

# REFLECTIONS



April  
May  
June  
2012

Society of Abidance in Truth



## Invocation

*What manner of worship is prescribed for the One  
existing as undivided Being-Consciousness-  
Bliss with no second, without misconceptions,  
and of one nature ?*

Nirguna-manasa-puja, verse 1

*What is named the samadhi of the Self is the absence  
of the hallucinations of the mind (mental error)  
of anything else (as existent). There, itself,  
repose of the mind is declared to be abidance  
always in Brahman.*

Nirguna-manasa-puja, verse 31

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Reflections, April May June 2012

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# *The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi*

(From *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*)

22nd July 1946

“Anoraneeyam Mahatomaheeyam”

(An Atom Among Atoms and a Giant Among Giants)

This morning at 10:30, Sonti Ramamurthi came with his wife, brother, and some friends. At that time, a devotee, reading some book, was saying to Bhagavan, “In this book, it is stated that we eat food and food eats us. How is that? That we eat food is correct. But what is meant by saying that food eats us?” Bhagavan was silent.

After waiting silently for about ten minutes, Ramamurthi told Bhagavan that he came there mainly because his brother was anxious to see Bhagavan, that he himself had Bhagavan’s darshan about ten years back and, taking up the thread of the previous conversation of the devotee, remarked, “All living beings are born, maintained, and absorbed ultimately by annam (food), and so food is known as Brahman. That Brahman is all pervasive. All things are its images, and, as that is known as annam, it is stated that annam eats us. Isn’t that the meaning?” Bhagavan said, “Yes.”

He told Bhagavan several things about science, and his brother also spoke about science, atom bombs, and the like, all in English. I do not know English, so I could not follow their conversation. But Bhagavan replied in Telugu. After hearing all that they were saying about science, Bhagavan said at last, “Certainly. But not one of these things is divorced from one’s own self, is it? Everything comes after one’s self. No one says he is not existent. Even an atheist would admit that he himself exists. So, whatever comes must come from out of one’s self and must resolve into it ultimately. There is nothing separate from one’s self, in accordance with the principle in the Sruti, “Anoraneeyam Mahatom-

aheeyam” (the self is smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest).”

Ramamurthi asked, “Where does the difference come between the atom and the infinite?”

“It comes from the body itself,” said Bhagavan.

Ramamurthi asked, “How is it that we see so many forces in the world?”

Bhagavan said, “The mind alone is the cause. It is the mind that makes you see so many different forces. When that is born, all else is also born. The five elements and the forces beyond the elements, whatever they are, and the forces beyond others also take shape, once the mind is born. If the mind is dissolved, all the others also get dissolved. The mind is the cause of everything.”

28th July 1946

### Dreams: Delusions

Some time back, a North Indian came here and stayed for some days. One afternoon, at three o'clock, he came to Bhagavan and related his experiences through a Tamil devotee thus: “Swami, I was sleeping in the guest house yesterday. You were there speaking to me in my sleep. After some time, I woke up and even after that, you were speaking to me. What is that?”

Bhagavan said, “You were sleeping, weren't you? Then with whom could you be speaking?”

“Only with myself,” he said. Everyone laughed.

“You say you were sleeping. How could there be any conversation with someone who is asleep? ‘No, I was conversing,’ you say. That meant that, even though the body was asleep, you were awake. Then find out who that ‘you’ is. After that, we will consider the conversation during sleep,” said Bhagavan.

There was no reply at all. Looking at all the people with a kind look, he said, “There are only two things: creation and sleep. There is nothing if you go to sleep. You wake up, and there is everything. If you learn to sleep while awake, you can be just a witness. That is the real truth.”

In the same manner, some time back, Subbaramayya asked Bhagavan, “What is meant by asparsa rupam?” “It means that a



thing is visible but not tangible.” “What is meant by *chaya rupam*?” he asked again. “That is the same thing. It appears as a shadow. If you examine it, you will find nothing. Call it God, devil, dream, vision, inspiration, or whatever you like. All this is existent if there is someone to see it. If you find out who it is that sees, all these will not be there. That which is nothing, that which is the source of everything, is the Self. Without seeing his own Self, what is the use of a man’s seeing other things?” said Bhagavan.

Recently, a person told Bhagavan that he had a friend who could see the limits of *sukshma sakti* (subtle powers), that he had seen the limits of the subtle power of *Mahapurushas* (great souls), that among them Sri Aurobindo’s subtle power-light extended to a distance of seven furlongs, that of Bhagavan’s he could see up to three miles but could not see to what farther distance it extended, and that the power-light of Buddha and others had not extended to that much distance. Having heard him patiently until the very end, Bhagavan said with a smile, “Please tell him that he should first look into his own power-light before looking into the extent of the subtle powers of so many others. What is all this about the limits of subtle powers and examining them? If one looks into one’s own self, all these silly ideas do not come up. To him who realizes himself, all these are mere trifles.”

10th August 1946

Siddhas

There was a talk in Bhagavan’s presence today about *siddhas*. Some people said, amongst other things, that someone had tried to attain *siddhi* and had succeeded. After hearing them all patiently for a long time, Bhagavan said in a tone of annoyance, “You talk of *siddhas*. You say that they attain something from somewhere. For that purpose they do *sadhana* and *tapas*. Is it not really a *siddhi* or attainment for us who are really formless to have got a body with eyes, legs, hands, nose, ears, mouth, and to be doing something or other with that body? We are *siddhas*. We get food if we want food, water if we want water, milk if we want milk. Are not all these *siddhis*? While we experience ever so many

siddhis at all times, why do you clamor for more siddhis? What else is required?" ...

Bhagavan often says, "To know oneself and to be able to remain true to oneself is siddhi and nothing else. If one's mind is absorbed in the inquiry of the self, the truth will be realized some time or other. That is the best Siddhi."

I give below an extract from prose writings of Bhagavan regarding these siddhis in his Unnathi Nalubathi which bears this out:

"Siddhi is to know and realize that which is ever Real. Other siddhis are mere dream siddhis. Would they be true when one wakes up from one's sleep? Those who are wedded to truth and who have got freed from maya, will they get deluded by them? Please understand." (No. 35 in U. N.)



## *The Self is Brahman*

Satsang  
January 29, 2012

(Silence)  
Om Om Om  
(Silence)  
Om Om Om

N.: The Self is Brahman. There is no other kind of self. Brahman is the Self and nothing objective to be imagined, conceived, or perceived. To realize the supreme and ever-lasting bliss of Brahman, you must realize your identity as that. Such realization consists of Knowledge—nonobjective Knowledge. This is not something perceived through the senses or conceived in thought, but it is transcendent nonobjective Knowledge in which knowing is Being.

