

Gurus and Disciples - Part 3

Finding Your Guru

There is a common belief that you will know your *guru* when you meet. Lights will go off, bells will ring, thunderbolts of *shakti* will skyrocket you into instantaneous enlightenment. There may be a few people in an age for whom this kind of thing happens, but not only is this uncommon, such phenomena can be deceptive.

I am a perfect example of someone who accepted thunderbolts, lightening and a pounding heart as a sign of having found my *guru*, only to discover that someone else was destined to teach me. I was lucky. I caught on fairly soon.

The person who became my teacher and acted as my *guru* did not seem like my teacher at first. I did not see what I expected to see, feel what I expected to feel, but once I had settled on him as my teacher, I set about cultivating devotion for him. I was uncomfortable at first because of my own history and conditioning, but such things should not be allowed to run one's life. I had a brilliant teacher, but I nearly missed the obvious for chasing rainbows.

The Good Ones

A good teacher will know that your commitment to the path is a deal you make with yourself. A good teacher will not try to clone cow-eyed duplicates, sell secrets, demand all of your money, or try to control you. A good teacher will not try to rid you of your ego by attacking it, or exonerate fellow students of abusive behavior towards you in the name of eradicating your ego, for abuse of any kind only makes egos bigger.

A good teacher will make an effort to start teaching you "from where you're at with what you've got," and not expect you to be somewhere you're not. While you may hear the teachings of your path described in their highest form, a good teacher will understand that you are in the midst of attempting to get to that place, that you're not already there, but are in pursuit of guidance to that end. Otherwise, why would you need a *guru*?

Anyone can claim to be a *guru*, but it is ultimately the disciple who determines the *guru*. If you decide that a certain individual is your *guru* and that person accepts you as a disciple, that person is your *guru*. You were the one who chose the *guru*.

The Three Categories of Gurus

Gurus come in three varieties. The *guru* of the first variety knows *about yoga* and has knowledge of the scriptures. These *gurus* are scholars and do not actually practice *yoga*, but by giving talks and lectures, they inspire others to seek out *yoga*.

The second variety of *guru* is one who practices *yoga* but has not reached the highest state. This *guru* initiates seekers into various techniques. Because this *guru* has not mastered all the steps of *yoga*, his or her guidance and teaching will go through changes as the *guru* progresses. In this situation, students must adapt to these changes by accepting the later teachings.

The third is a *siddha guru* who has realized all the steps of *yoga*, has reached the highest state, and has knowledge of *yoga* science. Under the guidance and protection of such a *guru*, disciples can delve wholeheartedly and fearlessly into *yoga* practice.

In the *Guru Gita*, seven types of teachers are mentioned, further breaking down these three varieties into more detail as to what is out there to be found, ranging from preachers and scholars to the rare and illusive *paramguru* who is beyond having completed the stages of *yoga* and is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to find (if you run into one, let me know).

Shopping Tools

In order to shop for a teacher, to find “the guru who is meant for you,” you need to know yourself.

Now, that sounds like a no-brainer, but the truth is, hardly anyone truly knows this—knows their own mind, feelings, the motivations behind their actions, and the difference between these, or that there even *is* a difference.

Most people rarely give a thought to these things, yet they believe that they *are* these things: mind, body, feelings, actions, personality, etc. So, if you haven’t already done so, start paying attention to *you*.

People everywhere are seeking empowerment. This is a good thing. What is not so good is that most people don’t have a clue as to what power really is,

much less how to access it. Most people think of power as synonymous with control. It is not.

I'm going to tell you something that will empower you if you just take it and run with it: (1) Your power is inherent and unlimited. (2) The basis of your power is your ability to choose.

Conscious choice is fundamental and the key to everything, including successfully finding your true *guru*.