



Reflections

**October
November
December
2011**

Society of Abidance in Truth

Invocation

*Thus, I perceive Brahman and that there is
nothing else, ever. Oh! Difference is to be
frowned upon! Oh! Maya does not exist!*

*Oh! The greatness of the true Guru! Oh! The
immense joy of Brahman! Oh! The greatness of
Knowledge! Oh! The glory of good company!*

Nidagha, Ribhu Gita 40:34 - 35

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Reflections, October, November, December 2011

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Society of Abidance in Truth

1834 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA

Ph: 831-425-7287 / e-mail: sat@cruzio.com

web: www.SATRamana.org



The Boundless Wisdom of Sri Ramana Maharshi

(From *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*)

15th April 1946

The True Nature of Pradakshina (A reverential salutation made by circumambulation from left to right so that the right side is always turned towards the person or object circumambulated.)

You know what a good day it is today! Bhagavan has taught us something very great. From the time I came here, it has been my usual practice, mornings and evenings, to bow before Bhagavan after going around the hall thrice by way of pradakshina.

When I was doing pradakshina as usual this morning, some other-worldly voice came out of Bhagavan's mouth and struck my ears as if from a flute. Wondering what it was, I looked up toward Bhagavan's sofa through the window. The rays of the morning sun were falling on Bhagavan's body and were giving out a peculiar luster. Dr. Srinivasa Rao was massaging Bhagavan's legs with ointment. A light smile was visible on Bhagavan's face. "Oh, it is only Nagamma! I thought it was somebody else," he was saying. I felt that he would tell me something, and so I prostrated before him as soon as I entered the hall. Bhagavan smilingly said, "So! You, too, have started doing pradakshina after seeing others, have you? How many times do you do pradakshina?" I was rather surprised, and, as I was asked about the number of times, I said, "Thrice." "Is that so? Others also will do the same, following your example. That is the trouble. I told them not to do it. I tell you also. What do you say?" "What is there for me to say? I shall stop doing it, if

you advise me to.” So saying, I sat down. Looking at me, Bhagavan said, “See, these people go on doing pradakshina around the hall without end. It was only yesterday I told them not to do it. They will say, ‘Nagamma also is doing pradakshina. Should she also not be told?’ If people see you going around the hall, newcomers will think that they should do the same, and will start doing it as they do around a temple. That is why I am telling you.”

Bhagavan then told us all:

“What is meant by pradakshina? Sankara has written:

परिभ्रमन्ति ब्रह्माण्डाः सहस्राणि महेश्वरे ।
कूटस्ताखिल रूपेऽस्मिन् इति ध्यानं प्रदक्षिणम् ॥

Real pradakshina is the meditation that thousands of universes are revolving around the Great Lord, the unmoving center of all forms.

“The same bhava (idea), was expressed in Tamil by the author of *Ribhu Gita* in greater detail.” So saying, Bhagavan got that book, read it, and told us the following:

“Oh Lord! I went all around the world to do pradakshina to you, but you are in fullness everywhere. How then could I complete a round? I shall worship you as ‘kutastha akhila rupa’ (immovable entire form of the world). That is the only pradakshina to you’. Namaskar also means the same thing. The merging of the mind in the Self is namaskar and not the mere act of prostrating whenever you get up or sit down or whenever you go that side or come this side.”

Doctor Srinivasa Rao said, “What you say about pradakshina, namaskar and the like may be for those who are in atheetha sthithi, i.e., in a highly developed state, but, for people like us, is it not necessary to prostrate before the Guru? It is said that the Advaita attitude should not be shown toward the Guru, even if it is shown toward all the three worlds.”

“Yes, it is so. The Advaita attitude does not mean that you should not do namaskar and the like. Only it should not be overdone. Advaita should be in bhava, in the disposition of the mind; it will not do for outside, worldly affairs. You are asked to look at everything with equality (sama drishti), but can we eat the same food that a dog eats? A handful of grain will do for a bird, but will that do for us? We eat a certain quantity of food, but will that be enough for an elephant? So, you should have the attitude of Advaita only in bhava, in the mind, but you should follow the world in other matters. Though there are no pains and pleasures for a Jnani, for the sake of others, he does everything. He is like those who beat their chests, and weep loudly, if ordered to, for an agreed wage. That is all. He is not affected by it,” said Bhagavan.

Someone asked, “What is that about beating chests and weeping for wages?” Bhagavan replied, “In olden times, there used to be such a practice. Supposing some elderly person dies and no one in the house bothers to weep for him, what is to be done? Someone must weep for the person who is dead. That was required by custom. There used to be some professional people whose vocation was to weep for a fee. If called, they used to weep better than the deceased’s kith and kin, methodically, like bhajan and with great variety, by beating their chests and shedding tears, which flowed either by long practice or by squeezing onion juice into their eyes, and they used to finish this program to schedule. In the same manner, the Jnani conducts himself according to the wishes of others. He keeps time to whatever tune is sung. As he is well-experienced, nothing is new to him. He goes to whoever calls him. He puts on whatever garb he is asked to wear. It is all for the sake of others, as he does not desire anything for himself. His action will be according to the desire of the person who asks. One must therefore find out for oneself sufficiently well what is really good and what is really bad,” said Bhagavan.

Previously, whenever Bhagavan asked those devotees who were close to him, “Why is this done?” or “Why is that not done?” I used to regret that I had not the privilege of being questioned so familiarly. I have now been disillusioned. Not only that, I have received an upadesa (communication of an initiatory

mantra or formula). Sri Bhagavan's voice seemed to say, "When I am everywhere in my fullness, how could you do pradakshina to me? Do you think that I am a stone image that you should go around and around me as in a temple?"

23rd April 1946

Four or five days back, recalling a reply given to somebody's question, a devotee, residing in the Asramam, asked Bhagavan thus: "You said that ananda also gets dissolved; if so, what is the meaning of dhyanam, samadhi and samadhanam?"

Bhagavan said, "What is meant by laya? It should not stop with ananda. There must be someone to experience that. Should you not know that someone? If you do not know that someone, how could it be dhyanam? If the one that experiences is known, that one is the Self. When one becomes oneself, that becomes dhyanam. Dhyanam means one's own Self. That is samadhi. That is also samadhanam (perfect absorption of thought into the one object of meditation, i.e., the Supreme Spirit)."

2nd May 1946

Paratpara Rupam

(Form of the Supreme Being)

This afternoon, some Andhras came with their ladies and went away after staying for some time in Bhagavan's presence. One of them asked Bhagavan, with folded hands, "Swami, we have come here after going on pilgrimage to Rameswaram and other places and worshipping the gods there. We want to know from you what paratpara rupa is like. Please let us know."

