needed to find the ultimate witness of the void and all consciousness.

What is the void exactly? Is it okay to postpone inquiry until this point on the path or should I still make attempts at doing it right now also? And what preliminary experiences should I expect in practicing opening the third eye?

On a side note, before going to sleep, I have begun to listen to chanting (OM) by your recommendation. It is quite relaxing, thank you.

K.

RESPONSE:

The void has many guises. Sometimes people describe it as darkness.

But by void, I mean you always feel everything is surrounded and contained in an empty mental space that is self-illumined. The void is an element of consciousness that extends everywhere. But the void is as unreal as everyday consciousness. What you want to know is that which perceives both the void and the world.

To find THAT which perceives the world, you need to go backwards and retreat into the sense of I-ness.

Attached is the Nisargadatta Gita. Download it, print it out and read it every morning for a bit. Ponder the words, meditate on the I Amness.

Read chapter eight of the attached book the Path of Sri Ramana.

Don't get too distracted by the void. Do it, but self enquiry is far more powerful if you do it right.

Ed

Thank you Ed for your timely reply,

I will try to do what you advise but the problem with self-inquiry is that I have found no satisfaction in it, there is no intuitive sense that it is a meaningful practice. Of course, I may just have been practicing it incorrectly and probably was but is it common for beginners to be discouraged with self-inquiry? How do I know I'm making progress with it?

K.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, because they do not know how to practice it.*
>
> *They think it a simple repetition of questioning, "Who Am I?," or they can't get ahold of a sense of I Am. Some maybe are not ready for it because they don't want to look inside themseleves.*
>
> *Self inquiry consistes of reading the right things, pondering, introspection, and meditation, maybe for many years. It is the only method I practiced. The Third Eye opened because of it.*
>
> *If you want to learn how to concentrate on a candle flame, you can learn how to do that one pointedly in a week, but you'll never get anything out of it.*
>
> *Self-inquiry is like a life of psychotherapy, attention, focus, and thinking precision. It is high level difficult stuff.*

Ed

From K.

The "I am" is the primary thought that precedes all conceptual thinking. So, it makes sense that Ramana said the "I am" is the first to wake up out of sleep and then the world follows.
Following that logic, is it correct that the "I am" is the very last thought before drifting into sleep? If so, it would make sense to me.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Makes sense. I never thought about it.*

From K.

Perhaps self-inquiry can be practiced by going to the edge of sleep and abiding in that state with a mind keen in identifying the "I am".

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *That is very difficult to do.*
>
> *It is better to immerse oneself i the feeling I Am when fully awake because you can do that anytime, not just the moments before and after sleep.*

From K.

There is a feeling mostly associated with the chest, torso and arms that is constant throughout the day, the mind rests in that when thinking is quieted and nearing sleep, this must be the feeling "I am"?

Ramana said with a little practice self-inquiry can be done even in the midst of activity, Annamalai swami who was a devotee of Ramana's and considered enlightened in his own right said self-inquiry must be done constantly or it does not work. Working almost any job requires almost uninterrupted thinking, I don't see how inquiry could be practiced in the midst of work rather just when sitting and meditating?

Thanks. K.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *I am is the feeling that you exist. It is also called a sense of presence. But it is also the one who witnesses. Maybe that is how you experience I Am, but it doesn't sound like it.*
>
> *You read too much and form too many opinions on too slim a basis.*
>
> *Just read the Gita and let nature take its course.*
>
> *Meditation for the sake of meditation WILL PRODUCE NO USEFUL RESULT WHATSOEVER.*
>
> *Ed*

From K.

Hello,

I have been reading the Gita and meditating these past few days but I cannot seem to be able to get at this "I am" sense. I have been trying to do this for just over two years now ever since I was touched learning about the life of Sri Ramana Maharshi, so its not like I'm squirming like an impatient child. There simply does not seem to be a thought "I". Sure, I know I exist and it is easy enought to examine that fact but that knowing or feeling is amorphous and can't be pin-pointed. If the point is mental quietness there are various ways to get at this I don't understand what makes self-inquiry so special. It seems futile to me.

Thanks,

K.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, the knowing and feeling I Am cannot be pinpointed. It is amophous and it is different from the thought I. This is what to focus on. Try "falling backwards" into the feeling, as if it were a background.*
>
> *That you cannot perceive an I thought is astounding because it is only a thought like any other, except all other thoughts are connected to it.*
>
> *If you cannot perceive the I thought, you are unlikely to be able to perceive any thought. Is this true?*
>
> *The Void is just another phenomena, like anything in existence.*
>
> *Ed*

From K.

I've got it now. It took me just a few moments imagining falling backward. I suppose it was just to obvious for me to get right away.

The I seems to be both a thought and a bodily sensation.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes focus on the sensation, and also try to fall backwards into the sensation. Play with it. Get to know it.*
>
> *Ed*

From K.

Hello Ed,

Contemplating the I yesterday I was struck by an urge in the form of a query: what does it mean to observe/be aware? The inner question focused my efforts in investigating the I from casually noticing to deep meditation and enjoyment. I understand even more why Sri Ramana advised his devotees to ask themselves who am I, there is a potent emotional force in wanting to know what it means to exist.
My question to you however, is more mundane and one you must get asked a lot. Why is it that so many seek after self-realization or enlightenment and fail, even after spending many decades meditating? Could it be simply that those many nameless failed meditators never turned away from inner and outer objects toward the subject? Also, why are there those such as Osho, who are considered realized (Osho even by Adams apparently) and yet lack basic integrity? Another example being this Adi Da character. The first personage I associated non-dualism with was (besides the buddha) Ramana Maharshi who was a great example of kindness, patience, honesty and humility. I find it hard to believe such immoral characters could have been realized. These may seem like petty questions to you but I am sincerely curious.

Thanks,

K.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *This is a complicated subject that would take about 30 pages to explain. I recomend reading Michael James Happiness and the Art of Being (which is attached to this email)-attached.*
>
> *Sometimes just small changes in a way a person practices self inquiry can make a huge difference. So you have to play around with it.*
>
> *A true guru really has little involvement with the world and he would usually be indifferent to what is happening around him, from chaos to sweetness. The point is, don't judge, because any judgment is based on a conventional viewpoint, and a truly enlightened being will piss everyone off because they are beyond convention.*
>
> *Ed*

From K.

Hi Mr. Muzika,

I wonder what importance you place on absorption states or samadhis?

Michael James says that self-inquiry, practiced correctly, should bring about a state of thoughtless clear self-conscious awareness. In other words samadhi.

Which leads the question that given the fact that samadhi or absorption can be gained through, say, focusing on the breath rather than the I sense of what great importance is the I sense if samadhi is the goal?

You have suggested that I play with the I sense, which must mean observe it in relation to thought and the body. You wrote in your previous email to me that sometimes small changes in the way self-inquiry is practiced can make a huge difference. So, I'm guessing you don't place much importance in the thoughtless state called samadhi.

Thanks,

K.

> ***RESPONSE:***

Don't you see you are raising all kinds of irrelevant-to-enlightenment questions?

They are good questions in their own right, but you have an endless amount of them, which means you are doing far more thinking than using the mind to discover your true nature and awaken.

Are you really interested in awakening?

Ed

From K.

Hi Ed,

I'm dead-set on awakening.

I don't really care about any of the questions I asked you in my last e-mail, you replied quickly before and I was taking advantage of that, basically, for my entertainment.
Sorry, I shouldn't waste your time, I read your blog and see that you help a lot of serious people. I apologize and I hope you take me seriously when I say I'm dead-set on awakening. You don't know how happy your website has made me.

I have been meditating more and I've come to what I think is a better understanding of self-inquiry.

I can notice the I-sense passively in association with my body and I can concentrate on the feeling. Noticing passively, the I-sense feels basically concentrated in a straight line from the top of my head to my groin area in the front of my body. When I notice it I have a thought of it like white, or light, if you will. Noticing the I-sense passively I notice how it relates to thinking which imposes itself on it and mixes with it, so to speak. I can "fall backward" and allow the I-sense to come in more clearly throughout the body, like whiteness taking over.

I spend more time concentrating on the feeling because it is much more enjoyable. When I do this I don't really experience the I-sense in association with the body, I experience it as simply awareness as opposed to thought. Like a mirror, a constant reflection with temporary bits of thought like dust obscuring it. There is a very satisfying sense of clarity at certain moments concentrating on the I-sense deeply like this. I know this self-awareness is the feeling that is returned to between periods of being lost in thought and is actually constant, with thought moving about, again, mixing with it, so to speak.

Intuitively, I have also started meditating on the perception of the body itself, as if to make my perception of my body disappear. A sense of hollowness, mainly in my abdomen, has been developing and it feels right to make it increase throughout the body. I feel that if I could meditate an entire day on this feeling I could make it go away, at least temporarily, though I might be deluded in that thought. I experience this hollowness as darkness or blackness, in contrast to the white line of the I-sense, which again, goes in a straight line from the top of my head to my groin area in the front of my body. I have found myself unable to experience my body in as many ways as before, if that makes any sense to you. Also, I'm afraid to meditate too long this way because it creates an uncomfortable sensation at the bottom of my spine and odd feelings of inner movement.

I also spend about ten or fifteen minutes a day meditating on the third eye as you recommend, because of the interesting effects you said this would produce.

Does any of this mean anything to you? Am i making any sense here?

As a pointless side question, if you're willing to humor me, I was wondering if sakti can be transferred through a photograph. I've seen a picture of you, Ramana and as it happens UG Krishnamurti, with the same odd effect. This sounds strange but could you meditate on a photograph like this to an effect?

Thanks,

K.

RESPONSE:

(Comment: I guess I did not respond to this. I can't find one. But I certainly did not encourage him to practice any Third Eye meditation. I encouraged him only to practice attending to the I Am sense.)

From K.

Hi Ed,

You have written on your website that the "awareness watching awareness" description of self-inquiry by Michael Langford on his website is actually Shikantaza and not self-inquiry. It seems to me that "awareness watching awareness" is a valid description of self-inquiry or self-remembering to put it another way. Self-inquiry is being aware your sense of self or "I AM" sense in whatever false manifestation in which it appears, is it not? Being aware of being, a being who is having thoughts, yes?

The only difference I can make out is that Langford says to try to ignore the body completely, though the I am often seems to associate itself with the body in some way, usually in the heart center.

I don't want to be practicing Shikantaza thinking I'm practicing self-inquiry. If you could answer this question I would be very grateful.

Thanks,

K.

RESPONSE:

If you are set on practicing AWA go ahead.

I told you my opinion about AWA. It is written in this blog and on the itisnotreal website. If it appeals to you I am not going to repeat myself again and again and try to argue you out of it. You are big enough to make your own decisions.

Look, you know what I am about. You can read the Autobiography of a Jnani, the Nisargadatta Gita, and Sadhu Om's direction of practicing self-inquiry. This is all that I am about. If you don't want to practice this way, please don't bother writing. I feel an obligation to respond to questions, but yours are endless and keep missing the point.

From K.

I had no intention of arguing with you, I am genuinely a little confused is all. If you want me to stop e-mailing you questions all you had to do was say so politely. I admit I was a bit rude before in wasting your time a little but I wasn't purposely trying to annoy you or argue with you. You're a big boy you can hit the delete button. I have no idea how you got the impression that I wanted to go back and forth arguing with you. Discussing topics like these obscurity in meaning is bound to happen. Anyway, how hard is a polite snub? Not at all.

I never thanked you for the autobiography, the nisargadatta gita, happiness and the art of being and the path of sri ramana part 1, so I want to thank you now.

Posted by Ed Muzika 3 comments Links to this post at 11:41 PM

Dear Ed,

Practicing on the hara or the heart center seem very different. Heart center appears like a horizontal meeting into the sense of presence, when the hara a vertical dropping of oneself into the void. Is it better to choose one of those two centers to dive within or depending on moments attention can shift from one to the other? At the moment it is difficult to imagine that they are leading to the same goal.

Dzogchen practice is to abide in that state of presence which is the common note to any experience (even the experience of emptiness), is that the same method that you describe as abiding in the ultimate subject?

This document of yours is a beautiful gift for seekers, I cannot relate to many of Rajiv experiences though, as my experience is pretty simple: more or less crystalised sense of me, sense of presence, occasional transparence, silence and movement...

With Gratitude

s.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *It is of no value to ask how one technique from one tradition compares to another technique in another tradition.*
>
> *It just leads to increased conceptualization and is a distraction.*
>
> *The Hara techniques leads to different experiences from the heart technique, but in the end, you are beyond them all.*
>
> *It is like comparing push ups with sit ups, the feeling is different, but in the end, you are not the body at all. You are not the body or the experiences at all. You are trying to explore your inner world and find it is not you, and by finding what is not you, you eventually find the pure you.*
>
> *Try the Hara technique, it is deeper.*

Ed

To Me:

Dear Ed,

Diving into the sense of presence is really natural and blissful, when the mind is totally focused it feels like geting absorbed into sleep. This diving into the presence appears to be directed more into the heart center but I do not need to focus specifically in a center and just dive in I Am. I feel that I could in sometime just abide there and be absorbed most of the time. Let's see.

In sitting meditation I do direct attention into the hara, like you say that's much more dramatic, I can feel even strained by the exercice. I can experience at the same time that something is attracting me down, and on the other something is preventing me to drop totally, I suppose I have to practice more and more letting go for the grip to loosen up.

It appears that my presence and actually everything experienced is surounded by silence, this silence is more or less heavy, does the mind will surrender more and more into that silence and finally the understanding will dawn that I am that?

With Gratitude as always,

s.

> ***RESPONSE:***

You are making good progress.

Actually, being aware of the coming and going of sleep is the best you can do, as the awareness of the sleep state is of nothingness, because the body is not functioning producing conscioiusness. Therefore you are experiencing one nothingness state in deep sleep. It is not a waste of time at all. Enjoy not knowing anything.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:27 PM

16 February 2010

SENT TO ME WITH RESPONSES:

Hello Sir!

It is very nice to hear from you!!
I am doing well. I sit mostly at night time and probe the sense 'I Am' for 20 minutes a sitting, which is much more formal and longer in duration than my previous practice. I also try to sit in the morning however I generally have to wake up early (I work at Starbucks), but I hope to slowly incorporate a consistent formal sitting then too. I hope to be sitting consistently both morning and evening soon.
I have been experimenting with a pranayama technique called 'spinal breathing' for several minutes before each sitting to help relax the mind, and to build a 'head of steam' as you call it. I found the technique at the AYP.org website written by Yogani, have you heard of AYP? It has some interesting forums, and techniques. I found it when I searched Google to see how popular 'Autobiography of a Jnani' was.
Do you think this practice is beneficial? I feel like I should have asked you before starting, but I was curious about pranayama, especially since Rajiv spoke often about it (I was one of the many that e-mailed him) so I thought I would try for a bit just to see what happens. So far, when doing it, I notice a deeper sense of bodily and mental relaxation going into my sittings, but I have only been doing it for maybe two weeks and am still getting the technique down.

RESPONSE:

No, focus only on the I Am. The breath control comes automatically with concentration on the I Am. All pranayama practices can cause kriya type experiences which can be dangerous. Notice Rajiv advises AGAINST pranayaman practices and he had 12 years experience.

During sittings I sometimes get the impression I can 'see through' my eye-lids, like I can open and close my eyes even with them closed. When I 'open' them I can see the outline of my body, and sometimes other shapes in the room, and when I 'close' them I see only moving darkness. Sometimes outside of meditation, when I doze off, I observe a state where there is witnessing of thoughts, but no perception of the world. I know I have a body, but I'm not aware of it or the world. I'm only aware of the thoughts that pertain to the world and the body Ryan Altman.
The pressure in my third-eye area is more intense and prolonged now. Only a little attention on the area or a thought causes pressure to occur. It mostly occurs on it's own. It happens a lot in the mornings when I ride the bus to work, or read spiritual literature or think intently on spiritual thoughts.

RESPONSE:

Also, forget the Third Eye. It, along with pranayama, are kintergarten practices that cause sensations and energies that have nothing to do with awakening, except to make it take longer because you get distracted by experiences

The other day when coming home from work I had the realization that I was unchanging. The world and the consciousness in front was in constant flux, but 'me' at the background was steady and unchanging in it's perception of consciousness. The question immediately came 'Who witnesses all this? These thoughts, this body?' and I 'sank' back into that background awareness. I came home and was speaking with my Mother and it didn't feel like I was speaking, it didn't feel like I was standing there. It was all sort of just happening and I was watching, but not participating in it. The state faded soon thereafter when I became engaged in more strenuous activity around dinner time. I think this was my first taste of the 'watcher' state.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *This is where you need to spend your efforts. This is right on.*

TO ME:

I will focus solely on the 'I Am'. I'm sorry I strayed from your instruction.

TO ME 4 DAYS LATER:

SIr, I can't stop chuckling. Throughout the day things that once used to bother me now just make me laugh. The mind manipulates perception to give the appearance that you act or feel a certain way, but it isn't so. It's just playing games with you. What I am is always silently watching what's going on in front of me. It really is like a movie. I cannot say that I still do not identify with the body, thoughts, or what's going on in the 'movie' but I am becoming more aware of the way the mind functions to give the perception of a body, thoughts, etc. that belong to 'me'.

As I result, I am beginning (at least intellectually) to identify more with consciousness as a whole. It isn't exactly natural yet, but I've been identifying with my body for so long that it will obviously take some time before it once again becomes natural to see the totality of consciousness as 'me' rather than just the body and it's thoughts.

Michael James' Chapter 8 has made this all even more clear, Sir, and I cannot thank you enough for pointing me towards it. I read it before but it didn't really sink in until now. I look forward to reading Chapter 9. Thank you again for everything.

R.

Post Comments:

rajiv said...

"Notice Rajiv advises AGAINST pranayaman practices and he had 12 years experience."<<<<

Absolutely !!!!

Two reasons for the same:
They keep ones mind centered to the chakras,breath,mantras etc etc. People make a system out of it and attention is NOT towards the SELF but these means. The means become the end and many advanced sadhakas remain centered there for a long long time just like me.

And more importantly these altered breathing exercises can be potentially very dangerous. Any stoppage of breath or holding them can cause serious health damage. It did to me too.

Most want experiences. I can understand why. They want things to happens and which is good and infact very much required in the early to advanced -intermediate stages. Kriya can give fantastic experiences but so can Self-inquiry practiced in the correct manner (not just intellectual knowing or practicing baby method of being in the "NOW")
It only requires dedicated practice and one will get all the experiences without much health hazards.

Later all experiences will drop on their own but you will be confident to say "This is NOT me"
The intellect knowing will drop, the experiences will drop,everything will drop and what will be left will be "YOU".

February 17, 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 9:56 PM

TO ME:

Hi Ed. You know that experience I had last e-mail of sliding inward, feeling I had found the I am to focus on! Well, I tried repeating the experience, and I couldn't - so I had assumed I had lost it! So I was back at the drawing board, testing what I had done. You see when I would practice, to me being, was just that, not someone being, just sitting, no mind movement, whatever the experience that was left, to me was being. Now this might have been the sensation of the body. So I said to myself why don't I just move back and include this "feeling of me" that is always there. Then I remembered a few experiences I had, when I had become conscious between sleep and awakening. Then, I was the "feeling of me" the existence part was a given - I knew I was, I just didn't know who I was, no life story! So in comparison, this feeling is exactly the same as " the feeling of me" I have found through testing. It is the same same "feeling of me" before any add-ons like my name my life story etc. It is kind of embarassing, in that this "feeling of me" was right under my nose all the time! So I tested it, and compared it to the "being feeling" I used to focus on - and I found the feeling of me would give me the inner feeling (not the slipping feeling yet!), but much more of an effect than the "being feeling". Also you said the "I feeling", and the "I am feeling" of Nisargadatta were both the Ego - which is our target - right?

I also remember, during the sliding inward, that I was oscillating back in forth between I and being (what I thought was the I am). So the "I feeling" could have been responsible for the sliding inward.

Have I finally got it with this "I feeling" ? Do you think , that what I thought was the I am was actually the body's presence and not the presence of the I. I think I got it this time Ed, I just need your confirmation. Thanks Ed.

Regards,

T.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *T.*
>
> *When practicing the I Am meditation, don't jump to conclusions.*
> *Your experiences will change over time, the more you practice and develop discrimination.*
> *There are many false I's, like the ego, or the knot where consciousness appears attached to the body in the heart area*
> *So don't ask about correct phenomena or incorrect. Just stay with the feeling/sensation that feels most like you NOW, and do that all the time.*
> *Many "I Am" posers will arise. Stay with each until the real, unchanging subject is revealed.*
>
> *Ed*

TO ME:

This is a perfect approach "just stay with the feeling/sensation that feels most like you Now, and do that all the time, stay with each until the real , unchanging subject is revealed".

Now I feel I have the proper approach to practice. Thanks very much Ed, this makes a great deal of sense to me now.

Regards,

T.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:59 AM

18 February 2010

Hello Ed,

I've found my true master, who is guiding me all day long. Let's call it consciousness as what I feel or see, seems to
match the descriptions that I find in spiritual texts.
When the attention is focused on consciousness, the thoughts loose their power and it's like I'm falling asleep but still awake. I clearly feel this technic that I remember you named "hara" or
something like this, with this energy descending in the belly and this feeling of becoming completly stupid.
Yet, in my experience, I find that this stupidity is in fact really
bright, alive, because the hypnotic, repetitive, and disgusting part of the tought process falls alseep while life itself fills in the gasp.

Finally, one becomes infinitly more intelligent, loving, attentive,
quite, still, than when constantly trying to battle and fix the thoughts.

The toughts are always promising salvation, better moments, in the future, or turn back to nostalgy when the present or future are dark.

The problem is that the very thinking about past and future is putting oneself in complete darkness itself. As you said, "imaginary space".

It's like hypnosis. A compulsive energetic movement towards "I". "I this", "I that", and then when "I" get born, "others" get born, "he this", "she that", then the world gets born, the policitcs, and so on, and so on.

In my last observations, I see the so called "Ego" as a moving energy, or, I'd rather say, energy blockages which the body is tirelessly trying to push away. Sometimes one can feel the ego in the brain, next moment in the belly, in the muscles. It's just a bad play of energy happening, even a disease seems to be like that.

Even more, I feel sometimes that my body is not limited to the visible body. I perceive energy movements outside of me, very subtle ones, particularly in front of me. And I observed that the ego energy was taking source here, outside the body. Well, maybe it's only a matter of viewpoint.

What is terrible with this mind/consciousness game, because it's nothing but a game, is that as soon as the "I" gets born, it begins to scratch and the hypnotic compulsion to fix things, "problems", appear.

Practice consists in losing this bad habit and staying quite in consciousness, beeing 200% trustfull with her, and more important than that, to see absolutly that *nothing else* can bring fullfilment in life. Nothing, no friendship, no wife or husband, no job, no status or fame. Staying in the arms of consciousness is the only fullfilment, anything else is bonus.

What is even more funny is to be more detached with day to day life. I'm still a computer engineer doing my job as good as I can, and I see how the others are involved in their story. Maybe I'm wrong about them, because it's not that easy to know how much one is involved just by watching his or her actions. I'm myself involved sometimes, but less often than before. Much less. I know my path back "home".

Thats's why I began this email by saying that I've found my true master. Not that your help is unnecessary, because it *is* to me. Who else can talk about this around me ? Nobody, you know.

Your light is much appreciated in this life.

Thank you for reading, Ed, and again for the website which is a gold mine for any thirsty human beeing,

J.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 2:41 PM

Namaste dear Ed,

Thank you for your site - it's precious to read the dialogues here and know there are others out there on this strange path.
I hope you can help me with some long held and difficult to eradicate doubt. Please excuse me if this is long - it feels helpful to put it all down.
I was fortunate to be with Papaji (Sri Poonja) in Lucknow during the whole of 1994. I had a major scooter accident whilst there and sustained a head injury that catapulted me right out of normal consciousness. I couldn't speak and had my memory wiped for sometime. I suppose it was a classic near death experience, but it was also an epiphany. There was a feeling 'this is it'. It took a long time to integrate and function normally.
When I found out about Papaji I was 24 and doing intense training to become a yoga teacher. I left all that to go to Him. I did not have a real desire to teach, I just wanted to find 'the answers'. After contacting Papaji's teaching of 'finish sadhana, make no effort' I was sure that that would be the end of the yoga practice. However in the following years I was constantly put into situations where I wound up teaching yoga. For many years it's been my full time profession.
About 5 years ago now I had a phase of extremely disturbing phenomena I can only call kundalini - insomnia due to fiery energy coursing my spine, head-splitting migraines, hypersensitivity, dizziness, a feeling like electricity in my body. I even had a full seizure at one point. This phase of phenomena lasted about 3 years. I have had intermittent phenomena since, though right now it feels stable.
During these times I've only had recourse to the words of Papaji, Ramana and Nisargadatta, and trust that it will pass. What I most want is to continue to focus on Self and to let it do its work. My question is, is there something I'm missing? Is it enough? Will the I dissolve by itself?
Also - several factors are also making me question this profession of yoga teaching, and until now it has felt impossible to find a useful sounding board for what I've been experiencing. Because yoga has always been tied up with notions of truth for me, several times I've found the work becomes a kind of satsang. This became more or less a formal satsang a few times, where I felt a particular space open up with the students and the quality of the communication was completely different. However then it wouldn't feel true - to advise the students to practice (asana) - and to feed this whole concept of process and 'becoming'.
Also physically, the focus on asana - which is generally what I'm expected to teach as a yoga teacher - feels like it keeps me bound and involved with the body. My body has a succession of complaints and no longer feels nourished by what I do. But if it is the service I'm here to do, then so be it... I always wanted to asked Papaji about this.
Thank you so much for taking the time to read this.
yours in Truth,

Y.

RESPONSE:

N.,

Has making no effort all these years resulted in anything dissolving?

Ramana never said do nothing. Nisargadatta never said do nothing. Robert never said do nothing. They all emphasized self-inquiry. This is homework.

In fact, this is what most people do with regard to spiritual work--nothing.

I never read a Papaji book so I don't know what he advised. If he advised abiding in the self, he advised correctly, but learning how to abide in the self means learning what the self is which means digging around inside your subjectivity.

If you are meant to be a yoga teacher, perhaps that is why the feeling of Satsang arises. This has been your accidental life's work to now. If not this, then what?

True, teaching yoga does make you think about the body too much, but it also provides asana that increase mental power for meditation.

To all that you are doing now, I merely ask you as a test, to download the Nisargadatta Gita and Autobiography of a Jnani. Read the Hunting the I section or AOJ, and print out the Gita. Read it every morning, about 4-5 verses. No more. Contemplate it and then meditate on it while in Padmasana for 30 minutes. Do this every morning and report back in two weeks.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 7:32 PM

19 February 2010

Some thoughts on Awareness Watching Awareness.

For some reason, many people continue writing me for more information about Langford's technique which he calls awareness watching awareness. I have stated the reasons I don't like this method FOR MOST practitioners. If your questions regarding my opinion are not answered below or in the practice section on the itisnotreal.com website, please write to Michael Langford for clarification. I never practiced this technique.

First, his book is nothing more than a meditation manual and a promise. The promise is if you practice this method by giving it a good chance, and he says six months is not a good chance, you will have some success.

But he never states what that success or goal is, outside of the title of the book, eternal bliss. No guideposts are listed nor experiential map. He does not state what his own experiences were, or where the practice led him. There are no email transcripts where he directs students from step to step. So to practice his method, one has to depend totally on faith on Michael to obtain some unknown goal.

At least with Ramana's method, which Michael said he never could figure out how to practice, we have a known quantity, namely Ramana himself and the lineage he started including Robert Adams. The same for Nisargadatta.

Next, the technique itself is vague and confusing. He says you must become aware of awareness.

What does this mean? It sounds like either there are two awarenesses, or you have to split one awareness into two.

Other times he uses the phrase "aware of consciousness," and describes "awareness" as the background of everyday consciousness.

By now, if I were a beginner, I'd be very confused, because that background could be the sense of "me" that many meditators experience as a dark-heaviness in and behind the body, it could be the void, which is the essence of consciousness and which contains everything. But it could also mean the totality of consciousness perceived or apprehended as a whole. Being aware of that totality, or

being aware of the Void is the same as the Zen meditation called Shikantaza, which requires much patience.

Again, he gives few examples in real life as to what he means. This is a major, major weakness. He might in some other writings or a blog, but I have not searched more for detail from him. The book by itself is incomplete.

Also, this is hardly a beginner's technique, in that he invented it after failing to perform self-inquiry in terms of locating an I Am sense for 27 years! That is, he had performed all sorts of self-inquiry methods including asking who am I, and also trying to find the tactile sense of I Am, and failed. One can be assured though that after 27 years of practice, he was quite sophisticated.

Now, I would agree his method has great promise, if by being aware of awareness, he meant becoming aware of consciousness as a whole AFTER one has become one with the sense of I AM and has attained unity consciousness, or after one has gone beyond I Am, and is observing the totality of that which is as an observer. However, this is near the conclusion of the path rather rather than the beginning.