Of jagat-jiva-para—the universe, the individual, and the Supreme—Sri Bhagavan said, "These three appear as if three only so long as the ego is there." In egoless Knowledge, that is, in the Reality as it is, there is no such differentiation. Of the three—one-



self, the universe, and the Supreme—the definitions attributed to oneself determine the form or definition of the others. So, if there is misidentification with the body, one then imagines an external world or universe. In relation to the body, the eternal, the infinite, that is, the Supreme, appears as if something else different from oneself. But, are we bodies? Dive deep into the nature of your own Existence—your very Self. “Self” signifies Existence, itself. Inquire to know the real nature of “I,” the real nature of the Self. What is your Existence? Can it be a body? If you are not a body, can you have beginning or end, birth or death? Can you have location? Can you even possibly be the performer of any action? All those qualities and characteristics pertain to a body, but your Being is not a mere body.

If you are not the body, what is the world? The Maharshi said, “Has anyone ever seen the world without a body?” The world, external, internal, lose their meaning and cease to exist as such if you know the truth that you are not the body. If you are not the body, where are you, and when are you? Spaceless and timeless is Being. Is this Brahman, or is this yourself, or is there no difference?

Within the mind is conceived the mental image of the Supreme and the mental image of a world to which is attributed another concept that it is external. Are you the mind? Are you in the mind? Is there even a second knowing existence apart from Consciousness to be called “a mind”? If you are not the mind, everything conceived within the mind does not pertain to you and cannot be a definition of you. You remain, existing as the inconceivable. In That, the inconceivable, there can be no differentiation, for difference is merely the thought of such and not a transformation or division in Reality itself. Reality is pure, absolute Existence, or Brahman.

The very idea, the barest assumption, of existing as an individual, as an ego, should be inquired into. Who am I? Existence is only one. Duality is a product of imagination. There cannot be two existences for you; there cannot be two selves. So, you cannot at the same time be Brahman and a limited individual. You cannot be the Self and an ego simultaneously. Nor can you oscillate back and forth between those two. For Existence ever exists; it is as it is. You never cease to be. That which is changeable cannot be you. So, whatever you truly are you are always.

What are you always? Before birth, all through life, after death, what are you? Waking, dreaming, deep dreamless sleep, what are you? With a body, without a body, with the senses, without the senses, with thought, without thought, the “I” imagined, or the cessation of such imagination, what are you? Who in truth are you?

In the Sastras, the Self is declared to be of the nature of Sat-Chit-Ananda—Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Know your Being by the light of this innermost Consciousness, and the innate Bliss shines unveiled. Inquire. Inquire until the certainty of this, the Truth, is self-evident. There is no one else to be ignorant of it. Such is Self-Knowledge. Inquire, and if, at any point, you have a question, please feel free to ask.

Q.: Master, what if Sat-Chit-Ananda expresses itself in day-to-day life. Let’s say that I know the chair. There is existence. I use my own light, which is Chit, and I work hard in knowing, and I experience peace. That is my experience in day-to-day life experiencing other things. My understanding is not clear, for I have to work hard to find something existing, and then eventually I get peace. I see Sat-Chit-Ananda expressing something, but I work hard for the purpose. Can you throw some light on that?

N.: If you must go through the senses by which you perceive the chair in the waking state of mind, there is much hard work, as you called it, to see what is, but consider your own Existence. Do you require any work to know that you exist? Do you do anything to exist?

Q.: No.

N.: That Existence is always and is one without a second. Making your vision nonobjective is the way.

Q.: Does the chair have an existence different from my existence?

N.: Does the chair declare its own existence, or do you say that it exists?

Q.: I say.

N.: Then, the chair does not exist always, but you exist always. What does this tell you?

Q.: That I am continuous. My Existence is continuous.

N.: Your Existence is continuous, and the chair has no existence apart from you.

Q.: The objects always require attention. I give attention to the objects all of the time. There are so many objects in the world that exist, and I want to know the existence of everything.

N.: Do you want to know the Existence of everything or the form of everything?

Q.: Form.

N.: The imagining of form can go on endlessly, but the only thing that is actually there is pure Existence, which is unformed. To know the unformed Existence, know yourself. The thoughts, “The chair has existence, my existence,” “another object has my existence,” etc., are not eternal. They are, as you referred to them, expressions of Knowledge, not the Knowledge itself. Make your vision nonobjective. The chair is nothing but the thought of it. The thought is nothing but the knowledge of it. This is so much so that there is no “it;” there is just Knowledge. The Knowledge is inherent in the knower. What is his nature?

Q.: Some objectless knowledge. That’s what I have heard, but I have not understood it completely.

N.: Yes, you are objectless Knowledge, or pure Consciousness. As for the chair, it is like a chair seen in last night’s dream. To go through one’s dream saying, “This is also myself, this is also myself,” is fine, but it is better to wake up. Then, what happens to the chair? As long as we consider objects, there is the definition of being a perceiver. Find out if you are a perceiver. The perceived rises and falls and depends utterly upon the perceiver. There is no perceived apart from the perceiver. Find out the nature of the perceiver. If it turns out that he is unformed Consciousness, there is no perceiver, perceiving, and perceived. Where such differences vanish is true Knowledge.

Another Q.: I am just so grateful to have satsang and be able to hear the Truth. It’s when I can practice most deeply. Any idea I may have about satsang is not satsang. I was reflecting on how I can read spiritual texts conceptually or non-conceptually. If the

text would be read conceptually, I may be able to pass a test on it, but I really would not understand it. When it is read non-conceptually, though, it is a description of my experience. So, I ask myself if am I approaching inquiry in the same way. When I inquire, “Who am I?,” am I seeking to find a concept of myself or am I directly inquiring into that essence that I know as “I”?

N.: Who would select either? Is he a concept?

Q.: Yes, he is a concept.

N.: Then, he cannot do anything. He is just an inert piece of imagination. Inquiry is of the nature of Knowledge. The end appears as the means.

Q.: If the end appears as the means, does it mean that I have to start at the end?

N.: Yes, if the end is oneself, you start with oneself. You start with your Existence, and where you start is where you end.

Q.: So, if I start with my Existence, there is no start. In the experience of existing, I don't start existing because I start inquiring. It is more that I stop thinking that I am something else.

N.: So, as Sri Bhagavan said, “You un-realize the unreal.”

Q.: It is reeling back the dream of being another.

N.: Alright. The Self is ever existent. It is eternal. Knowledge, or Realization of the Self, must necessarily be of the identical nature. Hence, it is referred to as nondual, because of its absence of difference, its absence of duality, its absence of division, and its absence of an alternative. Seek eternal Knowledge. It does not have a beginning, for whatever begins ends. Seek the reality of Being, which ever is. This is what satsang, scriptures, and the rest are for.

Q.: You said something .I can't remember the words.

N.: That is alright. Just express your own understanding.

Q.: You say that, in order to realize the Self, my identity must be one and the same as that Self. I was meditating on that and searching to see if there is something other than that. Does something else exist other than that? I just don't find anything that is

other.

N.: That the Self can be known only by the Self is, after all, self-evident. Another would be non-Self, and the non-Self cannot know the Self.