With a smile, Bhagavan said, "Is that so? It is the same. You, yourself, are saying that you have come after worshipping all the gods. Though He is one in all, that which is above all is paratpara rupam. It means, 'The form of the Supreme Being.' As you

have seen all those temples, it has occurred to you to wonder what that Supreme Being is which is the source of all these gods. Would this question arise if you had not seen them all?”

On looking at Bhagavan’s face, it appeared as if the Supreme Being were dancing on his face. That glow on his face, beaming with happiness must be seen! Though those words were not understood by that young man, he was satisfied with the benevolent look of Bhagavan and so went away with his people after prostrating to Bhagavan. After they went away, Bhagavan said enthusiastically to a devotee sitting nearby, “See, the real meaning is in their words themselves. Paratpara rupam means the form or figure of the Supreme Being which is highest of the high. The meaning of the question itself is not known. If the meaning is known, the reply is in the question itself.”



Can and Are

Satsang, May 16, 2010

(Silence)

Om Om Om

(Silence)

One Self alone exists, eternally. It is purnam, the perfect fullness, of the nature of Brahman, the vast Absolute. It is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, unborn, endless, indestructible, completely formless, and undifferentiated. That ever is, just as it is, and this one Self, infinite and eternal, is your very Existence. There is no other kind of Self.

It cannot be lost, and it cannot be attained. It is, and there is no one who exists separate from that to miss it or to grasp it. It is said to be realizable, not in the sense of making it more real, for it is already real, as Sri Bhagavan has stated, “How to make more real that which is already real? How to realize?” but it can be realized in the sense of Self-Knowledge, in unrealizing the

unreal. It is not taking to be real that which is unreal, not imagining the Self to be that which it is not. To realize the Self is to abide in That, as That itself, with no differentiation. The immensity and depth of this are ineffable, and in revealing the truth of it, silence is most eloquent, as in the case of the Maharshi and, in ancient days, Dakshinamurti.

There may be said to be two approaches in the attempt to realize this. One approach is to try to bring this vastness within the context of the present conceiving mind. This is not recommended because that is the way samsara is caused. The other approach is the dissolution of this very mind and absorption of the truth by being absorbed in it.

The Maharshi said that that which he realized, what he attained, is certainly possible for all. As the *Gita* declares, the same Self dwells in the hearts of all. There is not a multiplicity of selves. A multiplicity of selves is an illusion born of imagination. It is possible for you to realize, and that which seeks to realize is, itself, that which is to be realized. That is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. It is possible for you to abide as Being, for Being is your very Existence, apart from which there is no other existence. All that is required is a profound inquiry to know your own Existence as it is. Chit is Consciousness. It is possible to abide as the infinite, space-like Consciousness always, for that, indeed, is the only Consciousness that actually is. Ananda is bliss. It is possible to abide in the fullness of Bliss, for happiness is undoubtedly within, and within is the Self, which is truly yourself.

What is required is an inquiry to know that which is within, to know yourself. What is actually your very Existence? It cannot be that which appears and disappears, gross or subtle. What actually is your very Consciousness? It cannot be anything perceived or conceived. Relinquishing such from your sense of identity, what remains? Certainly not a body, certainly nothing of the senses, and not anything conceived in thought—the mind. What remains?

Un-realize the unreal. That is, cease to regard as yourself that which your Self cannot possibly actually be. Who is the individual who misidentifies, who can be apparently capable of being a bound one? Who is the individual? If the individual is sought through the profound inquiry, “Who am I?” there is

found to be no individual at all answering to the name of “I”. All that is found to exist is vast Being-Consciousness-Bliss, without beginning and without end.

There being, in truth, no one bound, there is, in reality, no bondage. Realizing this conclusively without doubt and without differentiation is referred to as “Liberation.” It is Liberation from the imagined bondage. Certainly this is possible; certainly you can accomplish this. By your own light, discriminate as to what is real and what is not, who you are and what you are not. Discriminate, inquire, fueled by the desire to know yourself, because to know yourself is to abide in lasting, indestructible happiness.

Inquire. You cannot be simultaneously the eternal, which is the immortal, and the transient. You cannot be simultaneously the non-objective and the objective, the motionless and that which is subject to activity, the undifferentiated and the individualized. Inquire. The nature of your Existence is always the same. The Self never changes its nature. What is that unchanging nature in you?

Brahman is beyond description, yet the Vedas have declared, “Tat Tvam Asi, That you are.” That is Brahman, the real Self. Who is the “you” that is That? Only the real Self. As for the “are” part in, “You are That,” it is self-evident.

Indeed, you can know the Self and repose in the innate state. There comes a time when you laugh and recognize that it is not possible not to know yourself. Is there one self who does not know another? Bodiless, mind-transcendent, and egoless you are. Realize this at heart, and you will remain naturally happy and at peace. By your own light, inquire within yourself, and, if, in the course of inquiring, you have a question, please feel free to ask it, or, if you wish to relate your own experience, please feel free to speak.

Questioner: In inquiry, I find that I’m seeking something. The deeper I seek, the more it becomes clear that what I seek is already my own nature. I am the very bliss that I seek. So, the seeking and what’s sought become absorbed into the Reality so that there’s not two left anymore. There is just the one abiding Reality that is not divided at all.

Nome: (Silence)

Another Q: What are thoughts?

N: Not different from that which knows them. How do you know that you have thoughts?

Q: Because I'm aware.

N: That which is aware cannot be a thought. Do the thoughts stand up on their own and declare their own existence, or is your only experience of thoughts your awareness of them? Yet, the awareness has no form and is always the same, no matter how many thoughts appear. Even if no thoughts appear, it is the same. So, it is without modification. If the significance of this is truly realized, you will know that thought is utterly non-existent.

Q: So, then, why does it sometimes appear that a certain thought can hold so much weight and another thought can seem just as noise?

N: It is because of the identity behind each of them. Thoughts, or the form of thoughts, proceed from the identification you define yourself as. To whatever you lend your identity—your Existence, your Reality, or, more externally, your happiness—that seems vivid and seems to have more weight.

Q: So, it's just a belief?

N: What is the root of belief? From where does it come?

Q: It, itself, is like a thought.

N: Yes, but even if there is no thought, there is still belief, only it is not belief in something. It comes from your own Reality.

Q: So, Consciousness is the same as awareness? They mean the same?

N: Commonly, people say, "I am aware of something." It is Consciousness plus the notion of an object. If we remove the objective notion, which is merely illusory, Consciousness remains, or is revealed, just as it is. Then, we can say that there is no awareness other than pure Consciousness, but pure Consciousness never actually becomes modified into some sort

of awareness of something else. When you are aware of something, does the something exist outside of the awareness?

Questioner: (shakes his head to indicate “No.”)

