

An Evening With An Enlightened Man

It was a quiet night by the Ganges as the young man sat on the steps and watched the sun set over the holy waters.

Despite the beauty of the scene, he did not appreciate it.

The lilting cadence of the bathers chatting loudly seemed far away, and even their playful splashing of each other did not amuse him.

Someone started chanting a bhajan about Krishna and the gopis and others soon joined him until their happy voices slapped on the shores of the river and made the mosquitoes pause in midair.

This only irritated the young man more. He was worried about his job how little it paid and how he was going to pay for the rent for his 250 rupee room.

He was also lonely and wanted to get married, but what good family would accept someone who spent most of his time serving in a tea stall.

A holy man came and sat by him. He was only wearing sacred ash from head to toe.

"You seem troubled, young man," said the man, almost jovially.

Soon they began talking and the young man poured out his heart. He learned that the holy man, who spoke very well, had once been a college professor at the University of Allahabad. Then, one day, after he had given a lecture on the philosophy of renunciation he had decided to pursue what he most desired, the quest for enlightenment.

After many years, one night, as he was stroking a stray cat and the two had been sitting for hours under a banyan tree, he understood his true nature and an immense peace filled his life and miracles happened to him spontaneously from then on.

The young man listened impatiently, feeling increasingly irritated.

Finally, in exasperation, the young man said, "I don't understand how you can be either enlightened or happy. You have even less than I. You don't even have any clothes and you don't even know where your next meal is going to come from."

Suddenly serious, the sadhu said:

"It's tempting to believe that your problems are real and that your life is hard and that things are simply not going your way.

"After all, isn't that what everybody else thinks, too?

"It's a great temptation to believe in yourself as a limited being.

"And everyone will back you up. The newspapers will. The TV will. Your neighbors will.

"How long are you going to let this painful delusion continue?

"You've read the great books. You've heard the avatars. You've walked on the path yourself. You know.

"You know that you're pure energy.

"You also know that your reach is infinite. You can be, have, and do anything that you choose. You have the power. Right now it's turned back on itself and being used to create limitations for yourself.

"Your imaging power is how you express your infinite power.

"All ideas of limitations are an illusion fostered by the mind.

"And you can't fall back on science either to confirm your limitation.

"Because what physicists say is that there is nothing but energy everywhere and that matter only seems solid but isn't really. It's just that the atoms clump together and the electrons spin so fast that even I look like a real thing.

"Of course, it's fine to keep seeing yourself as "just human" but it's not going to last for very long. Sooner or later, you'll drop your body and be faced with your energy form. I just think it's easier to admit it now and see how you can go around expressing your spiritual power while you're still in this dimension."

"Yes," said the young man, "I think I understand."

"What do you understand?" challenged the sadhu.

"I understand that I can be, have, and do anything that I choose because I have the power. The only reason that I don't recognize it is because I misuse it to limit myself to the extreme."

"Yes," said the holy man, pleased. "The world for you is only the images you hold in your mind; change your images and you change the world for you."

"One thing I don't understand, though," said the young man. "Why did you give up everything a fine education, an excellent job, and a devoted family? Why? Was it worth such a heavy price for enlightenment?"

"Yes, because it led up to that moment under the banyan tree with the cat that I mentioned earlier."

"What is this enlightenment? What happened?"

"I caught a glimpse of the infinite."

About the Author

Saleem Rana would love to share his inspiring ideas with you. Hunting everywhere for a life worth living? Discover the life of your dreams. His book, Never Ever Give Up is offered at no cost to stimulate your success. <http://www.theempowersoul.com/enter.html>

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