Just as there is only one Existence, forever indivisible, so, likewise, there is only one Knower, one Consciousness, and not a multiplicity of such. There are not two of you that one could be ignorant of the other and then come to know the other. Your Existence, your Consciousness, is only one. The entire assumption—a bare supposition—that you are something else, an “I,” a “mind,” that supposedly is a second knowing entity, should be questioned and thoroughly examined. As long as that supposition is un-inquired into, the Self will seem to be at a distance, at least subtlety so, or unrealized. If, through deep inquiry, that false assumption is abandoned, there remains no one else not to know the Self, and the Truth of the Self is then Self-known. Hence, Self-Knowledge.

Q.: So, it is just questioning any assumption of “another” right where it appears to start. I can’t make it up out of Reality. It is not found there. So, I ask myself, “Does it ever get made up?” “Does it ever actually occur?”

N.: For whom would it occur?

Q.: It couldn’t occur for the Self. That is for sure.

N.: It cannot occur to itself because that is redundant. There is not a third one, because that arises only after the “I.” Let your inquiry be thorough, deep, and persevering. “Who Am I?”

Another Q.: Does Brahman of which you are speaking have a beginning?

N.: The eternal, the timeless, cannot be spoken of as beginning or ending.

Q.: I read that Brahman has beginning, that the absolute Truth has a beginning. In the meditation, “Who am I?” I am not the body; nor am I the mind. I know that they have a beginning and an end, and there is Brahman, which is absolute Truth.

N.: If it is absolute Truth, it can have no beginning or end.

That which is before the beginning and after the end, which knows about the beginning and the end, which itself is beginning and endless, understand that to be yourself, to be Brahman.

Q.: Does it have to do with the inconceivable?

N.: Find out. That which is conceived has a beginning and an end.

Q.: So the Self is inconceivable, and that is who I am—inconceivable. That is the position of absolute purity or Being.

N.: That is right.

Another Q.: Master. How does cause and effect work in the waking state? There is an element of time in it. I have done meditation on deep sleep and there is no cause and effect, but, in the waking state, the causes of previous years, months, come and say that I was the cause of that. They are past. They are gone. Those thoughts keep coming in the waking state—this is the cause of this, this is the cause of that. I cannot find the cause. I start circular thinking. I was trying to deconstruct cause and effect in my inquiry.

N.: Regarding that which appears objectively, subtle as one's thoughts or gross things sensed, we can infer cause and effect, but does your Being have a cause? Is your Being an effect?

Q.: I will have to inquire regarding that.

N.: If you inquire, you will find yourself to be beyond all causality. The waking state is said to be the effect, and deep sleep is the cause. You are beyond all three states. The same one who exists in deep sleep, when there were none of these waking state considerations, still exists now. If he seems to be caught up in these things, what has happened? Your nature has not changed, but some misidentification, composed of imagination, seems to be active. As Sri Ramana points out, such starts with the very notion, the mode, of "I," aham vritti. So, he says that one should search for that, find that, and get to the root of that.

Q.: In your book, you mentioned being the witness. How do I get started with that, because the "I" comes up again and again in the waking state? If I am the witness, when I assert myself as



the witness, something is going on, and there is no simultaneity.

N.: You may not be able to have simultaneous ideas, but Consciousness, which is the ever-present, silent witness of all that is ever known and experienced, is continuously present. The instruction is not meant to be interpreted as, “Think that you are the witness.” Rather, it means to know yourself to be the nonobjective Consciousness, the unknown knower of all that is known, as the Upanishad declares. You are Consciousness. Speaking of Consciousness in relation to all else, which is to be negated, it is called the witness. By itself, it is just absolute Existence.

You see the “I” come and go. You see the world come and go. What is this witness that sees the subject and the object come and go, but that does not come and go? Identify yourself as that and not with an “I” or with an object. Is this clear?

Q.: Thank you Master, thank you.

Another Q.: For whatever reason, my state of mind changes. It is dull, in this particular case. In your discourse, you described the inquiry step-by-step, taking down the ideas regarding the body, the world, and the mind, just by your questions. To understand the questions seems to take some mental faculty, but, past that, the actual inquiry, itself, doesn’t seem to require the mental faculty. To understand the questions and translate them into an internal state seems to take something. There is something else going on here that is not requiring that.

N.: The actual inquiry is mind-transcendent. It is not mental. Such is true Knowledge. The means of expression, the words used, etc., may require the senses and mind, but they are incidental. The actual inquiry—the actual Knowledge—is beyond words and thoughts. Thus, the opening phrase of Dakshinamurti Dhyanam, “Revealing the Supreme Truth of Brahman in eloquent silence.”

Q.: Yes, the Truth could not be touched by the obscuring factors of thought. You quoted the Maharshi as saying, “Un-realize the unreal.” It makes more sense now because that un-realizing comes with deep experience, from that Dakshinamurti silence. Is it the only way?

N.: By that silence, all the doubts were resolved for his disci-

ples, which means that their egos were proved to be nonexistent. The ignorance was negated. Silence is that in which no “I” arises. The Maharshi revealed this. Where there is no “I,” can there be any veil, any dullness, and any delusion?

Q.: That dullness needs someone for whom it pertains.

N.: Discrimination cannot be truly regarded as a mental activity, for if you discriminate between thought and yourself, how can that be a thought? So, fine discrimination involves the clarity of your own Consciousness, which can never be obscured. The guna-s refer to the mind and the senses. You are beyond all that.

Q.: I can see that any reality placed onto something unreal creates this mind. That is the issue. From the ego sprouts all this other stuff. Once I give it any reality, that is the mistake right there. Then, I appear to become affected by these different states, but it is only an appearance.

N.: Discern the nature of the one who experience such. When you know dullness or when you know agitation, tamas, rajas, or, when you know sattva, the light by which you know is invariable. That light, your Existence, does not change. It does not become part of those qualities. Superimposition of the unreal upon the real does not make the unreal even one bit real. There is not a trace of the snake in the rope.

Q.: It is so important to divest myself of that identity.

N.: Yes.

Q.: Because with the slight grasp, or slight belief in that identity, it seems to be real.

N.: Yes. In once sense, the smallest, infinitesimal speck of the real attributed to the unreal makes the entire unreal seem as if real. Such is a testimony to the power of Reality. It does not prove any solidity in the unreal, even momentarily so. The apparent reality in any illusion has only one source. This source is you. Every experience seems real for a while and then passes. The sense of reality remains, but the form of the experience changes.

Likewise, every condition and state of mind seems as if real momentarily and then passes. There is nothing special about the momentary-ness; that is also unreal. What is it that can appar-

ently lend the force of its reality endlessly, never be extinguished, and which ever is just as it is? Though apparently lending its reality, yet it remains unmodified, just as the rope is the only substantial thing in the snake. The rope is not modified into a snake, and the snake has not really come to be. So it is with the conditions and experiences, both external and internal, that you think you have. Who knows all of that? What is his existence? Aside from his knowing of it, the “this” aspect has no existence. Who knows?

Q.: The knowing of?

N.: Everything.

Another Q.: So, devotion has no division.