N.: Then, it has no independent existence. That which has a dependent existence really cannot be said to exist in its own right at all, but is only the substrate upon which it depends appearing as that thing. Trace the substrate in your own experience. You will find that there is only pure, homogeneous Consciousness, and, in this, lies great bliss.

Another Q: Thank you, Master. When grace gives an exposition of the truth, as we are in your discourse, there is one kind of simple contemplation that I enjoy. I also want to briefly share a memory that was always important to me in the early part of my life.

The contemplation is, if I take as real everything that the sage says and also imagine anything that would seem to be less than that, contradictory, or an obstacle by nature, as if all of that were collected, it's only that they claim that it's something I know, and, then, I fall back on the fact that the knowing is totally consistent with the statement of the sage. If there were any of that other stuff, it rests on this knowing of it, but the knowing is exactly what the sage is talking about. It is not knowing that but just pure knowing, itself. It helps me to separate and to give myself to what has been put forth in the exposition or in the scripture read. It seems very simple, but it feels right to divide it that way.

N: That of which all the sages speak is the nature of the knower. There is only one knower. Multiplicity is only in the known. All the scriptures are written about you. Even if you have contrary ideas or doubts, they shine in the same light. They are known by the same knower. So, while you may doubt what may be said, you never doubt the knower in yourself. The knower is constant and is beyond doubt. It is the same as your Existence. No one ever has a doubt regarding Existence. You exist. You know that you exist. The Knowledge of existing and the Existence are indistinguishable. They are one and the same thing. That Knowledge is Consciousness. That Existence is true

Being. Being-Consciousness is what you are. You cannot stand apart from it to not know it.

Q: It tempts me to share this memory, which I never shared because I never expected any receptivity for it. It may be just pure imagination, but it supported me. It's something I saw and remembered throughout my childhood. I would see this scene as if I were viewing it and supposedly early life details of a plastic, inflatable swimming pool with water and a new, little toy sailboat. I'm in the back of a building, and the light reflects off the sailboat. It's as if the bright flash made me more awake, and I was pre-verbally amazed that I existed. I was amazed that I was there, not there, but that I was. The baby is sitting in front of this pool at two years of age, and it's just this amazement that never left me. All the details are crystal clear. I realized that, if I ever shared that, it would be taken as silly, but I always cherished it inside. It was a supportive memory.

N: Why do you suppose it would be taken as silly?

Q: Because two-year-old babies aren't suppose to do that.

N: Who says?

Q: I never cared to figure out how old this memory was, but it could only have been associated with a two-year-old baby, and there was no sense of being that baby either. That was part of it, the ridiculousness of supposedly being this baby didn't register at all.

N: Has the Existence changed since then?

Q: No, it hasn't.

N: Just the body has.

Q: Well, it didn't seem like my body then.

N: That's right. It is bodiless Existence, and you are still there.

Q: Yes, it seems that no time has passed.

N: Time is of the mind and of the body. Existence is mind-free and bodiless. The wondrous Existence still is. Everything

you thought of as yourself since then has been just so much dream.

Q: The bhava then was amazed fascination, like an enjoyable shock.

N: So, what can be silly about that?

Q: I mean I love it. (laughter) I've never been tempted to share it before, just by insufficient confidence in the ears that would hear it.

N: That is why it is not worthwhile to follow the trait that developed later of caring about the opinions of others. Is the Existence moved one way or another by the opinions of others? Its wondrousness is self-evident. The memory part of the objective phenomena, what was sensed at the time, is superfluous. The Existence is not a product of memory. It is timelessly the case. In light of this you may want to revisit the opening verse of *Saddarshanam, the Truth Revealed*, by the Maharshi.

Another Q: I'm starting to understand that ideas in my mind about ethics that I've held sacred are really manifestations of being selfish or egotistical in terms of what I think is right or the right thing to do. There is a core smallness that somehow it would impinge upon my sense of happiness or what I want, as opposed to what I think the greater good is. In seeing that, I'm able to be more open to interactions with my fellow beings and not consequently be as reactive in my behaviors.

N: What is it that is truly right, truly good?

Q: I know that to be abiding in an egoless state. That's what is good for me.

N: From that abidance streams forth everything that is true, good, and beautiful, satyam-sivam-sundaram. Certainly, it is right only to do unto others what you would have them do unto you. So what is it that you want?

Q: I always want to feel free.

N: Do you know the way to find that freedom? Then, that's good, that's right. Simply, see others as you should see yourself.

If you would thus see others and truly see yourself, that would suffice.

Q: I should not see others as projections in my mind, who I think they are or who I think they should be.

N: Who do you think they are, and what do you think they should be?

Q: I think it has to do with who I think I am and who I think I should be.

N: Alright. What do you think you are and what do you think you should be?

Q: It definitely fluctuates. If I'm inward-turned, I know who I am and I know what I should be, but, if I'm attached in some way, I don't really know.

N: Do you know what causes attachment?

Q: Sometimes I do, and sometimes, if I'm blinding myself, I don't seem to know.

N: What makes the difference?

Q: That is a good question. If I'm earnest in my inquiry or my devotion, then the truth is in some ways invisible, but Grace makes it visible and makes it known and knowable. Grace is always there, but I also have to avail myself of the Grace as well.

N: That's right. When you are cognizant of the Grace, will you proceed in any other way than what is true, good, and beautiful? When you thoroughly know the source of happiness, attachment becomes impossible. As for what is unsatisfactory, just ensure that you, yourself, are free of what is other than the good, Siva. Then, you will naturally respond appropriately. Be free of confusion regarding what is the cause of happiness, be clear about what the nature of others is by being aware of the nature of yourself, and always treat others as you would have them treat you, or better. So, it is not that there are no ethics; you just must know the core of them.

Q: Make them pure, have them pure.

N: There is something in you that is truly you that is entirely blemishless. Its stainless nature is beyond taint at anytime. Be keenly aware of that. That is absolutely indivisible. It is one and absolute. Devote yourself to that entirely. Know that entirely, and, then, of course, others will be seen as yourself. Upon this depend all of the ethics.

Another Q: I get into trouble thinking that my happiness is objective. In a certain sense, I know the place of happiness because I'm reminded of it all the time, but I forget it. Maybe, because it's so formless, it doesn't need anything.

N: Have you ever experienced happiness outwardly? Have you ever seen happiness, heard happiness, touched some happiness, tasted happiness, or smelled some happiness? (laughter)

Q: No, but I keep trying. (laughter)

N: You keep trying because you know something. What do you know about happiness that you keep trying for it? Even if there is the least speck of it missing, you try for it. What do you know?

Q: I know intrinsically that that has to be the case, that happiness has to exist.

