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Living
Enlightenment
(Gospel of Paramahansa Nithyananda)

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Published by:

Nithyananda Publishers

Nithyanandapuri, Off Mysore road

Bidadi – 562 109, Bengaluru

Karnataka state, India

Copyright© 2009 - 'Living Enlightenment year'

Previous editions: 12500 copies

Seventh edition: November 2009, 3000 copies

M.R.P in India only: Rs.750

ISBN 13: 978-1-60607-048-2

ISBN 10: 1-60607-048-7

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All proceeds from the sale of this book go towards supporting charitable activities.

Printed in India by

Progressive Partners

22, 20th Main Road, Rajaji nagar 2nd Block, Bangalore 560010, Karnataka

Ph.: +91 80 23328162 E-mail: progressivepartners@gmail.com

Living enlightenment is actualizing the limitless potential and experiencing the ultimate as every moment of life unfolds afresh.
Living in this divine space is living the best life and doing the greatest service to society.

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PREFACE

Many reputed intellectuals including scientists have recorded that there has been an elevation in human consciousness in recent times. Whether it is to do with the Age of Aquarius as rock groups foresaw or the metaphorical end of the world as the Mayans predicted is not the question here.

The question is, how do we define consciousness? As societal beings who have been guided all our lives by moral and legal commandments, our beacon of behavior has always been conscience. But conscience is not consciousness.

Consciousness is the awareness that there is something more to our life than the material pleasures that we seek. Consciousness is that tension within us that tells us there is something higher than what we see. It is the beacon of inner awareness that guides us to a state of being where we realize that we are more than what we think we are.

Human beings are far more than mere bio machines. This is why even the most powerful computer would never be able to replace the human. It can replace the mind and the body but not the energy of the human being. It might be a fact that we ascended from animals. But it is the truth that we can go further.

From time immemorial wise men of all cultures have pondered deep into this simple yet intangible issue of what lies within us. 'Who am I' has been the refrain of many sages. Many did find the answer. Their answers were experiential. The scriptures of all great religions are the expressions of these wise masters to convey their experience to us. When they live, the masters themselves are the experience that we can share.

Paramahansa Nithyananda is such an experience.

This book is the first volume of the essence of the wisdom of Nithyananda that has so far been expressed. Nithyananda has spoken in a number of structured programs. He has commented on great scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita and spoken to large public and small private groups over the last five years. This book is an essence of these teachings.

This book takes you through an understanding of why we behave the way we do and explains how we can change the way we act so that we are in synchronicity with the

energy of the cosmos. Meditation techniques provided in this book help you to experience this synchronicity.

The understanding and the experience that we are one with the energy outside us expands our consciousness. We realize that we are one with every other individual, however different the individual may be in culture, color, language, religion or tribe. We realize that we are all waves in the same cosmic ocean.

This experience is Living Enlightenment. This experience is Nithyananda.

While there is some order in the way the chapters are structured, you may move back and forth in any order to read the subject of your choice. All chapters are interconnected with the common thread of Living Enlightenment. Yet, each one is an individual pathway to the experience and not a sequential step. In this book, references of non-English words have been explained as footnotes on the first three occurrences of the word, and explained in the glossary as well.

As you go deeper into the experience and feel the need to interact with others who experience a similar need, visit the Living Enlightenment section of www.lifebliss.org. You can also join one of the many hundred Life Bliss Centers around the world and interact with others who are already on this path.

This book is an amazing journey into Existential Truths and a gift from an enlightened master of this millennium.

-Nithyananda Publishers

INTRODUCTION

If you are here, it means Existence wants you to be here in this form. You are not an accident, you are an incident. You are a conscious miracle of Existence. Don't think this is positive thinking. This is the straightforward and simple Truth. If you trust this Truth, you will start experiencing life in its pinnacle.

Understand, Existence is trying to express itself through you. What you call your potential is nothing but the expression of Existence through you. When you freely allow this, you will start realizing your infinite potential. When you start becoming the fulfillment of Existence, you become flowing energy, which is what I call Living Enlightenment. Living Enlightenment is living with the flowing energy of Existence, in synchronicity with its miraculous happenings.

When you live this way, you will find there is no personal barrier, no emotional baggage, nothing that holds you back in life. Life flows continuously like a river, carrying bliss and fulfillment every moment.

In this book, you will find deeper truths and powerful techniques to tide over personal barriers and resolve emotional conflicts. You will also find truths that demystify your relevance in this vast cosmos, so you start moving in a higher plane of consciousness.

This book is for anyone who wishes to live a fulfilling life. It reveals the secrets of the self, Existence and the world. It is for every individual to start experiencing the ultimate purpose of taking human birth on planet earth. It is meant to give the experience of:

Shakti, the Energy to understand and change whatever you need to change in life

Buddhi, the Intelligence to understand and accept whatever you don't need to change in life

Yukti, the Clarity to understand and realize that however much you change, whatever you see as reality is itself a continuously changing dream

Bhakti, the Devotion, the feeling of deep connection to That which is unchanging, Eternal and Ultimate, and

Mukti, the ultimate Liberation into Living Enlightenment when all these four are integrated.

-Paramahansa Nithyananda

Psychology explains that thoughts arise in the brain, and emotions from the heart. Irrespective of where they arise from, thoughts and emotions are inseparable. Ancient scriptures say that thoughts create us. So do emotions. We become what our emotions are. Managing our emotions is crucial to transforming our lives.

What is Love?

Whenever we look at something, the first thing we do is to calculate what we can get from it. It can be a person or an object, that doesn't matter. Our thoughts start functioning either through fear or through greed to calculate what there is in the situation for us. Our attention is centered on that object or person.

It is possible to turn our attention towards our own inner space and ask, 'What can I contribute?', 'What can I add?', 'How can I enrich others?' If the process is only to ask, 'What can I get out of it?' then it is driven by lust. If the process asks, 'How can I enrich it?' it is driven by love! Lust is an energy that demands. Love is an energy that gives.

To tell you honestly, it is very difficult to define love exactly. Mere words cannot express it precisely. I am trying to use a

few words here and there so that some word will click within you.

Love is an intense experience in one's inner space. Many of us think love is a choice. We think experience and expression of love are a choice. We think that if we want to, we can handle love; otherwise we can let it go. No! It is not a choice as we think. It is a basic necessity of life.

When I say life, I don't mean just breathing and staying alive. I mean being alive at the innermost being level, as a live Consciousness. If you can express love, if you can experience love, that is the only way of being alive as a Consciousness. If you don't experience and express love, you may inhale and exhale, but you can't say you are a live being. There are so many animals, plants and other things that breathe day in and day out. You will continue to exist like them, that's all.

A small story:

A disciple asked a Zen master, 'Does an enlightened master speak?'*

The master said, 'No, an enlightened person never speaks. Only a person who doesn't know enlightenment speaks.'

Then the disciple asked, 'So does an enlightened master keep quiet?'

Zen - Japanese Buddhist practice. Derived from *dhyana*, meditation.

Whether it is energy, time, talent or pleasure, only when you are overflowing can you really share it.

The master said, 'No, an enlightened master never keeps quiet. If he keeps quiet, then he

is not enlightened.'

The disciple was puzzled. He asked, 'You say he neither speaks nor keeps quiet. What does he do?'

The master replied, 'He sings! His being sings. He neither speaks, nor keeps quiet. His very being sings.'

Love is the ultimate experience of a human being. When the experience happens, we will not be able to possess the experience, only the experience will possess us! That is what the master means. When the experience possesses us, whatever we do will be like a beautiful song. Any word that comes out will be poetry. Our being will be so light. We will simply float. Our walking will be a dance. Our body language will radiate grace. All our expressions will be of great service to humanity.

All human beings are born as loving beings. A newborn baby radiates causeless love. Does she know anyone around her at birth? No! Her energy is causeless love. As we grow, society instills fear and greed in us and we orient our love based on greed and

fear. Then it is no longer causeless love. It is love with a reason. It becomes suffocating. We start feeling other emotions like jealousy, fear and anger. We experience only love with a cause, a reason. But with a little awareness and awakening, it is possible to reclaim our original love.

Love cannot be created

Love can never be made to happen with just our logical decision. Our mental setup itself should be created in such a way that we become love and our actions speak love. Our logic should start radiating a love that is beyond logic! When real love happens in us, we will not even be aware that we are loving. Only others will be aware that we are radiating love.

When real love happens, we overflow with so much energy that we will have the courage to share whatever we have with others. We get tremendous confidence because we know it has happened in us! Whether it is energy, time, talent or pleasure, only when we are overflowing can we really share it. Similarly, love happens only naturally, never through compulsion. If we try to create love, it will be like forcing open the petals of a flower to make it bloom. Can it be called flowering? No. Love is a flower that blossoms deep within your being and sends

out a sweet fragrance that we share with others.

Love heals five types of restlessness

The word 'love' is loaded with so many different meanings, interpretations and commentaries. First, let us leave out the idea of selfless and spiritual love. Let us first consider the normal, simple love with all its possessiveness, jealousy and all the side effects it causes! Even that love can do a lot of good for the body and mind. Later we will discuss selfless, spiritual love or mature love.

The other day I was reading an article in a magazine. The title was, 'Live Forever'. I was amazed to read it. It gave eleven techniques to extend your life by at least twenty years and it was supported by statistics and survey reports. All the eleven techniques were related to love. It said that even caring for a pet animal releases a hormone in us that allows us to live at ease with our body. If caring for our pet animals does so much, surely caring for the husband or for the wife will do a lot more!

The article also spoke of how people die early if they are single or widowers and

how life is extended with love. It also spoke of how chances of getting cancer or depression are less when you have love in your life. Even what we call ordinary love, simple infatuation, can do miracles for our body and mind. It can give us a deep feeling of healing and wellbeing.

According to Tantra*, five types of restlessness happen in a person and all of these can be healed by ordinary love, by the simple caring for one another. Once again, I am not speaking of spiritual love or devotion or selfless love. That comes later.

A small story:

A school boy fell in love with a girl from his own grade.

One day he was kidnapped by an extremist group and sent to a camp across the border for training. A few months later he came back to his homeland to spread terror.

He entered his village to find that the family of his beloved was killed by terrorists.

He met the girl and they started talking. She told him how much she hated what was happening and begged him to stop what he was doing. She told him she would marry him only if he surrendered to the authorities.

Tantra - Ancient *vedic* tradition of achieving enlightenment through spiritual techniques or practices, meditations and ritual worship.

**Whenever you
express love you
become a channel
for healing
energy.**

The boy immediately surrendered and joined the army fighting the insurgency while carrying a photograph of the girl in his pocket all the time.

Let us first talk of simple, practical love that you share with someone for some reason, either because the person will support you socially or support you when you face some difficulty or just because you want to maintain a good relationship with that person. For any of these reasons you may show love. Even this type of love heals you from the following five kinds of restlessness.

The first kind of restlessness happens due to your circumstances. Sometimes, in a particular place or situation you feel restless. If you move from that place or situation, you feel more settled. Even under uncomfortable circumstances, if you just show a gesture of love to someone, or if someone shows a gesture of love to you, things can become instantly better for you! It can heal you.

The second kind of restlessness is physical. Physical restlessness is nothing but a constant tension in your body for no particular reason. It is said that all such tension can be released when you express love to somebody. You may ask, 'How can

love take away physical restlessness?' You can see for example, a mother who has a child to look after will feel continuously rejuvenated in spite of the child driving her crazy! Because of the love element, she will cope with the tension. Otherwise, taking care of children is not an easy job!

The rejuvenation happens because of the love and care the mother feels for the child. Any tension or restlessness in the body disappears when you care for somebody, when you smile at somebody, when you express love in your body language, even if it is just once.

When you express yourself through your head, it is called intelligence. When you express yourself through your heart, it is felt as love. When you express yourself through your being, it is experienced as energy. When you relax into your being without expressing, it is bliss! Each one is the same energy but expressed in four different ways.

So whenever you express love, you express energy also. Love is concentrated, caring energy. So naturally, whenever you express love you become a channel for healing energy. When you are a channel for energy, you not only heal others but heal yourself as well.

The third form of restlessness is mental. Any mental restlessness can be healed by love. Research indicates that when you care

for pets or play with children, you reduce the possibility of heart attacks and also reduce the risk of fatal diseases!

The fourth form of restlessness is emotional. Mental restlessness is different from emotional restlessness. Mental restlessness is purely intellectual and can be controlled easily. But emotional restlessness cannot be controlled by just a few words of consolation. It can be healed only when you express love. When you start radiating love, it floods your being with energy. When your being is opened to such higher energies, it heals the emotional restlessness.

Ultimately, we come to spiritual restlessness. There are so many people who can sit with others, who can sit with the television, who can sit with newspapers, but who can't sit with themselves. This is what is called spiritual restlessness. Spiritual restlessness means that you cannot sit with yourself. You can give appointments to everybody else but not to yourself!

Your love for the teacher or the master can heal your spiritual restlessness. Many people come and tell me, '*Swamiji*, just sitting in your presence puts us in a calm state but when we go back home, we are not able to remain in that calmness. Why is it so?' When you are in the presence of an enlightened person, you start relating, you start expressing your love towards him

automatically. This heals your spiritual restlessness.

If you observe when I speak,

I often give long gaps between words. The gaps are actually used to bring down your spiritual restlessness. When you sit in front of the television, you are able to sit so comfortably because information is just pushed into your being without a break. You aren't given a chance to experience your restlessness. So while your restlessness is actually supported and increased, you don't experience it and you feel very comfortable.

But here, if you have the patience to sit and listen to these words with the gaps, your spiritual restlessness will come down and the tendency of your mind to ask for the next thought will also come down. You automatically become receptive and these words will not only touch your head, but they will directly touch your heart as well. If you are totally relaxed and at ease with yourself without too many thoughts, your being will open, taking in everything and be healed.

If your mind is calm, just listening is enough. There is no need to even meditate separately later. The very listening itself can create the experience in you. If your listening is not proper, then it is difficult

Your love for the teacher or the master can heal your spiritual restlessness.

for the experience to happen. J. Krishnamurti*, the famous philosopher says, 'Listening is god.' Deep and total listening without restlessness is divine. That itself is god. If you look deeply into your being, the very presence of the master that causes love to happen in you heals the spiritual restlessness.

So even simple, normal love heals all five types of restlessness.

Love brings great courage

A beautiful incident happened in the life of Ramanuja*. If you study the life of Ramanuja*, you will see how he used every step of his life to move towards enlightenment.

When his teacher initiated Ramanuja, he gave him a special chant. The teacher told him not to pass on the chant to anybody and that if he did so, he would go to hell. Ramanuja asked him what would happen to the others with whom he might share it. The teacher said that they would be led to salvation.*

What would we have done? Naturally we would have kept quiet, thinking, 'Why unnecessarily go to hell?'

Ramanuja immediately stood on a platform in a temple and called out to the whole village. He loudly pronounced the chant given by his teacher and told the people, 'Let you all go to heaven! I am not bothered about me going to hell. Let you all reach heaven!'

When you are deeply in love, you feel as if your whole being is open and you are ready to go to any extreme for the sake of anybody. You are ready to go to any boundary, as there is nothing to protect within your being. Your being is totally open. You don't feel insecure when you are wild with love. That is why people who are in love always do risky things. They take the risk because they feel they have nothing to lose. There is no insecurity about anything. They feel so expansive. Love gives tremendous courage and energy. It opens you up. It makes you finally available to yourself. As of now, you are not available to yourself. Love can make you available to yourself.

When the teacher saw what Ramanuja did, he admitted that he learned a lesson from

J. Krishnamurti - Renowned Indian philosopher.

Ramanuja - Founder of the *Vishishtadvaita* or modified duality principle. Along with Adi Shankara and Madhva, considered to be one of the three great teachers of Hindu philosophy.

his disciple and declared that Ramanuja had reached greater heights than him. He told Ramanuja, 'You are in a different space now.'

Be open - not philosophizing

If you observe, you will have a very definite mental setup towards the people you live with everyday. You will practically know all the dialogues that might happen between you and them. You will know exactly that if you start the conversation in a particular way, in just what way the other person will respond! If you start the dialogue in another way, you will know exactly how the other person's response will change. You have a virtual script of all the possible everyday dialogues in your head.

Only if someone comes up with a new dialogue or behavior are you a little shaken or disturbed, and you don't know how to answer or react. Those are the only few minutes you start wondering about how to respond. Otherwise, you know the dialogue for the whole day. You know how it should start, when it will take a turn and how it will end. It is a dead dialogue. There is no life in it.

The problem is that we have all practically become philosophers. We don't understand

that life is not philosophy. It is spontaneous flowing energy. It is new every moment. Philosophy is all about repeating the same old things in different ways, that's all. There's nothing fresh in it. Life is fresh every moment. Philosophy robs life of the freshness.

A small story:

Ten philosophers were imprisoned in a country. They were kept together in one cell. They decided that somehow they should escape from the prison. They sat and made a big plan. They got the mold of the prison door key and made a duplicate key.

Finally, they chose the date of escape. The whole plan was clearly laid out. They decided that on the particular night, two of them will open the prison door with the duplicate key and signal to the others. The others would escape and these two would follow after locking the door behind them.

The day of escape dawned and two of them went to open the door. The rest of them waited for the signal. They waited and waited but never got any signal. Three hours passed. Suddenly the two who had gone to open the door came back and said, 'We have to drop our plan to escape. It can't happen today. We will have to do it some other day. We will have to reschedule our escape.'

**Love is really a
success of the
heart that every
individual should
experience.**

*The others
asked, 'Why,
what happened?'*

*They replied,
'What to do? The foolish guards forgot
to lock the prison door!'*

Those who philosophize cannot think of anything new! It has to be the same old mental setup. If there is some change or some new situation, they cannot think creatively to deal with it, because they are not open. They are like a closed circuit.

We have also become like philosophers when dealing with our lives. We are stuck in patterns of the past. We are never in the moment. If anything new happens, we are at a loss.

The person who experiences the 'ever living presence' experiences life in its freshness. He is also the one who is open and available. He constantly experiences the oneness with everything around him. Understand, being open means respecting every thing as equal to you. It means considering each other as equal and being open to change. 'Available' means that you are clear that the source of everything in this universe is Existence and that you are available to it every moment. That is the meaning of being available. It is recognizing the profundity of Existence of which all things are part. If you are open

and available, you are no more a philosopher. You are ready to open up to life with love.

With philosophy, you have fixed ideas, and you become very assertive. When you are too assertive, you can't love. Assertion is an aggressiveness that does not allow love to come in. When you are too sure and filled with preconceived ideas, then where is the space for love to enter? Love needs beautiful space in order to blossom.

With philosophy, there is no room for love to settle in its existential state. If you really want to experience the taste of nectar, can you experience it through just a set of ideas about it? No! You need to taste the nectar yourself, give it some space, allow it to fill you and settle in its existential state. Only then you will know its taste. In the same way, to experience love, just a few ideas alone will not help. You need to allow it to grow in its existential state in your inner space. Then you will know it. Allow it to happen in your heart, not in the head. Decide to be with the heart. Then it will grow and happen.

What was once a failure within the head can become a success within the heart! Love is really a success of the heart that every individual should experience. It is easy to stay in the head. It is, after all, a mundane and familiar intellect. It requires courage to come down to the heart, because with the heart nothing is familiar,

everything is fresh. At the head level you have a solid identity and familiar patterns. At the heart level there is no identity, no pattern. It is an open space. To enter into it, you need tremendous courage. That is why love is fearsome for many people. It is an unfamiliar zone. With the head, there is comfortable familiarity.

Ego disconnects - Love connects

If the cosmos is a grand ocean, we are all part of it. We are one with the ocean, not individual drops in the ocean. When we think of ourselves as individual drops, we feel separate in our boundary and in our feelings. This is what is called ego. We become driven by feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. As long as this separation remains, we never experience the energy of the ocean that is love, we can never experience that causeless and surging love.

As long as we remain a drop in the ocean, we say 'no' to life. We neither love nor trust. We don't feel blissful either because bliss is possible only for those who know how to love and trust. It happens only to those who know how to feel part of the ocean. Bliss is possible only when our heart says 'yes', when the 'no' completely disappears from our being. 'No' is darkness, 'yes' is light. 'No' is ego, 'yes' is egolessness.

Love is being in the flow with Existence, to be totally with it.

'No' is the way of the unconscious person. 'Yes' is the way of the awakened one. All the conflict, all the suffering in our life is because of our saying 'no'. 'No' is a fight, a war with Existence. 'Yes' is love, peace with Existence. 'Yes' is deep accord with the totality of who we are – the ocean. Bliss is another name for that accord, that harmony.

The way to be in bliss is to dissolve into the ocean, not to be a drop but to merge with the ocean. To be a drop is to be with ego. The ego is the root of all misery. When the ego is absent, bliss reaches us from every nook and corner of the ocean of existence, as if it were just waiting for the ego to disappear.

Ego is a closed state of consciousness. All the windows and doors are closed. Life itself becomes insulated and encapsulated. Our ego surrounds us like a capsule. Our ego is like a sealed capsule; there is not even a small gap to allow anything to enter. It closes itself due to fear and shrinks into itself. That is how we create misery for ourselves.

Love is being in the flow with Existence, to be totally with it. Ego is like frozen ice. Love is like liquid water. Only when we are liquid do we become part of the ocean. Then we don't have any private goal or

**Consciousness
can do two things.
It can create ego
or it can create
egolessness.**

destination. Each moment is blissful, incredibly ecstatic, just going with the plan of the cosmos.

The mind is part of the ego. It knows how to close, but it does not know how to open. To love means to open up, to surrender. It means opening up to Existence, to the flowers, to the bees and to the stars. How do we open to this beautiful music that fills the whole of Existence? How do we open up to this celebration that goes on and on – flowers dancing in the wind, trees enjoying the wind and the stars, always in a state of bliss? Except for man, everything else seems to be in harmony.

Man falls out of harmony because he has what is called ‘consciousness’ which is not present in other living creatures.

Consciousness can do two things. It can create ego or it can create egolessness. If it creates ego, we live in hell. If it creates egolessness, we live in paradise. The whole world is in paradise without knowing it. When man enters paradise, he enters knowing it fully. That is the grandeur and beauty of man. That is the danger as well, because it is easier to fall into the trap of the ego and not enter into paradise than to enter paradise knowingly.

The problem is that we have forgotten who we are and for what we were created. We are emperors of love, but we dream that we are beggars. We have the whole kingdom of Existence within our being and yet we continue to beg for mundane things. We keep collecting mundane things not knowing that we have infinite, inexhaustible treasures within our being. We are oceans, yet we are thirsty because we have become disconnected from our own selves. But no matter how disconnected we are, no matter how much we have forgotten and how long we have forgotten, it can be remembered in a single moment and we can become connected immediately.

Love is the connector.

Bliss arises from love. Love is the poetry that connects you back to Existence. Love is the sword that slays the ego and merges you with the ocean. When the heart is full of love, your whole life is transformed from prose to poetry, from noise to music and from discord to harmony.

It is such sheer joy to simply exist. Just ‘to be’ is enough. But we need to be sensitive to feel the joy of being. We need to grow feelers. The feelers are what we call love. Love feels the joy of just being. When you grow the feelers of love, life is no longer made of independent thoughts but becomes a continuous feeling. Then the ego starts to dissolve. Once we have moved

from thinking to feeling, there is only one more step and that is from feeling to being. That is very simple.

The first step is difficult, to move from thinking to feeling. The ego has trained the mind to think so much, that's why. The second step comes almost automatically. There's nothing we need to do for it to happen. From feeling to being, the distance is nothing at all. It can happen at any moment. The poet can become the mystic at any moment. He is almost there. The real problem is how to get out of our thinking and get more and more into feeling.

Just follow the heart. Just love more, that's all! Feel more. Enjoy more so that you can feed your heart. Watch the sunrise, sunset, clouds, rainbows, birds, flowers, animals, rocks, and people, and watch them with awareness. Look into their eyes. Existence is so multidimensional. Look into every dimension like a poet. Praise it. Feel it. Be ecstatic! Expand your consciousness and experience every single detail of Existence with love. Slowly, the ego will lose its hold and disappear.

The only barrier to love is fear. When things start happening, we become fearful because with love we enter into a merger. This threatens the very basis of our ego. Ego is separateness while love is a merger. The fear we feel is nothing but the fear of the dissolving ego. Let the fear be there. It

will hang around for a while. If we simply ignore it, the ego will leave us. It is a

great day when fear of losing the ego leaves us. From then on growth becomes simple, easy and spontaneous. Then we are not, only *love* is.

From feeling to being, the distance is nothing at all. It can happen at any moment.

Be a lover every moment

Encounter any situation in life with deep love. Soon you will become pure love. Whether it is a person or your work or a passerby or god or anything, just encounter it with deep love for love's sake. If you are a painter, just be completely in love with painting. If you are a dancer, be completely in love with dancing. If you are working with your computer, treat it with utmost love and become lost in it. Just be completely sincere and completely in love every moment.

If you are painting and at the same time thinking about which gallery to put up the painting in or how much to sell it for, then be very clear, you are not lost in love. You are in love only with some particular thing, which is money in this case. If you are dancing while calculating what you will get once you finish the dance, then be very clear you are not lost in love. You create

Real love keeps you in the moment.

more and more bondage by doing this. Even when a master happens in your life you do the same thing to him.

I tell people, 'I am showing you the moon by pointing at it with my finger. If you look at the moon, you will experience what I experience. Instead if you cling to my finger, you will neither see the moon nor will you relax!'

If you become lost in every moment, you become love. Then, when you work you work with the utmost focus because you are in deep love with it. This way, your very life becomes a deep meditative love.

Then you start feeling, relating and respecting everything as a living being, just as you are. You even start feeling the other person's thoughts. You start responding and relating to the other person without him or her opening up to you. You feel the cosmos as a translucent, ever-living presence. You have tremendous intelligence. You know exactly how to connect to things. Such is the power of love.

Real love keeps you in the moment. It gives you tremendous awareness. That is why it is so powerful. Nothing is as intense

as being in the moment. Love is experiencing life moment to moment, in its totality. And it is not about two persons or any object. It is just love for love's sake, that's all. If you get a glimpse of real love experienced in the moment, you can nurture it within you and make it grow to fill your whole being and life. That spark is enough!

Then you become a wonderful creator because love energy is also creative energy. That is why poets express such creativity. They lose themselves in love and become blissful creators. Out of the freshness of the moment, the creativity happens.

The Sufi* mystic Jalaluddin Rumi* says, 'Wherever you are, whatever your condition is, always try to be a lover!' The whole of Existence is in a deep romance with itself. You are part of it. So it is your nature to be a lover every moment. Only by being that can you experience the real fulfillment of your original nature.

Love yourself first

The big problem today is that most people don't love themselves. Society never teaches that it is possible to love ourselves.

Sufi - Mystical dimension of Islam.

Jalaluddin Rumi - 13th century Persian Sufi poet.

Understand that unless you love yourself, you cannot possibly love another person. Only when you lose yourself to yourself can you lose yourself to others. We are taught that we can only love even ourselves if we have a reason. If we perform well, we love ourselves. If we fail, we hate ourselves. We apply the same logic to others. We love them only because of something, never without a cause or a reason.

When you don't love yourself, you become cynical and negative towards life. When you were alone in your mother's womb, you were completely loving and blissful. In your aloneness in the womb you experienced your loving self. That is why you will see that you assume the fetal posture whenever you lie down with insecurity. Blissful aloneness is your original nature. Once you came into the world, society conditioned you to believe that you needed people and television to be loving and happy. It never nurtured your original quality. Your original quality is blissful aloneness. If you get back in touch with that, you will settle down and feel peaceful and relaxed within yourself.

For a few minutes every day, just sit by yourself and feel overflowing love towards yourself. Feel what a wonderful being you are. Feel how much you have taken yourself for granted. Feel yourself as part of Existence and love yourself for it. Melt

with the feeling of love for yourself. If you practice

this everyday you will see that where you were once hard and self-centered, now you have become soft and loving.

When you deeply settle down within yourself with peace and love, bliss will explode in you. When your nerves are clean, when your nervous system is cleaned by peace, bliss will explode. You will start expressing the same bliss that is expressed in the master's body language.

Then when people love you, you don't feel guilty or unworthy because just as they love you, you love yourself too. You become ready to receive love from others. Usually when others show love to you, you feel guilty or unworthy because you don't feel you are worth being loved. Once you settle within yourself with deep love, you will receive others' love with joy.

Love Existence and feel It loving you

Existence is not a thing. It is a living energy being. Every single tree, every single stalk of a plant responds to your love and hate, your every thought.

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Cleve Backster*, a polygraph expert, has conducted several experiments to examine the response of plants to human emotions and thoughts. He discovered that plants would respond to human thought in a way similar to how a human being would respond. A simple thought by a person about burning the leaves of the plant would register erratic movement in the polygraph recording of the plant! Backster* called this response 'Primary Perception' - the ability of plant, animal and human cells to perceive and respond to any thought.

On one occasion, Backster* recorded graphs that registered a flat line that suggested the plants were in a state of shock. He asked the owner of the plant if she had done anything to hurt the plants. The lady told him, 'I roasted a few of its leaves to get their dry weight!'

When you start loving Existence, it begins responding to you in beautiful ways. You start rising above all of the differences around you - differences between people, situations, emotions, between anything and anything. Everything merges into unity. And that is the truth. Everything is part of one Whole. And love is the only thing that can make you realize this truth.

In India, there is a tradition of spiritual wandering where people walk by foot the

length and breadth of the country, visiting many temples and pilgrim centers. I used to wonder how they were able to do that, especially going through forests, sleeping with wild animals and begging for food. The secret is that they start feeling connected with nature so completely that nature protects them beautifully. Whether it rains or shines, the animals and trees, everything, takes care of them. Even though this may be logically difficult to understand, it is the truth.

If you begin to live with a little respect and love for Existence and all its creations, you will be able to recognize these things happening in your own life as well. Nature will simply reciprocate your love in many beautiful ways.

Love is different from respect

Very often, love is confused with respect. From a young age, children are brought up to always show respect but never to show love. You can hear people teach the children, 'You should respect your elders.' You will hardly hear, 'You should love your elders.' That is the problem.

Cleve Backster - A polygraph expert who studied behavior of plants subjected to threats or affection using the lie detector equipment.

Respect sows the first guilt in you that you are something inferior. It makes you feel separate from the other person to whom you show respect. On the other hand, love sows the seeds of joy and unity in you. It makes you feel connected with the other person and with everything in Existence. With respect, there is fear. With love, there is authentic respect as well as the scope for deep understanding to happen. With respect alone, not much understanding is possible. With love, there is a possibility for tremendous understanding and transformation to happen. Love by its very nature is transforming. It softens and melts you.

The scholar Professor Nicholson, composed a Sufi* verse on love:

‘Love, Love alone can kill what seemed dead,

The frozen snake of passion. Love alone
By tearful prayers and fiery longing fed,

Reveals a knowledge schools have never known.’

Any stone heart can be melted with love.
Only love can melt your hardness. Only
love can keep you porous.

Respect creates distance between you and the other. Love bridges the distance between you and the other. Only because

**Love is like the
root of the tree
and all religions
are like leaves or
branches.**

people themselves have not experienced love, do they give respect as the rule of acceptable behavior. Respect is easier but not real. Love might be difficult only because not many know how to go about it, but it is real. With love, respect is automatic and authentic. With pure respect, the appearance of love is forced and may never be authentic.

Love is the root of all religion

Love is the original religion. It is the root of all spirituality. All other religions are offshoots. Love is like the root of the tree and all religions are like leaves or branches. Even the greatest religions are only big branches compared to the religion of love!

Love has no temple or scripture. It is like the roots that lie beneath the ground but provide the nourishment for life. Without it, the whole tree dies. Through love many branches and leaves are created. But what do we do? We cling to the branches and leaves instead of clinging to the root. When we cling to the root, we get the direct nourishment. When we cling to the

Sufism - Mystical dimension of Islam.

**Love is the secret
of all religions.
There can be no
logic about god,
there can be only
love.**

branches, we enjoy only one dimension of the nourishment. When you become more loving, you will enter the invisible temple of love.

Tree roots contain the information about all the trees in this world, just like a dewdrop contains information about all the oceans in the world. If we understand the structure of a drop of water, we will understand everything about all the oceans on earth. We will understand the compound called water itself. Water anywhere cannot be anything other than its chemical composition. That composition is ingrained in the smallest particle, and that is the dew drop.

In the same way, man is an atom of love. And love is nothing but the quality of Existence. If love is known, the whole of Existence can be experienced. Understand that the composition of man is not physical, chemical or even psychological, it is spiritual. Nobody can teach us what it is. We must experience it on our own. All other knowledge is transferable: physical, chemical, scientific and psychological. All such knowledge is easily transferable. Only spiritual knowledge is not. It cannot be taught as such, but it can be experienced!

A small story:

One day a master asked his disciples how they could tell when the night had ended and the day had begun.

One of them said, 'When you can look in the distance and tell whether the animal is a cow or a horse.' The master said, 'No.'

Another disciple said, 'When you can look at a tree in the distance and tell if it is a pine tree or a mango tree.' The master again said, 'No.'

They asked the master, 'Then what is it master?'

The master replied, 'When you can look into the face of any man and recognize your brother in him. When you can look into the face of any woman and recognize your sister in her. If you cannot do this, then no matter what time of the day it is, it is still only night time.'

The master can give a few hints, little hints here and there. Then we must find our own way carefully, cautiously. Love is just a hint, but if we follow love slowly, very slowly, we will be surprised that god becomes more and more of a reality. He is no longer just a thought, no longer simply an idea, but something that we can feel. The deeper we go into love, the closer we come to the feeling. The day we dissolve into love we merge with unity.

Love is the secret of all religions. In spite of this, people are lost in logic and theology. Theology is as far away from religion as anything can be. There can be no logic about god, there can be only love. God is in poetry. He is in music and in dance, but never in logic.

God is not an idea that can be arrived at through logical processes. He is an interior experience, so deeply interior that one must go there absolutely alone to discover it.

From time immemorial, the conclusion of many mystics has been that matter is glued together with love. An invisible force keeps atoms and molecules together. They do not fall apart because of this invisible force. Science has yet to discover this ultimate energy. It has detected a few of its manifestations such as gravitation and electricity but these are only gross manifestations. The day that science discovers love will be the day when religion and science will commune with each other in the same language.

For now, just rejoice because love *is* possible. Be joyful that love is your inner potential. You can rise to the ultimate heights with love. Nothing is impossible with love because love can transform itself into god.

Three types of Love and their integration

**Nothing is
impossible with
love because love
can transform
itself into god.**

Many people confuse lust with love. This is one of the greatest tragedies. The person who thinks lust is love remains confined to the physical plane. He never rises higher than that. He has no idea that there is a higher plane. He remains in the basement of his house. Sex is the basement. It is not the place to live in. You can use it for other purposes, but it can't be your home. Your home is above it.

Man has three planes of being, which are animal, human and divine. First is the plane of lust, which is the animal plane. It is a crude form of love. It is not that love is not present there. Love is mixed or polluted by gross greed and desire, that's all.

As our being becomes more refined, we enter the second plane, ordinary human love. Human love has traces of possessiveness and jealousy. Since human love is grounded in greater understanding than animal love, one does not simply use the other person for his or her own gain. Human love is capable of seeing the other as an end unto itself.

**If the object of
love is removed,
then the whole
world becomes the
object.**

The third type of love is divine love. It is love in its highest form, almost like a prayer. There is no possessiveness. There is nothing earthly in it. It becomes an invisible but powerful force. This is when love becomes prayer and we feel restful contentment for the first time. I say restful because the other two types of love always keep reaching for more or keep missing something. There is no restfulness in them. When the third type of love happens, even sex becomes a deep and divine act beyond mere physical pleasure.

In India, people consider the place where three rivers meet to be sacred. It is a metaphor because man is a meeting place of three forces: physical, psychological and spiritual. When these three forces *really* meet, there is great joy and bliss.

Ordinarily we live in compartments. Our body lives in one compartment, our mind lives in another and our soul lives in a third compartment. The body is unaware of the mind. The mind is unaware of the body. The soul is not known to the mind. The body is oblivious of the soul. They are together but they don't know each other.

The first step of meditation is to bring them closer together, to introduce them to each other and link them in a deep friendship so that a merger becomes possible. When all three dimensions merge into one point, the fourth dimension is born. Out of the meeting of the three, the fourth is born. That fourth is god or Existence or Divinity or whatever you wish to call it.

The whole work of spirituality is to create an alchemy in which the body melts into the mind, the mind melts into the soul, the soul melts into the mind, and the mind melts into the body. By and by, slowly, very slowly, they become one integrated phenomenon. Love is the outcome of it.

Enter into causeless Love

People tell me they feel such exuding love towards me. I always tell them, use that flowing love as a gateway to jump towards the whole of humanity. The love towards the master is like food. If you digest it, you become energetic and you radiate the same energy in your life.

Buddha* says, 'I live in the commune.' He means, 'Don't direct your attention towards me. Direct your attention towards the whole world.' If the object of love is

Buddha - Enlightened master and founder of the religion of Buddhism.

removed, then the whole world becomes the object. Then you will never enter into suffering.

The first thing we need to understand is that relationships can happen causelessly, without any reason. Only then will we understand that the experience of love is much more important than the object of love.

You must have at least one relationship in your life that exists for no reason. If you don't have such a relationship, be very clear, even if you have money, deep down you are still poor.

From today onwards start relating with someone for no reason. There should be no monetary or physical benefit from the relationship. If you experience causeless love once, after that, if the money is shared, if the body is shared, it is okay. The quality is totally different. I am not against money or against marriage. I am not against the physical relationship, but if it becomes the center of your life, you are missing something very important. That is what I want to convey here. You miss a major dimension or energy center of your being.

I am reminded of a small story:

There was a blind girl who hated herself because she was blind. She hated everyone except her boyfriend.

You should not have any benefit from the relationship. Only then you will understand the word 'love'.

The girl told her boyfriend that if she could only see the world, she would marry him.

A few days later, her doctor told her that someone donated a pair of eyes to her. She underwent the surgery and she opened her eyes to see everything, including her boyfriend.

Her boyfriend asked her, 'Now that you can see, will you marry me?' The girl was shocked when she saw that her boyfriend was blind. She said, 'I am sorry but I can't marry you because you are blind.'

Her boyfriend walked away sadly. He told her just one thing, 'Just take care of my eyes, dear.'

That is why it is said that you have to create your being. You have to awaken the center of love in you. You should have at least one relationship in your life from which you do not expect anything beyond just the relationship. You should develop one relationship in which you do not receive any utility from that relationship, be it monetary or physical comfort or name and fame. Have at least one relationship... it could even be with a tree or the moon or

the sun. The criterion is that you should not have any benefit from the relationship. Only then you will understand the word 'love'. Only then the love center in you will be awakened.

I always tell people, 'Do some work for half hour everyday that does not bring you money or name and fame. Just for half an hour, go to some temple or church, clean and sweep the floor, offer some service. Don't plan to become a committee member in that place! Don't think that it will fetch you good credit and a place in heaven... no. Don't look any further than that work for half an hour.'

Initially you may think, 'This half hour is a waste of time!' After a few days you will realize that only in that half hour are you really alive! Only for that half hour you are not driven by fear or greed. You smile at the people around you without any calculation. You feel strangely sincere in a way that you never felt before.

If you observe yourself at other times, you will see that you even smile only after some mental calculation. Even before laughing you will see who is the person next to you. Based on that, you decide how many inches to open your mouth, how polite you should be, how you should project yourself. To overcome these conditionings, just for half an hour try this technique that does not bring you money, that does not bring you name and fame, that does not give you any

social position, that does not give you anything in return. Then you will understand what I mean by the words 'causeless relationship'. You will see that soon only that half hour becomes the real life for you!

As of now, every action of yours is driven by fear and greed. You are fuelled by fear and greed. That's why you feel lonely and tired.

If you try this technique, you will suddenly see that your body and mind start functioning without the need for fear and greed! Once you learn this simple knack of how to move your body without fear and greed, be very clear, you can enter into love. You learn how to tap into the energy of love. You learn how to run your life on the beautiful energy of love. Only then will you know what is meant by the word 'love'.

A new center will be awakened in you. A new energy will start radiating in you. Then you will understand how loving and causeless relationships are possible.

Love, hatred and attention-need

As long as love is conditional, hatred and love are opposite sides of the same coin. Love can flip into hatred the moment we feel that our expectations are threatened.

In love of this type, it remains love only as long as the conditions remain as expected. The moment the conditions change, the love also changes.

Often what we believe as love is actually related to time and space. So long as the distance between the lovers is large and the time of contact is minimal, they feel love towards each other. However, once they get closer and spend more time together, they feel that they are not so much in love after all! That is why they say 'familiarity breeds contempt'. Familiarity can also convert love into hatred. To transcend both love and hatred, we first need to drop expectations. Expectation is the first enemy of love.

We all go through several stages of relationships in our lifetime. If you observe very closely, whichever stage we are in, when we ask for love we are actually asking only for the other person's attention. When we say a person doesn't love us, we actually mean that the other person doesn't give us enough attention. The basic need for any human being is attention from others. The attention-need, along with our dependency on others for survival, is what we experience as love.

The dependency on others might be psychological, physical or spiritual. For example, when you expect someone to lend you a shoulder to cry on, you are dependent upon him or her psychologically. When you

expect someone to provide you with money or fulfill your bodily pleasures, you are

dependent upon him or her physically. In whatever way people may fulfill this dependency, what it boils down to is the attention that they give us! The whole idea of love is nothing but getting the attention of the other in some way.

In the first session of our meditation camp, I ask people to make an honest list of at least one or two persons in their lives who they really love. Usually in the beginning, people come up with a big list: husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister and so on. They include people whom they would like to please or need to please in order to be happy themselves. As they hear me talk about real love, they start crossing out names from their list one by one! Understand, if you cross out something, then it was not truly there in the first place.

Many people include certain people in their love list because these people give them a 'feel good' feeling. What do I mean by a 'feel good' feeling? It is a certificate saying, 'You are good. You are this, you are that' etc. We love anyone who pays us compliments, is it not? We think twice before arguing with them. We secretly

To transcend both love and hatred, we first need to drop expectations. Expectation is the first enemy of love.

nurture our good name with them in the name of love. If they go back on their approval of us, we might fall into depression, so we continue to please them and love them. Like this, there is always some hidden reason for our love.

Some people tell me, ‘No *Swamiji*, I don’t love my son or daughter for any of these reasons.’ I ask them, ‘Alright, if your son suddenly starts to make his own decisions, if he suddenly doesn’t fit into your framework, if he doesn’t follow your guidance, if he doesn’t live according to your rules, will your love for him be the same?’

They tell me, ‘No, it will not. My love will be reduced a little!’

What does this mean? We love our next generation as long as they are extensions of our life. As long as they fall into our pattern of thinking, as long as they live in accordance with our conventions, we love them. We simply fulfill our own desires through them. We fulfill our lives through them. Whatever we couldn’t accomplish in our youth, we try to accomplish through them. We use them as an extension of our own lives. If we wanted to be doctors and couldn’t for some reason, we inspire them to be doctors. As long as they act and live as an extension of our life, the relationship is beautiful. But the moment they start deciding on their own, the moment they feel we are suffocating them, the moment

they stand up and say ‘no’, the relationship takes a different turn.

A small story:

There were three grownups having their morning tea together. Their children were playing on the floor. They were discussing what they would do if danger threatened, and all of them declared that the first thing they would do was pick up their children and escape.

Suddenly, the safety valve of the pressure cooker burst, creating a steam explosion in the room. Within seconds, everyone was out of the kitchen – except for the children playing on the floor!

Our love is not as great as we claim it to be! Even we don’t know the real depth of our love, that’s the problem. We say and do a lot of things in the name of love. But reality can be shockingly different from all that. If we integrate the love emotion in us, it can become a highly sincere and authentic expression of our original nature.

The unity of Love

Children feel that they are adults only when they say ‘no’ to their parents. It is a basic instinct. When they say ‘no’ they feel that they are established as an individual. That is why, all over the world, youngsters always rebel. Whether it is in the West or

in the East, in all the countries all over the world, in all the cultures, the youth say 'no'. When they say 'no', they feel they are strong.

But our love is dependent only on 'yes'. As long as we receive 'yes', our love also is 'yes'. When we get a 'no', we also start saying 'no'. This is called horizontal love. It starts and ends horizontally. It starts again and ends again. It always ends with some reason or other. There is another love called vertical love. It never ends because it never starts. It is always there in the form of energy. It is consciousness. Vertical love is when we suddenly realize that we are living inside everybody just as we live inside our own body!

There is a beautiful example given in the *Upanishads**

A master asked his disciple, 'Do you enjoy all your five senses?'

The disciple said, 'Yes.'

The master asked, 'What if one of your senses was missing, would you have the same amount of joy?'

The disciple replied, 'No, it would be twenty percent less, and if two of my senses were missing, it would be forty

**Enlightened
people experience
themselves as the
whole universe.**

*percent
less.'*

*The master
suddenly*

*said, 'What if you had five more
senses?'*

*The disciple answered, 'Naturally my
enjoyment would be a hundred percent
extra.'*

*If I am given one more body, naturally
I will enjoy everything twice as much.
Or if I am given five bodies, naturally I
will enjoy things five times as much.'*

If you are able to experience yourself as being alive in all the bodies of this world, imagine how much joy or ecstasy you would experience! It would be immeasurable, eternal and ultimate. That is what enlightened people experience all the time. They experience themselves as the whole universe. They experience tremendous ecstasy. That is why they don't need anything from the outer world. They are enough unto themselves. They are established in the highest form of love energy.

In Krishna's* life, the whole happening of *Ras Leela** is one of causeless love, the

Upanishads - Scriptures that form the essence of the ancient texts of the Vedas. Literally means 'sitting with the master'. There are eleven main *Upanishads* that have been commented on by enlightened master Adi Shankara.
Krishna - Enlightened master from India who delivered the Truths of the Bhagavad Gita.

Ras Leela - The spiritual interaction of enlightened master Krishna with the *gopis* or cowherd women devotees.

Divine love that permeates the entire universe. *Ras Leela** is misinterpreted by many people as Krishna* having a physical relationship with the cowherd women. Understand, Krishna* is a superconscious being and *Ras Leela** happened when Krishna was around eight years old! It is in no way related to any physical relationship. It was a pure and causeless spiritual happening.

Radha*, Krishna's beloved, was attached to Krishna, but she never really experienced pure joy. She had constant mood swings with possessiveness and jealousy. During *Ras Leela*, Krishna, as a superconscious being, gave her the experience of seeing him simultaneously with every single cowherd girl present there. He wanted to show her that he is in every physical form, not just in his own form. Such is the manifestation of divine loving beings!

There is another beautiful poem by Jalaluddin Rumi*, the Sufi* mystic. He writes,

One went to the door of the Beloved and knocked.

A voice asked, 'Who is there?'

He answered, 'It is I.'

The voice said, 'There is no room for Me and Thee.'

The door was shut.

After a year of solitude and deprivation he returned and knocked.

A voice from within asked, 'Who is there?'

The man said, 'It is Thee.'

The door was opened for him.

In real love, there is no duality. There is just oneness with everyone and everything. That is the ultimate stage of love.

Love and liberate, don't possess

As long as our love happens towards a particular object, even if the object is a person, we will try to reduce that person only to the level of an object. That is exactly what we do when we feel possessive or attached to another person. In the way that we try to possess furniture

Krishna - Enlightened master from India who delivered the Truths of the Bhagavad Gita.

Ras Leela - The spiritual interaction of enlightened master Krishna with the *gopis* or cowherd women devotees.

Radha - Chief among the *gopis* or cowherd women devotees of enlightened master Krishna.

Jalaluddin Rumi - 13th century Persian Sufi poet.

Sufism - Mystical dimension of Islam.

or a house or any object, we try to possess the person also. We want the person to be just how we want him or her to be, which means we are actually reducing the person to sheer matter.

So understand, whenever our love or our attention is towards something in particular, we will be only materialistic, we will be creating suffering for ourselves and for others. We will only suffocate the object or person. Instead, if we turn our attention towards the experience of love itself, we will be liberating the object and we too will be liberated from the object. That is the beauty of love that happens just as love and not for the sake of any object.

When you start possessing someone, you bind yourself also. If you are walking holding your dog's leash, be very clear that you are also bound. Don't think only the dog is bound. You are also bound. Don't think that only the dog cannot run away, you too cannot run away! You may be thinking that you are holding the rope and the dog may be thinking that he is holding the rope. Who knows?

We always place our attention in the wrong space and miss the truth. When we place our attention on an object, we miss the inner experience of love that happens. We misunderstand that the excitement and the joy of love happens because of the object. We don't understand that the excitement or the joy of love happens not because of

the object but because of us. It is an energy that happens in us. If it was

because of the object, then whenever the object came in contact with us, we would have the same excitement, am I right? But it does not happen that way. Even if the object continues to be there, the temperature of the excitement comes down after some time, which means that the excitement or the energy is not related to the object. It is related to the subject, which is us. It is related to the experience itself, not to the object.

A small story:

An art collector traveled to a village. He saw a cat drinking milk from an old antique saucer outside a small tea shop. The art collector recognized the value of the saucer and wished to buy it.

He approached the shop owner and asked him, 'Sir, can I buy this cat for two dollars?' The shop owner refused saying he didn't want to sell the cat.

The art collector said, 'I want a cat because my house is haunted by mice. Please sell the cat to me. I am ready to pay ten dollars.'

The shop owner said, 'Fine, sold! Have it!'

Excitement or energy is related to the experience itself, not to the object.

Now the art collector said, 'I will take the cat but can you give me the saucer also? Then I don't have to buy a new saucer. The cat will be happy since she is already trained for this saucer. Why don't you give me the saucer too?'

The shop owner said, 'No! That's my lucky saucer. Only because of that I have sold sixty eight cats in the last one week!'

The art collector wanted to get the saucer but got only the cat. We too miss what has to be really experienced in life because we go after the object and not the subject.

The next time you are with someone, when you are with your friend with whom you are completely open, remember to practice this technique.

Just sit next to him or her. Don't bother about what you are going to do or what you are going to say. Just sit, that's all! That is the technique. Actually, speaking is nothing but avoiding the other person. Because you cannot look into the other person's eyes, you go on speaking. That is the truth. The other person listens so that he can start speaking whenever you take a break! If a person is listening to you, it means that he is either thinking of something else or he is preparing for his

turn. He sits there so that he can start once you finish.

Now if you try this technique, it can take you to a different space altogether. When you are with the master or your friend or your beloved, whoever you feel deeply connected with, whoever you are very open with, you can try this technique. It will straightaway lead you to enlightenment. Be very clear, I am not teaching this technique for you to have better relationships or for you to develop your personality. No! I am giving it to you to straightaway experience the pure love that can lead you to enlightenment.

The big problem is that you never sit in a relaxed way. Either you are driven by greed, meaning you are in a hurry to say or do something, or you don't know what you are doing and so you are caught with fear. You just try to finish your job and escape! Either you are in greed or you are in fear. But for now, just relax. Be neither in fear nor in greed.

Just sit in the present. Just feel the other person's presence. Accept the other person as he or she is, as that being is, and feel what happens inside you. Try this for a few days. Suddenly you will see that you will experience a different space, one you have never before experienced in your life.

This is a technique from the Shiva Sutras*, a collection of techniques for enlightenment delivered by Shiva*. This technique will take you through a quantum jump from the form to the formless, from possessive love to causeless love.

You may be attached to your beloved or god or master or friend or whomever. To move from that attachment, to move from the form to the formless, this is the technique. You can take a quantum jump into love with this. With this jump you will see that love happens not as an attachment to a particular object but as an overflowing energy that doesn't look for any attachment in the outer world. It is just your own overflowing that you share, that's all. It happens irrespective of whether the object is there or not.

When love happens as causeless overflowing, you simply liberate yourself and the other person from your own attachment and possessiveness, because possessiveness as you know it, binds not only the other person but you as well. It tortures the other person as well as you! Real love simply liberates both of you. It gives freedom to you and the other person.

Real love simply liberates both of you. It gives freedom to you and the other person.

When I travel around the world, people ask me, 'Did you sleep well last night? It is a new place for you.' I tell them, 'Only when you have attachment to a particular house does another house become a new place for you and you struggle. When you don't have attachment to any house, you feel at home wherever you go!'

I never feel any place is mine or not mine. I feel totally at home anywhere. The comfort is always within us, never outside us. When there is no comfort within us, we look for comfort outside us. Feeling comfortable within us is the result of the causeless love energy. When we don't feel attached to one home, we feel at home in the entire world. We are totally relaxed anywhere in the world.

People ask me, '*Swamiji*, how are you able to travel so often and not feel unsettled?' This question comes mostly from people who travel for business. They say, 'If we go to one or two places and come back, it takes one week to recover, settle down and

Shiva Sutras - A collection of teachings of enlightened master Shiva in epigram form as techniques. Includes Vignana Bhairava Tantra, Guru Gita, Tiru Mandiram, etc.

Shiva - enlightened Master from India who delivered the universal Truths in the form of scriptures like Shiva Sutras.

Real love doesn't look for utility. It operates on sheer trust, is beyond space and time.

get back into our routine and feel comfortable, to feel like ourselves again. How do you travel so continuously?' The secret is the same thing I told you earlier. I don't feel attached or connected to any one house, so I feel connected to the whole world! There is a deep feeling of being at home with the whole world. With this feeling, wherever you go, you will experience a deep, relaxed bliss and ecstasy because that bliss doesn't come from the outer home but from the inner home.

Love in relationships

In real life, we always look to express our love towards others in some tangible way. Only if love is demonstrated in tangible form, it is considered to be love nowadays.

True love is like a communion. It is a resonance between two beings. It can be felt without any expression. It doesn't need communication because it is already happening as a communion.

If you really love a person, then your very body language will show it. It will be too much to express in words. You will feel that words are inadequate and will only bring down the love that you feel. But if you are using words, then somewhere the

love has not really happened. When you have to speak to express love, then somewhere there is a lie in it! You are using the words just to decorate the lie.

Real love liberates because it doesn't compel you to express it all the time. It just is. Real love also gives you the freedom to freely express what you want to express. You can easily express anything like disapproval or anger and it will not be mistaken for reduced love.

Not only that, with real love, there will be no domination or power play in relationships. Each person will be like a beautiful flower that has blossomed to radiate its unique fragrance, that's all.

With real love, there will be no fear or insecurity either. In normal love, physical distance between two people causes a lot of insecurity and a lack of trust.

A small story:

A young soldier went to his senior officer and said, 'Sir, my friend is not yet back from the battlefield. I request permission to go out and get him.'

The officer said, 'Permission refused. Your friend is most probably dead. I don't want you to risk your life going there.'

The young soldier went all the same and came back mortally wounded and carrying the corpse of his friend.

The officer was furious. He shouted, 'I told you he was dead. Now I have lost both of you. Tell me, was it worth going out there to bring a corpse?'

On the verge of dying, the soldier replied, 'It was, Sir. When I got there he was still alive. He said to me, I was sure you would come.'

Real love doesn't look for utility. It operates on sheer trust and is also beyond space and time.

These days I see people gifting each other with so many things to show their love. Gifting has become an expression of love. If the gifting happens as causeless overflowing, it is okay. But if it is a condition to be fulfilled, it becomes a problem! Then it becomes a poor substitute for real love.

As long as real love is there, no relationship can become boring. Understand, as long as love is there, every object or person is unique. For example, if the coworker in your office dies, nothing will really stop you in your life. Along with the others, you will console his family members and continue with life, that's all. But what happens if you are in love with the same coworker who passed away? Life will never be the same again, am I right? Whenever you are in love with some object or person,

Causeless overflowing love is always total in its expression.

or somebody is in love with you, the whole relationship

becomes unique. Love makes things unique.

One of the *ashramites** asked me one day, 'Swamiji, everyday you see all of us, all our mistakes and confusions. It is the same thing for you every day. Are you not bored by us?' It was a very honest question! I told them, 'For enlightened beings, just because of their very love, they feel everybody is unique. They do not look at people as mere numbers. They see each one as unique.'

That is why, with so much patience, masters continue to work with everybody. If it were just a matter of numbers, it would be very different. When you have this love, your inner space is such that there is no logical reason behind your actions. You will just feel connected and you will radiate love, that's all!

Not only that, causeless overflowing love is always total in its expression. It doesn't carry the usual dilutions of greed or fear. So any person whom you love, you will love totally without any reservations. Irrespective of the way he is, you will love him. When you love this way, even if the person leaves your life, you will not grieve.

Ashramites - Residents of ashram.

When a person passes away, you grieve only because you regret not having loved him completely. You can love him completely only when your love itself is complete. It doesn't have anything to do with the other person. It doesn't matter what kind of person he is. That is the beauty of real love. It loves for the sake of love, not for the sake of the other person.

If you are grieving for the loss of a person, be very clear, you are grieving because you missed loving him in totality. If you had loved him in totality, you would say goodbye to him with complete restfulness, not with grief. You grieve only because you missed something somewhere. Even if it is your own father or husband or wife, it is the same. If you had radiated your causeless love to them when they were alive, then when they left there would not be any regret. But if you had loved them with rationalizations, then when they left, the incompleteness of your love towards them would create a hangover, and that hangover is what you feel as grief.

Meditation – feel the Love overflowing in you

Sit down comfortably by yourself and close your eyes.

Focus on your heart region. Exclude everything else. Focus only on the heart.

Visualize your heart as an endless reservoir from where blessings can flow.

Feel every heartbeat deeply. Let every beat resound throughout you.

Between the heartbeats, feel the energy of love happening.

In the deepest parts of your body, mind and soul, the love energy is waiting to be acknowledged.

Invite the love energy of the heart to flow and fill these deepest parts of your body, mind and soul.

Slowly open your eyes.

What is Worry?

We talked of love so far. Love is about our relationship with others. Love is also about our relationship with ourselves. Without loving ourselves we cannot love others. What prevents us from loving our own self is the constant worry or irritation that we generate within us. Whether things go right or wrong we worry. There is nothing more corrosive to our self-esteem than worry. What is this worry?

A small story:

A man walked into a bar looking worried and upset.

The bartender asked him, 'What's the matter? You look very worried about something.'

The man said, 'My wife and I had a fight and she told me that she wouldn't talk to me for a month.'

The bartender consoled him, 'It's okay. One month isn't that long.'

The man said, 'I know. The month is up today!'

Everyone has his or her own set of worries! If I ask you what you worry about, you will tell me, 'I don't have a job, that's my worry.' Your neighbor will say, 'My job is my main worry!' Someone else will say, 'My children are my worry.' Another person will say, 'I don't have children, that's my worry!'

Worry is the discrepancy between your expectations and reality.

One person's dream is another person's worry! You will not find any logic in it at all.

What is meant by 'worry'? Worry arises whenever things are not happening as you want them to happen. It is the discrepancy between your expectations and reality. For example, you feel your son should stay at home with you, whereas he feels he should be by himself, away from you. You feel your salary should be a few thousand dollars more. Your boss feels otherwise. You want to finish your project by a certain time. But things are happening too slowly and it seems an impossible task. These are all causes for worry. What you want and expect does not match what others want and expect.

You continuously expect things to happen in a certain way. Whether it is as big as your career or as small as what time your husband should come home for a meal, you continuously impose your will upon what is happening and worry about it.

How does Worry take root?

Worry takes root from your own thoughts or words. There are two things that

**Even when
something joyful
happens, you
remember only the
moment when it
ended.**

continuously happen in you. The first is dialogue, and the second is monologue or what I call 'inner chatter'. You either talk to people outside or you continuously chatter within you. In any case, words and thoughts are the 'building blocks' that make up worry.

When you speak to others, what you say is strictly governed by societal rules. You automatically don't use prohibited or 'politically incorrect' words. But what you say inside yourself, no one except you knows. The thoughts that you generate inside constitute your real worries.

Khalil Gibran*, a Lebanese poet, beautifully says, 'You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts!' and 'Our very verbalization is because we are not able to handle ourselves peacefully within us.'

It is like this: there is a continuous current of chatter happening in you twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. From this current a few spikes rise. These spikes are what you feel and express as worries. Worries are nothing but spikes in the current of thoughts constantly moving within you.

These thoughts are mostly negative. That's the problem. If I ask you to write your life story in a few pages, you will write a few incidents highlighting how and when you struggled. You will not highlight the many joyful incidents that happened in between. The mind is trained to record only negative things. Even when something joyful happens, you remember only the moment when it ended, never the moments when you felt joy. Because even when you are at the peak of joy, you are always worrying about when the joy will end! The mind is trained from a very young age to think that life moves from one worry to the other or from one pain to another, never from one joy to another.

In a classroom, the teacher found that one boy was sitting with a very sad face.

She asked him, 'What happened? Why do you look so worried?'

The boy said, 'It's my parents. My dad works all day to provide good clothes and an excellent education for me. He buys me anything I want. My mother cooks the best food for me and takes care of me from morning until I go to bed.'

The teacher asked, 'Then what is your problem? Why are you worried?'

Khalil Gibran - Lebanese American poet best known for his 'The Prophet'.

The boy replied, 'I am afraid they may run away.'

The mind has a clear identity only with pain, never with joy! That is why recalling even joyful moments becomes painful.

Joy never gets recorded as thoughts, but pain does. That's why our internal recordings are always negative thoughts. Joy is like a blank recording! For example, if your entire life is like a time shaft, on that shaft the joyful moments are simply empty spaces! There won't be any recording corresponding to it. But the moments of worry and suffering will be clearly recorded as black impressions.

On a beautiful white wall if there is a small black dot, and I ask you what you are able to see, what will you say? You will say you only see the black dot. You will not see the big white space surrounding it! That is how you conclude that your time shaft is only made up of worry and suffering.

See what is as it IS – and move on

Buddha*, an enlightened master, used the word *tathata* - seeing what is as it IS. It is seeing what is there as it is, without any judgment.

The mind has a clear identity only with pain, never with joy. Joy never gets recorded as thoughts.

But most of the time we see things only through our worry. When we see

everything as it is, there is only joy, and when there is joy, no thoughts get recorded in you. There are only empty spaces. That is why when you are joyful you feel light, because nothing gets recorded. When you see everything through worry, more thoughts get recorded in you and you feel heavy.

There is a common saying, 'We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are.' If you feel there is something wrong with what you are seeing, then you should look back in at yourself because what you see outside is only a reflection of what is inside you. If you feel pure love inside, then you see only pure love outside. It always has to do with you, not with what you are seeing.

How can you keep thoughts away from what truly IS? How can you enjoy each moment all the time?

Try this small technique. When you see something, for example a person, or a situation, or a book, or anything, normally old thoughts and familiar reactions

Buddha - Enlightened master and founder of the religion of Buddhism.

**If you understand
that everything is
auspiciousness,
you will drop
expectation.**

immediately
rise in you.
Bring in the
awareness
that these

conditioned thoughts and memories cloud your judgment and visualize shattering those thoughts. Next, see the situation, or person, or object now with a fresh eye, as though you are seeing it for the first time! Suddenly you see how much you missed, because of your own worry and thoughts.

Even when you see your husband, wife, brother, or anyone, look at them as though you are seeing them for the first time. Suddenly, you realize that not only does worry not arise, but also that you start seeing everyone alike, whether they are strangers or familiar to you. That is the right way. No one is familiar or unchanging. Even your wife is not known to you. Everyone is constantly changing every moment along with Existence. Only your mind is trying to make them appear to be permanent.

Once you start seeing what is as it is, all your energy will integrate within you. There is no more worry, no more conflict. Worry arises because your thoughts resist what you see. Once the conflict disappears, all the energy invested in worry is released for you to integrate!

Some one asked J. Krishnamurti*, the famous Indian philosopher, how to fall in tune with what IS. He beautifully says, 'Just don't name it, you will find you are in tune with it!'

Usually, when we see something, we either try to identify with it or we try to condemn it. For example, if you are told you are arrogant, you either accept it or you try not to be arrogant! You never understand or go beyond arrogance. You can only understand within your frame of reference, what you are familiar with. Because of this, you are caught in a limited view of possibilities. To really understand, you need to go beyond this limited point-of-view. To do that, you have to stop naming it arrogance, that's all! There will be no more arrogance. Only by naming it, you start the conflict. That is how you see what IS – by not naming it.

One man got onto a bus and sat down next to a young man. He could see that the man was a hippy. He was wearing only one shoe.

He asked him, 'You have lost one shoe?'

The young man replied, 'No, I have found one shoe.'

Stop naming any situation, person, or thing! Just see, that's all. Don't give room for condemning or accepting thoughts.

J. Krishnamurti - Renowned Indian philosopher.

Initially there's a compulsion to pass judgment on anything that you see because that is your habit. But when you experience the great energy released in you by seeing what IS, you want to remain that way – free from thoughts, worry, and suffering.

When you see what is as it is, you are in heaven. When you want to see what you want to see, you are in hell. If you understand that everything is auspiciousness, you will drop expectation and see things as they are, because everything is auspiciousness.

A small story:

One disciple kept asking the master, 'Master, where is paradise?'

Finally one day, the master asked him, 'Do you really want to know?'

The disciple sat up and said, 'Yes!'

The master said, 'Alright, my first disciple Hemachandra is in paradise.' After saying these words the master closed his eyes and went into meditation.

The disciple knew it would be a long time before the master opened his eyes. So, he went and asked some of the disciples if they knew where Hemachandra lived. No one seemed to know.

Finally one disciple said, 'I know how to guide you there, but I have never

been there myself. It is in a deep valley beyond a range of ice covered mountains.'

The disciple wrote down the directions carefully and went back to the master. He told him, 'Master, I wish to pay a visit to Hemachandra!'

The master was absorbed deeply in some work. Without even looking up he said, 'Go ahead.'

The disciple started on his journey. He walked for many days, passing through sun, rain, snow, and what not. He became exhausted, on the verge of death. It took him one hundred days to reach the valley. When he finally reached it he looked at the valley and thought, 'This valley doesn't look all that great. I have seen many more beautiful valleys. Why did the master call this paradise?'

He looked around and walked further and finally found Hemachandra's hut. Hemachandra was very pleased to see him. He served him food and asked how the master and other disciples were doing.

All along, the disciple was thinking to himself, 'Master called this place paradise? I can't believe it.'

After a week-long stay he left and returned to his master. It took him

**Worry is an
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grandparents to
parents to
children.**

*another one
hundred days
to return
home.*

*He went
straight to the*

*master and stated, 'You said that the
place is paradise. But what I saw was
the most ordinary place ever!'*

*The master said, 'Oh god! At the time
of your enquiry, had you been more
explicit about your intention, I would
have told you the truth.'*

The disciple asked, 'What is the truth?'

*The master replied, 'Hemachandra is
not in paradise. Paradise is in him!'*

When you live close to Existence, without any expectation, seeing what is as it is and finding the blessings in it, you will carry heaven in you! Heaven is not geographical, it is psychological. It is not physical, it is mental. If you decide, you can be in heaven right now.

Many people get worried about what they see in their dreams and come to me for interpretations. I tell them that we are unable to even accept what happens in reality, then why bother about what happens in our dreams?

*One day, a man dreamt a strange dream
and became very curious to know what
the dream meant. He went to his master,*

*told him about the dream and asked for
an explanation.*

*The master told him, 'Come to me with
dreams that come to you in your wakeful
state. We will work them out. The dreams
of your sleep belong neither to my
wisdom, nor to your imagination.'*

If you are still worried about your dreams, you should know that dreams tell you about the state of your mind during the day. Learn from your dreams and think how to transform the mind during the daytime. For example, if you think too much about lust when you are awake, your dreams will be lustful. If you worry too much about passing with high grades, you will write exams in your dreams! If you worry too much about relationships, you will fight with someone in your dream. So wake up to what your dreams indicate to you. There is nothing more to interpret from your dreams. Wake up and see what is as it IS.

Worry – a legacy passed down

Worry is an unwanted legacy passed down from grandparents to parents to children. Children are like sponges. They simply absorb the body language and attitude of the parents. The parents are not even aware this is happening. For example, if a child

hears the mother repeating a certain worry four or five times, the child simply internalizes the habit. He grows up repeating statements unnecessarily, which is one attribute of worry.

Ultimately he carries the worry with him into marriage and then both he and his wife must deal with it, even though it was originally his mother's concern. They will then hand it down to their children, unless they stop naming it and learn to live with what IS.

A man was pushing his baby in a pram. The baby was screaming at the top of his voice. All the while the man kept repeating quietly, 'Keep calm George. Don't scream. It will be okay.'

His wife told him to keep quiet.

A woman who was watching this said to the wife, 'Why are you so rude to him? He is really doing his best to pacify your son!'

The wife looked at her with resentment, pointed to her husband and told her, 'He is George.'

When parents express constant worry, children grow up thinking life goes on only because of worry! Understand that life goes on not because of us, but in spite of us!

One man had just moved into a remote part of a village. One day, he was seen throwing handfuls of bread crumbs

**It is possible to
care without
worrying.**

*around his
house.*

His neighbor who was watching him asked him, 'What are you doing?'

The man replied, 'I am keeping the tigers away.'

The neighbor was surprised. He said, 'But there are no tigers in these parts!'

The man replied, 'That's right. Very effective, isn't it?'

This is how we are trained to worry! The other day, I read a survey about worries. It said that forty percent of the things we worry about never happen, thirty percent are in the past and can't be helped, twelve percent concern the affairs of others that are not our business, ten percent are about illnesses that are mostly imagined, eight percent are worth worrying about but they are also not worth the energy to worry. They can be overcome by simply putting faith into action. So really, zero percent of our worries are worth the effort!

People will believe anything that is said with statistics! So I am talking with statistics. Otherwise, just one line is enough: don't worry, just do. Things will happen as they should!

The problem is that parents expect their children to worry! If they don't worry, they brand them as uncaring. It is possible to care without worrying. Care is *doing*, worry

is *chattering*. There is no use chattering. Chattering is like trying to cross a bridge before it comes.

A young boy was driving his mother to the neighboring village. They were nearing the village when they remembered a particular bridge that used to be very old and unusable.

The mother got very anxious and said, 'I will never cross that bridge by car.'

The son said, 'Let's see how it looks when we come to it.'

The mother said, 'I'm sure the bridge will break if we attempt to cross it.'

The son replied, 'Let's see how strong it is. We won't cross it without checking it carefully.'

The mother said, 'If something happens to you or me, your father will never forgive me.' She kept going on like this, becoming more and more upset.

Soon they reached the spot where the bridge stood. The bridge had been replaced with a new one!

There are two things to understand: chronological planning and psychological worry. Chronological planning is needed to set up a schedule for tasks or projects to be completed. For example, you decide, 'I will wake up at six a.m., do my meditation, then take a shower at seven a.m., and leave

for the office by eight a.m. I'll finish work by five p.m. and return home by six p.m.'

This type of planning is perfectly alright. But before you come to each task on your list, you start creating anxiety about it. You think of the pros and cons of each, etc. This is called psychological worry! This is not needed. Chronological planning is fine, but psychological worry is not needed. It is like trying to cross a bridge before it comes.

So much energy is spent worrying, and it is all of no use. In the story I just narrated, it does not mean that the son does not care. He cares without worry, that's all. Why contemplate over the bridge even before it comes?

Understand that sensitivity is different from worry. You can be very sensitive to the moment, but not worry at all. If you see children, they are highly sensitive to you when you are sick. But they won't worry like you do. As long as your child is sensitive to others' needs, it is perfectly fine. He doesn't have to worry to show it. In fact, be happy he doesn't multiply the worries in the house!

You can clean the physical parts of your house like your carpets and floors, but what about the *space* inside your house? This space is the energy that circulates throughout your house. It captures all the thoughts you radiate. It sets the very mood

of the house. Your worries rest like cobwebs in the space of your house. That is why when you enter your house, you experience a familiar pattern of worry. The patterns remaining in the space of your house grip you when you return to it. Understand that your mental setup settles into the space of your house.

By contaminating the space in your house, you subject others to the impure environment without their consent. That is the problem. Many people perform rituals in their homes to cleanse the energy, but that is not enough. After the ritual, you again start airing your negative thoughts in your space. Unless you break free from the mental setup or worry, there is no point in doing cleansing rituals in your home. Along with rituals, you must start airing positive thoughts, so the energy in your house will remain clean.

Worry and dilemma – our inner software

One man got up from deep sleep with a jolt. His friend asked him, ‘What happened?’

He replied, ‘I suddenly remembered that I forgot to take my sleeping pills.’

Worry is a deeply embedded pattern in us. It happens independently, without any

Worry is a deeply embedded pattern in us.

solid, valid reason to justify it. It is an addiction like smoking and drinking. I read about some recent research conducted at the American College of Chest Physicians. It said that the proportion of people classified as highly nicotine dependent has increased by thirty two percent in the last eighteen years!

Any addiction happens because we want to maintain our patterns. The same is true with worry. You worry to maintain patterns. It becomes your nature.

Understand that the mind is like a piece of hardware programmed with the software called ‘worry’. For example, let us say you experience depression, or worry, every morning at ten o’clock when thinking of all your unfinished office work. Ten o’clock gets recorded as a low mood time for you. Everyday at exactly ten o’clock you will experience a disturbance in your mood. Many of you might have experienced this. The same low mood happens on Sunday when there is no office to go to. Then you tell yourself, ‘No, today is a Sunday. I don’t need to go to the office. I don’t need to think about those things.’ Then you have relief but the mind goes back again and again to the same mood, because our mind is programmed hardware.

**When the
thoughts are
different, the
dilemma becomes
different.**

The stress of suffering or worrying becomes part of our being.

If the worry or stress is taken away from us, we feel lonely. We feel we are missing something. When we enter into old age, there won't be much to worry about because no one will expect us to solve any problems. If you watch elderly people, even if their children are married, and sometimes even their grandchildren are married, they will sit religiously every day and read the 'wanted bride and groom' column in the newspaper!

One more thing is that when we fall into this software, this worry, again and again, we often end up in dilemma.

What is a dilemma? It is moving back and forth when making a decision. The moving happens because there are so many thoughts inside you trying to put their signatures on your final decision! There is great conflict between these thoughts because they were recorded at different times and under different circumstances. So they conflict with each other when a decision has to be made. This conflict becomes your dilemma. For each person, the dilemma is different. There are no standards or rules for a dilemma.

A small story:

One friend said to the other, 'I am in love with two girls. One is very beautiful, but has no money. The other one is not that beautiful, but she has a lot of money. Whom should I marry?'

His friend replied, 'I am sure that you really love the beautiful girl, so I think you should marry her.'

The man was relieved. He said, 'Thank you very much!'

The friend asked, 'I wonder if you could give me the name and telephone number of the other girl!'

The crisis is different for every person because the mind is made up of a unique set of thoughts for each person. When the thoughts are different, the dilemma becomes different. The worry becomes different.

A blind man and his guide dog entered a hotel and sat down at a table. After ordering some food, he spoke loudly to the people there, 'Do you want to hear a blonde joke?'

The whole room fell silent. One man went up to him and told him, 'Before you tell that joke, you should know something. The hotel owner is blonde, the security guard is blonde, and I am a six foot tall, 200-pound blonde, with a black belt in karate. The lady to your

right is a blonde wrestler. Think about it seriously. Do you still want to tell that joke?’

The blind man said, ‘No, not if I have to explain it five times.’

Each one’s worry is different, according to one’s own inner software!

The big problem is that you become so used to your inner software that you end up like an island that is cut off from the fragrance of the mainland. You are cut off from the fragrance of Existence because of your worries. You miss the miracles of Existence that are continuously happening around you. You forget to appreciate and remember only to complain. You forget laughter and remember only anxiety. You forget bliss and remember only stress. Remembering these negative things becomes a mere habit.

Another small story:

One day a dog entered a butcher’s shop. The butcher tried to chase it away but the dog persisted and came back. Suddenly the butcher noticed a note in the dog’s mouth. The butcher went near the dog and took the note. Someone had written the items to order on it.

The butcher then saw a ten-dollar bill tucked in the dog’s collar. He took the money, put the ordered items in a bag, and placed it in the dog’s mouth. He was completely in awe of the dog. He

closed down his shop and decided to follow the dog wherever it went.

The dog walked down the street to the crosswalk. He put down the bag, jumped up and pressed the button. He waited patiently with the bag in his mouth for the green signal to appear. The moment it appeared, he crossed the road. The butcher also crossed the road along with him.

Then the dog came to a bus stop and looked at the timetable. He checked out the times and then sat on one of the benches waiting for the bus to come. Soon, a bus came. The dog jumped down, walked around to the front of the bus, looked at the number and went back to his seat and sat down.

Another bus came. Again the dog jumped down and went to look at the number. He saw that it was the right bus and climbed in. The butcher could not believe it. He also got on the bus.

After a few stops, the dog stood up and pushed the button for the bus to stop. He got down with the bag in his mouth and started walking. The butcher followed him.

The dog entered a gate and dropped the bag on the doorstep. He jumped up and rang the doorbell. There was no response. So, he jumped onto a windowsill and banged his head

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the whole thing.

A fat man came and opened the door. To the butcher's surprise, the man started abusing the dog. The butcher couldn't bear to see it. He ran to the door and asked him, 'Sir, what are you doing? The dog is a genius. He is helping you so much! Why are you abusing him?'

The man replied, 'You call him clever? This is the second time this week that he forgot to take his key!'

There are so many miracles happening around us! But all the time we are moving down the track of our own inner software, so we miss the miracles.

Awareness – the benign virus!

What is the solution to this distorted software of the mind?

against the glass several times. He then waited at the door. The butcher was watching

Deep awareness is the solution. Deep awareness is like a benign virus, if such a thing exists! Once awareness enters your system, the more you work with the mind, the more the awareness gets into the worry software and destroys it!

Awareness is nothing but bringing our focus to exactly what is happening in and around us. It is witnessing. Anything that we watch with awareness will dissolve. That is the power of awareness, whether it is physical pain, mental pain, worry, or something else. When we watch with awareness, we stop the conflict somewhere within us. We start moving with the natural flow of things.

When we watch worry with awareness, we focus light on exactly how worry is created, how it exists. Once this happens, the worry starts to dissolve and clarity starts happening.

There is a small story about Buddha* and his disciples:

One day Buddha arrived for his usual morning discourse with his disciples. He had a knotted handkerchief in his hand. He showed the handkerchief to the disciples and asked if any of them could come up and untie the knot.

One disciple went up and tried to untie it. He pulled and pulled and the knot

Buddha - Enlightened master and founder of the religion of Buddhism.

tightened. Another disciple went up, he looked at the knot for a few seconds and easily untied it.

All he did was look at the knot and immediately he knew how the knot was made in the first place. So, he just reversed the whole thing and untied it! The knot itself taught him how to untie it.

In life worries are the knots in the handkerchief. If we look at them with awareness, we will know how to dissolve them. We will see exactly how the worry was created and then know how to 'untie' it. The worry itself will teach us how to release it.

First of all, there is no need to worry. Life itself holds all the solutions. It is a beautiful self-sustaining mechanism. We just need to allow it to function in its natural way. Then we will awaken to its higher intelligence and drop all our worries.

Not only that, when we witness, our mind slows down. Worry itself causes the mind to rush around in what you call anxiety. When awareness is brought in, the rushing slows down and things happen as they should.

There was a student who wanted to learn martial arts. He approached a teacher and asked, 'I wish to study martial arts. How long will it take me to master the art?'

The teacher replied, 'Ten years.'

The student became very sad and said, 'But I want to master it faster and I will work very hard. Even if you want me to practice more than ten hours a day, I am ready to do it. If I do so, how long will it take?'

The teacher said, 'Maybe twenty years.'

The teacher clearly means that hurrying is not going to help! When you are in a hurry, there is only anxiety. To really do something, you need only awareness, nothing else. When there is awareness, there is right action. When there is hurry, everything is blurred.

With awareness, anything becomes a blessing, including illness. Have you ever been joyful when you were sick? You can be if you become aware. There is no need to worry about sickness. Even sickness is a part of the flow of Existence. You can feel this if you become more aware of the bigger picture and what is happening at the cosmic level. Awareness simply relaxes you into deeper understanding.

Don't Worry about others' opinions

Another major cause for worry is when we constantly try to conform to another's opinion of us. The funny thing is that while

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we are worried about others' opinions of us, they are worried about our opinion of them!

Society conditions us to worry about others' opinions all the time. That is the problem.

When you are worried about what other people think, you unconsciously weaken your efforts in whatever it is you are doing. You divert a major part of your energy toward suffering and worry.

Why do you worry about others' appreciation? Don't bother. Just do anything totally and to the best of your ability. Leave it at that, that's all. Only then will what you do be the best that you are capable of. In the end, you are your only stronghold. You should be clear from the beginning that you are your only stronghold. Then there is no need to worry about what others think of you.

**Work out of inspiration –
not out of Worry**

If you observe closely, you will see that goals always create worry in us. When we

move toward any goal, we move only with the worry about the results.

Krishna, an enlightened master from ancient India, beautifully says in the ancient Indian scripture, the Bhagavad Gita*, "The person who does not expect gain or loss from anything works happily with no need even for motivation."

When you are worried about the results, the very worry affects the results. Because when you worry, your doing is affected. Work should always be done out of inspiration, never out of worry. The motivation for any work should be inspiration, not worry. Inspiration is an overflowing energy that expands your capacity to do things. It is completely energizing. Worry, on the other hand, is something that shrinks your capacity. It limits what you are capable of really doing because it takes away your energy.

When you work out of worry, you are always bothered about the results. When you work out of inspiration, you are not bothered about the results. You are bothered only about doing the task to the fullest. Any task done with the energy of inspiration always turns out good results. Even if it doesn't give the expected results, you won't feel bad about it because you

Bhagavad Gita - Ancient Indian scripture, delivered by enlightened master Krishna, and considered the essence of the *Upanishads* or scriptures.

have received fulfillment simply by doing it. The 'doing' itself will fulfill you.

In today's world, everything is measured by productivity. Even in that context you see right away that worry is a waste of time. It is the most non-productive activity.

The problem is that today's world is so highly competitive. Everyone feels compelled to achieve. Everyone wants to be first. Everyone is worried that they might be last. Tell me, so what if you are last? Someone has to be last! You should worry only if you did not give it your best. If you gave your best, then there is nothing to feel bad about. In fact, if you can feel neutral about being last, you have achieved a much bigger thing than finishing in the first place. It is not a sign of failure, it is a sign of success at a different level.

Leave no space for Worry to fill

When you live without expectation, you are already fulfilled. There is no space for worry or discontent to thrive. When you don't have worry, you see things as they are. You don't worry about what might be or might not be. Worry exists only if you give it space. The space for worry is the past or future. The present doesn't hold any space for it.