N.: That’s true. Devotion has no division, and the purpose of devotion is to remain in that state free of division.

Q.: So, being a devotee who has pure devotion is the one who realizes the Self, because there is no division of Existence.

N.: That is so. Otherwise, if he puts himself up as being separate and distinct from the God that he worships, he makes too big a deal over himself, does he not? Where the identity of being separate dissolves, devotion is at its sweetest.

Om, Shanti Shanti Shanti Om



## *From The Ramana Way*

***The following articles appear in the August 1988, vol. 8, no. 6, issue of “The Ramana Way,” a monthly publication produced by the Ramana Maharshi Center for Learning in Bangalore, India. They have been producing monthly publications entirely devoted to Sri Ramana and His teaching since the early 1980’s. Sri A.R. Natarajan dedicated his life and his family’s life to the cause of Bhagavan Ramana. Sri A.R. Natarajan was absorbed in the lotus feet of His Master***

*in 2007. His daughter, Dr. Sarada Natarajan continues in his legacy, keeping the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning and “The Ramana Way” alive for all Ramana devotees. May the devotion and wisdom from which these articles are written “jump” off the pages and into your heart. Please visit them at: [www.ramanacentre.com](http://www.ramanacentre.com)*

## **Rid of Fear and Sloth**

By Sarada Natarajan

There was a little sprout growing right near the compound wall of my grandmother’s house. Nobody noticed it. It grew into a bigger sprout. Still, nobody noticed it. It spread its roots deep into the soil and found it had no room to grow upwards. So, it began to grow closer to the compound wall. Taking support from the wall, it grew well and sturdily into a little tree. Now it needed more room. It was strong and decided to make room for itself; it cracked the compound wall and grew into it. It cracked the wall of the garage next door which adjoined the compound and grew into that also. Now it got all the attention it could have wanted. Suddenly, everyone realized there was a full grown tree breaking down their property and they wanted to get rid of it. They chopped off its branches. The branches only grew back with leaves that were fresher, greener than before. They even poured acid on it. Poor tree must have been greatly hurt. But it sprouted afresh from the burns. It even had grandmother wondering whether acid treatment was the right thing for all dying trees. So, she and her neighbor are still worried about the tree that they unwillingly share. And while they worry, the tree digs its roots deeper into the ground and sprouts new, defiant branches that eat more of the compound and garage walls.

The habit of identity creates a similar problem. Every time one of its associations is chopped off, it grows a new one. Even from scars and burns, it sprouts new attachments, new objects that it identifies with. In fact, it seems to become more defiant, more resilient the more it is attacked. There is only one way to stop it from growing for good. It is the same way that one may get rid of the tree. Grandmother and her neighbor are not unaware of the way, but they wish to achieve their end without the

consequences of that way. The way is to dig out the tree from its roots. That requires a great deal of labor, a great deal, that is, at one time (though it is a great deal less than constantly lopping off the branches because it is once and for all). That amount of labor may not be readily available or expendable. Besides, rooting out the tree might imply the crumbling of the compound and garage walls as well, and this they do not want.

If one must pull out all the associations of the “I” by their roots, one must put in the requisite effort, the effort of continuous alertness, constant watchfulness. One is often unprepared for this effort. Unprepared, because one is afraid that, along with the removal of its associates, identity, too, will crumble. Identity and its associates have become so interfused, like the wall and the tree, that it is difficult to disturb the one without disrupting the other. There is the unnamed fear that identity cannot exist in isolation, without its associates. And one is certainly loath to lose identity. The fear is not entirely unfounded. It is true that, if one isolates the “I,” it will melt away. But the important question is, “Into what?” Into what will the identity dissolve? Or, what is it that will remain when identity ceases to be? Will anything remain at all? Or, will it be only a void? Bhagavan repeatedly reaffirms that it is not void but fullness, completeness. In almost every verse of His “Forty Verses on Reality,” in “Upadesa Saram,” in His hymns on Arunachala, in the “Atma Vidya” song, again and again one finds a description of the egoless state as being full, blissful, effulgent: as if to remove every inkling of fear from our minds about what will happen when identity is no more. Despite all this, the fear seems to lurk in some untraced corner. If not, what can keep one from regaining what is one’s own natural state? Why is it that we do not pursue the search for our self with unbroken enthusiasm? It must be fear, or laziness, or just lack of interest and eagerness.

If there is great eagerness, then fear or sloth cannot stand in the way. But, when counter attractions pull one away or when a sense of non-achievement undermines the enthusiasm, then one must stop and ask oneself the questions: For whom are these attractions or these disappointments? They are naturally for me. Would it not be absurd to think I am attracted or sad when I don’t even know who I am? Could I vouch for the desires and dejections of Mr. Kukulagai? Could anyone of you vouch for them? If one were to be asked such a question one would an-

swer, “Who? Who is Mr. Kukulagai?” When I don’t know him, how can I tell you whether he likes chocolates or feels dejected if he is woken up in the morning? If one should turn the question around on oneself, “When I don’t know who I am, how would I know whether I feel attracted by something or disappointed by another?” this query will serve to turn one’s attention back to one’s primary business of questing for one’s own true nature.

However, in the face of numerous habitual pulls, even recognizing the absurdity of one’s condition may not suffice to gather the mind’s attention at its root. One may prefer to be absurd and do what one is used to doing. So, one must continuously keep at felling that tree which has grown into one’s identity. One must go about breaking the habit of identity’s associations. First, by the question, “Who am I?” that serves to bring the initial focus on the search, and then by riveting one’s attention on the “I”-thought minus its appendages or linkages. Here we come to the crucial question.

Focusing attention on a single thought, the sense of “I”-ness, what does it mean? A clear intellectual understanding of the process is the primal step.

## **Meditations on Teachings**

By A.R. Natarajan

“Free will is implied in the scriptural injunctions to be good. It implies overcoming fate. It is done by wisdom. The fire of wisdom consumes all actions. Wisdom is acquired by association with the wise, or rather, its mental atmosphere.” ~Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, June 19, 1936

Ramana’s first spiritual instruction to his mother, Azhagam-mai, was the best course in life would be to accept the flow of karma. It would be futile to take up arms against what is bound to happen. What is not to happen cannot be brought about even by herculean effort. This was in 1898. Years later, in the 1940’s, Devaraja Mudaliar recorded that Ramana was categorical that not only the major events in one’s life but also the smallest things are pre-determined. From these statements, one might erroneously conclude that Ramana regarded destiny as irrevocable. If it were so, it would logically follow that free will has no place in the shaping of one’s life. Such a view should be quite contrary



to the teachings of Ramana where we find the importance of free will being stressed quite often in the context of destiny. He would say that destiny and free will co-exist as long as there is a sense of doership. One transcends them both only when, through self-enquiry, this feeling of doership ends.

Let us have a close look at the exact domain of destiny and the role of free will in Ramana's teachings. According to Ramana, what are destined are only the experiences which the body has to undergo. "Destiny concerns only the body."