N: Happiness exists, in perfect fullness, and it is your natural state. The moment you feel even a speck of it is missing you are in search for it. It is an intuitive search for your own Self, since Bliss is identical with Being. The desire for happiness springs up from the depth within. When you experience happiness, it is the within-ness, itself, that shines as happiness, and the place where it shines is also within. Within is not in the body and not in the senses.

Q: If I could see that depth in any experience, what you're saying, that would help to clarify where happiness comes from. When I've objectified something, my mind is outward and unquestioned at that point, but I guess that there is no reason why I couldn't.

N: Is there anything obstructing the inquiry? Is there anything preventing you from turning within? Does one have to wait for a certain time or opportunity to turn within? Are you not free

to do so all the time? You are absolutely free, and you are free to find the freedom.

Q: That's interesting. There would be no reason, especially since the delivery of the goods has been absent, but the chocolate cake or whatever is there looks darn good.

N: Alright. Chocolate cake can give you a sweet sensation, but, if you eat too much of it, it can give you another type of sensation, I suppose. But can it give you happiness?

Q: Every single aspect of anything involved with that chocolate cake involves the body, senses, and mind. However, what you're saying earlier is that there is another aspect that is shining in that experience, and it's just that I'm not looking.

N: If you eat some chocolate cake in your dream and you feel happy about it, where does the happiness come from?

Q: Definitely not from the chocolate cake.

N: It is just like that in the present waking state, which is only another dream. Trace where the happiness has its source, from where it seems to rise.

Q: It's definitely not the body. I shouldn't say definitely, because I become confused and "snookered" all the time.

N: Do you become confused by the things, or do you confuse yourself?

Q: Not by the things. I confuse myself.

N: So, the things really don't enter into it at all, do they? They neither give you the happiness nor do they take it away.

Q: That's a good point. I lend happiness to the object.

N: The object does not exist anywhere outside of your own mind.

Q: Just like the chocolate cake in the dream.

N: The entire world is like that. If the world is within the mind, in what is the mind? The objects are not real, and the mind, also, is not real. Trace the happiness to its source. There is the Reality. The Consciousness that knows the happiness is

the happiness. It is your own Being, which is nothing that appears in this waking state or that appears in the dream state. With a body or without a body, with the senses or without them, it is the same. Knowing yourself to be That, what does it matter if there is chocolate cake or not? The appearance and disappearance of the entire world is insignificant in That.

Q: What you're discussing, though, is complete detachment. The only thing that keeps illusion going is a belief in happiness in the external, objective something.

N: Detachment can be spoken of in a variety of ways. At first, it can be spoken of as "becoming detached," which has its root in jnana, or knowledge, specifically the knowledge of where happiness is. That makes a man detached from every worldly thing, and he is happy inside. Detachment can also be spoken of in terms of being the nature of Consciousness, which is the witness of all of this universe and of all the minds in it, and which remains unmoved by any appearance and by the disappearance of anything. For That, even life and death are the same. Then, there is absolute detachment. For the unborn, there is no creation. There is just Brahman, and Brahman alone. There is nothing else to which it can become attached. It is and alone is. One who proceeds with the beginning winds up at the end. In the end, you find that the end is the beginning.

Q: So, proceed to Consciousness and that will take me to that which is birthless and deathless. This is what I understood from what you were describing.

Another Q: I was thinking about the story about the two-year-old and what determines ultimate release. If that light, which is the same, changeless and brilliant, and a two-year-old has even less thoughts than now, far less than what we might have as adults, what prevented that two-year-old from waking up from the brilliance of that light?

N: The question is good but supposes that there are existent individuals, some of whom are not awake and some of whom are awake. The supposition is that there are some who are unenlightened to their nature and some who are enlightened to their nature, but Self-Realization is characterized by the Knowledge that there has never been an individual. Individuals

don't wake up to spiritual truth. You wake up from the dream of individuality and leave that behind.

Q: Why wouldn't that have happened for that little two-year-old? I mean to be free of that.

N: The idea of it happening, or an occurrence, is based on the same illusion as the individual. What is to happen and for whom? If you determine your own Existence, seen in its own Light, know by your own Light what your Existence is, you will see that it was not young and is not now older. It was never two or any other age and was never in darkness. The idea of another state other than the Reality is an illusion, yet when we attempt to know the illusion for what it is, it vanishes because it is utterly unreal. That which existed then exists now and always. (Silence) If you want the question answered at the level of which it was asked, which is not the final answer, it must be said that depth of inquiry, depth of knowledge of one's Self, makes the difference.

[Then there was a recitation in Sanskrit and English of selected verses of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, followed by silent meditation.]

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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From Yoga Vasishtha

(Continued from previous issues)

3:102:1

Vasishtha said:

By the force of one's own imagination (sankalpa, concept) the foolish one is deluded, not the wise. By the imagining (by concepts of) the perishable to be in the imperishable, he is confused (bewildered), like a child, indeed.

Sri Rama said:

What is that imagination of the perishable, best of the knowers of Brahman, and by what is the great delusion by which the reality is imparted to the unreal, indeed?

Vasishtha said:

By association of the unreal with the real existence (or, by the living being's association with the unreal), there is the perishable, possessing the name "ego" (the conception of individuality), just like a ghost imagined by a child, here, is false (illusory).

There is only this one alone. In the abiding place of all, in the Absolute (Supreme) Reality, from where and who is this which is named "I"? How has that so named arisen (been born)? (or, How is it possible for this to arise?) (Note: "arisen" can also be interpreted as "been produced" or "for this boasting.")

In reality, the ego does not exist in the non-different Supreme Self. It is just as the incorrect visions of a river of a wayfarer in intense heat.

The mind-jewel performs the great undertaking of samsara; thus it is considered. By the Self, dependent upon the Self, it trembles (flashes) interiorly, just as that consisting of water [i.e. the motions and waves].

Rama, abandon the erroneous vision that offers no support (or, that is not deep). With the support of the real, there is the resting place of the bliss of the correct vision (revelation).

By meditation of a knowing inquiry (faithful to inquiry), abandon the agitation of delusion. Inquire now into the real and the unreal, and completely abandon all. (Or, Inquire now into the real, and completely abandon the unreal.)

Having thus connected the unbound with the bound, why do you grieve like a fool, indeed? How and by what is the infinite Truth of the Self bound?

Causing difference in the difference-less, but unchanged and not separated is the great Self. In all, in this Brahman-Truth, what is bondage and what is liberated?



From The Ramana Way

The following articles appear in the November 2010 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

In a Few Words . . . by Sarada Natarajan

If there is one word in which we can sum up our entire existence, it is ‘seeking’. We are constantly seeking something or the other. The object that we seek may be gross or subtle. Our goal may be small or large. It may seem distant or appear to be near. But nonetheless, we are seeking.

