

## What is Viveka?

Welcome everybody to the Satsang!

What about shall we speak today?

*Q: About Viveka?*

Viveka! Ok, it's a nice topic!

Viveka is a yogic term – it means discernment or discrimination.

It's a very good topic and it's a rather spiritual and yogic topic, because Viveka is one of the greatest qualities of a Spiritual aspirant.

Anybody who wishes to have any sort of progress or wellbeing in his life, he must have Viveka or discernment. I will use a different word because maybe some people don't even understand what is discernment - the word is intelligence!

Because all intelligence is about is discernment – the capacity to tell the difference between what is beneficial, what is harmful, what I should do and what I should avoid, what will help me grow, what will bring me down. Telling the difference between these is called intelligence or discrimination or Viveka – same thing.

There are different kinds of intelligence. Some people make a distinction like this; intellect and intelligence.

By intellect we can describe what is the rational intellect, that is what takes place in the left brain hemisphere actually, mathematics, calculations - all kinds of programming. So, they give you certain data, they say "If you do this it's good, if you do that it's bad." This is our social programming - what our mother and father tells us to do, what the school tells us, what the internet tells us, what the books tell us... That is programming, this you can call it intellect, it has nothing to do with discrimination! It works exclusively on memory, whatever people have told us to do, we do it, because they told us it is good. Our mother and father told us "My child, you do this, it's good!" You say "Ok, I do this, it's good!"; "Don't do this, it's bad!" "Ok, I will not do it!"

So, you can give it the name intellect if you like, or it's a function of memory, it has nothing to do with intelligence or with discrimination or with Viveka.

Intelligence is a quality that is natural to all conscious beings. Intelligence exists within all conscious beings. It's more of an intuitive understanding - you intuitively understand what is good for you, what is not good for you. Intuitively you can choose the right path, intuitively you can avoid what you think it's harmful. It's more like intuition if you like, or natural wisdom.

Now, what is very interesting is that intellect as we said before, the rational intellect, is different in every human being, according to the programming everybody have received - it's different! As if you open up your laptops, every laptop will be different because it has different software inside. It has nothing to do with intelligence!

Intelligence is one! That's why you see that if you read the Scriptures of the Sages, all Sages speak about the same thing, with different words of course, but what they teach is the very, very same thing, the very same fundamentals, the very same essence, the very same essence in all Scriptures.

Maybe one Scripture was written in India before 5000 years, maybe the other was written in Mexico before 10 years, it doesn't matter, it would be the same essence, because the intellect is one!

So you can say that in the average human life there is a journey - a journey from the intellect towards intelligence, because we all start with a programming, it's inevitable, what to do?

I think most of us from very small age we started having a certain programming and many times this programming is not the most beneficial programming we can have. It's a programming we need to somehow deprogram, we need to format, we need to erase, to take out completely and start from scratch.

That's why you see the most intelligent children are like rebels! Naturally they rebel, they rebel against the school, against the system, against their parents, against everything. They rebel! They go against it because they feel something is wrong here, something is upside down, "This doesn't tune in with my intelligence, doesn't tune in with my being what happens, is not correct." So they rebel, which is a sign of intelligence, they rebel against everything, especially the system.

You see, some of the most intelligent and spiritual people of today, when they were teenagers they were anarchists, they were following anarchy, they wanted to break down

the system completely, which makes very much sense and it's a very intelligent thing. And also it makes very much sense, because most of us at this age we have not even heard, we have not even conceived of a harmonious, beautiful way of coexistence, of a harmonious and beautiful system to be together. We have not even conceived this thing. So we just want to have no system at all, anarchy!

These are all signs of intelligence. This rebelling against the system, it is a sign of intelligence and Viveka or discrimination. And many, many times the human being will be in conflict, it will have from the one side the intellect, what he was programmed, and from the other side the intelligence, the natural intelligence, what he feels is the correct thing to do.

Now, of course when we speak about intelligence, we don't mean acting arbitrarily, just doing whatever you like whenever you like it. This is of course nonsense, we are not speaking about this. We are speaking about acting in wisdom, acting in such a way that is beneficial for everybody, yourself and everybody else, acting from a standpoint of realizing the oneness you have with everybody else. When you realize this oneness, that life is one, then slowly you come closer to this intelligence. Your actions will never be egoistic, just to benefit your own self. Your actions will be selfless and a source of benevolence for everything.