Identified as we are with the body, it is hard to accept that idea that destiny affects only the body. For the logical implication of such a proposition is that the mind and the body are distinct and separate.

It is, therefore, necessary to go into this deeply. First we have to ask the question, "Why has the body come into existence at all?" The great ones do not have a karmic cause for their birth. They come for the welfare of the world and can retain the body as long as they wish. Ramana told Rangan that Yama would have to wait and take the permission of a jnani, and only when the jnani is ready to cast off his body can that event happen. As for the normal run of men, birth is part of the cosmic law, as a result of which one goes through the experiences consequent on his ethical balance sheet. It is because of this fact that we find infant mortality, the death of the young, sudden unforeseen deaths and the lingering on of the old. Many people often question God's laws and the wisdom when children or the young die. Since, however, the body has come into the existence as a result of karma, when that force is exhausted, life becomes extinct. We find that the body, linked as it is to a particular karma which gave rise to its birth, comes to an end when that force is over. The mind may be well at the height of its powers, the body in perfect health, but, its karma being over, death cannot wait.

We can also look at this from another angle. The great ones have demonstrated in their lives as to how one can completely delink oneself with one's own body and remain unaffected by its changes or sufferings. Ramana's body went through intense suffering, caused by sarcoma, for over twenty months. Not one moment did he complain of any pain, though the pain must have been excruciating. When asked by Major Chadwick whether he was suffering, Ramana said, "No." But at the same time, he said,

“There is pain”—the pain pertained to the body and not to Him. Hence His bewitching smile and divine splendor even on the 14th April 1950 when he chose to give up His body which had been racked with intense pain.

If the mind and body are distinct and karma refers to the body, one may ask why is it that the mind, too, appears to be under its sway. This is only because of its attachments. Because of the pull of the past, it is unable to dis-identify itself from what destiny brings to the body and is therefore affected by sorrow or joy which karma is yielding. If one learns not to pay attention to the event, if one learns to be detached from it, then, where are destiny’s pleasures or pangs? This is quite obviously so, for any event can be blown up or belittled by the mind. One may go under its weight or meet the event with equipoise and calm strength. From this arises the first basic point of Ramana that one is free to exercise his will either to identify himself with the event or to be unconcerned by it. His reply to one Mrs. Desai would indicate this clearly. Mrs. Desai, quoting from the Gita, asked Ramana that if one is compelled to do the work for which he is destined, then, the question of free will could not arise at all. Ramana explained to her that it is open to each one to be free from the joys or pains, pleasant or unpleasant consequences of the work by not identifying oneself with the body. Let the body experience its allotted destiny, but it is up to each one to be unaffected mentally by it by exercising free will and untying the bond of attachments.

One has, therefore, to develop through spiritual practice to this state. Even at the very threshold, there is freedom. Free will can be exercised to direct action on the right lines. Were it no so, there would be no meaning to spiritual injunctions and the code of ethics enjoined therein. One has to discriminate between good and bad, between what is pleasurable and what is liberating and choose wisely. To believe that one is a helpless victim of karma is to fall into the trap of the mind’s making. If only we pause to think, we can readily see that it is impossible to be truly passive, to be a mere onlooker of an event—one’s own nature will assert itself in one form of action or the other. When the feeling of “I am the doer” is alive and kicking, it will leave no room for rest. Exercise of free will and action are inevitable. Free will has to be channeled in pursuit of such action as would purify the mind

and enable one to escape altogether from destiny's shackles.

It is necessary here to clear one point. To say that one must give a purposive turn to action, should not be taken to mean that success is assured. A dispirited devotee told Ramana that he had come a couple of years earlier and had cultivated his will power thereafter but had met with a series of failures in his efforts. Ramana clarified that what will result is only the strength of mind which would enable one to react to success or failure with equanimity. He also made it clear that will power should not be taken to be synonymous with success! For success or failure are the products of destiny, whereas free-will enables one to neutralize it by insulating oneself by an attitudinal change of mind.

An allied question regarding the efficacy of prayer has also to be mentioned. If destiny were supreme, of what use would prayer be? This doubt was voiced by Khanna when he specifically asked Ramana, "Are prayers granted?" "Yes," said Ramana, and "they are granted." No thought goes in vain. The thought force will produce its effect. Mind is powerful because of the conscious portion of it, the "I"-thought which springs from the fullness of consciousness. It can make or mar, push one to abysmal depths and lead one to the portals of freedom.

Destiny and free-will, their interplay lasts only so long as one does not enquire, "Who is it that is bound?" and "Who is it that is free?" Through constant vichara, ceaseless enquiry, one ends this doership notion, and then both are cut at their very root. Then, there is neither destiny nor free will. The person to whom they pertain has lost his separate identity. What remains is only the Self ever liberated, always free.



## *From the Temple Archives*

*[This is an excerpt from a message by a SAT member who resides at a distance. Nome's response follows.]*

December 24, 2011

Dear Beloved Master,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste.

[Name omitted] is much better. Thank you both for your kindness and support during that very stressful time.

I recently experienced several days that were more peaceful and free from thought than I ever remember. When those sweet days of freedom from the mind ended, I was so very disappointed, longing for more.

I guess grasping for what I missed. The teaching is clear that I am not a doer of any action, yet I want to do something about this. I really want this freedom. Any guidance would be greatly appreciated.

During the beginning of Satsang, the camera meets your eyes, just briefly. I so love that and feel a great love then, it is your Grace. Thank you.

All my love to you and Sasvati,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

We are glad to know that [name omitted] is continuing to recover and is feeling much better. Please convey our best regards from everyone here to him.

That which is "to be done" is the attainment of Knowledge of the Self. This is not an action such as would be carried out by one's limbs or senses. It is not even a mental activity. Rather, it is the profound ascertainment by interior Knowledge of what actu-

ally is your Self. It is a matter of what you regard as your identity.

When misidentifications dissolve, the natural freedom and peace of the Self shine forth. When misidentifications occur or resume, though the Self is ever existent, it appears as if veiled, and the freedom and peace seem obscured. If you examine your experience finely, you will be able to determine what these misidentifications are and then, by inquiry, dispel them. Your experience shows you that peace, freedom, and happiness are natural. If they seem absent, you naturally long for them, because they are of your very nature. Yearning should become intensity and continuity of spiritual practice. Thereby, the Self is realized.

If love reaches its origin, in devotion to the Supreme, the result is sublime beyond description.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[From the same SAT member. Nome's response follows.]*

December 30, 2011

Dear Beloved Master,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste.

Thank you for your spiritual instruction. I have spent much of the week with the strong intention to make good use of all instruction.

The I that I inquire into has always seemed a bit mysterious. I've seriously tried to really see what I am and who is looking.

When I read the quotes from Ramana regarding the 'Spurious I', there was some sense of a deeper knowing and seeing.

I listened to your comments on CD and your website regarding some of the other quotes from this pamphlet and was disappointed that I could not find your comments specifically regarding this 'Spurious I', as it is called in the quote from the pamphlet. It is probably quite obvious, but I would certainly appreciate further commentary and guidance.