Worry exists only if you give it space.

When you allow the mind to wander to the past or future, worry gets created. It includes what is and what is not, based on past experiences and future expectations. For example, if your friend loses his job, you worry about what might happen to *your* job. Why worry about that now? You already have a hundred other worries about your job. Then why add the hundred and first worry, about losing the job, when it has not even happened? That is the space in which we should never allow worry to reside.

A small story:

A mother was preparing a meal for her young son. She emptied a tin of beans into a saucepan and put them on the stove to cook. Just then the phone rang. She was expecting the call and wanted to take it, but she was concerned that her son would be left alone for those few minutes while she was out of the room.

She firmly told him, 'Stay here while I answer the phone. I'll be back soon. Don't misbehave, and whatever you do, don't put those beans up your nose...'

We always worry about what is happening and what might happen, also! The boy might not have even thought about putting beans up his nose! Now his mother has

**Worry can never
be hope. Worry is
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planted the idea in him. Worry infuses life into many things that never existed in the first place. Now, when the boy puts the beans in his nose, her worry turns out to be true! She concludes that her worries were always right.

George MacDonald, a Scottish author and poet says, 'It is when tomorrow's burden is added to the burden of today that the weight is more than a man can bear.'

If you find yourself overloaded, at least remember this, it is your own doing, not god's. He begs you to leave the future to Him, and concern yourself only with the present.

When you take care of this moment alone, you enjoy the moment. You create a blissful future, because every moment takes birth only from the previous moment. When you are in the moment, you don't think, you only do. It is only when you think that you start creating worries. Worry needs space to think and time to move. Space is your mind and time is the idea that you have of the future and past.

Understand one thing, only those who are weak worry a lot. They feel so helpless that they hold tightly onto worry as their hope. Worry can never be hope. Worry is only

like a hammock. It goes back and forth; nothing comes out of it.

When you stop worrying, you make correct decisions. There are some people who come to me asking me to make decisions for them. They see outside circumstances as the cause of their troubles. They use these influences as their reason for poor decision-making and see me as an influence in making any new decisions correctly. Sometimes they blame their parents for not educating them properly, for the lack of correct exposure, etc. Your parents did what they felt was right. Feel grateful to them for what they did. They might not have educated you in the right way, but they may have given you many other virtues that made you a good human being. So see the whole and move on. You only have the present under your control, so why waste time living in the past?

In the same way, the future is completely open. Anything can happen in the future. You can make the best happen. It is in your hands. It is only when you think of the past and worry about the future that you make the future a replication of the past. Otherwise the future is completely open. Just through your worry, you end up making the same mistakes in the future also.

Worry is only an illusion

If you look into worries, you will observe that they arise out of deep ignorance of the truth that Existence is running the whole show. If you look, you will see that all worries are mere illusion. You can understand this by observing what happens at the time of death. When you are alive, you may have one hundred worries, but suppose you are dying. At that moment, how many worries do you think will dominate you the way they did earlier? Surely only one worry will be foremost – that you are going to die. None of the earlier worries will exert any great influence. All the outer world situations remain the same, but still the worries disappear! Only loving thoughts remain for the people around you who are dear to you.

How is this possible? It is possible only because your worries were never a part of you in the first place. They were merely a part of your mind. They were nothing solid. If they were solid, they would definitely exert some amount of influence over you at the time of your death as well.

The nature of worry is such that it always goes behind something that is not present. If you have wealth, it will go after relationships. If you have relationships, it will go after education. If you have education it will go after good looks. If

everything is present, it will suspect what IS!

A small story:

One man was slipping in and out of a coma for several months and yet his wife faithfully stayed by his bedside, day and night.

One night he opened his eyes and started talking to her. He told her in a soft voice, 'I was just thinking... you have been with me through all the bad times. When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business failed, you were there. When we lost the house, you gave me support. When my health started failing, you were still by my side. You know what I think?'

The wife asked, 'What do you think?'

The man replied, 'I think you're bad luck.'

Worry is always trained to see the black spot on the white wall! That is the problem. Not only that, even our seemingly solid worries can easily be proven to be illusory.

Let me tell you another small story:

A disciple went to the master and said, 'Master, I am very keen to renounce the world. However, I am very worried about what will happen to my family. They will not be able to take it.'

The master listened to him and said, 'Alright, I will teach you a yogic secret

**Surrendering to
the laws of
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from worry.**

*that you can
use to cause
death.'*

*The disciple
agreed and he
went through*

*the process and died. His family mem-
bers started crying and shouting.*

*The master walked in and saw the
scene. He told them, 'I know the way to
bring him back to life, but one of you
has to be willing to die in his place.
Which of you would like to volunteer?'*

*The disciple was shocked to see that
not one of them volunteered, including
the man's wife. They all simply gave
some reason why they couldn't
volunteer.*

*Finally they said, 'It's ok. We will
manage without him.'*

In reality if we track our worries, we will not be able to find any truth in them! That is the truth.

Surrender and relax

When you clearly understand that you are part of the grand plan of Existence, no worry can take root in you. Existence is a live energy being. It has tremendous intelligence with which it runs the whole

show. We are all part of it. The same intelligence that conducts Existence is available to us too. If we tune in to it, our actions will be fluid and spontaneous like the happenings of Existence. If we don't tune into it, we will harbor worry and fear and remain closed.

There is so much to learn from Existence! Take animals, for example. Have you ever heard of worried sheep or cows? No! They conduct their lives like you. They are born, they reproduce, they find food, and they face death, just like human beings. You may say, 'They don't have to face the challenges that we have to face.' What about their other activities like reproduction, facing death, etc.? Are they worried about all that? No! But these things happen to them too. So understand that Existence is running this whole macrocosm. It can surely take care of you as well!

Surrendering to the laws of Existence is the greatest relaxation from worry. Once you surrender, you start seeing that everything that happens is auspicious! Nothing causes you any worry. You find blessings in everything. Either there is surrender or worry, never both. Once you surrender, you see that Existence plans even the small things beautifully, only we don't see it.

The Isavasya Upanishad*, an ancient *vedic** text, says, ‘The one who sees all living entities as spiritual sparks, can never have anxiety on any account!’

Everything that happens is a spark of Existence. That is the truth.

A small story:

Once a rich man met a Zen master. He asked the master to write down something that would encourage happiness and prosperity in his family for years to come. He wanted something that the family could cherish.*

The Zen master took a large sheet of paper and wrote, ‘Father dies, son dies, and grandson dies.’*

When the man saw the master’s writings, he became very angry. He said, ‘I asked you to write something that would bring prosperity and happiness to my family, but you have written such things! Why?’

The master answered, ‘If your son dies before you, it would bring unbearable grief and sadness to your family. If your grandson dies before your son, that would also bring great sorrow. If your family dies generations after generations in the order I have desc-

Worry is created out of ignorance, but sustained by ego. If worry is taken away, the ego suffers.

ribed, it will be true happiness and prosperity.’

Whenever

your mind suffers with worry, immediately be aware that somewhere you are interpreting the ways of Existence with your own ignorant mental setup. You will then stop worrying and start doing.

The ego in disguise

If you seriously analyze every worry that arises in you, you will see that ninety nine percent of your worries are baseless. But the problem is that the ego is not willing to accept that. The ego has invested too much in worry. Worry can’t be discarded just like that! Just try telling someone that his or her worries are not worth anything. They will get very offended. You would expect that a person would feel happy if you tell him his worries are not true. But it won’t be so! He will feel offended. The ego feels offended whenever its worries are not acknowledged with due respect.

Isavasya Upanishad - One of the major and oldest *vedic* scriptures

Vedic - Referring to Veda.

Zen - Japanese Buddhist practice. Derived from *dhyana*, meditation.

**Our very worries
become our
comfort zone. We
hide in them.**

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu* says beautifully, 'When a living entity forgets the constitutional nature of his relationship with god, he is at once overwhelmed with external energy. This is the cause of his false ego, his identification with his body-mind system!'

Ego comes into play only when you lose your connection with Existence. The ego is what sustains the worry. The worry is created out of ignorance, but sustained by ego. Worry becomes an axis around which the ego revolves. If worry is taken away, the ego suffers. The worry of work and the worry of responsibility are classic examples of this.

Understand that the idea of hard work itself is a myth. Hard work is really just worry plus a little work, that's all. Real hard work never causes worry. It simply rises and falls like a wave, with great dynamism and intensity. It will never dilute itself with worry.

An eight year old girl was very intelligent and somehow sensed that her mother would like a gift. She decided to buy her mother a birthday gift. The mother was very happy. She thought,

'At least my daughter appreciates my efforts. No one else does.'

The girl gave her mother the gift and told her, 'This is for you because you work so hard and no one appreciates it.' The mother replied, 'But dear, your father also works hard. Don't forget that.'

The girl said, 'Yes, but he doesn't make a fuss about it.'

The fuss is the worry. If you watch some people, they simply magnify their situation to prove that they have the greatest worries on planet earth! If you try to contradict them, they feel very hurt.

Even worrying about what others will say about us is a problem of the ego. The ego is constantly worried that its self-image might be spoiled by someone. It is because of the ego that we feel we want to be somebody special all the time. We spend considerable time just worrying about our self-image. Understand that the greatest blessing is being a nobody and yet being blissful. That is the greatest specialty. It is said that the most extraordinary thing about an enlightened being is that he thinks he is ordinary! So, understand that enlightenment itself is a journey to relax into yourself. You are someone special all

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu - A mystic from Bengal, India steeped in devotion to Krishna. His followers are known as Gaudiya Vaishnavas.

the time, only when you drop worry and ego.

Get out of your comfort zone

If you really want to come out of your worries, you will come out right now, without trying to justify any of your worries.

The thing is, our very worries become our comfort zone. We hide in them. Hiding and merely talking about them helps us to remain lazy.

Someone asks Mahavira*, an enlightened Jain master from India, 'Who is the one who has worries?' He beautifully replies, 'The person who is worried.'

They ask him, 'What is the cause of worry?' He replies, 'Laziness.'

Then they ask him, 'Who ends worries?' He replies, 'Man himself.'

They ask him, 'How can worry be ended?' He replies, 'By dropping laziness.'

If you drop laziness, you fall into right action. And when you fall into right action, you drop worry. Your comfort with worry can be understood even from the way you

react to other people's worries. If you keenly watch, you will observe that whenever a person talks to you about his worries, you first tell them, 'What can you do... That's just the way it happens...' You never straightaway give a solution to them. When you do this, be very clear, you are not only encouraging them, but you are also encouraging yourself to remain comfortably in the worry zone.

Worry can never have an external cause. Externally, events happen. They continue to happen. But your inner space is what decides your response to them. If you choose to respond with worry, be very clear, somewhere within yourself, you are giving into the laziness of your comfort zone. This is where you can simply sit and worry without moving into action. Any external event can be handled with the right decision or action and handled immediately, or you can choose to speak endlessly about your worry. What you choose to focus on is purely in your hands.

We again and again seek out the same old worry! We love to worry and talk about it. It makes us feel that we are shouldering a lot of problems. It makes us feel important, like the world can't make it without us to take care of it.

Mahavira - The 24th and last Jain *tirthankara* or enlightened one, who established the tenets of the religion of Jainism, founded in India and now practiced by millions worldwide.

Trying to change your impression to beat worry is like trying to change the screen to see a different scene.

A man and his wife were hurrying to their seats after a movie intermission.

In a very concerned way, the man asked the lady at the end of a row, 'Did I step on your toes on the way out?'

'Yes you did,' the lady answered back angrily.

The man said, 'Alright then, this is our row.'

Worry literally becomes 'our row'! You are very comfortable with it although you claim you suffer because of it. If you really want to come out of it, you will come out immediately! The question is whether you want to come out of it or remain in the problem.

In a university, there was a small department store where students could buy materials for their classes and personal use. There was a new person in charge of the store one particular day.

A student went to him and asked, 'Can you give me a blank tape?'

The man asked him, 'What language are you studying?'

The student replied, 'French.'

The man said, 'Sorry, we don't have any French blank tapes.'

The student asked, 'Do you have any English blank tapes?'

The man said, 'Yes, we have.'

The student said, 'No problem. Give me one of those.'

When you see a problem, if you want a solution, you never dwell upon the problem even for a second. You simply switch to the solution, that's all! In the same way, for every worry there is an instant solution. You only have to want it.

Most of the time, you prefer to stay in the comfort zone of your worry. It keeps you settled. For example, let's say you are visiting your child at college. You see a few students keeping their rooms all messy or exchanging clothes and wearing them. You record the whole scene in your mind and assume that is the way of life in the dorm itself. You advise your child to keep her things neat and not to wear others' clothes. Even if she tells you her things are in order and that she doesn't wear others' clothes, you will not readily erase or reprogram your recording. You stick with the earlier recording of what you observed.

There probably were many other beautiful things to record in the dorm like the joy of the students, the campus itself, etc., but every time you think of your daughter, only this one recording comes up and you worry

about her. Not only that, anyone you meet, you talk about how things are a mess in her dorm and how everyone exchanges clothes and wears them! The recording itself is not the truth. But you choose to have it as your comfort zone. You reinforce it.

I often tell people that if you sit in your house and worry, you call it homework. If you sit in the office and worry, you call it office work. If you sit on the beach and worry, you call it vacation, that's all! The mind is the same, only the location is different. You can't experience peace just by changing the place!

You should change the slide in front of the projector to see a different scene, not the projector screen! Any projector screen will show you the same picture if you use the same slide. Trying to change your impression to beat worry is like trying to change the screen to see a different scene. If you really wish to see a different scene, you must change the slide.

Stop Worrying about your wealth

An eternal worry for people is the worry about money. Even your money problems

get sorted out if you get up and get into right action. There is a famous saying, 'If you can't find a solution, you *are* the problem.'

If making money is the worry, then it clearly means that somewhere laziness is pulling you back into the comfort of worry. If you discard laziness and move, you make money. There are a million opportunities in today's world to make money.

If sustaining the money is a worry, then again you should either take steps to reduce spending or be in the ultimate surrender to Existence, knowing it will sustain you. The worry of sustaining money might not be a great problem in your life after all. So relax and just remain with the right action.

Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita*, 'A person whose mind is contended because of spiritual knowledge, who has subdued his senses and to whom stone and gold are the same and who is satisfied with what he has, is said to be established in Self-realization and is called an enlightened being.'

Bhagavad Gita - Ancient Indian scripture, delivered by enlightened master Krishna, and considered the essence of the *Upanishads* or scriptures.

**Too much
perfectionism
leads to stomach
troubles and
ulcers.**

**Drop
Worry,
pick up
health**

When you create more thoughts inside you through worry, the load on the navel region increases. It is from the navel region that thoughts or worries arise. When you create more and more thoughts, you feel the heaviness in your stomach. There is an energy center in the navel area called the *manipuraka chakra**. This energy center starts shrinking with the heaviness of worry. This energy center responds directly to worry, and affects the stomach. That is why when you worry about something, your stomach starts becoming uneasy. Or when you hear shocking news you say, 'I can't digest it...' Any disturbing news causes your stomach to churn. The stomach is very sensitive to thoughts.

You may have observed that those who are very ambitious, and who are perfectionists, will end up with ulcers. Too much perfectionism leads to stomach troubles and ulcers. Such people worry too much. Ulcers are due to continuously suffering with worries.

When worry becomes a habit, it causes many psychosomatic diseases and even cancer. It doesn't affect only certain parts of the body. Worry can affect any part of the body. Psychosomatic diseases don't have any carrier. They happen purely due to the way the mind and body of a person interact. That is why worry needs to be addressed and removed from the system.

There was a doctor famous for his extraordinary and effective treatment of arthritis. He always had a waiting room full of people.

One day an old lady with her back badly bent entered the office, with the aid of a stick. When her turn came, she went into the doctor's room and amazingly, came out within five minutes, walking completely erect with her head high.

A woman in the waiting room ran to her and said, 'It's a miracle! You walked in bent and now you are walking erect! What did that doctor do?'

The old lady replied, 'He gave me a longer cane.'

Sometimes we are so used to living in a certain way that we can't see a better way to live. Worry is that habit that keeps us from living to our full potential and invites

Manipuraka chakra - Subtle energy center located near the navel region and associated with worry.

disease into the body. Disease starts in the mind.

There are extreme forms of worry that may become habitual and slow down the functioning of the individual. This form of worry is diagnosed as Generalized Anxiety Disorder, called GAD. It is much more than the normal anxiety people experience day to day. According to research done by the National Institute of Mental Health in the USA, GAD affects about 6.8 million adult Americans and about twice as many women as men.

Understanding brings the energy of insight into the flow of time, the laws of the universe, and cause and effect of the many things that happen in the universe. Out of this arises a deep peaceful acceptance and reverence for the universe and its ways. Once this understanding happens, you remain cheerful, come what may. You enter into life with laughter and bliss. A blissful person's life is so rich that there is no space or time for worry.

How meditation helps

Once worry happens, we visit psychiatrists. The cause of worry is in the mind, not outside. Then how will medicine alone help?

A large number of people in the world visit psychiatrists for the treatment of worry. Medication is all right, but for psychosomatic conditions like worry, meditation is also needed.

In places such as war-torn Iran, research groups have studied the *Transcendental Meditation-Sidhi program designed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*, a 20th century teacher from India. When meditators did the TM Sidhi program in high conflict area, the crime rates, violence, and anxiety all reduced and the quality of life around them improved dramatically!

Meditation softens you. When you soften, love and gratitude start happening in you. Then slowly, there is no room for worry. Worry is also a form of violence. It is a subtle form of violence. It is a disguised agitation in the system.

Meditation also tremendously increases awareness. When awareness increases, outwardly you might be completely involved in the outer world, but inwardly you will be untouched by anything that happens. That is the real worry-free life.

Meditation

Let me give you a simple meditation technique to drop worry and become

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi - Indian spiritual teacher and promoter of Transcendental Meditation TM.

pleasant all the time. This is a meditation to tune yourself to bliss. It can be practiced anywhere, any time, even continuously, twenty four hours a day.

Just continuously visualize that you are inhaling and exhaling bliss and light. Visualize *prana*^{*}, the life giving energy, going in and out of you with each breath. *Prana*^{*} is energy and bliss. It is the energy that enters and leaves us through air, which it uses as the vehicle for entry into our

system. Air carries *prana*^{*} into you. Life continues in you because of *prana*.

So whenever you inhale and exhale, visualize yourself inhaling and exhaling blissful light energy. Feel that your whole body is a beanbag filled with light. You automatically start radiating bliss instead of worry and irritation. Worry is dissolved. You start radiating love and bliss continuously.

Prana - Life energy or life force.

What is Stress?

Worry and stress are closely interrelated. They are like parent and child. One cannot exist without the other. What works for one works for the other as well. However, given that stress is considered the biggest destroyer of health in today's world, it is worth going into more depth on this subject.

Four hundred years ago Rene Descartes* declared, 'I think, therefore I exist.' This has formed the basis of modern thinking. Billions of people in this world have followed Descartes* for generations believing that unless each one outthinks the other they cannot succeed in this world.

Descartes* was right, and he was wrong. He was right in that the human system does not know how to live without its mind, without thinking. As a result human beings become slaves to their minds. They live in bondage.

Many centuries before Descartes, a *vedic** sage declared that man does not begin to exist till he stops thinking. Adi Shankara*, at the age of eight, faced his future master across the waters of the holy Tungabhadra

The confusion between our true nature and what we pretend is stress or tension.

river. The master asked him, 'Who are you?'

In response Adi Shankara*

said, 'I am not the mind, I am not the intellect, I am not the ego and I am not the senses. I am beyond all that. I am pure consciousness.'

We are merely a bio-machine as long as we think we are mind and body. We are just a shade better than the animals we ascended from as long as we allow our senses to guide us. But the true potential of human beings is not merely to think and prove that we are superior to animals. The purpose of human life is to transcend the mind and ascend to a higher state of consciousness. In that state we are truly in the divinity that we descended from.

Till we reach that state of unity with what we truly are, we are in turmoil. This turmoil, this confusion between our true nature and what we pretend and strive to be is what we call stress or tension.

Rene Descartes - French philosopher scientist famous for his saying 'I think, therefore I am'.

Vedic - Referring to Veda or ancient scriptures.

Adi Shankara - Enlightened master from India. Greatest exponent of the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta or non-dualism, whose movement restored glory to the declining *vedic* tradition and Hinduism during his period.

Mind is not a machine

According to *vedic** psychology, we are not *disturbed*. We are indeed the *source* of that *disturbance*. Understand this well, you are not tensed but *you are tension*. You are not stressed but you are the source of stress. There is a big difference between the two. Let us look deeply into it. Then you will understand. You are not in tension. You are the tension. There is a very big difference between 'you are disturbed' and 'you are the disturbance'.

A group of reputed and experienced scientists, after doing research for many years, have now come up to say this. They say, we cannot make man responsible for his actions unless we teach him how to manage his emotions by managing what is happening inside him.

Whatever the *vedic* scriptures said five thousand years ago is the same thing that the modern scientists are saying now. These scriptures also provide the solution and answer for this age-old problem. They can bridge the gap between the Western psychology and the *vedic* psychology.

Western psychology continuously gives us the hope that we can be brought back to normalcy, retaining *I* as *I*. For example, if we are feeling hot in this room, we can fix the air conditioning and make it cool to be

comfortable. But we forget an important factor. The moment we bring air conditioning into this room, we need to maintain it. That brings additional tension. That brings additional problems. Now we need electricity, we need to pay the bills and for all these facilities we need money. When you go out to work, you no longer enjoy this room. The room and its air conditioning exist, but you are elsewhere working to pay the bills for the air conditioner!

We forget an important factor. *You as you are*, is a disease. The concept of mind, according to Western psychology, is a machine. According to *vedic* psychology, it is a process. Mind is not a machine but a process. It is constantly happening. The word '*manas*', which is the Sanskrit word for mind, means a constant happening, something that is not passive and dead but something that is dynamic and alive.

Western psychology insists on this one idea that the mind is a biomechanical machine. We all believe unconsciously that mind is matter, a thing or a machine. That is why constantly we connect all the past happenings of the mind as a chain, and start believing our mind is a solid thing.

Vedic - Referring to Veda or ancient scriptures.

Connecting the unconnected

Let me give you an example. The low mood that you experienced ten years ago, the low mood that you experienced nine years ago, the low mood that you experienced eight years ago, the low mood that you experienced seven years ago and the low mood that you experienced yesterday are completely unconnected and independent incidents. All these happened for different purposes, different reasons, at different times and situations. You connect all these unconnected incidents and say, 'My life itself is a depression.'

The low mood that you experienced years ago, months ago, weeks ago or days ago are all unconnected and independent incidents. Fifteen years ago, you would have felt the low mood and felt depressed because your toys were lost. Nine years ago, you would have felt depressed because your girlfriend was lost. Few years ago you would have felt depressed or disturbed because your son was not listening to you. The reasons were different, situations were different, and the causes were totally different. However, when you connect all these low moods and decide, 'My life is full of depression,' you have created hell for yourself!

The moment you start believing that your life is depressed, your life indeed becomes

You are not in depression. Please understand that it is only what you believe to be your past that you will reproduce in the future. We all know that we can't fly from our past experience. How can we believe that we can start flying from tomorrow onwards? No, we can't. Whatever we believe to be our past, only that we will believe can be our future. So once we start believing that our past was filled with depression, we have created the unconscious faith that our future will also be depression.

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When we believe that the mind is just a thing, a bio-machine, we have created hell for ourselves. Fortunately for us, the mind is not a thing. There is hope. The truth is that mind is not a thing as we all have been taught, it is a process. It is not a noun but a verb.

When we believe the mind is a thing, we create problems that do not exist.

A small story:

A man goes to a psychiatric doctor and says, 'Doctor, my life is full of problems'. The doctor says, 'Everybody's life is a problem. Don't worry. Every week we will have three sessions and you will be charged 100 dollars.'

The man says, 'Doctor, three sessions per week each at hundred dollars will

solve your problem. What about my problem!'

Understand, the moment we start believing that the mind is only a machine, we become helpless. No psychiatrist can help. No psychoanalyst can help. No other method can help, because the basic belief is wrong. The moment we bring a wrong belief, whatever is built on that has to go wrong. It cannot be the truth. We need to understand the basic truth that the mind is a process; we are not in tension but we are tension.

Identity gap

The identity that you project to the outer world is called *ahankar**. The identity that you believe as *you* internally is called *mamakar**. Again and again *vedic* psychology says that you are beyond these two. You are not just these two. According to Western psychology you are just these two. That is why so much of work is done to protect your identity. So much of attention and energy is given to hold on to your identity.

The reality, the real *you*, is much more than these two identities. You are beyond these two identities.

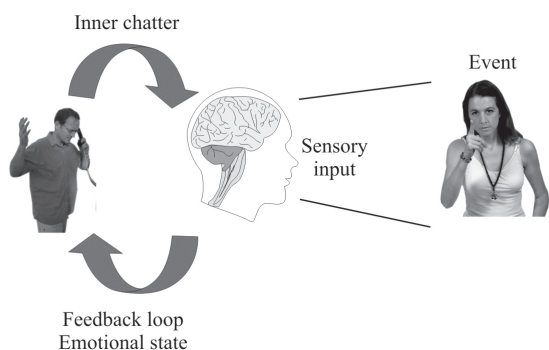
Ahankar - The false identification of the pure inner self with the outer world. A form of ego that makes you project a false identity of you to the outer world.

Mamakar - Inner ego that constantly says that you are smaller than what you think you are.

Above all, you need to understand that your mind is not a machine. It is not connected as you think. Because you do not experience the gap between two thoughts, you start believing it is connected. You go on repeating that you are disturbed and tensed. No. You are not disturbed. You are a disturbance. You need to understand the basic root where the problem starts, where the problem is created. The first basic root is you believing yourself to be a shaft or a thing. You are not a thing. Your idea about pleasure, your idea about pain, your idea about life, everything is built on that one lie, that you are a thing.

Mind is a process

You need to understand this one truth: you



are a process, and that by your very nature, your thoughts are unconnected, independent and unclutched.

Understand, by very nature, what you think as your identity is not required for you to run your life. You may say, 'No, if I am unclutched, unconnected, how will I plan for my future, how will I think of tomorrow? I have deadlines, project plans, so many things. How will I work? How will I submit my projects? How will I run my day-to-day life?' These are big questions that haunt you.

Understand this one example: when you are driving, do you plan every step? Do you plan how much you need to press the accelerator, when you need to press the brake, when you need to turn right, turn left? No. In the initial level when you are getting trained, you may plan but once you learn driving, you just sit. Many times you don't even remember what happened while driving. Am I right? You don't even remember you drove down to your office all the way. Only when you park your car in front of your office, suddenly you realize that you have been driving all this time and even reached your destination!

This is what we call *prarabdha**, bio-memory. You have an automatic intelligence to run, to maintain, to live and

What you think as your identity is not required for you to run your life.

to expand your life. What I am saying is a very basic truth.

Only if you

have suffered enough in your life with your mind, you will understand what I am saying. Only if you come to the verge of suspecting your own identity, you can understand.

Mind is also an illusion

The doors of entry to our mind are our sense organs. Without the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin we will not be able to give any input to our mind. The sensory inputs are the foods that the mind thrives on.

We assume that all that we see and hear are authentic. We believe that the sights we see and the dialogues we hear are the way that things happened. A little reflection will show how untrue it is. How many times have you interpreted a scene to be very different from what it really was based on your own conditioning? For instance, the moment you see a man and woman in close proximity interacting emotionally with one another, perhaps hugging, you immediately jump to the conclusion that they are lovers! They could be friends, brother and sister, father and

Prarabdha - Mindset and desires that we bring into this world when we are born.

daughter or mother and son.

It is the conditioning that we carry in us that drives us to interpretations of what we perceive through our senses. That is why I say that we first decide on the judgment and then collect the evidence to support the judgment we have already made. We have made the judgment already. All we need is a few bits of data to support that conviction, that's all.

It is as if our mind is a projector. We have a number of slides we have gathered along the path of our life, some even from our past births. These slides are the projections with which we live our lives. Each time the slide is repeated it gets more powerful. The first few times it may have to be shown for several minutes for it to impact us. As the *samskara** gets engraved deeper into our mind, all that is needed over time is having a quick glimpse and our mood changes and we decide based on that *samskara**.

Molecular biology experiments have revealed a startling truth that each time we experience a powerful emotion, like anger for instance, new cellular transmitters and receptors for anger get activated in our body-mind system, not merely in the brain but everywhere in the body. The first few times the emotion happens in the system, it may be a brief

drizzle. Once more and more cellular structures get built for this emotion, the drizzle turns into a shower, then into a storm and finally into a tsunami!

A man was stopped by a policeman on the highway for speeding. When the policeman questioned the man, he angrily replied that he was not speeding.

The policeman said he noted his speed at seventy miles per hour when the speed limit was fifty miles per hour. The man screamed that the policeman was lying. Now the policeman reached out for his pistol.

Just then, the man's wife leaned over and rolled down the window, 'Officer, don't argue with my husband when he has been drinking, he can become dangerous!'

All these incidents of road rage and other acts of passion and violence do not happen at one particular instant. The conditioning gets deeper and stronger at the cellular level. It is like cancer. Just like the malignant cells grow and kill, scientists have now discovered that emotional receptors multiply allowing emotions to flood us with no control from our part. In simple terms these emotions take over our behavior. To think that we control our mind

Samskara - Engrams or deeply engraved memories.

and we decide what we do is the biggest illusion we carry in our lives! This is the *maya** that drives us.

How do we decide?

Only about ten percent of what we perceive through our senses gets recorded in our conscious mind. Everything else goes directly into our unconscious mind. This is why many times we do not even remember a place that we pass every day. So long as this sensory perception does not interest us in some way, it does not get recorded.

Let us now see what happens to those sensory perceptions that do get recorded in our conscious mind. These impressions are sorted out by parts of our mind and identified. Your conscious mind records whether the person you see in front of you is known to you or whether he is an unknown stranger. How you would like to interact with him is no longer a decision made at the conscious level. In case you know him, your attitude towards him and your action would be based on the engraved memories that are grooved in your mind. In case he is unknown to you also, the appearance of that person would

t r i g g e r
u n c o n s c i o u s
r e s p o n s e s .
E i t h e r w a y t h e
f i l e m o v e s i n t o
y o u r
u n c o n s c i o u s f o r

**To think that we
control our mind
and we decide
what we do is the
biggest illusion
we carry in our
lives!**

a decision about what you should do.

For most of us, less than ten percent of the mind is conscious. Less than ten percent of what you perceive through your senses gets recorded consciously. It is possible that less than one percent of what you decide is a rational decision!

What do we do then? Do we continue to allow our unconscious mind to control us or can we do something to regain conscious control?

There are two ways in which we can regain control. The first is to reduce the conditioning that binds us. In our meditation programs, we work on the removal and dissolution of these *samskaras** that bind us. The second way is to be in the present moment, in total awareness and control.

In our Life Bliss Programs we teach techniques for both these methods. In the superconscious meditative state it is

Maya - Literally 'That which is not'. It is the concept that life is but a dream, however real it may seem while being experienced.

Samskara - Engrams or deeply engraved memories.

possible to relive embedded memories so that they are relieved. This allows the inner space to be cleansed. One gains the skills to reach and stay in the present moment awareness.

Transcend time - be in the present

If you observe your thoughts carefully, you will understand two things. One is what we talked about earlier about thoughts being unconnected. All you need to do is to sit down and write down the thoughts that arise in your mind for ten minutes. You will realize that there is very little connection between your thoughts. They seem to jump from one to another.

The second point you will notice is your thoughts are always about your past or your future. You can only think about what happened in the past or what will happen in the future. Your thoughts of the past are usually regrets about what you did not do or guilt about what you did. Thoughts of the future are about what you wish to do.

Please understand, neither the past nor the future is real. The past is dead and gone. Most often we do not even learn from the past. All we try to do is use our past to steer the future. It is like driving a car looking only at the rear view mirror! You

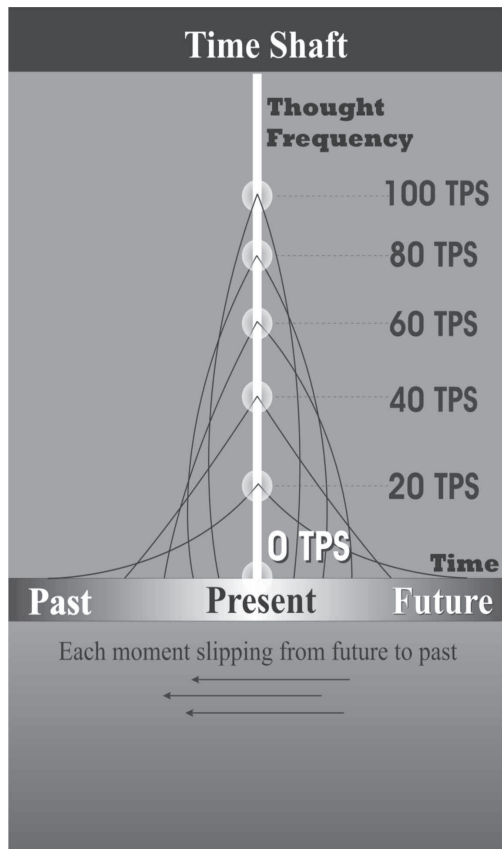
know for sure where you will end up!

The future is even more unreal. It has not happened. You have very little control over your future the way you are, because all your actions are steered by the unconscious mind. You are driven by the embedded memories of your past. Your thoughts are nothing but the movement of your mind between past and future. Your mind never wants to rest. If it rested you would know you could do without it!

If only you allowed the mind to rest or even persuaded your mind to rest, you will find that you reach a blissful state. That state is the present moment. All your future has to happen in this present moment. It is what you decide now in this present moment that makes your future. Once you take care of the present moment, once you live this present moment consciously, you no longer will have cause to regret your past or feel guilty about it.

You are oscillating at a high frequency most of the time. You are always excited, even when you think you are resting. This is why Buddha calls it the 'monkey mind'. As the thought frequency or thoughts per second or TPS comes down, you naturally rest into the present moment.

In the diagram, the shaft in the center represents 'time'. At any given time, the greater your TPS or Thoughts Per Second, the more far-flung you are from



consciousness of the present moment. You are simply worrying about the future thus allowing it to slip into the past, without ever getting a glimpse of the present.

When your TPS comes down, you enter more and more into the present and when this happens, you have a clearer vision of the past and the future. You may wonder what is there to be clear about the past. One can understand that the future may not be clear, but why the past? I have lived it, so why should it be unclear! You need

When you are in the intuitive state, you are more in the present.

to understand that what you now remember of the past is your judgment of the past, not the way it happened. How many times do we talk about the golden past? How much has been written about the 'golden past'? There is nothing golden about the past. We just choose to remember the good parts, so it looks golden.

When you are in the intuitive state, for those few moments, your TPS has dropped and you are more in the present. When your TPS is zero, you can clearly see the entire past and future.

The point where the future meets the past is the present. This is where your thought frequency is zero and you are in a no-mind state. You have not merely controlled or suppressed the mind, which is impossible. You have transcended the mind, which is possible.

Not only can the mind not play its games on you anymore, but you also reach a state where you can play with the mind and make it do what you wish. We can choose to be in this state. This is the state of meditation. Meditation brings the mind to rest. Meditation disengages the mind so that the mind cannot play games.

We can also reach this state in the master's

Ninety percent of your worries never materialize.

presence. The master is always in a no-mind state, which is the zero TPS state. When you are in his awareness, whether physically or otherwise, your own TPS also drops. You can reach zero TPS just by being in the master's presence. The presence of the master is meditation. Awareness of the master is meditation.

Inner chatter

In our normal state we are constantly in chatter. Even if we do not talk out loud to another person, as many stressed people in fact do, we talk silently within. Not only is our mind not at rest, but the thoughts it generates also take shape as a monologue or dialogue within us.

This inner chatter is what we call worry. Worry is nothing but the constantly repetitive inner negative chatter. Again and again we refer to the past and project it to the future by connecting all the negative things that have happened to us in the past. We then visualize the same thing happening in the future.

Left to themselves ninety percent of your

worries will never materialize. I have shown this to people who have attended our courses. I tell them to write down their worries and review them six months later. All of them tell me that almost all of their worries never really happened. The ten percent that did happen was good for them!

Your strong visualization actually invites these worries to become true! If a worry constantly nags you, bring in the understanding that the worry itself is a creation of your mind. The mind itself is unreal. The connection that it makes with your thoughts is unreal. Therefore, the worry is also unreal! You can replace negative words with positive words and negative thoughts with positive thoughts. It is that easy. These words have power.

Words cause Stress

We do not realize how powerful our thoughts and words are. As we discussed earlier, various experiments like those on water by the Japanese scientist Masaru Emoto*, show clearly that even water responds clearly to our words, thoughts and feelings. Over seventy percent of our body is made up of water and seventy percent

Masaru Emoto - Japanese scientist and author of 'The Hidden Messages in Water' showing the effects of one's thoughts and words on water and therefore on living beings.

of planet earth is covered with water. So you can imagine the power of words!

These experiments established beyond doubt what the Eastern mystics said centuries ago: As are your thoughts, so is your will. As is your will, so is your action. As is your action, so you become.

Don't think that negative thoughts and words will only affect those against whom you express them. Understand clearly that these same thoughts and words will have an equal effect on you, the person who created them. Negativity does not merely affect others, it affects you first.

Physiological effects of Stress

We have looked at what the scriptures say and what I think about why stress is created. Let us now look at what science says.

We all have a part of our brain that controls our actions such as breathing, digestion and such activities that the body does automatically, involuntarily. Nature has designed a fail-safe system in a part of our brain called hypothalamus. This part of the brain also includes what biologists refer to as the reptilian brain.

Behavioral scientists often talk about the fight or flight response. When the body-

mind system perceives a danger to our survival the hypothalamus is alerted by

our unconscious mind. The unconscious mind functions at speeds a million times faster than the conscious mind. So even before we consciously become aware of danger, we instinctively become alert. The hypothalamus activates the pituitary gland, the master gland, which then activates the adrenalin glands that secrete the adrenalin hormone, which is pumped into our extremities, the hands and legs. We then get ready for the 'fight or flight' reaction – either the energy prepares us to fight the threat or to run away from the threat.

The unconscious reptilian brain takes the decision to release chemicals into our body to protect us. This worked very well in the days of the caveman when he faced lions and tigers. He had to be ready even without thinking to fight or run away.

To study the effect of adrenalin on human beings today, experiments were carried out on athletes. Sprinters were lined up at the starting block and moments before the pistol was raised to signal to them to start running, the umpire lowered his arm. So, the sprinters had to fall back and reposition themselves. This was repeated six times. Without even running a meter the

The life saving adrenalin can become a killer when it is produced without reason.

**Stress is a killer,
but it is in the
mind.**

sprinters
collapsed at
the starting

block! The adrenalin level in their bodies had become dangerously high. The life saving adrenalin can become a killer when it is produced without reason.

The chances of our meeting a tiger or a lion are quite slim these days. Nevertheless our unconscious mind keeps sending signals of such danger. I call them 'fear strokes'. Psychologists estimate that we face at least half a dozen such fear strokes every day. These fear strokes produce large quantities of adrenalin in us. It has been established that depression is a direct result of such adrenalin production. Depression in turn is considered to be the main cause of many chronic and fatal illnesses.

Medical research has found that many young people in rich countries, even teenagers, have arteries so badly blocked that their arteries are similar to sixty-year-old people! Doctors have established that the physical condition is only one part of the problem. A much larger part is the emotional condition. It is now fairly well established that an emotional trigger causes the immediate onset of a heart attack or stroke, even though the physical condition may have been present for a long time.

Nowadays, cardiac physicians routinely request people to fill in a questionnaire on stress factors in addition to conventional tests to determine how prone they are to cardiac problems.

Doctors have found that major traumas in life such as death of a loved one, loss of job, loss of money and even transfers in job and moving houses can be serious stress factors that can lead to heart attacks.

What is true of heart attacks is true of many non-life threatening but highly debilitating ailments such as backaches, migraines and ulcers. The underlying emotional or psychological factor is far more relevant than the superficial physiological causes.

Stress is a killer, but it is in the mind.

We create fear strokes through worry. We create them through conditioning. You can correct the situation temporarily through medicines. Unless the underlying cause is removed, no medicine can be effective in permanently curing the ailment.

Is Stress work related?

In an IT company the Chief Executive received an enquiry for a project. He sent it down for a proposal. The team that worked on such projects did a full review and said that they could do the

job in six months at a cost of a million dollars. The manager in charge of the team reviewed this and said the team can do this in 4 months at a cost of three quarter million dollars.

The proposal went up to a General Manager. The General Manager called everyone, gave them a pep talk and said, 'We should be able to do this for half a million dollars in three months.' Then he sent this as his proposal to the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive called the client and told him that his company will deliver the product in two months at a cost of half a million dollars.

People who work in corporations can relate with this incident. People who make decisions and commitments are often out of touch with ground reality. Once such decisions are made their egos are in play. Anything can be sacrificed but not the ego! A simple study of corporate history can show how many companies have failed because of the egos of the people who led them.

I am told by some of my disciples in the corporate field about something called Level 5 Leadership. This is about those corporate leaders who put themselves behind the needs of the company and the people who work for them rather than placing their own ego needs first. Research

has shown that the Chief Executives of companies that have been commercially successful consistently are hardly known to the outside world! These leaders are so humble, and focused inwards.

In life, there are two categories of people: those who are stressed and those who are not. Those who are stressed are those who wish to control life. They like to mould life in the way they wish it to be. They are focused only on themselves. Those who have no stress are those who flow with life. They accept without complaint what life offers them. Their focus is about what they can do for others. You feel the stress when you flow against the current, not when you flow with it. You lose yourself when you flow with the current.

You can choose to get stressed just by staying at home. It is not necessary to go out and work. Research shows that the highest frequency of divorces happens between the ages of forty and fifty. People tend to divorce more when children grow up and leave home. Till then children have been the buffers between their parents. When children leave home, husband and wife do not know what to say to each other. Silence creates stress!

Stress at the workplace starts with our education system. We start ranking children from a very young age. When in a group three people are graded as heroes,

the rest of the group feels useless. We are taught to compete from a very early age. This comparison continues into the workplace and converts it into a battlefield.

A small story:

A crow was sitting in a tree doing nothing all day. A rabbit passed by, watched the crow and became envious. The rabbit asked, 'Can I also sit like this doing nothing?'

The crow said, 'Of course, please do if you wish to.' So the rabbit sat under the tree and did nothing. Some time later, a fox came by and ate the rabbit.

The moral is: to be sitting and doing nothing, you must be sitting very, very high up.

The so-called Human Resource programs specify that people must be categorized. I am told that in many corporations it is necessary to show that ten or fifteen percent of the people are bad performers. People are reduced to statistics! In order to survive people are forced to make others victims. This is probably why they call these offices 'concrete jungles'!

As long as people are driven by fear and greed, they cannot be inspired. They can be controlled and made to perform routine

tasks, but they cannot be inspired to do the impossible. This is the dilemma today's corporations face. They need people to perform, but their kit of motivational techniques is not enough. It contains the whip and the carrot, nothing more.

Human beings are not satisfied merely with material things. Psychologists in the field of management recognize this and say that salaries and perquisites are dissatisfiers and not satisfiers. What they mean is that if people are poorly paid they are unhappy, but they do not become happy by being paid well. They look for something more. They look for recognition.

A well-known psychologist built a model of how human beings move up in their desires. This is now named after him as Maslow's* hierarchy of needs. At the base of this pyramid are one's survival needs of food, shelter and other material essentials. People then look for fulfillment in the society they live in, such as building a network and so on. They then seek love and attention. Then they look for respect, name and fame. After all this they are still dissatisfied. They feel that there is something still missing in their lives.

That something is within. Maslow* called it self-actualization. This is the zone where we flow free of stress. This is the zone of

Maslow - American psychologist famous for his concept of the five layered hierarchy of needs.

inner realization. This is the zone where you know that you are one with the universal energy. Whether you work at home, in an office or factory, or you do not work at all, you still look forward to this state where you are centered.

This is what we teach in our basic Life Bliss Program courses. The five levels of the pyramid that Maslow* drew correspond to the seven levels of energy that we carry within us. These seven centers of energy are called *chakras** in the *vedic* system. Each *chakra** represents an emotional state as well as a state of desire. As we fulfill the needs of each *chakra** we move up in energy till we reach a state of fulfillment. It is a process many thousands of people have gone through with remarkable effect. We have taught these programs in many corporations worldwide. I call this a 'Guaranteed Solution'.

I referred to the Level 5 Leadership concept earlier. If this concept is about developing people who are more concerned about what they can do to help others and the world and through that process themselves, then our Life Bliss Programs are a simple route to developing such Level 5 Leaders. Such leaders not only do not

suffer from stress themselves, but they also do not induce stress in others.

Beyond Stress

To sum up, stress is an inevitable part of life. There can be no life without what we term 'stress'. It is just the mind-body response to what happens outside of us. It is not the disturbance outside that creates the trouble, the stress. It is the disturbance inside that does it. That is why we said earlier that we are the disturbance.

This is why, what causes stress in one person does not necessarily cause stress in another person. Someone said that the reverse of 'stressed' reads as 'desserts'! What is poison for one is nectar for another!

Stress is such an important issue in the corporate world. They estimate that trillions of dollars are wasted because of stress. As long as stress affects only people no one cares. The moment it affects what they call the bottom line, of course something must be done about it. Talking about stress and offering solutions that work temporarily at best is a huge business.

Maslow - American psychologist famous for his concept of the five layered hierarchy of needs.

Chakras - Energy centers in the body. Literally means 'wheel' based on the experience of mystics who perceived these energy centers as whirlpools of energy. There are seven major *chakras* along the spine: *muladhara*, *swadhishtana*, *manipuraka*, *anahata*, *vishuddhi*, *ajna* and *sahasrara*.

There is nothing that you can do about stress by playing with things outside, rather than fixing what is wrong within. How long can you run? From what will you run away?

What you can do is to change yourself. You can make yourself stress-proof. It is so simple. Choose not to be affected by what happens outside you. This is not impractical. This is a simple truth. It is your conditioning that makes you get affected by what happens to you through events that are beyond your control. Nothing is inherently good or bad except what we judge them to be.

Drop your judgment about yourself, people around you and situations. You will be free of stress. That is all it takes to be liberated from stress. Meditation can help you with this liberation. It helps you reach the restful mind state from which you can witness events around you without being touched by them.

You really have nothing to lose by trying, except your stress!

Meditation technique

This is a simple and yet a powerful technique to clear stress. We teach this

technique in our Life Bliss Programs for unblocking the *manipuraka chakra** or navel energy center, which is the seat of stress. This technique should always be practised before a meal, when the stomach is empty and a few hours before sleep.

While standing, shout, scream, rave and rant in a language that you do not know. If anyone is listening, it should also not make any sense to them. Be aggressive in letting out all your emotions and feelings that will start pouring out of you once you start. Cry if you so wish. Roll on the floor if your emotions drive you.

This technique is a powerful meditation. It unblocks your unconscious and allows all the negativities stored inside to dissolve. Typical psychoanalytical sessions when patients talk to their analysts or even throw things around for catharsis, are still conscious processes. Only ten percent of your stored memories will be released. Processes such as hypnosis are through the unconscious and you have no control. This technique is a superconscious process in which you retain awareness while cleansing yourself.

Practise this technique for twenty minutes. Then sit down and allow the energy to spread within you in silence for ten minutes. During this silence just be a witness to your thoughts. Do not suppress them or chase them.

Manipuraka chakra - Subtle energy center located near the navel region and associated with worry.

What is Fear?

Fear is a deeper dimension of worry. Worry can cause ulcers. Fear on the other hand can even destroy life. However, unlike worry without which life is possible, fear seems woven into our lives. It is possible to face fear without fear. A person who we call courageous is not one without fear, but one who has learnt to face fear without fear.

Fear is a form of energy inside us. That is why it cannot be destroyed. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed. It can only be changed from one form to another.

Understand, your fear is directly connected to your life energy. Whenever you are facing a survival threat, you will see your fear rising and the adrenalin release happening in your body. That adrenalin release gives you so much energy that you can almost fly. We call it the fight or flight response - either you face the fear and fight, or you run away. There will be so much energy in your body the moment you face a survival threat. Whenever that threat is real, the *swadhishtana chakra**, the seat of life, gets completely shaken!

Big Bang and black hole inside you

When there is pure desire or pure greed in you without any object in particular, it becomes the overflowing energy of creation, expansion, or Big Bang*. For no reason, you simply explode with energy. In the same way, when there is pure fear in you without any object in particular, it becomes contraction, black hole*.

Fear is your nature, but don't direct it towards any object. Having fear is natural. But connecting the fear to an object is societal. Pure fear helps in survival and it is spontaneous.

Enormous energy radiating from you for no reason is pure greed. If it is because of an object, it becomes ordinary greed. In the same way, energy settling back within you for no reason is pure fear. If it is because of an object, it becomes ordinary fear. Unless the black hole* happens, the Big Bang* cannot happen. It is part of life, part of the drama, part of the game. Pure fear means you are relaxing into yourself, settling inside you. That is what we call

Swadhishtana chakra – Spleen energy center between base of spine and navel. Blocked by fear.

Big Bang – Cosmological model of the universe where the universe is considered to have originated from a highly dense initial state at some time in the past, and continues to expand to this day.

Black hole - A theoretical region of space in which the gravitational field is so powerful that nothing, not even light can escape from it.

**Fear is the fight
between faith in
oneself versus the
negative idea
about the future.**

destruction. The birth of this cosmos is the Big Bang*, and death is the black hole*. Birth of your being is big bang for you. Death of your being is black hole for you. The inhaling breath is pure desire. The exhaling breath is pure fear.

Prana, the life energy that enters along with the air, goes into you because of the Big Bang. *Prana* leaving your system with the outgoing air is the black hole. When you resist or fight with the Big Bang or black hole, you create disturbance in your system.

When fear happens, when the black hole happens, it means that you are turning towards peace or getting ready for the Big Bang. Whenever pure fear happens, you become rejuvenated with a tremendous relaxation which surges as courage and energy in you!

**Fight between your
potentiality and your negative
approach**

Whenever you are afraid of losing something that you have, or you fear you cannot achieve something that you want to have, there is a fight going on between your potentiality and your negative approach to the future.

If you are sure there is no possibility of achieving something, that you don't have the potentiality, you will not have fear. If you are sure that you can achieve something, then also, you don't have fear.

Fear is the fight between faith and belief in oneself on one hand, versus the negative idea or expectation you have about your future on the other hand. You are literally fighting with your own positive and negative energies.

If you are very sure you don't have the potentiality, that you can't achieve, then you won't have fear. If you are very confident you are going to achieve, then also you won't have fear. However, if there is something you want to achieve, but you are not sure that you can achieve it, then

Big Bang – Cosmological model of the universe where the universe is considered to have originated from a highly dense initial state at some time in the past, and continues to expand to this day.

Black hole - A theoretical region of space in which the gravitational field is so powerful that nothing, not even light can escape from it.

you will have fear. The fight between these two ideas, the dilemma is what we call fear.

You see, you are not afraid that you will never become the king of the universe. No! You are very clear you could never become that! But you are afraid that you will not become successful like your brother. You are afraid that you will not become or achieve that which is within your reach.

Possibility creates fear. It means fear is the root of life! Are you afraid that you can't live on the planet earth for more than three hundred years? No, because you know for sure you could never live that long anyway. But you are always afraid that you may not live for more than seventy or eighty years, that you may have a premature death. Anything you are clear is impossible for you to achieve will not create fear in you. Anything that you think is possible and that you want creates fear.

There are two ways to escape fear. One way is to block all possibility. This means you can die, then there won't be any more fear!

The second way to escape fear is to break the boundary of possibilities. If there is infinite possibility, if there is no boundary, if there is nothing that limits you, then you become fearless.

Either nothing is possible, so you won't have fear because there is nothing to be taken away from you. Or everything is possible, so you won't have fear because you feel all-powerful.

Just by having this understanding, something will click in you and so many fears will disappear from your being!

These two possibilities are actually used as techniques by masters. When masters say, 'Nothing can be done by you,' it is to create that deep surrender, a psychological death. You decide that there is no more possibility, nothing else can be done except relaxing. This is what Ramana Maharishi* calls *atma sharanagati* or self-surrender. You can go beyond fear in this way also, by closing all possibilities.

The second way to go beyond fear is by opening all possibilities. It is called *atma gnana* or self-realization.

There is a beautiful story:

One person wrote on the wall of a temple where the teachings are written, 'Soham' - 'I am That.' It means, 'Everything is possible by me.'

Another person came and wrote, 'Dasoham' - 'Nothing can be done by me. I am a slave.' Again that is also okay.

Ramana Maharishi – Enlightened master, based in Tiruvannamalai in South India. He taught the method of Self-inquiry, asking oneself, 'Who am I?', as the path to Self-realization.

If you are in tune
with the idea,
‘Nothing can be
done by me,’ you
are a *bhakti yogi*
- you surrender.
If you think,
‘Everything can
be done by me,’
you are a *gnana
yogi* - you explore
and experience.

A third
person came
and wrote,
‘Sadasoham’
- ‘Always I
am That.’

You can
surrender
yourself
when you
feel nothing
can be done.
You can

experience your power when you feel
everything can be done. Both techniques
can liberate you from fear.

If you are in tune with the idea, ‘Nothing
can be done by me,’ you are a *bhakti yogi**,
you surrender. If you think, ‘Everything
can be done by me,’ you are a *gnana yogi**,
you explore and experience. Whether you
work in this path or in that path, going
beyond fear is possible. But you should be
completely connected to one ideology or
the other. Either you should be ready to
work with ‘Everything is possible for me,’
or you should be ready to work with
‘Nothing is possible for me.’

Increased possibility for enlightenment

People come and say to me, ‘I have too
many fears. What can I do?’

I tell them, ‘If you have too many fears,
the possibility for enlightenment is more.
So many doors are available to you!’

For a person who doesn’t have too many
fears, the possibility, the number of doors
is also fewer because he leads a dull life. A
person who leads a dull life will not have
much fear. He has nothing much to lose,
nothing much to decide. He is not taking
many risks.

But a living being who is doing many things
and making many decisions will experience
fear. If you are experiencing too much fear,
then so many doors are available for your
enlightenment!

One more thing: only if you can open it
can it be called a door. If you don’t know
how to open it, then it is more like a wall.
If you are experiencing too many fears in
your life and if you know the right
technique, all those fears can become
doors and you can be liberated. Otherwise
all the fears are like walls, and it is as if
you are caught in a big prison.

Bhakti yogi - A person who follows the path of devotion, *bhakti yoga*, as a means to enlightenment.

Gnana yogi - One who follows the path of knowledge for Self-Realization.

All you need to do is, every time you feel fear, do not disrespect yourself. Do not lose confidence or condemn yourself thinking, 'What kind of a being am I?' Actually people who can face their fears do not have so many problems. People who are afraid of their fears create more problems for themselves. When you brood too much about your fears, you start thinking you have problems.

If you understand the true nature of fear, it can be considered a blessing. If you are courageous enough to face the fear, it can lead you to liberation.

Sometimes, just by switching your attention to something else, you can come out of fear. But that is not fearlessness. Fearlessness means taking a quantum jump into the consciousness where you will never experience fear of losing anything!

The fears that you have about your life, be it fear of failure, fear of losing your near and dear ones, fear of losing your wealth, fear of the unknown - every fear can be used as a door to enlightenment.

Either you are filled with tension or you are filled with energy. If you are filled with tension, you are trying to take energy by force from the source within you that does not die, without knowing the technique.

Every fear can be used as a door to enlightenment.

There is a source of energy within you that never dies, your *atman** or Self. If you try to take energy by force from this source without knowing the right technique, it creates tension.

Whenever you try to create energy in you by remembering some desire or fantasy, it is like trying to kick the door in and take the energy from the other side. You want the energy but you don't have the patience to open the door. You can use the key to patiently open the door and allow that bliss and energy to come into your being. That key is called meditation.

Another important truth you should know:

There is something within you that never dies which is your source of energy. There is also something within you that dies, something that is actually never alive even now. The fear of death exists in you because you think there is something you have now that will be taken away from you. No! Anything that you have now, cannot be taken away. Anything that can be taken away, you never had in the first place. Anything that can die can never occupy your inner space.

Atman - soul, spirit, consciousness, etc., as referring to the individual imperishable energy that is a holographic image of the Cosmic Consciousness or *Brahman*.

Fearlessness is courage to face fear

You cannot conquer fear. Fearlessness means intelligence to live the intense fear without directing it towards any object. When there is no object to be afraid of, the intense fear will give such an intense relaxation and peace.

Fear is a powerful energy which gives a deep relaxation, a deep centeredness. The fear center is the rejuvenation center.

Fearlessness is not suppressing fear. For example, when you are afraid to cross a dark area in the night, you start thinking of and repeating god's name. Because of fear, god's name will be topmost in your mind! You feel that you don't have fear because your inner chatter is engaged in something else!

When you engage your inner chatter in something else, you feel that you are out of fear. But you have only diverted your attention, you haven't solved the problem completely.

There is a saying, 'When a cat drinks milk, it will close its eyes tight and think that the whole world has become dark, and therefore, nobody can see it!' Understand, you also do the same thing when you don't pay attention to the fear, and then believe that the fear has disappeared.

Fearlessness does not mean non-existence of fear. It means the fear is there, but you have tremendous energy or courage to live with it and face it. Fearlessness means having the energy or the courage to live even with the maximum fear. It is going beyond that fear and being neither attached to nor detached from the fear.

One more important thing you should know is fear is part of the nature of life.

People come and ask me, 'What should I do about my fear of the unknown?' I tell them, 'Fear is a good sign, it means you are alive! There is a possibility of losing something, and that is why you are afraid. If you don't have any possibility of loss, you will never be afraid.'

You can be fearless if you are already in your grave! Then there is no need to be afraid of anything because you have nothing to lose! If you have something to lose, you will have fear. That is the nature of life itself.

Fear does not exist when things are definite and known. Fear exists only when things are not definite, when they are mere possibilities and unknown in that sense. For example, death is a possibility. As an incident it is definite, but when and how it might happen is not clear. So there is always fear associated with it.

Fear of darkness

Your fear of darkness and fear of death are actually the same - fear of the unknown. Connecting with the darkness will remove this fear. Your fear of death, the fear of disappearing, will be completely healed.

I am reminded of a joke:

Once a little girl was asking her father, 'Daddy, are you afraid of darkness?' The father replied, 'Of course not.' The girl continued, 'Then are you afraid of snakes?' The father replied, 'No, not at all.' The little girl was very happy that she had discovered something new.

She said, 'Oh! So Daddy, you are not afraid of anything other than Mommy!'

Anyway, understand your fear of darkness is because of your ignorance, because you have not faced it clearly.

In *tantra*^{*}, the first instruction that disciples are given to do for healing the inner self is to go and sit in a forest or empty space and gaze at the emptiness. All that the person has to do is to sit in the emptiness of the vast open sky, and one has to gaze at the sky the whole night. So many different fears and moods will come up. Whatever one has suppressed will come up.

In Zen tradition, they have a similar practice where the person is asked to sit facing a wall and gaze at the wall. The mind becomes empty and one with the emptiness outside.

One important thing to remember when you do this is that if you have suppressed your need for rest, that suppression that has become restlessness in you, and your desire to relax into silence, will also come up. It is like the whole system is getting cleaned. That opening up of your suppressed emotions is what you feel as fear. You feel, 'No, no! I don't want to look into this darkness!' You try to avoid it.

If you can just look into the darkness and the fear with awareness, you will live through it and get over it.

Wisdom through Fear

If a child is afraid of the dark, we say, 'Don't be afraid, you should be brave.' When you say this, you are teaching the child that the fear he is feeling should not be felt. But the child cannot do anything if the fear arises in him. So now he tries to force himself to feel brave by suppressing the fear. This is how the child learns to suppress the natural emotion of fear. His body is trembling with fear but he resists

Tantra – Ancient *vedic* tradition of achieving enlightenment through spiritual techniques or practices, meditations and ritual worship.

**All our fears are
actually fear of
death under
various disguises.**

the fear in
order to prove
he is brave.

Instead, if you
allow the child to accept the fear and
explore the darkness that is causing him
fear, the child will go through the darkness
and the fear completely. The fear will
automatically drop from him because his
own experience would have shown him
that the fear has no solid existence.

Fear of losing identity

The biggest fear human beings have is the
fear of losing their identity. Even the fear
of losing one's life is not as great as the
fear of losing the identity. The fear of
losing your identity is much worse than the
fear of death.

Fear of death

All our fears, be it fear of losing physical
health, mental stability, wealth, name and
fame, or loved ones, are actually fear of
death under various disguises.

A small story:

*A man had prepared thoroughly to
deliver a speech at a public function.
He suddenly went blank when he
stepped on stage and took the*

*microphone in hand. He was gripped
by stage fright! He just stood speechless
in front of the huge crowd for a few
minutes.*

*Then suddenly, after some time, he said,
'The human mind is the most amazing
thing in this world. It starts working from
the moment you are born and never
stops working until the moment you die
– except when you have to make a
speech!'*

The social fear or fear of being rejected by
society makes us do things to please
society, even when it is not good for us. In
this process, many times, we sacrifice what
our being really wants to do. That fear of
not being accepted by society is just
another form of the fear of death. It is the
death of the ego.

Every act of ours is unconsciously related
to death and the fear of dying.
Understanding death can change your
entire perception of life. It can simply
transform the way you handle all your
fears. (*A detailed understanding of death is
provided in the chapter on 'Death'*)

Anger – The active form of Fear

Fear is what leads to anger. Fear is the
passive form of the energy while anger is
the active expression.

A small story:

A man rushed into the post office very angrily with a bunch of papers in hand, saying, 'How dare they send me threatening letters like this!' The official at the post office said, 'Yes, sending threatening letters is a legal offense. Do you know who has been sending you these letters?'

The man shouted back, 'Of course, I do! It is the Income Tax people!'

When you are angry, just look into the anger. At the root of it, you will find a deep fear.

Try this for yourself: if you are feeling fear, express anger at that time. Throw your hands, stamp your feet and express the energy. You will see that the fear disappears. You will see for yourself how fear can simply transform to anger. Similarly, fear can also transform to hate. You just need to be aware of yourself and witness how the emotions subtly change from one form to another. When you understand this play, you can easily get out of the game.

Fear strokes

Psychologists talk about fear strokes. For example, you are walking in the garden in the dark, and you see a coil of rope. You start shivering, imagining it to be a snake.

Fear is the passive form of the energy while anger is the active expression.

That sudden shock you get before realizing it is just a rope and not a snake, is

what is called a fear stroke. A fear stroke is like shaking a rose plant from its roots. If you keep shaking it long enough, it will die.

It is said that we undergo six to twelve fear strokes every day and night, both in dreams and also in wakefulness. Imagine what happens to our being! Fear strokes originate from unconsciousness. When they are viewed with awareness and consciousness, they can be substantially reduced.

At the time of the fear stroke, you may not have any time to go into awareness because it is just like a spike. But after the fear stroke passes, you can analyze the stroke and get a deeper understanding of your fears. This will help you to dissolve the whole idea of fear.

The intensity and frequency of fear strokes can be greatly reduced by reducing the intensity and depth of the basic level of fear in us. Only from this baseline fear, do the fear strokes arise. With deeper understanding and clarity, we can reduce the baseline fear, and the fear strokes will also reduce.

How to overcome Fear

Witnessing and acceptance

When you are faced with fear, don't try to resist it or suppress it. Just look at the fear, note the fear and accept it. Acceptance of the fear dissolves the fear. Allow the fear to shake you. If your body trembles, let it tremble. If your eyes water, let the tears come. Just be like a blade of grass in the wind, bending without resistance.

A small story:

On a dark night, a man was walking on a narrow path. Suddenly, his foot hit a rock and he stumbled and slipped down. He managed to catch hold of a branch hanging over the rock. It was completely dark. The man tightly held onto the branch. He shouted for help but the only response was his voice echoing back. Hearing the echo, the man was terrified that he might be at the mouth of a huge abyss.

The night seemed endless and the man was desperately holding on, hoping he could get some help. Finally dawn arrived. The man looked down to see how deep the abyss was, but there was no abyss; just two feet down was a big rock!

Your fears are exactly like his, you think it is an abyss but it is actually just a few feet. If you can face your fears, you see they have no depth. Because you magnify the fears, you imagine them to be an abyss. It is your choice – to let go of the branch and the fear, or to keep clinging onto it and torturing yourself.

Acceptance is the only way to conquer inevitable things. When you accept, suddenly you see the fear disappears. The moment you accept, fear loses its power to frighten you. When you don't fight with it, you will see fear as deep peace. When the fear stroke happens, just live it. That is the only way.

When you have an object connected to fear, accept it. That acceptance transforms. The more you fight, the more you empower fear. Diverting your attention away from the fear is also not the way because then the fear still remains with you. It does not mean that you are out of fear.

Allow the fear to take over itself. Go into the fear two to three times. Live the fear intensely without any reservations. Suddenly you will find that it doesn't touch you anymore!

Swadhishtana chakra - seat of life and death

Fear is associated with the *swadhishtana chakra**, the subtle energy center two inches below the navel region.

This is an incident from my life when I was young:

I used to circumambulate the Arunachala hill every day. I would start early in the morning at around four am, and go around the hill, chanting and singing keertans*.*

One morning I started very early, soon after midnight. In those days there were no roads or lights on the path around the hill. It was a dense forest all the way. I was happily singing and walking with my eyes down. Suddenly, at a spot near a small river, I looked up and saw a pack of fierce-looking hyenas staring at me intensely ready to pounce on me!

In that sudden deep fear, I just let out a scream from the depths of my hara, the swadhishtana chakra*. It was a scream*

Acceptance of the fear dissolves the fear.

of pure fear that I had never

experienced before. It was so complete that never again did I feel shaken by fear in my life!

I felt a total surrender to Arunachala and a deep trust that Arunachala* would take care of me. Suddenly, from nowhere, an elderly sannyasi* appeared in front of me with a big stick, and chased away the hyenas. As soon as the animals ran away, the old man disappeared!*

With that primal scream, I found that my body had suddenly become much lighter. I was almost floating rather than walking, as if the frequency of my being had increased.

In modern psychiatric treatment, ‘primal theory’ is applied where patients scream as a catharsis, from the depths of their *hara**, to relieve fear and other suppressed negative emotions.

Swadhishtana Chakra – Spleen energy center, between base of spine and navel. Blocked by fear.

Arunachala hill – Literally the unmoving red mountain in Tiruvannamalai in Tamilnadu in South India, this mystical hill is considered a representation of enlightened master Shiva.

Keertans – Devotional songs.

Hara – Seat of the soul in Japanese tradition, corresponds to *swadhishtana chakra* or subtle energy center related to fear, situated near the belly region.

Sannyasi – One who has renounced, a monk.

Visualization

A very powerful way of overcoming fear is to visualize going through that fear as clearly as you can. The beauty with this technique is that it can be used when you are not in the fear situation, when you are calm and able to handle yourself.

You can sit by yourself and visualize the situation that causes fear. Feel clearly the fear coming up in you, face the fear with deep awareness. If you suffer, if your body feels uncomfortable, it is fine. Don't suppress the fear, just allow it to happen. When you experience something completely, you stop the process.

Meditation techniques

1. *Hamsa Mantra*

This is a very powerful technique that can be used twenty-four hours a day. Whenever you are attacked by fear, just sit back and relax. Put your awareness only on your exhaling breath. Repeat the word 'sah' silently as you exhale, that is, with the outgoing breath. Exhaling is like

relaxing and letting go anything that can die. While inhaling you will be constantly trying to hold on to something. Exhaling is like letting go. Focus on exhaling without bothering about inhaling. When you inhale, repeat 'ham' silently.

Place more awareness and energy on the exhalation. Help yourself exhale deeper. Let the inhalation happen automatically through the body. Place your energy, attention and effort only on exhaling.

It is a silent intonation of 'ham...sah...., ham...sah'. Silent intonation of this *hamsa mantra** will suddenly take you into the awareness, the relaxation, that never dies. Whatever can die will leave your system, your inner space.

This technique can also be practiced at other times when you are not faced by fear, while you are sitting, talking, walking, eating, even while you are sleeping. It is a very powerful technique. Constantly, all twenty four hours, place your attention on exhaling and just intone the *hamsa mantra** silently as 'hamsah', 'hamsah', 'hamsah'. When you inhale, intone 'ham' and when you exhale, intone 'sah'.

Understand, when constantly intoning this *mantra*, it will become *ajapa japa** or chanting without effort. Chanting with

Hamsa mantra - Also called *soham mantra*, it is practised by intoning 'hmmm' while inhaling and 'sssooo' while exhaling.

Ajapa japa - Chanting a sacred chant involuntarily.

effort is called *japa*. Chanting without effort is *ajapa**. It means that which goes on automatically in you. You just need to intone, that's all. Fall in tune, that's all. The whole day it will be resounding within you.

Whatever can die will leave your system, and you will realize that whatever can die can never be part of you. If you are identifying yourself with something that can die, that identification will be disconnected and you will be unclutched.

Whatever can never die, you will feel connected to that. Whatever cannot die is your very being. You will realize you are that which can never die, that which we call the Truth, enlightenment, Consciousness. If the intonation of the *hamsa mantra** becomes *ajapa** in you, you become a Paramahansa*!

Try this technique for just three days. Whenever you remember, inhale with the silent intonation, 'ham'. Exhale with the silent intonation, 'sah'. Let your awareness be more on the exhalation. You will suddenly see that the fear of losing your wealth, parts of your body or your health,

or your near and dear ones, or the fear of unknown and all the fears will disappear.

When your awareness is on exhaling, whatever is occupying your inner space as a part of you that can die, will simply leave your inner space. You will be liberated.

Darkness is the fulfillment, the creative energy from which you took birth.

2. Darkness meditation

We are born out of darkness, the darkness that exists in the mother's womb. Darkness is not negative as we usually think. It is intense healing. It is a motherly, positive energy.

The darkness that exists in your mother's womb is an intense energy. It is not the empty darkness of the graveyard. It is the Whole, the energy from which you came. The darkness existing in your mother's womb is the energy from which your body was created. It is called the causal body, the *karana sharira**. The darkness is the root cause for your body. Not only that, even

Hamsa mantra - Also called *soham mantra*, it is practised by silently intoning 'hmmm' while inhaling and 'ssaaa' while exhaling.

Ajapa japa - Chanting a sacred chant involuntarily.

Paramahansa - Supreme Swan, title bestowed on enlightened beings.

Karana sharira - Causal layer, the fifth energy layer in us, corresponding to deep sleep. The source of conditioned memories or engrams.

the sky or the space is intense darkness. Space is not intense light but intense darkness.

The *vedic* scriptures say that at the beginning of creation, darkness was covered by darkness. That is the beginning, the source.

Darkness is the infinite base. When you board a flight and look outside the window at night, you can understand what I mean. The space is darkness. Darkness is the only thing that is. Anything else that is added comes and goes. Understand, darkness is not negative as you have been taught. Most of us are taught darkness is death, the emptiness that happens after your death. You never realize the emptiness that existed before your birth is also darkness! Now change the understanding. Darkness is not the emptiness that happens after your death. Darkness is the fulfillment, the creative energy before your birth, from which you took birth. This clarity can make you feel connected to darkness.

You need to first understand about darkness with more clarity and more positive understanding, only then you can do this meditation. If you are afraid of darkness, you can't enter into this meditation.

This technique can heal four things: chronic fatigue, insomnia, oversleeping and depression. All these can be straightaway

addressed and healed just by this single technique.

Instructions:

Total Duration: 25 minutes

Close your eyes and sit. We all know how to close our eyelids but not our eyes. Closing the eyes means to completely stop seeing inside, behind the eyelids also. Usually when you close your eyes, you start seeing many things inside you. The inner television will never be switched off, it constantly goes on!

Now close your eyes and completely stop seeing inside. Turn off the inner television!

Then you will see the intense darkness from which you were born, the darkness in your mother's womb, the same darkness that you still carry in your inner space. Out of the same space energy in your mother's womb, the whole world has emerged. You came out of one bit of space energy from your mother's womb. When you came out from your mother's womb, you had already imbibed that darkness, that space energy, into your own inner space.

If you close your eyes and stop seeing things inside, you will see intense darkness. Just be with the intense darkness for at least twenty minutes. If your mind wanders, just come back and get centered. Be with the darkness.

After twenty minutes, open your eyes and

bring the same darkness outside for five minutes. With your eyes open, see the same scenes that you saw in the darkness. See the same thing with intensity. This may take up to a month of practice. But if you can see the same darkness inside and outside, you will see you are able to switch off your mind whenever you wish!

Understand, the ability to switch off your mind whenever you wish liberates you from all problems, all disorders related to the mind, whether it is insomnia, oversleeping, chronic fatigue or depression. All these things are related to the causal body or the fifth energy body in us. All diseases related to the causal body will be completely healed once you enter into the deep darkness inside and outside.

Physiologically and psychologically, this meditation will transform your life. This technique is not only for healing, but it can also directly open you to deeper and deeper levels of consciousness, to enlightenment.

3. Awareness of *swadhishtana chakra*

Step 1:

Remember the *swadhishtana*. Be aware intensely of the being center, two inches below the navel. Intensely chant the *hoo kara** by producing the sound *hoo*, through the mouth as you exhale as loudly and as long as possible. This will create a vibration effect around your mouth. Allow any fear that comes up to come up. If you are trembling or shaking or feeling disturbed, it is ok. Intensely chant the *hoo kara* mantra*.

Step 2:

Relax in the being center.

Pure greed is intense bliss or excitement.
Pure fear is intense peace.

Through bliss, you can achieve. Through peace also, you can achieve. Relax into the peace, and you will see that you are completely alive!

Hoo kara - 'Hoo' sound produced from the mouth during exhalation in meditation.

Often, fear manifests itself as pain. The most frightening thing in the world is pain.

All living beings are afraid of one thing, and that is pain. If you look deeply, you will find that people don't fear even death as much as they fear the pain and agony they will undergo at the time of death! Many are afraid of poverty, many of relationships, and many others fear disease. The root cause of all these fears is the pain that happens while going through these things. All these fears are because of the fear of pain.

What is Pain

Pain can be physical, mental or emotional.

Physical pain is a basic necessity for the body. Just imagine, if we could feel no pain in our body we might accidentally hurt ourselves or start styling our faces, hands, and legs the way we style our hair today! Actually, pain is a letter of request, written by the body to the mind, saying, 'Please pay attention to me!' because attention is energy. When attention is given to a particular area, that attention becomes energy for that area. When the body communicates pain, it is actually asking for attention or energy, which will help it heal.

Mental or emotional pain is the psychological feeling that arises when you are faced with something you don't like.

Research shows that emotional pain can deeply disturb the physical body. For example, the psychological feelings that arise with sexual repression can result in lower back disorders, or the pain of shouldering too much responsibility can cause pain in the shoulders.

Whether the pain is physical or emotional, an important thing you need to understand is that pain is always born from resistance to the present moment.

Time vs Understanding

If a painful incident happens in one's life like the loss of a child, the husband or wife leaving the spouse, the breakup of a close friendship, one suffers and then slowly accepts it over time. One may cry and brood many days and nights, but then one comes to accept what happened. Time heals. It is a common saying. Understand that time is needed for healing only because you were not ready to face the pain and suffering in a conscious and aware manner at the time the incident happened.

If you can just look at the pain, if you can witness the emotion with awareness and see the play of the mind while experiencing pain, then the understanding dawns and instant healing happens. Time is needed because you are not ready to have the understanding. So you suffer a great deal. Over time, after some weeks, months, or

**Pain is always
born from
resistance to the
present moment.**

even years, the incident fades and becomes a distant memory.

However, the pain is not completely gone from your system. If you come across a person who even distantly reminds you of your lost child or husband, for example, if the person has a similar style of talking, walking, or laughing, the wound reopens. It hurts because you carry the memory of the past. Because of this, you feel life is too heavy a burden to bear. You choose to hold onto your entire past, when you were a child, when you were a teenager, when you first went to work, holding onto all the stages of life with all the experiences, pains and mistakes. That burden and load of your emotions associated with the past, is what causes you pain every time you experience the memory. If you decide to drop the past and look at every situation with a fresh perspective, you will not have so much pain. You will heal instantly. You will not need so much time.

**Pain and pleasure – two sides
of the same coin**

A small story:

Once a disciple went to his master and

even years, the incident fades and becomes a

said, 'Master, I am not able to meditate. My legs ache. I feel distracted.' The master just said, 'It will pass.'

After two weeks, the disciple went back to the master, this time saying, 'I am able to meditate beautifully. I feel so aware and blissful.'

The master again replied, 'It will pass.'

The root of pain and pleasure is the same. It is the same sensation with two names. It is like two people receiving a body massage from the same person. One concludes that it was a beautiful rejuvenating process while the other decides that it hurt! The same massage will appear like pain or pleasure depending on the person receiving it.

Life has both of these opposites, pleasure and pain. Both pleasure and pain are from the mind. The mind always moves from one extreme to the other. It rarely falls into the middle path. From pleasure you move to pain, from pain you move to pleasure. As we saw earlier, pleasure and pain are completely dependent on the person feeling the pleasure or pain. Something may seem like pleasure to you, while the same experience may be pain to someone else.

In the Bhagavad Gita*, the great scripture that teaches the various paths to Self-realization, the enlightened master Krishna

Bhagavad Gita - Ancient Indian scripture by enlightened master Krishna, considered the essence of the scriptures.

says beautifully, ‘He who regards alike pleasure and pain, and looks on a lump of earth, a stone, and a piece of gold with an equal eye, who is wise and holds praise and blame to be the same, who is unchanged in honor and dishonor, and who treats friend and foe alike, is said to have gone beyond the modes of nature. Pleasure and pain are the same to him and he is ready for enlightenment.’

Free yourself from Pleasure and Pain

Buddha, an enlightened master, says, ‘Free yourself from both pleasure and pain.’ Craving for pleasure and nursing pain are both different aspects of the same experience. Both are chains. Pain may look like an ugly chain and pleasure a beautiful chain. Just as the day follows night and night follows day, pain and pleasure will always follow each other.

When you understand that pleasure and pain are both creations of the mind, you will realize that they are both temporary, they come and go like soap bubbles. Nobody is needed to take away your pleasure, because your mind by its very nature will move like a pendulum to the other extreme called pain!

The only way is to go beyond both pleasure and pain. This doesn’t mean suppressing

Both pleasure and pain are from the mind.

pleasure or forgetting about pain. It

is an awareness that transforms pain to bliss which is the energy that exists no matter what the external situation may be. Bliss is your very nature and cannot be lost. Just because of your resistance to what is happening, you feel pain and your natural bliss is forgotten.

Awareness in Pain

Like darkness, pain, whether it is physical, mental, or emotional, has only a negative existence . Darkness exists only in the absence of light. As such, it has no positive existence of its own. In the same way, pain exists only in the absence of awareness. Just as darkness disappears automatically when light is brought into a room, pain dissolves automatically when the energy of your awareness is focused on it.

Any mental or emotional pain that you carry is just the tip of the iceberg. You need to go into the root where it starts. You need to work on the root cause for it and heal it. Otherwise, there is a distinct danger that you will inflict that pain on someone else or hurt yourself more with it. I always tell people, ‘If you have pain, just drop everything and work on it. See that its root is healed. Only then you can be in a safe

zone. Otherwise neither you nor the people living around you are in a safe zone.'

When you face any pain with awareness you become aware that you are not just the body. You become aware that no pain can touch the real 'you'. Once you realize that you are beyond pain, you rise above pain to become a *dukkha ateeta**. You experience the rare freedom that arises with non-attachment to the body. You will carry this freedom all your life. You leave the mundane life behind and enter into a spiritual plane. The whole material world disappears and another world arises, one of incomparable beauty, innocence, joy and compassion.

The pain will evaporate of its own accord when you see the nature and cause of pain with intense inner clarity because the clarity evaporates the reasons for the pain to exist in you. This realization brings with it a state of absolute bliss, which is the state of enlightenment.

Pain from birth to death

Life itself starts with pain, which is the pain of birth. When you are born, you undergo tremendous pain and you enter into a coma before you even exit the birth canal. According to the mystics, before

entering into the world you are pure Consciousness and that Consciousness knows its reasons for taking this birth. Because you enter into a coma, you forget the memories of your past lives and the reason for taking birth again. In the same way life ends with intense pain, which is the pain of leaving the body.

Life is almost like a bridge between pain and pain. Just like the Golden Gate Bridge in the USA that connects two places, life seems to be a bridge connecting pain to pain!

Unclutching from Pain

When you can maintain your center, when you can be centered on your being while facing deep physical pain or mental suffering, you will see that you just go beyond the pain. When you go deep, when you become more aware, more conscious, you suddenly realize that you are affected and disturbed more by the 'internal reality' within you, than by the real incident that caused the pain. You realize that the incident that happened in the outer world is not directly connected to the experience that is going on in the inner world. Sometimes, if you just avoid the words that you constantly repeat like, 'pain, pain,' 'suffering, suffering,' you will escape from

Dukkha ateeta - Beyond sorrow and pain.

the pain that you might otherwise go through.

For example, with an incident that usually creates suffering or pain in your inner world, be a little intelligent and careful from the beginning not to allow thoughts such as, 'This is painful. I am suffering,' to occur. If you are aware or conscious enough to stop these types of words before they surface to the conscious layer, you can escape from the suffering. If you become a little aware, you will know how to play with your inner reality, how to be more balanced. Then, the outer world things will not be able to affect you.

Pain – a phenomenon of the mind

Painless delivery

There is an interesting incident from my wandering days that I want to share with you. During the days of my spiritual journey, I was once with some tribal people in Madhya Pradesh in India. I was living in a small temple in the center of the village. One day I noticed a pregnant lady entering a small hut. After about half an hour, she came out with a small baby in her hands! No pain, no doctor, no nurse, no medicine, no cries. In half an hour she

came out walking with a baby in her arms.

I was shocked! I could not ask anything because I did not know their language. After one month, I saw another pregnant lady do the same thing. In half an hour she came out with a baby. I asked the local priest who came to the temple, 'How does this happen? Don't they have any pain?' He asked, 'Pain? Why pain?'

I was amazed. The very idea that women should have pain at the time of delivery did not exist in their society! Not only that, nobody suffered from gynecological issues like menopause problems either.