Why do we seek? Quite obviously we seek to fulfill a want, to bridge a gap, to fill a void. If we had everything that we could ever think of in terms of our physical and mental needs, would we at all look for anything? And if we were not looking for anything what would we seek?

Yet, there is no respite for any of us at any time. Be it those among us who are apparently blessed with plenty or those who are evidently in need, there is no moment when we do not seek. Like some accursed mythological figures, we are eternally hungry, we are constantly thirsty. No doubt Bhagavan has given the example of the Ganga herself becoming thirsty to describe our

yearning for happiness, in so much as we hunt for what we already are. But we have practically no clue that our relentless seeking is only for our own nature, our very Self.

Hence, while our longings are many and varied, they are all necessarily for something that is 'other' than us, or what we conceive to be 'other' than us. So Bhagavan lovingly offers the only cure to our malady. He makes us not just change gear, he asks us to completely change our direction from without to within. Instead of being in urgent need of something or the other that lies 'outside' us, we need to recognize, as Sri A.R.Natarajan writes, that 'Inward, Inward, Inward is the Path'.

When we earnestly begin to go 'in' the question arises 'What is 'in' and what is 'out'?' Is not everything that we see and experience as an object something that is essentially only outside of us? And until our attention is held by something 'outside' can there be an end to seeking? So, we become repeatedly and immediately aware of every experience as an object or what Bhagavan describes as a thought. 'This is also only an experience, only a thought' we realize. Then how do we turn further 'in'? Surely with the question, 'Whose thought?' 'Mine'. At the innermost core of my being, I alone am. 'Who am I?'

Inward, Inward is the Path

by A.R. Natarajan

*"Inward," is the word he utters,
To me who wished to know the path
'Inward,' Inward is the path
For everyone the path is inward.*

- Murugunar, *Ramana Sannidhi Murai*, Verse 533

No one has given a clearer anatomy of the mind than Ramana. He has explained the A to Z of the nature of the mind, its source, its association, and how to make the most of its

potential. Even so, it is important to go into all his statements. One should not lose the correct hang of it by sectional and partial reading.

Does the mind have a form?

For instance he would often question the existence of the entity, mind. He told Santamma, 'Is there such a thing as the mind? Does it have any hallmark?' He told a visitor, 'Show me the mind and I will strike it down!' On the other hand he would emphasize the need for 'destroying the mind' and stress the futility of the methods which merely lull it into temporary stillness.

The question would naturally arise as to how one can destroy a nonexistent thing. Would it be shadow boxing? Another proposition he would make is that Reality alone is. Following from this would be the fact that the mind must originate from Reality, or Consciousness. The next idea in Ramana's exposition is that the mind is a bridge between consciousness, from which it arises, and the world of thoughts, beginning with the 'I am so and so' thought.

Is the mind any more a continuous entity than water in a waterfall?

What Ramana means when he says that there is no such thing as the mind is only that it is not a tangible or separate entity like the body. It is only a thought cluster, with a root I-thought and other thoughts dependent in it. If thoughts constitute the mind it follows that when we do not have thoughts, as in deep sleep, there is no mind. It disappears somewhere. Quite obviously it cannot happen if it is an independent entity. When talking about destroying the mind, Ramana refers only to constant and vigilant practice of merging it in its source and stabilizing it there. Once this is done, mind itself is consciousness, arising as a thought form when thoughts are needed. The mind is like a wave in the sea of consciousness and is therefore, in essence, consciousness. It is engaged. It is then 'Brahmakara Vritti', or Brahman in the form of a thought wave.

Ramana has made this clear in 1902 when explaining the nature of the mind to Sivaprakasam Pillai. He told him 'What is called the mind is conscious power residing in the Self. He has told other seekers too that in its purity the mind is the power of the Self itself.

While the mind has a pure source, it is contaminated by its association. The mind which is pure as it originates, imposes a limitation on itself by its identification with a particular body. Once this notion 'I am so and so' is superimposed, the mind which is by its nature in-turned, becomes externalized. Other thoughts, based on relationship to people, possessions and ideas, crowd in. There is a regular babble of thoughts, a pell-mell. Often it is like a village bazaar on a shady day. The classification of thoughts as pleasant and unpleasant, and the effort to hold on to the former and avoid the latter goes on. The superimposition of value-judgements and ideas add to the general confusion prevalent in the mind. The mind which is essentially pure and always in repose becomes broken, splintered and restless.

Since the root cause of the trouble is the externalization of the mind, the solution lies in our ability to find a technique which would internalize the mind again and stabilize it at its source.

Many methods have been suggested and practiced for this purpose. Desires are the cause of an insatiable activity orientation. It is therefore widely thought that if desires are controlled, suppressed, negated or sublimated the problem would be solved. Another method practiced is to cultivate noble thoughts, or the eightfold virtues, in order that the mind may be purified, in order that its 'Sattvic' content may be increased. All this is undoubtedly efficacious, but quite obviously time consuming. The transformation is slow. The effort and the result are not commensurate. The difficulty is all the greater if one remembers the inescapable time-frame of life. One has to pack all the will that one has got, to push ahead with inwardness, to succeed in stabilizing the merging of the mind in its source. True, there would be another innings or more than one innings as long as one continued with such thoughts. If the urge to find out, if the compulsion to know is strong, one has to look for a direct way which would yield the maximum results. It is here that Ramana's teaching matters.

The right-royal path

Ramana himself terms self-enquiry the straight path. Why straight? Because it concerns itself with the mind, its original and its essential nature. One 'Brahma astra' Ramana would invariably use. If you have desires, can they exist without the desirer? Find out who the desirer is. If you plead ignorance, again the same reply, find out who is ignorant. If you consider yourself impure find out who is impure, he would say. Why? This is in order to bring attention back to the basic question about one's identity. To disabuse oneself of the habitual preoccupations with the second and third persons. Unless the focus is so clearly on 'I', thoughts which depend on the individuals attention wither and fade for want of it. The mind turns inward and experiences the thrill of inherent joy.

By this technique of self-enquiry, we are systematically destroying the mind. For we have seen that the mind is only a conglomeration of thoughts. When thoughts are not allowed to sprout, mind too is just not there. The question naturally arises as to what would happen thereafter. The prospect is quite scary isn't it? We apprehend the loss of our memory, our intellect and reasoning faculty. Since our sense of existence is based on our relationship to objects, to persons and ideas, would we not be reduced to mere thoughtless idiots? All these fears are fundamental and unless one is able to deal with them it is unlikely that one would go the whole hog or plump for self-enquiry.

Since the fear is deep rooted one has to go into it. The most obvious way seems to be to point out examples of Jnanis like Suka, Sri Krishna and Ramana. Suka gave the devotional classic, *Bhagavatham*, Sri Krishna the *Gita* and Ramana, *Ulladu Narpadu*, a classic on Self-knowledge through self-enquiry. They were undoubtedly embodiments of wisdom and their minds functioned with super-alertness even though 'dead' in the usual sense as we know it.