This seems like a huge piece for me to fully grasp, I do feel some sense of it. I think there is an opening for me within that quote. I feel it but not completely.

I have many books and DVDs and CDs, if there is something you might point me to as further reference. I have always loved you so very much, it is naturally my deepest hearts desire to abide in your Being forever.

All my love to you and Sasvati,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

As to the question regarding the “I” into which one inquires, the Self is only one, and there is, in truth, no other “I.”

Sri Bhagavan has referred to the ego as a spurious “I” because it is entirely false and has not actually been born. It is an illusion that seems to connect the Self, which is pure Consciousness, with the body. It is an illusory combination of the Self with the non-Self, the Real and the unreal, absolute Being with the nonexistent. This illusion is merely delusion, composed of imagination, and has no actual existence. Thus, the spurious “I” is the false assumption of existing as an individual, which, being unreal, “vanishes” upon inquiry into its nature. The inquiry to know the Self eliminates this false assumption and reveals that the only existent “I” is the one Self. Thereby, the delusive notion of being bound is destroyed so that not a trace remains.

There are not two of you, so that one could inquire into another. Who are you? Thus, the Truth is realized.

I hope that you find the above helpful. Tonight, the Jayanti of the Maharshi is being celebrated in the SAT Temple.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[This is a response to two messages from a seeker who stated that he his experience was confined to that which is sensory and wished to know if his meditation or inquiry were correct.]*

January 10, 2012



Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your messages.

That which is sensed through the five senses cannot possibly be your true existence. For all that is objective, there is a knower, the nature of whom is nonobjective Consciousness. Self-inquiry is not an activity, but rather it consists of Knowledge. Whether you think your meditation is correct or incorrect, still you exist. Inquire deeply to discern the nature of this Existence, this Self, that transcends the mind and senses. Discriminate finely to determine what you merely conceive of as being yourself and what truly is the Self.

It is also wise to discern and to destroy tendencies that emanate from the misidentifications. This establishes one beyond desires and fears.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[In the course of her message on January 11, 2012, a seeker wrote, "I am focusing more in listening to your Satsang CDs and Ribhu Gita CDs. I have a question. In Satsang CDs, I hear that happiness is our real nature, but in Ribhu Gita it is also mentioned, "You are neither happiness nor sorrow." May I request for a clarification?" This is Nome's reply. The third paragraph is in reference to her request for blessings for her child with whom she is pregnant and expecting to give birth in several months.]*

Dear,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

It is good that you are listening to Satsang CDs and *Ribhu Gita* CDs to help you focus more clearly on Self-inquiry. That which is revealed as the Supreme Brahman in *Ribhu Gita* and in the spiritual teachings expounded in Satsang is truly your very Self. By profound realization of this, you will abide in imperishable Bliss.

Blessings, of course, are always there. Even now, you can prepare for the child by turning your mind inward so that your experience is filled with peace and love.

Your question revolves around the meaning of “happiness.” If you conceive of happiness as merely an emotion, a state of mental elation, Ribhu negates that along with its opposite, which is sorrow. The Self is free of duality and is quite beyond all mental modes, states, and conditions, as well as the pleasures and pains of the body. If, though, you understand happiness to be the innate bliss of Being, the Maharshi declares that such happiness is actually our real nature. This happiness, or Bliss of the Self, is uncaused and eternal.

May you ever abide in this deep happiness of the Self, beyond the changeful modes of the mind and the transient experiences of the body, by the Knowledge of who you truly are.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[In response to a SAT member who resides at a distance.]*

January 10, 2012

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for both of your messages.

The clarity and detachment indicated in the *Treatise in Deprecation of Acquisition That is the Non-Self* yield peace that is undisturbed regardless of the seeming surroundings.

Experiences of increasing clarity and spiritual strength are good indications of proceeding on the right path. Clarity is of the nature of true Knowledge, and spiritual strength derives from the solidity of real Being. That which is otherwise is not the reality. Understand that it is only delusion that is momentary and that which is of the depth is actually permanent. That is, cease to misidentify as the changeful mind, and know yourself to be the unchanging, infinite, eternal Self, of the nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

Yes, the retreats at the Temple are scheduled in full for this year. Of course, whenever you are able to visit, you are very wel-

come.

Because you mentioned it, it may be said that the disease affecting this body seems to be progressing. It seems to be characteristic of this illness that the symptoms intensify sometimes and recede at others. Care continues to be given in an ongoing attempt to reverse or retard the disease. Sri Ramana's teaching and Grace are the perfect remedy for the illusion of birth and death.

That in you which recognized even before you understood has its source in the Self that you truly are.

By deep devotion and profound inquiry, may you realize the Immortal and thus dwell in peace without end.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[From a SAT member in India. Nome's response follows.]*

January 11, 2012

Dear Nome,

Namaste!

Since we listen to your voice every day, we feel very close to you, even though we are separated by half of an imaginary world.

We are doing very well. I hope your body is not giving you too much trouble these days.

There is a sadhu who sits half way up the path to Skandashram. He calls himself the Wandering Swami of Tiruvannamalai. (Even though every time we see him, for four years now, he has not moved from the same rock on the path!) He apparently met you on one of your trips here, and he knows us as your devotees. The last time I spoke to him he asked after your health, and I told him of your battle with Parkinson's. He wanted to make sure I told you that he sends his regards and blessings.

My practice continues to deepen, thanks to you and Bhagavan. I can say now, as I said to you a couple years ago, that I'm finally getting ready to begin inquiring!

Please give my love to Sasvati.  
Love,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Yes, an imaginary world, with illusions of time and space, cannot divide the Self, of the nature of undifferentiated Being.

When you next have the opportunity to speak with the Wandering Swami who does not wander, please convey my fond regards and best wishes to him.

Though we may casually say that one battles with a disease, really, the Self, unborn and imperishable, is entirely bodiless. Just as, after you awake from a dream, neither the body nor experiences of the dream are found to exist, and you do not remain as an experiencer of any of the dream, so, if you inquire and thus abide in Self-Knowledge, you will realize that the Self, eternal and infinite, ever is just as it is. In this lies perfect peace.

Bhagavan's Grace is fully present always. Inquire.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[From another SAT member in India, followed by Nome's response.]*

January 17, 2012

Pranam Master,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Though I could not be part of SAT physically, I am happy and feel blessed to be an instrument in supporting SAT in any little way I am involved.

I am not sure what to write to you. Just need Your Blessings and feel Your Grace at every moment. I miss the Satsangs.

Please accept my namaskaram.  
Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya.

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Grace is always present, just as the Self is ever existent. Diving within, you find interior satsang. Transcendent of the bodies, this Sat, or true Being of the Self, is free of differences and division. In this, the distance does not matter. May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self and thus remain always happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[A message to a member who had just given a donation to SAT.]*

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your generous donation. The devotion that motivates your giving is also that which opens the gate to divine Knowledge and steady, blissful abidance as the Self.