I started enquiring about their lifestyle. I understood that in their tradition, they respect women a lot. The moment a girl becomes physically mature, she is acknowledged with respect that she is now qualified to become a mother. People fall at her feet and she touches and heals them! Just because of this different conditioning, the women don't suffer the usual pains that women in other cultures do.

'Phantom' Pain

There have been recorded instances of 'phantom pain' which is pain in a part of

The perception of physical pain can be changed by the mind.

the body that does not exist. Once in the

Second World War, a soldier's leg had to be amputated because it was badly damaged. The strange thing was that when he became conscious again he was still complaining about the pain in the leg. He was covered with a blanket so he had no idea that the leg had been removed. The blanket was removed and he was shown that his leg was not there anymore. He was shocked!

Further research then showed that each part of the body is related to a certain part of the brain. When a certain part of the body feels pain, the corresponding brain center shows activity. In this case, the related brain center was still vibrating in the same way it was vibrating when the leg was a part of the body. There are many such instances of people who feel pain in the empty space where their limbs were amputated. This is called 'phantom pain'.

Placebo effect

The mind has tremendous influence over the body. Even the perception of physical pain can be changed by the mind. In science they call it the 'placebo effect' when a simple sugar pill gives the same effect as a painkiller just because the person is made to believe that the sugar pill is a painkiller!

The other day, I was reading about research* done at the University of Michigan in the USA that appeared in the *Journal of Neuroscience*. The research was done on a group of young men who agreed to let researchers inject their jaw muscles with a concentrated saline solution causing pain. The brain's response to the pain was studied using PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scans that showed the activity of the body's natural painkillers called endorphins.

In one scan, the men were told they were being given a painkiller but actually what was given was just a placebo, a substance that had no painkilling properties. Then they were asked to rate the intensity of the pain they felt on a scale of 0 to 100. Also, the PET scan would indicate the

* 'Placebo Effects Mediated by Endogenous Opioid Activity on μ -Opioid Receptors', *Journal of Neuroscience*, August 24, 2005, 25(34):7754-7762

'Neurobiological Mechanisms of the Placebo Effect', *Journal of Neuroscience*, November 9, 2005, 25(45):10390-10402.

brain activity related to pain. The researchers were able to study both the response of the brain and what the men actually felt.

The amazing observation was that when the men were given a placebo, meaning not a painkiller but just a neutral substance, the pain they felt was actually less. It was as if they had been given the painkiller itself! The PET scans indicated that the endorphin (natural painkiller) system in the brain was activated. It showed increased activity with the placebo, just because the person believed that it was a painkiller! Further studies have shown that the placebo effect was observed in more than seventy percent of the people, where the pain decreased by up to twenty two percent. Science is still studying this amazing phenomenon, which so clearly shows the mind-body connection.

We invite Pain

A small story:

One man was seen walking in great pain. Another man asked him, 'What happened? Do you have stomach ache or leg pain or something?' The man replied, 'No. The shoes I am wearing are too small.' The other man was surprised and asked, 'Then why are you wearing them?'

The residual accumulated pain creates a negative energy field around you, which we call the 'pain body'.

The first man replied, 'Yes, I am suffering now, but in the evening when I

remove the shoes, it is such a relief and great joy. You don't know how enjoyable it is to feel the relief when I remove them!'

This may look silly. But if we look into our lives, we are also doing exactly the same thing!

We invite pain upon ourselves. We may not like to believe this, but every single pain that we experience in life is invited by us. It is just like inviting guests to your house, calling them again and again, but when they finally arrive we say we were not expecting them! We invite pain and disease upon ourselves with our immoderate habits and stressful lifestyles, and then forget all about it and complain later when disease happens.

Pain body

Every time we experience pain, it leaves behind some residual feeling that remains stuck in the body. This accumulated pain creates a negative energy field around us, which we call the 'pain body'. The pain

**Every pain is
because of your
internal
investments of
your ego.**

different kinds of pains.

Again and again, we share what we create. That's what I always tell people that if wealth is created out of a pain body, we transfer the pain body along with the wealth to the next generation. Wealth should be created just out of a relaxed and blissful mood. Then the wealth can be enjoyed by the person you pass it on to.

The pain body constantly attracts the same kind of people and situations that make you feel hurt. By the very law of nature, you attract similar situations in your life. What you think, you create in your life as reality. So the more pain you harbor, the more pain you attract.

Pain is due to ego

You undergo suffering in many situations, maybe when you fall ill, when your neighbor gets a new car, when your loved one leaves you, when your boss fires you, or when you lose some wealth. Suppose you decided to welcome these situations just as they are without anger or resentment. Would you still suffer as much? No! But you don't manage situations that way. When your boss yells

body not only stores, but also starts reproducing many different

at you, you feel pain. The pain could have been either because he scolded you in front of everyone, because you feel bad for having fallen short of your boss's expectations at work, or because you feel you didn't deserve the scolding.

Sit by yourself and think honestly about what the reason is. If the pain is due to him scolding you in front of everybody, then the pain is actually a hurt to your ego. Ask yourself, 'So what if everybody was watching? Why have I invested so much in what others think of me? Why can't I have my own gauge to measure myself?' Ask yourself these questions. You will realize your investment in other's opinions of you is not worth it. Your pain will disappear!

If you experience pain because you did not perform to the best of your ability, become intensely aware of that. That awareness is enough to overcome the pain. Then you will use only the learning from the incident, you will drop the 'feeling bad' part.

If you are pained because you feel you did your work and didn't deserve to be scolded, then again just the intense awareness will dissolve the pain. The awareness will bring in the understanding and acceptance of your boss. You will have the patience to approach him later and clarify the situation.

If you look deeply, every pain is because of your internal investments of your ego.

Your boss or your neighbor or your loved one or your wealth is not the reason. No one outside can be a reason for your pain, because your pain itself is only your response to an external event based on your own investments. Depending on where you have invested your ego, you will suffer. If you work towards dissolving all those investments, you are intelligent.

Understand, working to destroy your ego is nothing but working on your pain body and expanding its boundary. By expanding, I mean feeling less or no personal pain for incidents that happen.

A small story:

A man went to a doctor for treatment of severe back pain. A number of tests were conducted on him. Finally the doctor diagnosed his problem and told him, 'The pain can be cured by an operation. It will be a major operation, so you will need to be in hospital for a month and then take six months bed rest.' The man replied, 'Doctor, that'll be too expensive for me.'

The doctor replied, 'In that case, I can touch up the X-ray for ten dollars!'

If we look at our life, we also keep the pain alive, doing just touch-ups by feeding our ego. The pain doesn't come from life. It comes from our expectation, from our ego.

The question is not how to change ugliness into beauty, pain into pleasure, or misery into happiness. The question is how to change the unconscious into the conscious, how to infuse awareness into ourselves and embrace reality as it is.

Pain - the catalyst to start the quest for Truth

Just look back at your life. When was the last time you were happy about something? When was the last time you wondered about the meaning of life? Did you look inwards to see who you are or what life is all about? Did you feel the need to deeply know about the ultimate Truth? No! When things go smoothly you just blindly follow the same routine with barely any awareness or consciousness. There is nothing to jolt you into awareness from your routine and you continue without any awareness.

But when pain happens, it makes you look at life objectively. It forces you to look deeper into life, to learn why you react the way you react and seek to uncover the real mystery of life. Pain is a blessing in disguise. It is the key that can open the door to the world of reality. The choice is yours to open the door or not.

Pain can simply shake you out of both the dream state and the 'waking dream' state you are in. Please understand that even if

you are awake, you are not completely in touch with reality. You live in a world of your desires and fears, which is called a 'waking dream.' You see things only with the lens of greed and fear. Pain can be a great teacher that simply jolts you out of the dream and puts you in touch with reality as it is.

With pain, your usual thought patterns are shattered and you begin to see things as they actually are. You begin to recognize a subtle distance between you and the pain. You see that it is not something that is a part of your nature.

Stepping stones of Pain and suffering

Never curse the pain or the person who is inflicting the pain on you. Instead, take the opportunity to use it as a blessing, to go in, watch objectively, and cut the root of the pain. Pain can be a great teacher if you allow it to be. If in one instance you properly research the cause and effect of pain within you, it can turn out to be the biggest turning point in your life.

One important thing we need to understand is that while pain might be inevitable, the suffering that comes from the pain is not. For example, if you get hurt, there is definitely pain, but how much you choose to suffer from that pain is really

your choice. Suffering is not a state of life. It is a state of mind. It is not an event in your life. It is your response to an event. In a particular situation, whether you suffer or not depends entirely on *your* reaction to that situation.

A small story:

Once a man was seriously injured with multiple fractures and injuries. His friend came to visit him at the hospital. He saw the state of his injured friend and didn't know what to say. So he asked his friend, 'How are you feeling my friend? I guess it must be painful with all those injuries. Do you suffer a lot?'

The man replied, 'Not much, only when I laugh.'

It is a question of attitude! Pain is inevitable, but suffering is your choice.

Is suffering necessary?

One of the most deeply hidden reasons for suffering is that you may be enjoying it. For example, falling ill can become a source of pleasure if it gets you the attention and care you have been craving. Look deeply at why it sometimes gives you pleasure to inflict pain on yourself or on others. Is there a better channel through which you can receive the same pleasure without the suffering?

In the same way as a seed has to rupture before a plant can grow and blossom, intense suffering can rupture your ego and leave you open and vulnerable to transformation. In the great epic Mahabharata*, there is a beautiful quote by Kunti*, the mother of the Pandavas*, the heroes of the story. She prays to Krishna, the enlightened master, 'Oh Krishna! Let pain and suffering come from all sides in my life. They will constantly remind me about You, my Lord.' Kunti* is asking the Lord to bless her with pain and suffering so that she may constantly remember Him for relief! In modern days, we need not go to this extent, but we can understand the potential of suffering in the context of our own inner clarity. Suffering has tremendous potential to integrate and transform us.

Start to witness your experiences without judgment. See with clarity where you are suffering at the gross and subtle levels. If you are just aware, the suffering itself can open your eyes to the unreality of suffering. It can teach you how unnecessary it is to suffer at all. This is what I call 'necessary suffering'! Once you learn your lesson

through necessary suffering, you will handle suffering in a much more mature and beautiful way.

If you are just aware, the suffering itself can open your eyes to the unreality of suffering.

The master Bodhidharma* says, 'Every suffering is a Buddha-seed.' Suffering can propel you to become a Buddha. It can bring you the wisdom of knowing all about life and reality. He says, don't be against suffering. Feel grateful to suffering and pain because they create the situation for you to search for the truth. Otherwise, you will just live life like a rock or plant. You will not realize the ultimate, which can only be achieved by the human consciousness. If the body and mind are the field, suffering is the seed, wisdom is the sprout, and the ultimate state you attain is the grain! When you sow the seed of suffering in the field that is your body-mind, wisdom sprouts from it, and you attain the ultimate state!

Mahabharata - The Hindu *itihasa* or epic whose central characters are the five Pandava princes, their hundred Kaurava cousins and enlightened master Krishna.

Kunti - In the epic Mahabharata, the mother of the five Pandava brothers who stood for righteousness.

Pandavas - The five princes in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Their father was Pandu.

Bodhidharma - A disciple of Buddha and mainly responsible for spreading Buddhism as Zen Buddhism.

The cognitive shift

Enlightenment is not escaping Pain, it is understanding Pain

Normally, whatever steps we take when we are faced with pain are attempts to escape the pain and suffering. People ask me how I am able to be blissful all the time and whether enlightenment gets rid of all pain. Be very clear, enlightenment is not an escape from pain but an understanding of pain. It gives a deep insight and courage to look objectively at oneself. 'Why am I feeling miserable? What is it that is causing me suffering and anguish? What exactly is causing me to feel hurt?' All you need is the courage to ask these questions and face the answers. You will be free from the usual suffering.

A small story:

A man came to a Zen master with a question, 'Master, how can we avoid heat and cold?'

The master replied, 'Be hot, be cold.'

Heat and cold are metaphorical representations of pleasure and pain. How to avoid pleasure and pain? Just go through both in a witnessing state, that's all.

Pain – a path to no-mind

A small story:

Once a disciple was walking with a Zen master when a flock of geese flew overhead. The master asked, 'What are they?' The disciple replied, 'They are wild geese, master.' The master asked, 'Where are they?' The disciple replied, 'They have flown away.'

The master suddenly caught the disciple's nose and twisted it. The disciple cried out in pain. The master said, 'You say they have flown away, but they have been here from the start.' The story says the disciple became enlightened in that moment.

This story may sound very strange, but this is the way of most Zen masters. Pain has a tremendous value in awakening you to reality. That is why it has been used by many masters to awaken the sleeping disciple. Normally what do we do when someone is in pain? We console. Unknowingly we enable the person to continue to sleep. But the master is not interested in consoling. His only interest is in awakening you. In the moment of great pain, the mind stops, there is only pain. In that moment, the Truth is delivered! In the story you can see that in the moment of pain, the disciple's inner space was ready to receive the Truth from the master, and the master delivered it!

The Pain of transformation

Pain can become a very creative energy. It can become a remembrance of God. It can become prayer. It can become meditation. It can become awareness. It can cause tremendous transformation in you.

An important secret of life that you need to understand is that if you become aware of something, you can get rid of it very easily. If you are not aware of it, there is no question of getting rid of it. It remains with you. The pain is a pain because it exists in your unconscious, not in your awareness. Your fear of facing the pain allows it to exist and grow more and more, like a tumor. A master will simply remove this tumor through his master surgery! When it leaves you, you transform into a new person. Once a devotee asked me, 'Swamiji, I understand that the surgery is needed for my inner space to be cleansed. But can the master use some pain-killer while doing the 'master surgery'?'

What is the attitude needed to deal with the painful 'surgeries' of the master? Sometimes, just the awareness itself will dissolve the pain. Many times, I will just point at the pain, nothing else. It will simply disappear and it will evaporate.

Now, what is the correct attitude to deal with these painful 'surgeries'? It is having complete trust that whatever 'pain' the master causes is only for your good and

The master is intense life. He will just remove the 'tumor' and throw it away.

nothing else. The 'surgery' itself is because of his boundless love

and compassion for you. If this is clearly understood, then even if it hurts, you will go through it with deep gratitude for what the master is doing to you. I can say that the painkiller from the master's side is the love and compassion the master showers with just a look.

One more thing is that the pain is also because you start thinking it is a pain and labeling it so. The master can teach in just two or three seconds what will ordinarily take a lifetime or a few hundred years or a few births. The master is intense life. He will simply remove the 'tumor' and throw it away. So, even if it is intense, it is better to go with the master than with life because it is a very quick process. Also, if you understand what the master is doing to you, you can enjoy it as the ultimate happening in your life.

Also the pain you will experience continuing life with the 'tumors' will be much worse than the pain you experience when the master removes them. Removing a 'tumor' will take hardly a few minutes. The master just removes it, and it is done.

Once you understand this process, you will no longer label the transformation as pain. Instead, you will welcome it. You will not

only welcome it, you will feel thankful that what was lurking deep down in your unconscious has been brought up and removed.

The urge to know the true you

Your true nature is divine. Your ultimate potential is to realize that you are divine. Anything less will leave you feeling dissatisfied and discontented. You can have all the money in the world, all the name and fame, all the best relationships, all the power, and still you will remain empty and feel the pain of being unfulfilled. Unless your divine nature flowers, unless your divinity is revealed to you, you can never feel fulfilled.

The master kindles the fire inside you to know yourself. He creates the pain of unfulfillment in you. He creates such deep longing in you, because only through such divine discontent will you move, will you take the quantum jump into the unknown divinity that already exists within you. Only then you will wake up from the meaningless dream you have been living lifetime after lifetime. Only then you will integrate all your energies and jump in to explore the adventure of life.

Meditation techniques

1. Focus on Pain

Pain is actually the absence of attention, so the solution is 'giving your presence'. There is a simple and beautiful self-healing meditation technique that channels your presence into the diseased limb or the suffering mind. You can try it out the next time you experience pain or suffering. It is definitely a better option than painkillers, whose side-effects sometimes are worse than the original complaint.

Just try this. Suppose you have pain in your leg, or you are suffering because of some external incident. Lie down in a dark room. Make a conscious effort to forget about your whole body, focusing only on the spot which is causing you pain. If it is mental suffering, then forget your whole body and focus only on that incident that caused you suffering. As you experience the pain, deliberately drop the word 'pain' from your mind.

Your mental chatter will continue to tell you that you feel pain. Switch it off. Feel it deeply. Experience it with an open mind. Look into what is happening inside your mind. You will soon see that your mind was just exaggerating the pain. Put all your awareness on the center of the pain, and it will soon shrink to become just a tiny

point of pain. Concentrate completely on this point and you will discover in a sudden moment that the pain disappears, and in its place there is bliss!

2. Stop, Freeze!

Here is another meditation technique you can try when you feel pain or suffering.

Close your eyes. You don't have to sit straight. Just sit in a completely relaxed way. If you want to stretch your leg, you can stretch. If you want to sit on the ground, you can. If you want to lean on the wall, you can do that. Just make yourself completely comfortable so that you will face the actual pain or suffering. If you are uncomfortable you might start facing the pain that comes because of your uncomfortable posture. Only if your body is comfortable will you be able to face the real pain or suffering.

Close your eyes, visualize that from head to toe your body has frozen completely. Just stop all movement. Just freeze. Be like a stone. There should be no movement in the eyes, no movement in the hands, no movement in the legs, no movement even for breathing. Just stop, freeze.

Only the idea that you are frozen should be there inside you. No other idea should be there. Entertain only this one idea that you are completely frozen.

Do not imagine or visualize any relaxation from it. Relaxation or witnessing consciousness should happen by itself. Until then just be completely frozen. You will see that you establish yourself in the ultimate state of bliss.

3. Witness Pain

You can use this as a technique for dissolving physical pain in any part of your body.

When you are faced with physical pain, just witness the feeling of pain in that part of your body in a relaxed way. You will see that first, there might be a surge of pain, but soon the pain reduces to a spot and disappears. What happens is that the moment you get hurt physically, energy supplied by your own body intelligence rushes to that part to heal it. The energy rush is what you label 'pain'. If you witness the energy rushing and healing in a relaxed way, the pain disappears and healing happens. If we just understand this, we will not resist and suffer the pain. We will cooperate with the natural healing energy of the body.

I can say this from my own personal experience. Once somebody closed the door of the car on my finger. People around me got agitated and ran around to get first aid. I simply told them not to bother.

Your own inner ambulance system is what you call pain!

As my finger swelled, I just watched clearly what was happening inside my body. I could feel the energy rushing from my navel center to my finger. I could clearly see the body intelligence responding to the emergency on its own. It healed on its own.

Your own inner ambulance system is what you call pain!

The witnessing focus that you give the pain will make you realize that you are more than a mere body. You will touch your energy base and realize that you are more than the body-mind.

Watch the pain intensely but without attaching the word 'pain' and the meaning 'suffering' to it. For a brief moment the pain may seem to intensify but soon it will dissolve.

Actually, the body is intelligent enough to allow energy to flow to the part of the body that is asking for energy. But you resist that energy flow by labeling it as 'pain'. Just allow the energy to flow by infusing full awareness into that part of the body. Just look at the energy flow with curiosity. Be a complete outsider. Do not participate in the process. Just let the energy flow to that area and work on it. You will see it heal.

4. Filled with nectar

Close your eyes. Sit straight. Inhale and exhale deeply. Visualize that your body is filled with nectar (or honey), with a sweet feeling as if your whole body is smiling.

If you have irritation or itching in any part of the body, concentrate and feel that portion also being filled with nectar. Feel that your whole stomach is filled with nectar. Visualize that your whole body from head to toe is filled with nectar, with a pleasant feeling.

Now slowly divert your attention to the place where you have pain. Just be continuously aware of that spot. Now just drop the word 'pain'. Just see what that special sensation is, what is the experience you feel in that spot. Do not mentally suffer, do not connect to your suffering, do not be emotionally disturbed. Just see what is happening in that spot. Look just as a child looks, with curiosity. Just penetrate and be in that space without using the word 'pain' or 'suffering' until the feeling or the sensation disappears.

5. Look into the blue sky

Look into the blue sky beyond the clouds. Normally, we only look into the clouds and pass judgment on them as 'beautiful clouds', 'dark clouds' and what not. Now, do not get caught in clouds. Clouds are like

thoughts, like dreams. Look beyond the clouds into the blue sky, the vast emptiness.

If you look at the clouds, your mind will start thinking something. If you look at the sky beyond the clouds, your mind will stop working! If you start looking at the stars, again you will start thinking. Seeing the clouds means getting stuck with your thoughts. Seeing the stars means getting stuck with spiritual visions and experiences. Don't do either.

Just look into the empty, vast and open blue sky. Just lie down. Do not support your head with a pillow. Otherwise you will fall asleep. Just lie down and stare at the sky, the vast empty space.

Just gaze at the sky. You may experience fear. If you just gaze without looking at the clouds or counting the stars you will experience fear because the idea of your boundary is getting lost. Don't bother about the fear. If you are doing it properly you *will* have fear. If you are gazing and managing to think, you will not experience the fear because you are still caught in the boundary of the body. It is like back-seat driving. You are gazing and your mind is thinking.

Just gaze, do not think. After some time, suddenly you will realize you have forgotten your body for a few minutes. The

link, the shaft of thoughts that you normally create has suddenly disappeared. This can't happen if you are expecting it to happen. Don't expect, 'When will I lose my thoughts? When will I lose the shaft?' Just gaze without bothering about anything.

When you see that in the last few seconds there were no thoughts, just close your eyes and bring the whole outer space into the inner space. Visualize the same thing inside you. Suddenly you will see you are having the same thing inside. There are no thoughts, no stars. There is just vast space.

If you are having knee pain, try this technique. Just gaze at the sky. Suddenly when you remember that for the last few seconds you did not have thoughts, take that whole space inside your knee where you have pain. The pain will simply disappear in a few seconds.

Whenever you have physical pain, whenever you have mental suffering, try this technique. That very moment you will be healed. That very moment you will simply see the inner healing happening inside you. Apart from the healing, if you are a seeker looking for spiritual growth, it will also bring you tremendous energy and quantum experiences. You will have a quantum jump in your growth.

Fear and desire are the fundamental energies that drive our lives. We act either out of a desire to achieve something or reach somewhere, or out of a fear of not wanting to experience something. Attraction and repulsion are not merely forces of molecules, but also essential to human behavior.

Recognize your true desires

One of the major driving forces in human life is desire. If you look into your life, you can see most of the time we are driven by either desire or fear.

We have so many desires and often we feel we don't have energy to fulfill them. According to the Jain tradition, the Divine sends us with enough energy and capacity to fulfill all our desires. But most of us don't feel this way. Why?

There is a difference between our true desires and 'borrowed' desires. Our true desires are called our 'needs'. Borrowed desires are called our 'wants'. We have enough energy to fulfill our true desires or needs. What are our true desires?

During the Life Bliss Program Level 2 (Nithyananda Spurana Program), we have a session where people are asked to make a list of their desires, needs and wants. Then they meditate on these desires. At

the end of the meditation, I ask them to recollect from memory their list of desires. What they can recollect is usually a fraction of what they have written! It is as if they started with a large tree full of leaves, their desires, and during this meditation the tree sheds almost all its leaves, as if the leaves were dried and dead. What it retains glows like golden leaves. If you can understand which desire is innate and which is accumulated, spiritual growth happens automatically.

Whatever is left in their memories, those desires glow like gold. They are the ones that carry the energy for their fulfillment! These desires are the true desires. If the process is done with awareness, these desires are always selfless desires. They may benefit the individual, no doubt, but they always benefit humanity. Only such selfless desires carry the energy of the universe with them for fulfillment.

When our desires are our own true desires, when they reflect our real needs, when they express themselves in our inner energy, we don't feel any desperation about trying to achieve them. The realization comes that as a matter of the natural course of events, these desires will be fulfilled. We are not driven and we are not troubled. We accept that these will happen.

To truly love someone whom we spend our life with, to prevent familiarity from breeding contempt, we need to drop our

feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. As long as we consider our spouse as a possession, what arises in our mind and heart is violence, not love. We feel we must control the other being and we feel we must prove that we are the owner. To even comprehend the meaning of true love, we need to drop the feeling that we possess.

This is how Khalil Gibran* speaks on love in his book, *The Prophet*, 'Love one another, but make not a bond of love. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.'

The true Desire for fulfillment

When you have a headache, you are not comfortable with that state, because you know that it is not your true nature. Your true nature is having no headache. In the same way, when you have some desire, you immediately want to come out of it, because deep fulfillment is your very nature and desire causes an imbalance in that fulfillment.

Two important truths you need to understand:

1. Your whole life is a long chain of events performed towards the one goal of

fulfillment. Whatever you may do, whether it is eating or drinking or having relationships, wealth or joy, it is all to experience fulfillment. You seek fulfillment in different directions instead of seeking it directly.

2. Fulfillment is within you, it is your very nature. That is why you are trying to come out of non-fulfillment.

The fact that you are searching for fulfillment means that fulfillment is known to you. Otherwise you would not search for it! In the instances in your life when you have felt some fulfillment, there is also a hope that you will experience it again. That is why you extend your life.

Desire, knowledge and action

The desire that is pure and not directed towards any particular object or person is simply an overflowing energy that is called *iccha shakti* or the 'desire energy'.

From the navel, energy comes as pure energy. In the heart region, this energy gets converted to the power of desire. This further gets converted into words in the throat region. When this energy gets converted into words, it is called *vak* or

Khalil Gibran - Lebanese American poet best known for his 'The Prophet'.

the 'speech energy'. To give an analogy, the energy that comes from the navel is like loose cotton. The cotton becomes thread in the throat region. Or you can imagine it this way: the energy that comes from the navel is like molten iron. The throat is like a forge where the product is formed!

The speech energy moves further to the brain. There it stays as knowledge or gets converted into a command. In the brain, the energy could stay as the power of knowledge or *gnana shakti*. For example, the desire energy related to the body can become knowledge of the body.

The other option is, the words get converted to a command and get executed as well. The command goes to the entire body and moves you. This is called the power of action or *kriya shakti*. For example, the desire energy related to your body can express as the power of action like moving your body.

Pure *iccha shakti* or desire energy which comes from your being gets converted to *gnana shakti* or the power of knowledge and *kriya shakti* or the power of action.

If the energy is not processed and channeled properly, the knowledge and action become disconnected from the power of the pure desire energy. The knowledge and action should be in tune with the desire energy. Then it forms a

virtuous circle of desire leading to better knowledge and action, which in turn leads to clearer desires!

Say you have a desire to make a million dollars. If it gets converted properly as knowledge, you will have a clear plan and do the right actions to become a millionaire. If the desire energy gets converted as too much knowledge and less action, then you will end up only thinking more and more, building castles in the air.

On the other hand, if the desire energy gets converted as too much action and less knowledge, then you will end up working blindly. For example, you may work really hard like driving a truck from Los Angeles to New York, but can you become a millionaire this way? There is action but not the right knowledge. So the proper conversion of the desire to knowledge and action has to happen. The reason why this conversion doesn't happen properly is lack of awareness.

When you are honest and integrated with the desire, there is no conflict and the conversion happens properly.

Turning the awareness from the object to the subject

A small story:

Once a person went to the great saint Ramanuja and asked him, 'Master, I want to achieve enlightenment. Can you teach how?'

Ramanuja asked him, 'Have you ever experienced love? Have you really lost yourself in love?' The man was shocked at the question and said, 'What are you asking? I lead a pure life. I control my desires and do different spiritual practices. I came to you to realize god!'

Ramanuja replied, 'If you have not even experienced ordinary love, how can you experience god!'

Unless you experience ordinary love, you will not understand what happens when you are in love. Only when you understand what happens when you are in love with an object will you be able to turn your attention towards the experience. Turning your awareness towards the experience itself will naturally turn yourself towards you. That love will lead you towards your being. Love can lead you to the object or to the subject. It is a bridge and it can take you towards the subject. Whoever used the gate to enter into the subject became

enlightened. They liberated themselves and liberated others.

Experience life every moment

A small story:

Two friends met in the street. One man looked sad. The other man said, 'What happened? It looks like your whole world has come to an end!'

The man replied, 'Three weeks ago, an uncle died and left me a million dollars.' The friend was surprised and said, 'Sorry to hear about your uncle. But he left you a good sum of money.'

The man continued, 'Two weeks ago, a cousin I never knew died and left me ninety thousand dollars.'

The friend replied, 'Then what is your problem!'

The man replied, 'This week, I didn't get anything!'

In this whole world there are only two kinds of people. One group of people experiences life once in a while in their life and the other group of people experiences life continuously. Whenever you think you are feeling joy, you are experiencing life in the world for those few moments. That is why you feel so alive. You feel as if

everything is beautiful. You have a positive experience with the universe.

All your joy is positive experience with the universe, even if it is just eating a sweet. For those few moments you feel that life is great. You feel that life is really something you need, and you feel connected. You are in tune with that 'ever living presence'.

Understand that 'ever living presence' is what we call life, which is responsible for all activity. Either you experience that ever living presence at this moment or you hope you will experience it in the near future. That is why you are moving your body and still keeping yourself alive. You get out of your bed early morning, either to have some good experience or you hope that at least in the near future you will have some good experience. That desire to experience that 'ever living presence' is what drives you to get up from bed.

Every desire which drives you is nothing but the desire to experience that 'ever living presence'. Whenever your mind stops wandering and comes back, it tastes that 'ever living presence'. Any sweet, any joy, any ecstasy, any experience is important because it brings you back to that 'ever living presence'.

The power of love

You might have even experienced some incidents like this in your life. A girl who is afraid to cross a busy street sees her child run across the road and just jumps onto the road to save the child without a thought about her own safety.

We should understand how she has lost her fear all of a sudden. The reason is that the love for her child has awakened the dimension of motherliness in her. It is the same thing with every relationship of love. If the feeling of love blossoms in somebody, immediately all the fear will leave the person's inner space.

You might have heard something like this in your life, 'We have brought up our daughter with so much care and affection. She does not even know much about the outside world, but suddenly she ran away with her boyfriend! We are not able to understand how it happened.'

Love has tremendous power and so does lust. If you have a lot of energy in your *muladhara chakra**, it will override the other *chakras* immediately. There will not be any fear in your *swadhisbithana chakra* and there will not be any worries in your *manipuraka chakra**. These higher *chakras* will not work when the *muladhara chakra** has the full

Muladhara chakra – Subtle energy center at the root of the spine, related to the emotions of greed and lust.

Manipuraka chakra – Subtle energy center located near the navel region, related to the emotion of worry.

power. Without the person's knowledge, it will unleash the latent unknown potential in him. It will spread his potential to the outer world too.

That is why, from time immemorial, somebody who is in love has enormous power to even oppose the whole society that hinders him. Take the example of Romeo* and Juliet*. Once in love, they had the courage beyond their intellectual thinking to oppose the society that stood in the way of their love.

There are many such stories in history where the lovers go beyond what they could have done had they not been in love. They see a different dimension in their being and in their feeling.

Thus different people activate different dimensions inside you. If you have a lover, the feeling of love will be awakened in you. If you have a son or daughter, then the dimension of motherliness will be awakened in you. If your mind is ready to receive the experience of different dimensions, those dimensions will blossom in you.

So the deeper truth is that after the feeling of love happens between lovers, the very feeling will make them sacrifice a lot for each other. The depth of the feeling will lead to that level of sacrifices.

If you are completely open-minded, every person you meet in your life will cause you to blossom further. But if you are egoistic, even your spouse or your lover cannot cause you to blossom. Please understand, you have a great responsibility to create an open and non-egoistic mind before entering into a relationship such as between husband and wife or between lovers. Then the very feeling will transform you eternally. If this eternal transformation does not happen, you miss a major dimension of your life.

If a husband and wife are unable to create that kind of feeling of being without ego, the relationship cannot be called a relationship. It is similar to the physical relationship in animals. A true relationship is nothing but creating the transformational impact on the being or at the feeling level with each other.

Why are we not able to feel true love? It is because of our *samskaras*, our emotional attachment to the past memories. For example, your computer has a certain amount of memory. Now if it is filled with too many high-resolution pictures, which means that your emotional attachment is to too many things, all your memory space will be occupied.

Romeo - Male lead character in English poet Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Juliet - Female lead character in English poet Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet'.

You don't have enough energy because all your emotional energy is taken away by the past incidents or the people who are in your memory, either as attachment or anger or guilt. Your whole energy, your inner space, is occupied and you will not be able to directly feel connected and fall in love with Existence. All your fear, all your greed, all your guilt, and all these emotions are just because your energy is taken away by past memories. These 'high-resolution pictures' come up again and again in your inner space. That is why you are not able to completely relate with the present moment with the pure consciousness, with the pure being. Anybody whose inner space is not filled with high-resolution pictures, meaning too much emotional attachment, will be able to feel connected to anything.

Your inner space is filled with too many things related to the past. So your inner space is not available to the present moment. You can only love or feel connected to the people or objects falling in tune with the past memories you loved. If you can drop the emotional attachments to the past, suddenly you will see you have so much of inner space available to you. You can then directly open up to anybody who is in front of you without asking for his or her past.

Lust to love

Lust is a primal emotion provided by nature for continuation of the species. To go beyond lust is the first major step in realizing the ultimate potential of human life.

Humans are forever confused between love and lust. They think only animals are lustful. Actually only animals are capable of pure lust when they mate! Humans, with their rationalization, can neither be lustful nor loving. That is why they feel dissatisfied and unfulfilled.

When a desire is fully experienced it leaves your system. In ancient times, lust and sex left the householder around the age of forty because they had enjoyed these fully.

Physical relationship is used to verify whether the other person is still loving or not, whether you are still loved or not. It is only the doubt that creates bondage.

Sex is carbon, love is diamond. Sex is mud and love is the lotus that blooms in the mud. It is the same substance, only you should know how to process it. Just drop your expectations, and you will find a tremendous upsurge of energy.

Discover the man and woman inside you

Today, we know biologically that no man is 100% man, and no woman is 100% woman. A man may be 51% man and 49% woman. Likewise, a woman may be 51% woman, and 49% man; just a small difference.

You have taken birth from the energies of your father and mother. Then, how can you be only male or only female? Whether we accept it or not, we are an embodiment of both male and female energies. We are whole, not divided.

To be whole, we should be able to accept and express both the masculine and feminine aspects of our nature. But does it really happen? Are we allowed to express both aspects?

Right from the moment of birth, society labels you as either male or female. And it expects you to start behaving accordingly. Society simply does not allow boys to express their feminine side, or girls to express their masculine side. Right from a very young age, one half of our being is suppressed.

Until the age of seven, before the social conditioning has taken a deep root inside, the child is not conscious of being male or female. That is why a very young child has a sense of completeness. He is centered and secure. He is so beautiful and joyful

to look at! By around seven, the child comes under society's control.

But now, such strong conditioning goes into the child that the child begins to suppress that part of himself which is not approved by society. We don't realize it, but this period is traumatic for the child. He suddenly feels uprooted and cut off from one half of his being. He starts searching for this suppressed half outside.

Man's inherent nature is fulfillment. So he begins, unconsciously, to search for the lost half, the suppressed half. He starts looking to the outside world for a substitute for his own lost half. The male child starts searching for a female presence, and the female child for a male presence. This is where the whole idea of sex starts. This is how the idea of sex takes root.

In the period from seven to fourteen years, the child is closest to his parents. From them, the child collects images about how the ideal woman or ideal man should be. In the case of the male child, the suppressed half of his own personality is replaced with his mother's image and in the girl child, the suppressed part of her personality is replaced with her father's image.

That is why every boy's first heroine is his mother, and every girl's first hero is her father. This is the unwritten law! This deep-rooted search is what lies behind the so-called Oedipus and Electra complexes

of Freudian psychology. A boy expects care from his wife like the care he received from his mother and a girl expects the security and assurance from her husband that she enjoyed with her father.

At fourteen, the child attains physical maturity. His activities become diversified and the child or teenager doesn't spend as much time with his parents. The child now begins to collect images from outsiders and media. The media are perfectly aware of this. That is why you will see that all advertisements always have sexual undertones – an attractive woman or man will be modeling for the product, even if the product has nothing to do with them.

Almost all motorbike ads show women, but how many women ride motorbikes! Whatever the product may be, you will find a smiling woman recommending it. When you go to the market, you promptly pick up that product, forgetting that the woman does not come with it! This is the media's way of cashing in on your suppressed desires.

If you are alert and aware, advertisements can never fool you. Of course, by seeing them, you can always be aware of the latest things on the market, no doubt, but they will not deceive you.

You see, while on one side the media feed your imagination, on the other society tries to suppress you. The more society tries to suppress your imagination and desires, the

more they grow, because society aims at suppressing the symptoms without getting down to the root cause. You collect ideas from all sorts of media and build up an image of the perfect woman or man. From each person, you collect the best nose, the best eyes, the best personality, and create your own 'ideal person'. You follow a 'cut and paste' method like you do in your computers!

This stage lasts for around seven years, until we are about twenty one. By then the identification with media wears off, but the ideas are already deep-rooted in our minds. Then a fresh search begins, to find that ideal person in our real life. This is the search with the idea of how our 'would-be' should be. This is where expectations start.

A small story:

One ninty year old man used to sit every day at the beach from morning to evening, watching people going by. Another man who noticed this went up to him and asked him, 'What do you actually do sitting here everyday?'

The old man replied, 'I am searching for a woman to be my wife.' The man was simply shocked at this reply and asked him, 'Why did you not search in your youth?'

The old man replied, 'I have been searching since I was thirty years old.'

The man was astonished and asked him, 'What sort of a woman are you searching for?' He replied, 'I am searching for a perfect woman.' 'The man asked, 'You haven't found one yet?'

'I found one woman who matched what I had in mind but it didn't work out well with her,' replied the old man. The man asked why.

The old man replied, 'She was searching for a perfect man!'

This is what happens when we try to get a perfect match for the image that we carry inside us.

After a long search, we suddenly find a person who seems to match our mental image but from a distance. The picture in our mind is green, and the image that we see also seems to be green. A match seems to be found!

What happens at this point is what is called 'falling in love'. This is the science behind falling in love. Note that it is always 'falling' in love, never 'rising' in love! Because of our own strong needs and expectations, we see things as we want to see them. We project our mental image upon the other. Now, the world becomes filled with greenery and music and life becomes poetry. This is the stage at which we begin to write poetry, make paintings of each other and what not.

As long as this distance is maintained, things go on smoothly. We continue to project our imagination upon each other. But as the person slowly comes closer we then feel that what we saw as green was not so green but only a pale green. We feel it is alright and move on. After a while, we come still closer and feel that it is not even pale green but actually a sort of yellow.

But at this stage, we don't want to accept that our imagination has turned out to be a lie, so we start making excuses for the situation. We say to ourselves, 'This is life! Everything can't be perfect!' and so on. It requires tremendous courage, tremendous intelligence to live with reality. So we use these excuses instead, as a buffer system, to shield ourselves from reality.

Finally, when we get close enough we find that it is not even yellow, it is just white! What is inside us is green and what is outside is white. Fantasy and reality are totally different.

A small story:

A man fell down from the third floor of the building onto the road. A passerby ran up to him and asked, 'The falling must've hurt you.'

The man replied, 'No. The falling did not hurt me. Only the sudden stopping hurt me!'

As long as we float and flirt in love, as long as we keep our distances and time short,

we are fine. We are in a fantasy world. It is only when the floating stops and the real relationship starts, when the distances reduce and time increases that the problem starts!

The fewer fantasies you collect, the fewer the number of things there are to compare with and lesser the trouble. If you don't have any fantasy or imagination, you will immediately meet your soul mate. If you don't have fantasies, anyone you marry will become your soul mate.

We need to understand that no living person can live up to the image we carry in our minds simply because the image is not built from reality! No image can be matched with reality because at the end of the day, it is only an image, a fantasy!

The ultimate alchemy

What is alchemy? The process of changing a lower level metal such as copper or iron into gold is alchemy. In the same way, when our being is ripe the base feeling of lust transforms to love, the highest emotion we are capable of.

Alchemy involves removing the impurities, adding some pure elements and then processing to change the base metal to gold.

In the same way, remove the impurity of your fantasies, add the purity of friendliness in your relationship and process this with your patience. In the beginning, people may not be able to understand the change in you. Just continue with belief and confidence in yourself. Your sincerity and strength has no way but to touch others around you positively.

When we do not accept ourselves fully and copy someone else artificially, we can be beautiful at best, but never graceful. Grace comes from within. Accept yourself as you are and your partner just the way he or she is.

Add friendliness to love. As of now, our lust is deep-rooted violence to possess the other person. Add friendliness to the relationship. Welcome the partner as he or she is, do not just accept him or her. Welcome and accept the mind, body and being as it is. Then you can see lust turns to love and your being is in eternal bliss.

Patanjali* says, 'To whatever your mind is attracted, just meditate on that object.' You may say, 'But my mind goes to all kinds of dirty things.' Don't bother. Do not give the title 'dirty'. Just beautifully meditate with a deep sacred feeling. Anything can become sacred, when you

Patanjali – A sage of ancient India and author of Yoga Sutras, which is considered the foundation of the system of yoga.

are respectful and feeling connected. The lust will become love the moment you add sanctity and respect to it.

Love adds life even to the person. With love the person is a spirit, life! Without love the person is reduced to a thing, utility! Without love, when you look at a beautiful man or woman and plan for what you can get out of that person, you reduce him or her to a thing. Only when you look at that person with love, the person is a spirit, a living being.

That is why whenever people look at you with lustful eyes, you feel repelled, it looks ugly, and you just want to move out of that place. Whenever somebody looks at you with a deep love, you just feel like being around that person continuously.

Celibacy

Celibacy is nothing but not craving for the suppressed half that is inside you, that's all. If you are a male, you need to experience such fulfillment unto yourself that you no longer miss the suppressed half or female inside you. If you are a female, you are so enough unto yourself that you don't look outside to experience this fulfillment.

Once you have achieved this state, you can live with or without the female in the outside world. If this is not achieved, even if you get married, you will continue to be

under the torture of your hormones. Your hormonal torture is nothing but a yearning for the fulfillment that you are actually supposed to get from within, not without.

When you achieve this fulfillment, whether you are married or not, there will be peace in your mind. It is then that you can be celibate even in married life! This is true celibacy.

Meditation techniques

1. Beyond the object to the attitude

Changing the object is never a solution. Changing the attitude is the solution.

Make a list of things you feel attached to or things you feel greedy about. It might be a habit, perhaps a particular pleasure or object or person.

Include anything or anyone on the list that makes you feel possessive, greedy or lustful.

Then just sit and meditate with a deep and sacred feeling. Anything can become sacred when you are respectful and feeling connected to it. Bring in respect towards the object, or person.

With a lustful attitude, you will make even a person into an object because you try to possess the person. With an attitude of

love and respect, you will make even an object into a living being! Lust will become love the moment you add sanctity and respect to it. Promote each object or person, elevate them to the level of a being. Suddenly you will see that the lust has transformed into love. The passion has become compassion. Then every relationship is such an ecstasy, and you experience real love.

2. *Dukkha Harana* meditation

Total duration: 30 minutes

This meditation technique will bring out all the suppressed emotions in you.

Breathing is very closely related to the mind. If your thinking is calm, your breath will be relaxed. If your thinking is aggressive, your breathing will also be aggressive.

You may practice this technique on an empty stomach, preferably in the morning. Twenty one days of *Dukkha Harana* will transform your being and bring a glow to your face and body. This is like taking a psychological bath. You will be able to experience the silence in you.

Step 1: *10 minutes*

Stand with your eyes closed. In the first part of this meditation, your mental system is made fully alive by deep breathing and the increased intake of oxygen. Your cells



will get more energy and will create more bioelectricity or bio-energy. This energy will melt all the repressed emotions like melting ice. It is like fanning the *muladhara chakra**.

Breathe deeply and chaotically from the depths of your body, always through your nose with your mouth closed. Move your hands, flex your knees and bend to a



semi-squatting position and then rise up. Move as if you are a bird in flight, up and down, knees moving up and down, arms moving up and down, in line with your breathing.

Do the movements gently and synchronize your inhalation with the upward movement and exhalation with the downward movement. If you have a heart problem, do only as much as you can. Similarly, pregnant women and others with physical ailments, do only as much as you can.



Step 2: 10 minutes

Keep your eyes closed and tense each part of your body, part by part, limb by limb, then let it relax. Tense and relax one limb and then move to the next. Start with your feet; then move to legs; then move to thighs; next to the hips; then to stomach and lower back; then to chest and upper back; then

to your arms from finger tips to shoulder; next to the neck and shoulders; next to your face, and finally to the top of the head. Relax each part of your entire body before you move to the next part. At the end of these ten minutes, you will become vacant inside; you will become cool, calm and composed.

Step 3: 10 minutes

Sit down keeping your eyes closed and chant the 'hoo' *kara** sound, just the word 'hoo'. There is no need to chant it deeply and loudly. Just chant it in a relaxed manner. As you chant, simply witness whatever happens inside or outside your being.

The first two parts of this technique are actually a preparation for the third part that is the actual meditation. When you come to the third part, you will see that the mind becomes silent effortlessly, by itself. Silence cannot be forced upon you; it can only happen by itself.

Remain in this relaxed state with a smiling face and blissful mood. During this time, there may be many experiences. Just watch them as you would watch the television. Watch your mind thought by thought.

Muladhara chakra – Subtle energy center at the root of the spine, related to the emotions of greed and lust.

Hoo kara - 'Hoo' sound produced from the mouth during exhalation in meditation.

What is Guilt?

When you have desires you have guilt as well. Guilt is the opposite face of desire. Sometimes you feel guilty about desiring something because you feel it is not right to desire it. Other times you feel guilty when your desires are fulfilled because you feel you are not deserving of what you receive. When your desires do not come true you feel guilty because you feel you have not done what you ought to have. Desires invariably lead to guilt.

Guilt is nothing but your past decisions and actions being reviewed with your updated intelligence.

For example, when you were in school, you might have said a few mean things to one of your friends which caused a relationship to break. Now, this many years later, with the intelligence that you have, is it right to review that incident and feel guilty? No! At that time you had only that much intelligence, so you behaved in that fashion. Now, you have updated intelligence.

It doesn't make sense to review the past with your present intelligence.

The futility of the past

What is gone is gone. What has been done is done. You cannot undo it. Now if you constantly think about the past and feel

guilty, you destroy your present and your future too. Nothing can be done about it, so guilt is useless. What can you do? All that you can do is not repeat the same pattern again, that's all. At that time with whatever intelligence you had, you acted, that's all.

The past is always past, it is always dead. That is why it is called past. Yet we always let the past affect us. How do we allow the past to affect us? In two ways:

1. If you review your past incidents or decisions using the *present* intelligence, you will create guilt in your being.
2. If you base your present decisions on past experiences, you will be repeating the same past into the future also, maybe in a little updated fashion!

Even though you might not commit exactly the same mistake, you will be moving in the same experiential level, in the same plane.

Our mind falls into a groove, a track, a mindset that forces it to do what it has always done. So we keep making the same mistakes as well.

Three kinds of Guilt

There are three kinds of guilt that take root in us and kill our intelligence:

1. Guilt created by immediate family
2. Guilt created by social laws
3. Guilt created by ourselves

Guilt created by immediate family

Before the age of seven, guilt is created by your immediate family. If you don't do according to your parents' wishes, they instill guilt in you. They tell you that god will not approve of what you are doing. Poor god, he has to support whatever anyone says about him! Or your parents tell you that you should respect their wishes as parents. Immediately you feel guilty of making them unhappy. In this way, family sows the first guilt in you. You in turn pass it on to your child. Like a crown, it is passed on over generations.

Because you don't have the knowledge to explain why things have to be done in a certain way, you change it to a rule and impose it on the child and create guilt through it. For example, children love whirling. They love moving and flowing with the body. It is a natural way for them to center their energy. But what do we do? We stop the child and put the fear in him that he may fall. We don't stop our efforts until we make the child stiff, frozen and dull like us!

The child may want to go outside and play in the sun or collect some flowers or just jump around in the fresh air. If you think about it, it is not much the child is asking for. But the mother says 'no' - he may fall ill due to the hot sun. If you look a little deep, you can see that by saying 'no' she gets a subtle feeling of power, of being in control. She might say it is the sun but it is subtler than that.

The 'no' by the mother actually has a deep impact on the child. It creates guilt in the child. Now, the child may force himself to stay in or he may escape from his mother's eyes and step out. But either way his raw energy is being suppressed. If he forces himself to stay in, his energy is not being allowed to express. If he goes out, he will feel guilty, he will be afraid that somebody might spot him. And all this for nothing big, just for playing in the sun!

As the child grows, this deep engram of guilt will actually settle inside him. Even after he grows up into a man and becomes independent, he may be sitting in the lawn under the sun and those childhood memories may be triggered. He may feel guilty and uneasy for no reason. There is nothing to feel guilty about just sitting in the lawn, but the old memories are awakened.

This is how guilt arises. Small incidents like this collect and make guilt your natural way of life.

Guilt and happiness

Why can't we enjoy and encourage the natural joy and happiness the child lives in?

If you look a little deep, you can see that happiness itself has become associated with guilt. A small child knows nothing of guilt, he is just wild and natural. That is why seeing a small child can be so captivating. He is total in whatever he does. He has not been introduced to the mask of civilization. He is still wild. That is why he is so full of energy. He is overflowing with joy and curiosity, he is just vibrating with the energy bubbling inside him.

The child wants to enjoy everything, but the parents are filled with the conditionings of society like guilt, seriousness, hypocrisy. The child wants to shout and jump and dance; that is his natural expression. But the adults stop him, 'Don't shout! It is bad manners. You should be civilized. You should carry yourself well like us.' By and by, the notion of being free and happy is itself associated with feelings of guilt.

Guilt created by society

From seven to fourteen, society creates guilt in you through its rules. The guilt

Guilt is the greatest sin. Guilt will punish you when you are alive.

based on fear is created by social laws.

Till the age of fourteen,

family and society create guilt for you. An important guilt in this is the guilt of sex. Parents or family never open out the topic of sex. When there is a chemical change happening in you, you feel your body is new. A lot of questions arise and clarity is needed, but no one is prepared to give it.

And to add to the confusion and desire, the media around you constantly bombards you with fantasies in that vulnerable age of change.

To add to it, society instills in you the feeling that you are not enough unto yourself. It makes you feel guilty of what you are, what you do. Once it convinces you that you are a sinner, you are caught in its grips. Then you cannot enjoy the joy of life any more.

According to me, guilt is the greatest sin. At least other sins will punish you after your death. Guilt will punish you when you are alive.

The Tibetan poet-saint Milarepa* sang, 'My religion is to live and die without regret.'

You are called a saint or a sinner only by society. As long as society labels you a

Milarepa - Tibetan Yogi and disciple of Tibetan Buddhist teacher Marpa.

saint, you are a saint. The moment society labels you a sinner, you are a sinner. If you kill someone in society, you will be called a murderer, you will be punished. But if you kill someone on the battlefield you will be called a hero, you will be given a big award! So there is no absolute scale to decide what is right and what is wrong. It is society's own logic.

The means to exploit

People who create rules and regulations in order to create guilt in you hide their personal lives because it would be completely opposite to the rules set up by them. But they set up the rules so they can exploit you through guilt. Once you have the idea of guilt sown in you, you can be exploited easily by society. That is why guilt is the first thing that society sows in you.

A guilty person can never be at ease with himself. He will always lack self-confidence. He will always look for a leader for guidance. This is where society steps in and exploits him.

Society functions on your guilt. The more you feel guilty, the more society becomes powerful. It attracts you with the keys to get you out of the guilt it put inside you in the first place. First it creates the disease, then it sells the medicine.

Another important thing is that only people who don't practice or can't practice teachings give teachings to others continuously, they give them more and more words. When you yourself overflow with words and find you are not able to practice them, you catch others and start teaching the same words! Actually it is a nice way of escaping from guilt. By making others feel guilty, you don't feel the guilt. It is just a chain process.

A small story:

Once four monks sat around a candle and decided to meditate in absolute silence for the next five days looking at the wick of the candle. At the end of the first day, suddenly the candle started to flicker.

One monk blurted out, 'Oh no, the candle is about to go out.'

The second monk told the first, 'Remember, we were not supposed to talk.'

The third monk blurted out, 'Why do you both keep talking?'

Finally the fourth monk exclaimed, 'I am the only one who did not talk!'

When we point out other people's mistakes, we don't realize we may be guilty of exactly the same thing. If we look in, we will find that in many situations where we correct others, we are also guilty of the

same mistake, but because we are in a so-called higher position, we escape the guilt.

The dilemma

Guilt means you have done something which others don't want you to do. If you don't listen to society and listen to your natural intelligence, you feel guilty of doing something wrong. You are afraid and start defending yourself. You even pretend that you have not done it. You are in constant tension with life. Instead if you do something that others approve, you are not happy doing it because it is most often not what you naturally feel like doing. This is the dilemma you are caught in.

Guilt creates a dual personality, a schizophrenia in you – to the outside world you are one person and deep down inside yourself you are another. Guilt is a wedge inserted into your inner space which makes you take on double standards.

Heaven and hell

A very subtle and cunning way of sowing guilt today is through the idea of heaven and hell. People exploit your fear and greed by showing you ideas of hell and heaven. They create in you greed for heaven and fear for hell. They create so many concepts of hell and heaven and sell them to you.

Guilt is a wedge inserted into your inner space which makes you take on double standards.

They say, 'If you practice these types of things, you will be rewarded with heaven. If you practice otherwise, you will be punished with hell.' When you are given rules based on greed and fear, you automatically start creating deep guilt in you.

A small story:

Once a military general asked a Zen master, 'Master, what are heaven and hell?'

The master asked, 'What do you do for a living?'

The general replied, 'I am a general.'

The master just laughed, 'Which idiot asked you to be a general? You look more like a butcher!'

The general was furious and took out his sword shouting, 'I will cut you to pieces.'

The master just raised his hand and said, 'These are the gates of hell.'

The general realized his folly and bowed down deeply to the master for forgiveness.

The master continued, 'These are the gates of heaven.'

**Heaven and hell
are not physical
locations. They
are psychological
states of your
mind.**

Be very clear, heaven and hell are not physical locations. They are psychological states of your mind. One instant the mind may be in hell and the next it may be in heaven. The gates to heaven and hell open and close at any time alternately.

Guilt created by you

Till the age of twenty one, knowledge from family and society creates guilt. After twenty one, the guilt sown in you by family and society grows roots inside you. Then you start creating guilt for yourself without any reason. Guilt becomes a permanent guest in your being!

The guilt created by family and the guilt created by society are imposed guilt; they are like a crown that is passed on from one generation to another. The third guilt is the worst; it is the one which you create for yourself. When you internalize guilt based on greed and fear, you create new types of guilt for yourself.

The moment you start feeling guilty about something, you can be exploited. And when you start fighting with yourself it is easier to exploit you.

Be very clear, heaven and hell are not physical locations.

They are

If you look into your life you can see how every moment you are subtly looking for some reason to fight with yourself, to feel discontent with yourself. You cannot remain without some conflict, you want to create misery for yourself because that is what you have been taught – happiness is a sin.

**The stone of Guilt in the river
of your mind - the block in the
flow of intelligence**

You are designed to move like a freely flowing river. Guilt is like the rocks in the path of the water. Society has subtly branded happiness as a sin. That is the problem. That is why you will notice, when everything is going smoothly and happily, there will be a lurking feeling of guilt in you. You are taught by society that being happy and enjoying life is being irresponsible in a way. So you feel guilty.

But when you feel sad and depressed, do you ever feel guilty? No!

You are taught that life is a chain of suffering and endurance, with happiness stepping in once in a while.

This is also why people can't take it when you are happy and smiling all the time. They try their best to bring you back to the so-called reality, by instilling guilt in you.

When you are enjoying, dancing or relaxing at the beach for example, suddenly you will observe guilt starts rising in you about all the work that is pending, about all the responsibilities that need to be fulfilled.

Guilt has no basis, but it can destroy your whole life. If you can live without guilt, you will enjoy every moment without any regret and still fulfill all your responsibilities.

The problem is that your being is a crowd of voices that don't belong to you. It is a totality of your mother's voice, your father's voice, your teacher's voice, your neighbor's voice and what not! All these voices are in there. If there is only one voice, you will never have any problem. Your mind will move like a river. But there are so many voices telling you so many things and creating the rocks of guilt in your path.

As long as you flow like a river, you will express extraordinary intelligence in your life. You will live with an energy that is overflowing every minute. The moment you allow guilt in you, the moment you are stopped in your free flow, you create energy clots inside your being.

Lift yourself by your self

Once you become aware of how you are driven by guilt, you can start practicing to

The moment you start feeling guilty about something, you can be exploited.

come out of it. When you start practicing anything, naturally you

will slip a few times. When you practice to be without guilt, you are bound to slip back into the older patterns of greed and fear. Then suddenly you will remember, 'Oh, I started working out of fear,' 'I started working out of greed.' Then you will start afresh. When you start working, naturally you will see these things happening.

A small story:

A monk from a big spiritual organization was sent to a remote tribal area for doing service. Suddenly, the headquarters received a lot of complaint letters about the monk.

The president after reading the letters said, 'We have posted the right person.'

The secretary asked him, 'What is this Sir? We are getting complaints about him. How do you say we have posted the right person?'

The president replied, 'If we are getting complaints, it means he has started working, there is something happening!'

When you start something new you will have three phases. The first is resistance. The next is just indifference— people will

**Nobody can hurt
you unless you
allow. Nobody
can help you
unless you allow.**

neither care
nor resist. The
third is
acceptance.

In the same way, when you start doing anything inside your system, you will start growing, but these three phases will be there. The first phase will be resistance. You will feel the new practice is a difficult change in your current system. Because of this, the next thing that happens is you start avoiding opportunities where you should be practicing the change. Again and again you will go back to your older ways. Your system will resist, it will try to create all kinds of complications, all possible arguments. If you allow the resistance to grow, you become your own enemy.

Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, 'Let you lift yourself by yourself. If you don't, you will be your worst enemy.' It is up to you to help yourself as your best friend or hurt yourself as your worst enemy.

Nobody can hurt you unless you allow.
Nobody can help you unless you allow.

If you have forgotten the practice, remember and again and again lift yourself. Don't fall into depression, don't have guilt. Don't think you will not be able to do it.

Even if you read in the life of enlightened master Buddha, he was about to leave the body when his disciples asked him to give

his ultimate message, and he said *Atma deepo bhava* – Let you be your own light, let you be guided by yourself.

Guilt – a manifestation of ego

Guilt is actually the shadow of the ego.

When somebody says something and you become angry, it is the ego, your idea about yourself, that causes the anger. But right after, you start feeling guilty about losing your temper. Now, too, it is the same ego that causes the guilt. It gives you the feeling that you could have done differently to change the situation, but you did not do it. This is the dilemma. The ego creates the problem and the same ego goes on harboring guilt. If you understand this game of the ego, you can simply drop the guilt. Without allowing ego, if you allow only awareness, you will neither get unduly angry nor will you suffer for it. Because of the awareness, you will not be blinded with anger. You will get angry only to the extent required and automatically there will not be any guilt either!

The first way – feeling guilty

If you have made a mistake there are two ways to treat it. One is to feel guilty. If you feel guilty, you will commit the same

mistake again. Guilt is the way to commit the same mistake again because you forget the mistake and start focusing on the guilt. If you focus on the mistake, you will know how and where you went wrong and so you will not repeat it. If you focus on the guilt, you will not even analyze how and where you went wrong, so you are still very much capable of making the same mistake again!

Getting out of addictions

People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, I want to stop smoking. Please show me how to.’ I tell them, ‘First drop your guilt.’

They look surprised and say, ‘*Swamiji*, if I drop my guilt, I will start smoking even more!’

No. Only when you drop your guilt, only when you are free from the past, you will have enough energy to change your future. As long as you carry the guilt, you will project only your past into the future.

Understand, when you carry guilt, you have already decided you can’t change the future, and if you do have the confidence that you can change the future, you will not carry guilt. The deeper the guilt, the higher the chances of committing the same mistake in the future.

All your negativity has only one power, and that power is nothing but your faith in that negativity.

There is a beautiful character named Vali* in the Indian epic Ramayana*.

The story goes

that anyone who faced Vali* in a battle would lose half his power to him! If you stood in front of him to oppose him, half your power would be transferred to him.

In the same way, if you stand in front of your past to fight with it, half your power will go to it. Your guilt will suck up half your energy.

Please understand that all your negativity has only one power, and that power is nothing but your faith in that negativity. You empower your own negativity. When you decide to fight smoking, you give half of your power to it. Then when you start fighting it, it is almost like fighting with your shadow. You will never win.

As long as you try to fight with your past, you unconsciously empower it and project the same past into the future also. Be aware that the more guilt there is, the more the same mistakes. You will see that through guilt you will not be able to overcome any mistake.

Vali - Monkey king in the Hindu epic Ramayana who is killed by prince Rama.

Ramayana - Hindu *itihasa* or epic about prince Rama. The original version was written by poet Valmiki.

The second way – looking in

To feel guilty is to be in sin. In fact, that is the only sin. The hell that we talk about is not in another time and space. It is within us when we feel guilty, without doing anything to change our mindset.

All your guilt, all your pain, everything is a pure imaginary shaft you create inside your head. The mistake you did ten years ago, the mistake you did seven years ago and the mistake you did three years ago, are independent and unconnected incidents. But when you connect them and start thinking about it, naturally you start creating guilt. You start feeling like a continuous sinner. This is one approach.

There is another approach. When you commit a mistake, see objectively why you committed it, how you committed it. Watch as an observer how and why it is getting repeated. Look scientifically into the mechanism of guilt. Just this awareness will open a new door and you will never commit the same mistake again - because once you look into it, and find the cause, it will disappear. To know a thing totally is to be free of it.

Morality

Integrity

Please understand that morality should happen out of integrity, not out of guilt.

What do I mean by integrity? Integrity is being in the present moment and being only one solid personality and not many conflicting personalities. It is seeing reality without the play of the mind. Once the mind steps in, duality also steps in. Just by being intensely aware of the present moment, you can achieve integrity where there is only one and not two or three or many personalities fighting in you. Only when the mind flits between the past and future, you become split personalities and integrity doesn't set in. If the mind is on the present, automatically you become unified and integrity sets in.

A small story:

One day, a priest knelt before god and started crying loudly, 'I am a sinner. Please have mercy on me, O god.' A man who was praying silently got inspired by this and also knelt down next to the priest and started praying. Now, another man also went down on his knees and started crying. Seeing this, the priest nudged the first man saying, 'Look who thinks he is a sinner!'

All our humility, our morality, are more or less a pretence to others and to ourselves. We pretend because we are not solidly integrated within us. We ourselves don't know which personality within us is authentic and so we get caught in such games. If we are integrated, we will be authentic in every action, and automatically we will be moral.

Be aware, be spontaneously right

Please understand, you will never make mistakes if you are deeply aware at the time of making them. When you are aware, you will be one solid personality and moral as well. When you stray from awareness, you will be many personalities and immoral also. Morality has to do with awareness, not with any other social rules. Awareness is the only way to be naturally moral.

Awareness causes you to spontaneously take the right action in the right situation. Morality can cause you to do the wrong action in the right situation because it doesn't have the right base. Its base is not your own, it is built up by society. So you don't feel connected to it. When you don't feel connected, you cannot act with confi-

dence. Once you integrate yourself, you will be centered upon

awareness. If you remain fragmented, there will be no awareness and you will depend on morality for guidance.

Once you integrate yourself, you will be centered upon awareness.

Go beyond right and wrong...

What is the root cause of guilt? It is our idea about right and wrong, our understanding about what is right and what is wrong. What is the scale to measure right or wrong?

In Hinduism*, vegetarianism is considered right. In Christianity*, non-vegetarianism is thought to be right. In Hinduism*, you can marry only once. In Islam you can marry several times. In Hinduism*, you can't drink alcohol and liquor. In Christianity*, Jesus himself consumed wine. You are caught in rules like, 'If you eat this, you are guilty', 'If you drink that, you are guilty.'

There are so many rules and so many regulations in different places, different situations and different societies. Where is the scale for all the so-called morality? It

Hinduism - Religion of most Indians. Developed from the *vedic* principles of *sanatana dharma*, the eternal law, that gave rise to other religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism etc.

Christianity - Religion based on teachings of Jesus Christ.

Conscience is a poor substitute for consciousness.

is a set of local customs.

In the course of time, it becomes morality.

If you read the ancient scriptures, the epics of India like the Mahabharata*, the princess Draupadi* was married to five men! Kunti*, the mother of the Pandavas*, the heroes of the epic, had five sons from five different men.

At different times, different rules were formed by different leaders. In a particular society, certain things that were considered moral were considered in another society to be immoral. In America, there are such differing moral standards that I saw. In one state, casinos are allowed, whereas in the neighboring state, casinos are illegal.

Where is the scale of right or wrong? For one person, a particular food is nectar, whereas for another person, the same food is poison! As long as you are caught in right and wrong, you will never function with restfulness. You will only be guilty. You have to go beyond right and wrong into your own consciousness. There lies the key.

Conscience Vs Consciousness

When you start internalizing the laws of society, you create a deep wound in your being. You destroy your innate intelligence. According to me, children can be given a set of rules initially so they don't move from the path of consciousness. But soon they have to be given the understanding of life and the need to operate from consciousness instead of conscience.

If you live with consciousness, you will automatically live a moral life. To start understanding the need to live with consciousness, just look into your morality. Morality is only skin deep, whereas consciousness comes from the very being. Your consciousness tries to break through your conscience. Your consciousness continuously fights with your conscience. Conscience is societal. Consciousness is natural. Conscience is a poor substitute for consciousness.

People ask me, 'Swamiji, what is this? You are pulling down the whole social structure. Then how can we all live morally?' I tell them, 'Be very clear, it is only for kids that

Mahabharata - The Hindu *itihasa* or epic whose central characters are the five Pandava princes, their hundred Kaurava cousins and enlightened master Krishna.

Draupadi - Princess in the Hindu epic Mahabharata who was married to all five warrior brothers of the Pandava family.

Kunti - In the Hindu epic Mahabharata, the mother of the five Pandava brothers who stood for righteousness.

Pandavas - The five princes in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Their father was Pandu.

you need a forced morality. For them you need to say, 'Keep quiet, I will give you candy.' Of course, nowadays kids reply, 'I am happy. I don't need your candy. Who cares for your candy!' For a child you can say that you will give candy and restrict him. You can impose morality on him based on fear or greed. But for you, it is time to grow up. You are not kids anymore. Just stand up with consciousness. When I say consciousness, I mean the intelligent energy of your being.

Rules

The natural instinct to break rules

When anything is a forced rule, you always try to get around it. For example, you always speed when you don't see the policeman.

A small story:

A policeman pulls over a car on the highway for speeding. When he asks for the driver's license, the driver replies, 'But officer, I was only trying to keep a safe distance between my car and the car behind me!'

When you follow rules blindly without understanding their spirit, this is what

happens – you just wait for an excuse to break them.

Honestly answer yourself: if there were no rules, no regulating authority to keep a check on what you did, would you be the same person as you are now? Would you be doing things in the same way as you do now? If your answer is no, be very clear that the rule is coming from your conscience, not from your consciousness. You have not internalized the spirit of the rule or you do not agree with the rule. That is the reason you are not doing things in a way natural to you.

The thrill of 'no'

You can see, when you tell children not to do something, they will be most tempted to do it. As long as you don't mention anything about doing it or not doing it, they may not even be bothered about it. But the moment you tell them not to do something, they will be looking to do it.

A small story:

One man says, 'I found three ways to get things done.' His friend asks, 'What are the three ways?'

The man replies, 'First, do it yourself. Second, hire someone to do it. Third, tell your kids not to do it. That's all, it will be done!'

Actually there is a taste, a thrill in doing what you are not supposed to do. Most of the time, you develop an instant urge for something if you are asked not to do it. You feel a kind of joy or satisfaction by doing it. That is the basic tendency in every human being.

A small story:

Once a shopkeeper was trying hard to increase his sales. He tried various options like discounts, catchy advertisements, better customer service. Nothing worked. Then one day, he hung a black curtain on his shop window and made a small hole on it. Under the hole he put up a board, 'Peeping strictly forbidden.'

From that day, he saw crowds gathering at his shop, each one curious to peep through the hole to see what was there! His shop sales automatically increased because people now actually saw the variety of grocery items his shop carried.

When you are told not to do something, the basic human tendency is to do exactly that.

As a teenager, when you say 'no' to your parents, you feel you have proved you are independent. When you say 'no', you feel you have proved you are somebody special, somebody different. As long as you say 'yes', you feel you are only a child. When

you start saying 'no', you feel you have become an adult.

You feel that you are a man only when you say 'no' to your father. Till then you feel you are a child. Just to prove that you are a man you start saying 'no' to your father. This is basic psychology. When you say 'no' you think you are somebody, until then you think you are nobody. So please be very clear, to whatever you say, your grown up son is going to say 'no', because he wants to be somebody.

Only life can teach

People come and ask me, 'How do I make my son do what I advice him to? I know it is good for him but he won't listen to me.'

You have to understand two things. First thing, if they feel that something is giving them happiness, just let them be. Only life can teach them, you cannot teach them. You cannot teach anybody, only life can teach. You can put a few words into them so that it echoes when life teaches them the same thing, that's all.

Second thing, unless they need help, your help cannot help them. When they need your help they will come. See, your idea of happiness and unhappiness has come out of your experience. Just think, did you listen to your father when you were young? No. You did not.

No son listens to his father. After they become fathers, they forget that they did not listen to their fathers and start blaming their sons. Because they have to train their sons, they remember only the incidents in which they listened to their fathers! They forget the incidents where they said 'no' to their fathers. Be very clear, your children are doing the same thing that you did.

Only life can teach them. You can neither teach nor help your kids unless they want the help. If you force something on them, if you force rules and regulations on them, they may learn one thing, and that is how to cheat you, that's all. So just remain aware of the stage your child is in, that is enough. You can step in at any time he wants your support.

Dead rules Vs Live intelligence

In the course of time, many regulations that had meaning earlier become blind rules, without any meaning.

In India, during the times before electricity was invented, tailors would sew by hand with a needle with the help of dim lanterns. So clothes would not be sewn after sunset since sewing in the dim light of the candle or lantern would cause strain on the eye. So the work was always confined to daylight hours.

But even now in India, the elderly people in the house will say, 'It is not a good thing to sew after dusk!' The very reason for not sewing at night doesn't even exist anymore! Electricity and bright lights are there. But it has become a ritual for them, with no connection to its original purpose.

A small story:

Once a paratrooper was being interviewed on television. The interviewer said, 'Your life must be really adventurous.'

The paratrooper replied, 'Yes, it does have its scary moments.'

The interviewer asked, 'What is the most anxious experience in your life?'

The paratrooper replied, 'When I was coming down on the lawn of a house and the sign read, 'Keep off the grass!'

When you don't have the right intelligence or understanding, things become dead rules in your life.

When you have understanding, any correct rule can become a friendly technique to live life happily. Rules and rituals are actually techniques for your own enlightenment. When I say enlightenment, I mean a blissful life full of clarity. Of course, when pursued deeply, it will lead to the ultimate state of enlightenment.

A small story:

A railway official reported a murder on a train, 'The murderer entered the compartment, stabbed the victim multiple times. Then he left the train through the opposite door jumping onto the railway track – thereby violating the railway regulations.'

When you don't have the right understanding, you miss the whole thing and end up acting in a foolish way. When you are given the right understanding, you understand that any rule was created just for you and others around you to live a happy and blissful life.

When the spirit of the rule is understood, there won't be any problem falling in line with it. By falling in tune, there will only be juice in your action, there will only be a blissful commitment to it. But if the spirit is missed, everything is missed. Life will seem dull and lifeless.

Take meditation for example. Meditation itself is done to go inwards irrespective of the outer world noise and situations. I have seen that some people, before starting their meditation routine, will first try to create a noiseless situation outside. They will go around telling everyone to keep quiet. They will practically freeze people in their normal routine just because they are going to meditate.

Only when the spirit is missed, things become dead rituals. You miss and mess!

All rules and regulations were created for a harmonious life with the understanding, 'You will not kill me and I will not kill you, both of us will live happily.' That was the basic understanding behind them. However, in the course of time, they became laws.

All rules and regulations were created to live a harmonious and happy life, but the moment you internalize the rules without the understanding, you create guilt. As long as you follow the rules with an understanding, you will be happy. When you start following the words instead of the spirit, you will start creating guilt.

When you want to escape from the law, what do you do? You just catch on to the words of the law and drop the spirit behind them. Then you legally work around the words and escape from the law. When you catch the words, you become a bureaucrat and you miss the spirit. Only when you catch the spirit, you can be an intelligent being without guilt.

Nobody can live life based on any law

One of the ultimate laws that is very difficult to understand is that nobody can live his life based upon any law. When I say nobody, I mean NOBODY. When I say any law, I mean ANY LAW. Life is much

superior to laws. Life is live intelligence. Any law, rule or regulation is based on a certain understanding of life. But life is beyond all our understanding and logic.

People ask me, 'Why is this life created at all?' I tell them, this 'why' can never be answered because it is based on your logic. But life is based on god's logic. Your logic and god's logic can never meet with each other. His logic is so big, so vast and so infinite.

Life is created by Him. Rules are created by you. Life is created by Him. Laws are created by you. Naturally, your laws can never match or fit with god's logic or god-created life.

Life is natural. Laws are societal. Life is physical. Laws are mental. All your ideas, all your do's and don'ts, all your morality, all your 'right or wrong' are given to you by society. Rules are needed to co-exist peacefully with a common understanding of the way certain things are. But beyond that, one's own intelligence needs to be awakened so that life may be lived to its optimum.

The way out of rules - escape or revenge

By your very nature you are searching for freedom. When some morality is taught to you as a rule, either you try to get around

it or if you can't, you take revenge on the people who imposed the rule on you. Imposed morality always causes you to be or feel revengeful. You may not be obviously revengeful, but it will be there in you as a subtle thread.

For example, people repeatedly tell me, 'My son is not taking care of me.' Be very clear that your son may be your foremost enemy because you have given him so many rules, so many regulations throughout his life. Naturally, while one part of his mind will have respect for you, the other part will always harbor revenge towards you.

Don't think this is something new that I am telling you or this has to do with your son alone. No! This is a basic fact in society. It is not spoken about because it is too much truth for people to bear! Which son or which father will agree if I told them this fact? This is a very deep-rooted truth that most people are blissfully oblivious of. It is my duty to draw your attention to such truths of life.

You are a *Nithya Mukta* – eternally free

Your entire struggle in life is nothing but the struggle for freedom. Even your search for money is the search for freedom. If you have more money, you have more choices or more freedom to choose a bigger

By your very nature you are a *nithya mukta* - eternally free person.

house, a bigger car, more comforts etc. Your search

for more choice is your search for freedom. Whatever you may be searching for, whether it is relationships, wealth or titles, it is only the search for more freedom.

The first thing a rule does is to put you in fear of violating it at any time. Even if you don't break the rule, you are left with a feeling of fear and guilt about it. When you are with this fear and guilt, you feel your freedom is curtailed. You start living in a dull and dead way because by your very nature you aspire for freedom.

By your very nature you are a *nithya mukta* - eternally free person. You never want to be curtailed. You never want to be a slave of any rule. In order to be that way, you just need to bring in more awareness and follow the rules with the right understanding.

Guilt and responsibility

Many times you justify your guilt by labeling it as responsibility. No! How does one differentiate between guilt and responsibility? If you get into a low feeling when you think about it, it is guilt. If you feel intensity and integrity, it is

responsibility. This is the clear scale. If you are pulled to low energy at the thought of what you did, then it is guilt. But if you feel good about it, then it is responsibility. Falling into guilt is a clear way of escaping responsibility.

Once a man came to me complaining, 'I am suffering. I have fourteen children.' I asked him why he chose to have so many children. He replied, 'Why? God gave me!' The problem is, we do all that we want to do without taking responsibility for it. After doing it, we feel god made us do it! If we take up responsibility for every action, we will never land up in guilt or trouble.

All guilt related to extramarital affairs comes under this category of sheer lack of responsibility in behaviour. Be very clear that extramarital affairs clearly show disrespect to another being, your spouse. You have no right to disrespect another being.

What is the meaning of the relationship of marriage? Let me explain. Man as such is centered on *muladhara chakra* or the lust energy center in the body, and woman is centered on the *swadhishtana chakra* or the fear energy center in the body. That is why man gives in to lust easily and woman gives in to fear easily.

If you see during the traditional *vedic* marriage ceremony, in front of the sacred

fire considered to be a representation of god, the man promises to the woman, 'I shall give you security and release you from insecurity (fear).' The woman promises to the man, 'I shall give you love and free you from lust.' Both of them decide to liberate the other from their weaknesses.

But what happens once the ceremony is over? Instead of freeing the other person of the weakness, each starts playing on the weakness of the other person. Knowing the other person's weakness should make one compassionate towards that person. Instead, the man exploits the woman's fear and the woman exploits the man's lust in many ways.

Not only that, when one indulges in extramarital affairs, one increases the insecurity for the spouse. When you disrespect the feelings of another person, you reduce the person to a mere commodity. If you see your husband or wife as a commodity, you will continue to play your game with them. If you see them as a being, you will realize how much they have contributed to your life.

When man faces insecurity, the woman should become a mother. When the woman becomes centered on fear, the man should become her father.

Responsibility for your choices

When something is told to you, if you take full responsibility of deciding whether it is right or wrong, you can avoid all guilt feelings. If you don't take responsibility for your decision, you will feel discontented whether you do the action or not. If you do as you are told, you will feel that you are being dominated, that you are not being assertive, that you are being exploited. If you don't do as you are told, you start feeling guilty that maybe it was the right thing to do.

There is no need for this unnecessary dilemma. Just be simple. Respond intelligently. Take responsibility for doing whatever you are going to do. Then there is no question of guilt. If you are not going to do it, explain clearly to the person why you are not going to do it. When you explain, the other person may agree with you and may even be thankful to you for it. Or he may have stronger and better reasons than you to justify what he is saying, then you will be thankful to him for raising your intelligence.

In this way, you could use every opportunity, every moment in life to raise your intelligence, to raise your consciousness.

The useful Guilt

There is a certain guilt that is useful for you, a guilt which if pursued intelligently can cause you to move forward in life. When you see that you have the potential to do something, when you feel that you have so much potential which you are not using at all, then if you are intelligent, guilt will happen in you. This guilt can spur you to start doing things that will actualize your entire potential.

Sometimes we see the state of things around us and we know in one corner of our mind that we can very well help turn the situation around. But either due to laziness or due to the fear of confrontation, or due to the fear of taking responsibility, we just keep quiet and watch. This type of situation can cause deep guilt in us. This guilt is significant. If we take steps to correct the situation by doing what we really feel we should do, then the guilt will disappear and we will also move forward.

This type of guilt has the ability to drive you to do what needs to be done. Because of its very nature, you cannot harbor this guilt for long. You have to get over it. The way to get over it is by doing what needs to be done. Once it is done, the guilt also disappears. How long you wish to harbor this guilt without taking steps, for that long you suffer from it. This is the simple logic of this guilt.

Another manifestation of this guilt happens when you can feel your ego surfacing in certain situations and you are unable to help it. When you can smell your ego but you are unable to control it, this guilt arises in you. This guilt is also good since it is a sign of the deep awareness of your own ego. It facilitates you to sincerely work towards eliminating that ego.

Guilt can result in physical disease

Guilt is the sure killer of intelligence. According to me, guilt is the worst killer of intelligence. It will never let you move in your life.

Once one of our devotees had a tumor at the base of her spinal cord. For twenty years she suffered with the tumor. She came to me complaining, 'Please help me, heal me. I am suffering with this tumor for so many years. After undergoing surgery, it has reappeared.'

I started talking to her slowly to trace the origin of the problem. I asked her a few questions at the end of which she finally opened up and started weeping. I asked her, 'Do you have any guilt related to your sex energy?' She slowly opened up.

She said she was physically abused when she was very young. One of her close relatives had abused her for many years. That guilt stayed with her. She said, 'I started hating that part of my body. I started feeling that this part of the body should not exist in me. I felt that part of my body was not my being. My hatred towards that person turned towards my own body.'

Her hatred was so deep. I continued speaking to her. Slowly she opened up more and more. When she brought the guilt out, she came out of the guilt. She was psychologically healed.

I gave her a small meditation technique to meditate on that area. I told her, 'Express your anger towards that man. Weep, shout, cry, hit. Close the doors, take a pillow, imagine that it is he and show your anger on it. After that sit silently and feel that part of your body also as your own. Feel love towards that part of the body.'

You will be surprised that in just ten days, the tumor disappeared! It never recurred.

Most of our ailments are due to psychological disturbances where guilt plays a major role.

Most of the time, our energy flow gets blocked because of guilt. If you look deep, wherever you are not able to move,

wherever you are not able to take decisions, wherever you have fear, there will be some guilt lurking.

Acceptance – the beautiful way out

Acceptance is a wonderful tool to relieve yourself of the pull and push between the past and future. With acceptance you fall into the present straightaway. The first thing is to accept all the happenings of the outer world and all the happenings of the inner world. Whatever problems you have in the outer world and whatever problems you have in the inner world, just accept them in their entirety. Summarize all that you experience as problems and accept them in totality.

Accept all guilt, all mistakes and all failures. Even if you cannot accept, accept that you cannot accept. You will then relax and guilt will drop from your mind.

Just try this small experiment:

Just relax for three days with complete acceptance. If you relax for three days without the pull and push in the inner and outer worlds, are you going to lose all your wealth? Surely not! So there is no problem. In three days you are not going to lose anything. Why don't you give it a try? Just for three days, sincerely, utterly, accept everything in your life one hundred percent!

If you are not able to accept one hundred percent, then accept that you are not able to accept one hundred percent. Even the acceptance of 'I am not able to accept myself in the inner world and outer world' will make you drop from the pull and push between the past and future. The moment you understand, 'I am unable to free myself from the pull and push of desires and fears, I am not able to accept my reality,' that very understanding will start doing its job.

If you can fall into the present moment, relaxing from the outer world and inner world things, in three days you will have a glimpse: What is life? What does it mean to live in the present moment? If this happens to you, you will experience such ecstasy, such a different space, such a different life that you have never experienced before.