Again the fear is the product of wrongly locating consciousness in the mind. Ramana points out that the mind shines not by its own light. It is not self-luminous. It borrows its light from consciousness from which it springs. It is like the moon which reflects the sun's light.

So when you revert to the source, your mental faculties are not maimed in the least but only heightened. The mind becomes sharp like the edge of Kusa grass, functioning whenever needed with alert passivity. One no longer needs to control the mind. Thoughts rise, and subside when their purpose is over. It is like an automatic thermostat control. Freed from the stranglehold of innumerable thoughts, wanted and unwanted, the mind moves with alert swiftness in the vastness of space, a space which was lost because it was crowded with thoughts. All the burdens of psychological thoughts, the lingering on of memories which hurt, the sorrow or neglect, the moments which were once sweet, are extinguished. The mind is released from the load of useless memory. It becomes fresh and young.

Also one need not 'quake in fear and doubt' as to what would happen if we give up the thought contaminated mind. For Ramana points out that you get something much more worthwhile in its place. You become simultaneously aware of the throb, the bliss of the Heart. There is spontaneous joy, the joy of freedom when the burden of thought, of care, has ended. We are awake to and are constantly aware of the bubbling bliss within. One is suffused with exhilaration. With a mind which is ever new, ever renewing itself, a new ambrosial life begins.



From the Temple Archives

[A message was received from a seeker whose plans to return on a vacation visit to his native India were meeting with difficulties about which he was constantly worrying. This is Nome's response.]

June 8, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

Wherever your body may be, for unbroken, undiminished happiness, you must know yourself. The guarantee of Grace is not that all of one's wishes or desires will be met in a physical manner, but rather the certainty of transcendent peace that exists within, regardless of circumstances. Relying on Grace, dive within by inquiry and realize the Self, which is the perfectly full happiness.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A message from a SAT member followed by Nome's response.]

June 28, 2011

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Dear Master Nome:

Namaste

Bhagavan wrote, "My son, you should experience advaita within your Heart at all times, but never, even for a moment, should you express it in your outward actions. Advaita is appropriate in (all) the three worlds, but it is never appropriate in relation to the Guru."

Could you please clarify: it is never appropriate in relation to the Guru.

Yours in Bhagavan,

[name omitted]

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

The same instruction appears in the works of Adi Sankara, in the teachings by Ribhu, and elsewhere. Advaita is of the nature of Being, of Knowledge of Being, and not an action or set of actions. To think that there is a nondual way to act is to attempt to define the Self as the performer of action, which is delusive. It is to attempt to define the bodiless in terms of a body, and that in which there is no world in terms of the world, which is illusory.

You may already know the answer to your question by the power of devotion, which includes humility and gratitude. After all, you began your message with Om Namoh Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya, and not saying salutation to your name, and you concluded with Yours in Bhagavan, and not yours in your own name.

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan, ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This question from a seeker relates to the meaning of a nondual verse. Nome's answer follows.]

July 4, 2011

Dear Master Nome,

I've been reading Gaudapada's *Karika* on the *Mandukya Upanishad* and am troubled about the translation in one passage. I'm hoping if you have time you could help me find the Sanskrit word I'm curious about.

There are two translations I'm reading. The familiar translation by S. Gambhirananda and the other by S. Nikhilananda. The passage is in Chapter III. 36—"Brahman is birthless, sleepless, dreamless, nameless, and formless. It is ever effulgent and omniscient. No duty, in any sense, can ever be associated with It." (S.N.'s translation)

Gambhirananda's translation adds, "Brahman is birthless, sleepless, dreamless, nameless, formless, ever effulgent, everything, and a knower."

Honestly, I have difficulty with the idea of Brahman as a "witness," and so I'm really curious what Sanskrit words are

being used here. I have the feeling S.N. shared my feelings and that's why he didn't include knower in his translation.

Thanks so much for your time.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. I am glad to know that you are delving deeply into Gaudapada's illustrious, profound teachings.

Regarding verse 36 of the third prakarana (chapter), the following can easily be observed. It is assumed that you are not in possession of the itrans Sanskrit and transliteration fonts, so I will type the Sanskrit words in a sort of hodgepodge English, using double vowels in place of long vowels, etc. A few of the terms have a variety of meanings.

First, the word Brahman does not appear in the verse. It is implied by its appearance in verse 35.

The first line is ajam (unborn, birthless), anidram (sleepless), asvapnam (dreamless), anaamakam (nameless), aruupakam (formless);

The second line is sakrid (forever, simultaneously, instantly) vibhaatam (luminous, shining, effulgent) sarvajnam (all-knowing, omniscient one) nopacaarah kathancana (no practice, no proceeding toward, no ceremony, no offering, no conduct in any way whatsoever).

For sakrid, forever fits the context more than the other possibilities.

The term about which you asked, sarvajnam, compounds two words. As one term, it means omniscient. Split into its parts, it can be interpreted as all (entire, everything) and knowing (knower, one who is wise, etc.).

So, both translators are correct. Of course, the intended meaning is revealed in radiant clarity by Adi Sankaracarya in his commentary.

The idea of a witness (sakshi) is not actually presented in the verse, for in light of the first line of the verse, there can be nothing objective to be witnessed, and, in light of the second lumi-

nous line, the indivisible, absolute nature of Consciousness is clearly self-revealed.

I hope that the above is of some help for you. May you ever abide as the one Self, Brahman, in the certain, nonobjective, Knowledge of the Self, and thus be happy and perfectly at peace as That which is innate and without beginning and without an end.

Om Namah Sivaya

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A seeker who is a writer sent messages requesting information about an anecdote. She wanted to know from which book the passage was derived, on what page it could be found, etc. Nome's response follows.]

July 6, 2011

Dear SAT,

Thank you for your prompt reply! I made a mistake; the passage I want to quote is actually this one:

“Even a grain of rice or a mustard seed lying on the ground would be picked up, dusted carefully, taken to the kitchen and put in its proper tin. I asked him why he gave himself so much trouble for a grain of rice. He said: “Yes, this is my way. Everything is in my care and I let nothing go to waste. In these matters I am quite strict. Were I married, no woman could get on with me. She would run away.”

Can you help? I would also need the publication date of the relevant edition, if possible!

Thanks so much,

greetings in Bhagavan,

Dear ,

Namaste. The passage that you cited is located on page 219 of the fourth edition 2010 [of *Ramana Smrti*].

May you, not letting even the least “grain” of the innate ability to realize the Self go to waste, ever abide in That which is perfectly full, as That which is perfectly full, and thus, by His Grace, always dwell in happiness and peace.

