

Music in the practice of non-duality

At the present time 2024, there is a large and growing number of people teaching non-duality/liberation/enlightenment and most of their focus seems to be on the intellectual understanding that 'you are not a separate self' or similar.

This is useful to some degree but in order for this to be fully known in every fibre of the being an intellectual understanding is not enough because the intellect and all knowledge and the idea of someone knowing things also has to be let go of. If this doesn't happen it often leads to a subtle kind of spiritual ego, where the person goes around declaring they are not the self but is really just parroting language more than anything else.

This is one of the reasons that spiritual music, mantras, or similar activities allow for a deepening of this knowledge so that it is felt and known throughout the entire being. It can be a channel to allow one to melt into the knowledge rather than to just know it in the mind.

Some songs act as reminders and affirmations of who/what you truly are. These songs may be in the form of mantras, chants or just normal songs that speak the truth of your nature. Other songs are of gratitude, joy, love and celebration of what you have come to know and how you have come to know it. These might be in the form of devotional songs, prayers, hymns of gratitude and thanks. Some songs may have combinations of the above.

The practice of singing sacred and spiritual songs like these has been around for millennia and with good reason – they work as a medium to allow the essence of the singer (which is source) to connect with the source which is their true identity. With repeated practice the connection grows and grows and in time, can become like a fountain of joy flowing within. They can also help to de-program and decondition the singer from the old ideas that they are a separate self and replace it with the true programme of oneness.

Some people may say – I can't sing or I don't do that kind of thing - but really this is just an excuse to stay in the comfort zone and is an example of being restricted by a self-image. In other words, it's the ego which is blocking. While the ego is blocking, then Spirit cannot be free.

Throughout the ages various figures from the likes of Rumi who was known for his devotion to the 'beloved', to various enlightened saints, sages, and Masters, across the world and across different traditions and lineages, have shown their immense gratitude and devotion to their teachers. For example, Nisargadatta Maharaj every day performed puja to the teachers of his lineage with music, incense, flowers, bowing down to their pictures and so on. Christian's worship Jesus and this is another example of devotion to an enlightened spiritual teacher.

These practices of devotion and gratitude also help to shift the ego out of the way. Initially it may be mechanical, but in time it will become spontaneous and a natural state being. In the end comes the realization that the lover and the beloved are one. You are not bowing to a something or someone else but to the exact same light that is within us all – the One true nature. In the west, it is less common for people to adopt such practices, and again the resistance to this kind of behaviour is stemming from ego based conditioning.

In short singing sacred songs on a daily basis is a practice to help drop from the head into the heart and get carried home on the waves of love into the blissful ocean of our eternal true nature.