You have lived based on your philosophy for maybe the last thirty years. Just for three days, don't try to alter anybody in the outer world. You will see that when you experiment with such great techniques, they work miracles in your being. They start a great alchemy process in your being. If you are not able to be sincere, accept that you are not able to be sincere. Even that sincerity is enough. You will start seeing a different space in you.

Guilt can at the most change the symptoms

Let you be very clear, you can never help yourself by creating guilt. Is there a single person who says, 'No, I changed myself by creating guilt'? Never!

You might have stopped expressing the guilt attitude. You might have stopped doing that act for which you feel guilty. But unless you get to the root of guilt and work, it does not leave your system completely. Only the symptoms change.

A doctor asks a patient, 'You came to me with the complaint that you are hearing a telephone ringing sound in your ears. How do you feel after the medicine?'

The patient says, 'Oh, after the medicine I get only engaged tone!'

The ring tone may change into the busy signal. It does not mean the signal has disappeared completely!

Vedic social system vs Politics based system

The society which is created based on power and politics, by business people and politicians naturally will have techniques only to keep people in guilt. They need to control, so they will put people in guilt.

Only through guilt people can be easily controlled. But the social system created by enlightened masters helps people to be liberated and move towards more and more expression of freedom. Understand the big difference between the society created by enlightened masters and the social structure created by politicians and businessmen.

In the system created by the masters, they constantly give you confidence. Even when you fail, they say, 'No, don't worry. Just because you committed a sin, you are not a sinner. Committing a sin is different, being a sinner is different.' There is no word 'sinner' used to address people in the ancient *vedic* system of enlightened masters. They address human beings as *amrutasya putraha** or Sons of Immortality!

You are complete as you are

A small story:

A disciple goes to a master asking, 'Master, how can I become free? How can I attain liberation?'

The master asks him, 'Who has imprisoned you?'

The disciple replies, 'Nobody.'

The master asks, 'Where are the chains to bind you?'

The disciple replies, 'I have no chains.'

The master says, 'Then what are you trying to be free from?'

Just look at animals. You cannot find guilt in any animal. It just is. It has no ideals, no perfectionist attitudes and no discontent. That is why it is beautiful and innocent. But in the case of man, he always has an image of how everything should be, including himself, his family, situations, society - everything. He is always yearning to be what he is not.

This can be healthy and unhealthy. When you are yearning to actualize your potential, it is a healthy yearning. But most of the time we yearn to achieve only based on the ideas society imposes on us and the ideas we borrow from others.

Once you are caught in these imposed desires and ideals, you can never relax and enjoy the journey of life. You will always be discontented. And the more dissatisfied you are with yourself, the more it becomes impossible to reach your ideal. It is a vicious circle.

Amrutasya putraha - A scriptural statement from Shvetashvatara Upanishad that says: *Shrunvantu Vishve Amrutasya Putraha* that means 'You are the child of immortality', that all human beings are divine.

In the soil of dissatisfaction the seed of intelligence and spontaneity cannot grow.

In the soil of dissatisfaction the seed of intelligence, spontaneity cannot grow.

You become

like the horse with blinders, with a narrow vision of how you think things should be.

If you are not dissatisfied with yourself, if you accept yourself as you are, what you really need can be fulfilled here and now.

Society teaches you constantly that you are not complete. It induces in you a fear, an inferiority complex so you will not be confident and independent. Then your intelligence gets suppressed and you follow the rules put down by society.

You are already what you can be. All you need to do is just relax and let the energy of Existence flow through you.

If you are caught in bettering yourself, you cannot relax. You will be tense and always anxious that you are lacking in some way.

True religion says you are complete as you are. How else can you be when you have emerged itself from fulfillment? Man as such has emerged from fulfillment. So his very nature is fulfillment. This is what is implied in the great declarations such as

Tat tvam asi – That Art Thou, *Aham Brahmasmi* – I am Brahman*.

You are complete and you are total. You don't have to reach anywhere since you are already there. You don't have to become something because you are already that. It is just a question of waking up to this Truth.

Guilt of not being worthy of love

Many people carry the guilt of not being worthy of being loved. This guilt happens from young age conditioning. When we are children, our parents tell us, 'If you do this I will love you more. If you do that, I will give you a candy. If you listen to me, I will take you to a movie.' All these things take root in you and you grow up with a strong impression that you should deserve to be loved. You feel guilty if someone loves you without you doing anything to deserve it.

Many people when they come to me, carry the same guilt. Be very clear, you are here not because you deserve to be here. You are here as part of the flow of Existence, that's all. There is nothing deserving or undeserving in this. I am like a full cloud ready to shower. You don't need to do

Brahman - Absolute, Cosmic Consciousness, formless god, etc., all referring to the universal Energy source of which the individual energy of the soul is a holographic part.

anything or deserve to be showered on.

There is no question of the master's love asking for any qualification from you to receive it.

If you are open, if you choose to stand with open arms, you will receive. Instead if you decide to open an umbrella of guilt and stand under it, naturally you will not receive much.

Guilt vs Gratitude

If you are caught in guilt, you can never feel connected to the Divine. The only way to get out of guilt completely is to feel the connectedness to your higher Self. But your very guilt acts as the barrier to this. The only way to overcome this guilt is to start melting with gratitude.

When you accept things as they are, when you experience the causeless blessings of the Divine, you become more and more grateful. Gratitude is the fragrance that can pervade your inner space and replace the smell of guilt.

With guilt, it becomes impossible to celebrate life. Guilt sits on your chest like a rock. You become heavy and frozen. It does not allow you to be free to dance, sing, laugh and love.

Total acceptance and surrender

Especially in the subject of master-disciple relationship, I have seen people creating a lot of guilt for themselves. When it comes to your relation with the master, you have certain fixed ideas as to how you should relate with the master, how you should receive him and such things. Based on this, you create guilt for yourself. Just receive the master in the way in which you are ready, that's enough. Every state is right, every stage is right, every relationship is right. Just be authentic and integrated about what you feel. That is enough.

Whatever way you feel, be honest about it to yourself and the master. And he will guide you to the final goal.

Don't set ideals looking at others. Your relation with the master is unique. You are close to him in your own way. Don't try to jump ahead of yourself. Then you will create your own suffering and feel guilty.

Accept yourself as you are, totally and unconditionally. The total acceptance will bring about an active and intense relaxation in which your natural intelligence will flower. Then the transformation will happen, the realization will happen of what you always were deep within you. Suddenly you will see that you have started moving, flowing. You move towards realization, just like the river moves

**If you want to
slow something
down, hurry up.**

towards the
ocean on its
own with no

rules or directions from anybody.

Start living and flowing. Enjoy the ultimate surrender to Existence just as you are. Don't feel guilty, don't feel afraid you have missed. What you are searching for was always inside you. You were always complete. Then how can you miss? When you are relaxed, you can sense this completeness. But when you are guilty, you create a gap and then you feel you are incomplete and separate, away from the Whole.

For example, if you are talking to a child some concepts of philosophy, what do you expect the child to do? Naturally, he will not be interested. He will just continue jumping and playing around. Can you say there is anything is wrong in it? No.

In the same way, you are who you are. Be where you are. Whatever you can receive, receive. Don't feel guilty you are not able to receive in the way you imagine you should receive.

A small story:

Once a young boy set out in search of a master to study the art of sword-fighting. He finally found a master and approached him to accept him as his disciple.

He asked the master, 'Master, if I study sincerely, how long will it take me to be a master at sword-fighting?'

The master replied, 'Maybe seven years.'

The disciple thought aloud, 'My mother is alone. I need to get back soon to take care of her. Master, if I work really hard, how long will it take me to become master of the art?'

The master replied, 'In that case, it may be twelve years.'

The disciple was surprised and asked, 'First you said seven years. But when I said I will work extra hard, you say twelve years. I am willing to undergo any hardship and sacrifice but I want to learn in the shortest time possible.'

The master replied, 'Oh, in that case, it may take eighteen years.'

If you try to jump ahead of the game, you create tension. It will take longer for you to achieve what you want to achieve.

As the Zen saying goes, if you want to slow something down, hurry up.

When you try to hurry up, it is like trying to make a bud bloom by opening out its petals. Can you call it real blooming? No. The bud can never be forced to bloom.

When the maturity happens, when the time comes, whatever needs to happen will happen. Life is beautiful when things

happen at the correct time. Sometimes it will happen that you will hear me today but you will understand what you heard only after months or years. The seed I plant in you today may lie dormant inside you but it will sprout at the right time, in the right season. It is okay, don't be worried about it, don't feel guilty about it. If you start feeling guilt, in the agitation, the seed may even get lost.

Life is a dream

What you see as reality is actually just a dream. When you awaken to this truth, it is true knowledge. Then you relax, you are able to enjoy the dream, because you know it is not reality. It is just like in a game of chess. The players themselves may not see the right move because they are involved in the game. But a watcher of the game will know the right move. It is because he is not involved. So he can easily enjoy the game and intelligently know the next move.

You enjoy life more when you are watching, when you know it is a dream and you have nothing to lose. Then there is nothing to feel guilty about. You lead a life of celebration, living in this world yet detached from it. You enjoy it with no guilt.

It is like when you go to a theater. You watch a movie but you know it is not real.

That is why you are able to enjoy it, no matter what happens on screen. When you come home you forget about it. Life is exactly like this. The whole world is like a movie on a vast screen. When you understand this, you can enjoy the movie. You realize there is nothing wrong in enjoying it.

Guilt of following another master

Another common guilt is the guilt of following more than one master. Understand, feeling conflict about following different masters is nothing but a conflict inside yourself. There is no real conflict between the real masters. All masters are embodiments of the same energy. The energy is one and the same, there is no need for any conflict.

I always tell people: go around, pluck flowers from any garden and make a nice garland for yourself! But the problem is, people go around to many gardens, but don't pluck flowers from any garden, instead, they collect only thorns! If you are doing only window shopping, you don't learn from any master.

When you sincerely go to many masters, you will learn from all of them and become more intense. Once you become intense, it is better that you stay with only one

master so that you start going deep with any one ideology. But if you don't learn anything from any master, it is better to stick to one. After all, what are you going to learn from so many masters that you can't learn from one? It means you are only a window shopper. Going to the first master itself is wrong if you are doing just window shopping. You will only be troubling him and troubling yourself. If you feel the master is only a teacher and not the path, just leave him.

The thumb rule is, if he is really your master, your heart will simply fall, you won't even think of anyone else!

Meditation techniques

1. Relive to relieve

Re-living is relieving. The best way to relieve yourself of guilt is to relive it. Sit in a meditative mood. Close your eyes and one by one bring to surface each of your guilts. Relive the wounds completely. Do not console yourself about the guilt. Open your eyes and write it all down in detail. Write in as detailed a way as possible. You will see that you are free from all the guilt feelings that you are carrying.

2. From head to heart

Sit down and close your eyes. Take slow and deep breaths, just for a few minutes. Along with it, feel that your head is being pressed into your heart, into the chest region. Become totally headless. You have no head now. You are headless.

Feel that you are breathing from the heart. Feel that you are seeing through the heart. Feel that you are smelling through your heart. Feel very clearly that you are breathing through the heart. Listen through the heart, see through the heart and feel through the heart.

Stand up. Have the consciousness from the heart and let your movements be as slow as possible. Don't walk. Just move your body around slowly. Remember that you are moving from the heart. Your center is the heart, not the head. Again and again, forget the head. Move from the heart. Remember you are a headless being.

Stand in one place. Now increase the speed slowly, very slowly. Remember to move from the heart, not from the head. Forget your head. You are a headless being moving.

(After few minutes)

Sit down where you are. Just be without the head. Sit only with your heart. Relax.

(After few minutes)

Slowly, very slowly, open your eyes.

3. Be a witness

The sure way to handle any emotion including guilt is to be a witness. Just watch it. Hindus* call it being a *sakshi*, Sufis* call it *sahada*. Don't do anything. Anything done under the impact of a negative emotion is bound to be wrong. Later guilt

will arise. Just be a watcher, a witness. See it. It is there. You are not it. You are only the witness. You will be surprised how it goes away. It cannot be there forever. By its very nature, the mind will change state. In a few minutes the guilt will go and leave no trace behind that it ever existed.

Hindus - Followers of the Hindu religion, estimated at over a billion people.

Sufis - Followers of Sufism, a mystical dimension of Islam.

Comparison and Jealousy

Emotions of fear, desire and guilt are subjective emotions. What I mean by this is that you do not need another person or even an object to create these emotions. Imagine that you are in a sound-proofed room with your eyes closed and with nothing to touch, taste or smell. You can still feel the emotions of fear or desire. But to compare yourself with another person and to feel jealous of him, you need the presence of another person. Jealousy is therefore an objective emotion. It needs an object to be activated.

A small story:

One evening a man was sitting with his wife on a park bench. Without noticing them, a young man and his girlfriend sat down next to them. The young man started talking to his girlfriend in a very loving manner.

Hearing this, the wife whispered to her husband, 'I think he is going to propose to her. Maybe you should cough or do something to warn him!'

The husband replied, 'Why should I warn him? Nobody ever warned me!'

Jealousy starts from comparison. We always compare ourselves with others in various fields like looks, wealth, knowledge, name and fame and friends to

name a few. When we compare ourselves with others we feel that somebody else has something more than what we have and we get caught in jealousy.

Comparison is the seed and jealousy is the fruit!

Why comparison?

Why exactly do we compare ourselves with others?

First, we compare ourselves because we have never understood ourselves. We are not aware of who we are and what we have.

Second, society has conditioned us from our birth to evaluate ourselves based upon others. From childhood the comparison starts. In school, the grading system introduces a child to competition and comparison with others.

There are standard benchmarks to measure a child's qualities such as mathematical ability, scientific aptitude, artistic skill, athletic ability, musical talent and so on. But what we don't realize is that when we try to measure a quality using a standardized benchmark, it is nothing but using comparison as the scale to measure the child himself. We are literally punishing all children with the reward systems we use in schools.

Nothing exists except in relationship.

The child gets used to judging and knowing himself by looking at others and comparing himself with them. He has no understanding of himself based on what he is. He knows himself only based on others.

A small story:

Once a man was testifying in court about a road accident. Suddenly, the man noticed that the court reporter was writing while he spoke. As the man started speaking faster and faster he noticed that the reporter was writing faster and faster.

Suddenly the man said to the court reporter, 'Please don't write so fast. I am not able to keep up with you!'

Every judgment you make about yourself is based on some comparison. But why does the idea of the other enter into your mind? It is because you have not looked in and realized who you are. You have not experienced the bliss and tremendous potential you have inside you. You feel incomplete because you have not been able to express yourself as you are. So the emptiness and lack of fulfillment inside makes you feel inferior to others.

The futility of comparison

Buddha says, 'Nothing exists except in relationship.' Suppose you were the only person on a new planet, how could you compare yourself with anyone? Could you call yourself tall or short, ugly or beautiful, rich or poor, intelligent or dumb? No! When there is no one with whom to compare ourselves, we just are!

Even now, there is no scale to compare you with anybody. Each individual is unique.

Can you compare a lion and a horse? Do we ever compare ourselves with flowers or birds or mountains? Then why do we have to compare ourselves with other human beings!

A beautiful Zen story:

A king once went to a master to ask for a technique to become more powerful than his neighboring kings. He sat in front of the master and started telling him the purpose of his visit. The master listened patiently to the king.

He then told him to go into the royal garden where a rose plant and a cypress plant were growing side by side. He told the king, 'They are your teachers. They can teach you what you need to learn.'

The king went into the garden, saw the two plants but could not understand

what he was meant to learn from them. He went back to the master and asked, 'What do you mean, master? I am not able to understand what and how these plants will teach me.'

The master took the king to the plants and explained, 'This cypress plant has been next to the rose plant for so many years. Never once has it even aspired to become a rose plant. Similarly, the rose plant has never ever aspired to become a cypress plant. If man had been the cypress plant, he would have compared himself with the rose and felt jealous at the attention that the rose plant was getting from people. Or if man were the rose plant, he would have looked at the cypress plant enviously thinking how peaceful the plant was without the torture of getting plucked by people all day!'

The two plants prospered because they used all of their energy for their own growth instead of using it to compare themselves with the other.

The moment you stop comparing, all jealousy disappears. Instead, you will start feeling contented in yourself and grateful to Existence for having given you so much and for making you unique.

If you feel jealous of others, you will suffer. You will constantly fight with others openly or inside yourself. If somebody

When you feel hurt, understand you have a wound.

laughs, you think he is laughing at you. If somebody is friendly towards another person, you feel lonely and jealous of that person. Actually, you are just waiting for someone to hurt you. The jealousy you allow inside you is like a raw wound. Any action done with no intention to hurt you also touches the wound and hurts.

So when you feel hurt, understand that you have a wound. Don't throw the responsibility of the suffering on the other person. The wound needs to be healed, the jealousy has to be dissolved. Then nobody can hurt you. Nobody can hurt you without your silent permission.

You compare yourself to each other because you feel that you are somehow lacking. Honestly, you have no idea of your true, unique potential! If you did, you wouldn't spend one second looking outside yourself for answers about how to live a creative, fulfilling life. All of the confidence, intelligence, and vibrant energy that you need already exist inside you. You have the potential to live like gods on earth. Don't believe the limiting things that you have been made to believe about yourselves. Just look in! Experiment, explore and discover the truth for yourself. Then you will simply radiate all of these qualities effortlessly.

Above and below the ladder

Suppose there was a huge ladder and everybody in the world was asked to stand on it in ascending order of success in any field such as beauty or intelligence. You would probably position yourself somewhere in the middle of the ladder. There are many people above you but there are also many people below you. Seeing the people above you causes you to feel jealous, so you constantly try to become better than them in order to move further up the ladder.

Now at some point in your life, you may realize the uselessness of this never-ending game. Then you want to jump off the ladder. You look down. Now what do you see? There are so many people below you. Suddenly you start feeling happy to see so many people below you and you feel hopeful because you are not as inferior as you thought you were when you were looking at the people above you.

This is where the fight starts. When you look up, you feel miserable, but when you look down, you feel happy. Now even though you begin to realize the futility of spending your life just climbing the ladder, still you are not able to jump off the ladder because if you jump off, you will be left alone – there will be nobody above you or below you.

Wants Vs Needs

When you are on your own at home, you may think it is so nice that you have a beautiful home and a lovely car for yourself. You may feel satisfied with yourself and relaxed inside. After some time, when you step out of your house and go for a drive in your car, you stop at a traffic light and notice a flashy, new Mercedes alongside you. What happens? Suddenly you start feeling that maybe your car is not all that great after all. Now a thought comes, 'It is time to buy a new car...maybe a Mercedes.'

Just sometime back, you were happy with your own things, but now seeing somebody else's car, a desire has entered you to have that same car. You have borrowed the desire of that car owner – this is called a *borrowed desire* born out of comparison.

This borrowed desire is an example of a *want*, not a *need*. Try this: do an honest analysis of each of your desires when they surface. Drop all your prestige problems and do a self-analysis. If you can't drop your prestige when you are alone, how will you drop it when you are with people!

The very nature of the mind is to not be satisfied, not be happy, and not be in the present moment. The mind can only exist either in the past or the future. It cannot exist in the present because you cannot have thoughts in the present moment. So,

by its very nature, the mind will chase desires. We have to be aware and see which desires are actually ours and which we have borrowed from others.

Mahavira*, the enlightened master and founder of the religion of Jainism, makes a beautiful statement, ‘When you are born, the entire quantity of food and energy that you will need during your lifetime is sent along with you.’ Before sending you to planet earth, Existence equips you with the energy to fulfill all that you will need to live a happy and fulfilling life.

But when you start spending this energy to realize borrowed desires, you feel you don’t have enough energy to fulfill all your desires. You feel unfulfilled because your own desires have not been fulfilled.

You have enough energy to fulfill all of your needs but not your wants. The moment one want is fulfilled, many more come up as you borrow more desires from others.

Doing, having and being

We all function around the three axes of *doing*, *having* and *being*. Doing for having,

without enjoying being, is the sole cause of all our misery. Doing never catches up with *having*! Every time you work hard and fulfill one desire, suddenly that desire loses its pull over you.

As enlightened master, Ramana Maharishi*, says beautifully, ‘The mind is such that it shows a tiny mustard seed to be a huge mountain until it is attained. As soon as it has been attained, even a mountain appears as insignificant as a mustard seed!’

As soon as a desire is fulfilled, another one starts pulling at you. You don’t even have time to enjoy it and feel satisfied. You may think, ‘Let me get this one more thing also. Then I can relax and enjoy what I have.’ Be very clear, your mind will never let it happen.

The only way to really live and enjoy life is to enjoy the very doing itself. Then

Before sending you to planet earth, Existence equips you with the energy to fulfill all that you will need to live a happy and fulfilling life.

Mahavira – Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th and last Jain *tirthankara* or enlightened one, and established the tenets of the religion of Jainism, founded in India and now practiced by millions worldwide.

Ramana Maharishi - Enlightened master, based in Tiruvannamalai in South India. He taught the method of self-inquiry, asking oneself, ‘Who am I?’, as the path to self-realization.

automatically the doing, having and being, will be integrated and will happen.

You are unique

Nature has its own unique way of growth for each of us.

Take the Chinese bamboo for example. When it sprouts, it doesn't show much growth for the first four years. Then in the fifth year, the bamboo grows ninety feet in six weeks! It was not that the tree was not growing in the first four years. Though the growth was not visible, the roots were being strengthened to make it possible for the plant to grow fast and safely into a huge tree!

Like the bamboo's growth, there is no scale to measure yourself with anyone other than your own self. If you spend all your energy looking in and competing with yourself, you will progress in leaps and bounds.

First of all, understand that god is an artist, not an engineer. If He was an engineer, He would have made one perfect man and one perfect woman and then made millions of copies from that mould! No. God has made each one of us unique in every way.

It does not matter whether you are a rose or a lily or a wild flower. The important thing is that the wild flower should realize its ultimate potential as a wild flower just

as the rose should actualize its inherent potential. The fragrance of you realizing your unique potential is what radiates and, without effort, touches everyone around you.

Whether in regard to beauty or intelligence, you are unique. It is only when you don't respect your uniqueness that you start comparing yourself with others. Even if your favorite cinema star or model is very beautiful, can you enjoy drinking even a cup of water from that body? No! You can only enjoy using your own body, your best friend. Accept and welcome it.

Jealousy has no solid existence

Actually, jealousy has no solid existence. In that way it is like darkness. Darkness does not have an independent, positive existence. Darkness is not the presence of something. Darkness is just the absence of light. In the same way, jealousy has no independent, solid existence by itself. It is just the absence of knowledge or awareness.

A small story:

A man was having trouble finding a wife whom his mother would also like. He asked his friend for some advice. His friend advised, 'Maybe if you get

a girl just like your mother, she would like her.’ The man took his friend’s advice and searched for a long time and finally found such a girl.

He then came back and told his friend, ‘Just like you said, I found a girl who is exactly like my mother. She talks, walks, behaves just like my mother.’ But the man still looked depressed. His friend asked him, ‘Ok, good you found such a girl. But why are you still sad?’

The man replied, ‘Because my father hates her!’

There is no end to comparison because comparison exists in the mind, not in reality. The jealousy that arises from comparison also has no basis.

Some people ask me, ‘Then, is it better for us not to look at others and their achievements? Then there is no problem of comparison at all! Isn’t that the best way out of jealousy?’

I tell them, you can’t escape from your mind just by ignoring your thoughts! If you can look but not be affected by what you see, then you have found the right way. If you can accept and welcome what you see and what happens, then you are centered within yourself and nothing can shake you.

Don’t condemn the object of Jealousy

A small story:

A man was asked, ‘Do you believe in luck?’

He replied, ‘Of course! How else do you explain the success of people that you don’t like!’

Just by condemning the object of jealousy, you will not be liberated from jealousy itself because the moment you start condemning another person, it means that there is a wound inside you that you are trying to cover up, knowingly or unknowingly.

By condemning the object of jealousy, you might be liberated from that particular object of jealousy, but you will simply get fixed on another object of jealousy, that’s all! It is like saying ‘sour grapes’ and moving on to another vineyard! So, trying to overcome the object of jealousy is not the solution. You need to work on the subject, that is, *you*.

The sage Patanjali*, the father of yoga*, says, ‘When somebody is blissful, feel blissful and friendly.’ The secret is that bliss is a quality that belongs to everyone. It is

Patanjali – A sage of ancient India and author of Yoga Sutras, which is the foundation of modern day yoga. Yoga - Literally means ‘uniting’ of body-mind-spirit.

**This is the start of
hypocrisy: you try
to imitate others
and become what
you are not. This
is a vicious cycle.**

there for
anyone to
share, just
like a flower's
fragrance
spreads

choicelessly and is available for everyone, like a beautiful sunrise that is there for anyone to enjoy, or like a beautiful piece of music available to everyone! You can choose to tune into bliss, and that is all that is needed to experience it!

Other's sufferings worse than our own

A small story:

A man was feeling very burdened by his suffering. Every day he would pray to god, 'Everybody is so happy, why do only I have to suffer?' One day, he was really depressed and prayed, 'I am not able to bear my pain anymore. Please take it away! Even if I have to take someone else's pain in exchange, I am ready to do that.'

That night he had a dream where he saw god telling everyone in his village to bring all their sufferings to Him. So everybody gathered their sufferings in big bags and they all rushed to god. Then god said, 'Now you can keep your bags together around me.' Everybody

was very happy to get rid of their sufferings and dropped off their bags.

Then, as they had asked in their prayers, god said, 'Ok, now you can take any bag.' Suddenly, everybody including this man, rushed to take his own bag! Not only him, but all others were doing the same thing.

For the first time, each one had seen others' sufferings and they were glad their bag was not as big as those around them. Also, each person had become used to his own sufferings. Nobody wanted to risk taking somebody else's unknown suffering instead of their known!

The man suddenly woke up and prayed to god, 'Thank you for opening my eyes! I know what I have is good for me. That is why you have given my circumstances to me!'

Jealousy – the mother of hypocrisy

Because of jealousy, you suffer inside yourself. You feel something is missing in your life. To get that missing element, you try to become what you are not by nature. This is the start of hypocrisy. You try to imitate others and become what you are not. This is a vicious cycle. The more you pretend, the farther you go from your true

nature. This leads to further dissatisfaction and jealousy, which in turn leads to more pretence.

The only way to break out of this vicious cycle is to realize your own uniqueness and express it. Be authentic in everything that you do. This new experience of freedom will help you tremendously to find your unique and authentic dimension of creativity. Love yourself just as you are, as the unique creation of the Divine. And watch the self-created myth of jealousy just drop.

Peer pressure – the stick of Jealousy

There is a beautiful verse in the ancient scriptures that says the power of *maya*^{*}, the energy which runs the universe, uses jealousy as a tool to make you do whatever it wants you to do.

In India, there are people who do circus shows with monkeys in the street. They will have a small stick. Once they pick up the stick, the monkey will do whatever they say. If they just gesture to the monkey, it won't listen. Even though it knows that the man can pick up the stick at any time,

Peer pressure is just a big ego game. Actually, it is not at all necessary for you to grow.

unless he picks up the stick, the monkey won't listen. If he picks up the stick and tells

the monkey to walk straight, it will walk straight. If the man tells the monkey to jump three times, it will jump three times.

The man will use the stick like the ringmaster uses it in the circus. In the same way, the power of *maya*^{*} uses peer pressure and jealousy as a stick to make you do whatever it wants. Understand, peer pressure is just a big ego game. Actually, it is not at all necessary for you to grow. There is enough food, shelter, medical care and clothing in the world to satisfy all of our basic needs. There is no need to compete!

How to overcome Jealousy

Jealousy is closely related to many negative emotions like anger, greed, possessiveness and depression. All of these emotions will dissolve when we break this cycle of jealousy.

^{*}Maya – Literally 'That which it is not'. It is the concept that life is but a dream, however real it may seem while being experienced.

1. Witnessing

Jealousy cannot be overcome either by escaping from it or hating the object of jealousy. All you need to do is just be fully aware when the feeling of jealousy arises. You will be surprised, it simply disappears.

The enlightened master Buddha says, 'Destroy those envying roots and enjoy lasting peace.'

Just be aware and destroy the jealousy, competition, envy and comparison that have robbed you of your very nature of bliss. Use the light of awareness to reveal the shadow nature of these negative emotions. Otherwise, you are just caught in the rat race. I always tell people, even if you win the rat race, you are still just a rat!

The way out of jealousy is not by suppressing it or denying its existence. Expressing and encouraging it is also not the way because then you are not ready to face the jealousy with awareness.

Just watch how jealousy arises in you, how it develops into hatred for the object of jealousy, how it creates restlessness and frustration inside you and makes you lose all of your peace and calm.

Be aware of the jealousy instead of hating it or the object of your jealousy. Just watch, as if you have nothing to do with it. Look at it with a scientific attitude. What do I mean by a scientific attitude?

When a scientist is experimenting, he simply experiments without any judgment, without any pre-determined conclusion. If he has a conclusion already in his mind, that means he is not a scientist because his conclusion may influence the experiment.

Now, you are the scientist in the laboratory of the inner-world science. Be a scientist in your inner world and let your mind be your laboratory. Just be aware and witness without any prejudice.

Don't condemn the emotion saying it is bad because that is what you have been taught. It has not become your experience. If it is your experience that jealousy is a negative emotion you will drop it automatically. It has not become your own experience. It is only something that you have picked up from others. Unless it becomes an experiential understanding in you that jealousy and comparison are negative, it will not become a part of you.

Don't condemn the object of jealousy. The object has not generated the emotion from outside. The jealousy is happening inside *you*.

Once you see your jealousy with awareness, you will realize that it does not have a basis for existence at all. When this happens, jealousy will drop automatically. You won't have to drop it.

A small story:

A woman once hired a professional artist to paint her portrait. The artist carefully made a large portrait and then presented it to her saying, 'How do you like it?'

The lady looked at it and said, 'Yes, very nice. But can you add a few things? I want you to add a glittering diamond necklace, a gold watch and bracelet, emerald earrings and beautiful pearl rings on the fingers.' The artist was surprised and said, 'But madam, the portrait looks simple and beautiful as it is. Why do you want to add all the jewelry and clutter it?'

The woman replied, 'I want my rich neighbors to see the painting and go crazy when they see all the jewelry that they will think I have.'

The fire of jealousy can just consume you completely if you don't control it with the fire extinguisher of your awareness.

2. Infinite love

Jealousy does not allow you to experience your true nature of love and bliss. It arises out of misunderstanding life and yourself. You misunderstand love to be something outside of you that has to be acquired. Not only that, you think love is a quantity that

If you accept yourself just as you are, you can accept others also as they are.

needs to be shared. That is why you are afraid, thinking that if you share your love, your share will be reduced.

Love is a quality inside you. It is not a limited quantity. It is an unending happening overflowing from within you. It cannot be blocked by anything or anybody except you because it is your very nature.

Once love starts flowing, jealousy and possessiveness and all that simply become non-existent. If you accept yourself just as you are, you can accept others also as they are.

3. Ocean of energy

This technique puts you in touch with the tremendous energy inside of you. There is an immense reservoir of energy inside us that most of us are not even aware of. If you know how to tap into this vast energy source, you can simply go beyond what you now think are your limitations.

The key to this meditation is to keep the mind fixed on the throat region, the location of the *vishuddhi chakra**, throughout the technique. When you do this, the cosmic energy enters through the

*vishuddhi chakra** and becomes a tremendous source of energy for you.

Stand with your eyes closed and focus on your *vishuddhi chakra**. Stand behind a chair or some support and hold it and start walking slowly, very slowly in the same spot where you are standing.

Now start increasing your pace very gradually. Keep walking faster and faster in the same spot. Push your limits only to the extent that you can, with no discomfort. Don't over-exert yourself at

any time. At all times focus on the *vishuddhi*. You will be able to feel the energy coming from it. The important thing is never to slow down at any point in time but always keep your awareness on the throat region. Stop after twenty minutes.

Then, for the next ten minutes, just sit down quietly wherever you are. Keep your eyes closed and focus on the *vishuddhi*. You will absorb the energy that is generated during the movement.

Vishuddhi chakra - *Chakra* or subtle energy center in the throat region. Locked by comparing ourselves with others.

Seriousness Vs Sincerity

All our comparison with other people begins with what we think of ourselves. Jealousy disappears when we understand our uniqueness. We may then create another problem. We may believe ourselves to be so special that we start taking ourselves far too seriously.

What is seriousness?

Seriousness is nothing but paying undue importance to something, at the cost of everything else. It arises from the inability to see that all of life is just a drama that is unfolding every minute. Seriousness is the result of over-expectation from life.

A small story:

Two boys were building sand castles on the beach. They suddenly had a quarrel and one of the boys got angry and kicked the sand castle.

The other boy went and complained to the king about his serious problem. The king began to laugh at him for getting so upset over silly sand castles. But the king's advisor, a Zen monk, started laughing at the king.

He asked, 'When you can fight battles and lose sleep over stone castles, why do you laugh at these boys for fighting over sand castles!'

Seriousness is paying undue importance to something, at the cost of everything else.

All our seriousness is just about sandcastles! For the child, at that young

age, sand castles seem precious, whereas at our age, stone castles seem precious, that's all. Whether it is a sand castle or a stone castle, the seriousness behind it is the same. The object may be different, but the seriousness is the same. So don't laugh when children fight over sand castles.

Seriousness closes your mind to the openness and freedom of life. It makes you dull and dead. It curbs your thinking and makes you stick to the familiar patterns that you know and use all the time.

A small story:

In a Zen monastery, there was a competition among disciples over who had maintained the best garden. One disciple was of a very serious nature. He took the competition quite seriously. He always kept his garden neat, clean, and well-swept. All the grass was of the same height. All the bushes were neatly trimmed. He was sure that he would get the first prize.

On the day of the competition, the master went around all the gardens. Then he came back and ranked the gardens. This disciple's garden got the

**Seriousness kills
spontaneity.
Seriousness
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lowest ranking. Everyone was shocked.

The disciple could not contain himself and asked, 'Master, what is wrong with my garden? Why did you rank me the lowest?'

The master looked at him and asked, 'Where are all the dead leaves? A garden maintained in such a way is no longer alive! It is dead.'

Seriousness kills spontaneity. Seriousness destroys creativity.

Science has proved that when you perform a task in a relaxed and light manner, your thinking and decision-making capacity is automatically enhanced. The same task when performed in a serious manner dulls your mind. When you do something too seriously, when you are too concerned about the result, you are actually not allowing yourself to perform at the optimum level.

Of course, you need to make plans, and you need to think ahead. But do it with sincerity, not with seriousness. Seriousness is not the same as sincerity. Sincerity is focusing on the task with enthusiasm and youthfulness. Sincerity is giving the task your best without worrying excessively about the result! When you are serious, you don't enjoy, you don't laugh. How can you laugh when you are serious!

Be sensitive. Being sensitive means being strong, being aware of everything. Understand, being sensitive does not mean being open to everything. Being unable to say 'no' does not mean sensitivity. That is actually ego! The person who is not able to say 'no' when he needs to is egoistic. Sensitivity is having the clarity about when to say 'yes' and when to say 'no' and having the sincerity and courage to follow that decision.

Perfectionism

Perfectionism always comes from your mind. It becomes a goal for you. You work towards it as a goal. When you work towards it as a goal, it becomes dead and mundane. But when you are total, when you are established in your heart, it becomes a deep experience. The outcome has to be beautiful, and it will give you joy. Then, whatever you do, you will be in tune with Existence. Whatever you do, do it wholly, totally, and it will be total. You won't have to worry about perfectionism at all.

Perfectionism never gives you joy. It only fulfills your ego. Even if you feel fulfilled at the end of it, it is only a fulfillment of your ego, never a fulfillment of your being. Be very clear, perfectionists are the biggest egoists. They miss the dimension of being total. Totality is possible when you enter

into something deeply. Perfectionism is never possible because it is in your mind, and your mind keeps changing its definition of perfection!

Learning from mistakes

Have the courage to make mistakes. Serious people are always afraid to make mistakes. They take themselves too seriously. They think too much about themselves. It is too much to make mistakes and have someone point it out to them. Actually I tell you, these people who are afraid of making small mistakes, end up making big blunders!

Actually, when you make a mistake, people point it out, and you are not able to bear it. Your ego gets hurt and you are very sensitive to this. So to avoid getting your ego hurt, you try your best not to make mistakes.

You plan so unconsciously and continuously to keep guarding your ego. But the reasons you give are all different. It is not that you are lying. It is just that you are not aware of the subtle way in which your ego works.

There is nothing wrong with making mistakes. In fact, by making a few mistakes, you come to know clearly how to avoid making mistakes because you have experientially understood it. The more you

learn from mistakes, the more you know about how not to make mistakes. Do

things to the

best of your intelligence and enthusiasm but without worrying about whether you might make a mistake. The moment you are worried that it might be a mistake, you are worried about your ego getting hurt.

Synchronicity of Existence

When you are not so concerned about your ego getting hurt, you will have the courage to take any jump. All your so-called worry is actually about your ego getting hurt. When you are free from ego, you will act with more freedom and courage. You will be more willing to explore.

When you are full of wonder for Existence, you can create. On the other hand, when you are full of ego, you cannot create. Even if you do create, your creation will be a dead creation. It will be like a plastic rose that looks perfect but lacks fragrance and life. When an artist creates out of love, he gives a certain special quality to the creation. If he creates out of ego, the creation is lifeless.

When you are free from ego, you will act with freedom and courage. You will be willing to explore.

**Your logic gives
you the feeling
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logic.**

When you are able to resonate with the whole of Existence, you can see every

single thing in life as a manifestation of Existence. When you are in this state, you get whatever you seek, because you are moving in tune with Existence. Life then becomes a miracle. This is what we call the synchronicity of Existence.

When you are resonating with Existence, you will not seek things in a greedy manner. Existence will simply keep giving you what you need for that moment, even before you seek it. This is what I mean when I say, 'Whatever you seek, you will find.'

The more you lose yourself to Existence, the more egoless you become. The more egoless you become, the more you lose yourself to Existence.

Life is beyond your logic

Most of us unconsciously believe that life is filled with incidents that are under the control of our logic. But life again and again reminds you of the truth that life is beyond your logic. You are reminded of this fact, especially when some near and

dear friend or family member dies or when something unexpected happens. If you lose your job, suddenly you see that life is not under your control. You suddenly wake up to the reality that life is beyond your logic. Then you start seeking the Truth.

Especially if you live in the city, your routine is almost fixed. From morning until night, you know exactly how your day will unfold. You know where you will go, what you will do or not do, and what and when you will eat.

Practically, your ego gives an idea, your logic gives you the feeling that your life is under the control of your logic. That is why whenever some incident happens that is beyond your logic, that is not under your control, you are totally shaken. You are not able to handle it. You don't know what to do. Either you fall into depression or you just suffer.

There is an important truth, an ultimate secret that you must understand. Never think things are going smoothly because of you. In spite of you, things are going smoothly! This is one of the important secrets. As long as you think it is because of you that things are going smoothly, you will be constantly suffering with ego.

What is Ego?

According to the *Upanishads**, as long as you think that life has a purpose and you run behind that purpose, you are an egoistic person. When you realize the beauty of the purposelessness of life, you have dropped your ego. The master is the one who makes you understand the purposelessness of life. Whatever you think of as being worthy now is not actually the true and worthy thing. A man with ego searches with purpose and misses reality.

Death clearly shows that whatever mind you lived with has no real existence. When you realize the purposelessness of life, a new consciousness starts blossoming in you. The moment you experience that there is nothing to be achieved, that the diamonds you are protecting are not diamonds but stones, and that all your great things in life are mere toys, you will understand the purposelessness of life.

The real purpose of life cannot be understood by the ego. When the ego is dropped, you will understand the Divine purpose of life, the *leelas* or the Divine play, you will enjoy the drama. If you keep thinking that life has a purpose and wait to achieve something, you will miss life itself.

Upanishad - Scriptures that form the essence of the ancient texts of the Vedas. Literally means 'sitting with the master'. There are eleven main *Upanishads* that have been commented on by enlightened Master Adi Shankara.

Nithya ananda - Eternal bliss.

Life itself is the path and the goal.

Life itself is the path and the goal.

When you have a goal, you will run. Your feet will not touch the ground and you will miss the beauty of Existence or nature. When you drop the goal, the emphasis will be on the path.

When you understand the purposelessness of life, you understand the meaning of living. Until then, you are just a 'living dead' person. A person in a coma lying in the hospital bed and a normal person who has not realized the Truth, both live without proper consciousness. The master is the one who makes you realize this truth. The meaning of living is the meaning of life or Existence.

Drop the goal and enjoy life. Meditate on this teaching again and again. The Truth will dawn on you and the *nithya ananda** state will flower in you, the state that is the very meaning of life.

The solid feeling of 'no'

Many times you may have seen, whenever someone says something to you, the first reaction inside you is a certain resistance, a 'no'. When you say 'no', it is ego-

If your enemy

**is big, you
feel big.**

fulfilling. You feel solid and firm inside yourself. When you say 'yes', you feel liquid and vulnerable. Your ego feels submissive, which is uncomfortable, so you say 'no'.

This is also why you feel good when you break rules at home, school, in the workplace, or while driving. You feel boosted in ego when you say 'no' to rules. You can see this with small children. The moment you say they are not meant to have certain things, they will ask only for those things!

Ordinary Vs Extraordinary

Whenever you try to live for your ego, you make your life and others' lives miserable. Most of the time the miseries you face in your life are not created by others. They are unknowingly created by you. You may not even derive any benefits from them. But just to prove your ego, you create them.

A small story:

An enlightened master, Suzuki, lived in Japan. When his master passed away, he started weeping profusely. One person asked him, 'You are an enlightened person. Why are you crying on your master's passing away?' Suzuki replied, 'My master was the most extraordinary man on planet earth.' The person was puzzled and asked him,

'What was so extraordinary about him?'

Suzuki replied, 'I have never seen such an extraordinary person who thought he was the most ordinary man!'

In ordinary life, every average person thinks he is extraordinary. When you feel that you have undergone the maximum suffering, your ego feels good that you have been able to handle a tough life. Only when your enemy is big, you feel big. When your enemy is small, you feel small.

For the same reason, if your suffering is big, you feel good. Your ego feels satisfied. You measure life with the amount of your suffering. Unknowingly, you torture others as well as yourself. Suzuki's master was extraordinary because he thought he was the most ordinary, whereas in this world, every other person thinks he is extraordinary.

A small story:

There was a king in India who was very egoistic. His ego had grown to such a great extent that he started declaring, 'I can do everything god does. I am greater than god.' If someone objected to his view, immediately he would give the order, 'Kill him'.

There was an enlightened master in that kingdom. When he came to the capital, he heard about the egoistic attitude of the king and wanted to show the king

the truth. He went to the court and started praising the king, 'O king, you are equal to god. You are god'.

The king was very happy and said, 'Yes, you seem to be an intelligent person. Tell us what more you have realized.' The master said, 'O king, I have to tell you an important thing. There are some things you can do that even god can't do!' Now the king was floating with pride. He said, 'Please tell us what it is that I can do that even god cannot!'

The master replied calmly, 'O king, if you are angry with somebody you can send him out of your kingdom, but god cannot!'

God cannot send us out of His kingdom. The kingdom of god, enlightenment, the vibrant silence, is our birthright!

If you want to check whether you are average or not, do this experiment. If you feel extraordinary, be very clear: you are average. If you feel ordinary, you are extraordinary!

Using the right mask

You all play different roles, use different masks in your day-to-day lives. You use one mask with your mother, a different mask with your father, a different one with your boss and so on. As long as you use the right masks with the right people, it is

If you feel ordinary, you are extraordinary!

alright. The moment you use the wrong

mask with a person, be aware that your ego has stepped in.

All you have to do is switch masks efficiently and enjoy the show. Then you are a watcher. You can do this only when you know that you are something beyond the mask. Otherwise, you will get carried away by the mask and lose the whole charm of life. When you know that you are only using masks, your desires drop.

Just like when you grow up, you automatically drop your toys, in the same way, when you look at these masks intelligently, you don't have any desire for them and simply use them as needed.

Ego is born from discontentment

If you are a strong egoistic person, you don't need a separate hell because the mind can exist only in conflict and discontentment. With contentment, with satisfaction, you will lose your boundary. That is why you don't want joy or bliss. Please never think you want bliss. No! Actually you are afraid of joy and bliss. Whenever you go through a peaceful, no-worry feeling, just watch yourself. You feel you are missing something when there is

nothing to think about! Unless you have something strong to brood over, you don't have a clear-cut boundary in your inner space.

Your mind exists when it hits the corners of your suffering. You don't feel your boundary or your identity unless you have enough suffering. If you look a little deeper, you will understand that many times you feel lonely if you don't have anything to worry or suffer about. That is the way you believe yourselves to be, because by its nature, the mind can record only negative things. The mind can flourish, it can create more thoughts, it can more clearly identify with suffering, dissatisfaction and discontentment. The quality of joy is boundarylessness. When you are in joy, you won't feel your boundary. Whenever you don't feel your boundary, you are in a state of joy, in a satisfied and contented mood.

Suffering leads to Ego

Your ego cannot exist without your suffering. Suffering is the root of your ego. This is an important thing you need to understand. We always think that the ego is disturbed by suffering. No! Ego is enriched by suffering. One more important thing is that if your suffering is less, your ego is less. You feel you are too small, so

you increase your suffering so that you can feel you are somebody.

The less the suffering, the lesser is the ego. The more you suffer, the stronger your ego becomes. So you always exaggerate your suffering. The problem is that after some time you forget that you exaggerated. Then you are also caught in the same net. You might disagree and say, 'No, you don't know my life. You don't know my suffering.' But be very clear, after some time you are caught in the same net that you yourself created!

You can only enjoy yourself without Ego

Only when you don't have ego can you really enjoy yourself. If you have ego, you can't enjoy. Standing in front of the mirror, you may apply makeup so that others will enjoy you, but you can't enjoy yourself. Only a person who does not have ego, who does not identify with the body and mind, can enjoy himself. If you think something is *yours*, you can't enjoy. For anything that you think of as yours, you have lost the freedom to enjoy that thing or relationship!

Ego and the connection with Nature

This is an incident from the days right after my enlightenment when I was in Tamil Nadu in South India.

One evening, I was sitting in a very relaxed mood in a forest. My eyes were open, but I was not seeing anything, as there was no information going inside and getting processed. There was a huge snake lying about three feet in front of me. Because the eyes were not processing any information, there was no fear inside. I was sitting and the snake was also so relaxed and comfortable.

Then slowly, my mind came down to the normal plane and I had a thought, 'Oh, there is a snake.' Then the next thought came, 'I should move away.' The moment the thought 'snake' came in my inner space, I saw very clearly that the snake also felt disturbed that there was a man in its presence.

Until I felt 'There is a snake,' the snake never felt that I am a man. Until I felt the fear, the snake never felt threatened by me. Neither did I have fear nor did the snake have fear. But the moment I had fear, the snake also got fear. It was

When your ego becomes strong, your ability to connect with Nature is disturbed.

not that the physical distance between us reduced. Just the

thought 'snake' came in me and I was clearly able to feel there was a disturbance, a restlessness, in the snake's inner space. The moment I had the thought 'I should move', the moment I had the fear, immediately the snake also felt the same insecurity, the same threat. Immediately, the snake started moving, even before I started moving.

When your ego becomes strong, your ability to connect with Nature is disturbed.

Dual identities

We all have two identities, the identity that we project to the outer world, and the identity that we believe to be us in the inner world.

The identity that you believe to be you inside your mind is called *mamakar** in Sanskrit. It will always be much smaller than what you really are. You will carry or remember all your failures, past mistakes and guilt, constantly trying to work on them.

Mamakar - Inner ego that constantly says you are smaller than what you think you are.

The identity that you project to the outer world is called *ahankar**. *Ahankar** is your visiting card. You print on it everything that you want others to know about yourself. This is based on the identity you show to the outer world. It will always be more than what you have, more than what you are. It will always be much more than what you are because you think you have to sell yourself. It becomes a basic need to do this, especially in the societies where you have to market yourself.

Ahankar will be based on a superiority complex. *Mamakar** will be based on an inferiority complex. *Ahankar* will be based on fear. *Mamakar* will be based on greed.

A small story:

A man arrived home after giving a series of leadership talks to groups of employees at a company. His wife asked, 'How did the talks go?'

The man replied, 'Okay, I guess. But I am not sure how many people understood what I said.' The wife asked, 'Why do you feel that way?'

The man said, 'Because I don't understand it myself!'

The identity that you show to the outer world will always be based on fear. This is

why it will always be more than what is true about you. You will constantly try to keep it alive. The identity that you carry in the inner world is based on greed. This is why you always try to develop the identity that you carry inside you. You constantly work on the identity that you believe is you and continuously try to chisel it.

Your life is nothing but the fight between these two worlds. The conflict between *ahankar* and *mamakar*, the conflict between the personality that you show to the outer world and the personality that you reveal in your inner world is called 'tension'. The uneasy feeling between these two identities creates dis-easiness.

Both the identities, *ahankar* and *mamakar*, are pure myths, both are lies! You are something beyond these two identities.

If you spend your whole energy expanding *ahankar*, the identity that you project to the outer world, your life becomes materialistic. People who work on *mamakar* are constantly working on their personality, trying to create some identity to feel satisfied about. If you spend your whole life chiseling and developing *mamakar*, the identity that you think is you, your whole life becomes moralistic and suppressing.

Ahankar - The false identification of the pure inner self with the outer world. A form of ego that makes you project a false identity of you to the outer world.

Mamakar - Inner ego that constantly says that you are smaller than what you think you are.

The basic truth is that you are much more than these two identities. When you unclutch from these two identities, you will suddenly realize that you are beyond the two identities. When that happens, these two identities can never bind you again.

Inferior Ego

Low self-esteem means showing yourself or imagining yourself to be less than what you are. High self-esteem is imagining yourself to be much more than what you are. Again, this is also based on the opinions of others. You judge yourself based on your lifestyle rather than your life. You weigh yourself by the cars and real estate you have purchased, not by the quality of consciousness you have achieved.

The big problem is that you don't know how to remove your personality and go to the next personality. You don't know how to use personalities like coats. You are caught in one personality.

Using the wrong personality in the wrong place is what I call ego. Understand, if you are arrogant and violent where you need to be polite and humble, it is being egoistic. If you are polite and humble

Using the wrong personality in the wrong place is what I call ego.

where you need to be courageous, you are egoistic. Under-stand, we always think, 'If I am very humble how can I be egoistic?' Be very clear, ego standing on its head is also ego. It is called 'inferior ego'.

An incident from the life of Ramana Maharishi*:

One of Ramana Maharishi's disciples translated one of his books into another language. In the translation, inside the book, his name was also published as the translator.

When the disciple saw the book, he was shocked to see this. He went to the concerned authorities and scolded them for this mistake. He then went and told Ramana Maharishi, 'Bhagavan, they should not have put my name. I don't feel my name should be publicized. I am not that kind of person.'

Bhagavan said, 'The ego that asks for the name to be there and the ego that asks that the name not be there are one and the same. Relax.'

Be very clear, the inferior ego that is trying to show humbleness is also ego.

Ramana Maharishi – Enlightened master from India who encouraged Self-Realization through self-inquiry, 'Who am I?'

With a superiority complex, with a violent aggressive ego, at least society will teach you. This ego is very visible. With the humble ego, you will escape from society. That is more dangerous. It is a cunning ego that can nicely save itself.

Types of Ego

Active Ego Vs Passive Ego

The active ego is easy to recognize. People with an active ego will behave in a highhanded fashion; they will claim self-importance openly. They will be arrogant. This ego is actually easy for a master to deal with. He just needs to bang on it a few times and it will break!

A small story:

A psychiatrist asks his patient if he is suffering from fantasies of self-importance. The man replies, 'Absolutely not. In fact, I think much less of myself than I really am!'

A person with an active ego will not be willing to let go of it at any cost.

Passive ego is very subtle and cunning. People who have a passive ego will pose as being very humble, lacking courage to face people, and shying away from taking credit. The worst part of this is that they

think they are like this because they are not egoistic. Actually, they are so carefully guarding their ego from getting hurt by unconsciously thinking they are humble!

People with active ego are like dried, hard twigs. They can be broken easily. People with passive ego are like fresh, green twigs. Each time their ego is hit, they bend but don't break! Their ego is so well safeguarded that it becomes difficult to deal with. Actually, they work very hard to safeguard it but in a sweet and passive way.

You care so much about others' reactions and opinions towards you. You cannot bear to suffer hurt to the ego that you have nurtured so carefully all these years. This ego is your very anchor point. If it is jolted, you will feel anchorless. So, with the excuse of being humble and obedient, you keep quiet. You miss one more opportunity of exposing your ego in the master's presence. You miss one more opportunity to take a big step towards flowering.

Social Ego

There is one more play of ego that we all nurture so well. It is called 'social ego'. You feel that your life is highly private to yourself and that no one should be let into it. You are afraid that your whole image might come crashing down and there will

be nothing to prop you up in society. This is social ego. It is more of an identity for you to experience than for others! If you can show yourself to the world just as you are, you will be more relaxed because then there will be no pressure to cover up anything.

A small story:

Once a candidate running for a political office finished a speech and sat down. A man sitting next to him asked, 'Sir, would you like to have a drink? We have hard drinks as well.'

The man replied, 'First I need to know if this is an inquiry or an invitation!'

Because of our social ego, we are always self-conscious. We think people are looking at and talking about us all the time. When you are self-conscious, you are egoistic. You think that you are a big entity and that everyone's eyes are on you all the time. That is why you get self-conscious.

When you become self-conscious, you are living and yet not living. Self-consciousness is a barrier to your beauty and grace. Your beauty does not come forth freely. Look at animals and nature. They flow so beautifully and freely, because they are not self-conscious. They are simply happy being one with Existence. The moment you start thinking that people are watching

you, ego has stepped in, and you lose your natural self.

Children are not as self-conscious as adults. If you watch them play, you will see they have so much beauty and innocence. Even when pictures are taken, you will notice that pictures taken without you being aware that you are being photographed look much better than pictures taken when you pose for the camera!

The moment you are asked to pose, you become self-conscious. Your ego is afraid of what people might say and think about you. The self-conscious ego is all the time calculating and weighing others' opinions.

A small story:

One Sufi mystic went to a king and begged for a square meal. The king shouted at him, saying that nobody there knew him.*

The mystic laughed and said, 'Yes. I agree. Nobody here knows me. But I know myself. In your case, everybody knows you. But you don't know yourself.'

When you stop calculating and start being innocent and open, you will be filled with wonder and freshness all the time. Life will never become dull and restrained for you.

Sufi - Followers of Sufism, a mystical dimension of Islam.

‘I’ and ‘Mine’

‘I’ is the ego, the root of fear. ‘Mine’ – ‘this is my house’, ‘that is my car’, ‘these are my friends’ - is the root of greed.

‘I’ means continuously doing. ‘Mine’ means continuously having. Continuously you try to expand your boundary. Continuously you try to change the things outside. You want to expand your boundary of ‘mine’. For example, you have a basic car now but you want to have a more luxurious car. You may want more than one car. You have a house to live in, but you want a bigger house. This kind of personality is based on having. Such people feel happy, secure and relaxed only when they continuously possess more and more things.

The deep feeling of insecurity and fear drives us to more greed, to continuously try to possess more things. Continuously possessing things is nothing but a feeling of deep insecurity. You can see the idea of continuously possessing more and more things is just because of fear and insecurity.

We usually feel more secure if we have more friends, more relatives, and more things around us. With more security, we feel we will not be taken away from this world.

Ego Vs Master

People ask me, ‘Why do we have to follow masters?’ I tell them, ‘You don’t *have* to follow masters. But if you don’t follow masters, you will be following your ego, that’s all. There are only two options: either you listen to the master or you listen to the ego.’

Master is the being who has already achieved eternal bliss, *nithya ananda**. If you follow him you will also reach that state. As for your ego, you know what it has achieved so far and what it is heading towards! If you are happy, comfortable, contented and blissful in the path in which your ego is already leading you, then you can follow your ego. Nothing is wrong with that. If you are a little uncomfortable, if you want to change, then follow the master’s path.

There are only two things, master and the mind. If you follow the master, you cannot follow the mind. If you follow the mind, you cannot follow the master.

There is a beautiful word, ‘*na maha*’. It means, ‘not mine’, ‘I am not’ - I surrender the ‘I’ and ‘mine’ at the feet of the master or god.

Nithya ananda - Eternal bliss.

Story of Dakshinamurthy Swamigal

A small story:

There was once an enlightened master by the name of Dakshinamurthy Swamigal. He used to sit under a banyan tree. His presence was so intense that a person could touch it, feel it, and almost see it. His silent presence was so powerful that neither he needed to talk nor the other person felt the need to speak.

One of the court poets of the kingdom sang a thousand verses on Dakshinamurthy Swamigal, whom he referred to as a saint. This poet said Dakshinamurthy Swamigal was 'the greatest warrior'. By tradition, you would be given the title of greatest warrior only if you killed one thousand elephants in a war.

This poet sang all one thousand verses praising the power and heroic qualities of Dakshinamurthy. When the king heard this, his ego was hurt because it was known throughout the region that only he had killed a thousand elephants in war. Until that time, only the king had the title of the greatest warrior.

The king called the poet and angrily said, 'Justify your action of singing the

thousand verses in praise of the naked beggar sitting under the banyan tree. Otherwise, your head will be cut off!' The poet said, 'I don't have any reason or justification. You can kill me. But there is something about his presence. I want to make one small request: if you have some time, go and sit in his presence just once. That's all I am asking, nothing else.'

The king was curious to know more about Dakshinamurthy Swamigal. Along with his entire army, he set off to meet him! Kings always travel with their paraphernalia because they lose their identity without it! In contrast, Dakshinamurthy Swamigal was a Paramahansa, an enlightened master. The king found him sitting under a big banyan tree, without paraphernalia, not even clothes. He was just blissful in himself.*

Imagine the scene: this simple beggar sat in a corner without any clothes. He was merged in bliss and peace, completely lost in Existence. He sat in intense silence and peace. The silence penetrated anyone in his presence.

The king jumped down from his chariot and went towards Dakshinamurthy Swamigal. On seeing the king and his army and hearing all their commotion,

Paramahansa - Supreme Swan, title bestowed on enlightened beings.

Dakshinamurthy did not even move. He opened his eyes and looked straight into the king's eyes. It was the first time someone had dared to look straight into the king's eyes. The king had always looked at others and they had always put their heads down. For the first time somebody looked straight into the eyes of the king. He was completely shaken.

After a few seconds, the king put his head down. He clearly felt something happening inside his being. Dakshinamurthy Swamigal, the master, signaled the king to sit down. All the ministers and the army dropped their weapons and also sat in silence. In ten minutes the entire army was sitting down.

One hour passed. Then two hours passed, three hours, and the evening came and went. One full day passed by. The master, the king and the whole army sat in silence. Not a single word was exchanged. Three days passed by.

Then the master opened his eyes and said, 'Now you can go.' The king fell flat at the master's feet, paid his respects to the great master, and left in silence. He reached his palace, summoned the poet who had written the verses in praise of Dakshinamurthy

Swamigal and said, 'Why did you write only a thousand verses in praise of the master? You should sing ten thousand verses!'

The poet then made a beautiful statement, 'Killing ten thousand elephants is easy. You just need the weapons to kill them. But killing one's mind is a real achievement!'

This master had killed his mind. Not only had Dakshinamurthy Swamigal killed his own mind, he could kill the mind of anybody who sat in his presence. Killing ten thousand elephants doesn't take courage. Killing your mind requires courage.

Meditation Techniques

1. Remember the seer

There are two steps.

Remember who the seer is. When you open the eyes, understand that you are seeing through the eyes. You are not seeing. Then suddenly you will see that your whole energy is centered in the *ajna chakra** or brow center between the two eyes. You will see things more clearly, in more detail like

Ajna chakra - The sixth energy center located between the eyebrows. Means 'command' or 'will' in Sanskrit. This *chakra* is blocked by one's own ego.

how you see things as fresh after it rains. Then you will have neither attachment nor detachment, you will not have any suffering.

For example, sometimes in your sleep, you know you are dreaming but you don't come out of the dream. In that state, you can see that your dreams are clearer and you can even alter the dream. In the same way when you realize that what you think as reality now is only a dream, you will have the energy and intelligence to alter it! When the frequency of your consciousness rises, you will get the intelligence to realize that it is only a dream and so there is no need to change it.

2. Visualization

This technique can be practiced any time. Feel the cosmos as a translucent, ever-living presence. Try to feel the life in everything that is around you. Try to see it. Try to feel it. First, try to feel the life inside your body. Then try to feel the life inside the chair on which you are sitting. See how you are feeling alive inside your skin. In the same way, visualize and feel you are alive inside the chair, inside the cushion. Then visualize you are alive inside the people who are sitting next to you.

Let me give you an example. Let's say that you put a bamboo stick in a river. Now

you can see a part of the river on the left of the bamboo and another part to the right of the bamboo. But does it mean the river has now been divided into two parts? No! If the bamboo is taken away, there is no right side or left side anymore. There is no boundary. It is just one river, that's all.

Life is just like the river. The bamboo is your ego. Because of your ego, you say 'I' and 'you'. You have two sides - you and the world. You see duality because of that bamboo. If you just take the bamboo of your ego away, there is neither 'I' nor 'you'. It is pure ever-living presence.

3. Third eye meditation

Total Duration: *25 minutes*

This is an extremely powerful technique, most effective when practiced in the master's presence or in front of a picture of the master's eyes.

Step 1: *Duration: 5 minutes*

With your eyes closed, just see through your eyes, whatever images you are seeing behind the closed eyes.

Step 2: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now open your eyes and through your third eye, look intensely at the master's third eye in the picture. Look *through* your eyes.



Step 3: *Duration: 5 minutes*

With your eyes closed, just see through your eyes, whatever images you are seeing behind the closed eyes.

Step 4: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now open your eyes and through your third eye, look intensely at the master's third eye in the picture. Look *through* your eyes.

Step 5: *Duration: 5 minutes*

With your eyes closed, just see through your eyes, whatever images you are seeing behind the closed eyes.

During this meditation, you may see visions of your favorite deities, or you may find that the master's form is replaced by a beam of light. Sometimes you may see total emptiness where his picture was. Don't be alarmed or lose your awareness at these moments. It is not hypnosis! In fact, it is a dehypnotizing process. Your superconscious is being awakened. If you see only light or emptiness, it is a sign that you have done the meditation with deep sincerity. That is the truth of our nature that we are all nothing but energy.

Seeing through the eye, you can achieve the 'T'. Currently, you are making up your own reality. If you see through the eyes, you will wake up from it and see reality as it is!

Gratitude – what and why

When we recognize that we are part of the total scheme of Existence, and that we are lovingly taken care of by Existence every minute, we are overcome with gratitude. We become truly thankful for what we receive every moment, even if it is as basic as the use of our very limbs and senses.

Gratitude is your response to recognizing the abundance of Existence. It is a wonderful flowering energy within you.

If there is one energy that takes care of everything in your life, it is the energy of gratitude! If you ever feel that there is something missing in your life, it is because you feel less gratitude.

There are many religions in the world today. Each of them emphasizes one particular approach such as prayer, austerity, surrender, etc. But there is one thing that cuts across all these and connects you directly to the Divine energy. That is gratitude! Gratitude is the greatest religion. When I tell this to people they wonder, 'How can gratitude be a religion? Why should it be a religion? It can be a social habit but not a religion.'

Gratitude is your response to recognizing the abundance of Existence.

Gratitude should become the very breath of a person, not even merely religion. Gratitude is a transforming energy. It transforms the happenings in you and around you. It is an energy that harmonizes you with the energy of the universe and brings back tremendous prosperity to you. With gratitude you will see that Existence simply responds to you, as if it is a live being. It is the channel to commune with Existence!

When gratitude happens, it works beautifully through the law of attraction and attracts great prosperity to you. How is this possible?

A small story:

Akbar, a great king from ancient India, and Birbal*, his advisor, were walking together on the street one day.*

They passed by a sandalwood dealer and Akbar told Birbal*, 'I don't know why but I feel like hanging this man.'*

One month passed and the two of them walked past the same sandalwood dealer again.

Akbar - Moghul emperor.

Birbal - Advisor to Moghul emperor Akbar.

This time Akbar said, 'It's strange but I feel like giving this man some endowment today! How is it possible?'*

Birbal replied, 'O King! A month back, the sandalwood dealer's business was suffering and when he saw you walking past he thought to himself, 'If the king dies, the courtiers would come to buy a lot of sandalwood from me for his funeral pyre.'*

'He sent out these negative vibrations which prompted you to feel hatred towards him. That is why last time you felt like hanging him without any real reason. I immediately purchased a lot of sandalwood from him to make tables and chairs for our kingdom. It made him very happy. Today, he feels very grateful to you for it. You are now struck by these positive vibrations from him and therefore you feel like giving him some endowment!'

According to the Law of Attraction, like energy attracts like energy. How does this apply to gratitude? Understand this: when you feel gratitude towards everything, it means you feel fulfilled, you feel blissful. So when you radiate gratitude, your energy of fulfillment attracts fulfillment back to you in the form of material gains, good

relationships, good health and so on. This is how it works.

The important thing about this is that material gains, good relationships and such things are only incidental byproducts of gratitude. The main thing is that gratitude makes you resonate with Existence and transforms you into a beautiful human being.

Psychologists have studied the effects of the feeling of gratitude on people. In their first study, two researchers, Dr. Michael McCollough of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and Dr. Robert Emmons of the University of California at Davis, California, concluded that gratitude played a major role in a person's well-being.

Their study divided a few hundred people into three groups and required them to maintain daily diaries. The first group maintained a diary of all of the events that happened during their day. The second group recorded only their unpleasant experiences. The third group made a daily list of things for which they were grateful.

The results of the study indicated that daily gratitude exercises resulted in higher reported levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism and energy. Additionally, the third group, which

Akbar - Moghul emperor.

Birbal - Advisor to Moghul emperor Akbar.

recorded gratefulness, experienced less depression and stress, had a greater inclination to help others, exercised more regularly and made more progress toward their personal goals. According to the findings, people who listed daily items of gratefulness were also more likely to feel loved. McCollough and Emmons also noted that the attitude of gratitude encouraged a positive cycle where one act of gratitude encouraged another.

The findings also indicated that gratitude could work independently of faith. Though gratitude is a big part of most religions, they suggested that the benefits extended to the general population regardless of whether they had faith or not in any particular religion. They further suggested that anyone could increase their sense of well-being and create positive social effects just from counting their blessings.

Be grateful for just being

In today's world, any action needs a reason. If I tell a small child to come near me, the child will look for some reason. If I hold up a chocolate, she will come near! Utility has taken root very deeply within us. When there is utility there is action, or else justifying the action becomes difficult.

When I tell people to live with a sense of

gratitude, they immediately start looking for reasons. Real gratitude can never have a reason. It

happens as a causeless flowering within you. Does the flower bloom for a reason? No! It blooms because it is its very nature. Gratitude is our real nature. It has been covered by layers of conditioning from society.

Society doesn't know the language of gratitude. It knows only the language of utility. It straightaway instills greed and fear in you so that you will give it the needed results. Society doesn't know there is a path of gratitude that will give much better results than the paths of fear and greed. That is the problem.

By its very nature our being is gratitude. If we relax into it, we can connect to it. There are endless reasons to feel gratitude. This life itself is a gift that we have received. Did any of us work for it and receive it? No. To be born with human consciousness is the first blessing we have received. Our gratitude should start right from there. Just for *being* we should feel grateful.

A young girl sat at the dinner table to eat. She started eating when her mother suddenly stopped her. She asked her,

Real gratitude can never have a reason. It happens as a causeless flowering within you.

**The main reason
why you miss
experiencing
gratitude is that
you take
everything for
granted.**

*this plate that I have not already
thanked god for at least once.'*

*'Did you say
grace before
eating?'*

*The girl
replied, 'But
there is
nothing on*

Understand, if ever you feel life is dull, that it is not as juicy as it should be, it is because gratitude has not happened in you. Gratitude is the energy that makes your life intense and exciting every moment. When you carry causeless gratitude in you, life will be sweet all the time irrespective of external circumstances. When you miss gratitude, very often you will be gripped with the feeling that life is sour, but you won't know the real reason for that feeling. That is the problem. These are the basic secrets of life.

Every morning as soon as you wake up, before getting out of bed, just try to feel deep gratitude for just being, for just living as a human being in this wonderful Existence. Bring up the understanding that you are able to enjoy all that you enjoy only because you are a human being. Try to feel grateful for it. Melt for a few moments with that gratitude.

Similarly, every night before you go to sleep, sit on your bed and honestly bring

in deep gratitude for just being. Feel it in your whole body and mind. Even if you have had a bad day, it is okay. Put everything aside and feel grateful for just being. All days are not bad days. There are people who have days that are worse than the worst of our bad days. So put all judgments aside and feel gratitude. Go to sleep with this feeling. This is a very powerful meditation to nurture causeless gratitude in you.

Everything is a gift

The main reason why you miss experiencing gratitude is that you take everything for granted. You feel anything that people do for you is your birthright. Understand, people could be doing something else instead of doing things for you. So it is really a gift from them to you. You have to thank them for it.

Receive every small thing in life as a gift. When you take your plate to eat, see the plate as a gift. When you serve food on the plate, see the food as a gift. When you sit down on the chair to eat, see the chair as a gift. When you wash your hands after eating, see your fingers as a gift. We never see these things as gifts. Everything is taken for granted. There are people who don't have a plate on which to eat. There are people who don't have fingers with which to eat! Have we ever thought about

that? Never! We only look at those who have a diamond ring on their finger. We never look at those who don't have fingers. That is the problem. That is why we don't feel anything in our life is a gift.

When we start feeling grateful for small things, our whole sensitivity will increase. We will become more refined. Our whole attitude towards life will move to a different plane. Remember, the person who isn't thankful for small things will never be thankful for big things either. Even big things will be taken for granted. Currently, we feel we have a right to everything that we receive. Because of this attitude, we miss seeing the benevolence of Existence or god. We remain insensitive to the gifts showered upon us by Existence.

A small story:

A man was narrating to his friend how he got lost in a desert one day.

He told the friend, 'In sheer despair, I knelt down and prayed that I should be guided out of the desert.'

The friend was awed by the story and asked, 'So did god answer your prayer?'

The man replied, 'Oh, no! Before that an explorer appeared from nowhere and showed me the way.'

This is how insensitive we are in life! We keep taking everything for granted. If we sensitized ourselves with

gratitude, we would never take anything for granted, whether it is our fingers, or our wealth, or the timely benevolence of Existence. When sensitivity happens, every moment passes in deep awe of the happenings in Existence.

When we start feeling grateful for small things, our whole sensitivity will increase. We will become more refined.

Revere the other with Gratitude

The first thing we need to understand is that no person has taken birth only to serve us. Every other person is also on the path of life just as we are. As a kind gesture, out of love, they do things for us. Even your own wife or husband is doing a very kind act of serving you, of providing for you or taking care of you. Of course, marriage calls for give and take but the husband or wife can never be taken for granted. They can never be thought of as our birthright.

Especially between partners, a lot of things are taken for granted. Somehow, this idea has taken root very deeply in our society.

Because of this, many marriages fall apart today. I tell you, even during a physical relationship there can be such deep gratitude for the other person's body. It will make the whole thing a divine experience instead of mere physical pleasure. When you can derive so much pleasure because of the other, why not feel gratitude towards the other for it? If the other is deeply respected from the beginning, many marriages can be saved.

A small story:

One man prayed to god, 'Oh Lord, please have mercy on me. I work so hard while my wife stays at home. She enjoys staying at home while I slog the whole day. Please grant me a boon whereby I become my wife and she becomes me. I want to teach her a lesson on how tough a man's life is.

God granted his wish.

The next morning, the man who was now the woman, woke up early in the morning, packed lunch for the children, made breakfast, got the children ready and drove them to school. She then came back and put the clothes in the washing machine, went to the bank and cashed the checks, paid the electricity and phone bills. Next she went to the market and bought some groceries, put the clothes out to dry, picked up the children from school, sorted out all their problems, helped them with their

homework, watched television and ironed clothes at the same time. Then she prepared dinner, fed the children, put them to sleep, had dinner and went to bed.

The next morning the man prayed to god again, 'Oh Lord, I don't think I can handle this tomorrow. I beg you to please switch me back to a man.

God replied, 'Of course I will switch you back to yourself but you will have to wait nine months because you are now carrying a child!'

Each individual plays an equal part in life. No one should be taken for granted. There has to be some gratitude for every person on planet earth.

I always tell people that even if things don't work out between you and your wife and you have to part, part with gratitude. Every relationship brings some good into our life. Every relationship is auspicious in its own way. Only, we were not able to see it that way.

The problem is that somewhere we feel people are waiting to hurt us. It is not so. It is only our own insecurity which we project on others. We have a self-defense mechanism which causelessly plays in every relationship. It is driven with the thought that others are waiting to hurt us. This very mechanism will disappear when gratitude flowers.

A couple went with their three children to the beach one day. The children were making castles and enjoying themselves.

They saw an old lady in rags coming slowly towards them. She was bending down and picking up some things and putting them into her bag. As she came near the children, the parents shouted out to the children to stay away from her.

The old lady smiled at them, but they did not smile back.

A few days later they learnt the old lady made it her life to pick up small pieces of glass from the beach sand so that children would not cut their feet.

We are all looking to label relationships as good, bad, ugly, etc. This applies to any relationship, whether it is mother and child, boss and employee, or even between friends.

So many people feel ungrateful to their parents and society for conditioning them in certain ways. In one of the gratitude meditations that we offer, we ask people to first give their gratitude to their parents and all of the people who gave them their mental setup, their attitude. Please understand that with the intelligence that you have now, you are able to see that you did not receive the right kind of mental setup earlier. You are now trying to

transform to a new mental setup. That is perfectly alright. But it is not right to curse the people who gave you the earlier mental setup.

Those who gave us this body and mind did not have any intention to deprive us or disturb us in any way. Whatever they knew as their best, they just gave to us, that's all. We are going beyond it now because we have become more intelligent. Just feel grateful to them, that is enough.

One more thing is that whenever you feel truly grateful to the people in your relationships, you will never try to possess them. You will look at them as beautiful individuals and leave it at that. Possessiveness happens only when you think of the other person as an object and not as an individual. With gratitude, you will allow the person to have his or her own space.

Decide consciously that you will respond with pure love and gratitude for the next couple of days, whatever the situation may be. Just for two days, decide not to react the way you have been reacting all these years. Decide that you will respond only with pure, unassuming love. You will see that all of your relationships take a turn

Whenever you feel truly grateful to the people in your relationships, you will never try to possess them.

for the better. Automatically you will start seeing each and every person as a unique creation of Existence, as a reflection of the Divine. You will feel deeply connected to everyone and everything around you.

Not only that, you will find tremendous compassion towards everything around you. If you were a person who gets angry easily, you will find the anger disappearing. All the energy that was invested in other negative emotions will get released with this growing gratitude. You will be a compassionate and loving person.

Thank your body

A small story:

A middle-aged woman suffered a heart attack and was taken to the hospital.

While on the operating table, she had a near-death experience. During the experience, she happened to see god. She asked him if this was the end of her life.

God replied that she had another thirty or forty years to live.

Once she recovered, she decided to stay in the hospital to undergo multiple surgeries such as a face lift, jaw reconstruction, a nose job and removal of excess fat. She also colored her hair. She thought that since she was going

to live for thirty more years, she would start with a fresh look.

She finished the surgeries and was about to walk out of the hospital when she was run over by the hospital ambulance and killed.

She arrived before god and asked him, 'God, I thought you told me I had another thirty years to live.'

God replied, 'Sorry, but I didn't recognize you!'

Each human being is a unique masterpiece of god. That is why no two bodies look alike. God is not an engineer. He is an artist. That is why each of us looks different. If he was an engineer he would have made us all with the same mold, like in a production line! He has uniquely created each one of us. But we never feel that we are beautiful enough. We constantly compare ourselves with others and try to look like them. We never make our body feel it is beautiful.

Our body is influenced by the thoughts we entertain about it. Every cell responds to our thoughts and feelings about it. If we feel gratitude towards our body, our body responds by improving our health. If we hate our body, the body responds by shrinking with disease. It is just like the effect of our thoughts on other human beings. If we encourage people, they work better.

Only because of this body are you able to now sit and hear this talk. The fact that you are here reading these words is because of your body. Then how can you abuse it or take it for granted? If you just look around, you will see there are people born without an arm or a leg. There are people who were born without eyesight or lose their eyesight in an accident. We have everything and yet we take it all for granted. Sometimes people who have a physical handicap are more grateful than those who have a perfect body. The handicapped person knows what it is to miss a body part, so he is automatically grateful to the other body parts.

In the Sufi tradition they have a beautiful meditation where every morning as soon as they wake up they touch their body parts one after another and feel deep gratitude to every single part. They touch every part from head to foot with great love and gratitude. This is a wonderful meditation that can be practiced by everyone. You will see that your body starts looking more and more beautiful and it will also heal from any discomfort very easily.

Everything is auspicious, just celebrate it!

One thing has to be understood very clearly. The whole of Existence is an

auspicious happening. You are part of Existence, so everything happening around you is also auspicious. This is the truth of Existence. Nothing that happens in Existence is inauspicious. Everything is only a blessing.

If this is understood clearly, there is nothing to complain about in life. If this is understood clearly, your very eye becomes a grateful eye. It sees everything as extraordinary. Nothing appears mundane. Everything appears as a miracle.

A small story:

One day a duck hunter went to the market to buy a bird-retriever dog. To his amazement he found a dog that could walk on water! He immediately took it home.

He invited one of his friends to hunt the next day and took the dog. When a flock of ducks came near, he took aim, fired and silently watched. The dog walked on the water and retrieved the bird. He looked at his friend for a reaction but the friend remained silent.

He asked him, 'Do you see anything unusual about my dog?'

The friend replied, 'Yes, your dog is unable to swim.'

Miracles are continuously happening in front of our eyes. But we continuously miss them! Only because we miss them, life

**Just accept and
celebrate whatever
you are and you
will see that you
slowly realize the
real Self.**

entire life becomes a miracle. The truth is, there are too many miracles happening around us in our lives.

If we celebrate the three things, the existence of the self, world and god, we will experience the whole of Existence as a blessing that is happening continuously. Let me explain.

When you celebrate the existence of the self, god and world, all three will reveal their mysteries to you. Please understand that when I say celebrate the self, god and world, I am not giving you moral advice. I am giving you a spiritual technique.

The first step: you will never be able to realize or understand yourself until you accept yourself and celebrate what you are. As long as you fight with what you are, you will never be able to realize what you really are.

Usually we carry two identities within ourselves. One is the outer world identity and the other is the inner world identity. The outer world identity is what we present to the world, as how we want the world to see us, how we want to be recognized, how we want to present ourselves. This identity

itself appears to be dull sometimes. When we start perceiving them, our

will always be much more than who we really are.

The other, the inner world identity, is what we believe we really are. This identity will usually be much less than what we actually are. This is what we refer to as low self-esteem.

Your whole life is nothing but the fight between these two identities. You constantly try to fulfill your outer world identity, and this is in conflict with the inner world identity. The struggle between you and you, the struggle between these two identities, eats your whole life.

It is time to stop this struggle. It is time to just celebrate whatever you are. Just accept and celebrate whatever you are and you will see that you slowly realize the real Self. Self-realization is postponed again and again only because of the fight between these two identities. The moment you stop the fight between them, you will see that both of them disappear into the realization.

The two identities exist only because of the non-acceptance in you. So just accept whatever you are in the outer world and in the inner world. Just accept and say a deep 'yes' to you as you are. Suddenly you will see that both these identities have no utility or purpose for you. They simply disappear. They leave your body. They disappear from your very inner space. Then you accept and

celebrate your self as it is. You understand that you neither need to develop the self in the outer world nor do you need to develop it in the inner world. Out of this understanding, suddenly you will see that the Self will be realized!

In the next step, we come to the celebration of the world. Understand that all the difficulties and problems between you and the world are because you do not look at the world as a mystery. You continuously try to demystify the world with your logic. You try to understand the world with your intellect instead of celebrating it, accepting it, enjoying it. You analyze, segregate and try to bring it under your control. It is not possible to achieve this! It is too vast and too intelligent! It is meant to be enjoyed and not analyzed.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa*, an enlightened master from India, tells a beautiful story:

Two men entered a mango grove.

One of them sat and counted the number of trees. He studied the variations in their size, the number of branches, density of leaves and number of mangoes across the trees. He tried to determine the varieties of mangoes. He thought about where they would sell, what would be the cost etc.

I have seen people who can't enjoy a resort unless it is owned by them.

The other man simply ate a few mangoes, enjoyed himself and then left!

When you have entered the world, understand you have entered the mango grove. If you continuously use your logic to analyze and judge and try to bring things under your control, you will miss the whole thing.

I have seen people who can't enjoy a resort unless it is owned by them. They can't enjoy anything unless it is legally owned by them. Their logic has to conquer things, only then they can enjoy anything. Your logic does not have to conquer everything. You don't need to own things to enjoy them. Trying to understand the world is nothing but trying to intellectually own the whole of Existence, the whole world. Trying to understand intellectually is also nothing but trying to possess, trying to own intellectually. You will never be able to celebrate if you follow this path.

Just accept and celebrate Existence with all its different dimensions and paradoxes. Don't judge anything. You continuously judge what is going on as something is right or something is wrong, something should have happened this way or something

Ramakrishna Paramahansa - Enlightened master from West Bengal in India. His chief disciple was Swami Vivekananda.

**Everything has a
message for us
including death
and disease.**

should not
have happened
this way.

B e c o m e
aware that whatever happens in Existence is auspicious. In Sanskrit, the word *shiva* means 'Causeless Auspiciousness'. Shiva is also the name of a Hindu* god. For no reason in particular, auspiciousness is overflowing all the time. You too are continuously expanding and growing, whether you accept it or not. Every birth, every action, every single incident happening in your life is increasing your frequency, raising your intelligence. Causeless expansion is happening in you also. But you may or may not experience it this way. That is a different thing.

In the whole world there are only two kinds of people. The first kind feels that whatever is happening in the world is against their will and things have to be slightly altered all the time. Such people will try to alter, judge, criticize and develop the things happening in the world according to their ideas. There is the other group, a rare group, that feels that whatever is happening is auspicious – Shiva*-like! Whoever feels what happens is auspicious, live in Shiva*-Consciousness, in eternal bliss, in celebration. The other group

continuously suffers because it tries to change things all the time.