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Ever yours in Sri Bhagavan,

Nome

[Here is a message from a seeker who says that he read teachings of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. Nome's response follows.]

August 1, 2011

Hello Nome,

I will try to be short. Several months ago, I read the book “I am that” of Nisargadatta Maharaj. While reading this book, I had some experiences. During the night, while in sleep, I ran into a state in which nothing exists. Just an indescribable feeling of joy and peace. In that state, nothing was perceived, and the feeling was that I am one with everything. No thoughts. Often during these states, I was crying. When I woke up from those dreams, I had a state of bliss that was slowly fading during the day.

Now, all those experiences disappeared, and I am dealing with a long period of depression because of that. I have the feeling that I lost something, and I cannot make those experiences come back. Due to this depression, I am drawn more and more, day by day, in the chaos of my life. I understand how to do Self-inquiry, but no matter what I do I cannot make it last. It is like a weight that my body alone cannot lift. My question is: I need to find a living master that by his/her grace I will be able to lift the weight or I should continue my day by day existence in what sometimes appears to me like a living hell.

Thank you,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

That which appears inevitably disappears. The true Self neither comes nor goes. It is wise to inquire to discern what is truly your Self.

The Self is, itself, the joy and peace. Misidentification is the ignorance that yields suffering. It is wise to inquire to know the nature of the sufferer and thus remain released from that.

What is it that you refer to as your “life”? It is wise to discriminate between delusive assumptions and what is truly your Existence.

As for the need of a Guru, your experience, as well as the sastras (scriptures), should suffice to answer your question regarding such.

I hope that you find the above to be of some help to you.

May you ever abide in the Knowledge of the Self, realized by mind-transcendent inquiry, which is of the nature of beginningless and endless Being-Consciousness-Bliss, which is free from the waking, dream, and deep sleep states, and which alone is the Reality, and thus always dwell in happiness and peace.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This seeker has read some of the SAT publications and written a few times previously. Nome’s reply follows.]

August 3, 2011

Namaste

Nome, I have been increasingly practicing inquiry and am amazed at how often the “me” and its story arises in awareness. In addition to this, there have been occasions where that which arises is of an angry nature and often quite negative...it seems to color all forms that arise. It is shocking because it is not how I usually experience “myself.” It is quite painful and I must make efforts to not let it bleed over into my interactions with others

and sometimes must leave situations in order to not dump this on others. My question is...am I doing something wrong? Is this a reaction of the egoic processes in response to continually questioning its existence? If I need to correct something please let me know. If this is a common reaction that understanding would help too. Many times the arisings are so strong and sustained that it is almost impossible to break through them to inquire.

Thanks for any comments you may have.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message.

As is mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita*, from avidya (ignorance) comes kama (desire), and the from kama comes krodha (anger). To be free of such is essential, for anger is unhappiness, and that runs contrary to your true nature.

Ask yourself the fundamental question: what is the source of happiness? The answer to that question dissolves all desires and removes all anger. If one truly knows that happiness is within, not only will he not become frustrated due to delusive ideas that only give rise to suffering, he will also be endowed with a one-pointed motivation to inquire to realize the Self in order to abide in lasting bliss.

To actually continuously question the very existence of the ego leaves no scope for ignorance and its later developments, such as anger. Ignorance has no strength or enduring power of its own, for it is made of imagination. This imagination does not conjure itself. It is you who imagine and make such imagination seem as if solid. In a sense, such can be regarded as a testimony to the power of the source, which is the reality. Only, your natural state is to remain quite free of ignorance and all kinds of suffering. You can destroy this unreal imagination by the power of your own inquiry. What remains, in the Knowledge of the Self, is pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss.

In addition, considering the magnitude of the Grace that is shining for you, as well as your opportunity to realize the

supreme truth, about what should you be angry? It would be wise to meditate on this.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This message is from the same seeker who wrote on August 1st about his experience since reading the teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj. Nome's response follows.]

August 4, 2011

Dear Nome,

Thank you for your response.

When in a period of depression (like now), I feel that I need a guru that will guide me out of that state to happiness.

On the other side, when I'm in peace (rare occasions) I clearly see that the need for an external guru is part of the mind process to look for an identity. The "disciple of Master X" identity. In this peaceful state, I also feel that I don't need anybody to be myself.

I know that I should inquire and see who is that one who need/don't need a guru, but I really don't have the strength and clarity of the mind to do that.

As I'm writing this e-mail, I realize that even the desire for such an answer from you (if I need a guru or not) is in fact the desire to pass responsibility for the actions that come from such an answer. Fear of future unhappiness makes me weak. Now, being conscious about these desires and fears doesn't make me stronger and doesn't make the inquiry steady. And the question remains: what I should do?

Have a nice day,

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. If one truly knows the source of happiness is within, he no longer suffers at all.

The concepts of an interior and exterior in relation to the Guru endure only so long as one's misidentification with the body goes unquestioned.

"God, Guru, and the Self are one and the same," says Sri Bhagavan. The question is not whether or not a Guru is necessary, but, rather, if the ego of the disciple/spiritual seeker is necessary. Bliss is characterized by the absence of the ego, or the false assumption of individuality.

You may find it beneficial to more thoroughly, deeply meditate on the content of the previous response, as well.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A response to a SAT member, dated August 8, 2011.]

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your recent messages.

Grace is always present. It manifests in myriad ways, though its essence remains formless. Whenever, and to the extent that, the ego subsides, Grace is experienced, and bliss and peace shine. Turning within, you will find its existence within you, indeed, as the very nature of the Self.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A response to another SAT member who was dealing with suffering and fear in relation to some problems with his health.]

August 8, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namō Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. As you attempt to treat the body and remedy its illness, also deeply inquire and know the Self as free of the limitations of the body, and thereby remain inwardly at peace and

without the suffering of anxiety. Grace is present; turn inward and realize the undecaying and the indestructible.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A devotee of Sri Ramana who lives at Tiruvannamalai wrote describing his attempts to deal with his anger. This is Nome's reply.]

August 8, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for both of your messages.

That your conscience weighed upon you because your mind became irritable and angry and expressed the same to this woman is, in a sense, a form of grace, for it is an intuitive discrimination that the mental mode of anger is not natural for you, whose true nature is Bliss. So, you should not desire that to disappear, but, rather, it would be wise to realize the unaffected Bliss within, of the nature of Being-Consciousness, so that anger is not created in the first place. Anger follows from desire, which has its root in ignorance. By such ignorance, one overlooks the perfect, innate happiness of the Self and imagines that it may be elsewhere or thinks that someone or something else has stolen it. Be free of such ignorance by finding the Self to be the very source of happiness, by practicing the teachings of Sri Bhagavan. Indeed, the Self is Bliss. Therefore, due to what should you become upset? Abide in peace in the light of such Knowledge.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[This message is from the same seeker who wrote on August 3, 2011, accompanied by the response from Nome.]