That's why we see the most intelligent people like, let's say, the saints like Jesus Christ, they didn't mind to get crucified, they didn't mind at all! Because they acted out of benefit for everything.

The man who lives in his intellect, he only acts to benefit himself, only to feed his belly and grow and perpetuate himself.

The man who acts out of intelligence, he acts for the wellbeing of everything!

So, there is this journey, travelling from the intellect, from the programming, towards intelligence, towards the wider, the divine way of perceiving things, the divine way of interacting with everything.

And that journey we can call it also Spiritual growth. This is not something that happens in a flash, usually. It is a process. And many times this journey, as we said, it starts with a rebellion like "No! What I have been taught about, what I have been programmed, this is not the correct way to go! There must be something else!"

And many people in this process of rebellion, and in the process of re-setting themselves, formatting the hard drive, in this process they just go to seclusion. They say:

“I want to look deep inside of me and see what is life about, what is my place in this life, what is my purpose in this life, if there is any purpose at all. What is my place here? How can I use in the best possible way this gift of life that I have? How can I utilize this gift of human life that I have in the best possible way then just acting like a robot? How can I blossom in the most beautiful way like a human being?”

So to answer this question, because you cannot find it anywhere outside, people simply enter into seclusion. Maybe some people will go to a monastery for a little bit of time, maybe some people will simply go to a retreat like the silent retreats we are doing, maybe some people they come to India and they close themselves to their room - or they just close themselves to their apartment, wherever it is, and they cut communication with the whole matrix, with the whole programming!

Any form of seclusion and introspection, it helps very much in this process. Because all spiritual seekers, one way or the other they seek for this, they seek for this deprogramming, for this freedom from any programming, for awakening their natural wisdom.

Another thing that helps in this process of deprogramming is the Guru. Guru is supremely helpful in this process because the Guru is supposed to be somebody who is free from the social programming, who is like an archetype, like an example, like somebody who has freed himself from the bondage of the intellect and who has connected himself with the divine intelligence. So the Guru is a very good example because we want to be free from the bondage of the intellect but we don't have an example most of the times. It becomes like a very nice romantic idea which we don't know how to practically manifest. Well, the Guru is the practical manifestation of this!

The Scriptures are also a very, very good guide. In the absence of a Guru, the Scriptures it's a very, very good guide, because they come also from a source of intelligence, from a source of pure intelligence, so they can give an example.

The more we come closer to our nature, the more we come closer to our true Being, the more we connect with the Intelligence, with the great divine Intelligence - the more Viveka grows, the more discrimination blossoms, because as we say Viveka is a natural quality of the Being, is a natural quality of the Self, is naturally what we have inside of us.

So, a beginner spiritual seeker can come to the Teacher and has a million questions and an intelligent Teacher like Maharajji he simply doesn't answer these questions, he just says “Go and do your practice!”

Why to answer these questions?! You answer one question until to go back home he has ten more questions. He comes back, he asks ten questions, until to come back home he has a hundred questions. Because as long as there is no Viveka, as there is not the natural intelligence, there will be always a doubt, because the intellect cannot answer these things!

So the Master says, “Just do your practice! By this you will connect with your natural intelligence and when you connect with the natural intelligence, naturally Viveka is there. Viveka is a natural quality!”

So, whoever was asking questions to Maharajji, Maharajji would say “Just go and meditate!”

Some intelligent people they were doing just this, they were just sitting outside his room and meditating, and slowly, slowly, not only the questions were answered but also the questioning itself was fading out, there was no questioning anymore, there was no doubt, by itself!

Everything was becoming very, very clear. At a certain moment we not only had no questions for ourselves, but we had the capacity to answer the questions of others in a correct way!

So Viveka means to connect with the natural intelligence, to connect with the source of benevolence, to connect with kindness...

If the way your mind or your intellect works to bring benefit to yourself but harm to the others, know that you have no Viveka, you are just acting out of egoistical motives, this is no Viveka!

If you think, “I must do something, I must protect myself, it doesn’t matter if other people get hurt, I must protect myself!” This is not Viveka, this is shallow egoism, this is just an instinct of survival if you like.

Viveka is very selfless. Viveka and love go together. The person that lives with Viveka will slowly, slowly pave his way upwards, will slowly climb up the ladder of existence.