Everything has a message for us including death and disease. Everything has something to teach us. Every incident raises our intelligence, raises our frequency of consciousness. In the whole drama of the cosmos, anything that happens in our life brings auspiciousness to us. It adds to us. All we need to do is look at the world as a mystery, as an intelligent mystery.

A small story:

There was a certain village isolated and surrounded by acres of cornfields. The city was very far from it, so it remained very quiet.

One morning the villagers saw a sage whom they had never seen before in the village. He was seated under a banyan tree. They asked him where he came from. He told them, 'I have come to spend a few days with all of you whom I consider my own brothers.'

The villagers were happy to hear this and built a small hut for him. Soon the sage started healing and solving many problems of the villagers.

Once an epidemic struck the village and killed many birds there. The

Hindu - Belonging to the religion of Hinduism, estimated to have over a billion followers.

Shiva - Enlightened master from India. The word *shiva* literally means 'causeless auspiciousness'.

villagers reported this to the sage. He said, 'It is sad that you lost so many birds but if you have faith in Existence and pray, the loss may actually be a matter of gain.'

The villagers didn't agree fully with him but since they respected him they went away quietly.

The next week, suddenly, all the dogs in the village ran away. The villagers got upset again because the dogs used to guard the village against burglars. They went to the sage and reported this to him. He only repeated his message, 'If you have faith in Existence and pray, even this loss may prove to be a gain.'

A few days later a very strange thing happened. In those days, there were no matchboxes. People used to rub two stones together to make fire or keep a fire alive in their ovens continuously. One day, all the fires in all of the households went out. They tried to start a fire by rubbing stones but nothing happened. They got very disturbed.

They went to the sage again and told him what was happening. The sage told them, 'It looks like some very special phenomenon is taking place.'

The villagers started doubting the sage.

They started wondering in what way the sage was superior to them and whether

**Existence is not
an accident. It is
independent
intelligence.**

*he was in
any way
qualified to
tell them*

such things. Some of the villagers proceeded to the next village to get some fire but the sage stopped them, sternly saying that they should not go.

Early the next morning some of the villagers started making their way to the next village anyway. Suddenly they saw something like a sandstorm in the distance. After a few moments they could see it was actually a large invading army on horseback. They were on their way plundering the city and the villages surrounding it. The villagers hid behind trees and watched them. The army stopped ahead of the village and one of them screamed, 'Let us invade this village too!'

Another person said, 'No use will come out of it. There is no bird that chirps even so early in the morning, no dog barks, no smoke comes out of the chimney of any house. It doesn't look like a single soul lives there.'

The army turned back and went away.

The hiding villagers ran back to the village and told the villagers what had happened. They suddenly realized how true the sage was all along! They went to the sage's hut to tell him everything

**Only when an
enlightened
master happens in
your life do you
start knowing
what gratitude is!**

gone.

*but the hut
was empty.
The sage had
left.*

*Nobody knew
where he had*

Existence is not an accident. It is independent intelligence. When you understand that it is an independent intelligence, when you understand that it is a profound mystery to be experienced and not solved, everything in your life will open itself and reveal to you the lesson it has brought with it.

When suffering comes to you, if you approach it with non-acceptance, with resistance, it will create only pain in you. It will add only suffering to you. If you approach the same suffering with deep respect and gratitude, suddenly you will see that it reveals its mysteries to you. It will show you the reason why it happened in your life and the lesson it brought to you in your life. If you approach the suffering with acceptance and intelligence, suddenly you will see that the very suffering gives you enlightenment! It adds joy and experience to your life.

Everything happening in the world is auspiciousness, including what you call natural calamities. There is no such thing as inauspiciousness. Natural calamities are

nothing but nature's ways of adjusting itself to certain actions of human beings. So accept and celebrate the very existence of the world.

In the third step, we come to celebrating god, the root and the source for the other two steps that are the self and the world. As long as you carry doubt or faith about the existence of god, you won't experience god. Just like doubt, faith is also an obstacle. I have seen people who believe but never try to experience god. They continue to have faith but never experience god.

So now, drop your doubt and your faith about god's existence or non-existence. Even if you believe in god's existence, you will have only an *idea* about Him – that He will have ten hands or eighteen heads, that He is tall or short. Whatever idea you may have, even those ideas can be hindrances to finally experiencing god. So drop your faith and doubt. Just remember that if there is a creation, there should be a creator.

The moment you see an object in front of you, you know that the creator of the object exists, is it not? If the creation exists, the creator also exists. Even the word 'creator' does not exactly fit god. He is simply creativity overflowing for no reason, that's all! He is just constant creativity that is expanding. He is a

constant Big Bang...a constant black hole that is happening.

The creation, the created and the creator - all three express as just *creativity*. God is creativity. So celebrate the existence of creativity. Unless creativity exists, creation cannot happen. The very existence of creation is solid proof that the creator or creativity exists. Creativity is not a set of dead rules. It is an intelligent independence. It is intelligence and independence. So just celebrate the existence of that independent intelligence. Celebrate the existence of god as creativity.

When you celebrate the existence of these three - self, world and god, suddenly you will see that these three barriers were created only by your unconscious mind. There is no barrier, there is just pure Existence, pure consciousness, pure celebration.

Living with the clarity that self, world and god are not three things but the single core of Existence, and celebrating the existence of this one core, is what I call Living Enlightenment.

If you celebrate the existence of all these three, self, world and god, you will suddenly see that only celebration exists. All the three disappear into the celebration!

When all these three disappear into celebration, what remains is what I call eternal bliss, *nithyananda*.

**The very
existence of
creation is solid
proof that the
creator or
creativity exists.
Celebrate the
existence of god.**

The boundaries between these three exist only as long as the not accepting or the fighting ego exists. The moment non-

acceptance disappears, acceptance happens and ego disappears. Suddenly only celebration remains.

Some people ask me, 'How do we express our deep gratitude to you?' I tell them that the only way to express their gratitude is to live enlightenment the way I have just described it to you. That is the best you can do for me and that I can do for you.

The reason why you feel so much gratitude towards me is because only when an enlightened master happens in your life do you start knowing what gratitude is! Until then, gratitude remains just a social habit from your periphery. When the master happens, when the transformation starts, you start feeling a movement inside you, a deep joy... an inexplicable feeling not from your periphery but from your being. That feeling is gratitude. That is what is called devotion. You cannot express it with words. That is the beauty of real gratitude. Just relax into it and allow it to transform you. It will transform you from your being. That

The greatest service one can do is working for the flowering of one's consciousness.

is enough. Then the work of the master is done!

anything. It has to do with the state within you, the state of causeless bliss, of gratitude towards the Whole. Service, when done in this way, can itself lead you to enlightenment.

People ask me, 'What service can we do for the mission?' I tell them, the greatest service one can do to the world is working for the flowering of one's own consciousness. Once this happens, automatically, you will serve where required, not out of ego but because you are celebrating and overflowing. Then it is not called service. It is just an overflowing. That is the way service should happen, not as a giving, but as a spontaneous sharing.

People generally do service to gain credit. Society has taught us that service will get us a place in heaven, that service will somehow nullify our bad deeds. No! Service will not reserve any place for us in heaven. Heaven does not run any exchange offer for us in this fashion.

When you overflow within yourself, you automatically feel there is nothing more to be done, and you start serving, that's all. The overflowing does not have anything to do with your material wealth or

Gratitude can burn your *karmas*

Sufism* is completely a gratitude-based religion. If I have to reduce the whole of Sufism* to one word, it is gratitude. You can see it in all the poems of the great Sufi* masters like Jalaluddin Rumi* and others. You can see the flowing energy of gratitude in their words. Gratitude makes you a nobody, just flowing energy.

Gratitude is like a fire that can burn all your *karmas**. What is *karma**? It is an unfulfilled action on your part that pulls you again and again to fulfill it. In order to fulfill and exhaust all such *karmas** that we have accumulated, we take birth again and again on this planet. Just by being with the energy of gratitude, these *karmas* get burnt! Such is the power of gratitude.

Sufism -Mystical dimension of Islam.

Sufi - Followers of Sufism, a mystical dimension of Islam.

Jalaluddin Rumi - Thirteenth century Persian Sufi poet.

Karma - The *vedic* concept of one's freewill actions deciding one's destiny.

Gratitude - the ultimate prayer and religion

When your prayer becomes gratitude, you attract more benevolence to you. This is the law of attraction and the law of nature. Like energy attracts like energy. Gratitude is the ultimate prayer that can bring us more than we can imagine.

Many people think prayer and gratitude are bondage. No. They are the greatest liberators. They liberate you from the bondage of discontentment. Discontentment can destroy your whole life. Only because of discontentment, we run behind something or the other all the time. When gratitude flowers the feeling of discontentment is simply wiped away. Then you experience life differently. You experience that life is fulfilling.

To live with a feeling of fulfillment is the greatest blessing for any human being. Only when gratitude flowers can fulfillment happen. When fulfillment happens, irrespective of what you do or how you do it, you remain fulfilled. You don't do things to become fulfilled. You are already fulfilled so you do things out of it. When gratitude becomes your attitude, fulfillment becomes your nature. Then every moment becomes an overflowing, including your prayer.

Prayer should be an overflowing of the gratitude and fulfillment in you. Some people ask, 'Why do we go to the temple and pray?' Understand, prayer is a celebration of the benevolence of Existence. When our prayer is this way, Existence responds. When Existence responds, it comes to you as more benevolence in your life. This is the virtuous cycle of prayer and blessing!

The problem is that we have been taught that prayer and god are tools of last resort. We have not been taught that they are the very source and result of the continuous auspiciousness that happens.

A small story:

A pilot announced to the passengers in mid-flight: 'We regret to inform you we are in terrible trouble. Only god can save us now.'

A passenger turned and asked the man sitting next to him what the pilot had just said. The man replied, 'He said there is no hope.'

God has become the 'last resort of no hope' in most human minds!

Prayer is actually bowing down to the infinite Existence and surrendering your respect, fear, confusion, anxiety and everything to it. Existence, which is the very breath in your body, the thoughts in your mind, and the life force in your being responds by taking care of you.

When you pray with such deep reverence, Existence showers you with the four things you need in life.

1. The energy to change the things that need to change.
2. The intelligence to know what things do not need to be changed.
3. The understanding that whatever you may change, Existence itself is an eternally changing dream.
4. The liberation that comes from the above three.

Whenever you feel the presence of Existence, you start feeling gratitude, and that is prayer too. Prayer is nothing but deep devotion and a feeling of connectedness with the presence of Existence all the time. Even *satsangs*, spiritual gatherings, are meant only to foster this feeling of connectedness to the Whole.

Real prayer is not reading prayer books, it is not offering material things to god, it is not donating money to temples, it is deep and silent gratitude to the whole of Existence for being what it is. It is the undaunted trust that Existence is taking care. It is a deep and passive waiting for Existence. This is real prayer. If the other things happen as a result of this overflowing, then it is ok.

I always tell people a wonderful story of a Sufi saint. Sufism is a religion rooted in gratitude. It is nothing but gratitude towards the whole of Existence.

One Sufi saint and his disciples were in their spiritual wandering.

They went without food for almost three days. On the fourth day they were even chased away by the villagers and so they slept in a graveyard that night.

The next morning, the saint as usual started to say his prayer of thanksgiving to god. His disciples could not believe their eyes. They had gone without food and shelter for so many days and their master was thanking god. They refused to follow suit.

The disciples asked the saint, 'Why should we thank god when we were refused food and a place to stay for three days?'

The saint replied, 'You have been fed and given a place to stay for thirty years. What about thanking Him for that?'

Prayer is gratitude for the continuous showering of Existence upon us.

Don't think I am suggesting to you very old and outdated techniques. No! I am telling you these things from what I experienced in my own life. In my days of

spiritual wandering before enlightenment, I traveled extensively by foot. I went across the length and breadth of India. I traveled with just two pieces of clothing and a vessel for begging food. I also took a vow not to touch money and not to keep food for more than one meal.

I tell you honestly, I lived like a liberated king on planet earth in those few years! Existence simply gave me what I needed for the moment. I did not bother about the next moment. I experienced the invisible hand of Existence every moment of my wandering days. So understand that these things are possible and have happened to me, who is now sitting right in front of you!

Expectation is the culprit; let go!

Try to sit down and make two lists. One of all the things that you have and one of all the things that you don't have. The first list should include every single thing that you have, starting from your eyes, ears, hands and legs, because there are people who don't have some of these. Include all your physical and mental faculties before moving to material things. If you write very sincerely without leaving out anything, you will not be able to complete the first list! That is the truth. If you find you are unable

to finish the first list, it means gratitude has started happening in you!

The problem is that there is a continuous expectation in us all the time. That is why gratitude doesn't happen easily. We continuously receive input from our eyes, nose, ears, tongue and touch. Based on this, we continuously expect something or other to happen in a certain way. When we see someone who has a better house or a better car, it registers in us. When we hear of some great achievement by someone, it registers in us. Our energy moves only outward, constantly following our five senses, never inwards towards our self.

Gratitude is when this process reverses and you suddenly awaken to the abundance in you! With gratitude there is no expectation or greed.

Working with expectation is like pouring clarified butter into the fire to quench it. Can you quench fire by pouring clarified butter into it? Never! In the same way, you can never feel fulfilled if your actions are rooted in expectation. You will only tire your senses.

You can live either in expectation or in gratitude, never in both. With expectation

You can never feel fulfilled if your actions are rooted in expectation. You will only tire your senses.

there is a desire to possess things. You become the owner. With gratitude, you become the enjoyer. When you are the owner you enjoy only the few things that you own. When you are the enjoyer, you enjoy everything in Existence. When you look to own, nothing will seem enough. When you enjoy, everything seems to be overflowing! That is the difference.

A small story:

In a village, the night guard was on his rounds blowing his whistle periodically.

He had an earthen pipe that he smoked. He filled it with tobacco and searched for a match box. He didn't have one.

He went to the nearby hut where an old lady lived and asked if she could give him some ember from her oven. The old lady said her stove had not been lit for the past three days and that she herself was managing with the little food they gave in the temple.

The guard went to the next house and asked if he could have a match box. They said that they themselves had taken a burning log of wood from the neighbor to light their stove. Now they neither had fire nor a match box.

The guard decided to go to the village chief's house where the maids would surely have a match box. He went and

asked them for a match box to light his pipe.

One of the girls looked at him and asked, 'Fire to light your pipe? Why not use the lantern you are carrying?'

The guard couldn't believe his eyes. He had been carrying a lantern all along while searching for a matchbox!

When we believe that what we need is always only outside of us, we will continue searching like the night guard! When we believe that Existence always gives us what we need, we will find everything within us all the time.

Your very body language can change with Gratitude

When we work with expectation all the time, we will carry a subtle violence in our body language. It is not deliberate violence, but inherent violence. If we become a little sensitive to our body language, we will be able to catch this.

Watch yourself when you type on the computer, when you handle phone calls, how you place the phone receiver back in its cradle, with what aggression you walk, how you close the door behind you, how you hold your child's hand... everything.

You will see that everything carries a subtle violence in it.

You can try this. The next time you close the door, remember and observe how you closed it. Now, open the door and close it again softly, with tremendous gratitude and awareness, until it closes completely. Feel yourself when you do it. You will observe the difference between the two experiences. The second time, you will suddenly soften inside yourself! This is the effect gratitude has on you.

With gratitude, your entire body language changes. When you start experiencing deep gratitude, your responses to situations change. You start resonating with Existence. Your body will flow with that resonance, with a cool grace and softness. All your actions will arise out of this grace. There will be no violence. Only joy will be flowing. Then anything you do will only make life sweeter.

Meditation

Every day, just sit by yourself for half an hour. Close your eyes and allow any thought, person or situation to come to your mind. If it is a positive thought, a person you love or a situation that you cherish, feel deep gratitude for it and see it go away. If it is a negative thought, or a person you don't like, or an unpleasant situation, feel gratitude for that too and bless it. Anything that comes to your mind, bless it with deep gratitude.

You will see that in a few days, your whole attitude becomes soft and compassionate. You will start seeing things with great compassion and receptivity.

We have thus far looked at the basic emotions that drive us. When these emotions are negatively expressed, we destroy the energy within us and block ourselves from receiving energy from without. If you have practised the techniques that have been given with each of the preceding chapters, you would also have seen how you could overcome these negative energies and unblock yourself.

Let us now look at a few other issues, which if we understand well, can change the way we live. These understandings can transform us.

Let us start with something very simple, something that we all take for granted. Let us look at the way our mind *really* works.

The ten-minute experiment

Try a very simple experiment for just ten minutes.

Take a sheet of paper and a pen. Sit down alone. Write down whatever thought comes to mind as if a transcribing software has been connected to your mind. Transcribe exactly what you think. Do not edit or suppress any thoughts. It is an experiment only for you. No one else is going to look at what you have written. Visualize that a transcribing software has

been connected to your mind. Just like how the transcribing software which is connected to a taped speech transcribes everything, transcribe whatever is going on in your mind verbatim. At the end of ten minutes, read what you wrote just once. You will be amazed! You can clearly see that there is no logic in the way thoughts form in your mind!

For example, you see a dog on the street. Immediately you remember the dog you were afraid of when you were young, or the one you used to play with when you were young. The next thought could be about your childhood. The third may be about the teacher and the room you used to sit in at school. The fourth may be about the house where your teacher used to live.

There is no logical connection between the dog that you recently saw on the street and the teacher who taught you in school. However, in a few seconds you simply jumped from seeing the dog to your childhood teacher. You can see that your thoughts are just moving, drifting from one thing to another. We can't even call this 'thinking'. It is just 'association', that's all. You associate the dog with your childhood, your childhood with the teacher, and so on.

Actually, if you do this exercise just once, the very understanding that it gives you will transform the way you think about

yourself, and how you treat yourself and others. Your whole life will be transformed.

How does our mind work?

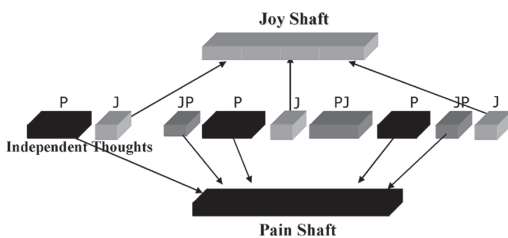
How do we create thoughts and how do we give meaning to them?

How do we experience life?

The nature of the mind

Let me give you a simple diagram to understand how thoughts flow in the mind and how you connect them.

Each thought in your mind is shown here as a rectangle. Each is a different shape, size, and color. Different thoughts are continuously flowing in you. One may be related to pain or a painful experience. Another may be related to joy or a joyful experience. The next one may be related to joy, but you think of it as pain. It is referred to as JP on the chart – joyful



experience, painful impression. Similarly you may have a thought that is related to a

painful experience, but you think of it as joy. It is referred to as PJ – painful experience, joyful impression.

Generally, all your thoughts are related to something about the past or the future. You cannot have thoughts about the present. In the present moment you can have only consciousness, no thoughts. Thoughts are either related to some joyful experiences that you had in the past and want to have in the future, or painful experiences that you had in the past and don't want to have again.

Even at the time of some serious problem, you will suddenly have a positive thought. Even in the peak of joy, you will have some unconnected negative thought. Each thought is completely independent, completely unconnected to the previous thought. That is why you are able to have a happy thought amidst sad thoughts and vice versa.

Understand that no two thoughts are logically connected. No thought is responsible for the creation of another thought. They all appear randomly, independently, and illogically.

How do you 'unclutch' from this random stream of thoughts? We will be using the word 'unclutch' again and again. Let's clearly define what is meant by 'unclutch'. When we change gears while driving a car, whether we change from first to second,

or second to third, or any gear for that matter, we have to pass through neutral every time. We have to completely depress the clutch, or ‘unclutch’, move through neutral, and only then we can go to the next gear, right? In the same way, we experience a neutral space between any two thoughts in our mind. That neutral space, that silence that exists between two thoughts, is peace and bliss. When we no longer grab onto thoughts and connect them to the past or future, we remain ‘unclutched’. As we remain ‘unclutched’ from our thoughts we become more aware of the neutral spaces between thoughts. The gap between the thoughts will automatically extend when we remain ‘unclutched’ from the stream of thoughts. We will dwell in the neutral space longer and experience more and more peace and bliss.

Awareness

The ultimate key

When you suddenly become aware, any thought that flows in front of you becomes your life for that moment. You start giving attention to it, either to fulfill it or to escape from it. It is like slides on a projector. Any slide that is kept in front of the projector light is seen as reality on the screen. The

problem is that in your inner space, the projector light is not continuously on. When I say projector light, I mean your awareness. It just comes and goes, comes and goes – you are not fully, continuously aware.

Many times, even though your eyes are open and your body is moving, you are not aware of your existence. An example from everyday life is like when you get into your car and drive for half an hour to the office. It is only after you reach the office, park the car, and get out, do you suddenly realize, ‘Oh, I have reached the office!’ It means that in those moments of driving, the projector light was off most of the time.

Any slide that is placed in front of the projector during moments that the projector light, your awareness, is off is not part of your life. You don’t remember it at all. When the light comes on again, when your awareness comes back again, whatever thought you have at that time becomes a part of you. Understand that this is a very subtle truth. Your life is the totality of all the thoughts you have when you are aware and unaware.

Unfortunately, many times there are thoughts, many major decisions, and life-changing incidents that happen when you are not aware. These are also part of your life, part of your biography. Unfortunately, you are not aware of these scenes,

**Your life is the
totality of all the
thoughts you have
when you are
aware and
unaware.**

decisions, or
t h o u g h t s
when they
come up.
Without your
knowledge

they have contributed significantly to your life.

Be very clear, every moment that passes in your life without you being aware of it, without your presence, is suffering. You will either directly or indirectly create situations for suffering. Just like when the turn indicator light in your car blinks, your consciousness blinks also. But, because of your lack of awareness, you do not know when it is on and when it is off.

I read a joke the other day:

One man got into his car and started the engine. He flipped on the turn indicator and asked his son to see if the light blinked in the rear of the car.

His son shouted back, 'Yes, it's on...no, it's not on...yes it's on...no it's off...now it's on!'

If you just see the thought flow in front of you, suddenly you will realize, 'Oh god, all these things are actually going on in me! I don't have a clue where I am heading. I don't know what is happening in me!'

You are not aware, but constantly you believe you are aware. That is the first illusion.

If you become aware continuously, you open up to reality for the first time. It might be a bit intense initially, because until now, you have spent most of your time in unawareness. Ultimately, it will lead you to experience only joy and bliss.

**You are not aware of your true
past**

This is the first truth. You are not aware of all the things that are happening in front of you. You do not remember your biography as it happened. You remember it only as you want it.

Just take a simple example. Your life is filled with different kinds of incidents relating to joy, suffering, guilt, pain, and depression. You don't look at life as it is. What do you usually do? You collect only the incidents related to suffering and create a shaft, connecting only these ideas, and you think your life is nothing but suffering. You think that your life is a long chain of suffering, a pain shaft.

Very rarely, you create a joy shaft. It is very rare that you collect joyful incidents, create a joy shaft, and feel life is joy. It is rare not only in the number of joyful shafts, but also in the quality of them. Most of the time you collect all the painful memories and incidents, and create the idea that life is only pain. The moment you believe life

is continuous painful occurrences, unconsciously you try to strengthen that belief, even though consciously you try to break the pain shaft. Please understand, your belief that life is a pain shaft or a joy shaft will stay only as long as you are unconscious, not when you are aware.

If you normally enjoy lustful thoughts, then whenever lustful thoughts cross your system, you come to the awareness, 'I exist'. If you normally enjoy violent thoughts, whenever violent thoughts come into your system, you come to life and know that you exist. This is what I call a vicious circle: you empowering negativity and negativity bringing you back to life, you empowering more negativity, and more negativity bringing to life perceived excitement.

The shaft that does not exist

Shaft of pain

There is a very beautiful analogy by Ramana Maharishi, an enlightened master from India. A dog chews a dry bone. As it chews, fragments of the bone will poke into its mouth making it bleed. The dog thinks the blood is coming from the bone and it enjoys the blood. It continues to

chew on the bone for the pleasure of the blood! It doesn't realize that the blood is coming from its own mouth and not at all from the bone.

If violence excites you, you wait for that kind of incident in your life. If pain excites you, if you believe life is a pain shaft, you wait for that kind of incident in your life in order to strengthen and reinforce your belief. That is the general human psychology. Although people claim they want to break the violence shaft or pain shaft, they secretly nurture it.

Let me provide a deeper understanding. The pain that you had ten years ago, the pain that you had nine years ago, the pain that you experienced seven years ago, the pain that you experienced three years ago, and the pain that you experienced yesterday are all unconnected, independent, individual incidents. But you start connecting all of them and create a shaft of pain. You connect all these thought shafts and create one big shaft. You start thinking and believing, 'My life is pain.' Is that true? No! What happened to all the sweet incidents of joy that you experienced in between? Surely, there must have been at least a few moments of joy in between? They are simply forgotten. They are never picked to form a shaft. So the shaft, any shaft, is never true, because it focuses on only a fragment of your complete biography.

First, you start archiving the painful memories for utility purpose. You archive all your pains, probably for medical history sake or to tell your doctor. By and by, you start believing that all these pains that happened in your life are connected. You decide that your life is pain, your life is suffering. The moment you come to the decision that your life is pain or your life is suffering, you create hell for yourself.

For example, until yesterday you were only walking, you were not able to fly. You know in your past you never flew, you only walked. Can you believe you can start flying from tomorrow onwards? You can't. You know tomorrow you will still only be walking. You rely solely on your remembered past experiences to predict your future, eliminating many new possibilities.

There is one more important thing about pain that I want to share with you. This may look mystical, but let me be honest, Patanjali* says very clearly that any pain can be used as a door to enlightenment. The technique is to not label it as pain. Just observe and see what is going on. See the way a small child experiences something new with all excitement and curiosity. Do this with situations that you currently label as pain and see how the whole experience transforms.

When you just observe the pain, you come to understand two things. First, in the process of pain you will see your body rejuvenating itself, reconstructing itself. You incorrectly label this process of rejuvenation and call it pain. Second, when you stop labeling it 'pain', you stop resisting the pain sensation and it can heal more rapidly. When you label it as pain, not only are you fighting with the self-healing process, you are also elongating the process and creating more pain.

Shaft of joy

The joy that you experienced ten years ago, the joy that you experienced nine years ago, the joy that you experienced three years ago, and the joy that you experienced one year ago are all independent, individual, unconnected thought shafts. At the present time, you connect all of those thoughts and create a big shaft of joy.

You may identify your joy with an object, a person, or a space like a particular vacation resort. Now you will try again and again to bring that back in your life, to bring that person, that object, that space, or that same incident back in your life. Try as you might, you will not be able to experience the same joy again. This puts you in further pain!

Patanjali - A sage of ancient India and author of Yoga Sutras, which is the foundation of the system of yoga.

In life, we constantly create either shafts of pain or joy. Once you create a shaft of pain, you try to break it. If you create the shaft of joy, you try to elongate it! But you don't understand that you can neither elongate the joy shaft nor break the pain shaft - simply because the shaft itself doesn't exist. It is just selective memory. The very shaft is your imagination.



Thoughts are like bubbles in a fish tank

There is no linear connection between one thought that we have and another thought that we have. The only relationship between thoughts is that they come from the same source. But we constantly connect one thought and the next thought in a linear manner.

Neither the joy shaft nor the pain shaft exists.

Just as bubbles in a fish tank rise from the bottom, our thoughts also rise in the same manner. When one bubble comes and reaches the surface of the water, the next bubble starts and then the third bubble starts. Because the bubbles are rising at a high speed, they look like a continuous stream! Actually there is always a gap between two bubbles.

Like the bubbles, we also experience a neutral space between two thoughts. Since the gap or the neutral space between two thoughts is so small, we think all thoughts are connected and form a shaft. But there is always a gap between two thoughts.

Let me tell you about an incident that happened:

A middle aged man came to me and said, 'Swamiji, I am going to divorce my wife. Please bless me!' One gentleman around forty five years of age came up to me and said, 'Swamiji, I am going to divorce my wife, please bless me.' I told him, 'I only bless people for marriages. Why do you want me to bless you for a divorce?' He replied, 'No, you have to bless me, because I have suffered so much.'

I said, 'Suffering is always give-and-take. It is never just taking. You must have given your wife enough suffering

**The only
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between thoughts
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source.**

too. So, please tell me the truth about what happened and then we will analyze the situation.'

He replied, 'How do I decide which incidents to tell you, and which ones to leave out? There are so many of them! From day one she has been torturing me. You don't know how much torture I have gone through!' Then he narrated an incident from the day of his marriage.

In Indian villages, when a wedding takes place, the newly married couple plays games after the marriage ceremony. For one of the games, a ring is dropped inside a pot filled with water. The husband and wife put their hands inside and compete to pick up the ring. Whoever grabs it first wins. These small games were created mainly to reduce the unfamiliarity between the couple because in arranged marriages the bride and groom first meet during the wedding ceremony. They have small games to reduce the distance between the couple because they are new to each other.

This man said, 'During that game, she scratched my hand. With her nails, she scratched my hand!' And he started a

big story about everything that she had done to him since that day! For all practical purposes, he had kept a file, like a police report from the first day of his marriage.

After two or three incidents, I told him, 'Please stop! If this is the case, she should be happier than you to part ways. It is very difficult to live with someone who keeps such large and detailed files in his head!' Any time she does something, this man will always be looking through the files.

Then he told me the immediate reason for the divorce. He said, 'She spilled some coffee on my clothes!' I told him, 'Spilling coffee on your clothes cannot be a reason for a divorce!'

He said, 'No, you don't know. Today she poured coffee; tomorrow she will pour acid!' He really said this. I did not understand the connection. I asked him how he could possibly connect coffee and acid. Again he said, 'No, no Swamiji, you don't know.'

He may seem extreme and you may laugh when you hear this. But just look intensely at your own life. You are doing the same thing - constantly creating illogical connections. You forget to see incidents as being independent of each other. You forget to see thoughts as being independent.

If you just learn this one simple technique of unclutching, you will be able to retain a significant amount of energy in your system, in your being. As a result, you will be many times more productive and creative. Your relationships will be much friendlier because you will not clutch incidents that are not related. You will not feel suffocated by people or their expectations of you. You will have tremendous inner space available to you to fulfill your needs, as well as others' needs. You will also have tremendous compassion to know why others are suffering. It is only when you don't understand why the other person is suffering that you are harsh with them. When you unclutch, you are able to accommodate that person in your inner space. You are automatically compassionate. Your very life has a different quality and you become a different person in the world.

It is never the 'same'

Every single happening in our lives is unconnected, even our everyday activities like eating and drinking. Each and every experience is independent by its own right. Drinking water yesterday and drinking water today are two completely different incidents. The food that you ate yesterday and the food that you eat today are

different, even if they seem physically the same! But your mind creates the shaft between these two incidents and says, 'I eat the same food every day.'

Please be very clear, you don't eat the same food every day. You may use the same word 'eating' for both the experiences, but they are not the same experience. Do not be cheated by the words that you use. Yesterday's eating, tod-ay's eating, and tomo-rrow's eating are separate incidents, separate experiences. They are completely independent and unattached.

A beautiful incident from the life of an enlightened master from central India:

During the last ten years of his life, the doctors asked the master to eat a particular kind of food. He was not allowed to eat anything else. He had to eat the same kind of food three times a day, everyday.

After two years the person who cooked for him came and complained, 'Master, I am bored with cooking the same food. How are you able to eat the same food day after day?'

The master just laughed and said, 'I am not eating the same food every day. How can I eat the same food every day? I can only eat this food today. Tomorrow's food is totally different!'

**Every single
happening in our
lives is
unconnected.**

Life is new every moment. It is the mind that makes it look repetitive, dull and mundane.

From fear to freedom

Your fear gives power to the mind

When a local gangster steps out on the first day of his job, he has a little fear. Once the people start obeying him, even if he is unsure of himself, just seeing people obey him gives him confidence, 'Yes, now I am a great guy!' His whole body language changes.

In the same way, when the mind comes to attack you, initially it will not have enough confidence. But when it sees that you are afraid of it, it gains confidence and traps you! You give confidence to the mind to attack you. Once you show your fear, once you show that you are very fragile, that is enough for your mind and you are caught.

The person who wants to exploit you first makes you believe that you can't run your life without him. He gives you the impression that you cannot survive without him. Once you fall for it, he starts exploiting you and playing games with you.

The moment you start believing that you cannot survive without him, you start putting up with him even though it is an abuse.

In the same way, the first thing your mind does is convince you that you cannot be alive without it. The moment it convinces you of this, nothing more needs to be done. Then you never try to drop the mind!

Just let Go...and you can fly!

I saw this in my days of spiritual wandering. In the forests of Northern India the hunters use a trap to catch birds. They tie a rope between two trees. In the middle of the rope, they secure a wooden stick. The rope is tied at the midpoint of the stick. This is actually a hunter's trap for birds.

You may think, 'How can a bird be trapped with a small stick? How is it possible?' Actually, all they do is just hang the stick between two trees using a rope, that's all.



When a bird comes and sits on the stick, the bird's own weight turns the whole stick upside down, it turns topsy-turvy. The bird is now hanging upside down, clinging to the stick.

The moment it turns upside down and loses its sense of balance it feels totally shaken and tightens its grip on the stick. It simply holds onto the stick as if its life depends on it. Because it is hanging upside down, it thinks, 'If I unclutch from this stick, what will happen? I will fall and die.'



There is no record that any bird has ever fallen and broken its head! But the bird does not have the intelligence to realize this. It keeps hanging on. By not letting go, not only does it lose its freedom, it loses its life too, because ultimately the hunter traps it.



Just like the bird, you don't realize that if you just drop your mind, at that moment you can become a Paramahansa*. That very moment you can be liberated. You can simply start flying.

The same fear that the bird clinging to the stick had, you have now. Your fear and the bird's fear are one and the same. The bird believes that it can't let go and if it does it will die. Similarly, you hold on to your mind and feel, 'I can't let go. If I start trusting that I am unconnected, unclutched, independent and illogical thoughts, I might be lost.'

The hunter comes leisurely, after four or five hours, takes the bird, puts it in the cage, and leaves. Now the bird neither has the freedom to fly nor the stick to balance. The foolish bird doesn't know that if it had just let go of the stick, it could have simply flown away!

Paramahansa - Literally means Supreme Swan. Title bestowed on enlightened beings.

In the same way, you hold on to whatever you think is your identity and security – your education, your mind, your life, your relationships, or your bank balance. Yama* ultimately comes to remove the stick that is your identity. Then you are neither a Paramahansa, a liberated soul, nor are you able to hold on to your identity. You will neither have the freedom, nor will you have the stick of your identity that you are clutching, because the stick itself is an illusion.

Let me tell you, if the bird lets go and relaxes, it may flutter to balance for a moment or two. It may take one or two moments to balance itself, but it will never fall and die. When it leaves the stick, maybe for a few seconds it will fall, but then it will adjust itself and start flying.

Be very clear, let go and you will never fall and die. You will only become a *Paramahansa!*

This moment, trust yourself. Don't bother about losing your identity. Just trust yourself and let go of your identity. You will immediately become a Paramahansa and be liberated. All you need to do is to trust that you are unclutched. Even if you don't trust that it is still the truth!

Safety net of the *sangha*

When you unclutch, there will be some revolutionary changes in your life, your day-to-day thinking, your decision-making, and your daily routine and your lifestyle. Courageously going through that revolution, going through the transformation that happens in you, is what I call *tapas* or penance.

On rare occasions during my wanderings, I have seen a bird hanging on the stick. Another bird that was once stuck in the trap, but had the courage to let go and open up, comes back. It pokes the hanging bird and says, 'Hey, let go! Relax! I was like you. I had the same problem. When I relaxed I just started flying. All it takes is just two or three seconds to balance. When I opened up, I never fell and broke my head or died. I only became liberated. I only became a free bird. Come on...?' But the hanging bird will not believe it.

Understand that the responsibility of the free bird is to go about freeing other birds. It is the responsibility of the free bird to go and poke the bird trapped on the stick and say, 'Free yourself.' I am that free bird and I have created a safety net. Even if you fall, you won't hurt yourself. Relax! Let go, you will only fly! See, the *sangha*,

Yama - Hindu god of death and justice.

the community of the master, is the net. Even if you fall, you will not hurt yourself.

First of all, you will *not* fall. But just to give you the deeper assurance, the *sangha*, the spiritual community, is created. So, I invite all of you to come and experience the *sangha*.

Understand that it is a free bird's responsibility to liberate all the trapped birds, to help them, to inspire them to free themselves.

Similar to the bird trap, hunters also have a trap to catch monkeys. They catch monkeys using a small box for a trap. They place some sweets inside a box that has a small opening. The monkey puts its hand inside the box and grabs the sweet. As long as the monkey holds onto the sweet, it will not be able to take its hand out because its fist is larger than the hole!

If the monkey lets go of the sweet, it can remove or slide its hand out immediately. But the monkey is not intelligent enough to realize that. It holds on to the sweet and just because it is holding on, it is not able to take its hand out. If it just lets go of the sweet, it can take its hand out and be free. If you allow the understanding of this story to happen in you, you will instantly unclutch from your shafts and be free this very moment.

Society does not liberate you

The whole purpose of social training is to make you believe that you have continuity of thoughts. Society constantly trains you to hold onto either the shaft of pain or the shaft of pleasure. If you start believing the shaft of pain, you will spend your whole life trying to break the shaft and you will waste your life. If you start believing the shaft of pleasure, you will spend your whole life trying to elongate the shaft and you will end up wasting your life again. Society cannot tolerate your freedom. That is why it never gives you the courage to unclutch. Because once you unclutch, you cannot be controlled, manipulated, or exploited by anyone!

If you are in a cage, society can play with you and make you follow all the rules it wants you to. It can feed you when it wants to, and what it wants to. You become very useful to it. But you will be just a utility. The society does not really care for you, you are only a means to an end for them.

The moment you understand the truth that you are by nature a liberated being, the moment you relax, the inner healing or the bliss comes out and you feel the freedom. Once you start feeling the freedom, it is

All you need to do is to trust that you are unclutched. Even if you don't trust that it is still the truth!

**Man does
not have an
unconscious
or
subconscious
mind.**

that your being simply becomes a Paramahansa in the pure cosmic Consciousness.

**Unconscious or
subconscious mind, a
pure myth**

Man does not have an unconscious or subconscious mind as we have been taught.

Please be very clear, I am making a bold, courageous and challenging statement. Of course, I have the support of the *vedic rishis** who dove deep into human consciousness, who did enough research in the inner world.

So be very clear, the idea of unconscious or subconscious mind is just one more concept generated to create more fear in you.

You can have only one thought at a time, am I right? Can you have two or three thoughts at a time? No, you cannot. You

enough. It will give you tremendous confidence and courage to fly, to spread your wings in the sky. You will see

can have only one thought at a time. Then where is the question of subconscious or unconscious? Where is it and what is it?

Be very clear, creating the pain and joy shafts is the original sin. You are not a sinner in any other way.

This is why the *vedic rishis** beautifully address humanity as *amrutasya putraha** – Sons of Immortality! By very nature, man is immortal nectar. There is no need to achieve that state separately.

Man is the outcome of intense enlightened experience.

**Unclutch! Radiate
awareness, energy and
intelligence**

When you completely unclutch, tremendous awareness, energy and intelligence happens in your system.

Energy can never be produced. It is not something you can create. It just continuously happens in every being. If you take the stand that you are a body, you are on the plane of matter on the physical plane. You are living only in the gross body. Your desires are very physical, at the gross

Rishis - sages.

Amrutasya putraha - A scriptural statement from Shvetashvatara Upanishad that says: '*Shrunvantu Vishve Amrutasya Putraha*' that means 'You are the child of immortality', all human beings are divine.

level. Your fears are related to the physical level fears like the basic fear of death, etc.

If you think you are the mind, you live in the mental plane. Your desires, fears and everything are related to the mind, like the desire for name and fame, fear of losing your identity, etc. In the mental layer, both desires and fears are subtle.

In the spiritual or being level, there won't be any desires or fears. You radiate energy continuously. Whichever plane you are in, your presence radiates that energy.

Myth of body-mind

Our mind creates our body

Not only yoga*, but also medical science, confirms that our body constantly rejuvenates and replaces itself. We are constantly repl-acing ourselves. This is the first truth.

The second important truth is proven not only by yoga* and *ayurveda**, but also by biology and medical science, that our mind creates our body. Our body is directly guided by our mind.

Yoga - Literally means 'uniting' of body-mind-spirit.

Ayurveda - Traditional Indian medicine, meaning Knowledge of Life.

Dr. Bruce Lipton - Molecular cellular biologist and author of 'The Biology of Belief', renowned for his seminal work in relating genetics to conditioning.

There is a book called 'The Biology of Belief' written by scientist, Dr. Bruce Lipton*. After thirty years of research in the field of biology, he came up with some very powerful conclusions. He clearly proves that our positive and negative emotions control our body in a bigger way than even DNA or cells do. Our body is guided by our beliefs, faith, and our positive and negative emotions.

He says that even our body structure can be altered by our mind. Step by step, he proves very clearly that all our genetic, physical and mental problems are created by our faith alone.

Research has also been done with children who were separated from their biological parents from birth. The children grew up thinking that the parents who had adopted them were their real parents. In these cases, the children even expressed all the symptoms of the hereditary diseases of the foster parents!

Unclutch to heal yourself

There is a small story about a woodcutter:

A woodcutter was once cutting a tree near a river. His axe slipped and fell

**Our body
constantly
rejuvenates
and replaces
itself.**

into the river. Suddenly, a goddess appeared in front of him with a golden axe and asked, 'Is this yours?' He said,

'No'.

Just a few moments later, she reappeared with a silver axe and asked, 'Is this yours?' The woodcutter again said, 'No'. Then she disappeared and came back with his axe, made of iron and asked, 'Is this yours?' He said, 'Yes, yes, it is mine!'

The goddess was very pleased with his honesty and handed over all the three axes to him!

Now, I will tell you the extension of this story, the second edition!

The same woodcutter was cutting a tree by the same river. His wife was assisting him. Suddenly, by accident, his wife fell into the river!

The same goddess appeared bringing a beautiful woman with her. She asked the woodcutter if she was his wife. The woodcutter replied, 'Yes, yes, yes!'

The goddess got very angry and said, 'How dare you lie, you greedy fellow! Last time, when the axe fell into the river, you told the truth, but now when your wife fell in, you are telling a lie!'

The woodcutter replied, 'No, no, you don't understand my problem. Last time you asked first whether the golden axe was mine, then whether the silver axe was mine, and then you showed me my axe. When I said the last axe was mine, you gave me all three. Now again if you give me three women what will I do! I know what suffering I am going through with just one! That is the reason I took precautionary steps. Anything is okay, but please just leave me with one wife, not more!'

Anyhow, just like the goddess who asks the woodcutter about the axes, in the same way, Existence, the Cosmic Mother always asks you, 'Is this your new body?' Existence creates a new body for you every passing moment. Our cells constantly rejuvenate themselves.

When the Cosmic Mother comes and asks, 'Is this new body yours?' you say, 'No, no, no! Bring my old one to me!' That is the problem. That is why, in spite of the natural rejuvenation process, you find that no big change has happened to your body over years and years.

Our body has enough intelligence to replace itself. You may ask, 'If my body is again and again replacing itself, rejuvenating itself, then why am I carrying the same disease?'

You carry the same disease in your body because you strongly believe in the same mind. Because you are carrying the same mind, you reproduce the same problems in the body. By clutching, by connecting, you stop the self-healing that could happen in your body.

The moment you allow the inner healing to happen, the outer healing will simply start happening. The moment you understand that you are an unclutched being, that moment depression will disappear and I promise that you will create a completely new body. You will not carry your diseases forward to your new body.

You carry the same disease because you believe that you are connected and that you are a continuous flow, which is supported by all of the shafts that you have created. When you create new cells or organs, you carry the same disease over into the new body also.

You can see this in your own life. Let's say that as a child, you are taught by your mother that if you go out in the rain and get wet you will catch a cold. This concept is constantly reinforced during your childhood. Once you grow older you won't even have to go in the rain. All you need to do is to watch the rainfall from a window and you will sneeze! But when you understand you are unclutched you can work on your physical aches and pains. They will heal quickly. Also, you will not

make and reinforce shafts that keep you in illness and suppression.

For example, the knee pain you had ten days ago, the knee pain you experienced nine days ago, the knee pain you had eight days ago are all unconnected, independent experiences. But when you connect all of them and put a label, 'I have knee pain,' you make a shaft out of it.

If you strongly believe that you had knee pain for ten years, naturally you will strongly believe you are going to have the same knee pain for the rest of your life. This faith is more than enough to reproduce and create knee pain in the new body that you create every morning. Because you clutch and connect with the same mind, you reproduce the same disease in the new body that you create every day.

When you stop carrying the same mind and the same old identity, you stop reproducing the same diseases in the new body. You stop reproducing the same pain, the same depression, the same difficulties, and same disease in the new body. You are liberated.

If you are unclutched, you allow your body to heal from the disease that you already have and you create a new body, a new system, that is healthy, energetic and alive. You will live like children. Children are so alive because every moment they create a new body. They are not stuck with a shaft, so they don't have any idea about

**If you are
unclutched,
you allow
your body to
heal.**

themselves. That is the reason that even if yesterday you fought with them, today they will be smiling at you as if nothing happened! They don't carry records in their minds. They don't carry any identity about themselves. They do not connect yesterday's fight, the day before yesterday's fight, and the fight that happened one month ago. They are free from the shaft.

**Let go of the body-mind
identity**

Please first understand that the thought that you are the body is itself an illusion. That is the first thought shaft that you create and suffer with as a result.

If you start experiencing the truth that by your very nature you are illogical, irresponsible, independent, unconnected and unclutched, you will start creating a new, alive, and fresh body. We abuse and disrespect our bodies in order to satisfy our ego. The moment we start to realize that we are not the body, we allow the body to function naturally.

By its very nature, the body heals itself. The body has its own intelligence. However, you have lost connection with that wonderful intelligence.

You constantly abuse and torture your body. The moment you start thinking, 'I am the body,' you start abusing the body. You do so many things to satisfy the mind that, by their nature, abuse the body.

If you can relax from the idea that you are the body, you will start to respect the body. You will make decisions that allow the body intelligence to function beautifully. You will allow the body to live naturally. You will be alive, bubbling and overflowing with energy. The moment you start understanding that you are not the mind, you will have sharp intelligence and spontaneity.

The first thing to do is understand that you are not this body and mind. When you fully understand that you are not this body and mind, you will start respecting both. You start living with and not against your body and mind. You no longer abuse your body or disrespect its intelligence. You let your body live naturally and blissfully.

Ashtavakra* says, 'You are not the body, you are not the mind. You are not the earth.

Ashtavakra - An enlightened *vedic* sage who was born with eight crooked limbs. He is the author of the Ashtavakra Gita.

You are not the water. You are not the fire.
You are not the air. You are not the ether.'

If you detach from the body and rest in intelligence,

You will at once be happy, peaceful and free from bondage.

First, you are not the body and mind.

Second, if you detach from the body and rest in intelligence, you will at once be happy, peaceful and free from all types of bondage. You become peaceful that very moment. You start understanding and accepting yourself as you are. In that very moment, you start relaxing into yourself. You become silent. That very moment brings bliss to you.

The moment you understand that you are not the body and mind, you relax from this whole *samsara sagara**, ocean of material existence. As long as you continue to associate yourself with the body and mind, you experience all the sufferings and pains that the body and mind carry.

Living intensely in the present

By your very nature you renounce every moment

Fortunately, by your very nature, you can have only one thought at a time. The moment a new thought comes inside your system, it means that the old thought has lost its power or influence over you. If the new thought has entered you, it means the old thought has been renounced because you can't have two thoughts at a time. You can have only one thought at a time. If you say that the old thought is also there, it only means that for that moment, the new thought has been renounced!

There is a beautiful story by Ramakrishna Paramahansa*:

A king who was inside a huge fort, was once attacked by an army that was two million strong. The king only had two or three people around him and got very frightened. He told his advisor, 'Two million people, and I am all alone. They will kill me!'

Samsara sagara - Ocean of birth and death.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa - Enlightened mystic from West Bengal in India. His chief disciple was Swami Vivekananda.

The royal advisor said, 'Don't worry, King. Open only one door. Surely through one door only one person can come in at a time. As they come in, stand on this side of the door and kill them one by one. Over! Do not try to fight with the whole crowd.'

If you think all your enemies are gathered together, you will start having unnecessary fears. You cannot have two thoughts at a time. You can only have one thought at a time. This means that every thought is replaced by the next thought.

I'll repeat: the first thing is that you can have only one thought at a time.

The second thing is that unless the old thought is pushed out, the second thought cannot come.

The third thing is that if somebody can push me out and sit here, he is surely more powerful than me! In the same way, any thought that comes in and pushes the old thought out is more powerful than the old thought. This means that any thought that is coming now is rooted in the present moment. It has more power than the thought that is being renounced, whatever that thought may be about.

By your very nature you are renouncing. You don't need to learn renunciation. Every moment you *are* renouncing. What do I mean by the word 'renouncing' here? I mean that at every moment you are letting

go of one thought after another. Only then is it possible to allow new thoughts to keep entering your system. Every moment your inner space is getting cleared of the old thought.

Thoughts are constantly getting renounced by themselves. The only issue is that when you create the belief your thoughts are connected, you have the problem of linked suffering, the shaft. Your belief that you have some problem is your only problem.

Every moment your inner space is purified by the new incoming thoughts. If you allow this process to continue, it will happen by itself and clean itself also. There is no need for you to clean your mind. All you need to do is just get out of the system so that the system can proceed on its own.

One important truth you should know is that even if you want, even if you try consciously, you cannot possess or hold onto your suffering for long.

Even if you try to hold it, you cannot hold your suffering because continuously, your thought that creates suffering is also replaced by newer thoughts! In fact, to hold onto suffering will require a lot of effort on your part because thoughts are continuously flowing.

Allow your thoughts to be replaced

Be very clear, your power to bring on a new thought itself proves you have the power to drop the old thought. The problem is, instead of just watching the new thoughts flowing through you, you try to bring back old thoughts into your system. It is like picking up your trashed emails and bringing them back to the inbox. Is there any need to bring back trashed emails? No! If you constantly look to bring back the old thoughts, you will create only suffering.

Understand that if you nurture the fact that any suffering can be replaced by a stream of fresh thoughts then that becomes reality for you. Then there is no suffering. If you are nurturing the thought, 'No, however much I allow replacing, the suffering comes back,' you will make *that* into reality. If you mother the thought that the suffering is going to come back, it will come back. If you mother the thought that it is going to go away, it will go away.

All you need to understand is that if even once you can replace a thought in your inner space without returning to the previous thought, you will get the confidence, 'I have replaced it once. I can do it again.' Then you can tell yourself, 'If

the old thought comes back ten times, let me replace it ten times!' that's all. Soon you will see the old thought will stop coming back.

There is a very beautiful incident in Buddha's life:

Buddha says, 'Whenever I said in meditation, 'I am going to get up after a few hours', I never became enlightened. Once I decided, 'If I am not going to become enlightened, I am not going to get up from this seat. Let this body dry up in this very place. Until I become enlightened, I am not going to move.' Buddha says that the moment he created that strong clarity, the authentic sankalpa, the next second, he became enlightened!*

When you sit down to replace your suffering and think, 'Today I will replace it ten times. If it comes back the eleventh time, I can try again tomorrow,' then nothing will happen. No transformation will take place for you. Decide very clearly, 'Until it stops coming, I am going to replace the negative thoughts.' That is what I call courage.

Sankalpa - Vow or decision.

When we unclutch, that inner healing will radiate as physical wellbeing.

Solutions for physical, mental and emotional problems

When we unclutch, the first thing that will happen to us will be an inner healing effect, a deep silence and peace in us.

Second, that inner healing will start radiating as physical wellbeing, which is our health.

Third, naturally it will start radiating in our relationships also.

Fourth, because these three are going beautifully, we will be creative and productive!

Solution for chronic ailments

People come and tell me, ‘*Swamiji*, for the last twenty years I have had knee pain.’ No, it cannot be! Please understand that in reality it cannot be. I am not disrespecting you or adding more suffering to you by saying all your problems are only in your head. I am just telling the truth: all your problems *are* in your head! I am just stating the truth.

The knee pain you experienced two years ago, the knee pain you experienced one year ago, the knee pain you experienced two

months ago, and the knee pain you experienced two hours ago are independent experiences. Only because you connect all of them, you conclude that you have been having knee pain for twenty years. Is it really true that you have knee pain continuously for twenty years? What happens to the moments of ‘no knee pain’ in between? The important thing you need to understand is that because you connect and see all these as one continuous incident, you block the possibility of self-healing.

Solution for depression

The depression that happened one month ago, the depression that happened one year ago, and the depression that happened three years ago are independent, individual, unconnected, and unclutched. The problem is the same as with physical pain. You start connecting them and concluding that you are having the same depression continuously. You create an idea that your life is depression. Then you start fighting with it. That only gives more life to the depressive thoughts.

When you strongly believe that your last ten years have been filled with suffering and depression, you create a strong mental setup surrounding it. Naturally you start thinking that your future is also going to be painful and filled with depression.

Suppose there is a person sitting in front of you who you think is an enemy. Suddenly if you notice that his head is separate, his legs are separate and his hands are separate, would you even feel like fighting with him? No! He is not even worth fighting! He doesn't even have a solid existence, as you imagined him to have. So what is there to fight?

In the same way, only when you imagine you have a huge problem in front of you, that a big person is in front of you, you start fighting and getting into more trouble. Your depression is not the huge enemy that you think it is. It is just like the person with disjointed body parts. It is you who joined the parts and gave it life. Your fighting with depression is the root cause of your depression.

In Ramayana* there is a beautiful story. Whoever stands in front of the monkey king Vali* and fights with him, loses half of his power to him. In the same way, whoever stands in front of the thought shaft and starts fighting with that shaft, half of their power will go away to that shaft.

The moment you unclutch from the shaft, you experience the neutral space, and inner

healing starts. The moment inner healing starts, physically also you are healed.

You create an idea that your life is depression. Then you fight with it.

Do not try to renounce your depression, because by your very nature it is getting renounced, flowing away from you. By your very nature just as joy disappears from your mind, depression also disappears from your mind. The moment you try to eliminate the depression, you will extend it and give it more life.

If you have a deep depression, will you stop going to the office? No! You may carry the depression in your mind but your body moves. You work. You may not be that productive or efficient. But your body still moves.

Instead of 'living depression', I am saying, 'live unclutched'.

When we live in depression, we don't have all these questions, 'If I am depressed, how can my body move?' We don't have such questions. The depression becomes part of our life. In the beginning you may have questions, 'How can I live unclutched? How will I even move my body?' Understand that the constant remembrance

Ramayana - Hindu *itihasa* or epic about prince Rama. The original version was written by poet Valmiki.
Vali - Monkey king in the Hindu epic Ramayana who was killed by prince Rama.

of unclutching does not interfere with your mind or body movements. It only removes the depression because it lets the depression thoughts rise and fall without clutching to them.

Solution for addiction

What is addiction? It is a behavior or action that if you don't do it, you will feel terrible that you are missing something. But, if you do it you won't feel any joy, it will only be mechanical. Addiction means believing that joy or ecstasy happens due to some object, person, or situation.

Understand that this is the definition of addiction: trying to elongate the joy shaft by recreating it. You bring the same persons, situations, incidents, or happenings into your life again and again, knowing that the same joy is not going to happen. Some people are addicted to partying, some to smoking, and some to drinking and there are so many addictions.

Remember that anything you bring to your life again and again will not give you the same excitement as it gave you the first time. It can only lead to addiction, not happiness. The first time you enjoy a sweet, it is a wonderful experience. The excitement is totally different. But if you keep eating more of the same sweet, the same experience is not there anymore.

Eventually if you eat enough sweets, you will not even like the sight of them. You will look at them and say, 'Oh no, not more sweets. They make me feel terrible.' In the same way, when meeting a person for the first time, the excitement is totally different. Later on, the excitement falls off.

People come and ask me, 'How can I break my habits?' See, habit is a beautiful word. If you remove 'h', 'a bit' will remain. If you remove 'b', 'it' will remain. Only when you remove the 'T', the shaft 'it' will die. Only when you remove 'T', only when you throw 'T' away, will it completely die.

Your smoking two days ago, ten years ago, and twenty years ago, all these three incidents are completely independent. They are not connected. Mentally, when you start connecting, when you start believing that you have the habit of smoking and that you are addicted to it, the belief creates a shaft. Then you start fighting with it. That is what I mean when I say the 'T' has to be dropped. It is your belief that makes it a habit. If you drop the belief, the habit drops.

If you believe it is a joyful experience, you continue to smoke more and more. If you believe it is a painful experience you start fighting with the shaft. Either way you don't win. Even if you believe that smoking is joyful, try to smoke without restraint and see for yourself how you feel. When you smoke and inhale, it can never

be a pleasurable experience. It is never really joyful.

When you smoke, in that moment, just see what is happening in your inner space. You are not enjoying anything. You are just trying to escape from something. You merely believe that smoking is joyful. Even if you don't feel joyful when you are smoking, you try to squeeze joy out of it.

If you deeply scan your life and see, you will understand that whether it is smoking, or sex, or money, or any other pleasure, even if you don't feel the same joy as you felt the first time, you try to squeeze joy out of it. You try to console yourself, 'No, this *is* joy. What else is joy?' You try to cover the frustration by believing it is joy. You want to believe it is joy.

Try your best to drop some addiction. You can never be successful. Even if you drop it you may be dropping it out of some fear or greed, which is a much bigger addiction. If you drop smoking out of some fear or greed, you are not doing anything good to your consciousness, to your inner space. You are only damaging yourself more.

You might have dropped smoking, but the fear or greed that made you drop it will be added to your inner space. At least with smoking, you will destroy only this body. With fear or greed you will destroy your whole being, life after life! In the next body, you will carry over the fear and greed. The

smoking habit may not carry over to the next body but the emotions of fear and greed will be carried with you to the next body. So the best way is to drop the idea that you have an addiction, and it will drop.

Solution for fear of death - just have a cup of coffee!

A person once came and asked me, 'I am haunted by the fear of death. I have so much fear about losing my wealth, and about my death. Give me some solution. Please remove my fear.'

I told him, 'Please have a cup of coffee.' He said, 'What do you mean?' I said, 'Just think of having a cup of coffee, then have a cup of coffee.' He was not able to believe me and asked, 'How can that help me?'

I asked him, 'The moment you are able to think of having a cup of coffee and decide to have a cup of coffee, the death fear that is haunting your inner space has left your inner space. Am I right? Even if it is only for a split second, the fact that the thought about coffee has entered your system means that the death fear has been pushed aside!'

Unless the death fear leaves his inner space, he cannot think of having a cup of coffee, right? We have already seen that only one thought can exist in your inner space at a time. If the older thought comes back, it

Drop the idea that you have an addiction, and it will drop.

means that you have consciously brought it back, like bringing back a trashed email to your inbox. So naturally, a simple thought to have a cup of coffee can remove the so-called powerful death fear.

The man said, 'No, it looks too simple! The death fear definitely comes back, what should I do?' If it comes back, have one more cup of coffee, that's all!

It is just a simple understanding. Fortunately, you can have only one thought at a time. The moment a new thought comes, it means the old thought has lost its power over you. Otherwise, the new thought cannot arise.

If the old thought is so strong, it should just be able to multiply and sit on you. It shouldn't be able to leave your inner space. So the moment a new thought comes, it means the old thought was not very powerful after all. It easily lost its power over you and left you. Because of that, the new thought has come inside. So, the moment you have a thought to have a cup of coffee or a cup of water, the so-called death fear has left you.

The man asked, 'Suppose it comes back? I can drink a cup of coffee once, but the next time what should I do?'

I said, 'Then drink a cup of water, that's all!'

Understand one more thing, your very fear about the fear coming back will invite that fear back. Why do you want to empower the fear thought? It is actually just like any other thought. Why don't you give yourself the luxury of entertaining some other thought? Because you give too much importance to the fear thought, it comes back. It is just another thought, why give undue importance to it?

You neither have to worry about your fears, nor about your greed. Your worry about your worries, your worry about your fears, and your worry about your greed is the only problem. Your fear is not the problem, your fear about the fears is the real problem.

Fear exists because of the possibility of not achieving your goal. Fear is not connected to your failure. Fear is connected to your fear of failure.

Solution for stomach problems

The *ayurvedic* science says that we get stomach problems like constipation, etc., only if we constantly hold on to our body. If we can just relax and witness, if we start understanding that we are not the body, we will never have stomach problems.

I tell you from my experience with millions of people that I have met and worked with,

if you have stomach problems, try this technique for just two or three days. Constantly think that you are not the body. I assure you, you will be liberated from any stomach problem. Your stomach will simply be healed.

If you have stomach problems like ulcer, constipation, irritation, or any problem related to the stomach, this technique will help you. For two or three days, just continuously think, 'I am not the body,' 'I am not the body.' Just relax and allow the body to function. I tell you, within two or three days you will be healed.

Solution for allergies

All your allergies and your phobias are nothing but the connection of independent thoughts. The only thing needed is the courage to be unclutched. Please be very clear, I have healed at least one thousand people with allergies in the last three years.

When I was giving discourses in Hyderabad, India, a man complained about twenty five years of allergies to lentils. Even if he ate a spoonful of cooked lentils, his whole body would start swelling. I said, 'Bring the lentils and eat them in front of me.'

I sat next to him as he ate. I just told him, 'I'll take care. I'll heal. Don't worry.' He ate and there was no swelling. The allergy simply disappeared. All that is needed is giving these people the courage to be unclutched. When I said that I would take care, he was able to break that shaft of fear which was causing his allergy!

Solution for aging

Let me tell you an incident from the days of my spiritual journey:

I went to a village where there were many elderly Lamas. I asked one villager, 'Can I see an elderly Lama*?' He said, 'Go to that field. There is a Lama* working there. You can speak to him.' I went up to the Lama and spoke to him while he was working in the field.*

I asked, 'I heard that you are a very elderly person, can I ask about some of your experiences, something about your life?'

He started laughing. He said, 'What? Elderly!? I am only a middle-aged man. I am only 136! There are so many people who are 190 and above, go and talk to them.' I was shocked! I asked, 'How do you live so long?'

Lama – Buddhist monk.

*He simply replied, 'What is there to say?
From childhood onwards we know that
the human lifespan is 300 years.'*

From the beginning they are taught that they can live up to 300 years. Your body is just like a child. Whatever you tell it, it will follow. All you need to do is create a correct, strong belief. If you are unclutched, things will take their own course. You will constantly rejuvenate yourself.

You are made to believe that human beings age and die by seventy to ninety years. By the time you become seventy, you are prepared for death. You constantly say, 'Oh, I have become old, I am ready to die.' Then you prepare your body for death.

Solution for fatigue

Your body creates or maintains a particular disease according to the identity that you create with respect to that disease. Tiredness, chronic fatigue and all these related disorders are directly related to this identity. We can call it the 'identity shaft'. What do we mean by identity shaft? Take tiredness for example. You connect yesterday's tiredness, the day before yesterday's tiredness, the tiredness that you experienced one month ago, etc., and create an identity shaft for yourself that says, 'By eight o'clock tonight I will become

tired'. Then every day, by six o'clock, you start preparing your mind, 'By eight o'clock I will start feeling tired....' You feel compelled to fulfill your identity!

So you start creating dullness or lethargy by six o'clock. You have to prove your identity because you created it. Sometimes you may even forget to prove your identity to the outer world, but you will never miss proving your identity to yourself! If the outer world doesn't believe your identity that is okay, but if you start suspecting your own identity, that is too dangerous for your ego. You will never let that happen!

Even if you felt the fatigue one year ago, there is every possibility that you can update yourself today. You may not actually have that problem anymore, but you are not interested in trusting that you are free from fatigue. You want to retain the old identity. Your ego can sacrifice anything except your identity. That's why you play a very polite, but cunning game, you hold onto the belief of the fatigue and become fatigued.

Solution for guilt

One person came to me and said, 'I constantly suffer because of my smoking habit. The moment I get up in the morning, I have to smoke. But after one hour I have

deep guilt. After two hours, when I am getting ready for work, again I have to smoke - again an hour of guilt. What should I do? I am constantly suffering with guilt and I am always suffering from this habit. What should I do?

I told him, 'You should either drop smoking, or drop the guilt. Drop either thing. You will be liberated from this habit.'

He was shocked to hear this. He said, 'You know that I am not able to stop smoking. If I drop the guilt also, I will smoke even more! How do you say that I will drop smoking?'

See, it is a vicious cycle. When you have guilt, what will you do? You will constantly keep repeating, 'I should stop smoking,' 'I should stop smoking.' Naturally what will happen? In your mind you give power to the word 'smoking'. So the memory of smoking keeps getting engraved deeper and deeper into your system. How do you expect that you will be able to stop smoking?

When you cannot forgive yourself, it is called guilt. When you cannot forgive others it is called vengeance. When you unclutch, both guilt and vengeance disappear. Not only will you forgive, you will also forget because there is no longer a connection between your behavior and these thoughts.

You may ask, 'If we unclutch, then how can we learn from past experiences?' Real learning from the past happens only when you unclutch from your past experiences. When you unclutch from your past experiences, the essence of your past experiences, the teachings that you need to learn from them will become part of your being.

When you are continuously clutched to the past, only the pain, suffering, and guilt reflect in your being. You will never pick up the essence or the 'juice' from the past and update your intelligence. Also, if you have a deep respect for or dependence on your past, you will never be able to live in the present moment. You will be always carrying the past into the present, corrupting it and your future. How can you live blissfully if you do that? You can't! Unclutch from the past, let the lessons be easily integrated and celebrate life in the present moment.

Because you believe some thoughts are connected and that they are joyous, you start giving life only to those thoughts. If you believe some thoughts are painful, you try to take energy away from those thoughts. Because of this, you don't live your whole life, you keep choosing which part to live with.

Because you have gone to such an extreme of relying on your mind, you cannot

understand that you can live without the mind. You are afraid that you might go to the other extreme of being a mindless person with no morality in your life. Let me tell you, a person who understands that by their very nature thoughts are unconnected will naturally lead a moral life without society's rules to tell him how to live. It is only in this type of person that you see a strong, deep sense of conscious morality. It is only in his or her life you see an extraordinary discipline. This discipline can never be shaken and this morality can never be taken away from him or her. It will be a morality that does not come out of fear or greed. True morality is the flowering of deep understanding of the self, world and god.

Witnessing

You are the witnessing consciousness

Adi Shankara* sings beautifully in the verses Bhaja Govindam*:

Adi Shankara - Enlightened master from India. Greatest exponent of the doctrine of *Advaita Vedanta* or non-dualism, whose movement restored glory to the declining *vedic* tradition and Hinduism during his period.

Bhaja Govindam - Collection of 32 (sometimes 34) devotional verses composed by enlightened master Adi Shankara. This is considered to be the essence of *Vedanta* and *Advaita*, non duality.

Ashtavakra – An enlightened *vedic* sage who was born with eight crooked limbs. He is the author of the *Ashtavakra Gita*.

Janaka – Indian King of the kingdom of Videha with the capital of Mithila, well-known for his righteousness.

*Within the potter's wheel's rotation,
The pivot stands still, amidst constant motion,
So too a man of perfection
Is poised, although engaged in action.*

When you understand that you are unclutched, suddenly you realize you are like the pivot of the potter's wheel, unmoving and untouched by the kind of pot being made, the kind of experiences being felt. Understand that you are not the movie being played. You are just the screen on which the movie is projected. The screen is never touched by the play of emotions that appears on it!

The boy sage Ashtavakra* tells King Janaka*,

Verily you are ever free

You are the one seer of all and really ever free.

Verily this alone is your bondage, that you see the seer as other than such.

When the scene affects the seer, the problem of bondage starts. Your very being is pure. But the moment you start thinking of yourself as someone other than the seer,

the problem starts. This is the only bondage that you have. There is no other bondage.

Even when you create a shaft and suffer, remember, even this idea 'I am creating a shaft', is one more shaft. The shaft you created ten years ago, the shaft you created nine years ago, and the shaft you created yesterday are not connected. Connecting all these shafts is one more shaft! That's all. When this understanding goes to a deeper level within you, it will take care of itself. Your thinking and actions will be transformed.

People ask me, 'Tell us some way that we can always remember to not create any shafts.' When you are trying to create that assurance, be very clear you are creating one more shaft. The moment you decide this is joy and you want this to permanently be with you, what have you done? You have started creating one more shaft. Then you are in trouble. Whether it is joy or pain, the moment you create the shaft, you are in trouble.

Bliss is choiceless

Do not try to retain the feeling of bliss that comes with unclutching. You felt the bliss itself because you understood that nothing could be retained. You felt deep joy because you were free from choices, because you felt completely disconnected, because you realized you are unclutched. Now don't try

to clutch again.

If someone tells you, 'I am in ecstasy because I played tennis and I enjoyed it,' you think, 'Playing tennis brings ecstasy.' You create an equation. You then begin continuously playing tennis, hitting the ball over and over. But nothing happens to you, no ecstasy. Then you think that the person who shared his tennis experience cheated you. Be very clear, while playing he was not at all concerned about joy; he was completely relaxed while he was playing. Because of this, joy simply happened. But somehow he associated it with tennis, that's all. It was not the tennis that caused the joy. While he was playing tennis he dropped into the state of being unclutched and experienced joy. If he could remain in the unclutched state he would remain in a state of joy whether he was playing tennis or not.

Choicelessness is bliss. If you choose it, bliss will not happen because you have made a choice and thus eliminated it as a possibility. When you are choiceless, when you are completely relaxed, bliss simply happens in you. When you are concerned about bliss, your very concern ensures that you will not experience it.

You are just the screen on which the movie is projected. The screen is never touched by the play of emotions.

With unclutching you are able to transform all your thoughts into reality. Be very clear, this is a very simple, powerful method to make your dreams into reality. Whatever dreams you have about the future, if you can relax, if you can unclutch, suddenly you see a new kind of energy flowing through your thoughts. This energy will take care of your dreams. This is the state of restful awareness, the essence of the research and development that went on in the world of inner science. Unclutching is the ultimate technique that can give you everything.

False identities

Ego is not necessary

Just understand this one simple truth. In order for an animal to breathe, it does not need ego, it does not need an identity or any character. But as a human being, you are afraid that if you drop your identity you will not be able to use your body. You fear that something bad will happen to it.

You are afraid that if you drop your identity, your body will not function smoothly. You have an idea about yourself as ‘I am somebody’s father, I am somebody’s brother, I am somebody’s son.’ This idea that you have, this identity that

you carry, this ego that you carry, is not necessary for the smooth functioning of your body and mind. Of course it is very difficult to believe this.

Do you need to think about breathing, making your heart beat, digesting food, or eliminating wastes from your body? No! This very fact should help you to realize that your ego is not needed for you to survive. There is something beyond the ego that is keeping you alive and functioning. If your existence depended on your ego what a catastrophe that would be! We would not be able to manage it! We are so much more than our ego, but that too is hard to believe.

A small story:

A person who was born blind went to a doctor and asked the doctor, ‘Please do something and give me eyesight.’

The doctor said, ‘I will perform surgery and you will be able to see. Then you will be able to walk without the help of a cane.’

The blind man said, ‘Doctor, I understand you will perform surgery. I understand that I will regain my eyesight. I am not able to understand how I can walk without my cane!’

We cannot convince the blind man that after the surgery he will be able to walk without a cane! We cannot convince him intellectually because over time he has

started associating his walking itself with the cane. Only after he gets his eyesight can a blind man understand that he can walk without a cane.

Similarly, you do not need your ego to live in the body and mind. You can live inside your body, inside your mind without the ego. Just as the blind man who had gained his vision does not need a cane to walk, you do not need the ego to live.

***Ahankar* and *mamakar* - outer world identity and inner world identity**

We all have two identities, the identity we project to the outer world, and the identity we believe to be us in the inner world.

The identity you carry inside your mind is called *mamakar* in Sanskrit. It will always be much smaller than what you really are. You carry or remember all your failures, past mistakes and guilt and constantly try to work on them. This identity that you carry in the inner world is based on greed. You constantly try to chisel your identity to become better.

The identity you project to the outer world is called *ahankar*. *Ahankar* is your visiting card. You print everything that you want others to know about you on this card. It will always be more than what you have

and what you are because you think you have to sell yourself. It becomes a basic need, especially in societies where you have to market yourself. There is a fear compelling you to project yourself as more than what you are.

Ahankar is based on a superiority complex. *Mamakar* is based on an inferiority complex. *Ahankar* is based on fear, *mamakar* is based on greed. If you spend all your energy trying to expand the *ahankar*, the identity that you project to the outer world, then your life becomes materialistic. If you spend your whole life chiseling and developing *mamakar*, the identity that you think is you, your whole life becomes moralistic and suppressed. When you project to the outer world, you project yourself based on the strongest link of the chain. When you measure yourself inside your mind, you measure yourself based upon the weakest link of the chain. The conflict between *ahankar* and *mamakar*, the conflict between the personality that you show to the outer world and the personality that you reveal in your inner world is called 'tension'.

You constantly spend your life trying to protect these two identities. When they start growing, they start fighting with each other and giving you trouble. It is like marrying two women at the same time and living with both of them at once! These two identities are purely illusions. You are

something far more than these two identities that you carry around constantly.

Freedom from these two identities is what I call liberation, enlightenment, *moksha**, *nirvana**. Whatever words you may use, it is nothing but liberation from these two identities. These two identities are bondage. When you understand that you are something beyond these two identities, you are a *jeevan mukta**, liberated while living.

I tell you, if you drop what you think of as you, only then you become alive. Until then, you are living and breathing, but are never really alive. Breathing is not a measure of whether you are living. Never think you are alive just because you breathe.

You are something much more than what you project to the outer world and what you project to yourself. When you relax from these two identities, you achieve what is called *jeevan mukti*, living enlightenment.

I tell you, any identity you believe about yourself that is less than you being god, is low self-esteem, because you *are* god.

There are two reasons why your mind will never allow you to believe that you are unclutched. Whatever you feel as your

identity in the outer world, that is your wealth, relationships and such, is based on your thought shafts. If you relax from the shaft, you may lose all your identities. So, fear of losing this identity is the first reason.

The next reason is your morality, your idea about what you should be doing. If you lose your identity, if you no longer trust that you are connected thoughts, your identity about yourself will be lost. The identity that you show to others will be lost and the identity that you have about yourself will also be lost. How will you then realize what is right and what is wrong for you? There is no basis to judge. So the mind will never allow you to believe that you are unclutched.

Let you clearly understand, I tell you from my experience, I have never seen a person who feels complete with the identity he is projecting to the outer world or towards himself. You can't feel you are complete because even if you try to be pure and perfect, even if you try all the practices that you can do, not just for twenty five years, but even for fifty years, you will still have the same mind. It is simply because of the mind that you are trying to chisel what doesn't exist. If it did exist then you

Moksha - Liberation through Self Realization.

Nirvana - Liberation through Self Realization.

Jeevan mukta - A person who achieves liberation from the cycle of birth and death during his or her lifetime.

could chisel and make it as you want it to be and keep it as you want it to be. That base itself doesn't exist, that shaft itself doesn't exist so there is nothing that you can chisel.

As Ashtavakra says,

Unattached, formless and witness of all are you.

You are not your identity. You are the formless, unattached, witness of what is going on around you.

As long as you are afraid, you can be exploited by your own ego.

Whoever wants to exploit you, the first thing they have to do is to create fear in you. If someone wants to exploit you, he will create the fear in you that if he is not there, you will not be able to manage things. You will start believing that if he is not there, your activities will be disturbed, whether it is your company or house or any other place. He first creates the fear in you. Then, depending on the level and the intensity of fear, he starts exploiting you.

In the same way, the first thing your own ego does is to clearly prove to your being that you cannot live in your body and mind without it. Once this frightens you, once you start believing that you cannot live in your body and mind without the ego, it is very easy for your ego to exploit you, to cheat you. Be very clear, it is just simple fear, nothing more.

Unclutch - work smart, not hard

The moment you hear you are unclutched, the first fear that arises in you is, 'If I start living without connecting my thoughts, who will pay my bills? I could lose all my wealth. I could forget where I keep all my money. I may not be able to live successfully in society. How will I do my job? How will I take care of my things? Won't I not just lie down in my bed without doing anything? Why would I want to go to my office?'

I ask, 'Why wouldn't you go to your office?' The moment you ask that, it means that you inherently have a little hatred or a little vengeance against your office work! This is why the moment you find some excuse, you want to escape from your work. By asking this question, you are only expressing your anger, your violence against your routine, nothing else! The question has nothing to do with unclutching.

If you have such questions, just unclutch and sleep for ten days. There's nothing wrong with that. Have a vacation for ten days. Decide, 'I am going to unclutch from both the identities.' How many days do you

**When you
measure yourself
inside your mind,
you measure
yourself based
upon the weakest
link of the chain.**

think you can sleep? How many days do you think the cessation of activity can continue in you? Only until the *tamas** in you is exhausted. After that you will automatically start doing something.

So, even if you feel it is a lack of responsibility or defeatist behavior, be unclutched for a few days. You will then understand and experience that when you are unclutched you will not have a lazy or passive attitude. Mentally you will be silent, but physically you will be active and alive.

When you are in that space of irresponsibility or defeatist attitude, mentally you are very active but physically you are tired. When you are unclutched, physically you are active and alive, but mentally you are silent.

You see, 33% of the body is *sattva**, pure silence. 33% of the body is *rajas**, restlessness and 33% of the body is *tamas**, deep sleep, laziness. Right now the first fear that happens in you is if you unclutch, you may become *tamasic**, a lazy person.

Unclutch. That 33% of your laziness will quickly be exhausted. It will disappear

from your system within a few days. Then you will automatically start working from your innate intelligence. You don't have to be driven by fear and greed to live your day-to-day life.

I am not saying you should stop thinking completely. I am only saying, when you are unclutched, whatever thoughts have to happen will happen auto-matically. Initially when you are unclutched you will feel as if no thoughts are happening. Later you will understand, even after unclutching, whenever thinking is necessary, the mind is clutched. Whenever thinking is not necessary, the mind is unclutched. Your mind is being used as an instrument, not as a master.

We can live purely from inspiration. But the problem is, we are never given that confidence. We are never given the courage that we can live simply by inspiration. Sometimes you can see that for no reason you radiate excitement, for no reason you radiate intelligence. That is what I call inspiration. It may last only for a few moments, but you need to realize that those few moments can become a way of life for you. If we remain unclutched, then

Tamas - One of the three *gunas* or attributes of nature. Attribute of inaction.

Sattva - One of the three *gunas* or attributes of nature. Attribute of passive action.

Rajas - One of the three *gunas* or attributes of nature. Attribute of aggression.

Tamasic - Having attribute of *tamas* or inaction.

continuous inspiration will happen in our lives. Unclutching directly kindles the energy of the being. This energy is the energy of inspiration, the energy of unclutching.

Are ‘you’ needed to run your life?

Understand one important thing, we have an automatic intelligence that can run our lives, that can take care of our day-to-day responsibilities. Not only can it run our lives, it can maintain, extend, and expand our lives as well.

But society conditions you from a young age. You are taught that you cannot run without planning, without fear or greed. Your self-respect is taken away from you. You are made to lose trust that you can lead your life spontaneously, without fear or greed. That is why constantly you try to infuse greed or fear into yourself. You try to use fear and greed as fuel to make your life run, to make your life alive.

Be very clear, you cannot run your life based on fear and greed. If you are driven by fear and greed, you will carry a constant irritation in you. From morning until night, from the moment you wake up until the moment you go to sleep, you will carry a

constant irritation in you. You just wait for a reason to explode. Just one small touch is enough, and you are ready to jump on the other person. He does not even need to make any mistake, just coming in front of you is enough to trigger you! This happens because of the strain of running your life through fear and greed.

If you just relax, the automatic intelligence of Existence will run your life beautifully for you. Your actions will be automatically propelled by the energy of Existence.

Technique – ‘I am not the doer’

Ashtavakra says,

You who have been bitten by the great black serpent of egoism ‘I am the doer’

Drink the nectar of the faith, ‘I am not the doer’ and be happy.

Ashtavakra gives this technique to the king and seeker, Janaka*. Please understand that simply thinking that ‘I am not the doer’ or having faith that ‘I am not the doer’ will not liberate you directly. This technique by itself will not liberate you. It will just make you tired! You are not able to remember that you are not the doer continuously without a break. The

Janaka – Indian king of the kingdom of Videha with the capital of Mithila, well-known for his righteousness.

When you are unclutched, physically you are active and alive, but mentally you are silent.

moment you understand that you are not able to remember 'I am not the doer' all the time, you will be completely frustrated and you will just drop the mind. The moment you drop the mind, the truth that you are not the doer will simply become reality! That is the technique suggested here.

Unclutching – a self-purifying and evolutionary technique

This is a very simple understanding of unclutching. All you need to do is remember to unclutch whenever you start giving meaning to old thoughts or whenever you connect with old thoughts and allow them to bother you.

Do not create, maintain or destroy any thought. If you don't do any of these three things, you are the Supreme Self, *Parabrahma**!

Unclutching is like a self-purifying method. For any technique to be self-purifying and liberating, the moment you become subtle, the technique should also become subtle,

by itself. Unclutching is one such technique.

The technique that does not become subtle by itself stays in the gross level. If it is not able to kill itself, if the technique is not able to commit suicide, it will kill you! The beauty with the technique of unclutching is that it will become subtler and subtler by itself as you become subtler. Finally, it will dissolve.

Meditation techniques

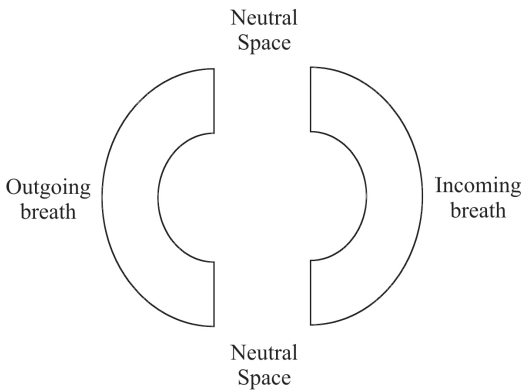
Unclutching through the breath technique

Let us see how unclutching is related to what happens every moment in your body – breathing!