The problem is the consciousness/body knot usually felt in the heart or belly (Hara), which is the seat of the ego and I Am. Unless that knot is specifically seen through, no permanent liberation can be obtained. It appears Michael was not aware of this knot or he would have immediately called it "I Am." It is extremely forceful and attention getting, unless you have practiced too much meditation on the background, and become very familiar with the Void. Void meditation will make everything else seem inconsequential, such as the I Am, even when it is not. Voidness meditation skips the step of isolating and following the I Am.

Comparatively, self-inquiry as outlined here, is finding the I-sense and attending to it, watching it, allowing merger with it, falling back into it, and discovering what you thought to be the I-sense actually changes over time, and the practice is to stay with that that feels like you as the subject. Cling to the I no matter how it changes.

For many the I Am appears to be the knot. For others later in their practice, the Void. For others, the witness, and also the witness of the witnessing duality. Stay with the one that feels most like you even as it changes. Then when you become clear, you can always be aware of the looker, and then rest in the looker, become the looker.

Now Michael may mean by AWA, to have the looker, look at the looker. However, he does not state ever that you are to look for the subject. He creates a dichotomy of awareness watching awareness, but never states there is a looker, or subject, witnessing the totality of consciousness as an object.

Therefore, I find his method confusing for any but advanced meditators who can look for the looker, or more easily, as in Shikantaza, sit in quietness, sitting in silence within ones present experience, doing nothing.

But his method misses the broad road of attending to the I Am. Once the I Am sense is found, a path directly to total liberation is clearly (I should say, more clearly) laid out and is much easier to follow.

Much else of Michael's book is powerful. Read slowly, stop, ponder and then meditate on the words. Also he describes how the ego (which he also says does not exist), will constantly try to stop you from proper reading and practice. He says the more you practice the better.

This is so true. I even have people who practice 2 hours a day ask me if that isn't too much, that there might be some danger in 2 hours of daily practice.

The more you can practice the better, formal sitting and informally stopping throughout the day to get in touch with that I Am sense. Just the sheer amount of practice engenders spiritual power, Joriki, which allows the mind to settle closer to the root consciousness.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 9:24 PM

Dear Ed,

State of absence is really really confortable and natural. Nothing extraordinary or fancy though: no big lights, no seeing of gods, no divine bliss, no kundalini energy shaking the body... but a sense of clear repose, deep contentment, silence, less involvement, unknown certainty... Indeed it is not the absolute not-knowing but still already basic happyness is flowing, one feels like positively practicing, at last.
It is indeed pretty simple but at the same time so different from ordinary confusion of consciousness and mind does not want to give up so easily.
I just stay there abiding into the spiritual center that seems most natural in the moment, in parallel dropping the mind, letting go of ego construct, relaxing solidity, becoming transparent, becoming no-one, practicing a lot with joyful dedication.
I continue to deepen understanding and absorbtion but being content with what is now.
I can not thanks enough for your precious clarifications Ed! Somehow I always knew what to do, but in my vast stupidity I need Teachers to clear my billion doubts.
Now I learn to follow my inner intuition that is always going to guide me on the most effective and natural path I am sure...

Love,

S.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:08 PM

Master,

I feel before consciousness comes back, there is one kind of awareness in which nothing is felt, meaning the outside noises, the feelings, perceptions, thoughts , images etc etc nothing at all except that I am always aware, meaning I always felt I am at it. I have no idea however how time passed. Time becomes a non event. There is awareness as to my existence yet no awareness of time or the passage of it.

The awareness of existence takes place when intense joy is felt like fountains of pure joy spurting all over my body yet during that time there is no memory of where I am, nor what I am. There is no memory as to where I am meditating either in room or office or which room and in which position. Once memory takes over fully and it takes a little time for it to fully return, so does the IAM ness return.
However the little gap between memory returning and no memory is real ME. That ME is the original state and precedes consciousness (memory).

Many times in office during afternoons as I just lie down, I very often lose memory whether I am at office or at home or whether I am lying or sitting. I have no memory for just that few moments YET something made me aware that "I remain" even without the memory of whom I am or where I am. As memory takes a firm grip I become fully conscious. With memory returning there is a self-knowing mechanism which tells me that "I exist" even without that memory. The return of memory marks the return of IAM ness again.

Many pranams,
Your Servant,Publish Post
Rajiv kapur

RESPONSE:

Yes, what most call consciousness is really just the mind. When the mind leaps forth from the resting state, all the trouble begins. I Am. The world.

The world, the body, I Am are apparent only. As Robert said, an optical illusion.

I am glad to watch your "experiences" and understanding deepen and unfold. The neo advaitins say spiritual states come and go, and the only constant quality is ordinary mind, and by that they mean the ordinary, unawakened mind.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 9:18 PM

20 February 2010

From some of the remarks from people who write to you, it seems an error that some make is they read a particular book or listen to a particular teacher for a short time and overgeneralize what they read or hear.

Papaji is probably one of the most misunderstood advaita gurus. His primary teaching was to sit at his feet and surrender to the sage / the Self. He never, never, advocated that everyone drop sadhana en masse. He did direct some people to stop practicing pranayama or other techniques that he felt had served their purpose with those particular individuals. To others, he recommended a wide variety of practices, in each case, based on the maturity of the student. He prescribed everything from self inquiry, devotion and seva to painting and dancing. He would tell one person to do one thing and another to do the exact opposite.

All good teachers personalize their message to each particular student. Ramana was no different. He once told a woman who had left the Catholic church to return to it and worship Christ. She apparently followed his advice, with good results. People who read something that Papaji or some other guru said to one individual or within a certain limited context and think that this advice applies universally are mistaken.

The best, most effective teaching is the one that will help the student in question to introvert the mind and drop all of their erroneous beliefs. That is why it is important to have living, breathing teachers like you, Ed. You give general guidelines and signposts to follow but also address the individual needs of each student. This is good. The world could benefit from fewer books lecturers and more realized teachers.

D.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:21 PM

27 February 2010

Dearest Ed,
the last saturday I awoke in the morning with a clear sense of 'I am': if You remember, before this experience, I was not able to find it.
So I was stunned and began to focus with intensity upon 'I am':
Peace, sometimes bliss, quiet mind but upon all curious experiences in which inner structures seemed to dissolve and after, sometime, an unspeakable condition without separation, without feeling of 'I am' which lasted a while and then all the process began again.
In these moments it seems there is unity with 'I am', but really there isn't 'I am'.
I meditated like this 4 days: I wanted to dissolve totally the feeling of 'I am' so to reach the 'ego death'.
Thuesday, reading your 'first awakening', I realized You are right! the feeling of 'I am' is only a feeling, not of 'I' but of 'Amness' without I!
not only that, I was identified with desire to dissolve the feeling of 'Amness' but in Truth I was witnessing everything, always, and 'Amness' is only an experience that I witness like body and mind.
I also witness and I am beyond the unspeakable condition of non separation without concepts! So, once again, I realized that all these happenings have nothing to do with me...

Now I can put attention upon 'Amness' but I know I am beyond this feeling and so I don't do it; instead in sitting meditation I, again, do nothing: all happen by itself:
silence gradually deepens (a silence without bottom, so peaceful) and sometime a strong bliss from all the body come out; I rest in myself as myself.

Every comment is welcomed...
with gratitude,
bowing,
L.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Very good Loris.*
>
> *Now you must become well acquainted without mistake about that resting in yourself.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 6:50 PM

01 March 2010

Dear Ed,

I know this is going to sound ludicrous, I know this Nothingness/Emptiness well yet not really in silence until now. After reading Autobiography of a Jnani page 87 to 92 it came to me so I went and meditated on it and went straight into this nothingness in silence.
I saw how the "I am" is not real and how the mind deludes me into believe everything else is real. This is kind of a first with me. Although I have had similiar sensations.
This nothingness/emptiness was my September expierence, which I had difficulties articulating to you. Looking back over my lifetime many, many times I have been here not knowing what it was.
Several weeks ago I had a small death with an "I am" luckly you had just explained about getting a new one to another so I did. Yesterday again felt as if I was dying with some strange sensations when I was talking to a friend about nothing related to realization but the sensation was, was this real or not.
Early on when you first stated as my Master I was looking for the gap finding it briefly and did lose sight and understanding of it. I will review the gap in which you talk with Rajiv. These talks have helped my understanding greatly! Thank you and Rajiv.

Unless you indicate anything else I will continue with "I am" the Gita as well as reflecting on it through out the day. I sense that my sittings are more advanced than what I can understand and/or articulate. Is this normal? Any luck with the pet food bank? My depression has lifted greatly thanks to you Ed and your teachings.

Be well Master,

K.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 10:46 AM

02 March 2010

I fell asleep on the bus home the other day and missed my stop, when I woke up it really struck me that I am not the body. The body was inactive on the bus, while my knowing was only of itself during sleep, but as soon as my knowingness of the body returned I found it in another location from where I expected! Needlessly to say I walked home.

The 'I' thought is still there, but as my attention is placed more and more on beingness it is more clear that I am not Ryan, nor a body, or the World, but I am entirely beyond all. This is a very freeing feeling, even at my early stage of understanding. I do not worry much anymore about what will happen, but rather sit back and watch as life takes it's course.

Sittings are becoming more easy. I notice longer periods where I do not know where I am or who I am. There are some thoughts, and the mind does get restless after some time, but nothing like it used to.

I know many Sages, and Jnani's have disliked the world, but for me, at this stage, it seems a beautiful lie. I think this may be because of my age and situation, but who am I to complain?! Beingness is beautiful, and knowledge of that beingness is such a special gift that I dare not betray it with words. Thank you for your continuing help, Sir, and as always I will continue you to update you as it all unfolds.

Love,

R.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 4:58 PM

03 March 2010

SENT TO ME:

Dear Ed,
Thank you for your site and all you do for those of us stumbling around in the dark.
I understand from your teachings and from the resources you lead us to, that the "I" is not something that can be observed or "seen" but can be experienced or felt.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes and no. It can be located by searching and experienced as a singularity, as something different from ordinary objects, because it is ultimately the subject wearing different self-object feelings and ideas that have to be transcended.*

TO ME:

I also noticed that you and other teachers have mentioned "falling backwards into the self". It seems that the "I am" or the self can not be found, but it can be experienced as "seeing from".

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes and no. It can be found, it can be researched, probed, felt, thought about, but ultimately one has to relax and abide in it.*

TO ME:

When I look at things visually and let go I sometimes get a sense of something behind my eyes. When I close my eyes the same sense is felt in my chest.

> ***RESPONSE:***

Many people experience it in many different ways. You can watch it, probe it, fall back into it. The point is to get to know it and then learn how to abide in it. You need to realize this is not truly you, but the first I Am-like entity that has to be seen through and transcended.

TO ME:

Robert talked often about "effortless, choiceless awareness".

RESPONSE:

Robert may have used the term a few times, but that is really Krishnamurti. Others may have brought up Krishnamurti at Satsang, and he talked about it. Robert advised an active self-inquiry, making effort.

TO ME:

Did he mean that our true self is the act of looking, hearing, feeling, etc.?

RESPONSE:

No, no, no. You are entirely beyond the world and experience. He advised actively searching within one's subjectivity for the source of I, which is an individual search and may be similar but not identical to anyone else's search. In "Hunting the I," I tried to cover many bases for many people. But ultimately, each person's search is their own responsibility.

TO ME:

Or should I try to isolate the feeling I mentioned before? When I read the Gita I get a similar feeling in my chest, almost like intense yearning.
Am I off the trail completely?

M.

RESPONSE:

By all means try to isolate the sensations, then play with them. They will change just by the process of observation. When you feel you are sure what the I Am feeling is, watch it, and then try to merge and abide in it. This is the real beginning of self-inquiry, abiding in the I.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 6:43 PM

08 March 2010

Hi Ed,

I've been into discovering my true nature for about 25 years now and I think I've spent 25 years doing it all in my

head. I know all the techniques and all the philosophies but it's all just words really.
A couple of times when I was younger on hallucinogenics I tasted a separate reality and I've spent a lot of time onging to get back to those spaces of Joy. Knowing beyond my limited self.
Recently I've been checking out all the non duality stuff out there and love it. All the Yoga , pranayama and kriya stuff I had dabbled with before seemed a bit effortish and always seemed to leave me feeling out of balance and pacey.Not good when you are a roofer! haha
Basically I've been a bit lazy and favoured cogitating the truth rather than doing "the work". I'm always aware that a silent sub stratum exists within me but I can't quite make it stay long enough. I've always felt like I'm just on the cusp of "getting there I came across your website last week and I absolutely love it.
It's just fantastic. I feel a real connection with you and what you say I tried your meditation practice this morning of the hot head of thoughts and butter on head melting into the hara. It was easy and great. I realize I spend most of my time floating in the head eye area which keeps the thought factory working over time. I've really been asking the Infinite Intelligence to please come and get me recently because I feel so soul sick and trapped in all my theoretical nowledge.
I just want to Merge into the Real Deal Anyway, I just wanted to email you and say Thanks for all your help , pointers , tips and inspiration on the website. The I Am stuff was becoming a bit of an intellectual exercise for me until I found your site and now I've started feeling it.
Thank you very much,

B.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 1:15 PM

The Business of Neo Advaita; from Charlie Hayes' Website:

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 1:15 PM

08 March 2010

Hello Ed

What an excellent explanation, for a situation where words only point the way. I do not see how it could be improved upon, or even substantially expanded.
You are seriously kicking ass and taking names my friend.
Absolutely outstanding work.
You have simply surpassed all written teachings (in logical straightforward exposition in the English language) with the " Our Mission " piece.
I don't know how I missed it previously on the site, I just read it this morning 3/08/2010.
I don't know what else to say other than to please let me know if I can be of any assistance.

A.

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

Where is "Our Mission" located on the site? Thank you.

March 08, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *http://itisnotreal.com/subpage23.html*

This is merely another formulation of "Hunting the I." This mission statement was written many years ago, as opposed to hunting the I which is recent. I am surprised to see how consistent this position has been over time.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 1:17 PM

12 March 2010

Updated Autobiography of a Jnani available for download.

http://itisnotreal.com/Autobiography%20of%20a%20Jnani.pdf

Some new material has been added, including an updated section on self-inquiry called "Hunting the I."

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 3:31 PM

14 March 2010

Hello Ed,

Thank you for your perseverance with me.

Here are description of my experiences that I think refer to the levels I have discerned so far, (referring to 17. Of the Gita).

1. Chattering interpretation – Ramesh's thinking mind
2. Doing and planning – Ramesh's Working mind - Mindfulness
3. Observing action – Being in the zone e.g. where my body is jogging and it feels like jogging is happening and has nothing to do with me – I'm just there observing. Words from the observer can be present.
4. Observing the words of the observer – wordlessly. Can happen with 3. above
5. Observing the space in which the wordless observing happens . **Only happens in meditation.**
6. 5. falls into nothingness. No awareness, no vision, not even the darkness. Sometimes with a jolt. (This is when the fear of oblivion happens and leads me to question whether losing the I am is desirable.) **Only happens in meditation.**

Can you advise me as to whether this appears to be the right approach and whether to continue in the same vein?

Thanks very much.

J.

RESPONSE:

This is absolutely perfect! Continue exactly the same way, but pay more attention to locating the observer. What is the observer? What is the experience of the observer?

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:58 PM

16 March 2010

Dearest Ed,
Sunday evening in the last part of 'Autobiography of a Jnani' I read the following Rajiv' sentence (pag.137):
'There is nothing to do but rest and whatever happens is simply not my concern'.
and in 'Hunting the I' You say: (pag 163):
'The I is the zero point of no movement and eternal rest. The apparent activity involved in abiding in that I, is really a resting, not a doing. It is discovering your nondoing, resting self.'
Inspired I tried in that moment and I entered a rest state:
It seems like a conscious sleep: there is peace and the body breath like in sleep, but there is awareness; it is easy and natural and I experienced it at times when I tried, in the past, to sleep consciously.
It is very peaceful and restful: there is no desire to do anythng, only to rest there for eternity. The body relaxes itself; there is generally silence, but thoughts can come but they not disturb and there is no interest in following them, if the attention follows them after a while it returns to resting peacefully.Sometime great joy comes out from the chest and the other parts of body. It is easy for me to contact this state and rest there: there is only desire to continue to rest there. Something of it remains during the day: like a part of me that continues to rest, a peace in background.
Is it Turiya? Would like to share any advice with me?
with deep gratitude,
L.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, this is Turiya. Abide there as often as you can. Sometimes effort may still be required in the future, as nothi9ng is constant in self-inquiry.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:19 PM

Hi Master Ed
thanks for the continuous help through your website..It is a blessing. There is something I feel compelled to tell you, I hope you can give me some directions..
the last month I spent a 3 weeks holiday on a foreign country by myself, I was there working on a photo project that required making interviews.
Most of them were sad tales about life and during them I got emotionally involved with the people
I was interviewing. At the end of my trip I went throught an emotional breakdown... my body was numb and I could barely walk/eat for 2 days. My body/mind was like in a storm....as a witness I experienced the "I feeling" struggling from the desire to change the events I was witnessing.
After 2 days the storm passed away and I was back on my feet...
But something has been missing ever since...the "I" feeling seems to be subsided.
There is a constant experience of emptiness, silence and peace even if the consciousness keep moving and changing.
Following the advice you gave Raji I started to include two 20 minutes (or more) session of meditation during my days. My body naturally let this happen, I sometimes seems to have to make effort in order to keep my body/mind from naturally falling in meditation (the body freeze) while working during the waking state.
During meditation there is no effort involved...
consciousness play in front of me and subside on Its will, I stand apart and from a silent and peaceful standpoint witnessing happens. There is no entity involved...and there are no words for defining this state.
During witnessing, in meditation or during the waking state, there is no feeling of joy arising...but a a feeling of sadness.

It naturally arise from the witnessing of an ever changing consciousness...a consciousness bound to suffer from It's incapacity to find peace, where every form It assume is bound to struggle and finally die.
There is no identity able to do anything about it....and all this show is too much and sadness mixed with love, for
all this struggling forms, spontaneously arise.
Often there is a feeling of wanting all this to disappear forever....the waking state feels too sad to witness, and I naturally feel the inclination to be in deep meditation.
I pray for your directions...
with gratitude
M.

RESPONSE:

> *Yes, as Robert often said, this world is the lowest hell. Only an idiot would want to stay here too long.*
>
> *However, the more you practice, you see that the world and you as a human are unreal, and your real nature is beyond all this.*
>
> *There is a happiness resting in oneself no matter what is happening outside.*
>
> *No guru ever lived a very long life except Nisargadatta who lived to be 82 I think. Most died in their 60s and 70s. They don't want to stay, but they are always happy because they do not identify with the play. You do.*
>
> *You need to find the witness and identify with it.*
>
> *Ed*

O ME:

35 Days Later:

Hi Master Ed
I hope to be blessed by your guidance once again.
I have difficulties to express my state at the moment but I'll try to be concise and clear about it.
Days are passing and I have no memory about them. Around me things are happening but I am not experiencing them directly....witnessing has no subjectivity anymore.
The predominant feeling is peace while everything happen...but there is nobody feeling it.
This is a constant feeling during my waking state and the mind flow happens without breaking it. I noticed that I don't seat for meditation as before but it just happens sometimes.
There are still moment when my body feel sick or it is disturbed by something... but this is happening without the interference of a personality. It is just part of the continuous movement and change in the waking state experience.
In the meantime life is going on as before but I lost interest in everything... sometimes I get passionate about something but soon this feeling subside and I have no more
interest in it.
I hope you can guide me.

Thank you
M.

P.S. sorry for my english...It is my second language and I am not really good in it.

RESPONSE:

> *M.*
>
> *Whatever you are doing is correct.*

Where you are is very good. You describe well. I understand perfectly.

You are going beyond the world to your true state.

Don't be afraid.

However, it would help to sit for formal meditation until you have gone all the way.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:11 AM

20 March 2010

TO ME:

I am constantly watching now, Sir. Sometimes I get involved and forget myself, but not very often anymore. It all just happens and it happens to the 'I Am' not me. The 'I Am' experiences the frustration, the 'I Am' experiences the pain, or happiness, but I just watch - nothing affects me. I am that steady thing in the background and I watch the unfolding of consciousness in front of me.

It's odd. When I walk or move I get the feeling I'm not going anywhere. The consciousness is changing to give the impression there is walking, but I am still, not moving, just watching from the place where I have always been. Space doesn't feel as big anymore. It almost feels like I'm inside of an enclosed room, but that room is so miraculous that it can morph and change to give the perception I'm standing outside under the stars, or at the foot of a mountain. In truth, though, there is only that room, which is consciousness. There is no mountain. There are no stars. And when the lights are off in the room, I don't know it's there, I don't even know I am there!

Anyways, that's all for now! Hope all is well with you!

R.

RESPONSE:

Very, very good. Not many have this kind of positive experience. This is pure grace. Your experience is very deep and will continuously change and mature over time.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:36 PM

21 March 2010

Hi Ed

Sorry for not getting back to you in the two weeks you said. I guess I needed more time to sort some things out. Anyways, I need your advice please. I can finally 'pinpoint' a wordless sensation of "I Am". Though it itself does seem to change. Sometimes appearing in front of me, other times between my heart and belly, though I know these feelings themselves are not the I am sense. I understand intellectualy that this sense is observed and arises

in what is observing it and hence it cannot be real either. Alot of peace has arisen just by abiding in this I am though. I am not sure what to do from here, do I just continually abide in this I AM? Or the 'sense of looking or observing' this I AM?
That Nisargadatta-Gita you gave me,has been a tremendous help !
Thanks a lot!

R.

> ***RESPONSE:***

> *For now, abide in the feeling I Am. Get to know it full well. The the I Am eventually will become the observer by itself.*
>
> *Ed*

TO ME (Two weeks later) :

Ive undergone quite a change in perception. It is as you said. Its like the I sense feels foreign and 'I' am observing it. Sometimes it feels like I have nothing to 'cling on to' as the I Am sense or 'me'. So I guess now its more a thing of being 'me' and resting as that?
Thank you

R.

> ***RESPONSE:***

> *Yes, yes, yes!*
>
> *Find that which feels most like "me" and then rest in it.*
> *Ed*

TO ME:

I feel like something is going to happen pretty soon. I feel like I am losing myself. It feels like things happen on their own at times, like a thought or my body moving etc. Concepts feel strange and foreign, even an urge such as hunger for example. It just feels like its there. I dont really know how to explain this. But I also feel frightened and I don't know why. It feels like this enquiry also happens with very little effort and runs on its own spontaneously. It feels like something is pulling 'me' along ?? Any advice would be great, but il keep abiding.

Thanks!

R.

> ***RESPONSE:***

> *R., you are doing well. Don't let fear deter you, continue to go straight ahead as you have been doing.*

TO ME:

I hope you are well (how could you not be lol). Anyways I have a question, would like your guidance. I have had a taste of Turiya quite a few times, some more 'deeper' than others. I can see that thoughts and so on, desires, etc are empty and just float on 'my' surface. My question is, is it necessary to stabilize there 24/7 to go beyond? Because it comes and goes (get distracted and seem to 'chase' the images on the surface). Though I try to self-abide as much as I can and it comes, without seeing Turiya as the actual goal of course. There have been points where I can see that anything I am is beyond mind or any appearance and I can understand why any attempt at describing is futile, though of course some 'I' still remains. Would Turiya eventually become more permanent the more I go back to it?

Thank you, I have deep gratitude for your help, its much appreciated!

R.

RESPONSE:

Stay away from labels such as Turiya, the Absolute, Consciousness, etc. They only make sense within the context of a philosophy of existence and knowing. You want to go beyond all understanding and knowing, which is just the mind. The point of all true spiritual philosophy is to satisfy the mind with explanations, so that it doesn't wander in thought any longer, and stops and observes and rests in the fundamental state.

Therefore, just stay as much in the sense of 'I Am' as you can, whatever that means to you. Like I say, that sense varies as meditation matures. All through the day, go to that place whatever you are doing, and of course in formal meditation.

But you have to become totally stupid without any understanding of Advaita philosophy or terms.

Ed

Post Comments:

rajiv said...

@R

Deepening of turiya is a relative concept. It is not turiya which is so important but what turiya leads to, especially during waking state. Deeper turiya states must translate into what happens to you and your behavior in waking state in relation to all the knowings,experiences and past memories of the mind.

Rajiv

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 11:31 AM

25 March 2010

Hello Sir,

After reflecting upon and spending more time in the state that I last shared with you, where I said there was no 'I' thought, I think it would be more accurate to say that there was no center to consciousness, not that there was no 'I' thought.

The more time I spend with that state the more I see there is an 'I' thought, or sensation that perceives consciousness, it just is not centered on the body, or one thing in particular, but on consciousness as a whole. In this state I feel detached from the body and the sensations it experiences.

For instance, in the shower, wetness doesn't seem to touch me the same way. I experience wetness, but am always 'dry', or untouched by all experiences. I think this is a more pure 'I Am', although obviously not entirely pure, because I still experience some thoughts, and the world itself.

I figured I should clarify, since I feel there is a big difference in understanding between consciousness lacking a center, and the loss of the 'I' thought.
OK, bye :D

Love,
R.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *It is o.k. to articulate, because that is part of the learning and unfolding process, but don't take the terms too seriously, such as pure "I Am," "Turiya," etc.*
>
> *These are only words and concepts.*
>
> *So when you describe taking a dry shower, or the center is not in the body, you are being truer to your own experience and not using buzzwords.*
>
> *So you are doing very well.*
>
> *You should be aware there is an I thought, but that is not the subject, the Self, nor is it "I Am." "I Am" is witnessed by the ultimate subject. What you regard as "I Am" will change over time. At first, it might have a big body-feeling, kinesthetic component. Some even consider the Third Eye opening to be "I Am." Later, "I Am" may seem like the totality of consciousness, or just pure awareness.*
>
> *In fact, in the West there is a whole branch of theoretic psychology dedicated to articulating and understanding the complex issues of all the images, concepts, words, feelings and perceptions that make up what we call "I Am." If you are interested, go to the website http:itisnotreal.com and hit the button entitled "Psychoanalysis, or just hit it here." I wrote three books on this subject in the 1980s. One complete book is posted, and part of a second.*
>
> *There are other summarizing articles I wrote for various academic journals, such as: http://itisnotreal.com/InternationalJournal.pdf*
>
> *But in most cases you will still be aware that these are all phenomena witnessed by the looker. Then you will think that none of this consciousness stuff has anything to do with me and you'll investigate the looker--the subject. This is when things begin to get interesting.*
>
> *Here you are on the border of nothingness, going beyond consciousness altogether and know of your existence as something totally beyond the world in a different way than you know anything else, such as objects or knowledge in consciousness.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:24 PM

> *The itisnotreal.com website is being completely recreated in Italian by Sergio Cipollaro, a student in Italy.*
>
> *Sergio, I thank you deeply for your efforts.*
>
> *This website is at: http://itisnotreal.net*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 1:06 PM

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:38 AM

26 March 2010

Dear Ed,

Read your "Hunting the I." Think it's made one important thing clear. You talk about discovering "the anomaly, that which never changes, which is the subject of all the myriads of objects." I think I've discovered that and in fact discovered it a long time ago. I don't mean to be bragging. It would indeed be an odd thing to brag about, since it's so...well, simple. I'm able to access it in day-to-day life as well as in formal meditation without difficulty.

The "experience" in meditation is one of resting. It does not require effort. It seems to be something (not a "thing or "object, though) that is apt for abiding. Abiding in it brings a deep and satisfying samadhi.

There is a sense of "Amness" that goes with or is identical to this abiding. This I AMness is somewhat different from feelings/sensations I have at other times identified as I AM feelings, feelings that do nonetheless seem to be aptly characterized as I AM feelings. It's different for example from the feeling I AM that seems to contract in response to narcissistic wounds. The "feeling" is constant in the sense that, when I have, it is always the same. It's not something that can be punctured.

The "experience" definitely is not one of finding the self or subject as a thing or object. It is one of being the experiencer or witness. It's a kind of self-awareness but somewhat paradoxically it is not reflective at all. The self-awareness is immediate.

If I understand you correctly and am describing my own experience accurately, then it seems that this is what you call the "real" I AM feeling-the feeling you encourage us to abide in. Does this seem right to you?

Thanks Ed.

Best,
M.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *Exactly M., 100% spot on.*
>
> *Just abide there and that is all that has to be done.*
>
> *Of course, the inner landscape will continue to change and sometimes it will be hard to continually abide in the anomaly, but you've got the method down pat.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 5:10 PM

Dear Ed,

I have been reading the site and been in and out of the blog and trying to take on board your guidance. I couldn't locate the I am precisely and you wrote me a few days back about that. I have been doing enquiry centred on "I am" and putting my attention on that constantly throughout the day. At some point, some days

ago, I had some glimpses of what felt like me to be “I am” when meditating which stayed with me throughout the day, and the next day and the next.

The experience itself was nothing I would call special but my attention keeps being drawn back to that all day. The world seems different and not that real to me presently. Everything has changed but I can’t explain how, it’s just not the same. I feel a peace and tranquillity like I have never known and I am smiling to myself inside (I don’t know why.....?)

Tonight I had to sit down because I had a wave of (?) come over me. I don’t know how to explain this but: I felt a feeling which I recognise from somewhere a million lifetimes ago, or from some depth I cannot even grasp. When it came, I knew without doubt that this was my true essence (or whatever the term should be).....I cannot describe it, it just was. What has made an impression on me is the remembering of this “state”. I have been there before, and it felt like “ home”, maybe its a deep seated memory of the “I am” from when I was a baby?

