

I Am Loving Awareness

by Ram Dass

I have a practice in which I say to myself; I am loving awareness. To begin, I focus my attention in the middle of my chest, on the heart-mind. I may take a few deep breaths into my diaphragm to help me identify with it. I breathe in love and breathe out love. I watch all of the thoughts that create the stuff of my mind, and I love everything, love everything I can be aware of. I just love, just love, just love.

I love you. No matter how rotten you are, I love you because you are part of the manifestation of God. In that heart-mind, I'm not Richard Alpert, I'm not Ram Dass — those are both roles. I look at those roles from that deeper "I." In the heart-mind, I'm not identified with my roles. They're like costumes or uniforms hanging in a closet. "I am a reader," "I am a father," "I am a yogi," "I am a man," "I am a driver" — those are all roles.

All I am is loving awareness. I am loving awareness. It means that wherever I look, anything that touches my awareness will be loved by me. That loving awareness is the most fundamental "I." Loving awareness witnesses the incarnation from a plane of consciousness different from the plane that we live on as egos, though it completely contains and interpenetrates everyday experience.

When I wake up in the morning, I'm aware of the air, the fan on my ceiling — I've got to love them. I am loving awareness. But if I'm an ego, I'm judging everything as it relates to my own survival. The air might give me a cold that will turn into pneumonia. I'm always afraid of something in the world that I have to defend myself against. If I'm identified with my ego, the ego is frightened silly, because the ego knows that it's going to end at death. But if I merge with love, there's nothing to be afraid of. Love neutralizes fear.

Awareness and love, loving awareness, is the soul. This practice of "I am loving awareness" turns you inward toward the soul. If you dive deep enough into your soul, you will come to God. In Greek it's called agape, God love. Martin Luther King, Jr., said about this agape, this higher love: "It's an overflowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative . . . the love of God operating in the human heart."

It's the love Maharaj-ji spreads around, the unconditional love. He loves you just because, just because. Spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless. He's not going to love you because you're an achiever or a devotee or a yogi, or because you're on the path. He loves you just because. Can you accept it? Can you accept unconditional love?

When you can accept that kind of love, you can give that love. You can give love to all you perceive, all the time. I am loving awareness. You can be aware of your eyes seeing, your ears hearing, your skin feeling, and your mind producing thoughts, thought after thought after thought. Thoughts are terribly seductive, but you don't have to identify with them. You identify not with the

thoughts, but with the awareness of the thoughts. To bring loving awareness to everything you turn your awareness towards is to be love. This moment is love. I am loving awareness.

If you put out love, then you immerse yourself in the sea of love. You don't put out love in order to get back love. It's not a transaction. You just become a beacon of love for those around you. That's what Maharaj-ji is. Then from the moment you wake until the moment you go to sleep, and maybe in dreams too, you're in a loving environment.

Try using "I am loving awareness" to become aware of your thought forms and to practice not identifying with them. Then you can identify with your soul, not your fears and anxieties. Once you identify with your spiritual being, you can't help but be love.

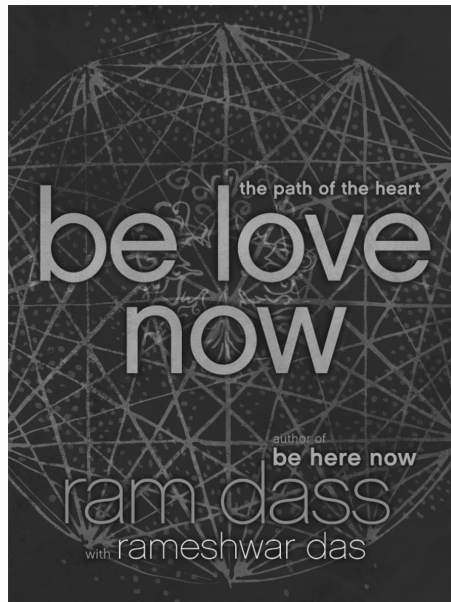
It's simple. I start with the fact that I'm aware, and then I love everything. But that's all in the mind, that's a thought, and loving awareness is not a thought. Or if it's a thought, it's pointing to a place that's not a thought. It's pointing at a state of being the way the concept of emptiness is pointing at emptiness, which is really fullness.

Souls love. That's what souls do. Egos don't, but souls do. Become a soul, look around, and you'll be amazed — all the beings around you are souls. Be one, see one.

When many people have this heart connection, then we will know that we are all one, we human beings all over the planet.

We will be one. One love.

And don't leave out the animals, and trees, and clouds, and galaxies — it's all one. It's one energy. It comes through in individual ways, but it's one energy. You can call it energy, or you can call it love. I like to look at a tree and see that it's love. Don't you?



Ram Dass first travelled to India in 1967 as Dr. Richard Alpert, an eminent Harvard psychologist. There he met his guru, Neem Karoli Baba (affectionately known as Maharaj-ji), who gave Ram Dass his name, which means "servant of God." Upon his return from India, Ram Dass became a pivotal cultural influence and has served as a guiding light for over forty years, carrying millions along on the journey. He is the co-founder of the Seva Foundation and lives in Maui, Hawaii. www.Ramdass.org

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