August 10, 2011

Dear Nome,

Namaste. Thank you for your prompt and thorough reply.

Based on your reply, I will stop entertaining concerns about doing the inquiry practice incorrectly and apply the suggestions you recommend. The outbursts of anger passed and will no doubt return in some way, at some time...perhaps. I wouldn't have written except the anger was an intense filter that all forms passed through...to such a degree that it was unique in my experience.

Correct me please if I am wrong about the following. It seems that there are situations in life where the operation of the "me" is necessary. Moving through a world based on thought and ego identities, it seems necessary to engage this "world" in kind. I am aware that communication with others is the most difficult time regarding remaining in an inquiry frame of awareness. Who am I? Who are you? What are we doing? If upon inquiry the "me" dissolves, who is going to carry on the communication? As yet, I have been unable to not fall back onto the usual modes of ego communication.

As I read your books and listen to your audios it sounds like you are responding from a sense of self and other...as do we all it seems. Do you move into and out of Inquiry and conceptual reality? When I'm by myself, it is much easier to spend more time in inquiry and less in thought. Just can't seem to communicate without thought entering in. The world is thought constructed, if I understand Ramana...how do I relate to and with those who see only their world...it seems I must respond in kind or it won't work. To ask them to inquire or to respond from that understanding seems inappropriate and unacceptable to most people.

I'm rambling, but perhaps you can tease out the gist of my concerns.

Initially, I was intending to only thank your for your response...then this emerged...it is what is. Anyway, thanks.

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. You may find it useful to reflect some more on the previous advice in order to be certain that you are free from the ignorance that gives rise to the illusory anger. One need not wait for delusion to grossly manifest in order to cut the root of it. The opportunity to liberate oneself from all of the imagined bondage is always.

Regarding your other questions, here are some suggestions:

“the operation of the “me” is necessary”—How could something that does not actually exist be necessary? It would be wise to first inquire as to what is signified by “me.”

“that there are situations in life”—Such is conceived only after the individual, or ego “I”, is assumed.

“Moving through a world”—It may be better to say that the world appears in you than you move in the world. You are not the body. As Sri Bhagavan has declared, has anyone ever experienced a world without a body? An unreal world does not demand you to misidentify. You alone project your own reality, identity, and happiness upon it, though it does not actually exist at all. If you recognize that the world is only the thought of such, that the world and the mind arise and set together, and that true Existence, which alone is real, ever is as it is changelessly, and that what appears and disappears is not actually real at all but is merely a supposition based upon the false assumption of “I,” the idea that the world can create your confusion will seem silly, and you will no longer retain it.

“communication with others is the most difficult time regarding remaining in an inquiry frame of awareness.”—Is it the communication that presents difficulty, or is it how the so-called others and yourself are conceived that gives difficulty? Actually, the Existence of the Self is always the same. You are that Self, transcendent of the body, the mind, and all else. The Self is not individualized and has neither “I” nor others. The supposed difficulty is only apparent and not real. Profound inquiry is composed of Knowledge, is continuous, and transcends all mental modes. From another perspective, considering the true nature of everyone, who is communicating with whom and how could there be a difficulty with that?

“who is going to carry on the communication?”—This is like asking, upon awakening, “Who is going to continue the dream actions?” The very notions of their continuance or cessation do

not apply. The “me” dissolves upon inquiry because it is unreal. If it were real even to the least degree, it could never disappear. Again, from another perspective, the love, which in essence is the oneness of Being, that constitutes the very core of one’s relations with the so-called others is the actual substance of “communication,” and the ego never has any part in that. So, the ego is neither real nor useful.

“you are responding from a sense of self and other”—What is the definition of this “you”? Is it not according to the definition attributed to the “I” for whom it seems? Abandoning the misidentification with the body, how can there be a “you,” an “I,” and such? There is no movement in and out of the Self; nor is there any individual to do so. If the significance of “the Self alone is real, the Self alone exists,” is realized, inherent in which is the knowledge that the world and individual are not real, how this motionless immutability is so will be self-evident.

It is not necessary for the others to inquire in order for you to firmly abide in the knowledge of who you truly are. The tendency to misidentify with the instruments of body, speech, and mind can be questioned, so that you are free from misidentification as a performer of action with any of them.

Your existence is absolutely one. If this existence is the absolute Self, for whom are these apparent obstacles, confusions, etc.? If you examine finely, you will be able to discern when you assume an identity other than the Self and associate what is not the Self with the Self. Then, inquiring to know the nature of the one who so discerns, you will find yourself to be only the one Self, in which the realizer and the realized are identical.

I hope that you find the above to be of some help. May you, setting yourself free of the objectifying outlook, deeply inquire to know the Self that you ever are and thus abide in undiminished, immortal Bliss.

Ever yours in Truth,

Nome

[A message came from another Ramana devotee in India, expressing her suffering over comments uttered to her by oth-

ers, failure to obtain a diploma, and similar difficulties. This is Nome's reply.]

August 20, 2011

Dear ,

Om Namo Bhagavate Sri Ramanaya

Namaste. Thank you for your message. Your true value lies in the very nature of the Self. Your Being is innately divine. No worldly success can add to it. No worldly failure can detract from it. Praise does not make it better, and criticism does not diminish it. If you inwardly inquire to know this Self as it truly is, yours will be perfectly full happiness and imperishable peace.

Sri Bhagavan did not obtain any diploma. Was He upset about that? Of course not, for He realized that which is the supreme treasure, which is eternal. If you remain devoted to the realization of that, you will be happy at heart.

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, general helping out wherever needed; Ryan Shaw: maintaining the temple grounds gardens; Tim Frank: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Myra Taylor: vacuuming & cleaning the temple, providing prasad after sat-sang & atmotsava, cleanup after pujas and retreats, providing meals at retreats; Raman Muthukrishnan: running the bookstore

including mail order service, maintaining the SAT website, providing prasada after satsang, editing and mastering recordings of Friday night events and special events; Sangeeta Muthukrishnan: helping with the bookstore mail order, organizing things around the temple, providing meals at retreats, providing prasada after satsang & atmotsava, teaching songs during atmotsava; Wimala Brown: providing meals at retreats and prasada after satsang & atmotsava; 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 recordings of satsangs and special events, providing meals at retreats; Jim Clark: lighting candles at events, flowering murtis, providing 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. Jaden Silva: transcription, mastering recordings of satsangs; Tristin Mzhavia: assisting with flowering the murtis and lighting candles.

Upcoming Special Events

Dipavali: October 26, 2011.

The Truth Revealed Retreat: November 9-13, 2011.

Karthikai Deepam: December 8, 2011