I am too green to even begin to understand what any of these things are. Whether I am a million lifetimes away from awakening, that’s fine with me, even to have had this one fleeting experience has radically changed everything for me.....

thanks Ed.

> *ML*
>
> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Great experience, no?*
>
> *AND, it just keeps getting better and better.*
>
> *At this point, don't try to figure anything out. Just stay in the I Am. The speculating at this point only hinders true understanding later.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:45 PM

27 March 2010

> *This blog appears to be doing some good. So far in March, it has had almost 6,000 unique visitors, or over 200 a day. This is down from February which had almost 10,000 unique visitors.*
>
> *This demonstrates that these teachings of Advaita/meditation/self-inquiry, where the emphasis is on the method and experiences of self-inquiry that stand behind the the knowledge, as opposed to mouthing aphorisms, or quotes, are desperately needed and welcomed.*
>
> *These teachings go way beyond the simplistic understanding of no I, no self, unity consciousness.*
>
> *I thank you all for reading this site and sharing your experiences.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:54 PM

27 March 2010

Hi Ed,

I had a tiff with my wife. I noticed that throughout the encounter, at every stage I had in my own mind a set of preconceived ideas about how she should respond to me. I realised I am the agent of my own distress.

Over the last week and a series of sits I experienced the sensations and subsequent realisations that I am not breathing, followed then by I am not hearing, followed then by I am not looking. Yesterday and today I am hit by a profound and startling sensation that the entire experience I have of myself as 'P,' ie my persona, is a fabrication, a series of accumulated experiences interwoven with memory, fears, needs, etc. The entire sense of this is that P is a lie as opposed to a liar. A thing so to speak that is not me. How do I know this? I don't.

In meditation I look at the vastness of the void. I am aware of the 'expanded' sensation of my own consciousness, the limitlessness of it, and yet, I am looking at the void. Suddenly...I realise they are one and the same. 'Looking at' ends. There is just awareness, no separateness.

Who is this mad person I once called P? He is not me...I am. And now what really makes me break out in a sweat is, if P is as fabrication, what of the world? Can you comment? As always, I very much look forward to your reply.
With much gratitude
p

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *If you see that you are not real, instantaneously you should see that the world is not real either. You are the center of the universe. When you disappear and are cognized as unreal, the world should disappear also, leaving only ONE.*
>
> *Stay in that ONE for a long time, and eventually you will go beyond it.*
>
> *You have nearly completed stage I awakening. Just keep aware of awareness as oneness.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:37 PM

Thank you very much for your response, Sir. It was very helpful. Your sense of intuition and understanding of your students is uncanny. My experience is as you stated. I am at the point where exploring perceptions within consciousness is of no more benefit. They are just that, perceptions within consciousness, and I understand they have nothing to do with me. It's time for me to go 'deeper', and this can only be done by joining the looker.

Microanyalsis as you call it, or the exploration of perceptions was very helpful, though. In the process of probing around inner space for a grip on a sense of beingness perceptions are explored, which leads to the understanding that the mind has an almost orchestral method of creating a center, or 'me' within consciousness, and the eventual realization that beingness is the constant backdrop where perception takes place.

As for concepts I will try to stick to my experiences, and only use them when I can find no other suitable words, especially bloated ones like 'I Am'.

Thank you again so very much for all your assistance and guidance, Sir. It is of unimaginable help, and saves so much precious time.

Love,
R.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:00 AM

29 March 2010

Ed

Since you are one of few Advaita teachers who have extensive exposure to Buddhism, I want to ask you this question. I stayed with Buddhism for many years before. Buddhism insists there is no Atman/The Self. Even I read this Buddhist teacher's book:

http://www.amazon.com/Mindfulness-Bliss-Beyond-Meditators-Handbook/dp/0861712757/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1269877325&sr=1-3

All of his realizations he talked about in his book such as no "me" are no different from what are described by Advaita teachers. But he still insists there is no Self and explicitly rejects Advaita's Atman tenet. Do you know why?

Best regards,

J.

RESPONSE:

This is the problem with concepts. Two people can have identical experiences and different understandings depending on their background. Two people can have opposite experiences, yet because of concepts, think that opposite experiences prove the exact some thing.

Like science. Understanding in physics changes completely every 50-100 years.

In the end, we don't know what their experiences are really, we only read about their conclusions, and the conclusions are not important.

Personally, I like the Nisargadatta conceptualization as it is closest to my own experiences and understanding.

Generally Buddhist pay far too much attention to the various voids, and don't so much make the distinction between subject and object.

He may mean there is no subject, or he may mean there is no objective self that can be witnessed.

The best to do is to answer the question for yourself in your own experiences, and this requires persistence and increasing maturity. Then you write your own book. You will understand with unshakable conviction. Remember, there are no truths, only guiding "pointers," which ultimately all need to be dropped.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:02 PM

Ed,

I am really puzzled by Advaita's no-doer concept. I have done some experiments on my own life. I found if I just follow the life flow, I basically stay in the same course of my life. If I want to make changes in my life, I have to resort to conscious efforts. Otherwise, nothing is going to change or happen. For example, I am not a native English speaker and my career in the States suffered a lot due to poor English speaking skill. I found to alter this situation is possible, but I have to resort to massive learning efforts. If no-doer concept is correct and a person adopts it, he is not going to be able to tackle the situation similar to mine.

Namatse,

J

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *You speak in terms of worldly knowledge. What I teach is entirely beyond the world and human knowledge. I talk about living in the Godhead, totally beyond the world and humanity.*
>
> *In spirituality, we are not talking about how to have a better life, more friends, better marriage, etc., we are talking about going entirely beyond the world.*
>
> *Therefore, if you want to stay in the world with a better life, stay far away from spirituality.*
>
> *Nor do I agree with the Neo Advaitins that no spiritual effort is necessary. It is. It takes a long abiding in the I Am, in the totality of consciousness to go beyond consciousness. Robert, Ramana, Nisargadatta, all emphasized self-inquiry in order to awaken.*
>
> *However, when it is all said and done, you will find there never was any effort, or anyone making an effort.*

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:58 AM

Hi Ed, friend and Master,

My live is fully dedicated to the recognition of my true nature.

These are big words of a big mouth and I realise that 'I am' is still daily indentified with body, mind and the world.

In daily live I have a fulltime job as a nurse in a private addiction clinic.
Over 20 years I been working on the recognition of my true nature. It consciously started when I was abouth 17 years old that I read J. Krishnamurti and found a deeper sense of live. Later for almost 15 years I was member and associated with the Dutch part of the School of Economic Science based primarily on the philosophy of Advaita. In that time I received an initiation and mantra in the tradition of Shankara. With ups and downs I practised jappa for abouth 10 years. This al came to an end after I was blessed to visit Ramana Ashram Tiruvanamalai in year 2000. Then new doubts and self-enquiry begin to live.

However, until I was 30 my live was filled with survival because I was always in a fight with the world and most of the time wrapped up in maya. Now I am so to speak 43 and slowly have entered more calm waters and more be able to dive inside.
January this year I received your records with the satsangs from Robert Adams wich has a deep impact on my being. I listen with great love and an open heart daily: before sleeping; driving the car to work; walking in the woods; and streched out on the couch. I feel blessed receiving the teachings of Robert Adams, it is a great treasure and reading this over tears of grace are not far away. Robert has deepen my understanding and make me a more sensitive being.

Daily (for as far my responsibilitys let me go) I am sitting for longer periods in contemplation with crossed leggs on the couch. I am resting with my back in the couch so it is not a formal posture. I keep my eyes closed and be aware of the movements and turmoil of body and mind. After some time they become to slow down and 'I am' be aware of looking with eyes closed. The sensory organs become more alert and the mind slows further down. When toughts and dreams arise in the mind I frequently ask the question: "To whom do these thoughts arise?, etc.." This self-enquiry mostly ends with the thought of: "I, I…", and simple awareness.

Stil it is not really clear to me what it means to abide in the 'I'. To me it stays with a more and more slowing down of the mind and sensory clearness where by the 'sensory' impressions and the body become so to say a ocean of energy without any limits or centre. However this experience or state of consciousness seems most of the time a conceptualizing and intellectual game.

I keep practising and resting in this sitting for at least an hour whereby I am falling sometimes in a dreaming or sleeping state of consciousness. Then sometimes 'I am', suddenly wake up with a shock and a remarkeble clearness of mind and awarenes remaines. This clear awarness of being sometimes also appears gradualy when just watching the mind proces.

I humble want for ask for guidance.

Can/do you advise a more formal posture for meditation? I can sit with my back straight if needed but I am reserved with using any form of pressure or strength. Is there any use in practising meditation (sitting) when I am tired of work and falling asleep?

Is there any real difference in waching the mind process and self-enquiry as tought by Robert Adams? Your support, any guidance and confirmation is more then welcome.

Pranams,
D.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Hi D.,*
>
> *Strong posture really helps to get into samadhi.*
>
> *The problem with Robert's method af asking who something comes to, is it is basically on the level of mind and you are ready to go beyond. That is, asking, "Who am I?," or "To whom does this come?" is a beginner's type of self inquiry.*
>
> *Attached is the Nisargadatta Gita. Download it and print it out. Put it in a 3 ring binder and read it every morning for just a few pages. Then ponder its meaning and then meditate on the I Am.*
>
> *Try this for 2-3 weeks and report back. You should make a lot of progress with this technique.*
>
> *Remember, Robert never practiced any technique, so he taught many different beginners techniques. He was spontaneously awakened.*
>
> *Try to sit half lotus with no support for at least 30 minutes after reading the Gita and pondering.*

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:36 AM

Ed,

Nisargadatta maharaj said that by all means attend to your duties
i dont think i am doing my duties properly, i am afraid that i will fail in my exams this time here.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Nisargadatta spoke approximately 500,000 words in twelve books. Do you suppose he gave exactly the same advice to all? Why do you latch onto that one paragraph?*

> *What you are is entirely beyond the world. Pay no attention to the world. It is a dream, a hoax, it is not real.*
>
> *Spirituality is about finding out what is immortal and entirely beyond the world.*
>
> *You have to decide. Do you want to pass some examinations, or become immortal?*
>
> *Ed*

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

Actually, it might be possible to do both, that is, for the "examinee" to commit himself/herself to at least some kind of ongoing meditative practice AND to enough studying for the exams. And in a "best case" kind of scenario, the relaxation brought about by the practice would result in better scores on the exams too.

March 31, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *The question is deeper than this. He is asking either/or about spirituality or regular everyday life.*
>
> *But it is the regular everyday life that has to be renounced so to speak.*
>
> *Robert/Ramana/Nisargadatta spirituality means death to the ego of everyday worldy events and accomplishments. Therefore, you clearly state to the questioner, that this is a matter of life and death, not balancing spirituality with everyday life demands.*

March 31, 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 3:45 PM

Dear Ed,

Months ago you stated my understanding was advanced; yet you were concerned that I remained unhappy.

Before interacting with you,after months of deep, consistent, seemingly effortless experiences I still felt it did not matter (no point, or conclusion); Despite samadhis, daily meditative black-outs, effortless sense of no real physical boundary (pervasive ease), pulsing lights with eyes closed, and giant-sized heavy presence and tilting, rotating movements in meditation, expanded heavy,presences of teachers, awareness behind my body, mind-numbed frozen stillness, etc. I was aware despite other acute experiences of wide-awake emptiness with razor bright light outlining objects, etc that, to me, it still did not matter. It wasn't enough though pervasive and gentle and just seemed to happen though much stillness began to normalize or drop away.

How true, how deep? I don't know. That still is not my concern. As you suggested, I focused on listening to chanting and listening daily to Robert's Satsangs. I continued to live simply and serve my community spontaneously. I practiced self-inquiry in most activities. I also became more socially involved.

Bliss returned to me. First while waking up, eyes still shut: warm, glowing, "inside" with attention toward my chest yet without boundary. I do not feel it was just bodily ecstasy because there was no body high or real body awareness. Weeks later Bliss occurred again while listening to chanting, resting on the couch. While listening I felt intense desire, almost romantic, in my chest, as I do I attended to it, watched it, sat in it, joined in and as typical with thougths/feelings it flushed away but instead of the usual lightness or ease I expect there was deep, rich bliss.

I began to set down my conclusions and dissatisfaction; bliss mattered-- there was something beyond voidness and dead thought. Life conitued to get crazy and at times carry me away. Bliss largely dropped away. I continued to do my best to practice.

At one point while putting on my socks after waking I clearly and spontaneously thought "I do not persist" as Robert said one would though I often was aware I did not clearly feel this way previously.

I remain clueless. Tension remains to push further, yet I could focus and practice much more. It appears wasted effort to try to understand what is occurring and what I should do, if anything, for I can't understand it or necessarily do it. Life occurs.

This is my long-winded approach, Ed, to express my deepest, heartfelt thanks and to ask again for your Grace and Guidance. I could not have managed effort or faith to move further without your guidance. Though I remain lost with a long way to walk I feel deep appreciation and surrender must be the only real way left. Anything else confounds me. So again, thank you.

Your persistence to refocus, to return to some practice, to not get lost in voids and find the real I AM felt difficult and confusing even unnatural; yet it appears to offer the only clear path through no-things to nothingness. So in many ways I started again. I remain seeing neti neti but now have some faith that this need not be my conclusion. That mostly, all is well.

I am grateful for chanting and Robert's Satsang and the Nisargadatta Gita. It is useful to hear questioners grow, to Robert clarify and joke, to sit in the silence of Satsang, to have an opportunity to just sit still without applying effort or intention, falling into myself.

I agree "Hunting the I" is strong; for me, especially the end, for practice is necessary long as there is one who can practice. And no practice will lead you home just the awareness of interacting with practices until you see who truly practices... Thus the importance of consistently practicing until eventually letting go, not knowing, surrendering, dropping attention from form/movement as mind to still awareness, no?

I have a question or two finally. But this email is long so I will save it for some other time. Maybe I won't wait months.

I do consider you my teacher and I still consider helping you with Satsang. We will see I guess.

Peace, peace,
B.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *B.,*
>
> *You have excellent understanding. In most people the bliss leaves naturally. As you say, you realize nothing matters. There is great peace and rest in that.*
>
> *What is important and what will persist, is peace.*
>
> *Just keep going as you are going. You understand more than you know.*
>
> *Conviction and courage will come naturally one day. The sense of being incomplete will disappear.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:25 PM

30 March 2010

Hi Ed,

Firstly, thank you for all the practical help you so willingly give away. I receive your blog posts almost everyday and they are always a great inspiration. For me the great turning point in my meditation practice was Michael Langford's Awareness Watching Awareness method. Giving up all 'outward' practices and merely dwelling in awareness deepened into recognizing the 'I' thought. Through your blog posts and reading the Nisargadatta Gita, there is a recognition here that somehow this 'I thought' is the scaffolding upon which the entire world is built. What a radical idea! All previous so-called 'spiritual' practice was built on the lie of the 'I' and so the last year has been a de-accumulation for me. The dismantling, which is more like de-identification with what was formally

'me' - the body, my interests and passions, my family etc. etc. seems to point more and more to a recognition that this 'I', this body, other people, the world is contained in a vast space. I still somehow know this is a conceptual understanding but there is also a sense that the whole world points to this Reality.

Anyway thanks for everything.

Best Wishes,

> *D.*
>
> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, David, it is all conceptual, but you have gone beyond conceptual to a large degree.*
>
> *Just stay abiding in awareness.*
>
> *At some point you will realize it is still YOU abiding in awareness. Awareness arose to you and disappears to you.*
>
> *You are separate and beyond awareness.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:08 PM

Greetings Ed,

Witnessing my entire world shift, shake and roll! For all the spiritual work I had done in the past and how "far along" I imagined myself to be...this practice has gently revealed that I was hiding beneath it all. All has gotten so much simpler and quieter. The practice invites me in and presents my moment-by-moment syllabus.
My question, does one use Self Inquiry for the dream space? I have been awoken this week by two dreams where I have been deep in reaction. Jealousy and anger to the extreme. I practiced self inquiry, because it works to Still the noise and to settle into that space of Silence.
I am enjoying observing how all my relationships have gotten sweeter! All of my stories about the "other" person seem to be fading away and now there is just space.
Deepest thanks and gratitude. You are truly a Gift.
K.

RESPONSE:

> *I remember when I was practicing sincerely, I also practiced in my dreams if this was what you are asking.*
>
> *Intensity of effort and intent work miracles. Many issues can be exposed, but none of these issues touches the subject.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:05 PM

TO ME:

Recently i had a feeling of losing all i have if i practice spirituality , as if i will lose my planning . my life , my family and the emotions i have for my friends and so called love
i am afraid of being awakened to reality for then i will lose it all .

RESPONSE:

Foolish fear. Just the ego trying to stop you.

TO ME:

For the world being unreal should i stop expanding relationships , friendships and all sorts of things i am busy in here in the world
i was attched to a girl now the attachment is losening up but still it is there .
what to do of all such things , involvements !!

RESPONSE:

Deliberately drop nothing. Just practice the I Am meditation. Whatever needs to happen will then happen as it needs to happen.

The point I am trying to make over and over, is that nothing in the world is important. Concentrate on knowing yourself. Then everything will happen automatically.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:29 PM

TO ME:

Hello,

I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being.
There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep. I am not able to understand this state.

I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance.

I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand.....

On what is this knowing resting then?

thank you ....
n.

RESPONSE:

I am that which knows the coming and going of the state of being.

Yes, this is perfect understanding

There was this complete fullness so to speak, complete within itself and then spontaneously the rising of the sense of being was known. This occurred during waking up from sleep.

Yes, this is how it is usually first seen.

I am not able to understand this state.
I know what I am...I am non-conceptual...but now this wants to be captured in words...painful and confusing....words need to conceptulize me...I turn to you for some assistance.

All conceptualizations are only philosophy, empty, transitory, illusion. You must learn how to accept knowing nothing.

I always recognized my sense of being..aware and unadorned by concepts as the space that I was...but when I now see that that too is rising and setting in what I really am...I am lost for words to understand.....

Don't you see? What you are is entirely beyond the mind and cannot be captured in words or concepts. There is no need to understand; just be.

TO ME:

thank you Ed... in deep gratitude...

n.

TO ME:

i was just getting down to sending you a reply to the first email once again.. :)
The self or whatever it is..is so un-contrived...spontaneous and self sufficient...that is seen in ordinary moments of just simple being. No words needed to be...simply are.
When these various states or experiences occur, there is an attempt to understand it..when the experience itself is not requiring that.. :) it also just is...
and you have so correctly stated..all explanations are only about the state of existence...and therefore the correct answer in all respects is that ..you are unborn...that shuts any more concept building.

Ed..the clarity that these words you have written, also cannot be captured in words...i can only say..thank you!

n.

RESPONSE:

Write any time. Those who are close to liberation are a joy to talk to.

TO ME, THREE MONTHS LATER:

Dearest Ed,
I thank you for your love that you share so very very graciously. And I know that it is none other than my heart. Every word expressed here melts into the joy that I am.
When we had communicated earlier, you had said just be.... :) what clarity in that message. Yes, just being is all that I am. Simply love. Every rising, every expression just me. I am in awe of this wonder that dances in all. No experience is looked for, no state is harnessed. The freedom I am is inexpressible. Tears, joy, no joy.... everything subsumed in this that I am. Even fears are welcomed as magical! I need nothing.

What can I say....when every flower silently points back with love and joy.
Ed...thank you for your kindness... :)
love all ways,
n.

RESPONSE:

> *(I use Gmail, which is sometimes confusing, as the responses are not automatically tied to the questions. I could not find a response that seemed to fit this message)*

TO ME, ANOTHER TWO MONTHS LATER:

Dearest Ed,
... with deep gratitude and love...thank you sir for all your help, in every which way....
I have been meaning to write to you but always stopped short...this moment felt different...so I went ahead...:)
There is a deep realization, that there can be no knowing of what I am...for whatever is known, I am present to know it, so to speak. There is always a background, if I can use that term, on which there is a reflection...And that background IS eternally me....
This realization came through observing the functioning while being awake and also Being the fullness that was experienced in sleep. There is a clear understanding that I am prior to that fullness as well....
Now, as I write these words...there is deep peace and rest. There is an unshakeable knowing that everything is of the same essence, no matter how it appears, no matter how it is described, no matter what...
Nothing else but gratitude to express right now in this moment..thank you...
love all ways,
n.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Remember, even that "background" is observed, and is not you. What you are is unknowable. The background is observed and known. It is still part of phenomenality.*
> *That background is the sublimest form of I Am, of the Void and consciousness. It is still not you. It comes to you and is apprehended by you.*
>
> *Ed*

TO ME:

Yes dear Ed, that is exactly what I am trying to convey really....what I am is unknowable...
that is what i was trying to express in the words..."that there can be no knowing of what I am...for whatever is known, I am present to know it, so to speak"
For as you have aptly described it...for which I have no words...the sublimest form too is known...that too is experienced by me....
in deep gratitude,
n.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Good, you have it perfectly. Yes, what you are cannot be known as an understanding in consciousness. But in a larger sense, you know who you are by just being who you are. It is a different way of knowing.*

TO ME:

Thank you dear Ed for all that you have shared...
On another note, I would like to share a bit of the story if I may call it, of this journey... :)
I was born in India and have lived there most of my life...for the last 3 years I have been in the United States traveling with my family.
Ever since I can remember I have searched...looked... for something...like most 'seekers'.

The search led me to drop philosophy, in which I was training and go a live in the mountains...:) anyway, I did get back and complete my training, I don't teach though...might get to doing that...one never knows what can spring up...:)
Moment to moment if one can call it ever since I was a little girl...there was an earnestness...very very deep...to get to the bottom of this understanding....I rejected everything that sprung up as an insight, identification. I just could not identify anything as "this I am".....then there was the experience which I wrote to you about...the fullness felt complete in and of itself....prior to the sense of being..a sort of watching of the rising of being.
Your advice to 'be' was in words like a bolt of lightening. Stopped the movement in the tracks so to speak. And gradually this 'be-ing' just deepened...and what I expressed to you right now, came as a realization.....now, there is just resting, if I can call it anything...
I have also read on your website the emphasis you place on 'practice'. Yes, the unravelling, the discrimination is essential to some sort apparent balance....this 'self' being so very very complex in the poses adopted can be very fascinating...
I am always available on this email id...if there is any way that I can be of any help...please let me know...
in deep deep gratitude Guruji,
n.

ps...it felt wonderful addressing you as that... :) thank you!

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 8:38 PM

01 April 2010

Edji

I would like to tell you briefly my life so far..

I was born in the city of Mumbai in a loving family. Right from childhood I've been used to all the rituals and chantings they do at home for pooja. I loved to do pooja from very young age.. Later when around 12 yrs or so I had immense attachment to Lord Shiva and I even made a small temple out of cement and a linga in my backyard..With no reason tears used to just flow when I think of his form..I'd also learnt few manthras on Devi like lalitha sahasranama and trishati which I used to chant regularly till 18 or so..

Then there was a break for almost 3 yrs..Then suddenly I had an experience of lucid dreaming which scared me to the core.So before sleep I started meditating choosing some form, shiva or ganesha or devi and imagine everything in detail about their appearance and how they danced and so on..I chose to do just it because I just felt like that was needed for me that time. It used to feel so good back then.

More sleep paralytic attacks used to happen after 2 yrs whenever I had an afternoon nap. Many times I've felt that I almost died and the only thing I clinged to was my guru whoever He may be..Many times I've felt intense pain in my head as though it would swell and burst.By this time I'd also started practising some yoga asanas and I was regular in that.I'd gone through a lot of emotional suffering and sleeplessness shortly afterwards due to some personal situations.I used to just sit wid eyes closed when I didnt get sleep.Later one day I decided to detach myself from all that I held to emotionally, and was reading a book written by a yogi in my place..That same night I had a vivid OBE as though some force just pulled me out to show that I wasn't just the body.Nights following that the experience of going at light speed through a dark tunnel filled with loud sounds had happened. In between when my eyes opened, it felt like I was in some spaceship and whole surrounding vibrated at great speed.This repeated few more times..

Then I decided to learn some kriya and joined a programme offered at my guruji's ashram.I did some more courses also and was initiated into meditation.My perspective on God , religion, or myself changed drastically and suddenly I knew that I knew nothing. This 'I dont know' feeling made me a seeker of the self.I practised kriyas regularly and some experiences followed it.The problem is that I was not sure if I'm on the right track.I can't contact my guruji directly and people dont encourage sharing experiences with other seekers in the ashram.I may not be as articulate as Rajiv, still let me try :)

All the experiences and witnessing of those, happen clearly when I'm just about to fall into sleep and completely relaxed..

1. Feeling some kind of force in between brows pulling inward (or outward, I'm not sure) and I feel like moving at a very high velocity somewhere into a deep abyss.

2. Feeling of expansion all over the body and rising up in the air and feeling more fluid and pervading.

3.Once I'd completely detached from my body and in few flashes was in some corner of a room.(looked like our physical world only).In the room was seated an old person with a beard whom I seemed to recognise clearly.We looked into each others' eyes for long and I felt very blissful then.I flew back and settled in my body and it felt like I was in the middle of a thunderstorm..(could hear loud roar) Now, I do not know who I'd met.That is the saddest part. :(

4.Many a times I happen to see images of many animals birds humans and all life forms just passing by at a very high speed between eyebrows. I also see geometric patterns (like srichakra) in all matter around me when I suddenly open eyes out of fear, in between some experience.

Then there was a beautiful experience where I went spirally in some lighted tunnel in a vast expanse, following an omkara, not as a clear voice but some kind of a deep chorus..

Sometimes there is also a feeling of intense pain like some mass is being pulled out forcibly from my body, in the navel area. I just accept the pain and go on being with it till the end.

When I lie to sleep, I am aware in the beginning, I'm aware of my dreams and in the middle of the dream I just feel being pulled into another realm of complete silence and completion, then coming back to dream sometimes and so on. This I can clearly be aware of most nights when I sleep.In all this I know I'm seeing myself being pulled in between states as a spectator too, so it is still not me, just the play of consciousness, as you've said.

Many subtle changes have happened to my body too.I can feel a circular movement of something all the time on top of my palms, feet navel and eyebrow.

I'm trying to keep that awareness through the rest of the day while not meditating too. Sometimes it works well. Sometimes not.But when it comes to any form of devotion say singing songs on shiva or chanting something or dance, I forget myself and rejoice to the core.Devotion happens effortlessly.

Can you please help me and tell what way I should go..Jnana is definitely needed for mukthi. Can a portion of bhakti also be added to it..If yes how?Hope I've passed on what I wanted to tell you. Kindly guide me Edji..

Thanks and Regards

S.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *You Kriya people seem to have all the fun. I'll bet a few readers of this blog will redouble their Kriya efforts to get results like this.*
>
> *You see, Kriya can be fun. It is filled with all sorts of experiences, samadhis, new understandings, and a constant sense that progress is being made.*
>
> *But to where?*
>
> *Yes, Jnana is the quickest, straightest and least dangerous path to liberation.*
>
> *You just find the sense of I Am focus on it, play with it, understand it, and also recognize that there is something observing the I Am, as well as something observing all the effects of your practice.*
>
> *I am sending you two items, the Nisargadatta Gita, which you need to download and read every morning for a few minutes and then meditate on the content, and "Hunting the I."*
>
> *Go slow. Slow down and focus very carefully. Use your trained meditation mind to become a careful, scientific observer of your subjectivity.*

Try this for three weeks and write about your experiences. I think you will notice an immediate change.

I note from your autobiography that you are a seeker of the best sort. I was touched by the love you expressed and your early age practices. Me too. At age 11 I started practicing Bhakta-type meditations and read about Rama Krishna, and then three years later, Yogananda.

YOU WILL DO WELL NOW. YOU ARE HOME!

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:02 PM

Dear Ed,

Thank you for your response.

I had a couple of questions. One, at least, I think just got answered while reading "Autobiography of a Jnani". These questions focus on one, my long-term predicament and two, my previous long-term discomfort and conclusions.

As I have stated previously, I try to not get lost in the past or swirling experiences, hell or high. They come and they go. I have preferences. I retain some memories. And I maintain some conclusions concerning these states. (At times I became concerned trying to understand what occurred: was it deep enough or long enough, did I work through it completely, can I relate it well? Often times I remain clueless. That aside, what I notice does consistently occur for years now, I think, is not knowing. And as you say, "stay stupid". This, to me, has been my predicament. And my greater sense of frustration/discomfort stemmed from my conclusion that all I could see was what was empty, dead, not real me--neti, neti. Thus after so many states my mood calcified into "it did not matter" or it was not enough, or I was deluding myself.

Then we began interacting more. As I said it took effort to practice and turn attention away from effortless, pervading ease (without body boundary), and try to locate a heavier me, a form of I AM, and start there.

I surrendered more and tweaked my practice while remaining engaged with life. As you know I believed I started understanding and experiencing moments of Turiya (?), and extended hours of Bliss. So I began to see what did matter again, to begin dropping conclusions, and to see the more liberating, transcendent awareness that "it does not matter." For peace, by definition, must be pervasive in all things in all conditions, and I am that--otherwise it is a concept, a feeling, an experience, no?