May you ever abide as the imperishable Self, free of even the least trace of the illusory ego and its anxious thoughts, and thus be ever at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[This is a message addressed to "SAT." Nome responded.]*

February 8, 2012

Dear SAT,

When a person has realized his/her true nature as Being Itself, is there a sense of unlimitedness or of any other qualities? Thanks for any light.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

One who has realized the Self is the Self alone, and no individuality or person remains. This Self is Brahman, and only Brahman knows Brahman.

The Self is said to be unlimited and nirguna (quality-less). If Being had a quality, it would be defined, and thus limited, by such. Being is undefined and thus unconfined. It is limitless and free of any quality.

As there is no other that exists, being the sole-existent Reality, it is called “unlimited.” Similarly, as it is locationless, timeless, undifferentiated, and the only power, it is unlimited.

Inquiry as to “Who am I?” reveals that what has just been indicated is self-evident.

It is hoped that what is said here is found to be helpful.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[From another seeker:]*

February 8, 2012

Dear Nome,

Please help me. For the past few months I am so tense. Couple of months back here in Dubai a young lady committed suicide jumping from 15th floor when she realised that her kid slipped from the same window few minutes back. This news devastated me totally. No other suicide news shattered me like this one in my whole life. And since then I have developed a fear that it might happen to my family members and that some one may do that in my house. I just don't know why I feel that way. And this fear is making me mad. When I meditate I feel better and again after some time, this fear grips me again. And a pain in the chest starts with the fear. Though I know this is just a fear, this mere knowing is not helping me come out of the fear. I have started realizing knowing is just not enough. How do I start feeling it in my heart?

I have never been like this in my whole life. Please help me



come out of this. Will more and more meditation help me? What is the missing link in my self-enquiry? Should I try any other methods for self enquiry so that I can come out of such fear? How do I come out of the fear of death? I am never afraid of my death but always worried about others.

Please help me Nome. Almost every day when I am traveling to office, I listen to one of your videos (“listen to something which he himself said”) that I grabbed from you tube. And this has given a confidence that you can help me.

Waiting for your reply.

Thank you.

Love and regards

Dear ,

Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

It is obviously not sufficient merely to have an idea that the fear is just a fear. Fear is constituted of particular thoughts. The thoughts pertain to and are generated by certain misidentifications, which are ignorance. By inquiry, trace the “feeling” of fear to the concepts that compose it. Trace the concepts to the false definitions or misidentifications, and then inquire to determine who you truly are. When the false is truly known to be false, it ceases to exist. By “trace” is meant that the entire sense of reality, identity, and happiness should return to their true place or source.

Such ignorance as the misidentification with the body and the belief that the world holds one’s happiness should be thoroughly questioned and examined. Destruction of the body by suicide is a deluded attempt to stop suffering (become happy) and to gain freedom from the limitation of the body, but it does not result in such at all.

The value and supreme efficacy of Self-inquiry as taught by Sri Bhagavan have already been indicated in previous correspondence with you, so such need not be reiterated here. You may find it helpful to reread the previous messages and what is available in the SAT website downloads, etc.

Meditation is always beneficial. Sincere devotion to the Guru also yields peace.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the immortal Self, the one conqueror of death that grants fearlessness, and thus dwell in peace.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[[This is from a SAT member on Mahasivaratri. Nome's reply follows.]*

February 20, 2012

Dear Beloved Master,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste.

I am most grateful for memories of Mahasivarati experiences from many years ago. It is actually a timeless experience with you and in your love. Every moment and every memory forever.

My practice is often really good and feels deep. There are other times that my mind seems to take over, (like the past few days.) I will use the energy of Mahasivarati tonight to continue the inquiry for truth. I just heard you on DVD mention eternal peace and eternal happiness. That is my goal!

Thank you for the Satsang DVDs received recently. It had seemed a long time, and I was so excited to have that little package in my hands!

[Name omitted] is doing well in Cardiac Rehab. He is scheduled for hip replacement March 12. He has just recently mentioned wanting to come to Satsang. I can so easily see that in your Presence his heart opens to you. It just does, and I told him he doesn't have to be afraid of that love. I think that knowing your disease is progressing may be the factor that pulls him back to you.

I wish I were with you tonight for this very special event. You are always in my heart.

All my love to you and Sasvati,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. The Oneness that exists as the Existence of the Self, the Oneness that shines in the heart's complete devotion, the very essence of Mahasivaratri, is ever present yet most clearly experienced by those who, endowed with a deep conviction in the Truth, practice to the best of their ability. In this way, eternal peace and happiness are, indeed, found in their fullness.

We are glad to hear that [name omitted] is doing well. He has our best wishes for a complete recovery and for success with the hip surgery. Of course, he is completely welcome at satsang if, and when, he wishes to participate.

May you ever abide in the timeless bliss of the Self, which always is and can never cease.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome

*[The father, "an ardent devotee of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi," of a seeker was suffering with anxiety. The seeker wrote for assistance, raising questions that can be inferred from Nome's answers.]*

February 21, 2012

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

If he is an ardent devotee of Bhagavan, there is nothing about which he need be anxious. If he meditates in love for Bhagavan upon the immensity and depth of His Grace, everything will be all right.

Yes, doubts, fears, etc. are composed of thought. Such thoughts are rooted in misidentification. The Self transcends all of that. If one inquires, misidentifications are destroyed, and, along with them, the ideas constituting the doubts, fears, etc. are also destroyed. Thereby, the innate peace of the Self shines without obstruction.

Certainly, this illusion can be overcome. Being a father of two children represents no obstruction to Liberation. Self-Knowledge

is that which is important. Depth, thoroughness, and continuity of Self-inquiry determine the abidance in such Knowledge.

For happiness and equanimity, for freedom and steadfastness in peace, the sublime way shown by the Maharshi is supreme. It is also available for all.

Injuring the body or the committing of suicide is not the way at all but only perpetuates suffering for such actions are born of delusion. If one truly wishes to be free of delusion and suffering, he must joyfully turn within and know himself.

It is hoped that your father finds the above message beneficial.

Om Namah Sivaya  
Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,  
Nome

*[A seeker telephoned the temple office and requested some spiritual advice. He was told that he could raise his questions by email. Here is his message along with Nome's response.]*

February 22, 2012

Dear Mr. Nome,

I have been asked by Ms. Sasvati to ask you a spiritual question or two I have.

I just finished the book by Maharishi, *Who am I?* The questions are from that book.

In this book, in answer to question 'what is happiness' Maharshi ji says that the world is full of misery. The exact quotation is that when mind goes out it experiences misery.

My question is how is it that? Surely, at times, we see a natural beauty, and the mind is exhilarated. What to make of this? At that sight the mind is not miserable.

At another point, the book says that (my interpretation only) that this world is a creation of the mind only. I can see that my world (the subjective world) is the creation of my mind, but the objective world is not just a creation of my mind. But it exists as waves exist in ocean. True, the waves die out in the absence of the wind.

