

I want to become really awake

Phil [Name changed]:

You know Vedanta is so vast hence it is difficult to know where and how to begin. I don't want to learn Sanskrit or chanting though I do enjoy chanting.

Tan:

You neither need to learn Sanskrit, nor do you need to do chanting. You begin the inquiry from the point where you are. And in this inquiry it is important to be very honest to yourself.

What is your current desire or fear? You wrote ... " to become really awaken".

But what does that word mean to you?

What is implied for you in the meaning of the word "awaken".

You can use Vedanta-scripture to check if your concept of being "awake" makes any sense and then you can progress from that point.

The Self (you) is always awake. It is that which is invariable throughout all states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. Vedanta will help you analyze that fact in a teaching called the "teaching of the three states" (*avastha traya*).

Your mind might "wake up" and realize that you are not what you thought you are (for example: your body, your mind or your conditioning). In that sense every mind which had an epiphany and has gained that first -maybe still vague- understanding is awake and no longer in the darkness of total ignorance.

Selfinquiry does not mean: Thinking the question "who am I" 24x7 like a parrot. It means inquiring into the experience of the moment.

What is experienced?

And what does that experience tell me about myself and of my relationship to the world?

And then you may find that there are ideas and concepts which create suffering such as ideas like "I will die, I am alone, I need love, I need money, etc."

And it is Vedanta and its tools which help you to inquire into the truth or falsehood of these ideas.

Phil:

What I am seeking are the tools for meditation to become really awaken.

Tan:

The tool for understanding who you are is Vedanta.

Vedanta means: the knowledge that ends the search for knowledge.

Now in terms of tools, there are many. There are Tools in Vedanta to:

- help you prepare your mind for self-knowledge (Qualifications)
- help you understand: "Who you are not".
- help you understand: "Who you are"
- help you reconcile the apparent duality of the above

But the tools which are teachings should be taught by a qualified teacher and they need to be taught in a specific order and sequence.

But a pre-warning you are not going to awaken, because you – awareness have never slept. You will however understand who you are and that you are free. We are using the words awareness and consciousness synonymously. They point to the same: Yourself.

Phil:

Ramana taught self-inquiry of "Who am I".

Tan:

Ramana as far as I understood was a great enlightened sage -a giant in those terms- but he was not necessarily a proper teacher of Vedanta. He studied the Vedas after his enlightenment and wrote a hymn that became a part of the Vedic Scripture.

Phil:

You wrote enlightenment means knowing exactly who you are...well what exactly happened to you and what did it feel like to finally see the real you?

Tan:

Nothing happened to me.

I realized who I am.

I am non-dual, action-less, unborn, limitless, ordinary everyday awareness.

... as you are as well.

Vedanta removed any doubts or vagueness or misconceptions about that in the mind for good.

This understanding ends the search for yourself.

It also ends any feelings of being limited, because you will understand that you are limitless and independent of any limiting concepts.

All limiting misconceptions about yourself such as “ I am a limited body, limited mind, limited witness, I am unenlightened, I am enlightened, etc.” are just concepts arising in you: Awareness.

Phil:

Vedic studies are vast

I can use a bug favor I would love if you could email me a copy of James book How to Obtain Enlightenment. I really wish to read it.

Thank you much

with love

Phil

Tan:

I can send you a copy of James older book: Meditation- Inquiry into the Self – which is pretty close from a content to “How to attain enlightenment”/HTAE.

“How to attain enlightenment” could be ordered via Amazon. I have no electronic copy.

I would recommend that you start and read “Meditation- Inquiry into the Self” closely and if any remaining questions or doubts follow, we can continue from there.

I also recommend wholeheartedly using the E-Satsang section on www.shiningworld.com. There is tremendous material, almost every conceivable question has been asked and answered.

Let me know how it goes.

Much love to you

Tan