My question was based around what to do with this--my on-going predicament of never knowing. To clarify, for me it is as Robert and you say, a dream. At each moment how can I say I persist? At each moment, sure there seems to be feeling and history and importance--just like a sleeping dream--we start fully engaged and active in the dream--and we believe time and space unfolded up to that point that we noticed we were participating... Awake dreaming is not different. In each moment.. In each moment...

Awareness of dreaming still feels so real. There is clearly still varying degrees of "me". Yet who can say this? Where? Who practiced and experienced? Prove it. It is all packets of thought: forms, charged with emotions. So as experience is noticed it is already dead thought--removed, an object... Any person, place, thing, memory is little more than a parameter of thought with a sense of denseness, etc., as is the distinction inside and outside the body, past and future, me and you... Thus neti, neti and my unfortunate sense that it didn't matter. Though this too is already dead, with a hangover quality that seems to persist. (Before I had some greater peace.) My further concern and question was how do I more readily let go this frustration, this conclusion that it is not enough and deepen my awareness and attention to pervading peace?

Then I read in Autobiography of a Jnani, end of page 47

"The Void exists as a property of mental space and contains all of consciousness, but is not you. This is a property of the subtle body, which in turn is also a concept. Deeper is the causal body, which is a deeper Void; no experience here is possible. Only total not knowing.

48
You are beyond both as the subject. Your only knowledge of your deepest existence comes from awareness of

that which is not you; i.e., consciousness, Void, the body and the world. You can only BE that deepest self."

I am sure this awareness is light years off for me, and I remember you stating this point before, but this time, at least intellectually it does seem to deepen my understanding and relax my awareness. How obvious. How simple. I smile. For I more readily admit what occurs, buried --that stillness is peace is pervasive is non-local is me. What freedom it must be to fully be this in all things! To finally deeply see "it does not matter."

If I see this truly, this selected answer to my question builds faith to honor not knowing, what you always reinforce to me?

Am I correct?

Is this useful to sit with or am I again cramming too many thoughts seeking certainty?

Thank you for your time yet again.
Peace, peace,
B.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *B.,*
>
> *Indeed, you are thinking far too much. Speculating, endeavoring to capture some understanding.*
>
> *Instead, you must become a scientist. Just watch the I Am. Also be aware that you are watching I Am.*
>
> *Then allow yourself to become I Am. Identify with the totality.*
>
> *Feel the background of consciousness if you can, then try to back into the background with a sense of falling into it.*
>
> *Play with the exploration.*
>
> *What you are doing is philosophizing, which is trying to substitute intellectual understanding with true realization which has nothing to do with understanding.*
>
> *Understanding is of the mind. Realization is a kind of understanding that arises before the mind.*
>
> *Spiritual knowledge is entirely different from worldly knowledge. It comes from silent observation and contemplating the words of the various Gita's and realized persons. But don't take their words literally. They are only pointers to set off something deep in you. If they set off your mind in speculation, they have not done their job properly. Let them do their job by just observing.*
>
> *Just watch. Just investigate. Just identify and play, and pay not attention to all the thoughts that come up and ruin investigation.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:31 PM

02 April 2010

Hi Ed,

We left off with me working at being the unknowable witness. Practicing such has lead to the on and off disappearance of the individual self. The world is still there so I've been working of receding away from it at times, and becoming it at others. Is that good? I've experienced enough of being totally and completely gone and free that I'm very keen to know who I am. I believe you've said the highest truth rests in the knowledge that one is? Is there is practice technique to expedite matters?

RESPONSE:

Clarify.

There is not enough info here for me to understand what your practice is or what your request is.

Are you practicing being a witness? What does that mean?

You practice being the world then receding from the world? What does that mean?

You still have to work on articulating your experiences better.

Can you locate the I Am feeling?

If so, can you realize YOU are watching the I AM?

If so, then you can look at the watcher, and you can "back" into the watcher.

Ed

TO ME:

I can locate the I Am feeling and realize I am watching it. That watcher feels like absence. I can become that watcher and I disappear as an individual. Then I feel like I'm gone but the world is still here.

I will work on articulating my experiences. I feel really good though, and feel I can really understand and follow your teachings.

Thank you!!

RESPONSE:

When you truly realize you do not exist as opposed to having sporatic experiences of not existing, then the world will cease to exist also.

I first had experiences of not existing in 1970 or 71, sometimes for hours at a time every day. But the world always returned and I always returned. It wasn't until 25 years later in 1995 that the full impact of those cumulative experiences over the years finally took Ed away.

I did not exist!

When I saw I did not exist, I knew the world could not exist either because it depended on me seeing it.

Shazam! Neither I nor the world existed. Only space with no division filled with imaginary, conceptual objects. Only space with nothing in it that is real.

But this is only the beginning of the awakening sequence. There is much more.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 9:40 PM

05 April 2010

Ed,

Nisargadatta advised the seekers to dwell on the thought of "I am" as the practice for achieving realization. Do I need to accurately understand what "I am" means in order to practice this correctly? It is translated from Hindu to English. Is possible the exact meaning get lost during the translation?

Namatse,
B.

RESPONSE:

No, you must know what "I Am" means to you. Not what it meant to anyone else including Maharaj or any of the hundred neo advaita gurus out there.

What is I Am to you? Locate it, Stay there. This is your central feeling that you exist. Read Hunting the I. Forget "I Am That." Read only the meditation manual "Nisragadatta Gita."

This is a matter of getting away from the mind with all of its speculations, philosophies and meanings, and just sense "I Am," I live, I exist. Isolate that feeling then join it, become one with it.

All Advaita texts from all the teachers say the same thing. Abide in the sense of I, or I Am.

It is so simple. Do not make it complicated with speculations about inaccurate translations.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:47 AM

07 April 2010

Ed,

Since you mentioned Nisargadatta's is the closest to your realization experience, I have a question for you regarding his I AM THAT book.

He said:

Your world is personal, private, unshareable, intimately your own. Nobody can enter it, see as you see, hear as you hear... -p17
In your world you are truely alone, enclosed in your ever-changing dream, which you take for life. -p.17
If the above is true, how can I be sure what he said in I AM THAT is true? According to the above, he appeared as a dream character in my dream. Can I be sure what were said to this dream character are the ultimate truth?
What other things do you disagree with Nisargadatta?
Namatse,

J

RESPONSE:

J,

Nisargadatta said that all he said was conceptualization and hence false.
His words should not be taken as truth or philosophy, but as a pointer to go beyond mind.
Also, I never read I am That, only the Jean Dunn Books.
Do not be taken by a search for truth in an intellectual/academic sense. What you are looking for is entirely beyond mind and knowing in the sense of cognition.
You must become stupid like a rock and get out of mind in order to find your most base nature and the nature of consciousness.
Forget about what Nisargadatta said in a book translated by who knows whom, written 13 years

before his death by an editor of unknown attainment?
There are probably 50,000,000 questions you can ask about specific statements by Maharaj, Ramana, Robert, etc., of the "What does he mean?", "Do you agree or disagree this this or that paragraph?" All that this means is you are reading with the intent of trying to understand concepts when you should be strictly listening to directions on how to abide in the Self, I-ness, or I Am feeling.
Don't treat this as philosophy and ask these types of questions. You are missing the point entirely and staying at the level of a mind who thinks you are a body/mind as opposed to the Absolute beyond existence.
The Absolute you can never be understood with your mind.
Instead, read without judgement or trying to fit in your past conceptual system or you will get nowhere. Just practice investigating the I-sense.

Ed

TO ME:

Ed,

Just followed your suggestion to read your Hunting the I article. It says, "Robert, Ramana and Nisargadatta rarely talked about the 'experience' of finality," Could you elaborate on finality and the experience of it?

Regards,

J

RESPONSE:

Jason,

Now read Autobiography of a Jnani. Download it from my site.

Again, you are asking a big question that takes lots of time to answer and is very subtle, and would not mean much unless one already had an initial awakening to the oneness of consciousness.

AOJ has over 160 pages describing the subjective states and the understanding associated with those various states.

Please, before you ask any more questions, do your homework by reading the questions and answers on the blog, the Blue site on the itisnotreal.com website, and the free downloads; 95% of your questions are answered there. Without reading those, you are asking me to provide you with long discourses that have already been provided in extensive form earlier and elsewhere, which, in turn will engender further requests for explanations that are answered in these sources. Our dialogues could take up thousands of words, but have been written already. You need to do your homework.

OR, ask questions about your practice and what is going right or wrong. I do not get the impression you are doing any self-inquiry or meditation or obtaining a real need for direction, but are asking philosophical questions, which are a waste of time.

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:25 AM

Rest in the foreground, not the background.

Many people write to me how they enjoy resting in attention on the background, which no one can really well describe. Generally, it is felt as some "thing" a presence or phenomenal solidity somewhere behind the body and head, or above it.

Yes, it is enjoyable and peaceful, and sometimes appears to be what Langford recommends as a meditation.

But, if you are aware of this background, and most people are not, then you should also be aware of a "foreground." By foreground I do not mean the "void ahead" as Rajiv mentions, but the place in the middle that is closer to the sense of I.

Sometimes spatially this is felt as being coextensive with the body sensation, sometimes it is felt to be the totality of awareness as well as the totality of phenomena that inhabit the field of awareness.

If you are aware of the background, you can become aware of the foreground. This is more essentially close to the existential sense of I, and is the better object to focus on an abide in.

This is the sense of consciousness burning brightly, the manifestation, as opposed to the background, which is the borderline with the unmanifest. It is more productive to join and abide in that foreground and, in a sense, to burn with it than rest in the background.

This is just one of many meditation hints I'll be giving over the next few weeks.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 7:30 PM

09 April 2010

If anyone has tried to contact me by email during the past two weeks, and has not received a reply, please send again.

Both my mother and moth-in-law were hospitalized during the past two weeks (MIL fell and broke her hip and had surgery, mother had an internal bleeding condition). In addition, two of my cats came down with an identical and serious disorder where they were not eating. Both required all day vet visits to a specialist.

In addition, some emails have been kicked into the trash as spam.

So send again.

satsang.online@gmail.com

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 8:35 PM

Dear Ed,

I am overwhelmed by gratitude towards You. I think I speak on behalf of all your students; there is obviously nothing more beautiful than to embody the Truth with one's being. You said You want an ashram in LA but You already have a virtual ashram with many students on the internet. Although there is something extra about meeting in the flesh, Your site allows Your teaching to reach a wider audience spread across the globe. And by it You are taking people to the other shore--- take Rajiv for example. The words You transmit through cyberspace

are making Buddhas of us all!

There are questions as with every email. You will answer them with passionate equanimity because You are in the Place beyond time, where God's work manifests spontaneously as it should. The only wish now is to join You There in order that I may have no more questions and possibly begin to answer some that others may have.

"You can feel what it is like---at least for me---by sitting in Padmasana, and letting your consciousness leave your head and go down into your body into the belly. Focus your mind in your belly."

This passage from Dialogues has always stuck out to me the most because I know what you are describing. I once told you about the most powerful feeling I got through meditation, and that is the feeling of doing the practice described above. I had been doing it before I found you and your page although I don't know why. When I drop my mind into my belly, "I" merges with the Whole and there is no longer a mind to separate this from that. It is like You said: **"Your body disappears and you are the world in total Samadhi."** But then You say: **"The Oneness is not real. You are merely observing the totality of Consciousness. But who observes? THAT is beyond Consciousness, prior to consciousness."** It is not clear to me yet WHO it is that observes the Totality. You did say this chronologically prior to giving Rajiv the belly practice so maybe I am wrong to connect them in this way. But if the Totality is not real then what is the point of merging with it? Isn't that serving Maya, not Brahman?

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *Yes, Kevin, it is not clear to you yet, who observes. The dropping of the center of awareness into the belly temporarily destroys the mind, and YOU become identified with the totality of awareness. You become the wind, singing birds, passing clouds, etc. What this experience is giving you is a window into the constant experience of someone who has had an initial awakening, the experience of oneness. One becomes like empty space and contains all phenomena as well as the void. They interpenetrate: "Form is no other than emptiness, emptiness no other than form. Feeling, thought and consciousness are also like this."[Heart Sutra]*
>
> *Yet, this glimpse is brought on by a specific technique and does not last. I used to go into and emerge from this state 4-5 times a day, and me, as the sense of a personal self, always returned.*
>
> *However, as self-inquiry persists, one day the mind becomes shattered when it discovers that the I-thought, though it exists, is not real. It is like an obscuring cloud—a cloud that is gone in the stomach technique. Then one is shocked to find there is no I-entity as an object. You don't exist! When you don't exist, the world also ceases to exist, just as there is no world in the stomach technique. With the stomach technique there is only You. You are all. But the stomach technique is temporary, first stage awakening is permanent.*
>
> *Becoming one with the totality is an essential step. This is what Nisargadatta calls abiding in the I Am. But the stomach exercise is artificial. This is irony; becoming one with the I Am eventually leads to the transcendence of I Am.*

The other thing is that I am taking the words used by Enlightened individuals to describe their awakening and contemplating them as koans. You will say that doing this only risks trapping the mind in a conceptual minefield but isn't the point of koan contemplation to shatter the mind through repeated blows? I have done this ever since I began practicing because I like it but if you tell me it is detrimental then I will stop. Earlier I was contemplating the following quote by Roslyn Moore who awoke during a retreat with Gangaji:

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Yes, avoid contemplating other's awakening experience, it definitely will not help your own. It will only hinder because the mind is looking for some key in someone else's experience which diverts you from deep contemplation of your own. You need to reply only on yourself at this stage.*

"The next two mornings when I woke up in the bedroom where I was sleeping in Berkeley, I was aware of the moment that my mind became activated, as if I were a mechanical toy that had been plugged in. Then, mysteriously and spontaneously, I was aware of waking up again, but now I was waking up from everything I thought. I expanded and KNEW this mind stream to be nothing more than a blip on a screen. **Who I am is vast and unending space. Space filled with bed, birdsong, tree branches out my window, me. I see the open space and I see the forms which have emerged out of the space, but there is no real distinction between thing and non-thing.** There truly is no separation. No aspect of "me" is in opposition to the emptiness which it is

made from. I do not exist. More accurately, I am existence itself. I include everything I see and everything I don't see. I am not bound by the event of me. The event of me is infused with who I truly am."
Reading this over and over and contemplating it as a koan, I found that a part of me believed what she said, maybe even understood it to some degree but the rest of me prohibited its REALIZATION. The only thing I can figure is that my ego or past conditioning is preventing higher understanding. So how do I weaken the bonds of my past conditioning? If You tell me it can be accomplished by focusing my mind in my belly then I will do that all day everyday.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *See, from hearing of her awakening, to then speculating why you can't duplicate it merely by hearing it, you have concocted a whole theory of why you have not attained and now ask for advice on how to free yourself within the context of that theory you created about what is needed. Her experience and your dwelling on it is taking you away from contemplation and abidance in the self.*

My last question pertains to the "dropping" of the conscious center to the belly that you describe. Does that dropping occur like a WHOOSH once and final opening a new stage, or does it describe the process of focusing the mind in the belly which is experienced every time I go from non-meditation into Samadhi on the world?

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *The stomach exercise is always temporary; it will not lead to liberation. It DOES give you a taste for first stage enlightenment.*
>
> *At this point you need to drop the stomach dropping exercise and fall back into pure self-inquiry, which means abiding in the I-sense, as often and long as possible throughout the day. Both first and second stage awakening can be found this way. The stomach exercise is an interesting diversion that gives you a taste of enlightenment.*

It seems what I should be doing is wall-sitting the belly practice (although I can do it anywhere provided I don't have to think). I want to mention that although I am becoming more confident I am still sometimes troubled by not knowing where I am going or if I am doing things right-- I always want the "bird's-eye" view of the Path although it is not possible. The only solution I have to that is to practice, for then the thought does not arise.

Thank you, Ed. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
Yours

Kevin

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:51 AM

14 April 2010

I discovered your site http://itisnotreal.com last month and immediately knew my search of many years for precise, authentic, detailed, information on the practice of profoundly effective Self-Inquiry and "description" of Self-Abidance had ended. In the past few weeks since then I have devoured your materials much of the time with tears of deep appreciation. You can have no idea how long I have wanted this material and how many dead ends I have pursued only to wind up in frustration, even exasperation. On this, the 60th anniversary of Ramana's death, I have presumed relationship and have felt moved to make my first contact with you to express my awe and wonder at the extreme value and rarity of the information you have made freely available. Already I am putting it to good use in my life with renewed and redoubled inspiration. To write "I thank you, Ed" does not come close. Only my Heart's Shout with Grace and Mercy in Its Wild Hair expresses it. I have come to be instructed in the finest strokes of Self-Inquiry and Self-Abidance and you seem to have left no stone unturned in your treatment of these. Daily I closely study your writings digesting bit by bit and "experienting" or experimenting with experience. I have procured all of the important books you have recommended but this is no "head game" for me so I curb any impulse to dive into the pile and read six things at once. I focus only on your

blog posts, Autobiography of a Jnani, and a few of your other key instructional web pages. A bit of personal info. -- I am a healthy male, 57, unattached, no kids, lifelong cat lover and now little min pin/chihuahua mix dog aficionado. I am living in XXXXXXXX for over seven years now. Originally from near ZZZZZZ, YYYYY, I have lived in Southern California twice. Just to say, Ed, if it became possible I would value nothing more highly than to maximize personal interaction with you and to sit in your physical company on a frequent basis not unlike your years of sitting often with Robert. Somehow I KNEW, perhaps as a response to my sincerity and unwavering desire that I MUST, someday, find this information, personal guidance and inspiration. My prior conclusions, intuitions, and glimmerings over many years have, at long last, been validated over the past few weeks and I just cannot express how that feels. Never have I felt as I do now that I finally have a source I can honor and trust to guide and inspire my practice with precision as you did for Rajiv. I invite you to write, Ed, if you feel moved to do so. It would be great to cultivate a friendship and teacher-student relationship if you are willing.

Yours in grace and ease,

David

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Sure David, glad to oblige.*
>
> *Since you are familiar with my work, hopefully you have read Autobiography of a Jnani, and the Hunting the I section on practicing self-inquiry.*
>
> *I then always advise people to download the Nisargadatta Gita, print it out, and read it every morning followed by meditating on the contents. At this point, the ONLY OTHER BOOK TO READ IS Path of Sri Ramana Maharshi, Volume I, chapters 7 and 8.*
>
> *That's it. No more book reading. Narrow down and focus on these.*
>
> *After 2-3 weeks, write me about your results.*
>
> *What you write will tell me a lot about where you have been, where you are now, and how to proceed.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 6:08 PM

15 April 2010

Good Evening Ed,
I liked Robert Adams' book. But the materials you are presenting online seem to go much deeper.
I was particularly interested in Robert's view (paraphrasing) that the best teachers don't have a big following.
I have an opportunity to go to a satsang with a teacher who has an international following. It will be attended by dozens of people. And it will end up costing a fair amount of time and money.
In your view, are these types of satsang worthwhile?
It seems that you gained a great deal from satsang with Robert. But it also seems that you got a number of relatively unproductive detours.
How do you tell if a satsang/teacher will be a help or a hindrance?
Thank you in advance for any comment you care to provide…

Best,

Ron

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *You can't tell ahead of time.*
>
> *But if there is a big cost involved, know it is worthless.*

The great ones do not charge. People are free to give what they will, but it is not a precondition.

The spiritual model is not the same as the business model. With the spiritual model, God takes care of you. With the business model you sell as service and get recompensed for the service.

Unfortunately, in the West most of the spiritual teachers have adopted the business model, selling books, Satsang, ebooks, workshops, intensives, lessons, talks, and personal interviews or teachings. Their ads are all over their sites.

On the other hand, the student must realize they have an obligation to take care of the teacher. Indeed, Robert used to say that is the agreement between student and teacher: the teacher takes care of your spiritual life and the student takes care of the teacher's physical life. Unless the student feels that obligation and just partakes of the teachings one way, being spoon fed, that student has learned nothing, and remains just a hungry mouth.

If people come to me with humility and ask to guide them, I do it willingly, freely. If they come with arrogance, or want only to know about concepts or words rather than self-realization, I have nothing for them.

Personally, I feel I owe everything to Robert and Grace.

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 8:24 PM

Sent to me by my friend David. This is an excellent observation on the student/guru relationship.

"The great ones do not charge. People are free to give what they will, but it is not a precondition."
Yes, people need to understand this. Enlightenment is not for sale, and anyone who suggests otherwise by charging money for satsang is just as deluded as the people who hand that individual their credit cards. The difference between a guru and a for-profit teacher is like the difference between a faithful spouse and a paid escort. Both may look the same on the outside and may even say the same things, but only one speaks with sincerity, from the heart.
When a true satguru gives satsang, much more is being transmitted than words. A powerful exchange of energy, which may or may not be perceived by the devotee, is taking place on at a subtle level. Just remaining in the presence of such an individual is far more effective than self-inquiry or any other technique.
Reading mass market spiritual books and jetting off to expensive weekend retreats in Maui is very good entertainment for the ego. For those who want to waste a lot of time and money, I highly recommend these things.

David

Post Comments:

Ed Muzika said...

Robert said he never talked about other teachers. He rarely did. He knew what trouble and acrimony it would bring.

Already I have received complaints that I am a hypocrite because I have a donation button yet dare to insinuate that some teachers are for profit, and David says there are more authentic, non-profit teachers.

But take a look below at various teacher websites. The first group, the not for profits, are information rich with dozens of free downloads, some with free audio talks, and thousands of pages of free teachings. A few sell books, but mostly the bulk of the information is free.

Robert too sold his talks. He used to charge $60 for six months of lessons mailed out. He never advertised it. It is just there was so little of his material available, that students wrote to him asking for talks.

Robert could not work. He had Parkinson's Disease and could barely function coming to Satsang let alone work physically as he had. His total income came from his wife's seamstress business, donations from Satsang, the few lessons he sold seekers asking for more, and donations from close students when he asked them individually for money.

I, on the other hand, still work in the "real" world editing medical reports. My wife works too.

I get some money from donations and soon, Autobiography of a Jnani will be out in print. You can still download it from the itisnotreal.com website, but for those who want the book in hand, it will be sold. I have yet to determine whether it will be sold on the website or I will refer others to where it can be bought.

But over 500 pages of Robert's transcripts are available on the not real website, as well as the Autobiography, Hunting the I, two books I wrote on Self-psychology, the papers I published about Robert in Yoga Journal and other places, as well as four or five of Robert's Audio talks.

Besides that there are hundreds of other pages of free information.

But there is not even a donation button on the site.

Some people want more information, and I tell them how they can get more information about Robert for a fee, but they come to me because they want more than the hundreds of pages on the not real website.

April 19, 2010
Ed Muzika said...

Part 2:

Now then, take a look at the Michael James site below. Again, there are hundreds of pages of free downloads, and tons of information and links to other free information.

The same holds true of the Godman site, and the two Ramana Maharshi sites. All have tons of free information, free talks, links and are exceeding dense with free information.

They may sell books too, but it usually is of books they already allow you to download free from their sites. The clear difference is that the sites immediately below are not money oriented even if they may make a few bucks selling books or tapes. One can hardly survive in this world without selling something, from labor, to books, or accepting donations. Because one may sell some books also offered free, or sell tapes for those who want more than all the free stuff, one cannot call them a hypocrite because they accept enough money to live on. The one who calls the other a hypocrite are usually the for profit teachers who comment anonymously, or one of their students.

Most of the not for profit teachers hate accepting money for books or talks. It is just a necessity.

Not for Profit:

http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/

http://www.arunachala-ramana.org/

http://www.maharajnisargadatta.com/

http://itisnotreal.com; http://itisnotreal.blogspot.com

Michael James: http://www.happinessofbeing.com/

David Godman: http://www.davidgodman.org/

Now take a look at what David might call the for-profit sites.

These are not information rich. Very little is said about the teachings, little is said about the path, and almost nothing is said in terms of dialogues between student and teacher about practice, teachings or anything else. 90% of the site is advertisements for books, workshops, etc.

One can just see the difference and the emphasis. One is spiritual model, the other is the business model.

For Profit Sites:

The Tolle website:

http://www.eckharttolle.com/home/

Charlie Hayes: http://charliehayes36.tripod.com/

Sw. Shankaranabda: http://shivayoga.com

Nicole Adams: http://robertadamsinfinityinstitute.org/

John Wheeler: http://www.naturalstate.us/

Siddha Yoga:

http://www.siddhayoga.org/

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 12:17 PM

16 April 2010

Hello, :-)

I came across 'Hunting the I' and the rest of your website at the beginning of the week, and it's had quite an impact.

* The 'I am' that I am abiding in as much as I can right now is a peaceful emptiness that is noticing things in an uninvolved way

* The current 'I am' is fairly easy to abide in (to various degrees) now that I've found it

* Some thoughts, images and emotions are dissolving before even being fully formed

* In the morning a few days ago, waking up felt like having a car airbag inflate in inner space (explosive entry of worldly sensations into an awareness that preceded being awake by a tiny amount of time)

* Behaving 'normally' seems like a challenge since everything seems rather plain and remote, imbuing kind of matter-of-factnessthat doesn't really stimulate a desire for much involvement

* I have had some weird bodily sensations especially around/in the head/face/brain area (feels decidedly weird, heavy and rubbery, flesh feels like it's hanging off the face bones)

* Last night I had an intense feeling that I can just sit around and do nothing forever, there seemed to be no point to anything and nothing to do

* At one point last night when 'just being' felt especially strong, I felt giddy, travel sick. Like going to sleep in one place and waking up in another distant place (a bit worrying, in fact)

Strangely, until very recently I openly ridiculed spirituality and had bet my entire adult life (I'm now 37) on reason and materialism. Now, after a few months of dry research into spiritual type things, I've spontaneously but somehow very meaningfully identified with you being my teacher, and I'll be doing whatever you tell me to, either implicitly through what I can see on your website, or explicitly if you decide to respond to me personally.

My plan (in the absence of any over-riding instruction from you) is to just spend as much time as possible abiding in the I-am, and not to read any more literature, apart from perhaps the materials you cite in your response to David on the 14th.

Anyway, many thanks for your website.

Sincerely,

Ja.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 4:04 PM

Again, from my friend David:

In North America alone, Eckhart Tolle has sold three and five million copies, respectively, of The Power of Now and A New Earth. The books have been translated into 33 languages, so international sales figures are surely in the tens of millions. One of his Internet broadcasts with Oprah attracted over 11 million viewers. He is a very wealthy man, but still charges $99.95 for six months access to his Internet broadcasts.

There is nothing wrong with mass market spirituality. I am sure it makes some people feel a little better for while. It's just important not to confuse the relationship between a for-profit spiritual teacher and a his or her audience with the relationship between the satguru and his devotee. They are completely different.

When a teacher charges people for satsang, he turns a sacred union into a commercial enterprise and makes it impossible for the bond of trust and surrender that is necessary for the guru-disciple relationship to form.

When someone gives money in exchange for access to something, he expects tangible benefits. If he gets them, he says (or thinks), "I got my money's worth." If he doesn't, he says, "This was a waste of my money." It is impossible to surrender to the guru when you are evaluating the financial merits of his teachings instead of opening your heart to him. It's like trying to form a loving relationship with someone you are paying for sex. It just can't work. Any truly enlightened teacher would be aware of this and would never, never, never charge devotees money to be with him.

It is the emanation of grace from the guru that sets people free, not the words he speaks. If someone else speaks the same words, they will not have the same effect. Unrealized teachers with a profit motive who repackage and re-disseminate teachings of jnanis do not have the power to set people free. The current of grace grace that flows through the jnani does not flow through them, and even if it did, by charging money for satsang, they are making it impossible for students to open themselves to receiving that grace.

David

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:09 AM

TO ME.

I had given initial meditation instruction and told him to practice for 2-3 weeks and then write back his experience:

I could not wait 2-3 weeks as you asked to write again. Couldn't.

So much of the time now I can hardly stand the ecstasy that I am being lived by. Tears crashing down as the Swoon of Ecstatic Adoration of all things, each and every thing, each and every one, as my Beloved, is my experience so much of the time now and now and now and now. Any thing and every thing sets it off from remembering my sweetie mini min pin DoggieBoo and facing the knowledge that she and I will die and vanish forever from one another's sight, to discovering an unexpected swath of gorgeous green grass jutting out from a field blanketed with snow, to beholding a magnificent private jet lifting off and retracting its landing gear as it returns my embrace, to a parade of images of your and Robert's and Nisargadatta's and Ramana's faces that

appeared before me last night as I lay down and could not sleep. By grace and with this Heart's Remembrance as my inspiration I must and I will continue diving deep into the Source of all that is and abide there as my Self, the Self of all. The real and true sum and substance of all the forms I now hold dear as my very own...