Between the incoming breath and the outgoing breath is a neutral space. Your identity exists in the incoming and outgoing breath spaces. Constantly you can connect and see you are connected when you are aware of your breath. But in the gap of the neutral space your identity does not exist. You don't connect the gaps, so you jump over this gap.

Parabrahma - Supreme Being.

You think that the breathing space or breathing time is more than the neutral space. This is because you have more thoughts when breathing. Because you give more emphasis to your identity you think that the time of the incoming breath and outgoing breath is more than the time of neutral space. In reality it is not. It is just a psychological game.



Meditation instructions

We will now do a guided meditation for unclutching. Once you have experienced unclutching, you don't even need to practice any technique. Just remembering the unclutching experience is enough, you will again be in that same space! Only in the beginning you need to relax - just like the hanging bird taking off. Once you take off, you don't need to bother about anything.

Close your eyes. Sit straight. For the first few moments, inhale and exhale, as deeply as possible.

Slowly start witnessing only the incoming breath. Do not bother about the outgoing breath or the neutral space. Just witness the incoming breath first. Be the witness. Be aware of the incoming breath.

(After five minutes)

Now slowly start witnessing only the outgoing breath. Forget about the incoming breath or the neutral space. Just witness and be aware of only the outgoing breath.

(After five minutes)

Now slowly, very slowly, be aware of both the neutral spaces - when your incoming breath turns into the outgoing breath, and when your outgoing breath turns into the incoming breath. Be aware. Witness both the neutral spaces alone. Intensely be aware of both the neutral spaces.

(After five minutes)

Now, be aware of the incoming breath, neutral space, outgoing breath, and neutral space.

Be unclutched. Whatever thought comes in your mind do not connect it to anything. Don't even think that you are thinking. Even that idea comes because you connect your thoughts. Everything is just completely independent. So do not connect

them and create one more thought that you are thinking.

Let the independent thought bubbles rise and fall. Let the independent thoughts come and go. Do not connect them and think you are thinking. Be unclutched. If they come, let them come. If they go, let them go. Your idea that you are thinking is a lie. Relax from your mind. Let go. Be liberated.

Unclutching – anytime anywhere

When you sit, naturally some thoughts will come. The moment you see a thought coming, do not give meaning to it. You give it meaning only if you connect it with your past. Without giving meaning to it just remember to unclutch, and see what happens. The moment you remember, 'Let me unclutch from this thought, let me not give meaning to it,' for a few seconds there will be a small silent gap. The moment you are aware that there is a silence, it will become one more thought. Then unclutch from that thought also. Then, again there

will be a gap of a few seconds. Then, one more thought will come, 'I am in silence' or 'I am unclutching'. Unclutch from that thought also. Just the gap or the silence should become longer and longer. That is the whole idea.

Naturally it is the nature of the mind to wander somewhere after a few minutes. The moment you remember or become aware that the mind has wandered, unclutch. There is no need to have guilt or be agitated that the mind has wandered. The moment you remember, unclutch, that's all.

In the initial level it may be very gross, like a solid fight. You may have to utter the word 'unclutching' like a *mantra**. But in just a few moments, you will see it becomes a subtle process.

With unclutching...

Every moment will be new.

Every moment will be ecstasy.

Every moment will be joy.

Every moment will be excitement.

Unclutching is the source of unending excitement – *nithyananda spurana**.

Mantra - Literally means 'that which shows the way'. Sacred syllables that have a powerful positive vibrational effect.

Nithyananda spurana - Eternal flowering of bliss.

If we are able to truly manage our mind with the understanding that it is our mind that connects thoughts to form shafts of pain and pleasure and if we stay unclutched, we can stay in what Buddha calls mindfulness. We can stay in awareness and in the present moment. It is our thought process that constantly takes us from past to future and back again and does not allow us to rest in the present moment.

Understand this clearly, when we are in the present moment we can stay out of trouble without fear and desire. We can act without fear and desire. You may ask how? How can I be motivated to do something if I do not desire it? There is no need for motivation. Do you think that it is motivation that makes you breathe or digest your food? It is the intelligence of the energy that is within and without us that makes it possible for us to live and grow. We live not because of us but in spite of us.

When we act without attachment, there is no consequence to our actions, there is no *karma* arising from our actions.

What is *karma*?

There is a very beautiful verse in the Isavasya Upanishad*:

Isavasya Upanishad - One of the major and oldest scriptures of the *vedic* age.

*Om poornamadah poornamidam
Poornaat poornamudachyate
Poornasya poornamaadaaya
Poornamevaavashishyate*

From the Whole came the Whole. If you remove the Whole from the Whole, only the Whole remains. By very nature we seek the Wholeness. By very nature we seek fulfillment in anything we do.

Whether it is eating, drinking, jumping, reading, talking, sleeping, or meditating, in any activity that we engage, our being yearns to completely experience the activity and be fully involved in it. Are we fully conscious of every action we engage in? Are we aware every moment of our lives?

A small story:

A man was travelling by cab to the airport. The cab driver was driving very fast even around corners and sharp turns. The passenger was getting terrified with his driving.

Finally, the cab driver seeing the terrified passenger, said, 'Why don't you do what I do when I take turns? Just shut your eyes!'

When you are not completely aware and involved in the action you are engaged in, your being remains unfulfilled in that experience. The unfulfilled experience

***Karma* is the collection of unfulfilled experiences that stay in us and constantly pull us to fulfill them.**

is *karma*.

Karma is the collection of unfulfilled experiences that stay in us and constantly pull us to fulfill them.

Anything that we do and experience intensely and deeply will always leave our system. It will liberate us. Any experience that we did not go through completely, through which we did not have complete fulfillment, that did not get our full energy, attention and awareness, remains inside us as *karma*.

Even though we carry some *karma*, basically we are complete fulfillment, Wholeness. So any *karma* that has not been fulfilled cannot rest inside us for too long. It will try its best to fulfill itself. It will drive us again and again to go through the same activity so that it can be fulfilled. Any desire, any experience, which has not become complete in our system, will remain as *karma* and push us again and again to make us go through the same experience until it is fulfilled.

We think, speak and do things without clarity, without fulfillment and with deep

r e m a i n s inside you and keeps pulling you to do the action again with intensity to fulfill it. This

ignorance. All these thoughts, words and actions collectively contribute towards our *karmic* baggage because none of them gives rise to fulfillment in us. When they do not give rise to fulfillment our *karma* pushes us to somehow fulfill them.

Our own thoughts, words and deeds become our *karma* and drive us to reach fulfillment in some way.

The present is the totality of all past decisions

Understand clearly that now you are reading this book because of all your past decisions. You decided to pay attention to the book on display. You decided to buy it. You decided to sit down and read this book now. The totality of all these decisions contributes to your sitting here.

The totality of all these past decisions is your present moment. Now, applying the same logic, the totality of your present decisions will be your future.

This is the essence of *karma* theory: the totality of all your past is the present, and the totality of your present is your future.

The totality of all your past is the present. The totality of your present will be your future. The problem is that we make most of our decisions unconsciously. We take

thousands of decisions unconsciously. That is the reason why we are not able to connect the cause with the effect.

Flood more awareness, more intelligence into your thinking system. Flood more awareness, more consciousness into your decision-making system.

In any given moment, the future is predestined but *conditionally*. It will be a certain future according to all the totality of events till that time, this is the predestined future. But it is conditional. There is an important factor that can and will change it, it is your consciousness, your will.

A small story:

Once two brothers met a sage who was known to be able to look into the future. The brothers paid their respect to the sage and asked him if he could tell them about their future. The hermit advised them, 'It may not be good for you to know your future. Besides, your future can change later even if I tell you now.'

The brothers insisted on knowing their future. The sage looked at the elder brother and said, 'You will become a king in a year.' Looking at the younger brother, he said, 'You are destined to die in the hands of a murderer in a year's time.' The brothers started walking back home. The elder brother was overjoyed while the younger one

The totality of all your past is the present, and the totality of your present is your future.

was depressed.

Now the elder brother started creating his fantasy world dreaming of becoming a king. The younger brother, who was destined to have less than a year to live, started spending his time in spiritual activities. He used his time to serve everyone and soon came out of his depression.

Eleven months passed. One day, the elder brother invited the younger one to his house. He wanted to look out for land for a grand palace he was planning to build since very soon he would become a king. They were walking on a huge open piece of land when the younger brother stumbled on a half-buried pot. The brothers dug the pot and removed it. It was a huge pot of gold coins.

The elder brother was thrilled and started shouting, 'This treasure is just for me! It is for me to set up my palace and kingdom!' Just then, a bandit jumped out from a bush, gave a blow on the elder brother's head and tried to snatch the pot from him. The younger brother jumped at the bandit to protect his brother. But the bandit attacked him with a dagger he had in his hand.

**Destiny
depends on how
you choose to
respond to every
situation life
presents to you.**

During the struggle the b a n d i t dropped the pot and ran away.

surrender to the Divine changed your destiny also. Death in the murderer's hands was reduced to only being wounded by him.'

The elder brother was very thankful to his younger brother for saving his life and offered him half the gold coins. The younger brother politely refused saying he was not going to live much longer in any case. The elder brother with his new treasure started living a lavish life, eating, drinking and being merry.

Understand, destiny is not something written in stone. It very much depends on how you choose to respond to every situation life presents to you. Your awareness will give you the intelligence and the courage to change the flow of events in your life.

One year passed. There was no sign of any crown in sight. The younger brother was also enjoying good health. They decided to visit the sage again. They met him and asked, 'How did your predictions go wrong?' The sage was also surprised and went into meditation. He then explained, 'I told you your destiny can be changed.'

Karma and TPS

If you don't know your past completely, you will repeat the same things in the future. If your Thoughts Per Second (TPS) can come down and you know your past as it happened, you won't repeat the same past in the future. You will then become a *karma mukta*^{*}, liberated from karma. As of now you are a *karma bandha*^{*}, bonded to karma because you have not lived your past completely.

He looked at the elder brother and said, 'Your destiny changed because of your irresponsible actions over the past months. The crown that you were to get was reduced to a pot of gold.'

For example, your childhood always seems golden. It is the golden past. You may feel your life in college was great, but when you were actually in college, you didn't really feel that way. Why? Because your suffering has become much more now and in

He looked at the younger brother and said, 'Your spiritual life, trust and

Karma mukta - Free of one's actions, because they are performed without attachment.

Karma bandha - Bound by one's actions, since they are performed with vested interests.

comparison, the past seems very nice! Now you attribute joy to your past and if given a chance you want to repeat it. When you lived through it, did you actually experience it? No!

If you can relax in the present moment, at zero TPS, for at least 11 *kshanas**, you will penetrate the time shaft. If you can stay in zero TPS for 21 *kshanas**, you will penetrate the time shaft and can alter the future. This is in your hands.

All meditation techniques are ways to bring down your TPS so that you can penetrate the time shaft.

Kshana

It is important to understand the concept of *kshana**. There is no equivalent for this word in the English language. So, let me explain to you what *kshana* means. *Kshana* is a measure of time. It is not a second or a minute as many people believe.

The gap between two thoughts is one *kshana*. We are used to thinking of time in an absolute sense. But a *kshana* is absolutely relative! The thoughts of every person and the rate at which they come in a person are dependent on that person. *Kshana* varies from person to person.

Kshanas - Interval between two thoughts.

If you can stay in zero TPS for 21 *kshanas*, you will penetrate the time shaft and can alter the future.

If a person is restless and gets too many thoughts in a span of one second, his *kshana* is shorter because the gap between two thoughts is less.

If a person is calm and collected like a meditator is, he gets fewer thoughts in a given span of time. His *kshana* is longer because the gap between two thoughts is more.

Karma – totality of conscious choices

Your life is nothing but the totality of the conscious choices that you continuously make. Whether you want to or not, directly or indirectly, you are choosing everything. Someone else does not choose. It is you who chooses.

A small story:

An employee approached his boss, ‘Sir, my wife said I should ask you for a raise.’

The boss replied, ‘Oh, I will ask my wife tonight whether or not I should give you a raise!’

**As long as you
don't understand
life is your choice,
your living is just
paralysis.**

Understand, continuously it is your choice, your decision. You

may think somebody else decides. But it is only you who is deciding.

A small example can make you understand the basic truth. If somebody criticizes you, you choose to get offended. If somebody praises you, you choose to get flattered. Because of your habit, you may choose it unconsciously. It is not someone else who chooses, it is you who choose. Because it has become your habit to think that someone else influences your decisions, you have forgotten that you are choosing.

Every time someone criticizes you, you choose to get upset. Every time someone praises you, you choose to get flattered. It is nobody else's choice but your own. You can decide either way. When someone criticizes you, you can choose not to get offended and you can choose to remain calm and relaxed. It is just your choice to feel offended or not.

All your continuous choices every minute put together decide your life. If you don't decide and if you allow incidents to decide your life you go into a mode of 'paralysis'. Our lives as of now are nothing but paralysis. It is only when you decide to live your life without any outside events,

situations or decisions being forced on you, you actually decide to live.

As long as you don't understand life is your choice, your living is just paralysis.

**Everything in life is a
choice you make**

We make thousands of decisions in a day. Whether it is thinking or talking or cooking, we do for the sake of doing.

When you eat, are you completely involved in the eating? While eating you plan for the next vacation or think about how to get a raise at work. The food is going inside the body but you are not tasting it and enjoying it fully. If you eat with awareness, automatically you will know the right type and amount of food you ought to consume.

Whether you believe it or not, directly or indirectly, you are choosing everything in your life.

No one else chooses for you in your life. It is *you* who makes the choice. Continuously, it is only your choice, your decision. You may think that somebody else decides your life. No! It is only you who is deciding all the time.

Somebody criticizes or insults you and you choose to get offended. If somebody praises you, you choose to get flattered.

Because of your habit, you choose this response unconsciously. Does someone else choose this for you? No! It is purely your choice. Because it has become a habit, you have forgotten that you are choosing.

A small story:

A man was invited by a scientist for lunch at his home. The man was sitting at the lunch table when he noticed a horseshoe hanging on the wall. A horseshoe is believed to bring good luck. The man was surprised and asked the scientist, 'Sir, I can't believe you are a scientist and you also believe in this superstition that a horseshoe brings you luck!'

The scientist replied, 'No, no! I don't believe in such stupidity. But the person who gave it to me said that whether I believed it or not, it would bring me luck all the same!'

It is you who choose how to respond, what decisions to make. But you try to fool yourself and others into believing it is someone else who is responsible, who is making you do things their way.

Understand, you can decide to respond differently. For example, when someone criticizes you, you can choose not to get offended. You can choose to remain calm, relaxed and collected. It is *your choice* to feel offended.

**For example,
when someone
criticizes you, you
can choose not to
get offended. You
can choose to
remain calm.**

We always think we have been given unfair results. This is because we are not able to connect the

cause and the effect of many of the things that happen in our lives. We are blissfully unaware that we are the ones who caused the effects. We made it happen by way of unconscious living and ended up collecting more *karma*.

Vasana, samskara and karma

There are three interrelated concepts, termed *vasana*, *samskara* and *karma*, in Sanskrit.

Vasana

Vasana is the seed of desire. For example, you are walking and you happen to see a dazzling necklace displayed outside a shop. A desire arises inside you to possess it. This is *vasana*.

Samskara

Samskara is the plant that grows when the seed of *vasana* sprouts. When you see that

**A *samskara* by
itself, by its very
nature, is
negative.**

necklace again and again, the desire to possess it becomes stronger in you. When you feed the desire to possess the necklace, it is like supplying water and nutrition to the seed of *vasana*.

The corruption that happens to the inner space is what I call *samskara* or engraved memories. They are the memories that go and sit in your inner space and pull you to go through the same experience repeatedly. They pull you to do the same kind of actions repeatedly, pull you to run through the same kind of thought patterns, even if you don't want to. Those memories are what I call *samskaras*.

Any *samskara* that is operating in your conscious or unconscious layer is nothing but a hindrance to the fulfillment of your life. There is no such thing as good or bad *samskara*. No *samskara* is good. An inner space filled with *samskaras* is hell. An inner space without *samskaras* is heaven. Do not try to classify *samskaras* as good or bad.

A *samskara* by itself, by its very nature, is negative. By its very nature *samskara* is depressive. Anything done out of *samskaras* will reduce everything to boring emptiness. Anything that happens with a deep understanding, just out of your pure inner space, always adds value to you.

Anything done out of *samskaras* adds more and more bondage to you.

From our young age we collect so many different *samskaras* in so many ways. We accumulate them and also reproduce them. *Samskaras* do reproduce themselves even without any further action from our part.

Samskaras get strengthened in different ways. There are some *samskaras* that get strengthened only by action, when you repeat the action. There are some *samskaras* that get strengthened just by receiving information with regard to them, when you receive input from the world about them. There are some other *samskaras* that need neither action nor information, just remembrance is enough, and they get strengthened!

We collect these different levels of *samskaras*, engraved memories, and store them in our system and expand them.

Karma

Finally when driven by the desire you execute the action and it becomes *karma*. The power of desire drives you into finally buying the necklace. That is the action, the *karma*.

Anything half done leaves a *samskara* (engraved memory) in your being. Anything not lived fully leaves an imprint or *samskara* in your being, which time and

again pulls you, attracts you to travel the same path and fulfill it.

The cause of addiction is also related to *samskaras*. In my own experience of having worked with millions of people personally, at least a few thousand cases of addiction have been healed by meditation. The basic truth about addiction is that you have lived your life vaguely, not fully or with the whole being. Unfulfilled desires create a *samskara* in you pulling you back to fulfill the desire by re-experiencing the same desire again and again.

Any emotion lived intensely simply liberates you of that emotion, be it anger, fear, desire to eat or attachment to any object or person. You are liberated fully of anything when you live it fully. If a person keeps going back to a problem time and again, it only means that he or she has not lived out the problem fully.

When we live, half our mind is somewhere else. Patanjali says beautifully, 'The more the quantity, the less the quality.' The moment the quality of enjoyment of any object increases, its quantity decreases in direct proportion, of its own accord. Therefore, it is the quality that needs to be increased.

Life is not a brief candle. It is a bright shining torch. Make it burn as brightly as possible in your life.

***Samskaras* in the seven layers of the body**

We have seven energy layers in our body.

The first layer is the physical body layer that you carry, made out of flesh and blood.

The second layer is made up of the *prana* movement inside your body. *Prana* is actually the life energy that you take in when you breathe. Air is the medium that brings in *prana* for sustaining your life. There are five stages in the movement of *prana* in your body that constitute what is called *pranic** body or breath body layer.

The next layer is the mental body layer. The continuous words or thoughts that rise in you are called inner chatter. The inner chattering that is continuously going on inside of you is the mental body layer.

The fourth layer is the emotion layer. I can say that intense inner chatter that does not respond to your logical analysis is what we call 'emotions'.

The silence you experience during deep sleep is the fifth layer. It is called the causal body layer.

In deep meditation, the joy and the intense vibrant silence from the thoughtless awareness that you experience is the sixth layer.

Pranic - Related to *prana* or life energy.

Any emotion lived intensely simply liberates you of that emotion, be it anger, fear or attachment to any object or person.

seven different layers.

The seventh layer is enlightenment.

We store different *samskaras* in each of the

Chronic fatigue is deeply related to the intense craving for rest. Please understand that this intense craving for rest brings diseases that will make you bedridden.

Actually if you see any advertisement for resorts, especially beach resorts, it will show a beautiful beach, an easy resting chair and a picture of somebody resting and looking so relaxed. The moment you see that, immediately something starts happening in you. You feel that you too should also be lying like that, completely resting, totally in peacefulness, in deep peace. That is what I call intense craving for *tamas**.

Understand, if you really find that same beach, that same chair and lie down, you will not have that same peace that you visualized. Till you exhaust the *tamas* engrams, the lethargy engrams, that you carry in the physical layer you cannot rest. Your desire for rest will not let you rest because the desire is from engrams, from *samskaras*.

Try to find the same beach, same chair, same bench, same place and lie down. The moment you start resting, in a few minutes this *samskara* will settle down and the next layer *samskara* will come up. Even your decision to rest, if based on a *samskara*, you cannot rest.

Chronic fatigue and the physical layer

The *samskaras* related to chronic fatigue or tiredness are stored in the physical body. That is why when you try to do some exercise, a workout, or even simple walking, the first thing the body will bring out is tiredness. But without bothering about these first level *samskaras* that are rising, if you continue to enter into the action, suddenly you will see that the same action brings energy out of you. If you start walking, in a few minutes your mind will suggest ten times, 'I am tired. No...It is too much! We did enough! That is enough for today. Tomorrow we can do.' But if you don't bother about these *samskaras* and just go ahead, within a few minutes the same action will bring energy.

Chronic fatigue, which is a deep feeling to be in inaction, to be in rest or non-moving state, is stored in the physical body layer.

Tamas - Attribute of inaction.

I can say that when the deep desire for vacation or the deep desire for rest, the chronic fatigue, leaves your system, ninety per cent of your spiritual journey is over. This first layer *samskara* is the worst problem.

Pranic layer and the desire samskaras

The next layer is the *prana* or breath layer. The *samskaras* related to desire are stored in the *prana*, the breathing. That is why, whenever your desires are changing, suddenly you will see the breathing pattern will also change. For example, if you are caught by strong desire like lust or anger, your breathing pattern will change. It will be chaotic. The more you enter into action based on those desires the stronger these engrams will become.

Mental layer and guilt samskaras

The third layer is the mental layer. In the *pranic** layer, which is the second layer, you store your thoughts about how your life should be. In the mental layer, you store your engrams about how your life shouldn't have been. This layer is built on guilt.

Pranic - Related to *prana* or life energy.

Whenever your desires are changing, you will see the breathing pattern will also change.

If your energy is flowing continuously towards the future, it is desire. If your energy is flowing continuously towards the past, it is guilt.

In the case of this layer, you don't need to do the same action again to strengthen the engram. Just the information or remembrance about that action will strengthen the engram. For example, if you have seen the same place, or if you are seeing the same person, if you are facing the same situation, immediately those engrams will become strong and they will be awakened.

Emotional Layer and Pain Samskaras

The fourth layer is to do with emotions. In this layer, you store all the visualizations related to pain.

Understand, this fourth layer of pain is a very powerful layer. You don't need any action or information to strengthen the engrams. Neither do you need action nor do you need information related to pain.

Removing the engrams is making friends with your body, creating a deep friendship with your body.

So you don't have to have the same pain again and again. You don't even need to receive information related to that pain. Just the engrams are enough. They can multiply. They can simply expand and multiply.

Causal layer and deep sleep

The fifth layer is what you experience in deep sleep. Even though there are engrams in this layer, you cannot do anything about them, because in the deep sleep, your mind cannot do anything. It is an unconscious layer.

If in the first four layers you can reduce the depth of the engrams, *samskaras*, the fifth layer and the sixth layer will be cleansed naturally. The fifth layer will be cleansed if you clean the first four layers. If the fifth layer is cleansed, you will start experiencing the sixth layer more and more. The sixth layer is the meditation layer.

If you are getting into the deep sleep layer more easily, it means the first four layers are clean. If the first four layers are not clean, then you will suffer more in the fifth layer. That is why, when you have more

stress and load, a lot of suffering related to sleep starts happening in life.

Not only that, if the engrams in the first four layers are too many, in the fifth layer, the relationship between you and your body gets disconnected. Reducing the engrams in the first four layers is making friends with your body.

We don't realize how we abuse the body. Understand, if you are overweight, it is directly connected to some of these engrams. When you feel lonely and empty inside, you start filling it. You start filling it with food or by drinking. Usually women choose food. Men decide to drink. Of course, in the modern developed society, you can't generalize! When you are feeling empty and lonely, you have to fill yourself with something.

Every single thing happening in your life is directly connected to some engrams. Removing these engrams, I can say, is making friends with your body, creating a deep friendship with your body. This is the best way to heal yourself.

Three types of *karma*

There are three types of *karma* - *agamyā*, *prarabdha* and *sanchita*.

Sanchita karma is like a bank, a reserve bank. Understand, this may not be the first

time you have taken a body and come to planet *earth*. You may have taken millions of bodies before! In those millions of bodies, whatever thoughts you had, whatever you spoke, whatever you did, all those unfulfilled experiences have become your engrams or engraved memories. Put together, they are like a bank called *sanchita karma*. When I say ‘bank’, it is not a collection or saving, it is debt! You will have to pay back all the loans!

The next type of *karma* is *prarabdha karma*. *Prarabdha* means, from the *sanchita* bank of *karma* you take some *karma* out of which you create your present body. You then decide to enjoy and exhaust all those *karmas* that you brought with you through that body. So *prarabdha* is just a small bit of the accumulated *sanchita karma* account that you have brought into this life. You have planned to enjoy or exhaust these through this body of yours.

The third type of *karma* is the worst. It is the *agamy karma*, the *karma* that you start collecting after coming down to planet *earth*, because of fresh thoughts, words and deeds.

Anybody who lands on planet *earth* has to exhaust his *prarabdha karma* before he dies. For example, let us say you have 1000 *karmas* in your *sanchita* bank. Out of these 1000 *karmas*, suppose you take only 10 *karmas* with you as your *prarabdha karma*

***Prarabdha* is a part of the *sanchita karma* you have brought into this life.**

when you take up your body saying, ‘Let me finish these 10 *karmas* this time.’ However, after coming down, instead of exhausting your own *prarabdha karmas*, you start watching others and collecting *karma* based on their desires. These are desires that you have borrowed from others around you. Because of these borrowed desires, you create certain thoughts, words and actions.

For example, if you see someone more beautiful than you, your thoughts multiply due to comparison and jealousy. You create *karma* based on thoughts. Sometimes you talk ill of others, without knowing any of the related facts. When you do this, you accumulate *karma* based on words.

The way out of the daily irritation - living your *prarabdha karma*

Let me explain the three types of *karma* from a different angle.

You see, if you take all the possibilities that you are aware of and that are available to you in the cosmos, we call that as *agamy*. There are all kinds of possibilities.

**Fulfilling your
prarabdha will
take away one
very negative
aspect of your life
- the continuous
irritation.**

You can become a fish, you can become a snake, you can become a man, or you can become a god. All these are possibilities. We call that as *agamyā*.

There are also other possibilities that are available to you. These are not only within the field of your awareness like the things that you know such as fish, monkey, dog, donkey and man, but also many other possibilities that are unknown to you. Those we call *sanchita*, the whole range of known and unknown possibilities.

The whole is *sanchita* and the possibilities that lie in front of you are *agamyā*. You then decide to play only with certain boundaries of these possibilities when you come into this body. That is what we call *prarabdha*. See when you came down, you decided to play inside certain boundaries. That boundary is what we can call *prarabdha*.

After coming here you see many possibilities before you that you try to accumulate, which you try to acquire. Those possibilities can be called as *agamyā*.

This *prarabdha* that you brought with you has the intelligence to run your life.

One big difficulty is that you see too many *agamyā*, too many possibilities in front of

you. Because of that, your trust over your *prarabdha* or your own preselected possibilities reduces. You think your *prarabdha* may not be that powerful to run your life because of the *agamyā*, the possibilities, which are in front of your eyes.

Trusting *prarabdha* is powerful. Fulfilling your *prarabdha* will take away one very negative aspect of your life - the continuous irritation. The constant irritation that you carry from morning till night is the gift of *agamyā*.

From morning till night, from the moment you come out of your bed till the moment you fall asleep, you feel a constant irritation. We just need somebody to make some mistake and we jump on them! We are just waiting. Anybody who comes in our presence will have our 'blessing'! That constant irritation is because we are centered on *agamyā*.

If our energy, our inner space is centered on *prarabdha*, we will not be carrying the constant irritation that we carry now. It is not that we will not be working or relating with the possibilities. It is not that we will stop working, no! We will continue to work but our base will be our *prarabdha*.

You see, the mood of constantly rejecting everything, constantly being irritated, happens because of our *agamyā*, because of the possibilities we see around us. We

are running behind the choices, the possibilities, the *agamyā*. But we forget that the *prarabdha* is very intelligent, very powerful.

In the whole world, there are only two kinds of people, people whose inner space is centered on *agamyā* and people whose inner space is centered on *prarabdha*, that's all. People whose inner space is centered on *prarabdha* live their life in restful awareness.

The mind that is based on *agamyā* will be inspired only by fear or greed. You can see this when you wake up. You will come out of your dream state only if you have a desire or if you are caught by some fear. For example, you may get inspired to wake up because you wish to send your child to school so that she gets a good education and has a bright future. Or you may get up out of fear of getting late for office because you are afraid of losing your job.

Moving the physical body out of fear or greed is what I call living your life based on *agamyā*.

The way out of the cycle of *karma*

All your actions are invariably driven by greed or fear and therefore end up being superficial actions, adding to your *karma*.

In this way, you end up collecting more *karmas*. By the time you go back, what will happen? Your '*karma* bank balance' would have increased by the number of your *agamyā karma*!

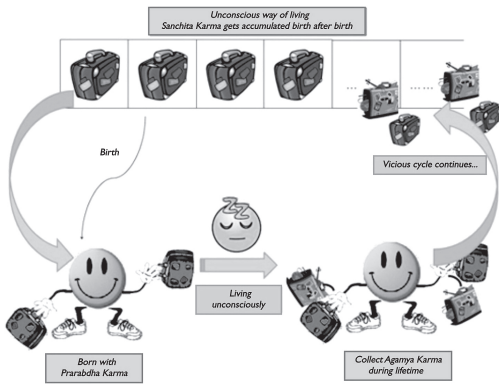
Say you came down with 10 *karmas*, you did not exhaust these 10 *karmas* with which you came, but you collected 200 more!

What will happen the next time you take the body? Your *sanchita* is now 1000 added to the 200 new *agamyā karmas* you collected now. You now have 200 *karmas* more than in your last birth. Again you take 10 out of that collection and come down with another body. But you only collect more and go back. This becomes a vicious circle. This is what we call *janma marana chakra*, life-and-death cycle, continuously taking a body and dying, again and again.

Instead, while you are living, if somebody gives you the knowledge that you are not just the body or the mind and it is *karma* that is influencing you, then the influence of that *karma* over you will begin to come down. You will then start exhausting the *prarabdha karma* that you came down with.

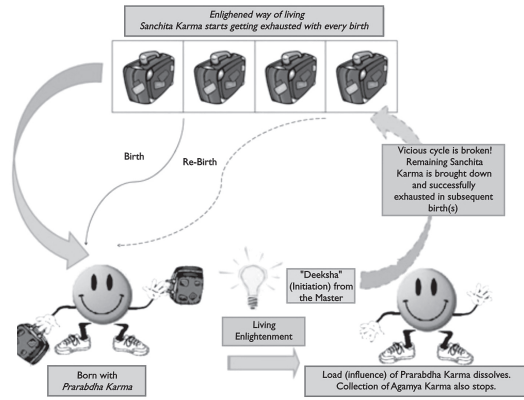
Let us say you brought 10 *prarabdha karmas* with you when you took this body and came down. Suppose in these 10 *prarabdha karmas*, you have three *samskaras* or three engrams that have the power to put you into depression. If you continue to obey those engrams and fall into depression,

they will not remain just three, but will probably become ten. The additional seven *karmas* are the *agamyas*. If instead of exhausting your *prarabdha* you decide to remain with them, you collect *agamyas*.



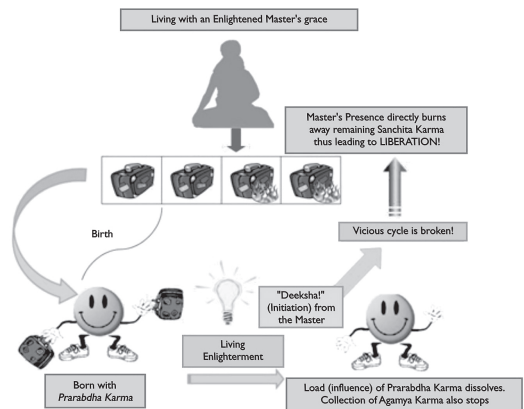
If on the other hand, whenever these three engrams put you in depression you have learned some technique to come out of the depression, then these three will start losing their power over you. So, over time, of the ten *karmas*, three will leave you. Whenever you reduce the influence of *prarabdha* on yourself, not only will the *prarabdha* get burnt, but the chances of accumulating new *karma*, the *agamyas* *karma*, will also come down.

You stop collecting *agamyas* when the *prarabdha* loses its influence over you. When the influence of these ten *prarabdha* engrams over you stops, the *agamyas*



collection will also stop because it is these ten engrams that are responsible for the collection of further engrams or *karma*.

Now let us come to the *sanchita karma*. Understand, you can't do anything directly with your *sanchita karma* bank. For *sanchita* to burn out, only *Guru Krupa*, grace of the master, will work. Only the master's grace can do anything to burn out your *sanchita*.



Cosmic cause-and-effect principle

You have been told that you will go to hell if you accumulate sins and to heaven if you gain merits. I tell you, society simply uses these concepts to control you through fear of hell and greed of heaven.

A small story:

In a calamity a whole village was wiped out. All the men and women lined up at the gates of heaven. God said, 'I want the men to form two lines. The men who dominated their women on earth shall be in one line. The men who were dominated by their women shall be in the second line.'

The line of the men who were dominated by their women was miles long. In the line of men who dominated their women, there was only one man. God was curious and asked the lone man in the line, 'How did you manage not to be dominated by your wife?'

The man replied, 'I don't know. My wife told me to stand here!'

When you are caught in fear, naturally you are ready to do what society tells you. You are no longer master of yourself. You are under the control of society.

Understand, there is no hell or heaven existing physically somewhere. Hell and

Hell and heaven
are psychological
states of your
mind.
heaven are
psychological
states of your
mind.

When you think good thoughts, when you do good deeds, you feel good and you are in heaven. When you think evil, when you act evil, you feel evil and you are in hell. That is all. That is all there is to *karma*. This is the cosmic cause-and-effect principle.

You are what your intent is. You become what your intent is. If you create thoughts, words or actions that do not emanate from deep awareness but from a superficial layer, then you create *karma* that further propels you to fulfill those superficial thoughts, words or actions.

The vibrant living cosmos

When you realize that the whole universe is energy, you will understand it is a living existence.

The universe of which our solar system is a very small part has constant creation and constant rejuvenation. The big bang creation of new solar systems and the black hole deaths of shrinking stars that grew too big to survive, continue constantly. Scientists now believe that each time there

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is a big bang
in one part of
the universe
there is a
corresponding
black hole

elsewhere. One without the other is not possible. All energy is interlinked. This is cosmic *karma*.

There is a theory called the chaos theory that states that the flutter of a butterfly in China can create a tornado in Mexico. This is called the 'butterfly effect'. The flapping wings of the butterfly can cause a small change in the pressure that can result in a chain of events leading to a large change in pressure causing a tornado in another part of the world. Not even one atom moves without another atom moving elsewhere.

If you look little deeply, we invite not only the physical diseases that we suffer from, but the accidents as well. The problem is that our thinking is so unconscious we are not able to connect the cause and the effect.

Reaction or response

Karma means action. But action can be of two types. It can either be a reaction or it can be a response.

When somebody insults you and you become angry, he has made you behave the way he wanted. Now if he apologizes, your mood suddenly changes. So he is the master. You are behaving like a slave. You are a victim having no control over the situation. When somebody insults you, you are immediately reacting out of your past experiences. This reaction is *karma*. It is a binding force. It creates chains for you.

But a response is totally different from reaction. When someone insults you, you don't need to give in to the emotion of anger rising inside you. You can listen to what he is saying objectively without judging whether it is good or bad, right or wrong. First you listen to him without immediately reacting. Then you respond with awareness. You don't react from the past. You are now responding from the present.

If the other person is right, you will thank him for pointing out something to you and making you aware of yourself. If he is wrong, you can simply witness the emotion and not react. If the statement is not true, why should you react?

A beautiful story from the life of George Gurdjieff*:

George Gurdjieff was a young boy of nine years when his father died. He was*

George Gurdjieff - Greek Armenian mystic and spiritual teacher famous for his principle of Fourth Way, corresponding to the *turiya* state in *vedic* tradition.

from a poor family but his father was a very honest and integrated person. When his father was on his deathbed, he called Gurdjieff and gave him his last teaching.*

If somebody insults you, listen silently and in detail to what he is saying. Then tell the person, 'I am grateful that you have taken so much interest in me. After twenty-four hours I will come and reply to you.' Gurdjieff promised his father that he would always follow this advice.

In his own old age, Gurdjieff said to his disciples, 'My father's simple technique helped me immensely. Because, after twenty-four hours who remains angry? After twenty-four hours, either you find that the person was right or he was not.

If he was right, it means you have an opportunity to learn and improve yourself. Your awareness about yourself has increased. If the person is wrong, there is no need to be agitated because the statement has no solid base.

Let your response be like a pure reflection in a mirror with no judgment. Let it not come from the *karmic* baggage of the past. Instead let it come from the freshness of the present. Anything that comes from

your past experiences is going to create a *karmic* chain. Anything from the present liberates.

You create your own *karma*. *Karma* does not create you. You are not a byproduct of your actions. You are far bigger than your actions.

You are not a byproduct of your actions. You are far bigger than your actions.

Masters have no *karma*

A beautiful story:

There was a beautiful garden with many trees and varieties of flowers and fruits. Three friends were walking near this garden that had a big wall around it. One of them climbed the wall and peeped inside.

He cried out, 'Oh, such a beautiful garden!' He jumped into the garden and started enjoying the fruits. The second man climbed the wall and saw the garden. He too felt it was beautiful, but he had a little bit of courtesy. He turned and said to the third man who was below, 'Dear friend, there is a beautiful garden below. Come, I am going in.' Saying this, he jumped over and started

George Gurdjieff - Greek Armenian mystic and spiritual teacher famous for his principle of Fourth Way, corresponding to the *turiya* state in *vedic* tradition.

Pure action with no end objective is

karma.

*enjoying the
fruits.*

The third man climbed the wall and saw the garden. He saw his two friends and understood the level of joy and bliss that they were enjoying. Then he said to himself, 'Let me go down and tell all the people about this beautiful paradise. I will bring them all to enjoy this garden.'

An incarnation is someone who comes down to tell his fellowmen about the blissful place that he experienced.

The man who descends from the Divine on planet earth to express the bliss of that divinity and to make you realize what he has experienced is an incarnation. Incarnations as such have no *karma*. They have nothing to achieve, nothing to gain. If they don't have anything to enjoy why should they be in the body?

They come down only for the love of humanity. Incarnations take a human body just to liberate more beings from the cycle of life and death, from the grip of *karma*.

Only intention matters

A beautiful story from the devotional *vedic* scripture *Bhagavatam**:

Krishna reached the banks of river Yamuna with the gopis*, his milkmaid friends. They wanted to cross the river but there was no way to cross.*

Krishna declared, 'If I am a true brahmachari, then let the Yamuna* part and let us go across.'*

The Yamuna parted.*

Outwardly, it may seem that Krishna was with the girls like other ordinary men. But Krishna was beyond the body-mind. His actions did not carry the intention of an ordinary man. It is the intention of any act that matters, not the act itself.

Intention is the baggage, the *karma*, not the action. If action creates intention, it becomes the baggage. Pure action with no end objective is *karma*.

Bhagavatam - The foremost epic of Hindu religion describing the incarnations of Vishnu, especially his incarnation as Krishna. It was written by Vyasa, who was also the author of the *itihasa* or epic *Mahabharata*.

Yamuna - A holy Indian river associated with enlightened master Krishna.

Gopis - Women who tended cows who were devotees of enlightened master Krishna.

Brahmachari - Literally means 'one who lives with reality'. A *vedic* student, usually referring to a young celibate monk.

Master's presence affects the intention

See, whatever you are doing in the presence of the master, you are doing for the master. You know it is in no way going to build your name or fame. So, the action happens without intention. There is no intention. The intention is the master's. The action is yours. Intention is in the being of the person who has no intentions!

You see, the total *sanchita karma* can be yours or mine. Mine is divine play. Yours is suffering. When it started, your total *sanchita karma* also started as a divine play. But, after gathering more and more gathered *agamy karma*, it became dirty.

Because I have no *karma*, when you flow with me you will also act without intention. Action without intention is living enlightenment.

Action without intention is free from *karma*

If a person has committed ten murders, the quantity of murders will not be recorded. But the intensity of the murderer will be recorded. It is the quality, the mindset, and the attitude, that carries the

Action without intention is living enlightenment.

karmic burden.

That is why

Krishna says again and again in the Bhagavad Gita that intention is much more important than action. That is the message of the whole Gita. He says, 'When you are without intention, I will take care.'

Action does not get recorded. Only intention gets recorded.

The Mahabharata* tells us the beautiful story of a courtesan and a monk.

There was a monk who lived across a courtesan's house. He used to keep a count of the men coming to her house and used to imagine all kinds of things about her lifestyle. The woman spent all her free time praying to Krishna to redeem her from her miserable life.

One day, they both died at the same time. Both reached the court of Yama. Yama* looked at the record of their lives and gave the decision: the monk should go to hell and the woman should go to heaven. The monk was shocked and started protesting, 'I lived such a pious life while she lived such an immoral life! How can I be sent to hell and she to heaven!'*

Mahabharata - The Hindu *itihasa* or epic whose central characters are the five Pandava princes, their hundred Kaurava cousins and enlightened master Krishna.

Yama - Hindu god of death and justice.

An enlightened being is one with Existence. His actions can never be without awareness and compassion.

Yama replied, 'In my court of judgment, your actions are of no value, only your intent matters. You*

wore a monk's robes and lived a good life outwardly but your inner space was filled with lust. So in the outer world, your body is now being buried with honor but you have to suffer hell. The woman's heart was forever with Krishna even while her body was sold to men. So her body doesn't have anybody to even do the last rites but she is going to heaven.'

You may ask, can people do what they want? Do they have license to be immoral and to commit murders?

An enlightened being, an incarnation, is one with Existence. An enlightened being can only operate in tune with Existence. He can never be out of tune. The actions of an enlightened master can never be without awareness and compassion.

Since we do not have the consciousness or awareness, we cannot justify our actions by saying they are similar to those of an enlightened being. Be very clear, the action

may look similar outwardly but the intention, the inner space, the attitude, is completely different.

A beautiful story from the life of Adi Shankara:

Once while Shankara was wandering with his disciples, he suddenly felt thirsty. They were in the middle of nowhere. They traveled further and finally came across one shop. Shankara went up to the man in the shop and asked for some water to drink. The man said, 'I am sorry but I have nothing to offer you except liquor. That is all I have.'

Shankara replied, 'Alright, please give me some.' He drank a glass of liquor and thanked the man. The disciples were shocked to see their master drink liquor! The thirsty disciples decided to follow the master and they all drank liquor to their heart's content.

When they resumed their journey, Shankara continued to walk normally but the disciples under the effect of liquor were not even able to keep the next step properly. They went up further and after some distance, they came across an iron forge.

Shankara went upto the man who was pouring molten iron into the cast. He

Yama - Hindu god of death and justice.

asked him for a glass of water. The man apologized saying he didn't have any water to offer. Shankara said, 'Alright. Please give me the molten iron then.'

The man and Shankara's disciples were all shocked. The man gave Shankara the hot molten iron which he just poured into his mouth as if it was water!

He then turned around to his disciples and said, 'You may also drink now.' The disciples stood with their heads lowered. Shankara then explained, 'Do not follow what I do. Follow what I say. Otherwise, you just choose to follow what your mind tells you.'

Understand, the very plane on which enlightened beings exist is different from the normal human plane of existence. So they do not need to and cannot do things according to usual logic. Their intention is what is important, which cannot be explained in terms of ordinary logic.

An enlightened being has no personal interest because he has no individual identity. His identity is dissolved in the identity of the whole universe.

When you act in tune with the cosmos, It blesses you.

Intention and action

If the depth of the intention is more and the action is less, the person is lazy. He is lazy or in *tamas*.

If the depth of intention and of the action is the same, the person is in restless action or *rajas**.

If there is no intention but only the action, he is in purposeless action or *sattva**.

That is why Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, 'Fight, O Arjuna*.' It is not the act of 'killing' that will be recorded but the intention that will be recorded. The intention of Arjuna* is the intention of Krishna, who is a being with no intentions as He is one with the Cosmos!

When you act in tune with the Cosmos, the whole Cosmos blesses you. You attract all kinds of positive coincidences around you. That is why when people contribute even a little to the cause of such a person they are showered in abundance from all corners.

Rajas - One of the three *gunas* or attributes of nature. Attribute of aggression.

Sattva - One of the three *gunas* or attributes of nature. The passive action attribute.

Arjuna - Warrior prince and the third of the five brothers of the Pandava family in the great Indian epic Mahabharata. He was a disciple of enlightened master Krishna who received the wisdom in the Bhagavad Gita from Krishna.

The power of daily intention

We have seven layers or seven bodies of energy, which are physical, *pranic**, mental, etheric, causal, pleasure and *nirvanic**. Please understand, in the causal layer our gathered or *agamyā karma* is completely available for us. See, in the causal body, you may have the skills to play cricket, golf and tennis. But if you get up from deep sleep with a strong will or intention to play cricket, then you will also bring from the causal body the intelligence to play cricket. You will be naturally led into the situations, the atmosphere and the intelligence for it. If you go to sleep at night with a strong intention to play golf and you wake up in the morning with the strong intention to play golf, then you will bring with you that intelligence to play golf.

The causal layer is an exchange place. It is like monetary exchange. In the causal layer you can exchange anything. When you go to the causal layer the *karma* of this birth itself can be changed if you have that strong intention every day. This is true freedom.

Strong intention has the capacity to change the gathered *agamyā karma* and the *prarabdha karma* of this birth. It cannot change the total *sanchita karma*. *Sanchita*

karma can only be changed by the grace of the master, one who is without *karmas*.

Mission or machine?

Reaching out to the master, doing what the master says and acting without intention, are what the whole game of life is all about.

Action without intention is mission. If you are acting with intention, you are like a machine.

If you are acting without intention, you are the mission. Machine or mission, the choice is yours. Till you act with my intention without adding your intention, I will keep training you. Just do what I say without asking inspiration from your intention, from your greed and fear. Pure action without intention will lead to fulfillment.

What is the *karma* of this birth? A miniature of your total *karma*

Another important thing, please understand this concept.

Pranic - Related to *prana* or life energy.

Nirvanic - Related to *nirvana* or bliss.

Assume that in your total *sanchita karma* baggage, 100 desires are related to your *muladhara chakra*, the energy center related to greed and lust; 100 desires are say related to *swadhishthana chakra*, the energy center related to fear, 100 desires are related to your *manipuraka chakra*, the energy center related to worry, etc. Assume you have 700 such desires, 100 related to each of the seven *chakras*.

From this set of 100 desires of each *chakra*, you take say 10 of each and come into this world. This small selection of the total *sanchita karma* is your *prarabdha karma* of this birth.

How to dissolve this birth karma? Simply by your breathing

Another important thing to note is that if you don't add gathered *agamy karma* to this birth's *prarabdha karma*, this birth *karma* can dissolve just by breathing. It will dissolve in your thought pattern itself.

For example, on seeing someone if lust awakens in you, in that intention and emotion itself the *karma* of this birth, the *prarabdha* will dissolve. Instead when you commit the action to fulfill the lust, the act generates gathered *karma*, the *agamy*. If you don't do the action, you will not

collect gathered *agamy karma*.

By breathing out the desire

this birth's *prarabdha karma* will dissolve. Breathing awareness into the desire has the capacity to burn your unfulfilled desires and can dissolve this birth's *karma*.

In our second level Nithyananda Spurana Program, participants are taken through a meditation in the *pranic* layer to dissolve desires, which are the *samskaras* stored in that energy layer. They list all their desires, then chase their desires during the meditation and by breathing in awareness into their desires they dissolve the *samskaras* of this birth.

Pointing the same sword inside

Karma is not a law of reward and punishment. It is not a way god uses to punish people for committing sins. It is a reflection of your own mental state giving you the experience of 'heaven' and 'hell'.

A small story:

A traffic policeman caught a man speeding. He was about to issue him a speeding ticket.

Suddenly a woman started screaming from the back seat, 'See, I told you that

you will get caught! Who asked you to drive so fast? And when I tell you to be careful, slow down and watch out, you tell me to shut up. Now see you got caught!' The cop asked the driver, 'Who is she?' The driver sighed, 'My wife'.

The cop tore up the ticket and said, 'Drive on. You have been punished enough!'

When you are angry, it is not that you will incur sin and pay for it in your next life. You are suffering with your anger now. That itself is the hell you suffer! You are suffering inside in the same way that you are torturing the person you are angry with. The fire you spit outside will burn with the same intensity inside you also. No matter whether it burns the other person or not, the fire of anger will surely burn you. The sword used to cut someone outside will cut you inside with the same intensity. Remember, it is a double edged sword.

A beautiful story from Buddha's life:

A man once came and spat on Buddha's face. Buddha wiped his face and asked the man, 'Do you want to say something more, or is this all?'

Ananda, his close disciple, was very angry. He was fuming that some man came and just spat on his master and that too for no reason at all. He said to

Buddha, 'Master, if you give me permission I will handle the man.'

Buddha replied, 'Have you forgotten that you are a monk, a sannyasi? That poor man is already suffering with his anger. See his angry face, his body shaking with that anger. Before spitting on me, do you think he would have been celebrating and dancing? He is mad with his own anger. In that state of madness, he came and spat on me.'*

What is a bigger punishment for him than being in such a state? And what harm has he done to me? I just had to wipe the spit off my face. Now you don't get agitated, otherwise you are building the same anger inside you. Why are you punishing yourself? That is foolishness. Feel compassion for the poor man instead.'

The man was listening and was surprised and confused to see Buddha behave in this way. He was expecting Buddha to become angry. That is what he wanted. Instead the compassion and understanding Buddha showed was just too shocking for him!

Buddha said to him, 'Go home. You look tired, you have punished yourself enough. Forget about what you did to me. You did not harm me. This body will

Sannyasi - Renunciate.

return to the earth and people will do all kinds of things like spitting. Go home and relax.'

The man was completely shaken by Buddha's response. He went back home. He came back that evening, fell at Buddha's feet and cried, 'Please forgive me!'

Buddha calmly said, 'I was not angry in the first place. How can I forgive you? But I am happy to see you relieved from the anger and in a state of harmony. Just remember, never do such acts again. This is how you create hell for yourself.'

Dharma and Karma

An important thing you should know: accept honor only from the person who has experienced you. He can never dishonor you. Even if he dishonors only he will suffer. You will not suffer. Live on the path of *dharma*^{*}, righteous conduct, having a clear understanding about you and allowing only the people who experience you to honor you. You will see that even if those people dishonor you, you will not be touched in any way because *dharma*^{*} is so powerful. It fills your inner space and protects you.

Dharma means to be clear, honest to your understanding.

Dharma means to be clear, honest to your center, to your understanding.

Dharma^{*} is what we call righteous or conscious behavior. It is not the moral behavior demanded by society. If you follow the law of society you are protected in the outer world. If you follow the law of *dharma* you are protected in the inner world. When you are in *dharma* you will always be right and you will never fall in depression.

We bother so much about following the law to have the protection from the outer world. Understand, follow the *dharma*. You will never fall into the difficulties and depressions that come from the inner world.

The inner world problems are much stronger, more difficult and more dangerous than the outer world problems. When inner world problems happen, immediately you are shaken and you will invite outer world problems.

In all your relationships be righteous, be clear. You will see that even when somebody who experienced you through your teachings dishonors you, you will not feel affected. That person will fall into

Dharma - Sanskrit equivalent of the Pali word *dhamma* used by Buddha. Also translated as 'righteous behavior'.

depression. Just like a law of the land that is laid down logically and enforced properly by society, the spiritual law of *dharma* is enforced by Existence. *Dharma* is enforced properly and it is still alive.

Please understand, enlightened beings are happening again and again in the planet earth just to remind you of this one truth that *dharma* is still alive. The cosmic law is still alive.

There is a beautiful scriptural statement: *dharmo rakshati rakshitaha*. When you protect *dharma*, *dharma* will protect you. When you uphold the cosmic law and live by it, the cosmic law strengthens you. The law of *dharma* is so powerful.

People ask me, ‘Swamiji, I have seen good people suffering and bad people enjoying. How do you justify this?’

Understand the truth that first of all good people never suffer. They may appear to be suffering. If there is suffering somewhere the *dharma* was lost. It is a perverted understanding that good people suffer and bad ones enjoy.

A funny one-liner:

What is luck? The factor that is responsible for the success of those you don't like.

Perverted understanding is not *dharma*.

One more important thing, you don't even have to be honest to the higher

understandings that have not become part of your experience. No. Be honest and true to your own understanding. That is more than enough.

If you are in the level of *dharma*, just completely be in that *dharma*. That is *svadharma*, being in tune with, honest with the *dharma* that is your core.

You will then see that there will not be any unnecessary movement within you. You will not fall into the low mood. When you protect *dharma*, it protects you. I tell you, when you protect the *dharma*, it gives so much of strength and so much of courage.

Responsibility

The theory of *karma* simply says that whatsoever is happening to you is your doing. Nothing happens to you from outside of you. You create whatever happens to you. Most of the time you are not aware and you are not conscious. So you are not able to see yourself doing it.

If you are sad, watch and meditate on your misery. Observe how you created the sadness. See how the root of your misery lies within you. The mind constantly tells you everybody else is responsible for your misery, spouse, friend, boss, or the man down the street. It always goes on throwing responsibility on somebody else.

A small story:

There was an ad in the newspaper for a professional that ended with, 'We want a responsible man for the job.' A man applied for the job. In his interview, he introduced himself saying, 'I think I am just the person for your job.' The employer asked curiously, 'Why?'

The man replied, 'Wherever I worked, whenever anything went wrong, they told me I was responsible.'

Be very clear, nobody except you is responsible for what you feel, what you do.

Nobody can make you suffer without your silent permission. Once you understand that whatever happens is from deep inside you, you will suddenly see things changing. Take full responsibility for yourself and see how you become integrated in whatever you do.

When you stop blaming others, when you understand that you are responsible for everything, you will become more and more aware of every action, every thought of yours.

That awareness is enough. You will act intelligently. If you *want* to be sad, you will be sad. Nothing wrong with that, just be total in that sadness. If you feel there is no need to be sad and you want to be happy, be happy. That's all.

Watch how you create your misery. How did you build it inside? Watch how you are continuously creating your moods. Don't fool yourself by throwing on others the responsibility of what you create. Then you will never change. You will remain miserable because you are helpless. If you think others are creating everything, what can you do? What is your role? Then nothing is in your hands. You can only wait for others to change. But the change can never happen because others are not creating your feelings and emotions in the first place.

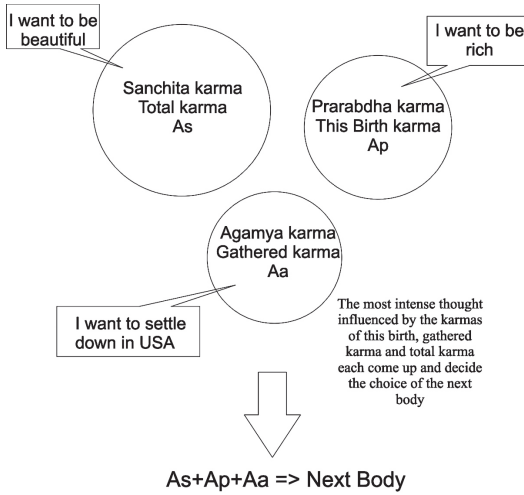
Karma and the next body

How do we choose the next birth?

Once the life force leaves the body, within three *kshanas*, it chooses the next body.

At the time of death the three most enjoyed experiences in that lifetime stand out as one's last thoughts. The choice of the next body arises from the mindset based on these three experiences.

These three thoughts will be based on one from each of the total *karma* (*sanchita*), this birth *karma* (*prarabdha*) and gathered *karma* (*agamyā*). Based on this, the *prarabdha karma* will take shape for this birth.



Practicing spiritual life solutions in one's lifetime will reduce the gathered *sanchita karma* of that life because these understandings will help one to live with awareness.

Meditation helps to reduce the *prarabdha karma*. It acts not only upon the conscious and physical levels but also has the capacity to penetrate and clean the unconscious on a physical, mental and being level.

However, the largest balance in the bank of *karma*, the total *sanchita karma*, can only be dissolved through the master's grace.

The more these three *karmas* are reduced, the less the constraints of choice for the next body. Since each of the three *karmas* will dictate a corresponding intense experience to be lived, the next body will need to provide a space for these experiences to be lived.

It is like this. If I say, 'Let me meet a person who can speak English,' I have more choice than if I say, 'Let me meet a person who can speak English, Spanish and German.'

Similarly, if you have all the three types of *karma*, of this birth, gathered and total, there are more constraints on your next birth.

For example, the desire influenced by your total *sanchita karma* may be, 'I want to be beautiful.' The desire influenced by your *karma* of this birth, *prarabdha*, may be, 'I want to be rich.' The desire influenced by your gathered or *agamya karma*, may be, 'I want to settle down in USA.'

It is more difficult to get a body for the life energy's next birth that will lead to the satisfaction of all the three desires within the short gap of three *kshanas*. So, it ends up choosing a body that satisfies the strongest desire amongst the three desires. The combined desires, the mindset, with which the life energy leaves the previous body is the *vasana*, the seeds of desire we earlier talked about.

These three desires, these three thoughts will be seen in one glimpse in three *kshanas*, as one *vasana*. The *vasana* is like a television channel and the body that attracts the *vasana* is like the television set tuned to this channel. The depth of the *vasana* and the body that matches the *vasana* attracts the life energy. Just like a television

set tuned to the satellite channel's frequency receives the corresponding electromagnetic waves, in the same way, the *vasana* is attracted by the body.

The life energy, the spirit, departing from the previous body enters the new body that it selected as that body leaves the womb of the mother. It enters the body in the birth canal. The darkness of the causal layer that it left from the previous body corresponds to the darkness of the mother's birth canal. Since the body has been prepared by the energies of the parents, the life energy chooses the combined energies of the parents based on the desires, the *vasanas*, the mental attitude, with which it leaves the previous body. So the parents do not choose the child. It is the child that chooses its parents.

Having chosen a particular body, the spirit or life force has to satisfy the other two desires it had but could not choose an appropriate body for. However, during its transition through the darkness, the deep pain experienced by the spirit erases all memories of the *vasana* it carries before it enters the new body. The new entity no longer remembers the desires with which it left the previous body. Instead of fulfilling the desires with which it left the previous body, since it has forgotten them, the life energy in the new body seeks new desires and collects more *karma*.

It is the child that chooses its parents.

Now, of the three types of *karma*, if one of them is gone, the choice constraints are fewer and the life force can be more focused in the choices. Cleaning the gathered *agamyakarma* and this birth's *prarabdhakarma* can be done by the individual by understanding about life and by meditating. The master's grace will reduce the total *sanchitakarma*.

Once the total *sanchitakarma* is cleansed, there is no reason to take another body. Then, if the next birth still happens, it is for no reason but out of overflowing joy and bliss. The birth is thus chosen consciously because there is no pull of *karma*. The life lived is a *leela* or reasonless play of an *avatar* or incarnation.

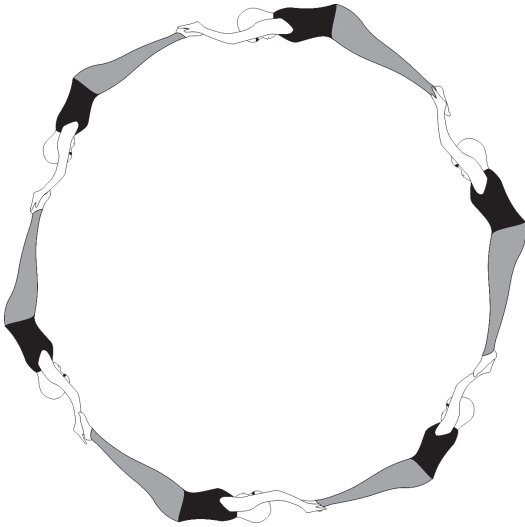
How did the cycle of birth and death start?

For all of us, our total *sanchitakarma* initially was a divine play. For an enlightened master, it is still a divine play as he has no *karma* at all. Playing because you can play is the divine play.

We took birth out of choice. We forgot our *prarabdhakarma*, started gathering *agamyakarma* and expanded the total *sanchitakarma*. Then, to exhaust the increased load we had to take another birth where we

collected more desires and *karma*. This is how the cycle of life and death continues.

Please understand, your gathered *agamyakarma* is your bondage. The total *karma* and this birth *karma* can be a divine play. The result of this play is the *karma* of that birth. After birth, if we play without gathered *karma*, it will continue to be a divine play. The bondage comes with gathered *karma*.



Will a human be born as an animal, bird or insect or can he be born as human being in the next birth?

This is a very good question. Let me boldly declare this truth and clear all the myths

that have been surrounding this one question on the wheel of *karma*!

When a human being takes birth as human once, he will continue taking the life of a human unless he has acted against his consciousness like torturing others or committed violent acts in physical, mental or verbal forms against Existence which is in the form of the master, nature and human consciousness. The intensity of these acts is what gets recorded in the cosmic *karmic* record. Understand, it is not the act itself but the intensity of the act that matters.

When a person spends his whole life in lower consciousness, he can be reborn as an animal. For example, if he spends his whole life in only eating or sleeping, he can be reborn as an animal.

If the person has not experienced even once in his lifetime, the unique human qualities like falling in love, seeking enlightenment, he will be reborn as an animal, because he had a human body but the channels of human experience have not been awakened.

Do we have to wait for the next birth if we feel strongly

about something but it is not our *prarabdha*?

No. You can change your *prarabdha* through a simple, strong will or *sankalpa**. The strength of the *sankalpa** can cause a rebirth in you in this birth itself. The next birth can happen now itself. For example, people, especially householder disciples who feel they are caught up in their responsibilities ask me, 'Swamiji, please bless me that I should be with you at least in my next birth.' There are so many examples where they have been able to come and live in the ashram* just a few months later. It is just the strength of the will.

Enlightenment – back to home

You are like a wave in the ocean of Existence. The wave rises up from the ocean but it is still connected to the ocean. It may think it has an individual existence but that is just a myth. Whether it is rising, above the ocean or falling down, it is still a part of the ocean.

On its own, because of joy, when the wave takes the body, there will be no

gathered or *agamyā karma*. When *agamyā karma* is acquired, it will corrupt the total *sanchita karma* that was pure. This *sanchita karma* has to be exhausted in the next birth. Corrupted total *sanchita karma* generates the cycle of life and birth. This is how the wheel of *karma* starts.

The new body that the life energy occupies does not remember the *prarabdha karma* that the life energy brought to it when it took the body. So, you do not remember the desires with which you left your previous body.

Reminding yourself of those desires again and fulfilling them in this birth is what doing *tapas* or penance and becoming enlightened is all about.

So what happens when you forget at birth that you have come through divine play? When the total *karma* weight becomes excessive, you realize, 'There is some problem somewhere.' Immediately you wake up and get enlightened again. The rewinding and coming back is enlightenment.

Sometimes, if you get a really bad dream, only a thought like 'I am dreaming' will come at first. Then, you actually wake up. That thought of 'I am dreaming' coming is turning towards enlightenment. Waking up is getting enlightened.

Sankalpa - Vow or decision.

Ashram - A monastery for Hindu or Buddhist monks.

That thought of ‘I am dreaming. This whole world is a dream.’ and then renouncing the false world and catching the reality is enlightenment. In this world, the same experiences repeat making you tired and bored. It gives rise to the suspicion, ‘I am seeing a dream.’ Then, you start doubting the world, doubting the promise the world gives.

It is like the newspaper ads about some beachside resort that will show the beach, the table, the food, all looking like heaven, giving a promise of luxury. You doubt that promise, because you realize that if hundred people see this and go, not many will actually feel the ecstasy promised. Similarly in life also, you doubt the promises your mind has been making all along but never fulfilling any.

Techniques to overcome *karma*

Re-living to relieve

Till now, what we discussed was a preventive measure for incurring *karma*. As a curative for *karma*, I will give you a simple technique. Right from this moment, try and remember all the incidents in your life. Start going backwards from this moment

to your childhood days. Remember what you can.

Do not bother about what you cannot. Understand, what you cannot remember is only a hangover. It has not touched you deeply. That is why it is not retained in your memory. Try this technique for a year. Re-living is a wonderful way of relieving.

Our second level Life Bliss meditation program – Nithyananda Spurana Program (NSP) is focused on just this method of exhausting one’s *karma*. It is like a complete spiritual bath in the presence of an enlightened master.

Deities and enlightened masters – your paths to exhausting *karma*

There is a way to again and again remind ourselves not to collect *karma* and to live without the influence of the earlier incurred *karma*. The first step is to have a clear understanding that *karma* is powerless in the presence of an elevated consciousness.

There is an important difference between normal human beings and enlightened masters. A normal person does not have the ability to make his body alive out of his will. His body is either alive or it is dead, that’s all. It is not under his control.

But for an enlightened person, it is under his control. He can either make his body alive, or relax. Because of this ability, he can also make another body alive! When an enlightened being chooses to make a stone or metal alive, that stone or metal becomes a representation of his very self.

All the deities in our major traditional temples are energized by enlightened masters. Masters like Arunagiri Yogeeshwara* from Tiruvannamalai*, Patanjali from Chidambaram*, Karurar* from Thanjavur*, Konganavar* from Tirupati* and Meenakshi* from Madurai* have energized the deities in these temples.

Deities are therefore considered to be the very bodies of the enlightened masters. Disciples continue serving the deities even after the masters leave their physical body.

The body of the deity is considered to be the body of the master himself. That is the reason why the deities receive the same respect offered to an enlightened master.

For example, all the disciples initiated by Arunagiri Yogeeshwara* will worship the Arunachala temple for generations together. You will see that whatever is offered to the master will be offered to the deity also.

Masters, even after they decide to leave the body, are continuously available to the disciples through the deities that they energized. For example, even during my lifetime, my physical presence is not possible everywhere at the same time. So these deities are programmed to do my work where I am physically not present! They are my representatives!

Arunagiri Yogeeshwara - The temple of Arunachaleswara in Tiruvannamalai is built on the living energy tomb of Arunagiri Yogeeshwara, who is considered an incarnation of enlightened master Shiva.

Tiruvannamalai - Temple town in south India where Nithyananda was born and raised.

Chidambaram - A place in South India famous for its ancient temple dedicated to enlightened master Shiva in his dancing form as Nataraja and where he is represented as the space energy.

Karurar - South Indian mystic saint upon whose immortal remains, the temple at Thanjavur is believed to have been built.

Thanjavur - Town in South India famous for its massive temple, learning and cultural heritage.

Konganavar - Hindu saint and disciple of Bogar, upon whose immortal remains, Tirupati temple is said to have been built.

Tirupati - Famous temple to Vishnu as Venkateshwara or Balaji in Andhra Pradesh, South India.

Meenakshi - The goddess at Madurai in south India. She is said to be a saint upon whose immortal remains, the temple has been built.

Madurai - Temple town in South India. A major pilgrim center with the temple to Meenakshi and her consort Sundareshwara, an aspect of enlightened master Shiva.

The deities possess independent intelligence. Energizing the deities is a big process. It is like giving birth to a child. These energized deities will directly respond to your prayers. They will directly relate with you if you are open in relating with them.

If you see our *puja** and our ashram* routine, you will see that in the morning, they play the wakeup song to wake up the presiding deity. Then they give a small cup of oil for His hair and a small cup of tooth powder for Him to brush His teeth! Then, they give Him a bath and offer fresh, ironed clothes, just like how they offer to the master. They offer food and perform the evening *arati**. In the night, they put the deity to bed again in a ceremonious way.

Understand, all this does not add anything to the deity or to the master. It adds only to us! This is what is living with god. This is what is practicing the presence of god. Practicing the presence of the master is *puja**. *Puja** is done every day because it is a technique to remember the presence of god every day.

Rituals

Rituals are very powerful tools. They are powerful techniques. Many people ask me, 'You are enlightened. Why should you then perform rituals?' I tell them, 'Because I am enlightened, I am teaching people exactly why and how to perform rituals!' Enlightened beings do not need any rituals for themselves.

A small story:

A man went to a hotel and started eating idlis.*

He ate eight idlis, and after the ninth idli* his hunger was satisfied. The waiter came and gave him the bill for nine idlis. The man said, 'What is this? I will pay only for one idli, the ninth idli, which satisfied my hunger! The first eight idlis did not do the job. Only the ninth one did the job of satisfying my hunger. So, I will pay only for that idli!'*

If the man had not eaten the eight *idlis*, would the ninth *idli* have satisfied his hunger? This is exactly what we do in life also. People who reject rituals are actually rejecting the first eight *idlis*! People who think that rituals are a waste and that they

Puja - Hindu ritual worship.

Ashram - A monastery for Hindu or Buddhist monks.

Arati - Fire ritual performed at the end of most *vedic* worship done with lighted lamps or camphor, accompanied often by devotional songs.

Idlis - South Indian delicacy, a rice lentil steamed dish.

can go straightaway to meditation and spiritual experiences are doing nothing but rejecting the first eight *idlis*.

Understand, the ninth *idli* worked *because* of the first eight *idlis*. If the man had not eaten the first eight *idlis*, the ninth *idli* would not have appeased his hunger. In the same way, your meditation will work because of your having gone through ritual worship sincerely! If you reject all these preliminary things and think that you can directly eat the ninth *idli*, will your hunger ever get satisfied?

As long as you think you have a body, you will be able to relate to the cosmic energy only through another body. Only when you lose your body consciousness can you see the Divine also as formless. Until that happens, you need some form, some reminding rituals, some deities to worship. It is good to have a ritual along with meditation so that the discipline of sitting and doing some *sadhana*, penance, is cultivated.

Otherwise, you will not do any penance or meditation regularly. The first day, you will think, 'Today my mother-in-law is here,' or 'I have too much work' and you will skip it. After two days, when your mother-in-law has gone or the work is done, you will think, 'Let me enjoy my vacation after saying goodbye to my mother-in-law! I don't want to do meditation today.' Or, if you are happy,

you will think, 'Today I am happy, then why meditate!' Or if you are depressed, you will think, 'Today I am depressed. How can I focus on meditation!' Your mind tries to find some logic to skip meditation. But, if it is made into a ritual, you will not find any logic to skip it. You will simply do it.

Ritualistic puja - a reinforcement of clicks

Initiation

With just the help of the initiations, you can reduce the *prarabdha karma's* influence over you and move towards your inherent state of joy. You can reclaim your pure and unwavering inner space. You can also stop collecting *agamy karma*.

Initiation is the knowledge or the clicks that bring you out of these depressive thoughts, which bring you out of the influence of your *prarabdha*.

Puja

Puja is a ritualistic offering. *Puja* is nothing but an everyday remembering of all the clicks that have happened in you till date, so that the necessary click will automatically come up whenever you have a problem.

When a master teaches, it is not even a teaching, it is a powerful experience. When you do not use the initiations received through him, when you do not again and again use those *shaastra-shastras** - knowledge-weapons given to you by him, not only do they lose their power, you may not even be able to remember them again. This is the important thing to understand here.

For example, let us say you have a cot. If you do not use the cot for two years, the cot will not become unusable or it will not disappear. After two years, you can still use it again. But if you do not use the knowledge given to you, the initiations given to you, for two years they will not be sitting in your bedroom waiting for you to use them! No! They will simply disappear, that's all.

So how do you remind yourself every day of all the clicks that have happened in you? Every day, sitting and reminding yourself of all the clicks that happened in you is what is *puja* or ritual. *Pujas* are designed with this intent.

Automatically, everyday, whether you want it or not, when you sit for the ritual, you will remember the initiation experiences. The clicks that happened with the master will arise from within you. The ritual brings you back to pure

consciousness every day. The engrams start losing their power.

When the engrams with which you were born start losing their power over you, further collection of engrams stops. When the collection stops and the existing *karmas* also lose their power over you, then, the person who brings you back to the superconscious zone again and again, the master, appears when you leave the body and burns your *sanchita* as well.

For example, if your child sits and tries very hard to build a small house, what will you do? You will say, 'Alright, do not bother. I will build it and give it to you.' In the same way, when a disciple sincerely works to remove his *prarabdha* and *agamyas*, the master's grace simply happens and removes the *sanchita* also!

Understand one important issue. The master's grace that we are talking about here is not just dependent on me. If anybody sincerely does penance or meditation, then in spite of me, the grace will land on him! It is not even dependent on me. It is an automatic mechanism!

Be very clear, it is dependent just on your own receptivity, not on me. I am like an ocean, constantly available to whoever comes with whatever size vessel they wish to carry. If you come with a coconut shell, you will carry back that much of me. If

Shaastra-shastras - Scriptures as tools used for blissful living.

you come with a little bigger vessel, you will carry back that much quantity of me. If you come with a bigger container, you will carry back what that container can hold. If you are intelligent, you will simply jump into the ocean of bliss!

So initiation or *puja* means, reminding yourself everyday of all the initiations and all the great experiences that happened with the master and bringing yourself back to the same high consciousness repeatedly. When you are ready every day with the same high spirit, it means that you are ready for the next 24 hours of the drama of life that is going to unfold! For the next 24 hours, you have the energy required. This is the reason behind doing *puja*.

Meditation and consciousness – antidotes for *karma*

When you have had even one glimpse of pure consciousness, no *karma* can influence you. Your frequency becomes much more than the frequency of *karma*. *Karma* can work on you only as long as you have thoughts. In conscious awareness you go beyond thoughts. So, naturally you will start ruling over *karma*. Any meditation when done intensely can give you a glimpse of consciousness, the Truth.

That is why they say, meditation is like exposing your film directly to the sun. If

the camera shutter opens for one second, whatever is in front of the camera will be recorded on the film. If the shutter is left completely open, what will happen? If the sun's rays directly fall on the film, what will happen? Whatever is recorded will be erased.

When you took birth, for a moment the camera shutter opened and life entered your body. Whatever was there in the scene outside at that moment was recorded. By the word 'scene', I mean the planetary positions at that moment. That is why the time of birth is very important. Based on that, your consciousness functions. However, during meditation, I consciously keep the shutter open for quite some time! So naturally, whatever is recorded will be erased!

So the first time the shutter was opened was when you took birth. The second time the shutter is opened is when you are initiated. This time the shutter is kept completely and naturally open so that the sun's rays enter and wipe out all your *karma*. That is why when you are initiated by a master, you are called *dvija* or twice born. The man who operates your camera, who holds the shutter open for that period of time, is called the *guru*. He is the master.

Nithyam – dhyanam – anandam

What is needed so as not to collect gathered *agamyā karma*, is life solutions, what I call *nithyam* (eternal) because you practice them daily. To dissolve the *karma* of this birth, you need meditation or *dhyanam*. That is why you see that most of our meditations are based on breathing. Altering the breathing, making it fast, slow, silent etc, is what our meditation techniques are all about. The only thing that can dissolve the total *karma* is the master's grace or *anandam* (bliss).

So understand, *karma* is simply the effects of thoughts, words and deeds that stem from deep ignorance and cause you to again and again tread familiar patterns of misery. The way to break this cycle is to tune into the clicks received from the master and live in an elevated zone of consciousness.

Myths on *karma*

Q: Will we contract another person's *karma* when they give advice, or touch them? How vulnerable are we to other people's *karma*?

Understand, you cannot get *karma* from somebody else. You have enough of your own! So do not bother about catching *karma* from another person.

Either by touching or by giving advice or by close physical contact or physical proximity, *karma* can never be passed on. You may acquire the mental setup of that person in close proximity, if you are continuously around him, but never his or her *karma*. Of course, you have to be mentally strong so that you don't get his or her mental setup! But if you are solid within yourself through the clicks that have happened in you, even this won't affect you in any way.

Understand one more thing, I do not interfere with your *karma*. Like how when the sun rises the darkness disappears on its own, in the same way in the presence of the master the *karma* gets burnt. *Karma*, like darkness, has got only negative existence. It does not have a positive existence. What I mean is that you cannot take it and throw it out like how you can take say a microphone and throw it out. Just like how lightless-ness is only called darkness, *karma* is just lack of inner light in us. It is just ignorance. It is energyless-ness.

Any *karma* can be burnt through remembering the clicks and living life according to the understanding through the

clicks. *Karma* is nothing but the faith of your fear in it.

Karma does not exist even to the depth of your fear. Fear will go to the depth of your causal body, the energy layer that you fall into in deep sleep. If you sleep with a knife above your head, you will automatically touch the causal body because of the intense fear. *Karma* does not have even that much depth. It is just your own doing and can be undone with understanding and awareness, and a conscious decision not to incur more *karma* through thought, word or deed.

It is very important to live a life only exhausting *karma* and not accumulating more. It is this idea that is promoted in the *vedic* marriages. In the *vedic* marriages, the couple takes a vow to put their spiritual life ahead of their married life and live together. It is simply deciding to cooperate and exhaust each other's *karma* without causing any further *karma* for each other.

Normally in marriage, the man will operate from lust and the woman from fear. The man exploits the fear aspect of the woman and the woman exploits the desire aspect of man. This vow states that they will work only towards exhausting each other's *karma* and not towards exploiting each other or multiplying their *karma*.

Q: Can our *karma* be exhausted by doing charitable service?

You need to see the motivation for the social service. Honestly look at yourself in the face. What do you want by doing the service?

Do you feel motivated by the fear of having to go to hell if you don't do good deeds? Is it the desire for a good name and publicity? Or is it just to do something to keep yourself busy? Is it the greed of a good afterlife after death? Is it a better next birth?

If you are driven by fear or greed, you can never intensely enjoy doing the service. One part of you will be doing the act of service. Another part of you will be caught in thinking about the benefits of the service. So you are not integrated in that action. You are not completely fulfilled through it.

This action also binds. Outwardly, socially, it looks good and free from bondage. But inside your inner space, you can see it is not. The whole of mankind is swinging around result-oriented action. This is extended to service as well. At least in service, do not think of dollars or fame. Do not plan to impress. Do not plan to make your presence felt.

Do the work for the work itself! Do not plan anything. Just do any service anywhere. This kind of service will infuse tremendous power into your being. For at least half an hour a day do something selfless, without any thought of results or benefits for yourself. You can then experience the true joy of service.

Karma can be exhausted only through deep understanding, awareness and at least one glimpse of consciousness.

Q: You teach us meditation. What is the point of meditation when the rest of the world is suffering? Instead of meditating, we can do some service.

A small story:

There was once a king who was known to be compassionate. He used to go around his kingdom unannounced to see how his subjects were.

One day, he saw a small boy catching a pigeon. The boy held the pigeon tightly in his hands as it tried to flutter desperately. The king asked the boy, 'Don't you see the bird is afraid and struggling? Why don't you free it?'

The boy did not know he was speaking to the king. He said, 'Sir, I have caught

this pigeon after a long wait. How can I give it up?' The king thought briefly and then asked the boy if he would sell the pigeon. The boy readily agreed. The king handed the boy a gold coin in exchange for the bird.

By then a crowd had gathered around the king. They watched as the king took the pigeon and waved his hands upward releasing the bird. The king was very happy to free the bird and at the same time to see the crowd praising him.

The king asked if anybody else had any captive birds. A few people came forward. The king asked them to get their birds and he gave them all a gold coin each in exchange. Then he proudly released the birds.

After a few days, the king's advisor, a wise sage, paid a visit to the palace. He asked the king to come with him in disguise to visit the kingdom. The king in disguise went with the sage to a forest. To his utter surprise, he saw several villagers busy setting up traps to catch the birds. Many birds were even losing their lives because of the crude traps. The people were now deliberately catching birds to get a gold coin in exchange for the bird from the king!

The sage asked the king, 'Why do the birds have to pay such a heavy price

for you to show your so-called compassion?’

Only acts of service coming from pure consciousness can be truly effective.

If we can genuinely feel the suffering of the rest of humanity and if we work out of compassion to remove their suffering, then it is very good. But we must first have the understanding of this extended consciousness to feel this compassion. Not only that, the greatest service that you can do to humanity is to become a divine human being yourself! Meditation is the first step for that!

Q: What happens when someone has a premature death like in suicide or accident?

In the case of premature death, the soul has to wait for the time it was destined to live, before it can take a new body. In the case of suicide, the suffering is much more intense than what would have been if the spirit had continued living. It is like when you have a plate of food in front of you but you don't have hands or a body to enjoy it!

In the case of accidents, the spirit has to be without body. But there is no suffering as in the case of suicide. The spirit lives in the same consciousness it would have lived

had it been alive. It just waits to get the next body.

Q: Why do we do the rituals and annual rites related to departed souls?

The rituals related to departed souls are to help the people who are living to accept the departure of the person.

However, when an enlightened master does this, it helps but it is not the ritual, it is his *sankalpa* (vow) that works. When an enlightened master makes a *sankalpa*, if you are in the body, it may take time to settle because the plane in which he is in, the plane in which the *sankalpa* is in, is different from the plane in which you are. But for the being who is not in the body, the *sankalpa* has immediate effect because the being is in the same subtle energy level as the master's.

If the being is existing in another body, the *sankalpa* takes time to settle. But the person unclutches from the past *samskaras*, and all the past *samskaras* are cleared. So suddenly for no reason the person feels cleared and light.

Q: Are past life regressions useful and safe?

Past life regression should not be done except by an enlightened being. It has such a strong influence it can affect this birth. For example, if you had been a blind person in a past life, when regression happens, you can become blind in this birth!

An unenlightened being doing the regression will also suffer the *karmas* of the person he is doing the regression for.

To clear past life regression, one should know how to handle it, clear the past *samskaras* and close it.

Q: When the master clears the *karmas*, do we have to go through pain?

When the master removes the *karma*, you call that feeling pain. Actually, the master would be removing in a second the suffering of many births, what would have otherwise taken many births to dissolve. So it is practically no suffering in comparison.

Sharada Devi says, the master clearing the *samskaras* is like you facing a thorn prick instead of suffering a fracture!

Our concern for *karma* is rooted in our fear of death. It is a primal fear, that of the unknown. Our actions in this life are for the most part driven by the desire to be in a better place after death or the fear not to be in a worse place after death. This fear of leaving the body and mind has existed through the ages.

Story of Yayati

There is a nice story in Mahabharata, the great Indian epic:

There was once a king by the name of Yayati. He lived extremely well for hundred years, enjoying his kingdom and all the physical and mental comforts of life. At the end of hundred years, Yama, the lord of death, came to take him away as it was time for him to leave the earth. The king was shocked to see Yama and started crying, 'Why have you come so fast and that too suddenly without any notice? I have not lived my life fully yet. Please give me some more time to live.'