I hope you will find time to answer my inquiry.

Thank you sir.  
Sincerely,

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

In the passage about which you raise your question, the Maharshi says, “Happiness is the very nature of the Self; happiness and the Self are not different. There is no happiness in any object of the world. We imagine through our ignorance that we derive happiness from objects. When the mind goes out, it experiences misery. In truth, when its desires are fulfilled, it returns to its own place and enjoys the happiness that is the Self. Similarly, in the states of sleep, samadhi and fainting, and when the object desired is obtained or the object disliked is removed, the mind becomes inward turned and enjoys pure Self-Happiness.”

Thus, he has already graciously answered your question. Happiness is the very nature of the Self. Just as the Self is not an object apart from oneself, so happiness is not an object and is not produced by the experience of an object. In the example cited by you, that happiness is purely of your own nature. The apparent limitations to the happiness are determined by the superimposition of limitations on your identity. So, if you misidentify with the body, the senses, as a sensing entity, etc., the experience of happiness, which is actually innate, will appear to be determined by the presence and absence of objects and limited to the condition and duration of such. If, though, you cease to misidentify, the happiness of the Self will be realized to be infinite and eternal. It is ever perfectly full.

An outward-turned mind may be understood to be one that believes in its own conceptions. An inward-turned mind is one that ceases such imagination and thus loses its own form. What remains is only Being-Consciousness-Bliss, which is the nature of the Self. This Self is the Reality. To ignore Reality and pursue imagination in the mind is ignorance and leads to all kinds of false bondage, which is the cause of suffering. The destruction of suffering results from liberation from the imagined bondage, which is realized by the dissolution of ignorance by Self-inquiry.

The idea that there is an existent, objective world is only in the mind. The idea of the creation of the world is also only in the mind. The idea of externality, an “out there,” appears only in the mind. Explanations, such as waves, are only in the mind. The idea that there is a mind may also be said to be only in the mind. If the root or nature of the mind be sought by profound inquiry, neither a mind nor its content, the form of the world, is found to actually exist.

That which is real is ever existent. That which is unreal is ever nonexistent.

The objective realm of experience, or world, does not declare its own existence; you say that it exists. Who is this you? If you are not the body, where, then, is the world?

The transient images of a world of objects and activities that appear in a dream state seem as if real as long as one dreams. Upon awakening, one finds that none of that was the case. The only thing really existing there is one’s own Being-Consciousness, though that is invisible to the dream sensations and thoughts. Similar is the case with the waking state.

It is hoped that you find the above helpful so that you can dive ever more deeply into the teachings of Sri Bhagavan. You may also find it useful to read the explanations given in such works as *Self-Knowledge*, *The Quintessence of True Being*, *Sad-darsanam and an Inquiry into the Revelation of Truth and One-self*, *Ribhu Gita*, *Song of Ribhu*, etc.

May you be endowed with the profound inquiry to know your true Self, which is mind-transcendent and world-transcendent, which is uncreated and imperishable, which is forever unmodified and always changeless, and which is the perfect fullness of bliss, and thus be ever happy and at peace.

Ever yours in Truth,  
Nome





## *Announcements*

### ***Thank You...***

The selfless service we do here to help maintain the temple is prompted by the love we have in our hearts for this teaching. We do not desire acknowledgement for such. We would, though, like to thank all of the folks who perform service at our temple...

Bob Haber: keeping the bathrooms clean, watering plants, sweeping the walkways & parking lot, cleanup after events, cleaning the temple, set-up for events, helping with flower arrangements; Ryan Shaw: maintaining the temple grounds gardens; Tim Frank: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats, transcription; Myra Taylor: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, providing prasada after satsang & atmotsava, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Raman Muthukrishnan: running the bookstore including mail order service, maintaining the SAT website, mastering recordings of events at SAT, providing prasada after satsang; Sangeeta Muthukrishnan: helping with the bookstore mail order, organizing things around the temple, providing meals at retreats, providing prasada after satsang & atmotsava, leading kirtans at atmotsava; Wimala Brown: providing meals at retreats and prasada after satsang; Dhanya Nambirajan: singing during special events, providing meals at retreats, providing prasada after satsang, cleanup after pujas; Ganesh Sadasivan: organizing special events including singing, recitation, and chanting; Eric Ruetz: editing and mastering all recordings of satsangs and special events, providing meals at retreats, securing the temple; Jim Clark: lighting candles at meditation events, flower arranging, preparing meals at retreats; Richard Clarke: providing incense for the temple and helping with book orders from India; Nome: temple grounds maintenance, writing books, administrative stuff, general help wherever needed including spiritual guidance; Sasvati: preparing books & Reflections for publishing, maintaining residential rentals, overseeing property repairs, flower arrangements, maintaining temple gardens; Advait Sadasivan: providing play time at any time for anyone who wishes to play, helping out when asked; Jaden Silva:

transcription, mastering recordings of satsangs; helping out wherever needed; Tristan Mzhavia: assisting with flowering the murtis and lighting candles, cleaning the temple.

***If you would like to transcribe satsangs and other events at SAT, please contact Sasvati at: <sasvati@att.net>***

***Transcribing these events is a wonderful opportunity to dive deep into this supreme teaching and it is also a beautiful service to preserve these precious teachings in printed form for many years to come.***

***It is perfect for those who live at a distance and would like to engage in service.***

## *Upcoming Special Events*

***Adi Sankara Jayanti:*** April 26, 2012.

***The Self-Knowledge Retreat:*** May 25-27, 2012

## *Sri Sadisvara Mandiram*

Everything we do at SAT has the direct purpose of evoking devotion in the heart and inducing the immediate experience of the Self. This purpose is fulfilled by all the events held at SAT—satsangs, meditations, Ramana darshanams, atmotsavas, temple sevas, special events, retreats, and publications. This purpose is also fulfilled by the design of the Temple itself including the deities and symbols used throughout the Temple for worship and meditation. SAT has the good fortune of already housing in the Temple deities Dakshinamurti, Nataraja, Lingodbhava, Ardhanariswara, and Lingam, which are worshipped regularly at SAT events. To complete the Temple, deities Ganesh and Subramania (Skanda) are to be added. Devotees endeavor to build a proper shrine for these deities downstairs in the front entry to the temple. The “Sri Sadisvara Mandiram” would also include Nandi and an additional Lingam to the one that is already situated in the Inner Shrine outside the Satsang Hall. In addition, murtis of Ribhu and Adi Sankara will take their place in the Satsang Hall near the front Ramana altar next to the dias.

The “Sri Sadisvara Mandiram” will provide an atmosphere in which devotees visiting the temple may experience puja, engage in pradakshina, listen to vedic chanting, read scripture, and worship. It will embrace the ambiance of Siva temples found throughout India.

To find out more about this holy endeavor and if you are inspired to sponsor this project, visit the SAT website at:

[satramana.org](http://satramana.org) and then click on “Sri Sadisvara Mandarim” located in the sidebar menu.

Om Namah Sivaya!