David (#2)

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:13 AM

17 April 2010

TO ME:

Dear dear Ed,

I'm a rooky as you know and it's only after reading the messages of long time seekers that I feel the importance of your work. I am blessed that I found you after only a few months of "interest" in knowing if I am anything. Despite the glitz, the monthly videos, the live meditations etc etc, I have abandoned all sites and any reading, only the two sources you advise.....and you know what? I feel great, I am not searching anymore, you have told me everything I need to know. No more words, insights, videos, live meditations , chat boards, wisdom etc can add anything to what I have already been told by you.....thats a relief. I have received the guidance and pointers and now it's up to me. I feel blessed that you told me (us) the truth, the true journey, the journey which everyone has to make alone, there are signposts, and you have spent a lot of time and effort helping people negotiate those crossroads. I only hope that when (if) the time comes you will also be there for me, to help me weave my path. Ed, what you have given me is priceless: I don't need to fill my head with anymore spiritual crap because the truth is within me, I am it, all I have to do is unlock it, I have to un-learn, I have to create the space to let my true nature emerge. So after all that , one question: I live in an incredibly noisy place, the booms and bangs bring me back from meditation. Should I be able to maintain during this commotion or should i move house.....sorry for the beginners question

Thank you Ed

M.

RESPONSE:

Yes, seek a quieter place.

I will always be there for you.

I am glad you are doing well and have come "home."

Ed

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:19 AM

19 April 2010

TO ME:

Master,

I know you have already said this. But now I discovered it by my own direct experience.

One can get all the most deep spiritual experiences – I am thinking of many friends of mine. But if he/she doesn't dissolve the feeling 'I Am', after those sparkling experiences, he/she will just return to be an ordinary human being!

The unique thing which prevents us to see we are the Absolute is this stupid feeling ‘I Am’. I often, while contemplating the ‘I Am’, I see contemporarally and clearly, I am the Absolute.

It is interesting the fact that Langford is not sure his ego is ended definitively and suggests keeping on with practice until the body dies. Why have you not this doubt?

It is such a stupidity this matter of ‘I Am’, but it seems it is the difference which makes the difference.

I am very exited. I see all the cases of people who have practiced intensely without results. It is incredible... just for that stupid impression of ‘I Am’. Well, I stop now.

Love,
S.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *With the AWA method, the ego may never die because he focuses on the toitality of consciousness, the background, while I emphasize focusing on the foreground, the sense of I Am. Until that is gone, any silence state, samadhi, or oneness state is temporary. The foreground has to be dissipated. He is rightfully doubting that his I Am is gone. However, even when gone, it still pays to sit in totaly silence in formal meditation as often as possible, because maturation of the awakening process goes on for years and it is best matured in silence.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:01 PM

20 April 2010

Dear Ed,

Thank you for your generous website. You wield a sharp sword and use it with precision. I have been visiting online for the past couple of years but have never written with a question on practice.

For several years, I merely "looked" at the darkness/peace behind the head and body, and so remained unwittingly separate from it. Now, the darkness seems to be "moving forward", somewhat diffusing the mind and sense of self. The experience is deeply restful and all-encompassing, like feeling pleasantly sleepy but not groggy. The words that best describe it are "forgetting" or "unknowing".

An inner injunction has been coming up: "Don't look"- not in the sense of avoiding or suppressing perception, but rather not crystallizing the position of separate observer or knower. "Not looking" has deepened the resting in unknowing. Is this approach in line with your advice that 'The looking "for" is the problem; the looker is already complete and at rest'? Or am I describing the resting in the background you warn about?

Persistently, "I Am" always returns in a different guise. One day, the heart exclaims "I Am!"; the next, it's the head space and above; another day, it's the total body energy, then it's the whole perceptual field; and the day after that, it's the bodily core. This shifting is confounding and always associated/localized with energetic or bodily sensation. As soon as it's seen as an object, "I Am" goes underground, only to reappear in a different configuration. Your comments or advice on any of this would be most welcome.

Your teachings are truly rare. Again, thank you for your many offerings and for your time reading this email.

With gratitude,
Marc

> *Yes, it appears you clearly see the difference between the background and the I Am foreground. True, resting in the background, by "backing" into it rather than objectifying by "looking" is a practice that leads to great peace.*
>
> *However, the real battle or effort is to stay with the I Am in the foreground, sometimes watching it, sometimes identifying with it, sometimes merging with it until it becomes you, and sometimes watching it come and go. Eventually the I Am settles down as does your abiding in it. Leave the background alone for a while.*
>
> *The background is complicated. It is actually a pseudo conceptual state of a passing awareness of the unmanifest self. It is the boundary between being and not being, but cannot be cognized, and is best experienced by doing nothing. But leave that alone for now.*
>
> *This raises another issue. There is an even higher state that is not contained in concepts about the foreground, background, I Am, Void, etc. All of these are experiences which we attach Advaita meanings and ontology to. Rather than understand or have everything explained, it is better to live in complete ignorance of what these states "mean," and instead, sit back and enjoy them all in a kind of wonderous awe.*
>
> *However, most Adavita-Jnana type people feel a need to understand their universal experiences in terms of universal, cognitive arguments or concepts. In the end, you should end up knowing and wanting to know nothing. That is why I have difficulty with people that just want to know concepts, because they haven't even transitioned into placing an emphasis on inner experiences instead of concepts.*
>
> *You have to realize all concepts are mistakes, and sometimes we call these mistakes "pointers" or ways to escape bigger mistakes.*
>
> *In the end, the highest human state is resting in a sense of awe and love.*

Post Comments:

Marc said...

Ed - Thank you for your precise and useful reply. "I Am" in the heart seems easiest to abide in, so I'll focus on that in its silent unknowing. I'll write again as things go. Thanks again.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 9:59 PM

21 April 2010

TO ME:

But, if you are young, why don't you continue with it for a while before declaring it a dead end.

37... I already feel like I started in on this road very late! But yes, with your blessing I may experiment a little more just in case something of value comes of it. Thanks for the warning about the insomnia.

> *However, I do not hear from you about how your practice goes with the Gita and I Am meditation--that is the broad road that is so successful for most.*

Yep, and it's the road I intend to travel. Nothing much to report over and above what I said about the I Am being this thing perceiving the lack of thoughts vacuum which is disturbed with thoughts. This I Am I'm identified with

right now also notices input from the senses, but non-judgementally. 'Judge Mentally' - I never thought about that word like that before. :-p

When trying to immerse myself in the I Am, I try to frame myself as if I had just popped into consciousness for the first time, having no language skills and no memory of prior experiences, basically a dumb 'new arrival' observer. I tried to remember being 3-4 years old, but I don't have memories that go that far back. The frame may well change as I continue with the NG. If this is a wrong kind of context for I-Amness please let me know.

An aside on the method of thought: I thought non-verbally until I was in my early-mid teens. I distinctly remember being part of a conversation with my friends where the subject of the representation of thought came up, and I was amazed that they used words internally. I don't remember converting to verbal thinking at any specific point, but I do remember that I had no real anxieties at all prior to that - I approached the world with fearlessness and lived from second to second, probably as most youths do. But I remember that time with fondness, as now I have some anxieties and I am reasonably convinced that internal verbal self talk created and nurtured them. For example I developed a habit of replaying past conversations/situations (with different outcomes, or with specific investigatory interest in what so-and-so might have meant, or how I came across, etc), and rehearsing future ones (trying to lock down the future into a known quantity). If you do this for years you get really quite neurotic. Thankfully my neuroses are now diminishing, and it does correlate with me actively trying to wipe out verbal thoughts (I've been doing that for about a month now).

> *Once you "see" the void you will know it. It is seeing the clear empty inner space that contains everything, objects, thoughts, the body, the world.*

Wow! :-) I will try not to look for it and hope to just come across it. I am wary of possibly creating false experiences based on conceptual understanding.

I'll continue to meditate (usually say 1.5 hours a day, in total) and bring myself back to wherever the I Am is throughout the day. As and when interesting things happen I'll email. I am really trying not to think things like 'how can I tell how well I'm doing' and 'how fast can I do this'. :-p If there's anything I can do that will maximize my chances of a more rapid progression I'm all ears. I'm contemplating quitting my job (gracefully, in 4 months, with some saved cash) which will allow me spend a block of time on 'doing nothing' in the most constructive sense.

I'm attending a 10 day vipassana meditation retreat in May, in Sweden (I live across the sea in Estonia) - I booked it before I had committed to the I-Am path. Do you think this might help or hinder? It's the kind where you meditate for something like 8hrs per day, and no talking is allowed. I think it should be very interesting, even if it doesn't translate to any progression on the I Am path (mind you, it occurred to me that I could hijack the time for I-Am study :-D

RESPONSE:

> *The "quickest" way is to focus on the I Am, play with it, abide in it. Right now that does not sem too interesting to you so you are experimenting. You will find more change towards awakening if you follow the I Am, see the relation of it to the I thought, abide in the feeling, I Am, etc.*
>
> *But I like your experimenting mind. It is just such a way that one learns all the tricks of Maya.*
>
> *By the way, you cannot "look" for the void. It is always there and it sounds like your experience of 'I Am' is an intense experience of the void. The difficulty is that it is very, very difficult to communicate about internal subjective phenomena, as no matter how articulate one is, one is never sure that inner state has been communicated well, especially if the other person has not had a similar experience and described that similar experience in the same way.*
>
> *However, the sense of I Am is always personal, the feeling I exist, I am here. It sounds like that is not your experience of I Am, but you have a voidness sense of I Am.*
>
> *I don't know. But, I am interested in your experiments. So few experiment, and those that do can blaze a new trail.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:36 AM

21 April 2010

TO ME:

Hi Ed!

How are you? I feel like I would like to share with you recent events.

Ive reached a point, where I now observe even myself and see that 'Riaan' with all his searching, fears, etc is also one with thoughts and any other perceivable. There is alot of silence and I am simply observing. I know that there is nothing to achieve, so its more a matter of 'lets look and see what is already right here' without any sort of expectation (i observe that expectation rising).

Also something I feel very important to mention, a deep sense of trust has arisen in this "I" (or atleast what is 'observing'). I find myself reverting back to 'it' and abiding in 'it'. I dont even read anymore, and its like I know fully that this I is all I need to abide in/listen to/trust.

This is more like a conviction or intuitive knowing than a belief. Its like I feel I dont even need to really share this with you, though in a sense I would still appreciate
any opinions you might have!

Anyways, thanks for your time =)
R.

RESPONSE:

> *Riaan,*
>
> *No need to share at all, though I am glad you did. You already understand the full benefit of this approach. Yo are doing exceedingly well.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 7:34 PM

23 April 2010

TO ME:

I appreciate what you are doing with your website. Reading the Nisargadatta Gita combined with your direct insights into the experiences of those who write to you, has a unique precision and benefit that is lacking anywhere else I'm aware of.

I am still with it, reading the Nisargadatta Gita and meditating in the morning. I am at verse 148. Following the "feeling of being" wherever it arises in the body, but almost always observing it from the space atop my shoulders. Sometimes I am able to sink down into the warm radiance below my navel, or maybe it is expanding to encompass me up in my head?

Sometimes in meditation my understanding is: The fact that I exist IS what I AM. I AM the fact that I exist. Instead of being an instrument of perception, my body or subtle energy in the shape and position of my body, is just radiating the fact of my existence. Other times I momentarily feel that what I am is a wrinkle on the emptiness that is otherwise still; or something like an interference pattern made by this standing wave of

vibration I am aware of, bouncing back on itself; or like a slight thickening of the electromagnetic spectrum. These are just ways of trying to describe my experience, I don't know if they are true or not.

JJ

> *Any of your descriptions are excellent. I know exactly what you mean.*
>
> *You are doing well.*
>
> *Ed*

I AM is a two-way street. It is the means by which I as the Absolute experience the finite, and the way for the finite to turn around and see it is already always the Absolute. I AM sits on the edge of a thin blade, it can see to one side or the other, or both at once.

I AM sings all notes all at once constantly, it is only perception which moves along picking out individual notes at different moments to make a melody out of it. I AM radiates constantly, with no pulsation or fluctuation, a standing wave that doesn't really move. I AM is local and non-local at the same time, like atoms.

I AM roars out of a floating point in my chest, creating the world and my perception of it simultaneously. I want to sit in this all day long, forever.

With gratitude,
JJ

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 10:57 AM

24 April 2010

TO ME:

Dear Master,

I need to clear a doubt.

By abiding in Silence do I run the risk you mention about AWA?

> ***"With the AWA method, the ego may never die because he focuses on the totality of consciousness, the background, while emphasize focusing on the foreground, the sense of I Am. Until that is gone, any silence state, samadhi, or oneness state is temporary. The foreground has to be dissipated."***

> *Yes you do because the work on the I Am is never done. You identify with the witness, yet the personal and the core of consciousness remain untouched*

In meditation I can evoke Silence at will, just two seconds. It is Silence, not a boring empty mind. Therefore, abiding in Silence is very easy for me and I love it. Silence gradually deletes every concept, everything, and sometime an idea rises within me, 'I am this Silence.' I often feel it is like a death, for ego I suppose.

As an alternative, I can look for the ultimate witness. But this is not easy for me, because I perceive an ultimate witness that implies a contradiction in embryo: another witness is watching the so called ultimate witness. Then I don't know what to do.

Turn your visual sense inward onto the looker. Then don't think one is relative and the other absolute. Don't attach labels. But this is te hard way. If you dwell on the I Am, the foreground, eventually the mind becomes crystal clear and you become the background.

Please, is correct I go on abiding in Silence? Do I run the risk you mention about AWA practice?

Should I look for the ultimate witness? If I do, how can I go beyond the phenomenon of an ultimate witness appearing as an object?

Again, you make the witness an object.

You look for the subject as an object. Turn the visual sense upon itself without interpreting as subject or object. Again, this is the hard way. the easy way is to feel the energy of I Am, I, Me.

Yes, silence before awakening is a deadly trap for many.

You need to understand the mind is a marvelous thing. It has a thousand faces: emptiness, the void, bliss, samadhi, everyday waking mind, sleep, dream, Turiya, the world, subject, object, oneness, many. All are you, so you have to explore like hunter--a mind phenomena hunter attempting to know all the faces of God and mind.

Then awakening comes when you least expect it. All boundaries and concepts disappear, instantly, totally.

At this point many stop practice and gradually the old ways and mind divisions return. So practice is necessary for a long while.

Then, at some point you realize that even this vast oneness, silence, unity consciousness, is itself also false, a fraud, and then you are free of the whole thing.

But do not stop at just one station--silence. Keep moving, exploring until awakening takes you.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 1:37 PM

TO ME:

I am currently going through this "process" up in northern California. I have no teacher but I have practiced a combination of methods for self inquiry for the last 20 years. The layers of perception are quite tricky at times but I see clearly that continued practice will have the result. On the other hand of course, the desired result is not really desired nor is there a result to have or anybody to have it...just so you know what I am saying... thought there is no true "I" to say it. For the sake of argument I use the old vernacular while I send the email that does not really exist.

You are still holding onto a lot of concepts. No need for advaita talk, I understand you.

The issue that comes to me that causes fear is the sense that there is no purpose or meaning to all this if there is no me to enjoy it or be happy. So whats the point then?

Because there is great happiness without an I to enjoy it. That's the point.

Is it up to my relative decision on the point since there is no point...is it just that once the supreme ultimate is gained that the act of being that unmanifested awareness naturally flows a state of compassion and we simply begin to be that grateful loving empty vessel? I suppose that is enough isn't it...to then go on living the rest of our lives as an ego-less compassionate being that helps where they can and needs not the rewards. The rewards are inherent since we are one, since we are empty, since the existence is a convenient way to temporarily fill the void with the illusion that it was empty. A hungry void is a hungry void...and not.

So many concepts are wrapped into your understanding. Leave them alone. Just be the happiness that comes with being nobody. The real trick is to become nobody. After that, there is no problems such as you raise. They all disappear in complete peace and happiness.

Well I am very pleased to have found your websites. Right now I practice SUBUD, Zen and vipassana along with other methods of lesser illusion that just feel like part of the deal. I am a house holder with a wife and 2 kids so I struggle with the mud coating the lenses as I bounce along making money for the stuff we think we need to live in this multi-tasking basket of modern day suffering billion strong humanity roller coaster. More and more I look to the garden I am planting...=)

I guess my main question to "you" really is: Is an email correspondence possible with one such as yourself or is that a waste of time (for you)?

No waste. But I highly advise only practicing abiding in the self. Do nothing more than that for 3-4 weeks. I am sending the Nisargadatta Gita. Download it and print it out. Start every morning reading a little, contemplating it, then meditating on the I Am.

If possible "I" would like to find a teacher to work with soon as "I" feel that these changes in awareness are accelerating to a potentially challenging stage, meaning that it might become a bit difficult to maintain a stable environment for my children. Any help is appreciated, but it is understood if that is not possible. A reference to someone who can would also suffice.

Thanks,
P

Just read the Nisargadatta Gita. You already understand the complexities of "Hunting the I." A few pages every morning. Your everyday life will adjust around you, no need for you to worry about how you will control the environment for them. You never did control it; it only appeared that way because your apparent "will" was more or less aligned with the common thought patterns of humanity.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 11:24 PM

TO ME:

Hello Sir,

Recently, I've become more aware of the void at the 'background' of consciousness. It became apparent after the suggestion you posted on your blog where you stated the 'I Am' is in foreground. By focusing at the foreground I noticed that the sense of 'I Am' is like a threshold or borderline between the unfolding manifest consciousness at the front and the unmanifest Void at the back. It is strange because in a sense I have always been aware of the Void, but never as an object. The consciousness feels like a tiny droplet in comparison to the vastness of the Void. Come to think of it, when I described consciousness as feeling like a small room this was probably because I was becoming aware of the Void, but now I can really feel it expanding, or at least coming into better focus as an object 'outside' of manifest consciousness. I see that the subject is beyond this too since it witnesses the Void.

When people are sad about the death of their loved one, it is not the body they are upset about letting go of, but the consciousness that functioned through it. Death and suffering is difficult especially in the moment, but I now see it's place in manifestation. It is just apart of it, it does not happen to anyone. However, despite understanding this Sir my desire to help any sentient thing has grown tremendously. I feel if I were anything it is this consciousness, not the individual I was conditioned to be, and as such, why not help out when I can? Helping is really only helping yourself. I now see clearly why you have devoted your life to helping animals and people learn the truth, it is truly the most fulfilling way to function in the body.

Several moments of Oneness have struck me and bliss overflows from the Heart. These moments are truly special. Also, often I have felt the desire to ask you a question, but the answer comes immediately in a thought or unfolds in some way where the question is answered. Some strange coincidences have been happening lately too, which leads me to think the more you work with consciousness as consciousness the more it takes care of itself, there is no need to worry about doing anything or making something happen, all manifests of it's own accord.

I know most of this is conceptual and still on the level of the mind, but this is what has been happening the past couple weeks for me.

I cannot thank you enough Sir for your guidance. Although, I feel I have much further to go, I feel I have come so far so quickly and it is all because of You. I am eternally grateful.

Love,
R.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *You are doing well. You conceptual understanding is solid and is based in experience. Keep going as you are doing. Later you will find no need to use terms like foreground, background, manifest or unmanifest. The strangest experiences will come and go and you will be unconcerned and happy.*
>
> *Your closest companion will always be emptiness, but know that is still not the core of you or all of you.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 11:30 PM

30 April 2010

TO ME:

Thank you for creating the "its not real" website, fantastic site. I wont bore you with my background, but I would greatly appreciate your advice. After extensive spiritual practices, twice in the last six months I have experienced an awakening experince that only lasted a few hours each time. The only description I can use it that it felt just like becoming aware of the dream state while dreaming. The moment the experience sets in I laugh almost hysterically at the realization, then settle into indescribable joy that cant not be hidden. The second (and last) experience left an after thought lingering in mind. The next morning I couldnt get the following thought out of my mind: "If these brief experiences had not ended, and I had stayed continously in that state my life as I know it would be altered in grave ways". I am sure my fiancee would think I had lost my mind, my employer would send me packing, and I would be left a lonely soul in bliss or in a mental facility.

So, the question is....should I abort the path Im on, realizing that in todays society there is no place left for the enlightened, or is this state much more workable once mastered?

Thank you so very much for taking the time to read my email.

Sincerely,

JP

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *As Robert would say, "So?" The world is illusion and a joke. Awakening takes you out of the joke, not a better player in the joke. You have to decide what you want, awakening or the world.*

Ed

TO ME:

Thank you for your response.
I was afraid of getting that answer, yet expected it. I have read many books referring to householders as able to take the spiritual path just as others who renounce all, but after my recent experiences I question the validity of this idea. I no longer feel that I can have both as described. I never had the forsight to consider this years ago when I began the journey....I guess I was more ignorant than I thought.

Sincerely
JP

RESPONSE:

JP, it is not that you can't do both, look at Rajiv.

It's just that it can't be both the ways you want it.

You can continue to be a householder, but things will change and the trajectory will change, maybe in ways you don't like--completely different than you expected.

There is nothing like a secure, safe, linear road after you begin spirituality.

Robert was a householder, I am too. Nisargadatta was a householder, but things change radically once you begin changing internally radically. The picket fence American dream becomes something else altogether and you have to adopt.

Ed

TO ME:

Ed,

Its good to hear that you are an example yourself of how this can work.

I think the feeling that the pace of progression has changed has brought this issue to the forefront. I honestly believe that the your website has changed this process for me....somehow it has turbocharged my understanding. I stumbled across the site and was instantly drawn into reading a few of the transcripted conversations. Then the next day I read the rest. Then two days later I actually printed them all out and reread them constantly. Somehow a cord was struck, and since then I feel Im being fast-tracked. Very, very strange. Nothing, and I mean nothing has hit me as hard as Roberts talks. Its seems he was able to deliver a potent version of the teachings that skip all nonessentials.

Thanks for everything

JP

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 5:00 PM

09 May 2010

Hello,

Felt an urge to write again, but don't know why because i don't have particular question.
I haven't progressed much. But i don't know how to explain... this 'I AM' is being witnessed for sure by something which i cannot grasp nor i can be it.

Currently i am stuck (or not stuck) with my attention going in circles (not verbally).
And it seems that this is an unending sequence of knowers who knows itself through itself by objectifying itself.

"Who is this seer?" (during a day thinking mind arises, but automatically non-verbal questioning takes place and this whole inner "personal" affair collapses, stillness arises, it happens by itself)

"Who sees this seer?" (suddenly attention seeks the one behind the seer, because it is being felt that this seer which I am is being known by something or 'no-thing')
"Who knows the seer of the seer?" (yet again attention seeks something because some kind of "behind" is felt always no matter how deep you go)
"Who knows the seer of the seer of the seer?....."

It does not mean that I feel that there is seer behind seer behind seer behind seer in actuality (thought it seems so sometimes)... It is just to describe this attention always trying to go behind.

Now in this writing process, suddenly, i realize that whatever there arise to be known, attention itself goes automatically to the knower of that knowledge because of the habit "who is the knower?", so if there is a Seer and something knows that seer, attention will seek always the knower of that 'something' who knows the seer and so on and on.

So ultimately it seems one needs to stop knowing? And let attention rest in itself?

sincerely,

A.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *Don't intellectualize so much. That infinite regression is purely concept. In your experience, there is only oneness. The mind divides the oneness into many. But all is one.*
>
> *Only there is knowing, and not knowing, consciousness and the disappearance of consciousness. Yet, there is something that watches and is aware of the coming and going of consciousness and you are that, but "That" can never be known as an object. But you have to become absolutely certain of this before you stop practicing and just sit still in awareness.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 12:07 PM

Ed

Lately I have felt moved and been able to sit more still and rest attention deeper in what has a sense of being. I am feeling more attraction to sitting and resting attention internally when I am not sitting but during whatever activity I am engaged in. So I am cultivating this desire more and dropping excuses. I am working with different phrasing also to uncover the "I am" sense. I know the mind wants to complicate matters and even create performance anxiety relative to practice. I just witness it and let it go. I know that sincerity and persistence is everything so I am accepting that I need to trust the process and not try to control or force anything.

Frankly, I am just enjoying being much more quiet and peaceful whichsupports the process. I can feel a palpable openness and stillness inside whenever I turn and keep my attention on the interior state. At this point I cannot say I have much sensitivity to discern internal states. Just stillness which does not feel body-based. It feels more like there is no body. I can still sense the physical body but the part that feels still and peaceful does not feel associated with the organism is what I am trying to say.

I bring your photo to mind throughout the day as a source of guidance and inspiration. Whatever you are able to do on my behalf is a blessing. Remembering that you care deeply and your desire and intention to be of service

to me moves me to do more each day. That goes beyond merely a teacher-student arrangement and I cannot fathom what that may mean for me in the future. Thank you.

I will write again as it seems appropriate.
D.

> ***RESPONSE:***
>
> *You attitude and determination are perfect. Even after just a short time you are feeling increased peace and silence.*
>
> *It will get better and better but possibly with dry periods coming that might shake your faith. But for now, it is going well.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:28 PM

12 May 2010

Article by http://enlightenmentdudes.com/

11 Tips to Acting "Spiritually Enlightened" on Facebook, Blogs, & Forums
By AdministratorPublished: May 11, 2010
Posted in: All Stories & Reviews, News & Opinion
Tags:

Hello Friends,
The team here at enlightenmentdudes.com thought we would have a little fun with everyone and do a sarcastic (but good natured) blog post about this subject. So no offense.. hope you all enjoy. If you like this our hate it, feel free to leave comments at the bottom, share, and/or subscribe.

Tip #1 Change Your Name
If you are getting frustrated because no one wants to sign up for your $25 an hour Virtual Satsangs, maybe you should try a name change? Make your name sound exotic if possible. Even better say your enlightened guru gave you the name of "angry tiger" or "moldy peaches." Everyone knows that "John Smith" doesn't wake up, but "Sri-Sri Super-Swami Ganeshahnto Arunachala" sure the hell does. Even better change your name to one word like Madonna did! You will have people flocking to your blog to collect your pearls of wisdom in no time.

Tip #2 Trace Your Lineage
Look, if you want to gain Enlightenment "street cred" then be prepared to trace your teacher to another teacher- to another teacher-back to some famously Enlightened Being. Because we all know when you get to the gateless gate they are going to ask to see your papers. In today's fast paced-online word, waking up has nothing to do with the deep arduous work of self inquiry or ego-death. It is all about who your teacher's, teacher's, teacher was. It is kinda like a "get out of ego " free card. Very handy.

Tip #3 Put "Things" in "Quotes" a lot
Since other online Enlightened Beings always try to bust you for talking about "you" or "yourself" you need protection yourself from this. The best thing to do is put tons of things in "quotes" all the time.
See the two examples below:
incorrect = My approach to awakening involved a combination of meditation and my own form of lucid journaling. I found this was the best practice for my path at the time.
Correct= "My" "approach" to "awakening" involved a combination of "meditation" and "my own" form of lucid journaling. "I" found this was the "best" practice for "my path" at the "time."

Tip #4 Refer to Your Self in the 3rd Person
So for example, I would say something like this in a blog or forum – "Jim experiences the world in a different way. I sense that there is a "Jim thing" but no experiencer to speak of."

Tip #5 Deny You Are Enlightened
This is one of my favorites, say things like…I am not awake because there is no "one" here to BE AWAKE!

Tip #6 Have NO sense of humor
We all know that the people that are the most Enlightened also seem to have no sense of humor online about anything! They are easily offended when you mention their teacher, practice, group or style in a humorous light.

Tip #7 Put on lots of White Robes
In old westerns the good guys have on white hats, but in the realm of awakening you gotta rock the white flowing robe. You may want to invest in some trinkets or medallions to go along with your new outfit.

Tip #8 Go Vegetarian
This one is easy, no one ever ate a steak and woke up and no one ever will!

Tip #9 Tell Others to Stop Seeking
Most of the popular Neo-Advaita folks go with this approach, it is very trendy and has a long and misunderstood history in Zen also. But tell people that they are already enlightened BAM! it is all here and now you are done! Forget about the destructive and life altering work, experiences, processes, that the masters all had to endure, all YOU have to do is DROP THE SEARCH AND "BE." It makes me want to slam one of those Staples Easy Buttons -that was easy. Done! Instant Enlightenment. It was here all along and I never knew it – wow! I bet the Buddha wishes someone would have told him that before the months of pain and fasting or all those dudes who almost died up in caves some place to wake up.

Tip #10 Talk in Slow Hushed Tones, Look Around In Bewilderment
How you act in public will be judged by your followers so I am going to tell you how to act. Talk very slowly and look around with your eyes very wide open, now you must have a slight, but goofy smile on your face. Also talk as quietly as a mouse, you have seen BEYOND and into to void, so start acting like it, people pay for your retreats, so give them a show.

Tip #11 Constantly use The Terms Consciousness and/or Awareness
Telling people on a blog or spiritual group that "everything is the infinity consciousness of awareness being aware of itself and its of own aware consciousness" or whatever, is like talking to a bunch of fish at the bottom of the ocean about how everything seems to be pretty wet. What's the point? A term that is everything means absolutely nothing in a conversation online.

By http://enlightenmentdudes.com/

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 9:44 PM

15 May 2010

ROBERT ADAMS MOVIE PROJECT

A devotee has written a script about Robert's life including scenes in America with Robert's teachers Joel Goldsmith and Paramahansa Yogananda, and masters he stayed with in India such as Ramana Maharshi and Nisargadatta Maharaj. It also portrays what we know of his life story, which was shrouded in mystery, but the few details we do know are amazing. This could be the first dramatic movie ever made about advaita vedanta and the practice of Self-inquiry, especially for people in the West.