Yama replied that there is no extension possible to one's life. But Yayati pleaded with him and begged for more time. Yama finally agreed that if any one of his sons was ready to give up his life for Yayati, then the king could live for that much more time.

Yayati called one of his sons. The son agreed, 'I will give up my life, let my father live.' He gave up his life. Yama extended Yayati's life by a hundred years.

Yayati continued to enjoy all the material comforts in the same way as before and lived another hundred years. At the end of this period Yama returned to take him. This time too Yayati was shocked to see Yama again so soon. He felt he had hardly lived his life and begged Yama saying that he was not prepared to die and wanted some more time.

Yama gave him another chance. Another of Yayati's sons gave up his life for his father, and Yayati got a lease of another hundred years of life.

Yayati enjoyed another hundred years and again Yama came back to take him. Again as before, Yayati asked for more time but this time Yama refused to play the same game again.

Instead of agreeing to the king's plea, this time Yama asked Yayati compassionately, 'O king! Do you think you can put a fire out by pouring oil into it? Do you think that you can fulfill your desires by living them out more and more?' In just a few beautiful words Yama explained the whole purpose life to Yayati. Yayati finally realized the

Truth, followed Yama and rested at the feet of the Divine.

You cannot feel fulfilled by offering sense pleasures to the senses. You cannot feel that you are ready for death if you never lived intensely. Trying to satisfy the senses, pouring pleasures into your senses, or living as you want does not mean living intensely. When you really live intensely, automatically you will be liberated.

Common perception of death

The very word ‘death’ creates agony and fear. Even talking about it is considered inauspicious as we may invite it by even mentioning it!

Death is seen as an enemy. That is why in all the religions, in all the cultures, death is painted as black. In Hinduism, Yama is black. In Christianity*, Satan* is black. In

Buddhism, Mara* is black. In all religions, death is painted as black. We paint death as a villain, never as a hero. The idea of death is always approached with negativity. We feel death takes away everything from us. Whatever we want, whatever we enjoy, whatever we have, everything is just taken by force from us. So most of us live either in denial of death or in fear of it. We think, ‘Why should we think about it now? We will handle it when it arrives.’ Or we consciously avoid even thinking about it.

Somehow we always want to escape from death. From time immemorial, all the traditions, all the civilizations are trying in all possible ways to conquer death. Scientists are trying through medicines, which gave birth to allopathy*. *Siddhas** and *ayurvedians**, the Eastern mystics, are trying through herbs, which gave birth to the whole *siddha** tradition and *kayakalpa**. The *yogis* are trying through *mantras**, which gave birth to Mrutyunjaya *mantra** and

Christianity - Religion based on teachings of Jesus Christ.

Satan - Representation of evil in the Christian tradition.

Mara - The demon of evil in Buddhist tradition.

Allopathy - Generally refers to western medicine.

Siddha - Practitioner of spiritual techniques.

Ayurvedians - Practitioners of the traditional Indian medicinal system of *ayurveda*.

Siddha - Traditional Indian system of medicine.

Kayakalpa - Body rejuvenation and anti ageing technique of *ayurveda*, traditional Indian system of medicine.

Mantra - Literally means ‘that which shows the way’. Sacred syllables having a positive vibrational effect.

Mrutyunjaya *mantra* - Chant for victory over death.

*pranayama** techniques. The Buddhist Lamas* are trying it through meditation, which gave birth to techniques like Mahamantra* meditation. Almost all the traditions, all the cultures are trying to conquer death, to go beyond death.

Why are we afraid of death?

Why is the whole of humanity struggling against one thing, the only thing that is a certainty in all our lives?

Can we make the whole earth flat? No, it is a proven fact that the earth is round. But if we struggle against this fact, then there is something wrong in our struggle, in our understanding. It is the same with death too. Why are we struggling to accept the truth? Because of the struggle, most people die unable to accept death when it comes - just as they have lived, unable to accept life as it is.

Why are we afraid of death?

We are afraid because instinctively we resist change and death is an abrupt change in life. The master Chuang Tzu says beautifully, 'Man's thirst for survival in the

future makes him incapable of living in the present.'

We are afraid because we do not know who we are. We hold an identity of ourselves inside us, based on our family, relationships, job, wealth, social image etc. Death removes this very foundation on which our identity is built, so we feel death snatches everything that is ours.

Our understanding about death, or rather our misunderstanding about death, makes death a fearful, frightening experience. The man who resists death dies even while he lives. He dies every moment because he is tortured by the very idea of death. When I say 'death', I don't mean only physical death. Losing anything is a form of death. Losing your comfortable life is one form of death, losing your relatives is another. Please understand that loss in any form is nothing but death.

There are two issues: the incident of death that happens at the end of our lives, and psychological death. Real death happens

We are afraid because instinctively we resist change and death is an abrupt change in life.

Pranayama - Breath control, one of the eight limbs of the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali.

Lamas - Buddhist monks.

Mahamantra - Humming meditation that energizes the *anahata chakra* and taught as part of Nithyananda's Life Bliss Programs.

only once, but psychological death, the fear of death, permeates our life. The idea and fear of death decides our entire life structure.

You may ask why people are so depressed and disturbed when they lose their close relatives. Even if you are not emotionally attached to them and in a sense are waiting for them to die you will be deeply affected by their death! It is more so when you are close to them, attached to them emotionally. Whenever your mother dies your whole left side will suffer. Whenever your father dies, your whole right side will suffer. Whenever your brothers die your hands will suffer. There is a deep connection between you and your relatives.

Every part of your body is connected to someone or the other. Your being is not an individual being. It is not alone, separate, as you think. We are all interlinked. That is why we undergo terrible suffering when we lose someone or something. Every missing that you experience, no matter of whom or what is what I call death.

All that we understand of death is that it is anti-life. Again because of our fear we think too much about death. We project our fear and see it as a giant figure. If real death is six feet tall, because of our fear

we see it as sixty feet tall! Fear of death is just the fear of continuity or discontinuity. We are afraid about the 'what next'.

In the mystery of death lies the answer to life

Once, in USA, a young lady asked the great Indian monk Swami Vivekananda, 'What is life?' Swami Vivekananda* said, 'Come with me to India. I will teach you.' She asked, 'What will you teach me?'*

He said, 'I will teach you how to die.'

The question is about life but the answer is about death! It seems strange! What Swami Vivekananda* is saying is that if you know the secret of death, the quality of your life will be different. Your very understanding and attitude towards everything will change.

We can actually use our lives to prepare for death. We do not have to wait for the pain of seeing someone's death or the shock of being faced with a critical illness to force us to look into the meaning of life.

Swami Vivekananda - Primary disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and founder of the Ramakrishna Order. 19th century Eastern mystic considered a key figure in spreading awareness of Hinduism and yoga in Europe and America.

Death is not a mere incident at the end of your life. It is a profound knowing. If you know how to die, you know how to live. Living and leaving are two sides of the same thing. Your life will be totally different once you understand death.

Entering into Death

Almost all the traditions have tried to conquer death, to outlive death. But one group of really intelligent, intuitive people understood after much struggle that we were approaching death in a completely wrong direction. They decided to take a 180-degree turn. They started working with death in a different way.

They used meditation as a technique to take them where others had not dared to go before. Those few intelligent ones were the *rishis* of the Upanishad* age. The report they submitted on their research into the phenomenon of death is called the Kathopanishad*.

These *rishis* researched deeply on death and finally came to the conclusion that death cannot be understood or overcome by

resistance. By resisting death you cannot go beyond death. The only way to break free from the vicious cycle

of birth and death is by becoming enlightened, by entering into death, dropping the fear.

As long as you are afraid, you will never look death in the eye. Unless and until you do that, you will never know how much you are blessed with abundance. Only when you know that you will lose something will you realize the value of that thing.

Just meditate: suppose you are going to die in two days, what all would you want to do? How much is there to finish? It is only when you take stock of your life that you understand how much of goodness is showered on you. You have taken everything for granted because you believe that you are going to live forever. Only when you understand death you will understand the preciousness of life.

The only way to break free from the vicious cycle of birth and death is by becoming enlightened.

Upanishad - Scriptures that form the essence of the ancient texts of the Vedas. Literally means 'sitting with the master'. There are eleven main Upanishads that have been commented on by enlightened master Adi Shankara.

Kathopanishad - One of the major *Upanishads* or scriptures that features the interaction between Yama, Hindu god of death and a young boy Nachiketa.

Once when you face death without fear, you will understand that death is not the end of life but it is the climax. When this understanding dawns on you then you will stop praying for everlasting life.

Please understand that death has power over you because of your belief, your faith in it, that's all. It is just a matter of belief. When you believe that death is terrifying, it becomes terrifying. It is like a mirror that faithfully reflects whatever you project on it.

When a donkey sees itself in the mirror what will it see? It will see a donkey only, nothing else. In the same way if you are totally afraid of death then you will see only the fear reflected back to you. Then death will be truly death for you. If you take a little time and look into your fear of death you will see that it has the power to transform your life in the most positive way. You will realize that it is not contradictory to life but complementary to life.

The ultimate let-go

We are not able to face death because we are not able to face the ever-changing nature of life. We try to hold onto things, to people, to feelings, to situations and that is where the problem starts. We are terrified of letting go, we are wary of life. The irony

of the situation is this. Not only is holding on to life impossible, but the very source of the pain we seek to avoid is holding on to life!

A small story:

Once a master was trying to teach his youngest disciple, a little boy. The little boy used to always hold onto things he liked and get very upset or depressed if he lost his favorite object or it was taken away from him.

One day, the master gave the boy a beautiful silver coin. The boy was thrilled and took the coin. Now the master told the boy, 'Son, hold it tightly in your fist and stretch your hand out.' The boy did as told. Now master said, 'Relax and open your fist.'

The boy was puzzled but did as the master said. He opened his fist and the coin fell down. The master said, 'Now take the coin and keep it in your hand.'

The boy did so. The master continued, 'Now make a fist and again stretch your hand out. But this time, keep your fist facing up towards the sky.' The boy obeyed. The master then said, 'Now let go and open your fist.' The boy opened the fist and there was the coin gleaming under the sun in his hands.

The master said to the boy, 'Son, if you can just let go and relax trusting this Existence, the Divine who is taking care

of you every moment, you can simply enjoy life.'

Look at everything happening in life with the understanding that change is the nature of life, the very reason why life is so colorful and interesting. Then you can see the mysteries of life unfold beautifully, including the ultimate mystery of death.

Death is a deep relaxation. It is the ultimate 'letting go'. It is the dropping of the old and starting with the new. When your being recognizes that it cannot achieve what it wants to through this body it decides to move on. This 'moving on', this 'passing over' is what is called death.

When your brand new house becomes old after the passage of years, you either try to repair it or if that is too inconvenient and frustrating, you decide to sell the house and move into a new one. When you do this, do you feel that you are missing something? No!

In the same way when you feel that you have not lived your life totally in the way you wanted to, you leave this body to take a new one. You want to restart. Your choice to start all over again is what is called death.

A fresh start

When you die, all that happens is that you rejuvenate your body and your mind. You

Your choice to start all over again is what is called death.

take a fresh set of memories, a new place, a different set of relatives, a new life. In other words you take up a new birth hoping to fulfill all your incomplete desires. Whatever you left unaccomplished you come down to finish. This choice given to you by *god* to start all over again is death.

But without understanding this simple truth you waste your whole life by doing everything possible to resist death. Once you add meditation to your life, you start understanding your fears. Facing the fear demystifies death. It is as if all the fog, all the snow, all the ice has been removed and you are able to see the sparkling water of understanding flowing so clearly, so beautifully. You start looking death in the eye, face to face.

When you face death you see that it is nothing but life. Because every moment you die, the next moment you are born. Death and birth are just cycles. If you die you will be born and if you are born you will die. When this understanding happens you lose all fears. You start living your life. You start enjoying every breath that you take on planet earth.

When you are forty you are not what you were when you were ten or when you were twenty or when you were thirty. But you do not feel you died, though you are

Death is the beginning of a new chapter of life.

completely
different.
You are
different

physically, mentally, emotionally, and materially, yet you feel you are continuing the same life. Death is just like that, it is one more continuum.

Nothing dies and nothing discontinues. Everything continues in a manner that nature dictates. When you get the knowledge that you are never going to die, bliss blooms and you are in ecstasy. Your life is transformed from fear to fearlessness, from death to deathlessness.

The Bhagavad Gita, the profound truths delivered by Krishna to Arjuna*, says that death is just like changing of one's clothes. Just like how we change our shirt, we change our body. This changing of the body leads us to inner transformation. Death is the beginning of a new chapter of life.

Mystery of mysteries

There is a beautiful story in the great Indian epic, Mahabharata:

The prince Yudhishtira was asked by a yaksha*, 'What is the most mysterious thing on planet earth?'*

Yudhishtira replied, 'Every day so many lives are going to the abode of Yama, the lord of death, yet the people who stay here think they are going to live forever.'*

We always think that it is someone else who will die, not us. Death is truly the mystery of all mysteries.

There are only two things that are certain about death. One is that we will die at some point in time. The other is that it is uncertain when or how we will die.

Everything that is born has to die. That is the nature of life.

A beautiful story from the life of enlightened master Buddha:

Once a woman came with her dead son to Buddha. She was mad with grief at the death of her only son. She cried to

Arjuna - Warrior prince and the third of the five brothers of the Pandava family in the great Indian epic Mahabharata. He was a disciple of enlightened master Krishna and received the wisdom in the Bhagavad Gita from Krishna.

Yudhishtira - The eldest of the five princes of the Pandava family in the Indian epic Mahabharata.

Yaksha - Demigod who according to Hindu mythology guards wealth.

Buddha, 'Master, please give me some medicine that will get my boy back to life.'

Buddha replied, 'Get me a handful of mustard seed.' The woman got up immediately and rushed to get a handful of mustard seed. Then Buddha added, 'The mustard seed must be from a house where no one has lost a dear one – child, husband, parent, friend.'

The woman went from house to house. Out of pity for the desperately crying woman, people gave her mustard seed from their house. But when she asked whether they had lost a dear one, they had someone or the other who had died in the house.

She went from house to house till sunset but found no house where a death had not happened. Slowly the truth started dawning on her – death is inevitable. She buried her son's body and returned to Buddha. She fell at the feet of Buddha and asked him, 'Master, please teach me the truth. What is death? What exists beyond death?'

She became Buddha's disciple and followed Buddha for the rest of her life.

There is a beautiful saying, "Tomorrow or the next life, which comes first, we never know."

Tomorrow or the next life, which comes first, we never know.

Buddha says, "This existence is as fleeting as the autumn clouds. To watch the birth and death of beings is like watching the movements of a dance."

Religions that talk of only one life create a hurry, an anxiety, to take the maximum juice out of this life because you feel you cannot miss anything. The idea of only one birth gave rise to science, looking for maximum enjoyment.

All Eastern religions talk about many births. You come down again and again. You play the same drama of life. It is just the same setup, same relationships but at different times. You feel bored and fed up and wonder, "How many times do I have to play the same drama?" You wish to get liberated and no more do you want to come back. You work towards *moksha**, liberation. Your understanding about death changes your outlook of life.

The topic of rebirth is not popular because it cannot be proven by science. Of course, now Near Death Experience (NDE) has become a hot subject as many doctors and psychologists have recorded their experiences. There are many people who have recorded thousands of NDEs, almost

Moksha - Liberation through Self Realization.

all of which fall into a similar pattern. They all relive the events of their lives. Hypnotists have regressed people into their past lives. These too fall into a pattern. They are similar to what the *rishis* said over five thousand years ago about what happens when you die, which is recorded in the Kathopanishad*.

Death in my presence - before enlightenment

This incident is from the days of my spiritual journey before enlightenment.

I was near a small village in North India, a place near Varanasi, the spiritual headquarters of Hindus*. Hindus* traditionally visit Varanasi at least once in their lifetime. The city has a floating population of at least two hundred thousand people every day.

I was there with an old monk who had been hospitalized and was in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). According to the *vedic* tradition, young monks take care of the elderly monks and *sannyasis**. As a young monk staying in that village, I started taking care of the elderly monk.

One day, while I was attending to him, suddenly it became obvious that the man in the bed next to his was about to die. He started struggling for life. I was able to see very clearly what was happening inside him. By that time I had had my deep spiritual experience or *satori* but I had not become fully enlightened, the realization of the purpose of my life had not happened. I was still seeking and my body was getting prepared for the explosion of energy that was to happen after enlightenment.

Several doctors were trying to give the monk critical medical care and support. The man was gasping for breath. I could see very clearly how death was happening in him. I could see very clearly how the life source was moving away from the body.

That is the strongest experience that has happened in my life outside my body. Inside my body, the strongest experience that happened was realizing the mission!

I was able to see what was happening, but I was not able to bear it. An important thing you should know is, if you see somebody in physical pain, it will affect you only about thirty to forty percent. But

Kathopanishad - One of the major *Upanishads* or scriptures that features the interaction between Yama, Hindu god of death and a young boy Nachiketa.

Hindus - Followers of Hindu religion, estimated at over a billion people.

Sannyasi - One who has renounced, a monk.

if you see somebody in depression and you can relate to the person and feel the depression, it will affect you more, say around sixty percent. Further, if it is emotional pain and if you are able to connect and understand the pain, it will affect you much more, about eighty percent. The more subtle the pain, the more you will be affected.

I saw not only the physical, mental or emotional pains of the dying man, but I also saw the being level pain. It was almost like I was going through the pain myself. I wanted to just run away from there but the elderly monk got afraid and just held my hand begging me to stay. I had been taking care of him for two to three months, so he had got really attached to me.

Since a young age, I have loved serving monks. I used to take food and clothes from my house and give it away to the monks! Serving monks has always been my passion. I have always felt that this whole *vedic* tradition is alive even today only because of such monks. They have kept this science alive.

For doing research in any science, you need great support in many areas. For example, in the West, a lot of research happens in the outer world science because there are people and organizations to support it. If it is research on medicines, a pharmaceutical company may support the research. If it is some research related to

space and astronomy, the government may sponsor and support it.

In the same way, in India, the whole country supports and sponsors spiritual science research. The whole country has taken up the responsibility to support an inner world scientist by providing him food, shelter and clothes so that he can continue his research in the inner world without spending time for basic outer world requirements. So I have always felt that it is my responsibility to take care of the monks and inner world scientists.

The elderly monk who I was taking care of in the ICU did not want me to leave because he was afraid seeing the man next to him dying. The man was going through such a hard time. It was like the whole six feet of his body was being torn apart! Imagine the pain if you have a small cut in your finger. Now imagine how painful it would be if the skin on your whole body is literally being peeled. It is something like a thousand scorpions stinging at the same time! I could clearly see the pain the man was going through.

On one side, the individual soul associated with all the unfulfilled emotions like desire, greed and guilt was undergoing terrible suffering. The individual soul wanted to stay in the body and fulfill these, but the body was tired and wanted to relax! It was a fight between the body and individual soul. It was as if the body wanted to leave

but the individual soul was trying to hold onto it. If the right hand was gone, the soul was trying to hold onto the left. If the right leg was dead and gone, the individual soul was trying to hold onto the left leg. Whichever part of the body it could hold on to, the individual soul was trying to hold onto it.

Part by part the body was dying. I saw that with the lower body there was not much struggle. But when it came to the upper body, the whole body was vibrating and pulsating with pain.

Slowly the individual soul started moving out of the physical body. Understand, when the breathing stops, that is the moment when the individual soul actually leaves the physical body. There are seven layers or bodies in you. The body of flesh, bones and blood that you see is the physical body. The energy moving in you as *prana* or life energy is the *pranic* body. There are five kinds of *prana* or air movements that happen in the body: air that enters into the body, air that circulates inside the body, air that spreads all over the body as life force, air that comes out of the body, and air that cleanses. These form the second body or the *pranic* body.

The third body is the body where inner chatter continuously happens. Inner chatter is nothing but the continuous stream of words or thoughts that move within you.

The fourth body is made up of emotions like fear, anger and greed which spread as feelings all over the body without even words coming into play. An emotion by itself can simply shake you. This is the emotional layer.

The fifth layer is the body that you experience in deep sleep. This is where all the engraved memories or engrams are stored in the seed or causal level. The engrams are not active but they are not dead either. It is like a deep coma where you are neither living what you want nor are you dead. You are just stuck in this layer.

From the causal body, the individual soul moves to the cosmic body. The sixth layer is the cosmic body where you experience bliss. This is what continuously inspires you to be a seeker. If you are a seeker, understand that this layer is strong in you. If you enrich this layer, your life will be blissful. If you have any engram remaining in this layer, you will assume another body and come back.

If you continuously enjoy pleasurable experiences, then you are said to be in heaven. If you are stuck in pain, then you are said to be in hell. Depending on how much pain you experienced in life, you will stay that long in the pain body or hell at the time of death. Depending on how much pleasure you experienced in life, you will stay that long in the cosmic body or heaven.

Hell and heaven are purely psychological. This is the truth. Based on what engrams you have, you experience heaven and hell. That is why different cultures visualize heaven in their own way because heaven is not a place, it is an experience.

The seventh layer is the *nirvanic** layer which corresponds to enlightenment.

At the time of death, there is a powerful fight between the owner or the individual soul and the object or the body. The object says, 'I am tired, I can't function any more.' The owner says, 'No, I want to use you.'

When the object wins, the physical body dies and the individual soul moves to the next layer, the *pranic* body. This is the layer you are in when you normally dream. While dreaming, your logic loses its power over you but your desires remain active. The very definition of dream is, the state where logic has no power but desires and engrams remain active. Even when you are unconscious or in coma, your logic will not be active.

As long as you are in the physical body, you will have desires with the logic to analyze whether the desires are needed or not and which one of the desires should be fulfilled etc. Desires are under your control, there is a balancing mechanism. But when the desires exist without the

supporting logic, the individual soul will be kicked around like a football by the desires. On one side there will be guilt and on the other side, desires that play on the individual soul.

When I saw the man dying, I could see that the individual soul was slowly moving out, layer by layer. I could see the soul suffering intensely when it went through the unfulfilled desires. The soul was literally being eaten by guilt when it realized, 'I did not fulfill the purpose and mission of my life.' Understand, you will remember the purpose of your birth only during death.

When you are born, your body travels through the birth canal of the mother, and because of the intense pain that you go through, you go into coma or the deepest unconscious state, and you forget the whole purpose of taking birth. It is like this: you booked the flight ticket and sat inside the aircraft also, but during the flight you were put in coma and so when you landed, you forgot all about why you came to that particular place! Only when you leave the place and board the flight again, you suddenly remember why you had come to that place!

In the same way, when you die, you feel the strong guilt of not fulfilling the purpose of your birth or what we call the *prarabdha**.

Nirvanic - Related to the bliss layer, the innermost of the seven layers of energy bodies in us.

Prarabdha - Mindset and desires that we bring into this world when we are born.

After passing through this guilt, next, all the pain experiences of your life will come up. So at the time of death, you first pass through physical pain, then through all desires, next through all guilt, then through all emotional pain and finally through all the pleasures that you experienced in this birth.

Normally, as soon as you reach the cosmic body or the sixth layer itself, you return to assume the next body, the next birth. The individual soul returns to assume the next body. Sometimes, rarely, you go beyond the sixth layer into the *nirvanic** body. Then you don't come back to assume another body.

When you travel through these various bodies and experience your unfulfilled desires, deep guilt and intense pain, you decide strongly, 'Let me take another body, another birth. When I do, I will not forget the purpose of my life and get caught in these illusive games. I will straightaway follow the path of Truth.' But when you actually take birth the next time, again because of the intense pain during birth, you drop into coma and forget all about your decision!

Finally, the man died. But the experience left a strong scar in me. It left a very strong impression in my mind. The fortunate thing was that the elderly monk became alright and he was discharged from the hospital. I

continued my journey, and after a few months, I had my own death experience and I became enlightened, thus realizing the mission and purpose of my life. My life as a liberated being started at the age of twelve itself when I had my deep spiritual experience. But the clarity about the mission, and what was exactly going to happen through my body, dawned when I became enlightened.

Death in my presence - after enligtenment

After my enlightenment, I came back to South India. I was in Bangalore in a devotee's house, healing people who sought me out. At that time, a devotee was admitted in the ICU and I was requested to heal him.

There again, while healing, the person in the bed next to the devotee started dying! The moment I saw that the person was about to die, the first thing I felt like doing was to move away from the suffering that was about to come! But the devotee was afraid and not ready to leave me!

Suddenly I saw that this person who was dying, was not going through any suffering like the earlier person. I was shocked, and I became very curious. Earlier, the

Nirvanic - Related to the bliss layer, the innermost of the seven layers of energy bodies in us.

movement of the individual soul from layer to layer was great suffering and torture for it. But this soul was moving so smoothly from layer to layer just like how a knife moves through butter, or how a snowball rolls down!

In the first layer or physical body, there was a little pain. Then suddenly the pain disappeared and the individual soul moved to the *pranic* layer. It moved from layer to layer like a royal guest! It was so empowered, that the desires, guilt and pain were not able to attack it at all. Even in the causal layer, it did not fall asleep. It was so energetic, and it finally entered the *nirvanic* layer, relaxed and just disappeared!

I thought that this person must be an evolved being. I asked his relatives whether he was a spiritual person or a meditator. The family was surprised and replied that the man had never meditated or done any spiritual practice in all his life! He had lived a completely materialistic life.

I contemplated as to why the first death I had witnessed was terrible while the second one was so wonderful. What I am about to tell you now is the honest and straight truth, and I am saying it because I have the great responsibility of telling it to you. When I meditated to know the difference between the two deaths, the revelation happened: at the time of the second death I was an enlightened person.

The second person had died in the presence of an enlightened being! In the case of the first death, my presence could not help, because I could not radiate the energy of enlightenment at that time. So the first person died an ordinary death, while the second person died a wonderful death in the presence of an enlightened being who had realized the Truth.

When this revelation happened, I saw a deep compassion coming out of my being. I felt that if at all I can give this as a gift to every individual, my mission will be accomplished. A peaceful death is such a powerful and wonderful gift which nobody but an enlightened being can give. I started meditating as to how I can give this gift to everyone. Obviously I can't be in the ICU of all the hospitals and wait for people to die! I contemplated on the science behind the whole thing, and understood what really happens at the time of death.

Let me explain:

As long as you hold onto your ordinary logic and remain in the physical layer, the master is just a simple faith for you. The material world appears more solid and real. But when you travel to the deeper layers, the master becomes reality while the material world becomes vague and blurred.

It is like how during your night dream, the dream world looks real and the waking world looks vague, whereas when you are

awake, that is when you are with a higher consciousness, the dream world becomes imagination while the waking world becomes reality. In the dream state, the dream world that you see appears alive, like a 4D colour film! When you come out of the dream, the whole dream appears black and white.

In the same way, if you are raised to a still higher consciousness, this waking world will become dull, while things like spiritual truths and the master will become alive and real! When you disconnect from the body and rise into higher consciousness, the master and the superconscious energy will become a gross reality.

When the second death happened, the intense enlightened presence straightaway caused him to connect strongly to it.

Understand, as you sit now and here, what is stopping you from connecting with the enlightened energy of the master and merging with it? Only your own logic and reasons.

As you sit here, there are still doubts in your unconscious like, 'If I drop my possessions and surrender, the master may take it away!' The other problem is, presently, as of now all other things in this world also appear as reality, and you think the master is also real to that same depth.

You experience me as the same frequency as the rest of the material world. In the case of the second dying person, all his outer world things became inaccessible to him at the time of death. He could not sign his checkbook or drive his car! Whatever was holding him back in the material world was automatically being taken away from him. When he looked around, only I, the enlightened energy was there! He saw the strong light energy and just held on to me! The surrender automatically happened to him because I was there at that moment. Even in his case, if he had seen me while he was alive, he may have struggled to surrender and connect to me! Only when everything was taken away from him, there was nothing to hold him back from connecting to me.

There is a beautiful story in the Bhagavatam*:

There was once a rich devotee. He asked Krishna, 'I want more wealth and possessions.' Krishna granted him his wish. There was also a poor lady, who had a cow and a small house. Krishna once visited her house, ate the food she served, blessed her and left. That very same day, her cow died.

Somebody asked Krishna about the strange happening of how a rich person got more

Bhagavatam - The foremost epic of Hindu religion describing the incarnations of Vishnu, especially his incarnation as Krishna. It was written by Vyasa, who was also the author of the epic Mahabharata.

wealth while the poor lady was deprived of her only source of income!

Krishna beautifully explains, “The king was already in heavy illusion of the material world. So I gave him what he wanted so that he will ultimately get tired of material things and turn towards enlightenment. In the case of the poor lady, there was only one thing that she really wanted, and that was to connect to Me. And the only thing that was stopping her from that was the cow. I took away the cow so that she could completely merge into Me!”

In the same way, in the case of the second death, the ‘cow’ was taken away. In the physical layer, the man was not able to connect. But in the *pranic* layer, the consciousness entered a different space, and the man was able to clearly see me there. The master’s presence is such an intense light. It is much stronger and of a higher frequency than this world, just like how this world is of a higher frequency than your dream world.

The man realized that there is something of a higher frequency and he completely surrendered to it. When he surrendered, all his other engraved memories lost their power over him. The individual consciousness became empowered. Desires, guilt, pain, pleasure, everything bowed down. Straightaway, the individual soul’s frequency increased.

Understand, when the seer is strong, the seen has no power over you. This is the science of death.

In the case of the first death, the seen was stronger than the seer. In the second death, the seer was stronger than the seen.

I intensely meditated how to transmit this science to people. Suddenly, a revelation happened to me.

Understand, energy is not constrained by space and time. It is just like the satellite waves that are present in space. If you have a set-top box converter, you can see the channel that you tune into. An enlightened master’s energy pervades the whole cosmos. I just need to place the set-top box in people. It is like a pacemaker, just that this is a pacemaker! Once it is placed, the person can connect to it while leaving the body.

A master is a person who creates a formula to reproduce his inner world spiritual experiences in the inner world of others. Such a formula is the Life Bliss Program Level 2 also called the Nithyananda Spurana Program. It is a program that inserts the pacemaker in individuals.

Along with placing the pacemaker it is my promise that, wherever you may be, in whatever situation you may be at the time of death, I will be there and see that you beautifully relax into the *nirvanic* body. Please understand, I am responsible for

what I am talking here right now. Even if I leave the body, I am responsible, because it is a promise; it is my commitment to whoever hears these words directly from me.

When I started sharing this technology, I realized that the people I shared it with, not only experienced peace at the end of their lifetime, but their life itself became intense, joyful and ecstatic once I shared it with them.

Understand, both life and death become blissful when deeply engraved memories are removed from your being. Your health becomes better, you start attracting wealth and better relationships because the frequency of being itself is different.

You will be relaxed in the *nirvanic* body when this peacemaker is placed inside you. You then have the freedom: to take one more birth as a conscious being or get enlightened and never again assume a body.

What you remember in the last moment counts

There is a beautiful story in the *Upanishads*, the sacred *vedic* texts:

A rishi called Jadabharatha somehow became attached to a deer he had rescued. He was living the life of a

renunciate but he got attached to this deer.

From morning till night, he used to spend his time taking care of that deer. When he was dying, he was not able to forget the animal. He started worrying about the deer, 'Oh! Who will take care of the deer? What will happen to it after my death?'

When he died, in the next birth, he was born as a deer.

Beautifully the verse in the Upanishad says that whatever you think in your last moment, you become *that!*

Some people think very cleverly, 'Let me live my whole life the way I want to live. In the last few moments, I will remember god and chant His name and enter heaven somehow.' Please be very clear, only that which you thought of in your whole life, will come up when you leave the body. Don't think that at that last moment you can play the game! No!

Actually, when you leave the body your whole system will be in such agony, because eighty or ninety years of your life will be run through in a fast-forward mode. All that will be seen are the scenes being fast-forwarded. Whatever experience you had intensely, only that will come up before you. Your spiritual experiences will come up in multicolor.

Please understand that ‘thoughtless awareness’ is the strongest experience you can have in your life. Even for a single moment, if you had that experience, it is enough. Naturally, when you leave the body that will come up. That will act as a light and you will be able to move into the Consciousness.

One more thing is important to understand about the time of death. If a person did not die naturally but had died prematurely or committed suicide, and if he did not have the conscious experience before his death, he has to wait for the remaining years he might have otherwise lived before he can assume a new birth. The spirit will live on without a body.

For example, if at the time of taking this body one had decided to live in this body for ninety years and then committed suicide at the age of sixty, then for the next thirty years the person has to struggle without a body waiting for the next body to be entered into. If the person commits suicide trying to escape the hell he was undergoing in the body, he will be forced to undergo the same hell without the body. Just imagine how much more suffering this would be. That is why one should never consider suicide as a solution to problems in this life.

Why do people normally contemplate suicide? Because they think this life is a torture, a suffering. But if they commit

suicide, they will realize that what they are going to go through will be a much worse torture.

It will be like this: if you have sweets in front of you, but you don’t have a tongue to taste or hand to take it and put it into your mouth, how much of suffering it will be! In the same way, the whole world will be in front of you, but you will not have the body to enjoy it when you float around waiting for your next body after having committed suicide.

My own death experience

Let me narrate to you my own conscious death experience in Varanasi.

I always used to think that I should have an experience of death, that I should face death directly. But somehow, that thought never became a priority. For any experience to happen, the related thought has to become the topmost priority. It should not just be in one corner of your mind.

Usually on our ‘to do’ lists, we have washing, cleaning, paying the rent and phone bill, and finally if time permits, enlightenment also! No! Enlightenment will not happen if it is this way. Only when it becomes a top priority, only

when the urge becomes urgent, everything around you will start aligning itself for the experience to happen in you. This is the case not just with enlightenment. With anything, it is true.

Understand, if at all you are complaining that what you wish to happen is not happening, it is because it has not become the topmost on your priority list, nothing else. Nothing else and no one else should be blamed for it. You will see that the moment it becomes the topmost priority, there will be an energy play that comes into being and it will simply happen. Until then, it will wait for you, that's all. The death experience was not my top priority and so somehow, it was getting postponed.

In my wandering days, I had been to Varanasi, the holy city for Hindus, which has an estimated 200,000 daily floating population. Further, every day around 100 dead bodies are estimated to be burnt in a place called Manikarnika Ghat on the banks of the sacred river Ganga*. It is traditionally believed that if somebody dies or somebody's body is burnt in that area,*

they will be liberated. They will have direct enlightenment.

It is not just a traditional belief. The enlightened mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa confirms it with his own experience. He says, 'I saw very clearly Shiva himself going near every burning body, taking the soul, unclutching it from the body-mind and liberating it!' So, you can't say that it is a mythological belief. It is a solid experience of an enlightened master.*

I had the fortune of going to Manikarnika Ghat. Traditionally, it is not only believed, but it is true that for the last 2000 years, the fire that is used to light the pyres has never been put off.

Whether it rains or shines or floods, people never bring fire when they come with the dead body to Manikarnika Ghat. The fire will already be burning there and they will just take it to light the dead body, that's all. The fire just continuously burns the bodies as they arrive. Sometimes I would see that two to three bodies are burnt at the same time, so many bodies keep coming!

Hindus - Followers of Hindu religion, estimated at over a billion people.

Ganga - The most celebrated river in India, considered holy by all Hindus.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa - Enlightened mystic from India.

Especially in the evenings, the bodies will be more in number. From the place where the person dies they will walk carrying the dead body, with chants such as, 'Ram naam satya hai, Ram naam satya hai' (Lord Rama's name is the ultimate and eternal truth). By evening they will reach Manikarnika Ghat.

The scene there, the very experience of just being there, I cannot describe to you verbally. You have to be there to experience it!

To tell you honestly, by just being there, the fear of death just disappeared from my system. You see so many bodies continuously being burned every day. You feel, 'I am also going to go like this one day...all right', that's all! You feel there are so many people giving you company! It is like one more trip that you make, that's all. You don't feel lonely about death at all.

In your life, you may see one or two bodies being burnt, so you still have the fear of death. But at Manikarnika Ghat, there will be no ritual done. They will bring the body and straightaway dip it in the river Ganga three times while chanting, 'Ram naam satya hai, Ram naam satya hai, Ram naam satya hai'. By this time, the fire will be ready,*

and the wood will be arranged. They will bring the body straight from the water and burn it, that's all!

One strange thing that you see there is that none of the relatives will stay there and do any further rituals. The moment they dip the body in the Ganga and place the body for burning, they will go away, that's all! The people who maintain the ghat will take care of the rest. You will not know how long it will take for the body that you brought to be burnt completely. There will be a queue and bodies will be burning continuously.*

I thought to myself, 'Let me try to sit here and see what goes on.' I sat at the Ghat. In just an hour's time, I felt that death is no more a strange incident which happens once in a while only for some relative or friend. I was sitting there watching bodies arriving one after another. It was like any other queue, that's all. Different sizes, genders, ages, and communities of people arrived to be consumed by the same burning flame.

When you continuously see dead bodies being burnt you actually lose respect for death! As of now, you have too much of respect, too many ideas about death. That is the problem. Death is actually

Ganga - The most celebrated river in India, considered holy by all Hindus.

nothing but this. The breath that goes inside the body doesn't come out, that's all. Nothing much can be done about it. Neither can you rewind it nor fast-forward it.

As I was watching this scene continuously, initially the little fear that I had about death also disappeared and slowly it actually became interesting to watch. I went near the people who maintain the fire and started helping them. As I was helping them, I was thinking to myself, 'After all, one day this body of mine is also going to become like this dead body that is burning now.'

When you remember that death is going to happen to you, the respect that you carry for your ego will come down. Because, whenever you think that something should not leave you, it is just the ego, nothing else. When you know for sure that everything is going to leave you, then the respect for the ego just drops drastically. The respect I had for my ego just dropped from me.

Then I decided, 'After all I am going to die. Either I should have a conscious death experience now itself and live the rest of my life without the death-fear, or really die, that's all.' I decided that I have to see death happening to me one way or the other.

There was a small Shiva temple around the corner and a small tower above the temple. I went and sat in that tower so that nobody would disturb me. I sat in that tower and from there I started seeing the dead bodies being burnt.

I still remember the strong click, the deep understanding and instant realization that triggered the whole experience that was to follow.

An elderly lady's body was being burnt. She had a big belly. Her clothes were being consumed by the fire and then the fat that was in the belly started melting and flowing. Sorry for describing this so vividly but I have to do it to explain the strong experience! I could see clearly that because of the fat flowing, the fire was burning with even more intensity. That gave a very strong click to me and I said, 'God! Yes, the very same thing is going to happen to this body also!'

That click opened up a deep fear of death inside me. The fear spread all over the body. But I faced the fear consciously. I could see very clearly the fear spreading all over the body, and when the fear hit my awareness, that became the experience of death. I went through a conscious experience of my own death and came out of it.

Understand, whenever your fear is suppressed, it stays inside you.

Whenever the fear comes out and you are not consciously facing it, it becomes a fear stroke, and shakes your whole nervous system and breaks it down.

When the fear is faced consciously, it becomes the death experience, that's all!

If you just escape from the death-fear, when the deep fear happens, it becomes death. When you face the deep fear consciously, it becomes death experience.

Death-fear plus unconsciousness is suppression or perversion.

Death-fear plus unconsciousness where you don't suppress but you don't face it either is a fear stroke or a nervous breakdown because you just get frightened and shaken.

Death-fear plus conscious awareness is a death experience.

I was able to see very clearly the fear that arose. When I faced it consciously with awareness, it became my death experience. The body was dead. It was not moving.

Death-fear plus conscious awareness is death experience.

For two and a half days I had no food, no water, no thought, no question, no doubt. The body alone was there. Only after the experience had passed, I realized that I had been like that for two and a half days! I could see with closed eyes that the body was dead and there was no movement. Suddenly, after two and a half days, the click happened again, 'God! The body is dead but I still exist! I am there!' That clarity, when it clicked, became such an intense ecstasy in me! The fear of death had left me once and for all.

I was in such deep ecstasy, such joy, and such bliss! I slowly opened my eyes and I was able to move the body. The first thing I felt was such a surge of ecstasy and gratitude. I went down to the Ganga, sprinkled a little Ganga water on myself, took the Ganga water in the kamandalu , took a little ash from the fire, and went straight to the Kashi Vishwanath temple. I went up to the Shiva linga* , offered the ash I had brought and did the puja* with such*

Kamandalu - Small water pot carried by Hindu monks.

Linga - Representation of Shiva as a symbol of rejuvenation combining male and female principles.

Puja - Hindu ritual worship.

inexpressible gratitude. I saw that Vishwanath was simply alive there!

Understand, because I died Vishwanath became alive! Until the day before, because I was still alive, Vishwanath was always an ordinary stone. I used to feel that to touch this stone, thousands of people are coming everyday from so far away... what foolishness! I always felt that the Vishwanath deity was an ordinary stone. I felt that way because I was still alive. When I died, I saw clearly, He became alive!

Only one can be alive, either He or you. When you see the Truth, He will become alive. You will not be alive anymore as you now think. The fear of death left me once and for all. I can say that this is one of the very strong experiences that transformed me to search for the ultimate experience of enlightenment.

What happens at the time of death

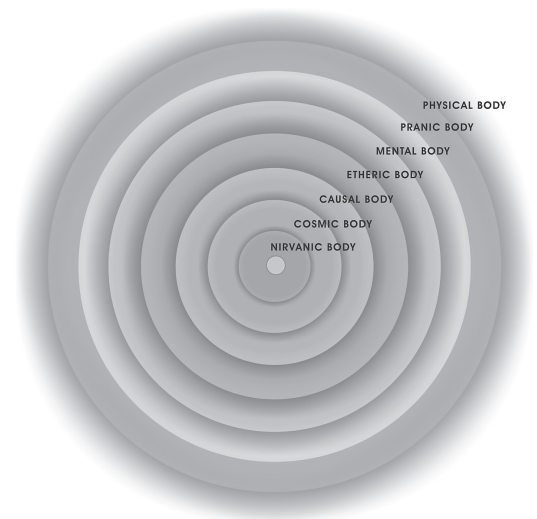
What exactly happens at the time of leaving the body? This question cannot be answered by a living person as he has not experienced death. It cannot be answered by a dead person since he cannot come back to narrate the experience.

Only an enlightened being, a person who has gone through death consciously and come back anew, can exactly explain what happens during death.

I am going to reveal the mystery of death now. This may be surprising, even shocking to many of you. But this is the truth. Whether you believe it or not, accept it or not, this is what happens at the time of death.

We do not just have one body. The physical body is just one of the seven bodies we have. It is the only gross body that can be felt and seen in space-time. However, we actually have seven layers or bodies or planes of existence. Since these layers have a subtle existence they cannot be seen or felt by the ordinary eye.

A simple representation of the seven bodies is shown below.



Each of the bodies holds a corresponding emotion. For example, the *pranic* body holds all the desires that arise in life. The mental body holds all the feelings of guilt experienced in life. The etheric body holds the experiences of mental pain felt in life.

When the spirit leaves the body it crosses all the seven body layers. The physical body dies. But, the remaining six bodies do not totally die. If you are holding a lot of desires in your life, all those unfulfilled desires are held in the *pranic* body. So even though the physical body dies, the *pranic* body does not die. When the life force leaves the *pranic* body, the being experiences tremendous suffering.

When you leave the physical body, your consciousness will be torn from the body and you will immediately fall into coma. According to doctors, coma is the automatic mechanism to make you not to feel the pain. It is automatic anesthesia. If the pain becomes too much, you can't bear and you automatically fall into coma.

When you move from the first body layer to the second body layer, all the unfulfilled desires, all the ways in which you wanted to live but did not live come up. When this happens, it is almost as if ten people are standing in a room kicking a football around. What will happen? Just like how the football is kicked from corner to corner, your consciousness will be kicked from all corners. In each corner, some desire

Desire is about the future and guilt is about the past. Actually both are same.

will be standing and kicking it. At the time your consciousness

is trying to leave the body, all your desires will be forcing you to re-enter the body so that you can enjoy them further and fulfill them.

On one side, the desires will be forcing you to enter the body again so that you can live and enjoy, while on the other side, the body will say, 'No! I am tired. I can't host you anymore, just leave!' That is what causes the pulling and pushing at the time of death. The pulling and pushing is nothing but the fight between your desires and your body.

Somehow, you manage to move away from the *pranic* body, and enter next into the mental body. When you enter into the mental body all your guilt rises. All the guilt about the way you felt you should have lived your life but never lived, all the mistakes committed, all the regrets, everything comes up.

Please understand, desire is about the future and guilt is about the past. But actually, both are one and the same. The way in which we *want to live* is desire, and the way in which we *wanted to live but didn't*, is guilt. Guilt is nothing but reviewing our past decisions with updated intelligence.

Like this, step by step, you move through different body layers.

The less the unfulfilled desires, the lighter is the *pranic* body and the easier it is to leave this body. Similarly, the less the guilt, the lighter is the mental body and the easier it is to leave this body.

One more thing, when the desires, guilt and pain are less intense, you not only have an easy death with less suffering but you also age gracefully. Ageing gracefully is what *vanaprastha sannyas** is all about. Being able to live in fulfillment in the latter part of life is the tremendous gift of *vanaprastha sannyas**.

All the guilt that we collect over our lives rises as we pass through the mental body. Then we come to the etheric body which is related to all our sufferings. All the suffering that we went through during our life is stored here.

Like this, each and every body layer has got its own *samskaras* or stored memories. Actually, traveling through these bodies is what is spoken about as hell. There is no other separate place called hell. Hell and heaven are not geographical locations but merely psychological spaces.

The first four bodies are related to the physical body-mind system. They store all

the engrams related to desires, guilt and pain experienced during that lifetime. The fifth body is experienced during deep sleep and when leaving the body. The sixth body is associated with happy memories and the seventh body is beyond sorrows and happiness, the ultimate consciousness.

Please understand, even attachment to happy memories brings us back into the cycle of birth and death. The desire to experience more and more similar incidents that are happy and joyful pulls us back and we take more births.

Understand, there is a big difference between bliss and happiness. Happiness comes from an external object or reason. For example, you feel happy when you get to eat your favorite candy. You feel that the candy is the cause of your happiness. But just think about it, if the candy was indeed the cause of you being happy, shouldn't it give you happiness every time you eat it? Can you keep eating more and more of that candy? No! If you are forced to eat your favorite candy one after the other, what happens? You will get sick of it. You will start hating that candy and run at the sight of it!

Happiness is a temporary feeling created by the mind. Bliss, the seventh body, is the

Vanaprastha Sannyas - The third stage of life according to the *vedic* tradition, where the wife and husband lead the rest of their married life in spiritual activities in pursuit of the ultimate Truth.

true reality. It is the causeless, unending happening inside you of spontaneous energy, joy and auspiciousness. It is like a fountain that continuously happens inside you for no reason.

Actually, the reason your favorite candy gives you happiness is that it acts as a trigger to put you into this space of bliss that is your true nature. But you mistake the happiness to be because of the candy, the external object. The happiness is because for those few moments, you come in touch with your inner bliss.

The cleaner the bodies, the lighter they are and the easier it is for the life force to leave the body. Just like its peel comes off a ripe banana, the life force easily moves out of the body.

Death happens everyday

In the seven bodies, the first four bodies - physical, *pranic*, mental and etheric, collapse into the causal body every time you go to sleep. The darkness of the causal body is associated with the deep sleep state, which is what rejuvenates you every day. So till you cross the fifth body, this 'death' happens every day. This is what happens when you fall into your daily sleep.

When the departing spirit moves beyond the fifth layer of causal body into the sixth

layer, which is the cosmic body the process of death is complete.

If the life force does not have to take another body to fulfill its remaining desires it then enters the seventh layer of *nirvanic* body, which is enlightenment. If the life force has to come back assuming another body to fulfill its desires, it is death.

Waking world Vs Dream world

When you enter into the dream state and start dreaming, this whole world in which you live now becomes black and white because you are in the dream world. You forget this whole world of your waking state and the dream world becomes very real and seen in multicolor. If you come out of the dream, this whole world that you wake up to is again seen in four dimensions, 4D.

Now when you are in this physical body and in the waking state, you experience this world as 4D, in multi-color. When you are in the dream world, you experience that world as 4D. So, when you are here, the dream world becomes black and white, and this world becomes 4D, and when you are there, the dream becomes 4D, and this world becomes black and white.

In the same way, when you move away from the physical body to the *pranic* body

at the time of death, this whole physical world will become unreal and seen in black and white. All your achievements, your pride, your efforts, your sorrow, your happiness, everything will no longer have any meaning and will appear in black and white. You will wonder, 'Why did I do all this work? Why did I think of all this as a base for my life?'

Let me explain why this happens. When you are alive you invest in your personality. You build up your personality based upon a few pillars like money, name and fame, relationships, pride that you have a big community, support circle, and so on.

If somebody asks you, 'Who are you?' what will you say? Your response will be, 'I am an engineer', 'I am a doctor', 'I am a lawyer', or 'I am the owner of four houses', or 'I am her husband', or 'I am her daughter'. Our personality is built on these few pillars.

When you move from the physical body, all these pillars, all these foundations will be completely shaken. You can't sign your name on your checks any more. Your signature is not accepted. Your bank balance is no more related to you. You can't handle your bank account. Your car will not be useful to you. At the most, only the ambulance will be useful!

Your house will be filled with all your near and dear ones weeping at your death. But

neither your house nor your near and dear ones will be useful to you. You can't even relate with your near and dear ones. None of them can come with you beyond the point of your death.

Only the conscious glimpse can come with you. Whatever has been the foundation for your being will be shaken. When the foundation is shaken, naturally you won't have anything to hold on to.

Understand this one thing. If we suddenly hear of some loss in our business, we will feel that our whole body is suffering. The suffering will not be just in one portion. The whole body will be suffering. It will be almost like our being is crushed.

So understand that when something moves away from us, our whole body suffers. When we move away from the physical body the same suffering starts happening in us. Whatever we thought was a foundation for our life is shaken.

As of now, this whole world will appear in 4D. All this talk about spirituality, meditation, growing the inner being, consciousness etc. will appear as black and white. That is why, when I call people for meditation, they tell me, 'I don't have time to meditate. Let me finish all my work and then come. I have a few more years to think about it.'

Be very clear, never say, 'I don't have time to meditate.' Be very clear to yourself and

say, 'I don't feel that it is that important in my life right now.' If you are not ready to meditate and say, 'I don't think meditation is so important in my life,' then you are honest. But if you say, 'I don't have time,' then you are just fooling yourself. Everyone has got the same 24 hours on hand to do what they feel they should. It is not that the few who are meditating are jobless. It is just a question of priority, of *what* you really want in your life. If spirituality and meditation appear as black and white to you now, you will not divert your energy in that area, that's all.

But this is what happens when you move away from the physical body at the time of death. Whatever you thought of as real and 4D when you were living disappears totally. Everything material is totally shaken and appears as black and white! At that time, all these things that attract you now will not have any basis at all. That is the reason why death is always a suffering. But at that moment, if you have had a conscious glimpse of truth at least once in your life before, then you can enter into death with awareness and fully conscious!

You see, now we are in two dimensions, the material world and spirituality. Right now, what is happening is that however many pillars we build our personalities and life upon, all those pillars are based on the material world which appears to be 4D. Not a single pillar is based on consciousness or

our inner space. Our whole personality is built only based on the outer space, our name and fame, what society speaks about us, etc. If everyone's opinion of us is that we are great, we think we are great. If everybody says, 'You are useless', we start getting depressed.

This happens because not even a single pillar of our building, our inner core or our being, is based on spirituality. The entire structure is based on the outer space. That is the reason that when those pillars are shaken by anybody, we start suffering terribly. If we have even one pillar based on consciousness, we can depend on that to stand straight without suffering.

One more thing: these outer world pillars are not in our control at all. Anyone passing by can easily shake them. Even if a small child comes up to us and says, 'You are a fool', we will get a little shaken, is it not? That child might have even said it only to try a few new words that he is learning! But you get shaken. So understand that these outer world pillars are that weak.

That is what the Bhagavad Gita, the ultimate teaching of Krishna, says, 'What comes and stands in your mind at the time of leaving the body will alone decide about your next birth or enlightenment.' If we have at least one pillar on consciousness, naturally we will not have suffering when we leave the body. All the other pillars will become black and white. But even if the

Our personality is based on outer space. There is nothing solid in our inner space.

other pillars become black and white, this one pillar will be there in multicolor, 4D and will take us through.

As of now our problem is that we have no pillar to take us through. Our entire personality is based on the outer space. All our pillars are made up of what we think is 4D now. There is nothing solid in our inner space either. That is why, like a football, people can kick us from corner to corner in the outer space. Anybody can just throw one word towards us to make us depressed. If somebody says we are mad, we shout at them and prove that we are mad!

Please understand that if we build at least one pillar based on our inner space, this pillar will shine in 4D at the time of death and help us leave the body beautifully.

The art of dying

There is a beautiful Zen saying, 'Learning the art of dying is the real and the ultimate knowledge that we can learn in our life.'

A small Zen story:

One day, an enlightened master suddenly declared that he was going to die the next day morning around 6

o'clock. Of course, enlightened people always know about their death. They can declare before hand when they are going to die. He declared that he was going to die around 6 o'clock in the morning.

His disciples said, 'No, no, please wait for 2-3 hours. It will be too cold early in the morning. Why don't you wait for a few hours so that we can prepare for the last rites?' The master agreed and told the disciples that he would pass away around 12 o'clock. Exactly at 12 noon, he greeted them all and left the body!

One more important historical incident:

When the British started colonizing India, in Central India there was a small tribal village. That village no longer exists, it is gone! The British were trying to bring that village under their control. The whole village had only about hundred people but they were highly mystical people, totally into devotion and meditation. They were experts in the ancient mystic rites. It is said that in that village people never fell ill.

Even if they dreamt that they had hurt somebody in their dreams, the next morning they would go and apologize to that person. Unless you have subtle vengeance, unless you have a subconscious idea to hurt a person,

you will not hurt him even in your dreams. So, these people used to apologize for hurting someone even in the dream so that even the unconscious idea of hurting someone was not developed. They were such a highly mature spiritual group. They had nothing of the outer world but they had everything of the inner world.

When the British tried to bring the village under their rule, the villagers were not ready to surrender and lose their freedom to anyone else. But the British said, 'Either you surrender or we will kill you.'

You will be surprised, these villagers said, 'You don't have to kill us. Don't bother, we know how to die. We will die by ourselves.' The British thought that the villagers would commit suicide by taking some poison or by some method like that.

The whole village gathered in one room as a group. The whole group stood in one place and in front of the eyes of the British soldiers they just chanted some mantra, prayed and all the hundred villagers just fell. They just dropped their bodies and died.

The incident is recorded by the British soldiers and they say that for the first time they felt the guilt of killing somebody. They say, 'We people are trained to kill.

Destruction can be looked at as rejuvenation.

We never felt guilt when we kill masses of people. But here, we felt deep guilt because we killed innocent people, such simple but great people!

Space for the new

In the *vedic* tradition, Shiva, the lord of destruction, is considered auspicious. The very name 'Shiva' means 'causeless auspiciousness'. You will be surprised to know that in Sanskrit if you literally translate the word for destruction, 'samhara', it does not mean destruction, it means rejuvenation. The word that we use commonly for destruction actually means creating space for new things to happen. Even destruction can be looked at from a different dimension of rejuvenating or creating a new space for better things to happen.

Even the disease which happens to your body just creates a new space so that you can start having a new body and so that you can get ready to live a new life. You can just restart the whole process. See, actually restarting the whole process can heal many of your wounds. There are some wounds that can be healed by falling asleep and coming back. You will forget them when you wake up.

Just be in the present, allow time to flow through you.

There are some wounds that can't be healed by falling asleep and coming back. At that point you decide, 'Let me restart the whole process, let me just start afresh.' Then you allow the body to have some disease so that the rejuvenation process can start.

According to the *vedic* tradition no experience goes waste. Every time when you move from one moment to the next moment you are expanding, you are growing, and you are learning. If you look from this angle even your death is auspicious because you are going to the next step. Only if you are not clear about the next step you will feel the fear of death.

Conquer death – be in the present

Understand, the future becoming the past is the present. Present moment is the point where the future is slowly becoming past. Present moment is the possibility of rejuvenation.

When you are in the present, you will see very clearly that the future coming inside you to become the past leaves so much energy in you. Every moment you are just overflowing with energy.

If you are caught by future you are in the world of fantasies, building castles in the air. You are left with no energy to live in the real world. So long as you are caught in the future, you will feel insecure, afraid.

If you are caught in the past, you will feel things are inauspicious, that life is dull and dead. You will be just like a rock which can't be moved, which is dead with no energy.

If you are established in the present, you will feel whatever is happening is auspicious. You will become like Shiva, who is the rejuvenator, who is constantly creating space for new things to happen.

You will be fearless. The moment you are fearless about the things happening, you will feel everything happening around you is causeless auspiciousness. You will be just like a flowing river, flowing energy. You will be just radiating the causeless auspiciousness.

When you are in the present moment, through you the future moves and becomes the past and you are there like a hollow bamboo, untouched by time, beyond death.

Conquering death is a simple technique. Just be in the present, allow time to flow through you, allow time to penetrate you, and allow time to do its activity through you.

When the future comes inside, you don't be greedy and just catch it. Let it pass through you, let it become past, and let it have its own course. Just be in the present and you will see you are living in eternity.

Every day your energy frequency increases. Every moment, your life only expands. Even your death is one more expansion. It is expansion in a dimension that your logic may not be able to relate with. But it is still an expansion nevertheless.

Complete 'yes'

What needs to be taken away from you is taken away, what needs to be added to you is added. Constantly the auspiciousness is expressing itself through you. Your mind which is saying 'no' to this change is the most inauspicious thing. Your mind that is trying to give you the false promise of security is the most inauspicious thing.

Look into your life. Have you ever said a complete 'yes' to anything even once? Saying a complete 'yes' to life even once is what I call enlightenment.

Decide this very moment that you will say a complete yes to life. Then so many insecurities will come upon your mind. What if something happens? Decide that you will take the next half an hour to say a complete 'yes'. Your mind might say, 'No

no. Then what will happen to my life? I may die. I may not get food'. These are all the tricks your mind plays to keep you under its control, under the control of the ego, which is the root cause of all misery.

When you keep on strengthening the mind that keeps saying 'no' by its very nature, the mind becomes so strong that it starts saying 'no' to anything and everything. By and by, the 'no' gets engraved even in your breathing. 'No' getting engraved in your energy flow is the first reason for cancer.

Just like life if you go through it with a complete yes, death also leads you to a higher frequency. On the other hand, even life can lead you to a lower frequency if you go through with a big 'no'. Whether you are going to enter into the higher frequency, higher consciousness, or lower consciousness is going to be decided only by your 'yes' or 'no'.

Just like if you go through life with a complete yes, death also leads you to higher frequency.

Auspicious Death

A true story:

The great master from India,

Paramahansa Yogananda, had moved to USA in 1920 and settled there. How he left the body is very interesting. Till the last moment he was doing his routine of giving discourses and attending programs.*

On the day of his passing away, he was attending a banquet in honor of the then visiting Indian Ambassador to USA, Binay Ranjan Sen, in Los Angeles. At the conclusion of his speech, he just relaxed from his body and died.

His body did not deteriorate for more than twenty days. No odor of decay came from his dead body at any time. There is a beautiful write-up about his death in his autobiography as an appendix. It was such a beautiful experience. Even his death was auspicious for him.

Reality is a dream

You are not the eyes. The eyes are just an instrument. Many times you can see, your eyes may be open but you are not seeing, not registering the scene you are seeing.

Just remember you are seeing *through* the eyes. If you look through the eyes,

suddenly you will see you are witnessing everything. You are not the two 'holes' called the eyes. You are only seeing through the two holes called eyes.

If you feel you are the two eyes, you are caught in ego. In your dream, as long as the attention is on the objects, you will continue to dream. When your attention is turned towards yourself, that is from the seen to the seer, you will be awakened.

The moment you realize you are something beyond the eyes, your attention is turned to the seer. Then you realize that this world is made of the same stuff of which your dream is made.

As long as you think you are seeing, the whole attention is on the seen. That is what I call ego. When you step back and realize you are seeing through the eyes, the whole attention is on the seer. That is what I call innocence. Innocence means having a clear understanding that whatever you see in the outer world is made of the same stuff out of which your dreams are made.

These are the steps: the first is getting the idea that what you see is a dream. The next is having the *shakti*, the energy, to change the dream. The third is the *buddhi*, the intelligence to know it is a dream and so there is no need to change it!

Paramahansa Yogananda - An enlightened master from India, well known for his book 'Autobiography of a Yogi'.

An important truth you should know is that dreams are made of the same stuff of which this waking world is made. If you think dreams are ordinary, this world is also ordinary. If you think this world is some kind of reality for you, dreams are also reality.

Understanding this will give you the energy to make your dreams into reality and it will give you the intelligence to understand that whatever you think as reality is nothing but one more dream.

Life and Death Vs Waking and Sleep

Air and *Prana*

To understand this powerful, life-transforming truth, we need to understand about this stuff of which the dream world and this world are made of. We need to know about *prana*, the life energy that sustains us.

Understand, the air you breathe is just a vehicle in which the *prana* comes in and goes out. *Prana* is the life force, the energy itself. Understand this one example. If a truck comes inside this campus and leaves something and goes out, the truck is like the air, the breath. The product that is delivered is *prana*.

Dreams are made of the same stuff of which this waking world is made.

Constantly, the air is going in and leaving the *prana* inside and the air is coming out. Constantly, we are taking *prana* through air.

In India, if you attended Kumbh Mela, the largest spiritual gathering in the world attended by millions of people, you may have seen the *yogis* bury their heads totally in the earth for three days. They are able to do this because they know how to take the *prana* into their body directly from the cosmos without the help of air. As long as you take *prana* through air, you need to breathe through your nose. You need to inhale and exhale. But, when you can take the *prana* directly without the help of air, you don't need to inhale or exhale through the nose. Your body can directly take the *prana* through the cosmos.

Life or death depends on the direction of *prana*

One more thing: as long as the incoming breath is bringing in more *prana* and going out as an empty vehicle, your life will be strengthened.

If the reverse starts happening, if the air comes with less *prana* and goes out with

more *prana*, it means death is nearing or the life energy is going towards death. When death nears, just the empty air will enter but when it goes out, it will go with the *prana*.

That is the reason all the great masters, such as Buddha, Shankara, Guru Nanak*, and Mahavira*, knew or could sense the *prana* and they could predict their death. Six months before their passing away, they were able to see very clearly the *prana* moving out of their body.

There is a beautiful concept in *Ayurveda** called as the 'peak age' which is based on this science of *prana*. Till a particular age, the person will be receiving more *prana* through the incoming breath and less *prana* will be going out through the outgoing breath. The moment the outgoing breath starts carrying more *prana* than the incoming breath, they know now the person is moving towards death.

***Prana* in the states of waking, dream and deep Sleep**

The *prana* moves, functions, and stays in the *ajna chakra** when you are in the waking state. When you are in the dream state, it moves around the neck, around the *vishuddhi chakra*. When you are in deep sleep, it moves around the *anahata chakra**, heart center.

That is why you can never fall asleep if your head is erect. You cannot fall asleep unless you relax the head, unless you allow the *prana* movement to move from the forehead to the heart region. That is the reason why you can't sleep unless you relax your head. Even if you are lying on the bed, if you keep your head straight and tense, you will never be able to fall asleep.

If you think constantly, your head will be erect and your shoulder will be under stress. The stress in the shoulder and the head being erect are very closely associated. You can see this in your life. When you reach your office in the morning you don't have to do any work. Just sitting in your chair

Guru Nanak - Founder of Sikh religion.

Mahavira - Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th and last Jain *tirthankara* or enlightened one, and established the tenets of the religion of Jainism, founded in India and now practiced by millions worldwide.

Ayurveda - Traditional Indian medicine, meaning Knowledge of Life.

Ajna chakra - The sixth energy center located between the eyebrows. Means 'command' or 'will' in Sanskrit. This *chakra* is blocked by one's own ego.

Anahata chakra - Subtle energy center in the heart region related to love.

and thinking about the problems will stress you and you will have shoulder pain!

Actually all the pain and the stress you experience first in the shoulder only. When your shoulder is under stress, the head will never bend, the head will never relax. That is why people who think constantly can neither relax their head nor will they be able to fall asleep.

Controlling life through awareness

Constantly, life is slipping and entering into death. Life slipping into death is what we usually call living. Please understand, actually we don't live. We are just waiting for death to happen. Ordinary human beings don't live. Life is just slipping into death, disappearing into death. That is the reason however many years you may live, you don't feel satisfied, and you don't feel you have lived your life because you don't even know what life is.

When you become conscious of life, when you start thinking, contemplating about your life, when you bring awareness into your life, you create a new center in your being. Between this life and death, when you bring more awareness into the life, you create a new center, a new space in your life - that is what I call consciousness.

Whenever you are conscious, you start deciding about your life. For example, the more you become aware,

the more you start designing or choosing what type of car you should drive, what type of house you should live in, and what type of life you want. You start deciding every inch. You become conscious about everything: how you should talk, how you should behave, how you should think, every inch you start becoming aware.

The moment you start becoming aware, you start deciding, and you start controlling your life. When you become completely aware you will start controlling your death also.

These two events of life and death then happen at the conscious level. If you are consciously thinking, it is life. If your consciousness can't think, it is death.

If you are consciously thinking, it is life. If your consciousness can't think, it is death.

Awareness - control dreams and deep sleep, life and death

In the unconscious level, two things happen as well, dream and deep sleep. In

the unconscious level, if you are aware, it is dream. If you are able to see anything, if you are able to sense anything, if you are able to feel anything, if you are able to experience any movement, then it is called dream. If you are not aware of anything, if you are not able to feel anything, if you are not able to understand any movement, it is deep sleep.

In the waking state, when you are aware or you are in what psychology calls as conscious state, it is life. If you are not aware, it is death.

When you bring more awareness into your life, you take charge of your life. In the same way, in the dream, if you start bringing in more awareness, you will take charge of your dreams and deep sleep.

Controlling life and death and controlling dream and deep sleep both require one important condition, awareness. Awareness is the main requirement to control life and death and to control dream and deep sleep.

Bringing awareness into your dreams can not only help you control the dream and deep sleep, it can also help you control life and death.

Reality and dream both made of *prana*

When you start experiencing *prana* in the forehead, you will understand that not only is *prana* supplied from air, but it is the *prana* that creates both your reality and dreams.

Whatever you call as reality and whatever you call as dream are both made of *prana*. This is what Shankara means when he says this entire world is *maya*^{*}, an illusion.

When you understand this, you will have the tremendous energy to control both dreams and life. As of now, you are just a victim. You can't even control your dreams. Can you dream what you want? You can't! You can't control a single incident in your dream. As of now, either you go through the whole dream or you can get out of the dream, you can just wake up. You can't control the dream itself.

If you can bring more awareness to the dream state, the awareness in the waking state will increase. The awareness in the life, awareness in the living state will multiply. If the awareness in the living state multiplies, naturally you will be able to control death.

Maya - Literally 'That which is not'. It is the concept that life is but a dream, however real it may seem while being experienced.

Dreams and life

If you bring more and more awareness into your dream state, if you can bring more and more consciousness into your dreams, suddenly the quality of consciousness in your life will increase. If the quality of your dreams changes, if the quality of your deep sleep changes, the quality of your life will also change. The quality of your dream and the quality of your life are both directly connected with each other.

Understand, life is nothing but day-dreaming and dream is nothing but night-life. Night-life is dream and day-dream is life.

A small story:

A poor man came back home with a full sack of rice after a hard day's work. He hung the sack from the roof of his home to protect it from rats and thieves. To protect it further, he lay down right under it. Lying down, he looked up at the sack of rice and started dreaming, 'If I can sell this rice in small quantities, I can make a lot of money. Then with that money I will grow some more rice, sell that and soon I will become rich. Then I can marry a beautiful woman and we will have a beautiful child.'

By this time, a rat had found its way up to the sack of rice and had started chewing the rope. As the man was thinking about his yet-to-be child, the

rat had chewed on the rope and the bag fell on him killing him instantly.

Of course, the wealth, wife, and child in the dream also disappeared.

In the day, whatever you do, you call it as life. In the night, whatever you do, you call it as a dream. In the day, if you are not able to do anything, you call it as death. In the night, if you are not able to do anything, you call it as deep sleep.

In the day, if you have three things: experiencer, experienced and the experience, it is called life. We can take the example of drinking coffee in which there are three elements: the coffee one drinks, the person who drinks the coffee and the experience of the state of drinking coffee. If you experience all these three elements in the daytime, it is called life and if you don't experience all these three, it is called death. In the night time, if you experience all these three, it is called dream and if you don't experience all these three, it is called deep sleep.

Prana movement in sleep and death

The moment you start moving towards the dream state, the *prana* starts coming towards the *vishuddhi*, throat center. The more you move towards the deep sleep

state, it moves towards the *anahata**, heart center.

It is the same in the case of life and death as well. The more you are alive and energetic, the more the *prana* accumulates and gets centered in the forehead.

When the incoming breath is bringing more *prana* and the outgoing breath is going empty, your *prana* will be centered on the forehead. If the incoming breath is getting less *prana* and the outgoing breath is taking more *prana*, slowly the *prana* will slip into *vishuddhi*, throat center. If the incoming breath is not bringing *prana* at all and only the outgoing breath is taking the *prana*, you will fall completely into the heart center.

Actually, falling from life to death, falling from the waking state to the deep sleep state, are both directly related to *prana* movement. If the *prana* movements of inhalation and exhalation are handled properly, you can handle life and death as well as dream and deep sleep. Dream and sleep, life and death can all be handled by this single key, single thread called *prana*.

Anahata chakra - Subtle energy center in the heart region related to love.

Vedas - Ancient scriptural texts explaining the deep spiritual Truths. There are four main Vedas: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. These texts explain about the performance of sacrifice and consist of stories and chants. The Vedas are considered to be revelations of the Truths that happened to the mystics and seers.

Dhammapada - Buddhist scripture of enlightened master Buddha's teachings.

Jain Sutras - Scriptures of Jainism, mainly teachings of enlightened master Mahavira.

Guru Granth Sahib - Scripture of the Sikh religion.

Moksha - Liberation through Self Realization.

Stopping the cycle of life and death

If you can be aware when you fall into the dream state, when your consciousness is slowly fading away, when you are falling asleep, you will be able to change the dream itself.

If you are able to change the dream, let you be very clear, the first thing you will do is you will stop dreaming. You will stop dreaming because you know the uselessness of dreams. You know you are wasting time and energy in dreams.

The person who can be aware of dreams will never dream. The person who is aware of life will never take one more birth. That is why, in the East, all the spiritual scriptures, whether the *Vedas** or *Dhammapada** or *Jain sutras** or *Guru Granth Sahib**, are all aimed only at the goal of not taking one more birth. They all have only one goal, *moksha**, liberation, from the cycle of birth and death.

Person who is aware of dreams will never dream. He will simply stop dreaming. Person who is aware of life will simply stop the cycle of birth and death. He will not take one more body.

When I use the word 'death', I don't mean you will commit suicide. When I say that when you become aware of life you enter into death, it does not mean that you will commit suicide. You will stop living in the normal way. You will stop living with identity. You won't give importance to identity. You will be reborn.

That is why enlightened masters are called dead people. Actually, the enlightened people are called people who are already dead as far as the world is concerned. They don't have identity or they don't have life as you understand. Their life cannot be called any more as life. Practically, if you want to give any term to their life, the only term which you can give is death! They are not alive as you think. That is the reason, again and again, all the scriptures say, the spiritual people are 'reborn'. In this state, you can never be tortured by the things of life. Life will look just vague or like a film. It won't penetrate you and disturb your inner space.

If you can be aware when the *prana* falls into the heart center every day, you can

stop, alter and manage your dreams and deep sleep. If you are aware of *prana* slipping from *ajna** to *anahata* each time you go to sleep, it means that at the end of the life you will be able to change your life and death. If you want, you can bring it a little early. If you want, you can postpone. You can play in whatever way you want.

Vedic technology - product of thousands of years of R&D in human consciousness

Be very clear, these are not theories. These are all the truths of thousands of years of research and development by our *rishis* on the human consciousness.

Let you be very clear, this technology, these techniques can directly develop the quality of your life from today. You don't have to think, 'Oh! If I practice this technique for ten years, maybe in the eleventh year, it will give results.' No!

Let you be very clear, because we do not know this technology, we started suspecting the science itself. For example, in some way if the theory of gravity is useful, applicable in your life, you will not suspect the science of the theory of gravity. But if it doesn't have any direct

Ajna chakra - The sixth energy center located between the eyebrows. Means 'command' or 'will' in Sanskrit. This *chakra* is blocked by one's own ego.

application in your life, if you don't have any direct benefit in your life from the theory, naturally, you tend to forget, you tend to question, and you tend to suspect it. Finally, you tend to completely throw out the whole science itself.

Just because we have not practiced this technology, this kind of truths and techniques in our life, we started suspecting the whole spirituality itself, 'Is it going to really work for me? Is it going to really help me?'

Changing the *prana* flow to heal and rejuvenate

Understand two things: now, whatever I have said is not only going to help you for your death, it will also help you in every moment of your life. You may think, 'How can it help me every moment?'

Actually, the dream state means the lower energy state of *prana*, that of *prana* moving towards the heart center. If you can be aware at that time, naturally you will be able to control your dreams. Not only will you be able to control your dreams, you can bring yourself up in energy at any moment.

Whenever you are aware of the low *prana*, you can increase the percentage of *prana* in your body. The awareness that the *prana* is becoming low is enough to bring more

prana into your body. Same way, when you are dying, relaxing from the body, when the *prana* falls to the lower level, you can stop and bring it up.

Your *prana* slowly falls into the *anahata chakra* not only at the time of death, but also when you are sick. The more your *prana* falls towards the *anahata*, the more you start falling sick. If you can stop the *prana* movement and bring it up, you will naturally heal yourself. It is the ultimate technique to heal your body and rejuvenate your body.

Courage to face life and death

Actually when you master the *prana*, you understand that death as you think doesn't exist. As of now, you are afraid of death mainly because of the uncertainty. It is not even fear of death, it is the uncertainty. That only creates more and more fear.

See, everyone knows that one is going to die and nothing can be done about it. But we don't know when, how and after that, what. These questions and the uncertainty create a big problem in our being. The psychological suffering which we go through when we remember the idea of death is more related to uncertainty and is not directly related to death itself. Once this uncertainty is cleared the very idea of death is totally demystified. The negative

impact the idea of death has in our being will be completely cleared.

Control life, health... and death

You will have more freedom not only to choose, but you will also have freedom to postpone or predict, to know death itself. This is the ultimate gift you can have from any spiritual technique.

Above all, even when you fall sick, the *prana* directly may not go completely into the *anahata* but it will start traveling towards *anahata*. You know you are falling sick and you can bring it back.

You can try this: be aware of the forehead, third eye when you are falling asleep. When you lie down in the bed, when you decide, 'Yes, now I am going to fall asleep', just be aware when your consciousness is getting diffused, when you are just disappearing into the darkness, into the deep sleep.

Next, the whole day, whenever you remember, remember and think this whole life is *maya*^{*}, you are just dreaming even when you are awake. Just try to think again and again, 'Whatever I am seeing is just a dream.'

Do not look at this logically. Do not bother whether it is fact or not. Immediately then you will wonder, 'How can I think that? It is not a fact. This world is a reality.'

Please be very clear, fact and truth are two different things. When I say that the whole world is a dream, it may not be a fact according to you because the reference that you have to measure whether something is a fact or not, is itself not a fact.

Once you practice this over a few days, you will understand the truth behind these words. It will lead you to the truth.

You will see it just gets diffused and you will see the screen on which this whole dream is played. When you start seeing the screen on which you are projecting this whole dream, you will also start seeing the same screen with awareness when you are dreaming. The screen on which you project this whole dream and see is what I call consciousness.

The next question your mind will ask, 'If I am dreaming in the waking state, why should I act? Why should I do anything?' Why should you not act? If you are dreaming, why should you not do anything?

Understand, you don't want to act because you take the action seriously. You relate your action with something you need to

Maya - Literally 'That which is not'. It is the concept that life is but a dream, however real it may seem while being experienced.

attain. You become attached to that action because of the result you expect. If you remember you are dreaming, you become aware that dreaming or non-dreaming is in no way going to change anything. Whatever happens will happen. You will let it happen.

Just be very clear that life is a dream. Suddenly your intelligence will be awakened. You will be awakened to the truth that the whole drama of life is your projection.

Death is not merely an event that happens at the end of your life, it also means the death that happens during your life. For example, if your money is taken away from you, the identity that you are a millionaire dies in you. If your brother dies, the identity that you are brother of somebody dies. If your father dies, the identity that you are son of somebody dies. In all those moments, some part of your being dies.

Please be very clear, 'complete' death happens at the end of your life. Even during your life, the 'part death' happens as some parts of your being die. With this understanding of death, even in those moments, you will not go through the pain and suffering. You will be able to work, manipulate, postpone, move or even stop those deaths.

Death is dissolving into the cosmic space

Suppose you take an empty pot. Inside the pot there is space. Outside the pot also there is space. Now suppose you break the pot. The pot may be destroyed but the space that is inside the pot will not be destroyed. It will just disappear into the space that is outside the pot.

The space that was caught inside the pot will disappear into the space that was outside the pot, over. Even the pot can't be destroyed. It will exist in a different shape. You may change the shape, but you can't destroy it.

In the same way, during death, the consciousness that is caught in your body relaxes into the consciousness that is outside your body. See, there is a space that is outside your skin and there is a space that is caught inside your skin. When your boundary is destroyed at some point, the space that is caught inside the body will simply relax into the space that is outside the body. Understanding this truth will liberate you from the fear of death. There is nothing in you that can be destroyed.

There is a beautiful incident in the life of Socrates*:

Socrates - Greek philosopher.

Socrates was killed by being made to drink the poison hemlock. When the poison was taken to him, he was asked, 'Don't you feel the fear of death?'*

He says beautifully, 'Why should I be afraid? After death only two things can happen. Either I will cease to exist or I will exist in some form in some place, that's all. Only these two can happen. If I cease to exist, then there is anyways no problem, because there is nothing to be afraid of, I am not going to even know anything. If I exist in some form somewhere, then again there is no need to bother. I am anyways going to exist. I am not going to die.'

These words of Socrates* are a great *mantra**.

Just look back at your life. You may say life was either more joy or more pain. These are the only two possibilities. If you say life was more pain, then why are you afraid of death? If you have already had enough suffering then why don't you try something new?

If you say life is more joy then again since you have lived so joyfully you must be ready for new things, new experiments. If your life was joyful at this level, naturally

any further steps will lead to more joy, better experiences. So, from whichever side you argue, your fear has no base.

Understanding that the energy space caught inside your skin will merge into the energy space that is outside your skin when your body is destroyed and understanding that you are going to exist even if your body or mind disappears are the basis of the truth of what we call 'transcendental reality'. A person who is established in transcendental reality constantly radiates joy and fearlessness. He radiates so much of bliss, so much of energy that he is in *paramasthiti*, the supreme state.

Meditation techniques

The same energy which manifested itself as the cosmic explosion constantly keeps exploding and manifesting within your body. Merge your awareness with the meeting point of inhaling and exhaling breaths, the confluence of the powerful and the powerless.

When the inhaled air goes out, it will be full of energy, and your awareness as a whole will vibrate. One can touch and feel life energy. The place where the exhaled air returns will be totally vacant. One can

Socrates - Greek philosopher.

Mantra - Literally means 'that which shows the way'. Sacred syllables that have a powerful positive vibrational effect.

touch and feel death. When the inhaled air comes in, one can touch and feel life direct. When the exhaled air returns one can touch death. If we merge our awareness with both these meeting points, we can experience within ourselves both the cosmic explosion and cosmic dissolution. The moment you experience the cosmic explosion and cosmic dissolution happening within you, you transform yourself as the universal energy.

Meditation technique 2

This technique has two parts: one that you do when you fall asleep, when you are lying in the bed and the second one that you do whenever you can remember during the whole day.

The first one will create more energy to do the second part and vice versa. They are complementary to each other.

First part: when you lie down, before falling asleep, just remember the area near the *ajna chakra** or the third eye, the center of the forehead. Do not concentrate. If you force yourself, if you start concentrating, your sleep will be disturbed and you will have a headache. Just remember that area in a relaxed way, the

way you look at a flower, just casually. Slowly, you will see that you are relaxing, you are slowly dropping into the deep sleep state.

Just be aware of this movement into deep sleep, that is enough. First day, you may feel that you are not falling asleep at all and that your sleep is getting delayed by ten or fifteen minutes. Don't bother about it. Just be aware of the *prana* movement in the *ajna chakra*.

You will be aware that you are dreaming. If you want to continue the dream, you will continue. If you don't feel like it, you will come out. But you will not have nightmares. There will be no intensity to the dream.

As of now, your dreams can shake not only your mind, but even your body. If you have a nightmare and get up you will see that your heart is beating fast and your pulse rate is high. Your body will feel the impact of the dream. You will not have that effect if you are aware of dreaming. This is the first effect of this meditation.

The next step, you will start having the dreamless sleep. That is the deeper level. Once you start having the dreamless sleep you will also start having the dreamless day. Dreamless day means that your energy will be conserved without day-dreaming.

Ajna chakra - The sixth energy center located between the eyebrows. Means 'command' or 'will' in Sanskrit. This *chakra* is blocked by one's own ego.

If you are aware of the *prana*, that is enough. It will automatically come back to the higher energy and your body will heal itself, as the flow of *prana* is directly related to all your diseases. Above all, when you are able to change your dream, when you are able to handle your dream, you will have the intense power and energy to handle the incidents of your life.

As of now, you are just a victim of your life, victim of your dream. You can't handle anything. You can't even stop a small sneeze. You can't stop anything not only in the waking state, but even in the dream state. Things just happen to you, that's all.

At the most, you can have the illusion that you are doing things. If you can be aware of the dream state, you will have true freedom and your consciousness will become more expanded.

Life Bliss Program Level 2 – Nithyananda Spurana Program (LBP Level 2 - NSP)

Our second level meditation program, LBP Level 2-NSP journeys you through your own life, simultaneously revealing the secrets of death. It makes your inner space pure and clean by unloading the baggage of emotions that you usually carry with you. It teaches you to live blissfully and

leave peacefully. It puts death in the right perspective so that your life becomes more joyful and meaningful.