Now, of course Viveka includes everything, it includes every aspect of our life. The greatest of sages like Sri Shankaracharya when he tries to define what is Viveka, he goes directly to the highest definition!

He says, “Viveka is the discrimination or the discernment between what is Real and what is unreal.” He goes straight to the end, straight to the goal.

And he wrote an amazing book, one of the most beautiful Scriptures, which is called "Vivekachudamani". "Chudamani" means the crest-jewel, what the kings had in their crown, the most precious jewel in the country, so this is called the crest jewel or the crown jewel. The crown jewel of discrimination...

Very small book, very shining, truly like a crown-jewel!

If you want to learn the art of discrimination, discriminating between this and that, that's a very good beginning! In fact, all the teachings of the sages teach us this art of discrimination.

Now, we can practice a little bit of Viveka in the form that Sri Shankaracharya said, discriminating between the real and the unreal, if we can...

For example, the average human being says "What I can see with my eyes is real. What I can touch is real. What I can smell is real. What I can analyze is real. What I can dissect, what I can put in the laboratory is real."

The sages think in a very different way. They say, "If existence is the reality or the nature of a thing, it cannot possibly be non-existent." Can you follow this? "If the nature of a thing is existence, it cannot possibly be non-existing. If a thing appears and disappears, it's nature is not existence or reality. It's nature is appearance and disappearance."

It is just appearance, like any magic, like any phenomena that a magician can do, he can take his hat and take a rabbit out it, and put the rabbit back, he shows you the hat and there is nothing inside. That is like magic! What appears and disappears is just like magic, it's nature is not existence.

So what is it that appears and disappears?

One thing that appears and disappears is our very body, our physical body belongs in this category, appears and disappears. Before a few years it was not here, nobody could find it, nobody could see it, nobody could touch it, nobody could take a picture of it. After a few years it will not be here anymore, you will not be able to see it. In fact it is so unstable that it changes every moment.

Today you meet your friend and you meet the same friend after one year, you cannot recognize him or her, so much it has changed. Maybe one person has grown a belly, the other person has grown beard, the other person has lost his hair, whatever the case...

So, the body is something very unstable, it's nature is not existence, it's nature is appearance. Before a little bit of time it was not there at all, after some time it will not be here, its nature is constant change.

The mind is exactly of the same nature. You can say that the mind exists... What does exist?! At the moment you look at it's a chaos, full of thoughts, like a traffic jam in Rishikesh! Next moment you look at it there is nothing there, tranquil like the sky...

What is the mind? The mind is only a collection of thoughts. If the thoughts are not there, where is the mind? It's nowhere! So appearance and disappearance is the nature of the mind, not existence! Nobody can say that the mind exists, it just appears, puffs in and puffs out! If existence was its nature it would always be there.

The same exactly thing with emotions - which are just a movement of the prana. The prana moves one direction, you have this emotion. The prana moves a different direction, you have a different emotion. That's all! Appearance and disappearance, momentarily, like flashes!

So ,Sri Shankara says "Discriminate between what is Real and what is unreal." And he said, "The whole of the Universe, our body, our mind, our emotions, whatever we experience, the whole of what we call Universe is of the nature of appearance and disappearance, it is unreal. The only thing that is real is the experiencer himself, is the one who knows of all these things appearing and disappearing. That Being is the only constant reality. That Being alone can claim to have existence as its nature. His nature is existence because it's constantly there. Is there in the waking state, is there in the dreaming state, is there in the deep sleep. Is there in the pleasant moments, is there in the unpleasant moments. Is there when the mind is fully chaotic, is there when the mind is empty. It was there before this body was born, and it will be there after the body will be dissolved and it's constantly there during this life of the body. Existence is its nature, it cannot possibly be non-existent. Appearance is not its nature, you cannot see it out there. Existence is its nature because it's constantly there and nobody can possibly deny it."

So, Sri Shankara says, this is the highest peak of discrimination, "Discriminate what is Real and what is unreal."

Once you understand the whole Universe, including all experiences, is something unreal, something that appears and disappears, then you stop putting your whole attention to it. You stop dedicating your whole life to a Universe that appears and disappears. You stop dedicating your whole energy to a magical trick and you start paying more attention to that which is real. You start redirecting your attention to that which is essential and real.