The script is very powerful and moving, but the next step is a challenge. The project would require extensive financing and a professional team with the appropriate resources. If any reader of this site is in film production or knows someone who is and would be interested in helping to make this project a reality, please email satsang(dot)online(at)gmail.com.

I am posting this to see if Consciousness wants this to happen.

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 4:13 PM

16 May 2010

Hello sir,

I was just reading about an individual who had issues with depersonalization, and I'm just wondering how it compares to ego-dissolution? I've had brief episodes where it feels as if I'm merely observing myself act. I've understood this could be anxiety-related in many people, and that this type of experience is not something that is uncommon. So: Are these episodes something to "latch on to"? Can the experience be utilized for progress, so to speak? The reason I'm asking is because it's generally considered pathological and people seem to find the experience unsettling but maybe it's a key to something beyond?

I'm not trying to conceptualize here, and I don't want to waste your time, sir. It's merely because I, as many others, have had these experiences but I find them somewhat unsettling. But can I use them somehow, or try to stay in that very observing position if an episode occurs?

Thank you,

P.

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *These are only experiences--temporary experiences.*
>
> *You are the witness of all experiences and beyond them. Be aware you are observing "depersonalization" when it happens. The experience has nothing to do with you.*
>
> *It is nothing to worry about.*
>
> *Just stay with the I Am.*
>
> *Don't worry about what others says about depersonalization. You are going beyond Western psychology which considers most religious experiences as depersonalization and dissociation.*
>
> *First, you want to experience without an experiencer. Then you want to apprehend that the experience, consciousness, is being witnessed by you.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 2:24 PM

18 May 2010

Hi Master,

I hope you are well.

Now I can catch the “I Am” at will. It is almost always available. Without your help I would certainly give up and miss the goal.

I have a question about Autobiography. At page 74 you write, “Robert’s talks will help them sleep and gently point the way for many.”

Please, what do you mean by “sleep”? Do you mean they were dull and closed to the Robert’s talks? Or that the Robert’s talks inspired a sort of yoganidra to relax and open them?

The complete Italian translation will be ready soon. There are just 45 pages to the end. I have seen a French version will be available too. What a joy!!!

I and Julius are honoured to give Italian aspirants such a scripture.

Thank you and much love,

RESPONSE:

Most people came to Robert to hear his voice and teachings. He taught on the surface for most. Most relaxed and some slept in Satsang. But for close students, the work was hard. He cooked us. But most never got close enough to feel the heat.

My teachings are more abrupt and effort directed so that real progress is made.

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 1:13 PM

18 May 2010

NEW TEACHING SERIES:

Chapter I The Need For Effort

I had my first awakening experience while taking a shower. As I had done before thousands of times, while feeling the water hitting my back, I looked inside into my inner sense of space, and asked, "Who feels the water hitting my back?" Over the years of looking inward, looking for the I, that inner subjective space had become empty space, self-illumined, and all inner objects and forms, including images and thoughts, were clearly seen as insubstantial, empty of separate beingness, permeated by a three dimensional void that permeated and contained everything.

However, this particular day something happened. I saw looking inwards, only the void and void-permeated images that had no existential substance, and attained Kensho, the first awakening.

The awakening was both an experience that form and emptiness were one and interpenetrated each other, but also that no object inside existed with any existential substance. It was all just mind.

I saw too at that time that there was no I. There was no entity inside that could be called Ed Muzika. There was no Ed Muzika and there was no I. There also was no I-thought, because the concept of I-thought required there to be a substantial and sustained entity called and I thought. Instead, all that there was was a shadow like object that floated in and out of emptiness. There was no I-thought as a stable, self-sustained entity. Indeed, no thought was a stable, mental entity. They were all brief ghost-like entities that came from a darkness at the edge of the phenomenal void, had a few seconds of existence, then passed away again into that darkness where consciousness could not follow.

The discovery that there was no Ed Muzika as an objective entity, and that there was not even an I-thought brought about a calamitous personal experience and existential collapse that I wrote about here. This experience lasted a few hours and deepened second by second and minute by minute until I had seen entirely through the empty nature of existence, the world and even consciousness. There were other awakenings to come, but they all just opened and broadened the reach of this first awakening.

What I saw is that the I-thought created a separation between I and the rest of the world. I appeared to be something inside the body, everything else was outside. When I saw the I did not exist, it was only a concept, it became clear that nothing else existed either because all other thoughts depended on the I-thought for its reality. The I-thought was the lynch pin. Without this central organizing thought, all the other thoughts and concepts came crashing down as being just as unreal as the I thought. That is, there were no objects associated with the non-I-thoughts, just as there was no object associated with the I-thought. Indeed, all objects were just conceptual, they did not exist in any reality other than my imagination. They existed as imaginary objects in my inner imaginal space that "I" superimposed on sense impressions. The world was wholly a mental creation, but I didn't create it any longer since I did not exist any longer. Since there was no longer an I to sustain it, the entire world came crashing down. It was an illusion. The reality was only the Void, while imaginary entities came from a darkness behind the Void, into the Void, and passed away

again, either because they were ignored or the mind went to sleep. [Much of the phenomenology and philosophy of this area is explained in "Autobiography of a Jnani."]

I want to be clear. I had practiced "looking inside" in various ways for 27 years before this experience in 1995. I had started by working on the koan mentioned by Zen master Bassui in the 12th Century. At times I looked inside in meditation 10 hours a day in formal meditation. For years I did not work, or I worked part-time. Over those years I was visited by thousands of Kundalini experiences, energies, visions, and an ever growing awareness of the Void nature of all entities, inner and outer.

At Mt. Baldy I would sit in meditation and go through a process wherein my mind would grow solid as a rock, where my head felt like it became as dense as a brick until all consciousness stopped, and my mind suddenly fell downwards and broke open, suddenly revealing one consciousness, without thought, that was brilliantly happy and embraced all the universe. But ordinary mind was always to return.

What happened in 1995 was the sudden recognition that the Void Oneness mind was all that there is. Nothing else existed. With this recognition my life changed completely because I saw I was not human. I was consciousness itself, uncontained by the body and coextensive with the world. One brilliant mind.

(A later experience revealed to me that even this one brilliant mind, the oneness consciousness, even though it was all that existed, was itself not real. Existence and consciousness are the same, but there is something beyond existence and consciousness that we all are, but which can never be known, only "felt." That is, the world is One vast emptiness, but even that One is not real.)

I-ness that is the thread that passes unerringly through the Void and the darkness beyond the Void to your truest and deepest existence beyond consciousness, and from which position you observe consciousness.

This inner exploration is not a trivial process of a few days or hours, but can take a lifetime because the inner world is so incredibly complex and because you have to spend years looking inside to counterbalance the many years of looking and searching outside in the world, which is what the ways of the world teach you. Ultimately, there is no inner and outer, but you cannot realize this until your inner space is as clearly perceived and known as your outer space.

What I plan on doing now is wading through several books by or about Robert Adams, Ramana Maharshi and Nisargadatta Maharaj that reinforce the message that practice in the form of self-inquiry or self abidance is needed before you can truly see the I is empty, and thereby destroy your mind and the external world at the same moment.

The first book we'll look at the "The Path of Ramana Maharshi—Part One" by Sadhu Om and Michael James. This is the best book on self-inquiry that there is. Read the entire book. Each chapter is a gem in its own way. Michael has written a much longer and more detailed book that covers the same area and more, but this book is the perfect bite-size that the beginner and intermediate student needs, as well as for a more advanced student that has lost his or her way. The links to Michael James books and site can be found on http://itisnotreal.com. I will refer to this book as PR1.

PR1-97

In the waking state when we enjoy agreeable experiences through the five senses, there is quiescence of the mind for an extremely short period of time. In sleep the period of the mind's quiescence is a little longer18. In death also the mind is likewise quiescent only. All these are only quiescence of the mind (mano-laya) and not the destruction of the mind (mano-nasa). It is not enough if misery (i.e. mind) is temporarily absorbed, it must be destroyed. This is the goal of mankind. Temporary quiescence (laya) of the mind is temporary quiescence of misery, and permanent destruction (nasa) of the mind is permanent destruction of misery; that is, the mind itself is misery! Hence, let us find out what is to be done to destroy the mind.

COMMENT:

By destruction of the mind, he does not mean thoughts never arise again, but only that the empty nature of thoughts is clearly perceived, and that there are no associated objects that these ghostlike entities apparently point to. With this recognition, not only is the I seen to not exist, therefore there is no entity that can die or be killed, or suffer, but, indeed, the world itself is seen

to be empty, an illusion, and thus something that cannot touch you in any way unless you believe in it. Then is would touch the imaginary you in an imaginary way.

PR1-97

What is mind? The verdict given by Sri Bhagavan is:

"The mind is only thoughts..."

'Upadesa Undhiyar,' verse 18

If we give up all thoughts and observe what is mind, we will find that there is no such thing as 'mind' at all.

"If one enquires–without inadvertence (pramada) – into the form of the mind, it will be found that there is no such thing as mind! This is the direct path for all!"

'Upadesa Undhiyar', verse 17

PR1-98

For destroying the mind it is enough if thoughts are destroyed. Let us therefore find out what thoughts actually are. This scrutiny is not an idle way of passing time. Is not the entire world struggling for happiness? Even this scrutiny is undertaken in view of obtaining that same happiness. Then what is the difference between the efforts of humanity in general and this effort undertaken by a spiritual aspirant? **The efforts of worldly people lead only to a fleeting semblance of happiness, whereas this effort of an aspirant – Self-enquiry – paves the path to perfect, eternal and unlimited happiness. Therefore, this research is far more important and worthy than all other kinds of human endeavour! Throughout this scrutiny, one must be very vigilant and put forth one's very best efforts. Only then will the result of one's enquiry – the supreme gain of life – be obtained here and now.**

PR1-98

Did we not begin with a proposal to scrutinize thoughts? For what reason? The aim is to destroy all thoughts and thereby to enjoy perfect happiness. Millions of thoughts rise in us, out of which we must search for and discover the first and root thought. When we do so, we will find that the first person thought, 'I am this body', which rises as soon as one wakes up from sleep, is the first thought. This 'I'-thought is the root of all thoughts.

"The mind is only thoughts. Of all thoughts, the thought 'I' is indeed the root-thought. Therefore, what is called mind is only the thought 'I' (i.e. the feeling 'I am the body')."

'Upadesa Undhiyar, verse 18

PR1-99

If the first person does not rise, the second and third persons will not come into existence. The first person is nothing but the thought 'I', and this alone is mind. The second and third persons will rise only after the rising of the first person, 'I'. The world is nothing but second and third persons.

"Only if that first person (the ego) in the form 'I am the body' exists, will the second and third persons also exist..."

'Ulladhu Narpadhu'. verse 14

"If there is no 'I'-thought, no other thing will exist..."

'Sri Arunachala Ashtakam', verse 7

If the 'I'-thought – the root of all thoughts – is prevented from rising, all other thoughts will also be prevented. If a man wants to cut down the millions of leaves and hundreds of branches of a tree, is it not enough if he cuts down the trunk? Similarly, a man who is trying to destroy all the millions and millions of thoughts will have succeeded in doing so if he destroys the 'I'-thought, their root. Did we not start with the objective of scrutinizing thoughts? From what we have seen above, it is now clear that **it is not necessary to scrutinize each and every thought, and that a scrutiny of only the 'I'-thought, the root of all thoughts, is quite sufficient.**

PR1-101

The first person thought, 'I', has this peculiar property: if (by enquiring 'Who am I?') **attention is focused on it in order to discover what it is, this 'I' thought will subside.**

PR1-101

"The thought 'I am this body of flesh and blood' is the one thread on which are strung the various other thoughts. Therefore if we turn inwards, 'Where is this I?', all thoughts [including the 'I'- thought] will come to an end and Self-knowledge will then spontaneously shine forth within the cave (the heart) as 'I-I' ..."

PR1-102

"... When the first person ceases to exit through one's enquiry into the truth of that first person, then the existence of the second and third persons will come to an end ...."

'Ulladhu Narpadhu', verse 14

Thus, the method of destroying the 'I'-thought is also the method which will destroy all other thoughts. **Therefore, what is essential is to destroy the first person thought, 'I'. The only way to destroy it is to scrutinize its nature! There is no other way!!**

"...How else to attain that state wherein 'I' (the ego) does not rise the state of egolessness unless we seek the source whence 'I' rises?..."

'Ulladu Narpadhu', verse 27

From Robert Adams, the Four Principles, August 19, 1990:

The third method of awakening, and the one that I advocate, is self-inquiry. Asking yourself, "To whom do these troubles come? To whom does this karma come? To whom does this suffering come? It comes to me? Well, what is me? I am me. Who am I? From where did the I come from?" And following the I to its source. You can use any of those three methods, the one that suits you best. But by all means do something. Don't waste your life with frivolities. Work on yourself, if you want to become free.

> *(Comment: Robert knows it is not enough to hear someone say you are already free. You have to practice and make effort, otherwise you are only parroting the concept that everyone is already free and there is no need for effort.)*

'Ulladu Narpadhu', verse 27

Posted by Ed Muzika 1 comments Links to this post at 8:56 PM

19 May 2010

CHAPTER 2

The Need to go Beyond No-I

NOW WITH A ROBERT ADAMS SATSANG AUDIO

> *I have a fundamental disagreement with the Neo-Advaita and Rinzai Zen position that awakening begins and ends with the discovery that the I-thought has no internal object of reference. That is, they hold once you look inside and see that there is no I, one immediately recognizes that all that there is, is Consciousness, and that is the Absolute, and no more practice or self-investigative effort is needed. Actually, it is only the first freedom.*
>
> *Firstly, many people who do look inside find all kinds of internal objects. Others have very poor introspective skills and find nothing. Others find endless, internal and imaginal objects, from thoughts, to feelings, to memories, imaginations, images to body sensations. If you are naturally introspective, or have developed introspective awareness, the internal-imaginal world is a zoo. For this person, to say they find no I is not a compelling argument, because they don't understand which of those zoo inmates they are supposed to reject as not-I or I.*
>
> *On the other hand, the non-introspective person easily finds nothing because the inner world has never been open to them. Thus, following the command and interpretation, "Look within for the I," followed by the statement, "You didn't find anything, did you," makes complete sense. There are many, many people who are not aware of inner objects like the I-sense, emotions or images. But they can grasp concepts.*

From there they can easily accept the Neo-Advaita guru's statement, that indeed, there is no I, and that which you see and experience now is all that there is, call it "isness" or whatever they want to call it. The guru tells them this Is-ness is the Absolute and unborn nature of reality. The guru now tells them they are enlightened. Just look inside for a moment, finding no I, and know that this is the beginning and end of spirituality."

In fact, if the person accepts this, he or she has merely accepted a new concept about awakening. There is no need to do anything. You are already perfect, no-I, blissful, complete and absolute. Now go forth to facebook and trade quotes with other neo-Advaita gurus and students. "Is-ness" for the non-introspective person is more or less the waking external world.

However, the sophisticated student for whom the inner world is blindingly complex will not buy this. He or she understands there is much more to the I-sense than merely the I-thought. For this person, seeing that there is no internal object to which the I-thought points is merely the first step in a long process of finding out who or what he or she truly is at the deepest level.

Both Ramana and Nisargadatta speak of deeper levels of I and consciousness, and of the I-sense that even goes deeper than waking or sleep consciousness itself. So does Robert who endless told students to dive deep within themselves. He never said look within and find nothing, and then know you are liberated.

The I-sense is quite complex and must be understood completely at all levels before there can be any talk about the absolute or the ultimate meaning of life and death.

The Neo-Advaitin's discovery of no I object related to the I thought, in no way supports any argument that waking consciousness and the abundancy of the waking consciousness is Absolute or immortal.

What is immortal is entirely beyond consciousness as we know it and this can only be understood by a progressive deepening of awareness of the internal world and more especially, the I-sense. The I-sense must be followed downwards as a thread, through all the sensations associated with the body, down through all the imaginations and images/feelings of the mind, and even further downwards into the empty darkness of not being awake to the world, the state of no awareness of anything.

Consciousness as we know it, appears and disappears. It comes and goes. It is not absolute. It is temporary and time limited. The neo-advaitins do not accept this obvious truth which is the common sense understanding of ordinary people as well as the enlightened Jnani. Yet, we are aware of the coming and going of the various forms of phenomenality, which I may call consciousness. When I awaken in the morning, it is not as if I am a newborn with no knowledge of the world. I remember that there have been numberless cyclings of the coming and going of various grades and activities of consciousness, from the dream state, to the awake state, to all grades and varieties of consciousness including the coming and going of sleep and nothingness. Nothingness too is an experience that we can remember. If asked to describe the sleep state, most people will take a shot at a description, such as it was darkness, nothingness, peaceful, restful, with no experience of consciousness whatsoever.

Yet, each day I awaken and feel the same identity as the same and unchanged as the day before. Indeed, throughout my life, I feel the same and unchanged no matter how much my body changes, or my mood changes, or activity level or any other change.

It is this central core of knowledge of the unchanging, which witnesses and observes the coming and going of consciousness, sleep, images, thoughts, imaginations, emotions, etc., which is the ultimate subject, the witness which we must become aware of to pass beyond life and death.

The I-thought is only one small, but very significant part of the I-sense, which actually penetrates downwards through the perceptions of the gross body, through the subtle body of the imaginal

This fundamental witness can never be cognized as an object, because objects are objects of investigation of the mind. The mind cannot penetrate downwards deeper than the mind-body level (subtle body). The becoming aware of that which lies deeper than the darkness of sleep, the causal body existence, can never be known as we are used to knowing an object of mind. We can only be at that deepest level, and in that being, apprehend existence beyond existence, a different sort of existence beyond the mind and body, not cognizable by mind.

This area of spiritual existence is explored more fully in Autobiography of a Jnani. It is existence entirely beyond human existence. Even to call it the absolute is to give it qualities it lacks. It is entirely beyond any property, description or experience of the mind or consciousness.

I want now to turn to secondary confirmation of this understanding to be found in the teachings of Robert Adams, Ramana Maharshi and Nisargdatta.

From Michael James and Sadhu Om's Path of Sri Ramana Maharshi, Vol. I

(PR1-Page 106)

The wrong identification 'I am the body' is itself all of these: mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), the storehouse of tendencies (chittam), ego (ahankara), wrong knowledge (ajnana), nescience (sunya), maya, and so on. The prana is a gross form of this mind, and so is the physical body! Even the mind is a body, but a subtle one; prana is a little grosser than mind; and the body of flesh and blood is still grosser than the prana; The subtle mind in its subtler form is itself the tendencies (vasanas) or the darkness of ignorance. Let us classify all these forms of the mind into three categories, namely the gross, subtle and causal bodies.

All the gross forms – the body, blood circulation and respiration – which are cognized by the mind through the five senses constitute the gross body; this is because all these are clearly cognized by the mind, the subtle body, which is the second in our classification. Though the sastras usually include pranamaya kosa in the category of subtle body, we have here included it in the category of gross body because it is clearly perceived by the mind as an object other than the mind, and since this will help us a great deal in applying our test. Moreover, since all these five sheaths are finally to be discarded as 'not I' (non-Self), no man with a little common sense will object to its being included with either of those two bodies.

PR1-108

Further, in the same manner as this 'I am the body'- consciousness (dehatma-buddhi) clings to the gross body as 'I', it can also cling in a subtle way to many other bodies. For instance, when the gross body is inactive, is not the mind working? Dream is one such case. It is an example of our taking a subtle body. During dream, the mind – as if it had taken another gross body – functions and knows many things through that body. This dream body is simply a mental projection. It is nothing but the mind itself. So it can also be called the subtle body, But do we not exist in dreamless sleep? Therefore, since we can exist even without this dream-body, we can clearly understand that it is not 'I'. We should not think that the mind thus functions with a subtle body only in dream. Even in the waking state, do we not day-dream? We know that these subtle bodies which we thus take now and then are transient. When we wake up from dream, the dream-body is gone. In the same manner, the body assumed in day-dream also becomes false (non-existent). That is, these bodies are false forms which come on us and go. Thus we can conclude that we exist even in the absence of these bodies. Therefore, they are not 'we'.

Now, if we scrutinize further, we will find that we have another kind of body even subtler than the subtle body. Here also, to support this, each one of us has his own experience, namely dreamless sleep. At that time we have neither the gross nor subtle body. The mind having completely subsided we sink at rest in total darkness, knowing nothing. When the mind rises again from this darkness, either dream or waking results. When we wake up from deep sleep, we remember our experience thus, 'I slept happily and did not have any dream'. That is, we know that we existed even in that state of seeming darkness in which there was not even a dream. That dark state is called the causal body30.

We who know that we knew that we existed there, is the real 'I'.

PR1-123

In deep sleep, the ego (ahankara – the mind in the form of attachments) is still alive in the very subtle form of tendencies (vasanas); it is this form which is that base and cause for the rising of the subtle and gross bodies, and therefore it is called the causal body. Even in death, it is in this causal body that we exist. This causal body is not destroyed by the death of the gross body. The reason for asserting that even this causal body is not 'I', is that we exist there to know even that state to be alien to us. There, our existence alone is real, and we cannot be the form (darkness or ignorance) which we assume there. Just as we rejected the gross body of the waking state as 'I am not this body', even though it appeared to be 'I', and just as for the same reason we rejected the subtle body of the dream state as 'not I', let us now also reject this causal body (darkness or ignorance) of deep sleep as 'not I', since it is only a form which comes on us and goes. **Therefore, having firmly eliminated all**

these three bodies as 'not I, not I', what then remains, that knowledge, the consciousness (chit) of our existence (sat), alone is 'I'.

> *(COMMENT By Ed: This is the core of the teachings of Ramana, Robert, Nisargadatta and I: the awareness of existence beyond all forms of consciousness of the waking reality, the dream subtle body reality and the causal existence of darkness and emptiness. However, this complete knowledge is only obtained after working through all levels of phenomenal existence, watching these various phenomenologies come and go, and recognizing we are apart from them, they are alien to us, the ultimate witness. All these states and things are experiences, objects to us as witness, who lies entirely beyond existence as the subject. The subject, the witness, is at the core of the sense of I. Following the thread of the I-sense through all the levels of existence reveals the existence of the subject as beyond all of that.)*

Can we eliminate these three bodies? Certainly we can, because they are only our sheaths and are extraneous to us. From what is extraneous to us, we can separate ourself. It is within our ability. Only when we thus separate ourself from these sheaths, which are extraneous to us, will we know our true nature. According to the truth which we have already established, namely that our true nature itself is happiness, knowing **our true nature is itself experiencing perfect happiness**. Thus, the experience of Self-knowledge (atma-swarupanubhava) **is the very pinnacle of happiness**. It is the ultimate goal for which all living beings are knowingly or unknowingly searching through all their innumerable endeavours. Attaining – through the enquiry 'Who am I?' – **the knowledge** (chit) of our reality (sat) **as the perfect happiness** (ananda) is the supreme goal of mankind. The sole cause of all miseries is the mistake of veiling ourself by imagining these sheaths to be ourself, even though we are ever this existence-consciousness-bliss (satch it-ananda).

From Robert Adams:

Before I am by Robert Adams; Satsang, November 1, 1990.

Robert: Let me ask you a question. Where do you think you were, or what were you, prior to consciousness? What do you think you were? Who can tell me? Before you came into this body, before you became conscious, what were you?

S (Henry Dennison (H.D.)): You mean prior to individual consciousness…?

R: Yes.

S: (Henry D.)...as opposed to consciousness itself?

R: Both.

S: (H.D.) Is there any prior to consciousness?

R: Yes, there is.

S: Prior to consciousness. Would that be consciousness at rest - no content?

R: Exactly. What were you prior to that?

S: (H.D.) There is no prior.

R: There's no prior. Are you sure?

S: (H.D.) Yes.

R: Any more bright answers?

S: (Henry D.)There can't be! It's absurd!

S: (Bob Solomon) Why can't there be, though, why would you just dismiss it entirely?

S: (Henry D.) Because consciousness is fundamental. Consciousness is all. It's all that is. What can be prior to totality, to all that is?

R: Tell me.

S: (Ed Muzika) Anything that would be said would only be a concept and would be in phenomenality. It would miss the point entirely.

(Listen to audio of that Satsang here..)

R: That is the answer. You got it. As long as you can describe it (or experience it as Robert considered all experience as illusion), it's not that. It's a mystery. It's beyond description. The finite can never comprehend the infinite. So as long as you can describe it, and you can talk about it, it's not that. And this is something you should always remember.

(Comment by Ed: Whatever I am cannot be in phenomenality. It cannot be an object of or in consciousness. The self is the subject, entirely beyond the phenomenal world.)

R: So the answer is silence. That's the correct answer. You are space, and now you appear to be the image superimposed on space. Now why do you identify with the image, but prior to consciousness you were not the space, really, nor the image? The reason I say you were not the space is because we can talk about it.

(COMMENT by Ed: Here Robert is saying you are even beyond the Void.)

R: As long as you can talk about it, as long as you can describe it, as long as you can argue about it, as long as you stick up for your rights and say it's this or it's that, you're wrong. Not really wrong, just on the wrong track, because if you are wrong, then something is right, and nothing is right, so there's nothing wrong. It goes beyond dualistic concepts.

R: For as long as you search, you'll never find it. After all, ask what you are searching for. You are searching for something that you already are. That's why you can never find it. If you were not that, then you would search, but you're already that, so searching becomes fruitless.

(Comment: Back then, at this Satsang, Robert did not like the term witness, but he did so in other Satsangs. Robert did not want to give the self a name or attach a concept such as the absolute or witness, as that would make it an object, a thing, and the subject can never be an object or known as having qualities. Self is entirely beyond the universe yet witness to it.

The witness is the subject, I: it happens to me, or I experience it, or I see or hear it, or otherwise sense it. When one accurately holds onto the I-sense, penetrates through all perceptions, concepts and images, through the darkness of the causal experience, it becomes itself, I become myself. Awareness becomes both aware and aware of itself being aware. That is, attention becomes the witness, the I, and "turns around," cognizing all, but resting in the knowledge that that all is really alien to me who is at rest. The world and all internal objects are second and third persons, while "I" the first person, is mystery, the ultimate unknowable.

I would note here that in other places Robert states you recognize that the entire observable universe emanates from your mind. That is true, but the mind itself has no real existence. It is appearance only as is the world that it creates, and is not you.)

R: Ramana Maharshi said that the only problem you've really got is that you believe that you were born.
S: That was your leading question today, "What were we before we were born?"
R: Prior to consciousness.
S: Which is really at the time of birth isn't it? Consciousness?
R: At the time of birth, yes, consciousness takes place. But prior to conscious there is nothing - space.
S: There wasn't even potential for consciousness.
R: Absolute zero.
S: But there was something there which was a concept, before.
R: As long as there is some thing, it's not that. There's no thing whatsoever. It's beyond words and thoughts.
S: But there is something.
R: What is it? What?
S: No, I was asking you.
R: It's a mystery. Nobody knows.
S: We don't know what, but there was something.
R: There's nothing. But nothing is beyond the senses so it sounds stupid. When your mind is quiet and peaceful, and you sit in the silence, then you become that you're referring to. And that's none other than yourself. But don't try to explain the self. Once you try to explain it, it's not it.
S: The self then is just a word pointing to something that is wordless, indescribable and can not be possibly explained.
R: Yes
S: But it indicates, it's like a finger pointing.

R: Like an arrow, a finger pointing to the moon.

> *(Comment: That is, this something is out of the world of existence and knowledge as we know it. You have to be it. In being it, it is revealed that something is there entirely beyond existence, life and death.)*

Robert Adams, Four Principals, August 1990.

I can only speak from my own experience. There's no difference, to me, in the waking state, the dreaming state, the sleeping state, or the vision state. They're all the same.

I'm aware of all of them, but I am not them. I observe them. I see them happening. As a matter of fact, sometimes I can not tell the difference.

Sometimes I don't know whether I'm dreaming, or awake, or having a vision, or I'm asleep. It's all the same, because I take a step backward, and I watch myself going through all these things.

> *(Comment by Ed: "I step backward and I watch myself." He watches the coming and going of the different states of consciousness, waking, dreaming and sleep. He is separate and knows they are not he. They are object, he is the mystery of the subject or witness. They are consciousness, he is beyond that.*
>
> *One more step is needed to reach this state. You are aware of the world and all the inner objects too, but you are also aware that you are aware, even though that "you" has no objective appearance. This is not an infinite regression. You are aware that you are aware. It stops there. It is not that you are aware that you are aware, of something that is aware, etc.*
>
> *When I had my second awakening, I was aware that the world, dream and nothingness states had nothing to do with me. I was apart from them and they came over me like clouds, first waking, then dream then sleep, and I was aware I was apart from those states, and, in fact, I had nothing to do with them, yet I had no existence as a thing.*
>
> *Therefore there were several processes going on. I recognized I existed. I recognized that all that I had thought made existence, such as waking and sleep states, had nothing to do with me. And lastly, there was the knowledge of transcendence. I was transcendent and I knew I was transcendent.*
>
> *I was beyond all, untouchable by fire or sword, life or death. I was the real unborn, not the unborn that the neo-advaitins talk about, which for them has something to do with recognizing that the lowly I-thought had no objective ego thing associated.*
>
> *There is a billion light years of difference between seeing that there is no objective personal ego self associated with the I-thought, and the recognition of I as the transcendent, beyond heaven and earth.)*

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

However, while liberation could be a "preposterous idea" as stated above, we would nonetheless need to be "liberated" from the notion that we aren't already this pristine awareness, yes?
May 22, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*

To the last comment. This is the neo-advaita concept that you already are everything you need to be. However, until you realize this for yourself, this insight is useless and even dangerous if it leads you to do nothing instead of making strenuous efforts at self-inquiry.

