

## OM SAI RAM

### WELCOME TO THIS QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

#### Q 353, “DISSOLVING BOTH THE EGO AND MAYA”

March 27, 2025

*The following text contains excerpts taken from Prof. Anil Kumar’s book “Seeking Within,” pg.137-142.*

*Prof. Anil Kumar Kamaraju was chosen by Bhagawan to spread His Message and Mission. He has travelled extensively in India and abroad and has answered countless questions and cleared doubts based on Swami’s Divine discourses and his personal interactions with Bhagawan. Most importantly, Prof. Anil Kumar guides us effectively on how to connect to the Inner Sai.*

**Q. What is the difference between ego and maya? Are they the same or are they different? How can one overcome them?**

**A. Prof. Anil Kumar:** Good questions! “Is there any link between ego and *maya*?” I always think that my listeners are better informed than I am. This has been not only my feeling but also my conviction and experience. What a wonderful question!

Ego and *maya* are not different. One leads to the other. Ego is the first step, and that takes us to the second step which we call *maya* or ‘illusion’ or ‘delusion’.

Let us proceed to learn more about ego. First, we should know that ego exists within all of us. There are many egoistic people who do not know about the existence of the ego within them. We can see when someone is egoistic, but that person may not know that he is egoistic. So, first one has to find out whether there is ego in him or not.

Ego is identification with the body, the mind and the intellect. In other words, the consciousness within me which gets identified with the body is ego; the consciousness within me which gets identified with the intellect, is ego.

So, the consciousness in identification with these three - body, mind and intellect (BMI) - is ego. But when the consciousness does not identify with BMI and remains separate as a witness, it is in a state of egolessness.

Egolessness means non-identification with the body, mind and intellect. The consciousness is a witness to these three. How is such a state possible? It is quite possible!

When I feel “I am the body,” my actions and attitude are different. When I consider the body as an instrument in the hands of God, my actions and attitude are different again.

So, egolessness will help you to consider the body as an instrument, while ego will identify itself with the body, leading to *maya*. Therefore, at the physical level, we can be non-egoistic by considering the body as an instrument.

In the realm of the mind, at the psychological level, one can also be non-egoistic. How? By observing the mind like this: "My mind is thinking like this. My mind has this thought. My mind is tossing about. My mind is confused."

When I observe my mind like this, I know that I am separate from my mind. I know my thoughts and I know that I am different from my thoughts. I am a witness to them. So, when I am a witness to my mind and its thoughts, I am egoless.

So, our reactions are different when we identify with the mind. We want everybody to agree with us. That is the tragedy. Why? Why should I expect that you should agree with me? You also expect that I should agree with you. Why should I want you to always say "yes, yes" to me? I am not a puppet in your hands. Why don't **you** dance according to my tune?

You are as independent as I am. You are as free as I am. This has to be recognised, but an egoistic man will never accept it. He goes on hammering you until you say "yes" to his words. So, instead of wasting time, we should say, "Alright! Thank you, you are correct."

Avoid such a man. Some people are not worth arguing with. If your mood is disturbed in their company, it is ego at play. In fact, our moods should be happy; we should be smiling. If you come across a situation that makes you sad, helpless or miserable, then it is ego at work.

All extremes are egoistic, my friends. I am up in heaven – it is ego. Or, I have no alternative other than to commit suicide – it is ego. Both extremes are egoistic. But the centre of balance, equilibrium, is non-egoistic or egoless.

You may say to me, "I am an intellectual".

"How do you know that?" I ask you.

You reply, "Well, have I not read all the books in my library?"

But mere reading is not a sign of intellectuality. No! If anyone says, "You know, I am an intellectual," then we know his situation is hopeless! Intellectuality is not a claim. It is an expression; it is an attitude. So, if you claim that you are a great intellectual, that is 100% ego! No! No! No!

I know only one thing – the intellect is a mirror in which the reflection of God is seen. You don't see the reflection of God in the body or the mind. So, the intellect is a pure mirror; it reflects God, egolessness.

My friends, I hope I am clear in explaining ego and egolessness. It is ego that is the **cause** for *maya*. Therefore, egolessness is the **remedy** for *maya*.

When ego is absent, there is no *maya*. Let's take a simple example. It is dark now. But when there is light, there is no darkness. So, the appearance of light is the absence of darkness. When I put on the light, I do not have to say, "All darkness, please leave the hall." The appearance of light is the absence of darkness, that's all.

Well, the next thing we need to know is how to get out of both ego and *maya*. Let me tell you this clearly so that we will have no further doubts on the topic. Let us enquire, "Where has this ego come from?" It has come from 'I' ness – "I am so and so". This 'I' ness is ego. It has come from the primal basis, out of the totality. 'I' ness has come from the *Atma* (spirit), the consciousness. Consciousness has given birth to this 'I'. When it identifies with the body, 50% of ego is reached. If it then identifies with the mind, the remaining 50% of ego is reached, leading finally to *maha-maya* or supreme illusion. So, what we have to do is to find out the origin of this ego, the 'I' ness, which is consciousness.

Once a water bubble merges in the water, there is no longer any trace of the water bubble. Similarly, when this 'I' ness has merged in the consciousness, the ego is no more. So, how to merge into consciousness? That is another question.

At one level, it is *bhajans* (devotional singing). No one can sing *bhajans* with a feeling of ego. If anyone is singing with a feeling of ego, it can no longer be termed ***bhajan***. Musical programmes are not *bhajan* as they are a presentation for the public. *Bhajan* is for the Self. Therefore, in *bhajans*, no one feels 'I' ness or ego. That is one way of merging the 'I' ness with consciousness.

The second level – the higher level - is meditation. In meditation, 'I' ness is lost. How do you know that in meditation 'I' ness is gone? In meditation there is no 'I' active, If someone says, "I have meditated, I achieved this and I know this," then he has only meditated on his ego. In true meditation, nobody is there to claim the benefits of meditation. A simple example; here is a glass of water. I mix some sugar in it. Where is the sugar now? The sugar has dissolved totally in the water.

So, at the end of meditation, the litmus test of meditation is that the 'I' ness in you is totally lost in consciousness.

Prof. Anil Kumar will continue to guide and inspire us in the next session.

Thank you for your time.

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