If this sort of Viveka appears in any conscious being then the Spiritual life has truly began and will truly blossom!

As long as the conscious being knows there is no essence in the experiences of the world, there is no reality in them, they come and they go, that conscious being starts to be free, free from the effects of the world, free from the constant changes of the Universe, free from the pain that comes from these constant changes, as the Avadhuta says, "Free from the fear of life and death."

You cannot possibly be afraid of something that is not real. You cannot possibly desire and run after something that is not real. Nobody will run after the water of the mirage once he understands it is not real. Nobody will run to save himself from a ghost if he understands it's not real.

So Viveka, or clear understanding of the unreality of the Universe, brings freedom!

Only the Self is real! Within all this turmoil of the world, within this chaotic turmoil of ups and downs, only the Self is real, that neither goes up, neither goes down. Only that pure Existence is real!

The more you come in touch with pure Intelligence, the more you will understand this. The more you will understand this, the more you come in touch with pure Intelligence. Because pure Intelligence and the Self are one and the same.

That which constantly changes, existence is not its nature.

That which constantly changes has a beginning point and a finishing point, and it is as unreal as the mirage in the desert. No matter how much you drink from the water in the mirage, you will still be thirsty. No matter how much you drink from any experience of the world, you will still be thirsty, they all belong in the same category... No matter how much!

Any experience of this world and beyond, any experience, you can name it!

Some people say, "I just wish to have a wife – or a husband – I would be fulfilled!" Really? Did it happen to anybody? They are still thirsty!

"I just wish to have a child then I will be full!" Really? You may have ten kids, twenty kids, you will still be thirsty!

"I just wish to have a good house to settle myself and a good car to drive fast!" It will not save you at all!

“I just wish to have recognition in this world!” Better honour your anonymity, it’s a much more safe place!

Whatever experience you choose within this world or all of them together, you will still remain thirsty after you drink from all of them.

Whatever experience you choose in the divine worlds, in the astral worlds, no matter how many of them, no matter how angelic, you will still be thirsty after they finish!

Why you will be thirsty?

Because no matter how much you drink from the water of the mirage, you will still be thirsty!

Understanding this very simple fact that we constantly see around us, that experiences of the world cannot quench our thirst! Understanding this so simple fact, this is a very good start for Viveka, or discrimination, or intelligence!

And the question arises, “Then what should I do, I am so thirsty! I constantly seek to quench my thirst from all experiences of the world and ok, I have been illuminated by God that I cannot do it. I know now that I cannot quench my thirst from any experience from this world or the divine worlds, what should I do?”

This is also a very good question because we are thirsty, we are suffering out of this thirst! What should we do?

Then one starts to seek, becomes a seeker, a seeker for water, and if he is a sincere seeker, he will find this spring of water in the form of the Guru. Only if he is a sincere seeker!

Maharajji was saying this, “When somebody is very thirsty for Truth, he will meet with his Guru. Not before this!” If you are not thirsty, even if you meet with a thousand Gurus, there will not be a relationship with Guru. There needs to be a strong thirst as well as the recognition that this thirst cannot be quenched by any mortal or divine experience! You need to understand it very clearly!

And then the Guru, the Master, he will point you towards the spring, towards the fountain of the eternal water, towards the fountain of the true water, where you can finally drink and quench your thirst. He will point you towards your own Self, towards the only thing that is real. Within this desert of unreal experiences, the only thing that is real is the Self, your Self, your Atman.

Once the Self is found, then the whole desert disappears, you find yourself immersed inside the Ocean, inside the Ocean of your own Being. You find yourself free for the first

time from thirst, free from running behind all desert mirages, free from running behind unreal phenomena.

So, understanding this, this is Viveka. Understanding the whole Universe to be unreal and that cannot fulfil one's thirst is Viveka. Understanding the Self to be the only Truth in this desert of experiences, this is Viveka.

Dedicating oneself to this Truth, meditating about the Self, hearing about the Self, worshiping the Self with one's life, making sacrifices for the sake of the Self, one plunges more and more into this Ocean of Truth, into his own Being. One comes more and more in contact with the Real - and that's Viveka!

*Blessed is the seeker who has found this eternal fountain!*

*Blessed is the seeker who has found this inexhaustible spring!*

*He shall never be thirsty again!*

*- Om Shanti Shanti Shanti -*