The whole point of Nisargadatta, Ramana, Robert and I, is that self-investigation is essential to awakening.

If someone says you already are perfect, no need for practice, self-inquiry or anything else, how does that help you?

Another person can say you are imperfect. YOU must self-investigate.

May 22, 2010

Sharada said...

Dear Edji
The messages are very inspiring and powerful.Thanks for that.
But why should there be so much attack on so called neo-advaitins (I dont know who you refer to)? When spirituality is about all inclusivess why should there be a belittling or denial of a few..They may also eventually realize their incompleteness sometime ahead and a real Guru does reach them then, I believe.The thing is even a little negativity makes the mind of the reader narrower. Any day a true seeker never stops till he awakens to his true nature..
Kindly pardon me, if I'd made comments beyond my capacity..Just a suggestion that is all..
May 24, 2010

Ed Muzika said...

There are perhaps 2700 words in this post and you focus on 100 words of "negativity?" Then you justify your focus on criticizing more or less with the argument that some day they will find the truth? Is this your true position? No matter what a false guru teaches, some day everything will be made good?

The same argument holds for politicians and scientists. It does not matter what they do or say because some day they will see the light. In the meantime, any criticism of anything is worse than living with illusion, falseness, and over simplification. Is this your position?

If it s, you will have a very difficult time finding the truth of your existence, because doing so requires an extreme drive to find the truth of your existence.

Many of the gret ones, such as Buddha, struggled for years, denying one false guru afte another.

In medicine, the Hypocratic oat requires the doctor to first do no harm.

All the false gurus who are peddling illusions and false teachings are doing harm to the immediate benefit of the correct teachings and the fastest way to enlightenment.

May 24, 2010

Sharada said...

Yes.I get it..I do understand your concern for people who are misled..
The quicker we move towards the truth, better are the chances we are not diverted away by illusions.I'm sorry for that comment. I clearly don't want any more delay added to the search for the absolute..

Thanks...
Sharada
May 24, 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika 14 comments Links to this post at 2:41 PM

24 May 2010

> *This email from Michael James is deeply appreciated by me. Michael and his mentor Sadhu Om, have studied the teachings of Ramana Maharshi as deeply as anyone, and his conclusions are most important for consideration for anyone traveling the path of Jnana Marga.*
>
> *Ed,*

Thanks for this e-mail and the copy of your latest post, which was very interesting to read.
As you point out, the so-called neo-advaita 'gurus' have an extremely simplistic, crude and confused understanding of what is really required to know ourself and thereby destroy our ego, and they seriously misrepresent the true teachings of sages like Sri Ramana. You have explained some of the problems with their poor understanding very clearly.

With love,
Michael

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 10:24 AM

25 May 2010

> *Later this week, Chapter 3 of a new book on self-inquiry, neo-advaita, and the jnana way will be posted, featuring voluminous quotes of Nisargadatta regarding the need for strong meditation effort, and that the I Am sense is more than just the ego and I thought, and that effort is needed continually until a conclusive awakening.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 2 comments Links to this post at 10:34 AM

27 May 2010

CHAPTER THREE (PROVISIONAL)

NISARGADATTA ON THE NEED FOR PRACTICE AND MEDITATION

> *There is a deep misconception spread by many neo Advaita teachers that not only are meditation, self-inquiry, or any spiritual practice not necessary, but any effort made at all will strengthen the non-existent ego, and prevent awakening. They state we are already awake and merely need to get rid of the idea we are not awake. That not-awake misconception is to be dissipated merely by hearing the words over and over, that you are already complete, perfect, and the absolute. Just stop and realize that.*
>
> *One of the main goals of this book is to point out that persistent effort at self-exploration and self-abidance is necessary for a true awakening experience as opposed to a conceptual understanding that the self is never not awake and you are that.*
>
> *So far, Chapter One explored Ramana Maharshi's charge that self-inquiry and self-abidance are necessary for awakening. Chapter Two focused on the need to go beyond the oneness state that comes when you realize there is no objective entity or ego associated with the I-thought, and the I-thought itself is like a ghost with no real existence. In this oneness state, nothing separate exists but the totality of consciousness.*
>
> *Robert Adams was also quoted as saying that the deepest level of existence in all of us, lies deeper than consciousness, or the oneness mind of the totality of consciousness, achieved at the first awakening. What you are lies beyond the manifest. Once the distinction of manifest, or totality*

consciousness, is made, the dual concept of the unmanifest, or noumenal state without any consciousness or quality whatsoever becomes a primary concept.

However, later it will be learned that both concepts of the manifest oneness and the unborn unmanifest are only ideas, neither exist in reality, and what you are is beyond both.

In this chapter we will explore what Nisargadatta Maharaj said about the need for effort and practice, as well as his statement that he practiced, dong little else, for three years, meditating on his sense of I Am. Then he attained awakening.

The neo Advaitins and many who have been mislead by READING (as opposed to practicing) some of the Rinzai teachers, such as Huang Po, Bankei, and many others, ignore the fact that they struggled for many years to understand the truth that Buddha mind was always there and plainly functioning, and jump to the conclusion they are the effortless Buddha Mind, which becomes just another concept because the conceptual mind has not been destroyed.

Below are many quotes of Nisargadatta and their sources as arranged by Rajiv Kapur. The neo Advaitins are always quoting Nisargadatta but strangely leave out quotes that long and patient practice is necessary. At this point Rajiv and I are trying to locate Maharaj's original audio Satsang recordings to get better translations. You see, correct translations are totally in the mind of the translator. The more subtle teachings require translation by someone who understand deeply the originating language, and who has meditated long enough to have attained a mind subtle enough to thoroughly understand Maharaj's deeper teachings.

Nisargadatta Maharaj Quotes

I simply followed his (Maharaj's Guru) instruction which was to sit for hours together with nothing but the "I am" in my mind and soon peace and joy and a deep embracing love became my normal state.

(I AM THAT PG 239)

Follow my advice implicitly and you will not be disappointed. I cannot solve your problem by mere words. You have to act on what I told you and persevere. It is not the right advice that liberates, but the ACTION based on it.

(I AM THAT PG 248)

Discover all you are not. Body, feelings, thoughts, ideas, time, space, being and not being, this or that. A mere verbal statement will not do. You may repeat a formula endlessly without any result whatsoever. You must watch yourself continuously--particularly your mind moment by moment, missing nothing. This witnessing is essential for the separation of the Self from the not Self.

(I AM THAT PG 27)

I was a simple man, but I trusted my Guru. What he told me what to do, I did. He told me to concentrate on "I am"- I did. I gave him my heart and soul, my entire attention and the whole of my spare time. As a result of faith and earnest application, I realized my Self within three years.

(I AM THAT PG 52)

(Comment: Notice that Maharaj states he became self-realized after three years of practice. He did not state like many neo-Advaitins, that there is no self-realization because there is no self to be realized. He also states he practiced for three years with all his heart and soul to realize who he is. This is completely contrary to the advice of many neo-advaitin gurus and teachers.)

Effort is very much needed. When ignorance becomes obstinate and hard and the character gets perverted, effort and the pain of it become inevitable.

(I AM THAT PG 114)

Go on pondering, wondering, being anxious to find a way. Be conscious of yourself, watch your mind, and give it your full attention. Don't look for quick results; there may be none within your noticing.

(I AM THAT PG 125)

When you listen to this you feel satisfaction and with that matter ends for most people, they don't meditate on this again and again and try to find out that principle behind everything.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 57)

> *(Comment: Is this not the state of most neo-Advaitins? Most people do not meditate on this again and again.)*

Sitting in meditation helps the consciousness to blossom. It causes deeper understanding and spontaneous change in behavior. These changes take place naturally, automatically, by themselves, due to Meditation.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 86)

This knowledge that you are the manifest must be opened through meditation, you do not get it by listening to words.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 107)

In practicing meditation the life force gets purified, and when it is purified, the light of the Self shines forth, but the working principle is the life force. When this purified life force and the light of the Atman merge, then the concept, the mind, the imagination, everything is taken away.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 25)

You must have a thorough knowledge of this consciousness, and having known everything about the consciousness you come to the conclusion that it is all unreal, and then it should drop off. Having listened to these talks, sit and meditate, "That which I have heard, is it true or not?" Then you will understand that this is also to be discarded.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 16)

Ultimately one must go beyond knowledge, but the knowledge must come, and knowledge can come by constant meditation. By meditating, the knowledge "I Am" gradually settles down and merges with universal knowledge, and thereby becomes totally free, like the sky, or space.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 17)

At the highest level all spiritual disciplines are to be dropped but at the earlier levels you have to do your homework.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 17)

If you have to make an effort in the beginning not to get involved, make that effort until it becomes effortless.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 34)

You should meditate; you should not lose what you have learned. When one disidentifies with the body, one transcends not only the body but consciousness as well since consciousness is a product of the body. The consciousness no longer says, " I Am", " I Am".

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 49)

> *(Comment: As explained more thoroughly in the next chapter, Maharaj is very explicit: You must go beyond consciousness, for is not manifest consciousness totally associated with the body? If there were not a body with eyes, would there be any vision of the world? If there were not a body with ears, would there be any sound? The same holds true for other sensations. Without a body, the world would not exist as an object of consciousness. There would be no world.)*

You must have a strong conviction; that conviction means not only “I Am” but it means I am free from “I Am” also. And that conviction means practicing.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 119)

For this keep steadily in the focus of Consciousness the only clue you have: your certainty of being. Be with it, play with it, ponder over it, delve deeply into it, till the shell of ignorance breaks open and you emerge into the realm of reality.

(I AM THAT PG 272)

When I say; remember ‘I am’ all the time, I mean : come back to it repeatedly’.

(I AM THAT PG 242)

The word ‘I am’ itself is the bridge. Remember it, think of it, explore it, go around it, look at it from all the directions, dive into it with earnest perseverance; endure all delays and disappointments till suddenly the mind turns around.

(I AM THAT PG 435)

Ask yourself; ‘To whom it all happen?’ Use everything as an opportunity to go within.

(I AM THAT PG 448)

Experience cannot be conveyed through words. It comes with action. A man who is intense in his experience will radiate confidence and courage. Others too will act and gain experience born out of action.

(I AM THAT PG 514)

Know the inside-out of consciousness and recognize it as useless; it is a fraud. When you transcend it, you will say, "I can manage without this. This is imperfect! Therefore, meditate in order to know the consciousness.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 52)

If you have the urge to go to the toilet, you will run. Similarly, the need of the ignorant is the urge to have knowledge, he will rush towards it. In the ignorant state, if you keep quiet, then the principle will keep quiet. Until there is a firm conviction about oneself, something or other has to be done.

(I AM UNBORN PG 5)

> *Chapter Four on Nisargadatta on the structure of the I Am, will post in a day or two.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 11:39 AM

28 May 2010

Chapter Four

Nisargadatta on the structure of self

Rajiv Kapur

> *The word ‘I AM’ or Beingness was a word used extensively by Maharaj in almost all of his discourses. He considered it to be the most valuable tool for effective Sadhana for Self- Realization. He made it clear that it was not the word ‘I AM’ but the wordless ‘IAM’, the IAMness or Pure beingness, which a seeker needed to latch on and explore it in all its manifestations. The term ‘Pure Being’ or IAMness is not just an ordinary sense of existence which a seeker experiences in his normal waking state of Consciousness but rather extends far beyond it, traveling downwards into the subtle dream state and even further down into the Causal deep sleep state of Consciousness. The Quotes given below of Maharaj clearly indicate this fact and also about the importance of regular and intensive meditation in order to realize or stabilize ourselves in that state of pure beingness or IAMness.*
>
> *The quotes given below have various hidden subtle truths. In the light of my meditative experiences and the blessings of my Master Edji and Nisargadatta Maharaj, I have managed courage to provide few hints and insights in form of my comments. I hope it can serve some purpose for the hard working meditator.*

When you are space you are no more the body, but whatever is contained in the space, and the space, you are. You are now manifest-whatever is known-the space.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 147)

> *Comment : The above quote is indicative of the state of Oneness with the totality of Consciousness (Universal Consciousness). This is state experienced when one transcends the I-thought. Most Sadhakas are stuck at this level but this is mostly one form of IAMness--the waking state part of Consciousness--and not the IAMness in its entirety. That is why Maharaj said in the below two quotes:*

Now, consciousness has identified with a form. Later, it understands that it is not that form and goes further. In a few cases it may reach the (entirety of) space (the void), and very often, there it stops.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE ABSOLUTE PG 13)

People will stop only at seeing the manifest. Who will go behind the manifest and see that the manifest and unmanifest are not two-they are one?

> *(Comment: That is most people stop with the visible, what is presented in waking consciousness, such as the totality of space, or the specific objects of the world, or ones inner images and thinking.)*

The manifest is seen as light while the unmanifest as dark but “what is” is the same thing - THAT WHICH PERCEIVES BOTH.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 110)

> *(Comment: From the above comments Maharaj clearly points out to the fact that most will stop at what is seen or perceived, the manifested form of Consciousness (gross and astral states) but no one pays attention to the unmanisfested form. The unmanifested dark state of nothingness or non-knowingness is the Causal state. And that which lies beyond both these states and perceives them is the Absolute or the real Self. The term ‘IAM’ or Consciousness hence is much more than just ‘what is’ or “is-ness.”*
>
> *One must never stop effort just because one has seen through the illusion of the I-thought and ego and attained oneness with the totality of waking consciousness, which itself is only a part of the manifest. This is the mistake of the neo-Advaitins.*
>
> *Given below are the various quotes of Maharaj which will prove that the ‘IAM’ is much more subtle than what is perceived as ordinary waking state or the manifest (perceivable) form of Consciousness. The unmanifest form (Causal body or state, unknowing or the non-being state) is very much part of IAMness and it too needs to be transcended through intense meditation.*
>
> *If this part of Consciousness (unmanifest Causal state) is ignored and not known through meditational practices and keen observation, then ignorance and attachment to the unreal remains. A serious seeker must not amuse himself with few achievements happening on waking and subtle levels but go deeper, much deeper and get to know all the manifestations and phenomenon’s taking place at all levels namely the gross, subtle and causal states.)*

Discover all you are not. Body, feelings, thoughts, ideas, time, space, being and not being, this or that. This witnessing is essential for the separation of the Self from the not Self.

(I AM THAT PG 27)

That causal body, which is very minute, needs to be known. By meditation you can know it. The quality of that causal body takes on the appearance of the consciousness and the form.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 51)

(Comment: That is waking consciousness is an appearance or artifact of something deeper, the causal body, the unknowing and unknown state that must be passed through in meditation.)

Even in the highest saints there is always some doubt about the clarity of 'I AM' and this enquiry of what I am must be gone into at any and all levels.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 123)

My sleep is not the kind you have, it is pure Consciousness. When I sleep there is awareness of total manifestation and also the unmanifest.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 128)

From deep sleep to waking state, what is it? It is the 'I AM' state with no words.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 50)

Behold, the deep sleep in which there is no notion of being this or that. Yet the 'I AM' remains.

(FOREWORD I AM THAT)

You will not comprehend exactly what it means, but as you get established in beingness and transcend that, you will understand how you are beyond deep sleep and waking state, because those are characteristics of the beingness.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 22)

All the three states- of waking, dreaming and sleeping- are subjective, personal, intimate. They all happen and are contained within the little bubble in Consciousness, called 'I'.

(I AM THAT PG 281)

When you say 'I am' it includes waking, sleep and beingness, the 'I am' knowledge includes these.

(I AM UNBORN PG 40)

This knowingness "I AM" which came spontaneously and you felt gradually is the ignorant-child-principle, the Balkrishna State.
Here "Bal" means the child principle and "Krishna" means "non-knowing"
(Quote 103 and 104 of Nisargadatta Gita by Pradeep Apte)

Not only the Conscious but the unconscious as well should be taken care of in our spiritual practice.

(I AM THAT PG 447)

It is only a rare who understands what I am driving at. To a normal spiritual person we have to say, "You do this or that and you will get benefit" But we can't help because he has no capacity to understand the subtlest aspect of this spirituality. At the most I would say, "You know you are; you worship that "I AM" principle. You worship that, be one with that only, and that "I Amness will disclose all the knowledge." **That's all I will say, but the subtlest part is this, from deep sleep to waking state. To abide in that. You must go to that limit, but it is very difficult.**

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 50)

(Comment: From the above it is very clear that the term IAMness, for him, is much more inclusive than the term 'I' as used by the neo-Advaitins, and there are various subtle levels involved in it. In fact Maharaj refrained from disclosing the highest truth to general seekers because of the subtleties and lack of understanding in them. Many take his message on the surface and don't attempt to take notice of these subtle hidden truths. It is impossible to take notice of the finer aspects of IAMness without constant effort in meditation to explore them. Below are a few quotes of Maharaj pointing to the importance of meditation and keen observation as tools to understand the subtleties involved.)

No external activity can reach the inner Self; worship and prayers remain on the surface only; to go deeper meditation is essential, as well as a striving to go beyond the states of sleep, dream and waking.

(I AM THAT PG 447)

First of all there is the knowingness “IAM”, without words, with that knowingness, the world is. Now when the seeker goes into meditation, that knowingness goes into non-knowingness. This is the highest in the hierarchy when the body aspect is there because this knowing and no-knowing are aspects of the body, and body means Consciousness, and in the realm of Consciousness, knowingness and no-knowingness both exists.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 153)

This is the stage where you are-you are not; that is the borderline. The moment you know you are, duality is there, when you do not know you are, you are perfect, <u>but you must go through this process</u>. In deep sleep you do not know you are, but that is grosser state. In this active state you must recede into the state of no-knowingness.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 51)

> *(Comment: Maharaj states clearly “you must go through the process” but NOT in the grosser state of unaware deep sleep state but in an active, investigating striving. From that aware state of knowingness you move into no-knowingness (borderline) Causal state. This is possible only through deep meditation.)*

In deep meditation my Guru indicated how this form and beingness came together and also, the world. That was indicated to me in deep meditation.

(I AM UNBORN PG 76)

> *(Comment: This is the highest state of deep meditation. The nature of beingness (origin), world and the form are all disclosed in this state. This state is not possible to achieve without the help of Guru. The Guru in Subtle form reveals this secret and guides the road ahead.)*

To turn beingness into no-beingness, assiduously follow meditation or else you will be like a calf frisking. Be in meditation and you will stabilize, and then stop there.

(I AM UNBORN PG 69)

Deep Sleep state is something like block of ice; nothing is there, then the warmth is taking place, and with that warmth you feel that you are. This is quite an elevated state

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 136)

> *(Comment : The “block of ice” is purely an experiential part of Meditation. Page 49 of the book Autobiography of a Jnani explains this process in detail. Edji guided me to this most beautiful state. It is the state of knowingness and no-knowingness, beingness and no-beingness. This is pure beingness state, the Turiya. But still it is a state. The one beyond this state cannot be called a state. It cannot be called as anything. It just is.*

Post Comments:

Jeff J said...

Thank you Ed and Rajiv, these essays are very insightful, clarifying and definitive. I’m wondering where you will go with this series next, and have a question for you to consider. The Nisargadatta Gita talks about the Absolute being “tricked “ by I Am, into believing it is limited, almost as if the Absolute were some doddering old fool who accidently wandered into the wrong part of town and had his wallet stolen, with all his identity papers, and now can’t remember who he is. It doesn’t make sense to me that the Absolute would make such a mistake, and yet, here we all apparently are! Maybe this is just a way of talking about something that can’t really be explained? Maybe I’m just looking at it from the wrong side of I Am, but I’d appreciate hearing what each of you understand about this question. Wouldn’t understanding how we got into this mess in the first place, help us to get out of it? Thank you.

May 31, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *Anything Maharaj says must be taken with a grain of salt and not accepted as literal truth. Ditto Robert who often said outrageous things.*

The word Absolute and the word consciousness, are just words. Don't let them trap you into believing there is some reality connected to them that can be explained and has mechanics.

All that is philosophy and in no way helps anyone to see through the illusions.

May 31, 2010

Anonymous said...

Jeff the question "How we got into this mess in the first place?" can never be answered. No one recalls prior to birth states. There are no questions in the Absolute state. Questions arise with the appearance of I AMness.

"What are we to do now that the mess has happened" is the question we need to address first. Later by virtue of Sadhana the 'How, when, where' of the I AMness is understood on its own and in that sense the mess called I AMness becomes a blessing. The workings of I AMness and its relation with the Absolute becomes clear in deep meditation while we are still in this body. We only have to be earnest and willing enough and be blessed to have a Guru like Edji guiding us all along. Rare are teachers like Edji who want us to transcend words and abide in the wordless through our own experience rather than words of others.

Rajiv

May 31, 2010

Jeff J said...

Thank you again for your clear and direct words, Ed and Rajiv. I see now that my question assumes that what I am asking about is a real thing, and that it is worthy of concern, manipulation or even guilt. (i.e. sometimes I feel I must have done something wrong to have ended up in this state.) This is where I find myself, but you give me courage to believe I don't need to stay here!

June 01, 2010

Ed Muzika said...

Good Jeff, Nothing is real except you. Only you can find you by looking for you inside. Everything else is just words, images, or the transient phenomena of the world--none worth your bother.

When you find you, your mission, if you are to have one, becomes clear.

June 01, 2010

Posted by Ed Muzika 8 comments Links to this post at 9:38 AM

09 June 2010

Chapter 5

Nisargadatta's Instructions on Self-Abidance

Part of the reason for writing this new series of lessons on self-inquiry, is to make it clear that self-inquiry it is not a simple, look inside a few times type of investigation, find no personal entity there, and then consider that enlightenment.

What Rajiv and I are trying to make clear to the seeker, is that all the great Advaita teachers up until the recent split off of the neo-Advaitins, have strongly urged long and intense introspection on one's inner life, and then abiding in that subjectivity.

Long practice leads to a progressively more sophisticated and powerful discrimination that allows the seeker to apprehend clearly what is real and what is not. Progressive recognition of what is not real is progressive liberation from the vagaries and sufferings of the mind and body. That which is not real then has the same effect as a dreamer realizing the dream now immersed in, is unreal and does not touch him or her, resulting in a greater equanimity, peace and happiness in the most distressing situations.

Then one day, after penetrating through waking consciousness, then the level of thoughts, images and emotions called the subtle body, then the darkness of the causal state, comes one or more liberation or awakening experiences as each level is seen through and totally understood as being unreal, temporary and illusory, with a reversal of the direction of consciousness, now going both inwards and outwards simultaneously. Most of our lives we focus outwards until we begin self-inquiry, which is inwards. After a long such reversal, balance is achieved, and one mind is realized which has no in or out, up or down, good or bad, or objects of any sort.

This teaching then goes beyond the neo advaitin teaching which appears to accept this oneness state as final--the transcendence of thought and the attaining of unity consciousness of oneness in the waking state.

There is no freedom here, because we have not found anything at this level that extends beyond waking consciousness. We have not gone or realized that which is prior to consciousness as is stressed by Robert Adams, Ramana Maharshi and Nisargadatta.

For this lesson, I tasked Rajiv to pour through the various teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj to find quotes that clearly point out the need for progressive meditation and the development of and ever sharper discrimination leading to pure Jnana.

He has done an extraordinary job.

Below are the teachings of Nisargadatta on practice and progressive discrimination as arranged and explained by Rajiv Kapur.

Ed

N: The indwelling principle ' I am' is common to all and has no attributes; it is the principle of the whole functioning.

(Quote 101 of NISARGADATTA GITA)

N: The only clue you have is your certainty of being. Be with it, play with it, ponder over it, delve deeply into it, till the shell of ignorance breaks open and you emerge into the realm of reality.

(I AM THAT PG 272)

N: Go deep into the sense of 'I am' and you will find. The sense of being, of 'I am' is the first to emerge. Ask yourself whence it comes, or just watch it quietly. After all the sense 'I am' is always with you.

(I AM THAT PG 2)

N: One begins with the lowest levels: social circumstances, customs and habits, physical surroundings, the posture and the breathing of the body, the sense, their sensations and perceptions, the mind, its thoughts and feelings, until the entire mechanism of personality is grasped and firmly held.

(I AM THAT PG 412)

N: If you stay put in beingness the thoughts will get less and less.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 53)

N: People pray to various names and forms, they do not pray to that beingness, that substance, which these names represent. Pray to that beingness only.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 98)

N: Consistently and with perseverance separate the 'I am' from 'this' or 'that', just keep in mind the feeling 'I am'.

(NISARGADATTA GITA VERSE 3)

N: You are sure of the 'I am', it's the totality of being, remember 'I am' and it's enough to heal your mind and take you beyond.

(NISARGADATTA GITA VERSE 5)

> *(Comment: From the above quotes of Maharaj it is very clear that the practice he mentions to follow is abidance to ones sense of existence or beingness. He says no matter what it is real or unreal, right or wrong, one thing is certain that is the feeling "I exist" and because I exist everything exists too. Therefore start your Sadhana by catching hold of that feeling of existence or beingness and stay there. Intense practice will be required to discover the various qualities and character of 'I am'. As practice deepens more and more is revealed by 'I am' itself.)*

N: Discover all you are not. Body, feelings, thoughts, ideas, time, space, being and not-being, this or that. A mere verbal statement will not do- you may repeat a formula endlessly without any result whatsoever. You must watch yourself continuously –particularly your mind- moment by moment, missing nothing. This witnessing is essential for the separation of the self from the not-self.

(I AM THAT PG 27)

N: The first thing you do after waking up is to meditate on that Consciousness, that "I Amness", worship that Consciousness for sometime before you start your daily activities. Before you fall asleep at night, again abide in that Consciousness, "I amness". Be devoted to that.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 64)

N: The word 'I am' itself is the bridge. Remember it, think of it, explore it, go around it, look at it from all the directions, dive into it with earnest perseverance; endure all delays and disappointments till suddenly the mind turns around.

(I AM THAT PG 435)

> *(Comment: Maharaj mentions clearly that rigorous practice will be needed to fully understand the various manifestations and phenomenon's of I Amness. All true Masters give a workable method to accomplish this aim as Maharaj does above. Ed Muzika (Edji) also gave something very similar in his chapter "Hunting the I". It's a classic manual on practicing Self-inquiry the right way. Notice how similar are the advises given by both)*

N: Now reverse; I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the senses; now you are stabilized in consciousness. After stabilizing in consciousness all further things will happen automatically. You will expand into the manifest.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 51)

N: You will find, when you are the manifest consciousness, you alone are the multiplicity, you express yourself in all this ample, manifest world.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 56)

N: When you are space you are no more the body, but whatever is contained in the space, and the space, you are. You are now manifest-whatever is known-the space.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 147)

> *(Comment: The above three quotes are indicative of the state of Oneness with Consciousness (Universe Consciousness). This is state experienced when one transcends the I-thought. This is the first awakening. Most Sadhakas are stuck at this level (the first awakening stage) but this is mostly one form of I AMness--the waking state part of Consciousness--and not the I AMness in its entirety as is clear from the quote of Maharaj given below)*

N: When the 'I am myself' goes, the ' I am all' comes. When the 'I am all' goes, 'I am' comes.

(I AM THAT PG 230)

(Comment: 'I am myself' is ordinary state of individual ego, which one identifies at the individual body/mind level. 'I am all' is the state of Oneness with the manifested part of Consciousness (the waking state) after transcending individual ego. Now Maharaj clearly points out that after 'I am all' (oneness) is transcended ONLY then ' I AM' comes. Most stop at "Oneness" (the first awakening).

N: Now you are in the waking state, a person with name and shape, joys and sorrows. The person was not there before you were born, nor will be there after you die. Instead of struggling with the person to make it become what it is not, why not go beyond the waking state and leave the personal life altogether?

(I AM THAT PG 427)

Since most would stop at "oneness" levels, Maharaj wrote the two quotes below:

N: Now, consciousness has identified with a form. Later, it understands that it is not that form and goes further. In a few cases it may reach the (entirety of) space (the void), and very often, there it stops.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE ABSOLUTE PG 13)

: People will stop only at seeing the manifest. Who will go behind the manifest and see that the manifest and unmanifest are not two-they are one?

(Comment: That is most people stop with the visible, what is presented in waking consciousness, such as the totality of space, or the specific objects of the world, or ones inner images and thinking.)

N: The manifest is seen as light while the unmanifest as dark but "what is" is the same thing-THAT WHICH PERCEIVES BOTH.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 110)

(Comment: From the above comments Maharaj points out to the fact that most will stop at what is seen or perceived, the manifested form of Consciousness (gross and astral states) but no one pays attention to the unmanisfested form. The unmanifested dark state of nothingness or non-knowingness is the Causal state. And that which lies beyond both these states and perceives them is the Absolute or the real Self. The term 'I AM' or Consciousness hence is much more than just 'what is' or "is-ness."

One must never stop effort just because one has seen through the illusion of the I-thought and ego and attained oneness with the totality of waking consciousness, which itself is only a part of the manifest. This is the mistake of the neo-Advaitins.)

N: Not only the Conscious but the unconscious as well should be taken care of in our spiritual practice.

(I AM THAT PG 447)

(Comment : The practice will involve going deeper than just waking state of oneness and include knowledge of various manifestations of I-ness coming from dream and sleep states and even beyond that.)

N: No external activity can reach the inner Self; worship and prayers remain on the surface only; to go deeper meditation is essential, as well as a striving to go beyond the states of sleep, dream and waking.

(I AM THAT PG 447)

N: This is the stage where you are-you are not; that is the borderline. The moment you know you are, duality is there, when you do not know you are, you are perfect, <u>but you must go through this process</u>. In deep sleep you do not know you are, but that is grosser state. In this active state you must recede into the state of no-knowingness.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 51)

(Comment: Maharaj says "you must go through the process" but NOT in the grosser state of unaware deep sleep state but in an active, investigating striving. From that aware state of knowingness you move into no-knowingness (borderline) Causal state. And then move beyond that too but with awareness (Turiya). This is possible only through deep meditation.

Ed Muzika (Edji) in his own words in the book "Hunting the I" writes "The process of locating phenomena, examining them and playing with them until you know them fully, and then eliminating them as the looker can be longer or shorter. This is the true self-inquiry process, not the one often referred to as mindlessly repeating, "Who am I?")

N: That causal body, which is very minute, needs to be known. By meditation you can know it. The quality of that causal body takes on the appearance of the consciousness and the form.

(CONSCIOUSNESS AND ABSOLUTE PG 51)

N: I have experienced all four kinds of speech and transcended them. Rarely will anybody follow this hierarchy to stabilize in the Consciousness and transcend Consciousness. Starting from Vaikhara (word), normally we listen to words; from Vaikhari we go to Madhyama (mind-thought); in watching the mind we are in Pashyanti where the concept formation takes place and from there to Para (I AM- without words), and finally from Para to Prior to Consciousness. This is the line to follow, but only a rare one follows it- receding, reversing.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 116)

(Comment: Maharaj indicates very clear steps in this quote. First comes Vaikhara (words) meaning all outer forms of worships and experiences related to waking state of Consciousness (oneness, beauty and music), then comes Madhyama (mind-thought) meaning the phenomenon's of the subtle dream body (astral experiences) , then the Pashyanti which represents the deep sleep (causal state experiences) and lastly to the Para (I AM -without words) meaning Turiya (the ever blissful fourth and last state of Consciousness). The wordless I AM is nothing other than Turiya and it is this I AM- without word (Pure Beingness) which is always referred by Maharaj and NOT the ordinary state of waking Consciousness (misunderstood as beingness) which needs to be transcended. No ordinary state of waking Consciousness can lead to the Self, steps as above have to be followed and so too the efforts as is clear from above quote of Maharaj. However only rare ones will actually follow the entire line and steps.)

N: The birth principle is "Turiya" which means where Consciousness is.

(Quote 137 of Nisargadatta Gita)

N: Turiya or I AM is always described as the witness state that sees through the waking, dreaming and sleeping.

(Quote 141 of Nisargadatta Gita)

N: The experience that "I AM" or you exist is "Turiya".

(Quote 138 of Nisargadatta Gita)

(Comment: The I Amness in its most unadulterated or pure form is turiya. The Sadhaka by intense practice and self-abidance reaches this highest state of samadhi by following the steps as given below. Yet this is still a state. It is observed by the looker. The looker is the real "YOU", the reality)

N: The "I am" in its purity is "turiya", but I am "turiyatita" (beyond turiya) and living in (as) Reality.

(Quote 221 of Nisargadatta Gita)

N: Get established in the "I am" without words, the "Parvani", but YOU the absolute are not that.

(Quote 189 of Nisargadatta Gita)

(Comment: Parvani the wordless state of I AM is referred by Maharaj as turiya)

N: The experience that "I am" or you exist is "Turiya". One who knows "Turiya" is "Turiyatita", which is my state.

(Quote 138 of Nisargadatta Gita)

N: The "I am" is only a little distance away from the True state, hence it is unreal, for whatever is away from the True state or Reality is unreal.

(Quote 227 of Nisargadatta Gita)

(Comment : Here too the "I am" refers to Turiya as this is the state which is closest to the Absolute (YOU). This is experiential in meditation for as soon as Turiya dissolves, the SELF shines. This SELF cannot be known as a concept. You can only be that)

N: Words are not exactly applicable. I have seen exactly how I am not. In the absence of "I Am", what that state is, I have seen, or am seeing, therefore I don't lose anything.

(PRIOR TO CONSCIOUSNESS PG 113)

(Comment: Powerful words for all to ponder. Maharaj states "I have seen exactly how I am not." These are not empty words but words flowing from a Master who has actually experienced how the I-ness is unreal. The whole of I is a big fraud and the fact that it doesn't exist comes from knowledge which flows in deep meditation when the I- Consciousness is killed. It is NOT an intellectual knowing that the I is not real but purely experiential.)

N: The first step is to go and dwell in the "I am". From there you go beyond Consciousness and no-Consciousness to the infinite Absolute, which is the permanent state.

(Quote 229 of Nisargadatta Gita)

(Comment : To conclude we can say two steps are given by Maharaj for effective Self-inquiry ,first is to dwell or ponder on the various manifestations of I Amness and reach the purest form through meditation, Turiya, and then to go beyond that and meet the Absolute (Self or looker).

Ed Muzika (Edji) gives a very similar approach to Self-inquiry. Edji states in Hunting the I on page 143 "So there are two steps: locate the looker, as the subject of sensations, and try to play with it to observe all its manifestations, and then to rest in the looker, relax and let the looker look, and become the looker only."

Posted by Ed Muzika 6 comments Links to this post at 4:07 PM

11 June 2010

Chapter 6 (Amended 6-12)

Going Beyond the Void

Self-Inquiry According to Ramana Maharshi

Once again I turn towards the Path of Sri Ramana Maharshi, Part I, by Sadhu Om and Michael James to reveal exactly what Ramana meant by self-inquiry or self abidance. Michael is one of two Ramana scholars and practitioners who remain alive and whom I deeply respect. The other is David Godman.

Michael supports his every conclusion with copious quotes from Ramana's works.

Once again, as with Nisargadatta, you'll see that Ramana suggests careful attention be paid to the I sense, and in that, the I-thought will be revealed to be a fraud. Later, the waking consciousness is revealed to be temporary and conditional based on words and concepts. Then, even the sleep state is seen to be an experience. All this is revealed by dwelling on the I-sense.

Chapter 8, The Path of Self-Inquiry from PSR1

On account of this fear of death, the concentration of Sri Bhagavan was fixed and deeply immersed in Self-attention in order to find out 'What is my existence ? What is it that dies ?'. Thus it is proved by what Sri Bhagavan Himself did that, as we have been explaining all along, only such a firm fixing of our attention on Self is 'Self-enquiry' (atma-vichara). He has confirmed the same idea in the work' Who am I'?", where He says: "Always keeping the mind (the attention) fixed In Self (in the feeling 'I') alone is called Self- enquiry'... Remaining firmly in Self-abidance, without giving even the least room to the rising of any thought other than-the thought of Self (that is, without giving even the least attention to any second or third person, but only to Self), is surrendering oneself to God (which alone is called parabhakti, the supreme devotion65)".

Therefore, discarding the corpse-like body as an actual corpse and remaining without even uttering the word 'I' vocally --

"Discarding the body as a corpse, not uttering the word 'I' by mouth, but seeking with the mind diving inwards 'Whence does this I rise ?' alone is the path of knowledge (jnana marga) ..."

'Ulladhu Narpadhu', verse 29

"When sought within 'What is the place from which it rises as I?', 'I' (the ego) will die. This is Self-enquiry."

'Upadesa Undhiyar', verse 19

"If without leaving it we just be, the sphurana, completely annihilating the feeling of individuality – the ego, 'I am the body', finally will come to an end just as the camphor flame dies out. This alone is proclaimed to be liberation by Sages and scriptures.

"Although in the beginning, on account of the tendencies towards sense-objects (vishaya-vasanas) which have been recurring down the ages, thoughts rise in countless numbers like the waves of the ocean, they will all perish as the aforesaid Self-attention becomes more and more intense. Since even the doubt "Is it possible to destroy all of them and to remain as Self alone ?' is only a thought, without giving room even to that thought, one should persistently cling fast to Self-attention. However great a sinner one may be, if, not lamenting 'Oh, I am a sinner! How can I attain salvation?' but completely giving up even the thought that one is a sinner, **one is steadfast in Self- attention, one will surely be saved.** Therefore everyone, diving deep within himself with desirelessness (vairagya), can attain the pearl of Self.

(Comment: Who now can doubt that Ramana advocated very strong concentration or meditation practices such as focusing on the sense of 'I' that eventually destroys the I-thought?)

"As long as there are tendencies towards sense-objects in the mind, (since they will always create some subtle or gross world-appearance) so long the enquiry 'Who am I?' is necessary. As and when thoughts rise of their own accord, one should annihilate all of them through enquiry then and there **in their very place of origin**. What is the means to annihilate them? If other thoughts rise disturbing Self-attention, one should, without attempting to complete them, enquire 'To whom did they rise?, It will "then be known 'To me'; immediately, if we observe 'Who is this I that thinks?', the mind (our power of attention which was hitherto engaged in thinking of second and third persons) will turn back to its source (Self). Hence (since no one is there to attend to them), the other thoughts which had risen will also subside. **By repeatedly practising thus, the power of the mind to, abide in its source increases.**

(Comment: Again, Ramana is advocating concentrating on the I, not on any object in the world or mind, but on the subject, the unchanging singularity in the subtle body. Like I've stated in the book Autobiography of a Jnani, and on the itisnotreal.com website, it is necessary to build spiritual energy that allows for a courageous faith in oneself, but also allows increasing discrimination. Jorika, meditation power, leads to Prajna, wisdom.)

When the mind thus abides in the Heart, the first thought, 'I' ('I am the body', the rising 'I'), which is the root of all other thoughts, itself having vanished, the ever-existing **Self** (the being 'I') alone will shine. The place (or state) where even the slightest trace of the thought 'I' ('I am this, that, the body, Brahman and so on') does not exist, alone is Self. That alone is called **Silence** (maunam).

“After coming to know that the final decision of all the scriptures (sastras) is that such destruction of the mind alone is liberation (m ukti), to read scriptures unlimitedly is fruitless. In order to destroy the mind, it is necessary to enquire who one is; then how, instead of enquiring thus within oneself, to enquire and know who one, is in scriptures ? For Rama to know himself to be Rama, is a mirror necessary ? (That is to say, for one to know oneself through Self-attention to be ‘I am’, are scriptures necessary?) ‘Oneself’ is within the five sheaths, whereas the scriptures are outside them. Therefore, how can oneself, who is to be attended to within, setting aside even the five sheaths, be found in scriptures? Since scripture-enquiry is futile, one should give it up and take to Self-enquiry” – thus says Bhagavan Sri Ramana.

> *(Comment: This is an extremely important point. You will never attain enlightenment just by reading the scriptures or listening to lectures from a third person. Ultimately you have to find out for yourself in your own experience what is true or false, and believe in yourself. In fact, all words and concepts are illusory. Therefore, truth lies outside words, and lies in understanding what is real and not real, self and not self. The best books can do, or talks, is to be a pointer, but when you take the pointer as truth you become bogged down by other people’s concepts. Even this is a concept, so beware.)*

At this point Michael James spends a lot of time exploring an analogy to self inquiry in the form of following a beam of light reflected off a mirror, until the seeker finds the mirror, and turns around and sees the world basked in sunlight, analogous to the experience of the Void.)

Because of his mere search for the source of the reflected ray of the sun, does not the man now, after leaving the dark room, stand in the open space in a state of void created by the non-existence of that reflected ray? This is the state of the aspirant remaining in the Heart-space (hridayakasa) in the state of great void (maha sunya) created, through mere Self-attention, by the non-existence of the ego-’I’. The man who has come out of the room into the open space is dazed and laments, “Alas ! The sun that guided me so far (the reflected sun) is now lost”, At this moment, a friend of his standing in the open space comes to him with these words of solace, “Where were you all this time? Were you not in the dark room! Where are you now? Are you not in the open space! When you were in the dark room, that which guided you out was just one thin ray of light; but here (in this vast open space) are not the rays of light countless and in an unlimited mass? What you saw previously was not even the direct sunlight, but only a reflected ray! But what you are now experiencing is the direct (saksha) sunlight. When the place where you are now is nothing but the unlimited space of light, can a darkness come into existence because of the void created by the disappearance of the reflected ray? Can its disappearance be a loss? **Know that its disappearance itself is the true light; it is not darkness”.**

Similarly, by the experience of the great void (maha sunya) created by the annihilation of the ego, the aspirant is some-what taken aback, ‘Alas ! Even the ‘I’ consciousness (the ego) which I was attending to in my sadhana till now as a beacon-light is lost ! Then is there really no such thing at all as ‘Self’ (atman)?”. At that very moment, the Sadguru, who is ever shining as his Heart, points out to him thus, “Can the destruction of the ego, which is only an infinitesimal reflected consciousness, be really a loss? Are you not clearly aware not only of its former existence, but also of the present great void created by its disappearance? Therefore, know that you, who know even the void as ‘this is a void’, alone are the true knowledge; you are not a void70 !”, in an instant as a direct experience of the shining of his own existence-consciousness by touching (flashing as sphurana) in Heart as Heart!

> *(Comment: Be careful here. Raman/Michael took two steps in one sentence. He says the I consciousness associated with the body, the ego, disappears leaving no more a discrete I-sense. Instead, the I is now the totality of consciousness, including the Void or space that contains everything.*
>
> *But then he says, “You are not the Void, the space, you are that knowledge that you are not the Void.” This is complicated, but also contained in that same sentence, is implicit that you are that to which the knowledge occurred that you are not the void.*
>
> *If you go back to the earlier chapter where Robert discusses prior to consciousness, he says EXACTLY the same thing, including the distinction between individual and universal consciousness, both of which are transcended.*
>
> *The knowledge you are not the void is the last experiential vestige of you in this world, but more than that, there is an almost immediate recognition that you, as something totally out of the world and mysterious, are that to which the knowledge occurs, as well as the cognition of the Void and the world.*

In the end, you transcend even transcendental knowledge, and attain a bold independence from the world, from cognition, from the body and even from awakening. Now you need and are nothing. This is the highest truth.)

Clinging to the consciousness 'I' and thereby acquiring a greater and greater intensity of concentration upon it, is **diving deep within**. Instead of thus diving within, many, thinking that they are engaged in Self-enquiry, sit down for hours together simply repeating mentally or vocally, "Who am I ?" or "Whence am I?". There are others again who, when they sit for enquiry, face their thoughts and endlessly repeat mentally the following questions taught by Sri Bhagavan. "To whom come these thoughts? To me; who am I?", or sometimes they even wait for the next thought to come up so that they can fling these questions at it! Even this is futile. Did we sit to hold thus a court of enquiry, calling one thought after another! Is this the sadhana of diving within! Therefore, we should not remain watching 'What is the next thought?'. Merely to keep on questioning in this manner is not Self-attention. Concerning those who thus merely float on the surface of the thought-waves; keeping their mind on these questions instead of diving within by attending to the existence- consciousness with a keen mind, thereby controlling mind, breath and all the activities of the body and senses, Sri Bhagavan says:

"Compare him who asks himself 'Who am I?' and 'From which place am I?', though he himself exists all the while as Self, to a drunken man who prattles 'Who am I?' and 'Where am I?'."

(Comment: This is an extremely important thought. Merely chasing the thoughts by mindless asking, "Who am I?" or "From where did I come?," is an idiot's task.

Unfortunately elsewhere, both Ramana and Robert taught a lower form of self-inquiry which is exactly questioning where a thought came from, or asking, "Who am I?" You have to realize that such kindergarten types of meditation are for beginners who have difficulty introspecting at all. If they practice thus for a while, perhaps they will see that thoughts arise and disappear into something beyond consciousness, the causal body, and begin to dive after the thought to find its origin, and later the origin of the I-thought.

The proper technique of self inquiry is to close your eyes and seek within the sense of I ever deeper until you get to the void. Unfortunately, I did exactly that for years and got trapped in the void as a way of living, and the way out of that void is to see that it too, is an object, something that I am aware of and apart from. I am a mysterious beyond and at the same time, nothing at all. Until the last vestiges of the personal is gone, you need to practice following the I, merging with it and transcending of it. This can be felt going on even during the night, when you wake in the morning and still find the searching for I taking place, as if it had never stopped.

However, watching the 'I' while falling asleep can often lead to long periods of sleeplessness, because you stay awake. It is far easier to see the continuance of consciousness, which I can apprehension in sleep, when you awake and watch the transition from sleep or dream to waking, and immediately grasp that you have not been touched by these passing states of consciousness.)

Therefore, **all that we are to practise is to be still** (summa iruppadu) **with the remembrance of the feeling 'I'.** It is only when there is a slackness of vigilance during Self- attention that thoughts, which are an indication of it, will rise. In other words, if thoughts rise it means that our Self- attention is lost. It is only as a contrivance to win back Self- attention from thought – attention that Sri Bhagavan advised us to ask, 'To whom do these thoughts appear?' Since the answer 'To me' is only a dative form of 'I', it will easily remind us of the nominative form, the feeling 'I'. However, if we question, 'Who thinks these thoughts?', since the nominative form, the feeling 'I', is obtained as an answer, will not Self-attention, which has been lost unnoticed, be regained directly? This regaining of Self-attention is actually **being Self** (that is, remaining or abiding as Self)! Such 'being' alone is the correct sadhana71 ; **sadhana is not doing, but being!!**

(Comment: This is a very important understanding. When effort is made to focus on an object, what Michael calls a second or third person, that is effort of the ego. But when attention is paid to the sense of I, you are really acting in consonance with consciousness's primary identification—self attention. Though it feels effortful at first, later it is recognized that that self-attention is the most fundamental property of consciousness, and is really not effortful at all. It only appears effortful because we lost touch with that ever inward flowing consciousness.)

Some complain, "When the very rising of the ego from sleep is so surreptitious as to elude our notice, how can we see whence it rises? It seems to be impossible!" That is true, because the mind's effort of attention is absent

in sleep, since the mind itself is not at all there! As ordinary people are not acquainted with the knowledge of their 'being' but only with the knowledge of their 'doing' (that is, the knowledge of their making efforts), for such people it is
impossible to know from sleep the rising of the ego from there. Since the effort considered by them as necessary is absent in sleep, it is no wonder that they are unable to commence the enquiry from sleep itself! But, since the whole of the waking state is a mere sportive play of the ego and since the effort of the mind here is under the experience of everyone, at least in the waking state one can turn and attend to the pseudo 'I' shining in the form 'I am so-and-so'.

The enquiry begins only during the leisure hours of the waking state when one sits for practice. Just as a thing comes to our memory when its name, is thought of, does not the first person feeling come to everyone's memory as soon as the name (pronoun) 'I' is thought of? Although this first person feeling is only the ego, the pseudo 'I'-consciousness, it does not matter. **Having our attention withdrawn from second and third persons and clinging to the first person – that alone is sadhana**. As soon as the attention turns towards the first person feeling, not only do other thoughts disappear, but also the first thought, the rising and expanding **pseudo 'I'-consciousness**, itself begins contracting !

> *(Comment: Again a very important point. Most everything done on the spiritual path is done from waking consciousness, because the mind is absent in deep sleep, and directed concentration is impossible. Initial awakening also comes in waking consciousness. Ultimately you have to experience the Voidness of the subtle body as being you, then transcending that understanding, and then you need to sink into and through the darkness of ignorance, deep sleep, even while retaining your identity. When the awaking to oneness consciousness takes place may not be the same for all. For me, the awakening to oneness preceded apprehending that I was before all consciousness. Perhaps for others the progression is different. I summarized my second awakening in the phrase, "Everything is One, and the One is not real.")*

Just as a rubber ball gains greater and greater momentum while bouncing down the staircase, the more the concentration in clinging to the first person consciousness is intensified the faster is the contraction of the first thought (the ego), till finally it merges in its source. That which now merges thus is only the adjunct (upadhi), the feeling 'so-and-so' which, at the moment of waking, came and mixed with the pure existence-consciousness, which was shining in sleep as 'I am', to constitute the form of the ego, 'I am so-and-so', 'I am this' or 'I am that'. That is, what has come and mixed now slips away. All that an aspirant can experience in the beginning of his practice is only the slipping away (subsidence) of the ego. Since the aspirant tracks down the ego from the waking state, where it is in full play, in the beginning it is possible for him to cognize only its removal. But to cognize its rising (how it rises and holds on to 'I am') from sleep will be more difficult for him at this stage.

When Self-attention is started from the waking consciousness 'I am so-and-so', since it is only the adjunct, the feeling 'so-and-so', that slips away (because it is merely non-existent, an unreal thing [the unreal dies and the Reality alone survives, 'satyameva jayate'), the aspirant even now (when 'so-and-so' has dropped off) feels no loss to the consciousness 'I am' which he had experienced in the waking state. Now he attains a state which is similar to the sleep he has experienced every day and which is devoid of all and everything (because, 'The ego is verily all – sarvam', since the whole universe, which is nothing but thoughts, is an expansion of the ego). But a great difference is now experienced by him between the sleep that, without his knowledge, has been coming and overwhelming him all these days due to the complete exhaustion of mind and body, and this sleep which is now voluntarily brought on and experienced by him with the full consciousness of the waking state. How?

"Because there is consciousness, this is not sleep, and because there is the absence of thoughts, it is not the waking state it is therefore the existence- consciousness (sat-chit), the unbroken nature of Siva (akhanda siva-swarupam). Without leaving it, abide in it with great love."

'Sadhanai Saram'

Whenever the aspirant during the time of sadhana becomes extroverted from this voluntarily brought-about sleep-like state, he feels absolutely certain, 'I was not sleeping, but was all the while fully conscious of myself'. But, though his real aspect (existence-consciousness) is ever knowing without he least doubt its own existence in sleep as 'I am', whenever he becomes extroverted from everyday sleep, since he (the mind) did not even once have the experience of continuing to know 'I am' from the waking state, he can only say, 'I slept, I did not know myself at that time', The truth is this: since the state of his Self-existence, devoid of the adjunct 'so-and-so', is traced out and caught hold of in the voluntarily brought-about sleep with the full consciousness (prajna) continuing from the waking state, the knowledge that the pure existence-consciousness (sat-chit} knows itself as 'I am' is clear in this sleep state. That is why the aspirant now says, 'I did exist throughout, I did not sleep' ! But prior to his sadhana, since he was throughout the waking state identifying **as 'I' the mind**, which is the form of

the adjunct 'so-and-so', **after waking up** from the ordinary daily sleep, where the mind did not exist, this mind (the man) says, **'I did not exist in sleep'**! That is all!!

Those who experience many times this removal of the ego through practice, since they have an acquaintance with the experience of their pure existence-consciousness as 'I am' even after the removal of the ego, can minutely cognize, even at the moment of just waking up from sleep, how the adjunct 'so-and-so' comes and mixes. Those who do not have such strength of practice cannot cognize, from sleep itself, the ego at its place of rising. The only thing that is easy for them is to find the ego's place of setting (which is also its place of rising) through the effort started from the waking state. In either case, the end and the achievement will be the same. When the attention is focused deeper and deeper within towards the feeling 'I am' and when the ego thereby shrinks more and more into nothingness, our power of attention becomes subtler than the subtlest atom and thereby grows sharper and brighter. Hence, the **strength of abidance** (nishtha-bala) will now be achieved to remain balanced between two states, that is, in a state after the end of sleep and before waking up, in other words, before being possessed by the first thought. Through this strength, the skill will now be gained by the aspirant to find out the adjunct 'so and so', which comes and mixes, to be a mere second person (that is, although it has hitherto been appearing as if it were the first person, it will now be clearly seen to be his mere shadow, non-Self, the primal sheath, a thing alien to him).

"As you practise more and more abiding in this existence-consciousness (that is, remaining in the state between sleep and waking), the ordinary sleep which had previously been taking possession of you will melt away, and the waking which was full of sense-knowledges (vishayas) will not creep in again, Therefore repeatedly and untiringly abide in it,"

'Sadhanai Saram'

> *(Comment: Please note there has been an important progression here. Ramana through Michael and Sadhu Om state there is a first enlightenment which happens when the I-thought, the ego is seen through, and with the disappearance of the ego, one experiences the great Void, a sense of immense space the interpenetrates and contains all the world. The Void is part and parcel of the Oneness state; it is the space that interpenetrates and also contains all phenomena, from external sensations and apparent objects, to all the inner phenomena.*
>
> *Then one "gets" the knowledge that he or she is not the Void, the void is just another witnessed object or second or third person.*
>
> *Then one "apprehends" that he or she (by this time neither), are universal consciousness without any identity to anything in the world.*
>
> *Then one apprehends one is even beyond both the universal consciousness and individual consciousness altogether.*
>
> *However, then you have to take one more step of maintaining your identity as impersonal universal consciousness even while descending in or coming out of the sleep state. This has to be practiced. Why?*
>
> *With the "apprehension" that you exist always, in all states, even though before you thought you did not, it is an easy leap to see that you exist entirely separate from the body/mind/sleep and even Turiya. In a sense, you apprehend your" beyondness," and with that comes absolute freedom and great courage.)*

By greater and more steadfast practice of abiding in this existence-consciousness, we will experience that this state seems to come often and take possession of us of its own accord whenever we are free from our daily work. But, since **this state of existence-consciousness is in fact nothing but 'we' (universal),** it is wrong to think that such a state comes and takes possession of us! While at work, we attend to other things; after that work is over and before we attend to some other second or third person, we naturally **abide in our real state**, existence-consciousness. Though this happens to one and all every day, it is only to those who have the experience of Self-consciousness through the aforesaid practice that the state of Self-abidance will be clearly discerned after leaving one second parson thought and before catching another one (that is, between two thoughts).

"Why has it been said (in the above two verses of 'Sadhana Saram') that one ought to make effort repeatedly to be in that state (our existence- consciousness) and ought to abide in it with more and more love? Because, until all the tendencies (vasanas) which drive one out of it are completely exhausted, this state will seem to come and go. Hence the need for continued effort and love to abide in Self."

“When, through this practice, our state of existence consciousness is experienced always as inescapably natural, then there will be no harm even if waking, dream and sleep pass across,”

“For those who are well established in the unending Self-consciousness, which pervades and transcends all these three so-called states (waking, dream and sleep), there is but one state, the Whole, the All, and that alone is real! This state, which is devoid even of the feeling ‘I am making effort’, is your natural state of being! Be!!”

> *(Comment: Such advice and understanding is not found among any of the neo-advaitins who think that loss of the ego, the entering and maintaining unity consciousness in the waking state is the beginning and end of spirituality. If you believe them, you will be stuck on the first step.)*
>
> *Michael and Sadhu Om then spend many pages discussing Ramana’s understanding of the relationship between consciousness and the body. Remember too, Nisargadatta says consciousness only exists with the body, including universal consciousness. However, I will stop here as the point I wanted to make was that Ramana advised rather intense practice which culminated in becoming the Void, then transcending the Void, then penetrating through the ignorance of the causal body by watching the arising and setting of I consciousness.)*

Post Comments:

Anonymous said...

Does this book have a pdf version?

June 13, 2010

> *Ed Muzika said...*
>
> *No book yet. The chapters are appearing first on this blog. One more chapter about Robert's instructions, which are almost identical to this chapter. However, the point I am trying to make by quoting these masters, is how they all recommended sadhana, doing spiritual practices.*

Posted by Ed Muzika 7 comments Links to this post at 7:25 PM

14 June 2010

TO ME:

Hi Ed-

I recently experienced something different from the usual Aha moments that have so often come and gone.

While going to pee, and inquiring into who was doing such a thing, something broke. I say broke because the closest description is that there was a "snap". It was like a feather-weight explosion that was neither here nor gone. There was no me, no practice, no inquiry, no elation, no joy, no sorrow.

I once experienced a kundalini blow out which resulted in myself being locked in laya for 3 days. Once the state lifted, I nearly had a breakdown. I figured this enlightenment thing was for the chickens, and wanted nothing more of it. I was only going mad. I did not inquire or meditate for nearly 3 years after that.

This was different. It did not feel temporary because nothing arose to begin with, so there was nothing to go. Just a flash.

The first concept that came to me was there is no one, so there is no practice, no need to inquire. A big laugh followed the joke.

I began writing this thinking my "difficulty" would arise, and it has- I am still here. So much has changed, but nothing really has. Still I feel a discomfort that I cannot pin down. Just a blah.

I actually feel much better sharing all of this with you, and thank you for listening.
Thank you, in loving kindness-

J

> *RESPONSE:*
>
> *I got my first awakening when taking a shower. You got yours while pissing.*
>
> *Perfect!*
>
> *Just spend a lot of time being quiet and introspective. See if you can locate a witness and abide there.*
>
> *This state will deepen if you don't lose it by being too active.*
>
> *Ed*

Posted by Ed Muzika 0 comments Links to this post at 3:00 PM