The Healing effect of LBP Level 2 - NSP

LBP Level 2- NSP has a complete healing effect at the physical, mental and spiritual levels. People come and ask me how I heal through meditation. Please understand, I do not heal through my physical body. It is my presence that heals. When the sun rises, the lotus blooms by itself. The sun does not go and open the petals of the lotus. Similarly, in the presence of the master, healing happens. Be very clear that healing is not done. It happens.

I can heal your body since it is in my presence. In the same way, if you open your mind too, it can be healed. In LBP Level 2-NSP, that's what we do - opening of minds. You are asked to write down about yourself, about your pains, desires, guilt and pleasures. You will not be showing these to anyone else. It is for you to know clearly what your deeply embedded *samskaras* or engraved memories are.

People ask me why I have them write down all this since they are neither expected to show them to me nor to each other. Understand, by writing it all down you are opening your mind in my presence. You

are opening your mind and hence I can heal your mind. If you open your wounds the sun can heal them. Similarly, if you can open your mind the energy will heal all the wounds.

LBP Level 2-NSP is opening up your energy layers one by one. Your pains, pleasures, guilt and desires are opened up. Once these open up and get healed, you experience a glimpse of god within you.

To be free from the fear of death, which is really the fear of losing our identity, we need to be aware that we are something more than this body and mind. We need intelligence to understand this. We then come to these questions:

What exactly is intelligence?

Are some of us more intelligent than others?

Can we increase the level of our intelligence?

Natural Intelligence

Intelligence is not something to attain. Every single being is endowed with intelligence. Every one of us has intelligence. It is an inherent, inborn quality of life just as fire is hot and ice is cold.

I am reminded of a joke on ‘intelligent’ people:

Once there were four men travelling in a private airplane. Suddenly, there was an emergency as the tail of the aircraft caught fire. Unfortunately for the four passengers, there were only three parachutes available.

The first person in a panic took a parachute saying, ‘I just got married. My wife is waiting for me,’ and he jumped.

The second person declared, ‘I am the most intelligent person on earth. Planet earth needs my intelligence.’ He jumped as well.

One of the passengers was an old man. He told the other remaining person, ‘I am old already but you have your whole life ahead of you. You take this parachute and jump.’

The young man quipped, ‘You can also come, Sir. We can both go. The most intelligent person on planet earth just jumped off with my back-pack!’

Most of us have lost touch with our natural intelligence. That is why we are not able to live life to its fullest potential. We mistake our acquired knowledge for intelligence, we are like the man who jumped with the backpack as a parachute!

Every single being in nature has been endowed with inherent intelligence. Birds have a natural intelligence that enables them to fly. It is amazing to see the migratory birds travel thousands of miles in the sky with no map or guide and retrace their paths back when the season changes!

From the caterpillar to the chimpanzee, every animal lives its life beautifully using the natural gift of intelligence. Plants and trees have natural intelligence, this is what enables them to produce food directly from the sun. Man also has tremendous natural intelligence. He is a more evolved, higher

form of consciousness than birds, animals or trees.

Patanjali, an enlightened master from India and father of the ancient science of *yoga*^{*}, says that man has in him the intelligence of all the lower forms of consciousness such as the trees, birds and animals.

Man has the capacity to produce food just like trees. He has the capacity to live by himself right from the time he is born, just like animals and birds.

Patanjali explains: when you were a tortoise, all of your past life memories of all the births that you took before that birth as a tortoise, were stored in the tortoise body. When you became a higher level animal, all the memories of the past lives before that life were stored in that animal body.

As you gradually evolve to the level of human beings, memories from all your past lives are stored within you. If you know the technique, you can actually tap into any of those memories at any time.

By nature we have all the intelligence in our human body. The difficulty is we strongly believe we are limited. We have been conditioned to think that we have only limited capabilities, that 'we cannot...' so we have forgotten how to use these capabilities. Because of this, we are

not tuned to the technique to tap into all the dimensions of our being.

For example, human beings have the capacity to swim without any training. In Japan they did experiments to test this, the moment the child was born, it was put in water and it was seen that the child started swimming automatically!

Children are born intelligent

A small story:

One boy came back from school and told his mother, 'You said the school dentist would be painless but he was not!'

His mother became worried and asked him, 'Did he hurt you?'

The boy replied, 'No, but he screamed when I bit his finger!'

Children are born intelligent. They are so spontaneous and enthusiastic. But the family, society and conventional school destroy the natural intelligence within the child with the undue importance they pay to logic, memory and competition. The price the child pays for education is too heavy. He sacrifices his priceless creativity

Yoga - Literally means 'uniting' of body-mind-spirit.

and uniqueness, and he is not even aware of it.

The other day, I read a statement on a teenager's T-shirt, 'I was intelligent until education ruined me.'

If you look at the way children are educated today, it results in a distorted development of the child. Undue importance is given to logic and analysis which are activities related to the left side of the brain. Because of this, the right side of the brain, which is related to creativity and art, is less stimulated. Fifty percent of our potential, a complete half of our brain, a whole half of our body is just waiting to express itself. Education can do wonders if it awakens to this truth. Educating through the left part of the brain is completely okay, but the right part is also equally, if not more important.

Allow your complete being to simply express itself, and you will see your natural intelligence flowering beautifully. This is what I call being integrated and fulfilled.

The driving forces of fear and greed

We think we are very intelligent and so we try to mould our children to become intelligent like us.

When we start this process, we first teach the child the logic of running in life driven by either fear or greed.

Either he has to do something to achieve more, or he has to do something to prevent what he doesn't want to happen. When you want something to happen, it is greed. When you are afraid that something will happen, it is fear.

Either he has to study so he can get better grades and win admission in a good college, this is being driven by greed. Or he has to study so he is not left behind in his future professional life, this is being driven by fear.

The motivation for the child is greed or fear, never inner fulfillment. Naturally, the child gets into the rat race and just keeps running, with no time to even look whether he is running for what he really wants. He does not even know that he can enjoy the run! He has been taught that with any other diversion, precious time will be wasted in reaching the goal.

But how many people have felt fulfilled after reaching the 'goal'? When you reach the goal you have set, you realize the

Allow your complete being to simply express itself. This is being integrated and fulfilled.

goalpost is no longer there. It has moved further, and you want something else now!

Just look in. See if you are really bringing up your children or just teaching them to be driven by greed and fear. Take a deep look at yourself and see if simply running the rat race gives the feeling of real fulfillment deep within you. Are you doing what you are doing because that is what you really want to do? Or are you doing it because that is what is expected of you by your family, friends and society?

Understand, if you are living your life based on just seeing what others are doing, you are just wasting your precious life. This is what they call 'herd mentality' – joining the rat race because everybody else is a part of it. You may even win the rat race, but you are still a rat!

What is the measure of Intelligence?

Can we measure intelligence? Is there a standard to measure intelligence?

Right from school, we use standard benchmarks to determine a person's so-called level of intelligence. In the grading system used from elementary school through college, we compare and grade all children for various skills and aptitudes.

One child may be good in science and another may have a natural talent for music. But both are graded on the same scale in science, and both are graded on the same scale in music. Now, how do you decide which child is 'more intelligent'? If the intelligence is measured based on performance in science, the child with an interest in science will be declared more intelligent. If the intelligence is measured based on musical performance, then, naturally, the child with a flair for music will be seen as more intelligent than the child who has the aptitude in science.

Say you choose science as the benchmark for intelligence. Then, the child poet gets the idea that he is not as intelligent as the science based child. Consciously or unconsciously, the poetic child starts suppressing his natural intelligence and tries to imitate the scientific child.

We need to understand an important thing here. One kind of intelligence is needed to be a scientist and another kind of intelligence is needed to be a poet. To be an Olympic swimmer one needs yet another kind of intelligence! Intelligence is the ability to respond to a situation or challenge. As the situation differs, the dimension of intelligence that responds to the situation also differs. The scientific child responds to a particular situation from a particular dimension of intelligence, whereas the poetic child

responds to another situation from another dimension. The swimmer responds to yet another kind of situation from yet another dimension of intelligence!

Everyone is born intelligent, it is a question of just discovering each one's unique dimension of intelligence.

Spontaneity - straightforward Intelligence

You have a natural, spontaneous intelligence inside you. You have tasted it as a child.

As a child, you looked at things in a very simple, straightforward way. That is why you were so spontaneous. What took away that spontaneity as you grew up? The societal conditioning that has been telling you right from when you were a child, 'You are not enough...' Because of this, you are constantly trying to become something else, to prove something to others. By constantly thinking that you are not enough, you try to imitate others and waste the wonderful natural energy bubbling inside you.

I read a funny one-liner on a company's notice board:

*Death will
be accepted as an
excuse, but
we would*

*like two weeks' notice, as we feel it is
your duty to teach someone your job
prior to your death.*

*Note: this new benefit program began
yesterday.*

If you blindly imitate another person's performance or behavior instead of acting from your own inner spontaneity, your own intelligence, you will be cheating yourself out of wonderful possibilities.

*Once there was a statistics student who,
while driving, would always accelerate
before coming to any junction, and then
drive fast past the junction and slow
down again once he passed the
junction.*

*One day, he was travelling with his
friend. They passed a junction in his
usual way. The friend asked him in
surprise, 'Why do you drive so fast
across junctions when you are actually
supposed to slow down?'*

*The statistics student replied, 'Well,
statistically speaking, you are more
likely to have an accident at a junction,
so I just make sure I spend less time
there!'*

**You have a
natural,
spontaneous
intelligence
inside you.**

Intelligence is the ability to respond to new situations.

Knowledge is good only when applied intelligently. It

is intelligence that gives the real result, not the knowledge itself. When knowledge is applied in the right place at the right time, it is intelligence. Spontaneity is when we easily express our knowledge in the right place at the right time, in other words, using our intelligence.

When you don't use some thing, slowly you start forgetting the very art of using it. In the same way, when you don't use your intelligence, slowly you start believing that you don't have the intelligence to handle whatever is happening in the moment and you start relying on others or on your past experiences.

Intelligence is the ability to respond to new situations. It comes from your very being, not from knowledge which comes from the mind.

The key to awareness

A small story:

A small boy was learning a lot of new things at school and home. One day, he told the teacher, 'Yesterday I killed three female and two male flies.'

The curious teacher asked, 'How did you know which were males and which were females?'

The boy replied, 'Simple. Three of them were on the mirror and two were on the cigarette box!'

Intelligence is being aware and spontaneous. Understand an important thing, when you are deeply aware, you cannot make mistakes!

With awareness, you don't rely on what others have taught you. You don't rely on the past conditioning that has gone on inside you for many years. You act just out of the fresh intelligence that comes with awareness. With deep awareness you are in the present moment. When you are in the present moment, you are alive and alert, what you call as intelligent. Your intelligence by its very nature is spontaneous. There is no training, no learning needed for it. It is only a question of awakening it from within.

The first step is to watch yourself and see how you unconsciously react to situations. See how your actions are rooted in your attitudes and conclusions from past experiences. Watching yourself with awareness is the first step. The good news about awareness is, it is the only step that is needed!

Most of the time, we continue to live in the dead past and miss the wonderful

dimensions of life, or we get angry over what has happened and feel hurt. Either way, we are escaping from the problem by going to one extreme or to the other. Instead, if we just look with deep awareness into the problem, an energy will awaken, the energy of intelligence which is enough to bring about the solution.

The very awareness is enough to awaken and break free even from the past conditioning, and we can act intelligently. This awareness will simply kindle the spark of intelligence that has always been a part of you.

The light of awareness is enough to remove the darkness created by years of living by habit.

The whole key lies in being aware so that your intelligence can function. Living every moment in total awareness is what meditation is all about.

Beyond rules to responsibility

A small story:

Once a sergeant in his training session asked the recruits why walnut wood was used for making the rifle.

The recruits thought hard and one of them answered, 'Because walnut is

harder than other types of nuts.'

The sergeant brushed him off saying, 'Wrong!'

Another recruit ventured, 'Because it is more durable.'

The sergeant's voice boomed, 'Wrong!'

A third person tried his luck, 'Because it is waterproof.'

The sergeant, tired of the answers by now, replied, 'You boys surely have a lot to learn. Simple reason: that is what is laid down in the rule book!'

In life, because it is easy to place responsibility on others, you blindly follow other people's directions instead of relying on your own intelligence.

You say you are obedient, but you are actually shirking the responsibility of owning up to your actions. This is a dangerous and age old habit of following the rule book. It is dangerous because sometimes you are not even aware that you are missing responsibility and intelligence. You become a parrot, repeating the same thing for years together because someone told it to you.

Talking about responsibility, a small joke on how people understand responsibility:

Living every moment in total awareness is meditation.

**Acting out of
your own
intelligence is
taking complete
responsibility
for what you do
at all times.**

Once, a convict was scolding his lawyer, 'You are a useless lawyer. You don't even understand your responsibility of when to raise an objection.'

The puzzled lawyer asked him, 'I don't understand. When do you think I should have raised an objection that I did not?'

The convict replied, 'When the opposing lawyer spoke, you objected. But when the judge declared me guilty, you kept your big mouth shut. That was the time to do all the objecting!'

It is always easy to put the blame on the whole world for what happens in your life. But if you just look a little deeper, you can see how you are completely responsible for what is happening in your life!

Because you do not live every moment with awareness and take responsibility for your words and actions, you do so many things unconsciously. Then, when the effects of these actions happen, you claim you don't deserve the results!

Acting out of your own intelligence is taking complete responsibility for what you do at all times. For example, when you obey someone else you feel that you are being subservient to that person. But when you disobey that person, you feel guilty because a part of you feels that you should obey him or her but you are not obeying. The way out of this conflict is to follow your intelligence at that time with the clear understanding that you alone are responsible for your action. Then you will not hurt anyone including yourself. And you will be responding intelligently to the person you are disobeying as well.

Now and here

A small joke:

A salesman called up a prospective client and asked him, 'Is the boss in?'

The new office assistant asked, 'Are you a salesman, bill collector or a friend of his?'

The salesman, thinking quickly, replied, 'All three!'

The assistant said, 'In that case, he is in a business conference, he is out of town, step in and see him.'

The answer depends on the person asking the question! Being intelligent requires the

effort to be yourself, which you are not used to. So you choose to react based on your past experiences.

Usually, we only react like programmed machines. We do not respond to situations. Someone insults you and you become angry even before becoming aware of what you are doing.

A beautiful story from the life of Buddha, an enlightened master from India:

Once a person insulted Buddha openly. His disciple Ananda said, 'I was getting so angry with the person. Why did you keep quiet? At least I would have given him a piece of my mind.'

Buddha calmly replied, 'You surprise me. What he was saying was completely irrelevant and you know that. Then why are you getting angry? You are punishing yourself. It is foolishness. When somebody else has made the mistake, why are you suffering for it?'

Moving with time, flowing with life, becoming a fluid process instead of being a solid ego is called intelligence.

But we are too lazy to act intelligently because responding to the present requires us to be continuously aware and alert.

Living in the present moment is living in utter insecurity. It needs courage and intelligence.

Actually, even the idea of security in life is an illusion. How can you predict what will happen even in the next moment? Anything that you predict can only be based on the past, something that you have seen. But the future is yet to happen. It is an unknown gift, so it can never be predicted.

Welcome people, situations, life

Intelligence is being open to life. It is being welcoming to people, situations and everything in life.

Many times you can see that you have your own expectations and ideas of how things should be. You are afraid to receive life with open arms. Can you put conditions on how the weather should be tomorrow? No! Then why do you put conditions on how the 'weather' at home, the mood of your wife or child, should be?

Understand, there are two things that we can do. One is collecting the data, making the argument and making a judgment. The second is forming a judgment and then collecting arguments to support that judgment.

Most of the time we have already formed the judgment and then we pay attention

only to those incidents that support our judgment.

For example, you have formed an opinion of your husband or wife. By now you know what your husband will say if you ask him to come shopping with you. By now you know what your wife will say if you ask her to join you in watching the Sunday football match. Based on just these few incidents, you would have made so many more judgments about them.

You don't credit him or her to have an intelligence that gets updated from every moment of life. The problem is, you don't even credit yourself with having that natural intelligence. That is why you can't believe others can become updated.

Beyond the head is the gate to loving Intelligence

Once, a father and son checked into a cheap motel at night.

The father tucked in the son to sleep and switched off the light assuring the son, 'Don't be afraid, son. The angels are watching over you.'

'I know,' said the boy. 'Two of them just bit me!'

Operating with intelligence is the process of going back to the innocence you were born with. It is not a process of becoming. It is not attaining something new, it is discovering your very being. It is the true door to knowing you as you truly are.

When you are intellectual, you operate purely from the head, from logic.

A small story:

A man was working on his doctorate in philosophy. He was so involved in his studies and research, his wife thought he would forget her if he was not reminded of her once in a while.

So one day, she casually mentioned to him, 'Honey, what is the one reason you love me so much?'

The man asked very seriously, 'When you say 'so much' are you referring to the depth, quality, quantity or mode of expression?'

When you are too caught in the head, you start thinking that your logic, your head, can understand the whole of life. You try to frame everything in this universe with your head.

Another small story:

Once, a student had freshly graduated in a course on plumbing. He went with his friends on a sight-seeing tour to Niagara Falls. He took a look at the

huge Falls and said, 'I think I can fix it!'

Your knowledge gives you the false illusion of knowing everything that exists. It keeps you firmly rooted in the head.

When your intelligence awakens, you drop from the head to the heart, from logic to love. Then, you operate neither from pure intellect nor from pure sentimental love. You operate just from loving intelligence, and you automatically radiate compassion to all of those around you.

Understanding, not thinking

A small story:

Once, three wise men set out on a travel journey to the city with the hope that they would learn more about life. They entered a big city and were surprised to see a very tall building, a skyscraper in the distance. They wondered what it might be.

They grouped and discussed what to do. They were afraid to go near and see for themselves thinking what if it had something dangerous in it. What if they did not know how to come out? So, they decided it was better to find out before they ventured inside.

You rely on thinking because you do not allow the natural understanding to happen.

They analyzed and came up with all the things it could possibly be, based on all their past experiences.

Finally, they concluded it was something too big for human beings and it must belong to giants. So, it was not safe for them to be in this city of giants.

Very satisfied that they had gained this new knowledge, they picked up their bags and went back to their village!

So you see there is not much you can understand from past knowledge. You cannot think about something in the mind and try to understand everything about it in that way. You need to see it, to experience it in order to fully understand. It is like the man who saw the water of Niagara Falls in a bucket and thought he knew what the Falls looked like!

You rely on thinking because you do not allow the natural understanding to happen. When you allow the understanding to happen, you don't have to think any more. Only a person who has not understood needs the crutch of thinking.

One more thing: you can only think about what you have known, what you have

**The mind is like
a radio that you
don't know how
to turn off.**

experienced.
Can you think
about anything
unknown?

You may fantasize about what the unknown could be, but that is still based on what you have seen in the past.

With thinking, the energy of intelligence and truth is not there, so the answer will be based on your limited experience and it will always lead to further questions and doubts.

Understanding is intelligence, it is fresh and new.

Intelligence is clear, so it gives answers and not further questions. It is the answer from your very being, so it is nothing but the truth. Even if the answer that comes is 'I don't know', the ignorance is closer to the truth than pretending to know.

Not falling back on the answers rising from the past memory but functioning from your present consciousness is called understanding.

Mind – master or tool?

Thinking arises from the mind, which is actually one of the most marvelous mechanisms. But the problem arises when the mind becomes your master instead of a tool in your hands.

A small story:

There lived a king who had a very faithful servant. He was so loyal he had even risked his own life to save the life of the king on a couple occasions.

On one such occasion, the king highly pleased with the servant asked him for anything he wanted. The servant humbly replied, 'I don't need anything, O King. You have given me everything I need.'

But the king insisted. Finally, the servant said, 'Ok. If you really want to give me something, please make me the king for one day.'

The king was a bit uncomfortable but he had already promised and had to keep it up.

The morning of the day the servant became the king. He simply pointed to the king and ordered the royal guards, 'Kill him!'

The king was shocked and asked the servant, 'Do you know what you are saying?'

The servant calmly replied, 'I am the king today. I can do what I wish to.'

The king was killed and the servant remained king forever.

In this same way, when we give the power of attorney to our mind, it takes entire control over us.

The mind is like a radio that you don't know how to turn off. Since the signal is continuously broadcasting, there is no silent gap for you to feel the energy of intelligence from within you that occurs between thoughts. Because of this, you are unable to experience relaxation and you feel tired and exhausted.

Into the depths of the mind

Try this simple exercise that can reveal so deeply the nature of your mind.

Write down on a piece of paper whatever thoughts come to your head. Do it honestly, sincerely without editing. Write down *any* thought that comes. Do this for just five minutes. Then read what you have written.

You will be shocked! For one moment you would have written about something that happened in India, the next moment about your daughter in the USA, the next moment about your school teacher, the next moment about a dog that is barking next door...and what not! The paper will look like a madhouse! If you analyze the paper, you will see, your thoughts are actually independent, unconnected and illogical. The mind is just a collection of thoughts which are independent, random and illogical by nature.

Understand, thoughts have no solid existence at all.

What we call mind itself is an illusion. Mind is a collection of unrelated thoughts projected onto it, much like a movie screen which displays the images from multiple frames of a movie. The screen itself is not the movie, it simply displays the projected images.

Thoughts are like bubbles rising in the mind. Like a bubble which breaks when you touch it, thoughts dissolve when they are touched with the finger of awareness. They simply dissolve and the inside and outside become the same. This happens in the mind when we bring awareness to thoughts.

All you have to do is witness your thoughts, be aware. Then you will see how your thoughts simply drop. Thoughts cannot survive the arrow of your watchfulness.

Intelligence is the quality that actually witnesses the mind.

Thoughts cannot survive the arrow of your watchfulness.

Body Intelligence

How many of us realize the tremendous intelligence that our body possesses?

Intelligence of the digestive system

Take the example of our digestive system. The whole process of converting bread to blood is such a complex and delicate one, requiring fine intelligence to convert the different types of food into energy to run the body.

What is achieved through a few feet of coiled intestine would need a few miles, if it were an industry outside of the body!

The process of digestion starts from our mouth. We chew the food and the saliva we secrete starts the digestion. There are so many big and small body elements that perform amazing functions in the process. We swallow the food and it passes through the throat into the food pipe. Beautifully the food is blocked from going into the wind pipe instead of the food pipe by the epiglottis. The food enters into the stomach, which is like an elastic bag and has a delicate and powerful digestive mechanism. Depending on the type of food taken in like carbohydrates, proteins or fats, the digestive mechanism varies.

The digestive fire in us, what we call *jataraagni* in Sanskrit, is related to the acid in the stomach. The stomach is such a delicate organ but it actually contains this powerful acid needed to digest the food we eat. The stomach itself is beautifully protected from this acid by a thick mucus

layer around its wall which neutralizes the acid.

All the complex foods we eat take just a few hours to digest and absorb into our system. Imagine not even a single process has to be consciously thought about! It is managed automatically and so precisely, adapting itself so beautifully to accommodate all our diets.

After the stomach, the food passes into the small intestine where the majority of the digestion takes place. It is actually a long structure but so efficiently fitted in a small area with many folds which increases the surface area of absorption. Most of the nutrients get absorbed in the small intestine. The main function of the small intestine is absorption of nutrients. The complex products like carbohydrates and proteins are broken down into basic elements and absorbed. The nutrients that are absorbed are carried to the liver for further processing.

Then the food moves into the large intestine where mostly water absorption occurs. Then the food that cannot be absorbed like fiber is mixed with other waste products from the body and thrown out as waste matter.

This is just a basic explanation of digestion. But in the body it is such a complex, well-organized and adaptive mechanism.

Similar to the complex process of digestion, controlling the level of blood sugar involves an intricate mechanism. When we eat, the level of sugar in the blood increases because the food is broken down into glucose or sugar. Because blood reaches all parts of the body, it is very important to monitor a person's sugar level. Otherwise, many parts and functions of the body like the kidneys, eyes and nerves can be affected. This is what happens in people with diabetes.

Insulin, a hormone released by the pancreas which decreases the level of sugar in the blood, is important in regulating blood sugar levels when we eat food. This hormone helps protect us from blood sugar levels that are too high. If the blood sugar level drops too low, sugar stored in the liver is broken down into glucose by a hormone called glucagon that is also released by the pancreas. The glucose is then released into the blood stream and the blood sugar level increases.

The same pancreas which generates the insulin that reduces the blood sugar level also generates another hormone, glucagon, which raises the blood sugar level!

Every moment, the level of blood sugar is regulated so beautifully by the body sensing the level of blood sugar and activating the appropriate mechanism to maintain it in a safe range.

Intelligence of the brain

Take the example of the human brain. Such a mind-boggling intelligence operates inside a structure that is just about two fist sizes! To date, scientists around the world have not been able to replicate tasks that the brain seems to do so effortlessly.

A recent research report reported that ten linguists working full time for ten years to analyze the structure of the English language could not program a computer with the ability of a child that learns the language in the first five years of life.

A computer may be able to perform trillions of mathematical and logical operations in a second but it cannot perform the amazing array of parallel tasks that the brain performs every millionth of a second.

Intelligence of the heart

If you see, the body and the heart function in such beautiful synchronicity. The natural pacemaker in the heart sets off an electrical impulse every few seconds. This impulse creates an electromagnetic field, which is sent to the whole body. The field acts as a field of resonance where all the body cells tune in to each other. Because of this resonance, each cell not only does its own specialized function but also

If you eat with awareness, you will never feel the heaviness because you will never overeat.

adapts to the activity of its neighboring cells, so our body can function in a completely

integrated way.

Distributed Intelligence

The human body starts from a single cell which replicates and becomes about 250 different types of cells.

Imagine one cell transforms into so many different specialized cells that form the complex parts of the body! Not only do these cells do their specialized job, their very maintenance needs millions of things to be done in a second. And all their activities have to be coordinated for the body to function as a single organism. It is the best example of distributed intelligence.

Trusting the body intelligence

Just think, when our body can digest food, pump blood, adapt to the environment and at the same time perform a thousand other complicated tasks without help from

outside, you have to accept that there is an intelligent energy driving it.

If you just reflect on this, you will realize there is something called body intelligence. But we don't see it because it goes on silently within us.

A small story:

Once a king went to an enlightened Zen master and asked him, 'I heard that you are an enlightened man and you radiate energy around you. You are always in bliss. What do you do?'

The Zen master replied, 'I eat when I eat and sleep when I sleep.'

You may ask, 'Don't we also do the same thing?'

Look into your own life. You will find that while you are eating you are thinking about all of your worries and problems. Your mind will be busy planning everything about work tomorrow or your vacation next week. You quickly eat your food because there is no time for eating. You don't really eat when you eat! When you eat, your being never feels the food. If you eat with awareness, you will never feel the heaviness because you will never overeat. Your body has its own intelligence to decide what food to take and how much. You can very clearly find out which food suits you and which does not if you eat with awareness. This itself is a great meditation.

In the same way, when you sleep, you never really relax your mind, you start analyzing all of the events that happened that day. Just try focusing on the present moment and falling asleep, that is enough.

The guaranteed way out of addictions

A real incident:

Once a young man came to me and asked me to help him stop smoking. I asked him how he picked up the habit in the first place. He said, once he had gone out with a group of friends who were all smokers.

He happened to meet his father on the road that day. Seeing him in the group, his father assumed that he too had been smoking. When he returned home, his father yelled at him, and refused to believe him when he said he was not smoking.

The boy said that the next day he smoked a whole pack of cigarettes just to spite his father! In that way he gradually got addicted.

When he asked me how to drop it, I told him, 'Don't drop it. Go ahead and smoke. But don't do it to prove anything to anybody. Don't do it to spite your

When we become conscious of what we are doing, many things drop on their own.

father. And don't imagine that you have become mature and independent by smoking. Every time you pick up a cigarette, do it silently. Be conscious of why you are smoking. Consciously feel the smoke entering your system. Be aware of how you hold the cigarette, how you put it in your mouth. You will realize on your own.'

After just a few days the boy returned to me. He said, 'Swamiji, I am not able to smoke anymore! Doing it consciously, I started wondering how I could send so much smoke into my system! Also I realized that smoking is not that important to me after all.'

Then he added something which made me very happy. He said, 'Swamiji, I realize now that I have been abusing my body all these days by pushing smoke into my system.'

When we become conscious of what we are doing, many things drop on their own. This is the only permanent solution. Of course it may take a few days to awaken the intelligence. During that time, the important thing is, not to lose hope and fall back on the borrowed intelligence that

you have picked up from the society, from the moral codes set up by society. Have trust in the natural intelligence of your body, that's all.

There is no need to control the body at all because whatever we try to control will express itself in some other way. It will refuse to be controlled! The only thing needed on our part is awareness in every action that we do and the trust in our own natural intelligence. That itself will break the wall of conditioning that makes us do things unnatural to us and will allow us to live life consciously.

Every cell in your body has Intelligence

We have been taught that the center of our intelligence is in our brain. We think that we control the body through our brain. Science has all along been saying that the brain controls respiration, digestion, blood circulation, and all such activities of the body.

Now, cutting-edge research has given rise to a new field called epigenetics. One of the pioneers in this field, Dr. Bruce Lipton*, an eminent biologist, has been

doing research in the field of epigenetics for over ten years. In his book, 'The Biology of Belief', he states that our brain does *not* control our body. In fact, there is evidence of intelligence in every cell, even in the cell's membrane!

Recent research at Sandia National Laboratories, USA, supports cellular intelligence theory. Scientists there studied how cells responded to a harmful substance called an antigen that attacked the cells in the body. They concluded that even the cell membrane had a beautiful and complex structure to fight the antigen, and that the cell membrane was not as simple a structure as earlier believed.

Our body is not a simple centralized system of intelligence controlled by the brain. The human body is a highly evolved distributed system of intelligence beautifully and seamlessly orchestrated.

The intelligent self-healing energy

Electric current does not have its own intelligence. If you fix a bulb in the socket, it will glow. If you put your hand in the socket, it will give you an electric shock!

Dr. Bruce Lipton - Molecular cellular biologist and author of 'The Biology of Belief', renowned for his seminal work in relating genetics to conditioning.

But the energy in your body is not like that. It is an intelligent, healing energy. Your body has a natural self-healing energy. You can see it at work when you see a cut or a wound healing itself even without any intervention on your part.

You can heal

There is an automatic body intelligence which is constantly rejuvenating and even replacing the cells in your entire body. If some part of the body is damaged you have enough intelligence inside to replace the damaged cells. But when the ego or mind interferes, this natural process is interrupted.

Constantly our body repairs itself and cells replace themselves. You might ask, "Then why does the same disease occur again in my body? If my body is again and again replacing itself, rejuvenating itself, then why do I carry the same disease?"

Because *you* strongly believe that the disease is continuing!

You carry the same mental setup that strongly believes that you are not well. This is what stops the self-healing from happening in your body.

All you need to do is just trust the automatic intelligence which is in you and relax.

Energy is intelligence. Your being is intelligence. The problem is, you never trust

that your being is intelligent. You weigh yourself only with your weakest link and you are not your weakest link. Be aware, you are something more than your weakest link. The strength of a chain can be measured based on the weakest link but the strength of your being cannot be measured this way because you are something more than what you think you are.

All you need to do is just trust the automatic intelligence which is in you and relax.

Nithya Spiritual Healing

Actually your body has the capacity to heal every disease, physical or mental, however complex it might be. The secret is to use the lost science of self-healing. This is what the science of Nithya Spiritual Healing is all about. It is a process of connecting the intelligence of the person to the cosmic energy, which is pure intelligence, through an initiated healer.

Compassion, Intelligence, Bliss

Please understand, energy is compassion, energy is intelligence, and energy is bliss.

Energy, compassion, intelligence and bliss are four sides of the same pillar. If all four are present, it is super-consciousness. If any one is missing it is unconsciousness.

When the energy manifests itself through the head, it is intelligence. When energy manifests itself through the heart, it is compassion. When energy manifests itself through the being it is pure energy. When energy does not manifest outside but remains inside, it is bliss!

‘You’ are not needed to run your life

An important thing to understand which may shock you is you have an independent intelligence in your system which runs your life without your interference.

Right now, you think you need to interfere with your intelligence in order to run your life happily. But the truth is the intelligence with which you came down to planet earth, the intelligence which created your very body, can run your life beautifully for you.

The intelligence or the energy based on which you created your body at birth, is called your bio-memory. You need to understand this important truth here, it is *you* who designed your own body to enjoy specific things, to live for a particular number of years, and to do particular things.

When you take birth, you decide your life, your enjoyments, whatever you want to do, based upon what you think is the ‘juice’ of life.

That same bio-memory has enough intelligence to live, run and expand your life. That tremendous intelligence is operating every single moment whether you believe it or not, whether you accept it or not. But our limited understanding prevents us from realizing this and we constantly feel that life has to be different from what it is at the present moment.

Trusting that intelligence and relaxing is what I call devotion. Surrendering to that higher intelligence is true surrender. Living in harmony with our natural intelligence is living a spiritual life.

Acceptance of the inevitability of life

For the majority of us, life is driven in only two ways. One way is based on greed,

which happens when we don't accept the present state of our life. We want something more or something different. The other way is based on fear, which happens when we don't accept the future moments of our life. Fear means being afraid of the future. When you don't accept the present moment, it becomes greed, restlessness. When you are not ready to accept the future moments, it becomes fear.

In both the cases if you see, it is a question of not being able to accept the 'inevitability' of life! You need to understand this word 'inevitability' in a very deep way.

Meditation technique – Nithya Sutra of acceptance

Please sit straight. Close your eyes and be in a relaxed way without moving the body. Body movements will create thoughts. So if your body is stable without movement, it can take you to a deeper silence.

Very consciously and intensely, create an intention that you are accepting yourself as you are in the outer world and the inner world, this moment.

Tell yourself, 'I have enough nice things in the outer world, enough possessions. I have enough good qualities in the inner world,

my inner feelings. I am accepting myself completely. There is no need to develop myself in the

outer world or in the inner world. If I have ego, that is ok. If I have guilt, that is ok. If I have fear, that is ok. If I have greed, that is ok. Whatever I have been told I have, is ok. Even if I am going to die the next minute, it is ok.'

Decide consciously, 'I accept everything.' Don't bother whether it is right or wrong. Whatever objection your mind raises, accept that also.

Accept the present moment. Accept all the future moments. Whatever your mind thinks as the worst thing that can happen to your life, accept even those moments. If it happens, you cannot avoid it. It is inevitable. Understand the inevitability and accept everything.

Do this for 21 minutes.

Your intelligence will simply awaken and show you how to relate with every moment, how to relate in every situation, in every relationship.

Fear means being afraid of the future. When you are not ready to accept the future moments, it becomes fear.

Universal intelligence – macrocosm and microcosm

The microcosm, that is this individual body, is intelligence. In the same way, the macrocosm, that is the universe, is also intelligence, pure energy. The same intelligent energy which runs the universe is also running your body.

Chaos in order and order in chaos

The universe, the macrocosm, looks like there is a lot of chaos. There are so many planets, stars, comets and all the heavenly bodies existing all together in the universe. But they all move so precisely in a beautiful order, with no police or regulatory authority! Imagine if one planet moved out of its orbit. There would be so many collisions in space! This is what is meant by the words ‘order in chaos’. What we think is chaos in the universe is actually beautiful order. This is enough proof to show that the universe is not just power, it is a combination of power *and* intelligence.

The intelligence is nothing but the energy of the universe. Energy IS intelligence. That is why this energy can heal a person

in a purely energy based healing system. It is pure cosmic intelligence that knows which part of the body to flow into and heal. For example, that is why even without knowing where the liver is located in the body, you can heal the liver with healing energy. Energy is pure intelligence. When we realize this power and order in the macrocosmic chaos, we enter into bliss.

While we feel the universe is chaotic, we also understand that there is a beautiful order in it. In the same way, what we think as order in us is actually chaos! We are part of the potential of this universe and also part of its chaos and order. Right now, we think we are orderly because we see a small boundary around ourselves – our home, our office, a few relatives etc. That is why we put in so much effort into maintaining our life in an orderly way. We condemn those who don’t follow this order.

But the truth is, deep down in our being we are a beautiful chaos. We are a microcosm of the macrocosmic intelligence, which is a beautiful orderly chaos. When we understand this, we will become compassionate towards ourselves and towards others. We will stop condemning people. We will also understand that the real order in us is nothing but the cosmic order.

So understand, initially, we try to maintain our so-called order because we believe we have boundaries. If we just let go of our

boundaries, our need for order will disappear and we will fall in tune with the cosmic order, and joy will happen. When we realize the Cosmic Consciousness within ourselves, we will discover the order that is inborn in us. We will then accept ourselves as we are and others as they are.

When you experience the order in cosmic chaos you experience bliss.

When you realize the chaos within your order you exude compassion.

Cosmic Intelligence responds to us

This may be a surprising revelation, but the truth is that universal or cosmic intelligence responds to every thought of ours. Interesting research by Japanese scientist, Dr. Masaru Emoto* shows this point very clearly.

Water responds to our thoughts

Dr. Masaru Emoto* did experiments on water. He collected water samples from different sources and exposed them to

Universal or cosmic intelligence responds to every thought of ours.

various kinds of thoughts. Then he froze the samples and studied their

crystalline structure through a microscope with the help of high-speed photography. Thousands of these crystals were studied under tightly regulated conditions of temperature, cooling time and lighting.

He did various experiments on these water samples, playing different types of music to the water, talking to the water, reading out from ancient life teachings, praying with a certain intention etc. He found that when the water samples were exposed to healing music, the water crystals that formed were very beautiful and graceful.

The water exposed to negative feelings or thoughts did not form crystals but rather an irregular structure which reflected the emotions of the person handling them.

Another series of experiments was done to study the effect of words and sounds. The water used was distilled water. The water sample was divided into two parts and placed in different bottles, one labeled 'Thank you' and the other labeled 'You are a fool' in different languages such as English, Japanese and Korean.

Dr. Masaru Emoto - Japanese scientist and author of 'The Hidden Messages in Water' showing the effects of one's thoughts and words on water and therefore on living beings.

After exposure to these labels, the frozen water samples when examined under the microscope showed a clear difference in the crystal structure. The water labeled 'Thank you' showed a beautiful, well-balanced crystal structure. The water labeled 'You are a fool' showed a very irregular, amorphous structure.

Water samples with negative labels like 'You make me sick' showed distorted and dispersed crystals. The water samples with positive labels like 'love', 'appreciation' and 'peace' showed beautiful and uniform crystal structures.

Even the tone of the words made a huge difference on the microscopic forms! For example, the collaborative words like 'Let's do it' caused a very beautiful crystal structure compared to the crystals formed by the commanding words 'Do it'.

Another surprising thing was the behavior of the water crystals when photographs were shown to them. The water, after being exposed to a picture of an innocent child, showed crystals of relaxed positions. The water which was shown a photograph of cherry blossoms showed a crystal almost like a cherry blossom!

Later, experiments were done to study the kind of change that thought could have on water. After a powerful earthquake in Japan, the water structure was seen to be a dark, amorphous structure reflecting the

people's fear and pain. Three months later, after kind help and warmth from around the world for the affected people, the water structure was studied again. This time the water crystals reflected the same warmth.

Experiments conducted on dam water initially showed a terrible structure. But after just one hour of praying and intention that the water become clean, it showed a remarkable change into beautiful hexagonal crystals.

Our body is about 70% water. Planet earth is covered with over 70% water. After studying the effect of mental thoughts on water, just imagine the tremendous effect our thoughts, words and intentions have on the planet and us!

Another real incident from history:

When India was under British rule, the British soldiers found that when they carried water from England to India in their ships, the water got spoiled even while on the ship. But when they carried water back from India to England, the water not only stayed fresh through the voyage, but also remained fresh until they consumed all of it back in England! When scientists studied this surprising phenomenon, they found that this fresh water was from the sacred river Ganga in Calcutta which was worshipped by millions of people from around the world. It had

the natural properties of neutralizing harmful bacteria and purifying itself.

Billions of people have been praying to Ganga for over thousands of years. Naturally they have left their prayerful thoughts as imprints on this water which is so energizing and self-healing.

Even in Egypt, the river Nile* has been studied by the Egyptians over thousands of years by measuring its flow, level, turbulence etc. They have found that many times these parameters reflected the calamities like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis, that have happened or are about to happen in even distant parts of the world.

Connection with nature

What makes us become insensitive to nature? The moment our ego comes into play we become insensitive to nature.

There was a beautiful story I was reading about a poet who in his young age used to go and play with the wild animals near his house. His father used to warn him that he should not play with the wild animals because they might harm him.

But, he still used to go and sit with the wild animals when he could. He would

When your identity that you are a ‘separate person’ is felt strongly, the innocent way of relating is lost.

say, ‘When I was self-conscious and afraid that there was a possibility that the

animals might harm me, they would never come near me. The communication never happened, the relationship never happened.

But, whenever I had courage or I was in a very playful mood, whenever I did not have the fear or the self-consciousness, the communication and relationship used to be so strong.

I could feel very clearly the animals were connecting with me and I was connecting with them.’

Understand, what I mean when I say your ego becomes strong. It means when your identity that you are a ‘separate person’ is felt strongly. When this happens, your connection with nature is disturbed. The innocent way of relating is lost. The feeling of being connected is lost. This is one of the big losses that can happen to a human being.

It is similar to how a person who is born blind can never be made to understand

Nile - The longest river in the world flowing through Sudan, Egypt etc in Africa.

**What happens in
your mind
affects not only
you but also
those around
you. Space is not
a criterion for
thoughts.**

what he is missing. In the same way, the man who has forgotten the way of relating with the heart can never be made to

understand what he has lost.

The cells were reacting to the experimenter's intention to cut his hand even before the cut was actually made!

The power of intention in a mental plane can cause something to happen in the physical plane. That is why it becomes very important to have the right intention at all times.

Power of intention

Writer and doctor Deepak Chopra*, in his book 'The Spontaneous Fulfillment of Desire' talks about a similar experiment where white blood cells were studied for their responses to various stimuli. The white blood cells were separated from a blood sample and placed in a test tube.

Suddenly, the experimenter had the idea to make a small cut on the back of his hand to see if this action might affect the cells in the test tube. By the time he went in search of a device to make the cut, to his surprise he found that the white blood cells in the test tube had registered intense activity.

Space no bar

I was reading about an experiment where some years back scientists used an electroencephalograph* (EEG) to measure the brain waves of two people meditating together. It was found that certain pairs of people showed a strong correlation in their brain wave patterns. These strongly bonded pairs were asked to meditate side by side for some time. Then, they were moved to different rooms.

Then one of each meditating pair was stimulated by bright lights flashing in the room. The EEG brain wave recording showed activity in the brain of that meditator as expected. But surprisingly it also showed that the paired meditator in the other room who was not stimulated by

Deepak Chopra - A medical doctor who writes and teaches spirituality in USA.

Electroencephalograph - Machine which uses electrodes attached to the scalp to measure brain wave activity.

the lights also showed the same activity in the brain automatically and instantly!

Understand, what happens in your mind affects not only you but also those around you. Space is not a criterion for thoughts. They simply travel in air. That is why in your house, if you express worry and negative thoughts a lot, the very atmosphere for your family members becomes heavy. They are affected by the negativity that you radiate.

Intelligence is not the experience but the lessons learned from experience

Intelligence is not to do with the information that you have or receive. That is only intellect. In other words, intelligence is not the totality of your experiences, but the lessons learned from those experiences. Understanding happens only when you are open and spontaneous without prejudice. If you are with prejudice, the complete understanding does not penetrate you. If you are open, then the complete understanding penetrates you and you become intelligent.

For example, a person touches a burning matchstick and learns that it burns. Next,

the person touches a gas flame and learns that it burns too. Next, he touches a blazing fire and finds that it also burns. If that person waits for learning this way, from experience, it will take him ages to learn the lesson that fire burns. And when he finally learns, it will be time for him to go to the burning cremation grounds!

The intelligent person figures after touching the first fire of the matchstick, that any type of fire burns. But the even more intelligent person does not even wait to touch the fire of the matchstick, he learns even when he sees another person touching it!

There is a beautiful story from the life of Buddha:

Once a philosopher came to Buddha and asked, 'Without words, without the wordless, will you tell me the truth?'

Buddha remained silent.

The philosopher bowed down to Buddha saying, 'With your loving kindness you have cleared away my delusions and I have entered the true path.'

After the philosopher had gone, Ananda, one of the closest disciples of Buddha, asked Buddha what the philosopher had attained.

Buddha replied, 'A good horse runs even at the shadow of the whip.'

There are three types of horses. With the first type, unless you beat him he will not move even an inch. If you beat him, he will move forward a little but then again he will stop and he has to be beaten again to get him moving again. With the second type, there is not as much coaxing needed. If you even threaten to hit him he will start moving. The third type of horse is the most intelligent. This horse does not even need to see the whip, just seeing the shadow of the whip is enough to make him run!

It was similar in the case of the philosopher who came to Buddha. The urge to know the truth was burning so much inside of him he only wanted the truth and nothing else. He had had enough of words and techniques. That is why he wanted the truth from Buddha in neither words nor wordlessness.

So, in the silence of Buddha, the philosopher saw the shadow of the whip and got his answer.

Emotional attachment – the roadblock on the highway of Intelligence

Your past can become part of your intelligence if you allow it to teach you, if

you approach it with pure consciousness, with a witnessing mood, without having positive or negative emotional attachment. Positive emotional attachment means love for that memory. Negative emotional attachment means hatred for that memory. Either way that memory will continue to haunt you. Understand, memory of the past itself is never a problem. Only the emotional attachment to it is the problem.

If it is love for that memory, then you will put it in the ‘favorite’ file and constantly you will be seeing it. If it is hatred, you will put it in archives or trash. Even if you put it in trash, just because of your hatred for it, it will again and again come back to you in the form of guilt.

Be very clear, your emotional attachment to the past is the first and the last problem in life.

Guaranteed Intelligence to handle life

If you look around there is continuous intelligence and energy that exists to solve your problems. If you have lived for fifty years, by now you know from your own experience that you can handle your problems in life. You can surely live without worrying for another fifty years based on your experience.

Bliss provides energy to face and solve problems. When you are not blissful, that energy is used to create more problems. That is the problem! When you are blissful, you disconnect from worries and use the energy to solve problems.

In a physiological sense also, researchers have found that when the 'bliss' chemical dopamine is released into the body, the frontal lobes in the brain which are primarily responsible for intelligence and wisdom start working much more efficiently. When you are really blissful you work with higher intelligence. That is why you will find when you are very happy and without worry for a few minutes, many creative and exciting ideas are expressed from inside you.

Intellect Vs Intelligence

Our entire educational system is based upon evaluation of information, not intelligence. It is driven by intellect and verbalization, not visualization.

When you try to move on the basis of information you lose the ability to be intelligent. In fact, if you are logically logical you will understand that logic itself is not logical. Life is not logical. It cannot be explained with the mundane logic and

intellect. It happens in a plane much higher than the intellect.

The intelligent person lives moment to moment, not through logic. He does not believe in borrowed answers. He sees the challenge of the situation and directly responds to it.

The intellectual person is like a photograph, he has the imprint of the past on him. The intelligent person is like a mirror, he reflects and responds to reality and is therefore spontaneous.

The intellect is a beautiful mechanism but only as long as it remains a tool. It should not become the controlling factor. When you put your intellect aside, a deeper intelligence awakens inside you. You start functioning from your center instead of from the periphery. Your center is pure intelligent energy.

Intelligence can be rediscovered. The only way to rediscover it is meditation. Meditation destroys all the barriers and blocks which society has created, that prevent you from being intelligent. Like in a flowing river, it's as if meditation removes the rocks so that the water can flow smoothly.

Intelligence needs tremendous courage. It needs a love for adventure! When you are always going into the unknown, then intelligence grows, it becomes sharpened.

It grows only when it encounters the unknown every moment.

Intellect is only a mental game, it cannot be creative. Intellect is imaginative, but not creative. Intelligence is creative because it is a part of the divine energy.

Intelligence from mistakes

A small story:

Once, two adventurous hunters decided to go hunting for rare animals in a dense forest in a remote area away from their homes. They chartered a plane to fly them into the forest where they captured and killed many animals.

A few days later, the pilot came back to pick up the hunters and the animals. He looked at all the animals and said, 'This plane will not be able to take the huge ox and both of the zebras. You will have to leave one of them behind.'

The hunters replied, 'But we took animals exactly like these in a plane the same size as this one, the last time we came here!'

The pilot was not sure but since the hunters insisted that they had taken all of the animals on the plane the previous time, he thought maybe the plane could

handle the weight after all. So, the plane took off with all of them along with the ox and the two zebras.

The plane had hardly gained some height when it came crashing down after some distance. The hunters and pilot escaped unhurt. They stepped out of the plane.

One of the hunters rubbed his bruised forehead and asked the other, 'Where do you think we are?'

The other hunter looked around the surroundings and replied, 'I think we are a few feet from where we crashed last year.'

If you see your life, if you have the habit of keeping a diary, you will understand that you have been making the same types of mistakes for so many years! For the last twenty to thirty years you can see that you have been making the same type of mistakes. Maybe the scale is different, the place where you do it is different, or the time when you do it is different. But the mistakes will be almost the same! We need to have intelligence even to do new mistakes!

Another small story:

A man came to the doctor with burns on both his ears. The doctor inquired, 'How did you get burned on both your ears?'

The man replied, 'Actually, I had left the hot iron on when the phone rang. By mistake I picked up the iron instead of the phone.'

The doctor was surprised and asked, 'Oh! But what about the other ear? How did that get burned?'

The man replied angrily, 'The man called back!'

When you live intelligently, you will never do the same mistake again. Because when you are intelligent, you bring in awareness and learn the lesson the first time itself.

Intelligence to realize life is a dream

There are two important statements I would like to make now that you need to understand. The first is, whatever you think of as the world is made of the same stuff of which your dreams are made.

This is an important statement. If you understand this statement, you can use it for many purposes. If you know how to use the power with which *you* create *your* dreams, with that same power, you can express your dreams. Your dreams are the energy out of which your real world is created.

The second is, whatever you see has been created by you, so you have the capacity to change the whole thing also!

We always think our life is an accident. No, it is not an accident, it is an incident. If you understand this one statement, your life can change in so many ways. It can change your visualization, your thinking pattern, and your imagination which creates your dreams.

Most of the time, we create dreams that contradict themselves, that cause confusion. The energy wasted in unnecessary dreams, if it is conserved and put to proper use, the reality that you can create will be much better than the reality you live in now.

You will have the important ability or power to realize your dreams, and more importantly you will realize that everything you see as reality is also just one more beautiful dream!

These two things together can transform your life – the capacity to make your dreams into reality and realizing that all reality is nothing but a dream.

The power of intention, the power of creative visualization, and the power to use your dreams, are very important in creating and achieving whatever you want in your life. These powers can create the energy and mood to live your life with complete fulfillment. But that is only one side of the

coin. The important thing that science has missed is the intelligence to realize that whatever you see as reality is nothing but your dream! Only when you understand *that*, you can settle down with yourself in deep relaxation. Till then, you are with a continuous feeling of non-fulfillment all the time. It is this feeling of non-fulfillment that keeps you in a state of subtle irritation.

Intelligence and Visualization

The very source of intelligence is clear visualization. You need to plan only when you don't have complete and clear visualization. Pure and clear visualization expresses the total concept in one glimpse. If we don't have such visualization, we do linear planning or step by step logical processing.

Enlightened masters don't have inner chatter, in other words they don't have the continuous train of thoughts going on in them. So they experience the pure and ultimate visualization.

Anybody with clear visualization does not require planning. Spontaneity is enough to

do the job. Events happen spontaneously around such a person. Any updating or development that is required also happens automatically. Even if events change they will beautifully fit within the framework initiated.

Only a person with pure visualization can create a real, tangible program and update it constantly with spontaneity and intelligence.

We see so many examples of this in our own organization like in our ashram in the temple town of Tiruvannamalai* in Tamil Nadu in South India. Tiruvannamalai* is home to the sacred, mystical hill Arunachala. A once empty piece of land near the base of the mountain was converted into a full scale ashram in a record breaking time of 18 days! At the end of 18 days, it had one dozen deities installed, 1008 Shiva *lingas** (dome shaped representation of the male and female energies of creation) consecrated, as well as accommodation and food facilities. Over a hundred thousand people witnessed the inauguration and stood testimony to the play of spontaneous intelligence at work.

Tiruvannamalai - Temple town where Nithyananda was born and raised.

lingas - A dome shaped representation of enlightened master Shiva as a symbol of rejuvenation combining male and female principles.

Meditation technique – drop the intellect

Just try this for the next 48 hours. Consciously decide you are not going to think about your problems. Drop your intellect which continuously tells you that you do not have enough intelligence to solve your problems spontaneously, that you do not have the capacity to produce that much spontaneity.

Work on solving your problems boldly and with simple awareness and you will see that a higher intelligence comes into play. One lesson you will learn is without your knowledge, the higher intelligence comes in to do things for you. When you become sensitive to this happening, your awareness will take a quantum jump. Then you no longer need to work to dissolve your problems. Problems will simply dissolve with the play of spontaneous intelligence in your life.

With the intelligence gained about who we are and what we are doing here, comes the feeling of responsibility for others. We know then that we are not independent of others but interlinked to each other.

Some years back, there was an epidemic of tuberculosis in Tamil Nadu in South India. Finally, medicines were found and the epidemic was contained. The officials responsible for eradicating it proudly claimed that they were the ones responsible for curing it. But did they take up the responsibility for the fact that it was allowed to spread all over the town in the first place? No! They were actually responsible for allowing the tuberculosis to spread also, right? They should have prevented it to begin with and not just taken credit for managing the crisis!

Likewise, in our lives we claim responsibility for anything good that happens, but we don't take responsibility for anything bad that happens. We take up responsibility with discrimination.

Only if we take up responsibility for everything that happens in our lives will we start growing.

When you start living with the attitude, 'I am responsible,' your whole life will change. If you sit and analyze each and every incident in your life, you will clearly see that you are the only one responsible for incidents in your life. Normally, we pass the responsibility to others and blame them

for what has happened in our lives. Understand that those who really wish to blossom should feel directly or indirectly responsible for everything that happens around them.

Swami Vivekananda beautifully says, 'Take as much responsibility as you can shoulder. The more responsibility you take, the more you expand. Expansion is the only growth. Without expansion, you will contract and die.'

A small story:

Once a man was giving a talk on Responsibility at the Charity Club. He gave an example of what happened a few days back. He said, 'A friend and I were walking down the street towards the park when we saw a helpless man lying unconscious on the road.' He paused and looked at the concerned faces of the audience.

Then he continued, 'Nobody had bothered to help him. Not only that, when we came back after our walk, the poor man was still lying there!'

Instead of blaming others, let us look into ourselves and see what we are doing to solve the problem! We are always ready to find fault with others. But how many times

**Only when you
feel responsible
for all that is
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around you, do
you become a
leader.**

the more you grow. Only when you feel responsible for all that is happening around you do you become a leader. Until then you are just a follower.

Compassion is responsibility and energy

One of my disciples once asked me, ‘*Swamiji*, how is it that so much energy constantly flows through you?’

When you feel compassion towards others’ suffering, the whole thing takes the shape of responsibility and expresses itself as energy, that’s all. For that matter, when anyone takes up the responsibility of suffering, they will immediately start radiating energy.

How many disciples did Jesus Christ have? Just twelve. How many disciples did Ramakrishna Paramahansa* have? Only

do we ourselves do something to address the issue?

The more responsibility you take up,

sixteen. Each of these beings had only a small number of disciples, but because they took up responsibility, the movements expanded.

Be very clear, you can stand up only if you feel responsible for people’s growth, only if you feel responsible for uplifting them. When you can say that you will do whatever you can for people, when you stand up with responsibility, you expand and the divine energy flows through you. Contemplate on this concept so that you can deeply understand it.

Can air flow through a blocked bamboo? No! A blocked bamboo will only help carry a corpse to the cremation grounds. That same bamboo will become a flute when it is hollowed out! As long as you are self-centered, you will serve in the same capacity as the blocked bamboo that carries the dead body. When you are free from ego and stand up with responsibility, the expansion happens and you become like the bamboo flute. Then, just as the air that enters the bamboo leaves it as music, so too will the air that enters you flow through you as energy!

Ramakrishna Paramahansa - Enlightened master from West Bengal in India. His chief disciple was Swami Vivekananda.

A cognitive shift

When you take up responsibility, a cognitive shift happens in you. Your mental setup changes. Many of us live life like slaves. For example, if you work eight hours in your office just following orders you will feel dull and tired. Instead, if you take up responsibility and initiative, that same eight hours will become much easier and more enjoyable.

For example, take the case of a person who is running his own business and another person who is working for a company. The owner of the business has the full responsibility of his business, but the person who is working for some other company does not really feel the full responsibility. If he does not feel the responsibility, the whole job becomes like a burden on him. There is little or no self-motivation. He keeps looking at his watch to see if it is time to leave! For him, only the first of every month is sweet, since it is payday! In a month, he sacrifices twenty nine days of his life for one day of joy. A sense of personal responsibility can help turn around any situation. A sense of personal responsibility can achieve great things.

When you stand up with responsibility, you become a solid force. Until then, you

**When you stand
up with
responsibility,
you become a
solid force.**

remain a burden for yourself and for others. We often think that we are in an ordinary job. We wonder why we should take up more responsibility when our higher authorities at work are not doing so.

Let me tell you, in an office, when a janitor does all his duties perfectly, he will inspire people. You see, the head of the organization has to be responsible. No credit is given to him for that! But someone in a lesser position demonstrating such responsibility is a true inspiration.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa beautifully says, 'A *sannyasi* has to think of god. No credit is given to him for it. A *samsari** is given credit every time he thinks of god! When a *sannyasi* forgets god even for a moment, it is a sin; whereas, when a *samsari** thinks of god even for a moment, it is a great thing.' In the same way, a leader has to be responsible. No credit is given to a leader for being responsible. If a janitor is responsible, he can inspire an entire institution.

There is a greater chance of people at a lower post inspiring others through their sense of responsibility than people at a higher level doing so. So don't wait to get

Samsari - One who is caught in *samsara* or cycle of birth and death.

**Don't wait to get
some authority
to become
responsible.**

some authority
to become
responsible.

S e c o n d l y ,

don't think that you are in a lesser post,
and therefore you need not be responsible.

Thirdly, allow the cognitive shift to happen
in you.

Allow a change in the mental setup to
happen in you. Currently, your mind is in a
state of *mithyam**, lost in the illusionary, the
unreal. Your mind is constantly searching
for worries and sorrow in the outer world.
If you deeply analyze yourself, you will
realize that if you are intensely enjoying
yourself, you are suddenly engulfed with a
feeling of fear that there is nothing to
worry about. Then, immediately you start
thinking of things to worry about. You feel
that you have lost something, and you start
recollecting all your worries.

*Mithyam** means to go in search of sorrow
and the ephemeral, going in search of that
which is not there. We have to change the
state of the mind from *mithyam** to *nithyam**,
to the eternal, to the present moment. This
is called the cognitive shift. This will
happen when you stand up, saying that you
are responsible.

If you stand up with this feeling for just
24 hours, things that were lying unfinished,
things for which you blamed others, will
get finished. Your entire life will change
and blossom with a new sense of
happiness. A new kind of ecstasy will
engulf you. You will become a natural
leader. Life will become a celebration!

There is a beautiful story about Buddha.
It is said that when Buddha went to beg,
He would appear like a king, and the kings
who gave Him alms would appear like
beggars! Appearing like a beggar or a king
is not because of your status or the
property that you own. It is because of the
state inside you.

When you take up responsibility for the
entire cosmos, you will expand and look
like a leader, you will become a leader.
Even if a leader sits on his throne and does
not take responsibility, but instead points
his finger at others for responsibility, he
will appear small. The state is that which
gets the status, the status can never get
the state. The state of *Nithyananda* is
different from the status of Nithyananda.

Mithyam - Impermanent, opposite of *nithyam* which is eternal.

Nithyam - Eternal.

A commitment to serve people

Swami Vivekananda, the Eastern mystic, describes the motto for his mission as *atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha* – ‘For spiritual liberation as well as bringing good to humanity’. He implies that without taking up responsibility for the good of the world, you cannot talk of spiritual liberation.

A beautiful story:

In a place called Pandharipur in India, there was a boy who served his parents very lovingly and with great care. Lord Krishna took the form of Pandharinathar and came to see him. It was raining that day while the boy was attending to his parents.

Krishna stood at the door of the boy's house and asked to be allowed inside. The boy asked Him to wait until he had finished attending to his parents. Krishna said that it was raining and slushy where He stood. So the boy actually threw a block of brick and asked lord Krishna to stand on it! Even today in that region, Pandarinathar is worshipped standing on a brick-block!

God Himself came down to see the consciousness and sense of responsibility of the boy. That is why I tell people, when you stand up with responsibility, energy

will automatically flood you! Feeling that you are responsible is the greatest quality.

Ego Vs Responsibility

When you stand up feeling responsible, your problems will dissolve. A new intelligence will awaken in you. Don't think you are being egoistic. Ego is different from responsibility. When you feel responsible, you will take the initiative, you will not feel egoistic. Only when you think that you would have done better than the other person will ego come into play. When ego comes into play, you will not take up responsibility.

Responsibility is not seriousness - the world is just a dream

Being responsible does not mean becoming serious. Sincerity is different from seriousness. When you become serious, you are only feeding your ego. When you are sincere, you understand about life and do not attach undue importance to any one thing at the cost of something else. You are able to approach life with a youthful enthusiasm, with

**This whole world
is merely a
dream. You look
at this world as
reality because
you have
experienced it so.**

spontaneity
and inno-
cence.

A child's
world is full
of, 'He took
away my
pencil!', 'He

hit me!'... 'She is not giving me my chocolate!' We all lived in this stage of our life before we grew up. How does it feel when you think back about this? It appears comical now, doesn't it? We laugh at how much we bothered for these little things!

Now, let's rewind to when we were five or six years old. At this age we may have fought for a geometry kit. When we were a few years younger, we fought for a pencil, and now we are fighting for the geometry kit. You grow up further. Now, if your best friend becomes very close to somebody else, you can't bear that! If we think back about this, we feel like laughing. If I ask the elderly people about the problems of youth, about relationships, the problem will now not appear to be of a serious nature. This is because they have passed that age. Just like this, there is a state that is beyond all these states. It is the state to experience bliss. It is an experience that goes beyond all the states of life.

Take another example: Say you get a shocking piece of news. Someone whom you loved has been murdered. Even when

you learn this, how much grief and trouble you feel! You can't believe he is gone. You are crying uncontrollably. Suddenly your mother gives you a nudge and says, 'Wake up' and you wake up and realize, 'Oh god! That was only a dream!' Suddenly you are so relieved and relaxed! From this, we can understand a small technique for living life: 'When the dream disappears, peace is born.'

Shiva says, 'This whole world is merely a dream.' How many people can accept this? You look at this world as reality because you have experienced it so.

We can accept things only when we experience them. The things that we have not experienced, we are not able to accept. The only solution is to go within ourselves and experience that bliss.

In our youth, the problems of early childhood appear comical. In our old age, the problems of youth appear comical. When we realize the Ultimate, everything appears to be playful. You can play the game of life beautifully, completely neck-deep in it, yet be completely unaffected by it.

Trust and patience

I always tell people, 'Do not think you have a certain amount of energy and you will

work according to that energy. No. Whatever work and responsibility you take up, the energy starts expressing accordingly. You will have energy according to the responsibilities which you take up. Whatever responsibility you take upon yourself, you will see that your inner space expands to that extent and energy flows through you!

If you feel responsible for whatever is happening around you, you suddenly become a leader. You start transforming your life and others' lives. Responsibility is one of the ways to consciously grow.

You only need to do two things: trust that life is good and know that you can expand to the responsibilities that you take up.

Another thing, when that expansion happens, just hold on and have patience during the transformation process. Patience during the transformation process is what I call *tapas* or penance. There is a beautiful phrase of the teachings of Shirdi Sai Baba*: '*Shraddha Saburi*' – trust and patience. This is the essence of life.

Trust that you can expand in your life and then you will expand for all the responsibilities and commitments you take up. Have patience

when the expansion or the transformation is happening in your inner space. That's all.

Nothing else needs to be done.

We seldom have either trust or patience. That's why we just reproduce the same past into our future. Why don't we allow big breakthroughs in our life? Because we don't trust that life leads us into a new space. Have trust and patience. The simple truth is that when you take more responsibility, you just expand and more energy starts expressing through you.

Taking responsibility for others is the technique for enlightenment.

Responsibility for others

Responsibility is one of the ways to consciously grow. Taking responsibility for others is the technique for enlightenment. That is what the Bhagavad Gita calls *karma yoga**. When you really feel that you should do the *karma*, the action of taking the responsibility for others, you will not even bother about results. Just out of your compassion, just out of feeling responsible, you will start working.

Shirdi Sai Baba - An enlightened master worshipped by Hindus and Muslims alike. Lived in Shirdi near Nasik.
Karma yoga - The path of Self Realization by fulfilling one's responsibilities without attachment to anything.

Working out of overflowing energy, overflowing compassion, and the overflowing feeling of responsibility for everything, is what makes a life spiritual. Working out of overflowing responsibility instead of greed or fear is what we call spiritual life.

Responsibility of enlightenment

Understand, enlightenment comes with a tremendous responsibility. It comes with a tremendous 'pressured' compassion. 'Pressured' is the right word to use! Your whole being will be vibrating with an intense compassion, with a very deep compassion.

Let me tell you one incident:

Early one morning, Vivekananda suddenly got up and said, 'I have a deep pain in the right hand.' At that time he was lying down on a bed. He said, 'On this side of the ocean, some country is suffering from some natural calamity. Please find out where we are needed, and send our swamis to go and do the relief work.' The next morning they received the news that there was an*

earthquake on a nearby island. All the swamis rushed to do the relief work.*

Vivekananda was sensitive to and actually felt the pain felt by people so many miles away!

With enlightenment, practically the whole cosmos is felt inside your body. A deep pressured compassion lands on you along with the enlightenment experience. Understand, it is a great responsibility. It is not just freedom. It is a great responsibility too.

State, not status

Most of us wait for the status to come in order to take up the responsibility. Be very clear, it doesn't work that way. Only if you take up responsibility will the status come. Those who wait for the status will not take up responsibility even after they get the status! They will simply find another reason or excuse, that's all.

Be very clear, responsibility is a consciousness.

Many people think that if they get enlightened, they will get a golden throne. They think that somebody will give them food and a place to stay. They think that

Swami - A honorific term used for a *sannyasi*, a monk.

people will worship their photograph. If you see the status of the enlightened master and try to achieve enlightenment for that, you will feel cheated! If you see

the state of the enlightened master and try to achieve it, you will be successful. You will be happy. You will enjoy it. That is the difference between state and status.

When we become responsible for others, we no longer are focused on us. We move towards serving other people. Serving other people is leadership. Pandering to one's own needs without a care about others is absence of leadership.

Background

There are so many books these days about leadership and how it is an important part of making an organization successful. There are so many so-called leadership *gurus* who teach and train people in organizations to 'develop' leadership. Yet when we look at all organizations, whether they are doing business to make a profit, or in government service or in the area of social services, true leaders are rare.

If you look at any organization you will find that less than 1% tends to become the so-called leaders in the organization. If you look at business organizations, we can say that there are probably only 1% of these organizations that can claim to be true leaders in their fields who are excelling in all areas of their business – making a profit, delivering good products and services, providing service to society, providing satisfaction to their employees, etc.

So we can say, true leaders are actually 1% of the 1% of successful business organizations. It means just 0.01% of the

overall working population actually has true leadership qualities in them! We can say the same about organizations in other fields. This is what I mean when I say true leaders are rare.

Let us now try and understand why this is the case. For this, we need to understand:

1. What is Leadership?
2. Can leaders be 'created' or do you have to be a born leader?
3. What are the key ingredients that make a successful leader?
4. Why do some individuals effortlessly and 'naturally' lead and most others struggle?
5. How do we start the process of our individual journey to become leaders?

Let us now understand step by step all these points.

What is Leadership?

So many books have been written on this subject of leadership by management *gurus*, professors and consultants. Most of them have spoken about how a successful leader should be. There are a lot of courses conducted by companies on leadership, team work, etc.

My disciples who have come from the corporate world have described to me how

Leadership is not a quality, but an experience that can radiate from an individual who has experienced personal growth.

these courses are conducted and what they have been striving to achieve through these courses. They have also told me that while the courses have been helpful to them, the effect from the courses tends to wear off within a short period after the courses are completed.

I am told of weekend boot camps where team spirit is built by climbing ropes, playing games, creating a sense of friendship, etc. The gist I picked up from hearing my disciples is that these training programs tend to work on the outer attributes but do little to change or improve the 'inner software' of the individuals so that leadership can radiate from the individual. Leadership is not a quality, but an experience that can radiate from an individual who has experienced personal growth and transformation.

Now let me give you some explanations of how leadership is described traditionally. If you search the internet under the terms 'Leadership' and 'Leader', you will be amazed at the millions of hits that come up! Just recently when I typed

the word 'Leadership' on Google it had 156 million hits and the word 'Leader' had 278 million hits!

So whatever needs to be written or said on these topics has been said! So I am here to mainly give you a few examples from the leading management gurus and their concepts of a leader and more importantly to give you the real understanding, tools and techniques on how to become a leader and how anyone can radiate leadership as a result of personal transformation!

Understand, every human being is a potential leader. Leadership is not a quality only some people have been born with as is viewed and understood currently. Everyone can become a leader and the quality of leadership arises from one's ability to take responsibility for a particular organization, a situation or a particular group.

I have here some definitions of leadership you can get from an internet search:

Peter Drucker* defines a leader as '*someone who has followers*'.

John C Maxwell* says, '*Leadership is influence - nothing more, nothing less.*'

Warren Bennis* says, '*Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well-*

Peter Drucker - Management guru considered to be the father of modern management.

John C Maxwell - Leadership expert and writer.

Warren Bennis - Management and leadership consultant.

communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own leadership potential.'

John Gardner* defines leadership as '*the process of persuasion and example by which an individual or leadership team induces a group to take action that is in accord with the leader's purpose, or the shared purposes of all.*'

Here is yet another definition of a leader from an unnamed source, '*Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills.*'

I am sure there are thousands of such definitions on what a leader should be and what leadership is. I am not going to go into too much of detail into this, but I wanted to point out some of the quotes from leading management *gurus* on leaders and leadership. All of these experts tell us what a leader should be and the traits that define a successful leader. Yet, there is very little of how one can attain this state of a leader. So it leads to the question: Are leadership traits inborn or can a leader be created? To understand this, we need to delve into the composition of the mind and the science of the so called inner world.

This is an area where the eastern mystics have spent thousands of years exploring and discovering the inner world. They have created tools and techniques to create the right 'inner software' to cultivate leadership skills. Let us explore this in greater detail.

Can leaders be 'created' or do you have to be a born leader?

A lot has been said by many people on what a leader should be. But there is very little that has been said about actually how to get there. What exactly do I mean by this?

Is leadership some quality you have to be born with or can it be cultivated? How can one develop leadership skills? Can a person truly lead an organization if he or she is caught up in personal struggles and confusions?

Before we get into these details, let me first say that leadership skills *can* be cultivated. It is all about achieving the state of consciousness of a leader and not the status that is achieved by becoming a leader.

When you read this, please do not think I am going to take you through a spiritual journey! The process I am going to take you through is a time-tested, proven

John Gardner - Author of a number of books on leadership.

science of personal transformation. It is a product of ten thousand years of research and development from the Eastern system of inner science. What do I mean by this?

Firstly, understand that every civilization has focused its energies in certain fields. In the West, they focused their efforts on the outer world science, innovation, discovery and creation of products and services to improve the quality of life and comforts. These outer world scientists have discovered so many products and services which have greatly benefitted humanity and improved the quality of life of humans all over the world.

Just as there is science of the outer world, there is a vast science of the inner world, something that lies within all of us. The scientists of the inner world or *rishis** worked on various tools and techniques to handle the different emotions we experience and our mind. Over the last ten thousand years, these scientists of the inner world have created tools and techniques that help us handle our emotions and overcome the stress and depression from emotions. They have created techniques for us to live blissfully with ourselves. These tools and techniques are what I call meditation techniques.

So most of my discussion on leadership will be focused on giving an understanding

of human emotions, the mind and how we can use these simple understandings from the inner scientists to help us lead a successful and fulfilling life.

In most organizations, those who have become leaders have achieved the status of the leader. They may not have necessarily achieved the state of the leader. What do I mean by this? To understand this, first let us understand the key ingredients that make a successful leader.

What are the key ingredients that make a successful leader?

A small story:

There was once a great war between two countries. The war had been going on for some time and the soldiers were starting to feel tired of the long battle.

On a hot afternoon, a man in civilian clothes was riding past a small group of tired soldiers digging a huge pit. The group leader was shouting orders and threatening punishment if the work was not completed within the hour.

The man riding the horse stopped and asked, 'Sir, why are you only shouting orders? Why can't you help them yourself?' asked the stranger on horseback.

Rishi - Sage.

The group leader looked at him and replied, 'What do you mean? I am the leader. The men do as I tell them.' He then added, 'If you feel so strongly about helping them, you are welcome to do so yourself!'

The man got down from his horse and started walking up to the soldiers at work. The group leader was simply shocked! The man took up the tools and started helping the soldiers and worked with them till the job was finished!

Before leaving the man congratulated the soldiers for their work, and approached the group leader. He said, 'The next time your status prevents you from supporting your people, you should inform your higher authorities and I will provide a more permanent solution.'

The group leader was now completely surprised. Only now he looked closely at the man – and realized that the man was the army general!

We now need to ask ourselves how many so-called leaders in organizations exhibit the qualities of the group leader. And how many people do you know who exhibit the qualities of the army general?

Regardless of the status in an organization, you will agree that the majority of the so-called leaders exhibit the qualities of the

group leader. They achieve the status of the leader but not the state of the leader.

There are very few people who are ready to really help the work get done.

The army general exhibited some of the key qualities that are important for a true leader:

1. Honesty and Responsibility
2. Caring genuinely about people
3. Confidence
4. Efficiency and lateral thinking skills
5. Attention to detail
6. Efficiency and Effectiveness
7. Broad-based thinking and doing

I will discuss these traits in greater detail in the following sections.

Leader consciousness

Leadership - a result of a conscious choice made by an individual

What do I mean by this term, 'Leader Consciousness'?

Most of us achieve the status of a leader, but not the state. State is totally different from status. Status comes from society.

A responsible leader is a person who is able to respond spontaneously to situations.

When you are leading a group of people, if you are forced to take the responsibility

of some department or if you take the responsibility out of your greed, the status comes. But the state is totally different.

When I use the word 'state' I mean your inner space or your being should be mature enough to handle what you are entering or the responsibility which you are assuming. When we just get the status without achieving the state, all the problems which exist in the corporate world start - stress and tension in the personal level, and backbiting and politics in the level of the team. All these problems start when you don't achieve the state but just achieve the status.

Here I am trying to express to you the truths from the great traditions of the East, how to achieve leader consciousness, how to achieve the state of the leader and not just the status. See, status is very easy, state is something which we really need to achieve.

Status will simply follow a man who has achieved the state of a leader. Even if the status takes its own time, he will not be bothered, he will live like a king! His very life will be totally fulfilled. The invaluable

feeling of fulfillment happens to beings who achieve leader consciousness.

State of a leader Vs Status of a leader

What do I mean by the word, 'state of the leader'?

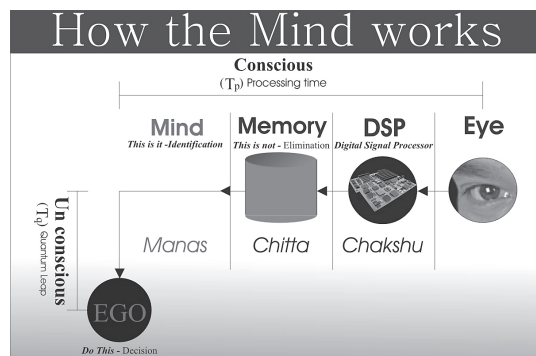
A true leader is a person who is ready to take responsibility consciously, who is ready to handle life consciously, who is not constantly dependent on the past or his memory. If you are dependent on your memory, if you are dependent on the past to take decisions, please be very clear, you will be a follower. You cannot be a leader.

Responding spontaneously to situations is what I call responsibility.

A responsible leader is a person who is able to respond spontaneously to situations, who is fresh and continuously keeps himself alive, who is not caught in the past.

Let me try to give you a small diagram on how the mind works, how the state of a leader is achieved, how leader consciousness happens in us. Let us understand how the mind works - how we receive data, process it and make decisions.

For example, you are seeing something through your eye. Of course, you receive information through all the five senses -



eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch. For now, let us take the example of the eye. When you see with your eyes, immediately the file goes to a space called the *chakshu**, it is just like a Digital Signal Processor (DSP). Whatever you are seeing through the eye is converted to a bio-signal, just like a digital signal file. This file moves to a space called *chitta** in Sanskrit which is just like memory in a computer. Here the process of identification starts. For example, you are now seeing this book - the whole file goes to the DSP, *chakshu**, and the whole file is converted into a bio-signal file, and then it moves to *chitta**, memory.

The memory starts analyzing - 'This is not a stone, this is not a tree, this is not an animal...' The elimination process happens in the memory. This process of elimination happens in the memory. Next,

Chakshu - Energy behind the power of sight.

Chitta - Memory.

Manas - Mind.

the identification, 'This is a book,' happens in the mind or *manas**. In the mind, you start identifying, 'This is a book', 'It is a book on spirituality', 'It is written by an enlightened being'

After identification, the file then moves to a space which I call 'ego', the decision-making center. In the ego you start thinking, 'In what way am I connected to this situation?' If your past experiences with similar books were good, you decide to continue to read. If your past experiences were not good, if you felt, 'O, this is not worth it, I felt very bored last time,' or 'I read similar books but did not feel any benefit,' if you feel negative you will decide not to continue reading. The ego decides based on your past experiences. This is the way your mind functions.

Now, the important thing which you need to understand is, the decision is taken *unconsciously*. If the process happens like this, in a straightforward way, you will not have any problem and things will go very smoothly in your life. Everything will be clear and straight!

But this process does not always happen in a straightforward way. Sometimes things start happening in an unconscious way. For example, if you were hurt or disturbed by

something that was said in a similar book you read before, the moment you see this book, unconsciously that memory will be awakened.

You see, in your life, if you are hurt or disturbed in a particular place, or by a particular situation, or by a person wearing a particular colored dress, the next time when you go to that place, or the next time you see another person wearing the same colored dress, you will go through the same low mood even if you know logically that the place or that person has nothing to do with your past experiences. You will have that same memory again in your mind. You will again have that same experience. This is what I call '*samskaras*' or 'engraved memories'.

These engraved memories distort or disturb your decision-making capacity. You see, if the whole process of the mind map I just described happens consciously, then it is a straightforward and logical process. But due to the unconscious mind, a lot of times, the process is not straightforward. As I described earlier, we tend to get biased based on our experiences we have had with a particular person or a particular situation. This is the space where politics happens! This is the space where things move illogically. This is the space where the past memories or engrams will be sitting and you do not even know what decision you are making!

Let me give you one more example to give you more understanding of the unconscious mind. If we analyze logically or consciously, all of you know that smoking is injurious to health. If we follow through the process from eye to the mind, you know clearly that smoking is injurious to health, according to the data collected by your senses. But suddenly, even though logic tells us not to smoke, you decide to smoke, beyond your logic and consciousness. This is where the unconscious engrams are sitting.

Even though you consciously know that smoking is injurious to health, when the data moves to the ego, when the file takes a quantum leap, you just decide to smoke. Maybe some memory, or some experience which you had in the past must have made you feel relaxed when you smoked. Or maybe when you smoked during your youth, you may have felt like a hero. So these engrams have been associated with this habit, and suddenly, because of this engram you decide to smoke, even if you consciously know that smoking is injurious to health.

In the same way, many times in your life, even if you know what is right, simply you decide unconsciously because of your engrams. Your life is under the control of unconscious engrams, it is not under your control. You may think that you are taking

the decision, but your unconscious engrams are taking the decisions!

These *samskaras* or engrams are the root cause of our behavior. They are the reason why we behave in a certain way with certain people. The engrams tend to cloud our judgments when we have to take decisions. They influence how we accomplish our tasks in an organization. It is these engrams that dictate our productivity, interpersonal skills, teamwork, judgment and all our responses and behavior. But engrams are never understood and more importantly given any importance in the field of corporate training and leadership development.

The Eastern mystics and inner scientists have spent thousands of years developing tools and meditation techniques to cleanse us from these engraved memories. These *samskaras* can be effectively erased through meditation techniques.

Recently I visited one of my devotee's houses and saw a beautiful one-liner in the living room:

'I am the boss of this house, I have my wife's permission to say so!'

Similarly, you may think you are the boss, but your unconscious engrams are leading you! As long as you are caught by these unconscious *samskaras*, you can never achieve the state of a leader. You may achieve the status of a leader with a lot of

suffering and struggle.

Be very clear, if you sit in the leader's chair

with a lot of suffering and struggle, you will tend to create the same suffering and struggle for your subordinates!

Again and again, your mind will say, 'When I suffered and struggled so much, why not them!' You will just reproduce your old mental setup on others. This can be a very demotivating factor in organizations.

If you take decisions consciously, you will never have any stress.

Decision making and stress

Now let me share with you some very important truths.

If you take decisions consciously, you will never have any stress.

Stress happens only when you take decisions unconsciously, when engrams interfere with your decision making. If things are straightforward, you can take thousands of decisions and be completely relaxed. Your life will flow, just like a river!

But if you are filled with engrams, even after taking two or three decisions, you will be completely tired. You don't even have to work, just sit in your chair and think about work, and within half an hour, you

**Everyone is a
leader in some
way or the other -
of your team or
your house.**

will have shoulder pain! This means you are caught with engrams. They do not allow you to take decisions.

When the file takes a quantum leap from the mind, each engram writes its opinion on the file! The more the number of engrams, the more the number of decisions, so when the file reaches the ego, it is completely confused! When three hundred opinions are there on that file, what decision will you take! Your ego says 'Just do whatever you want, just leave me!' You don't have any patience to take any decision and decisions are taken in a very haphazard way, without any clarity.

If you are continuously deciding without any clarity, and you sit in the leader's chair, please be very clear, not only will you be suffering, you will be torturing others also! Everyone is a leader in some way or the other. Either you are the leader of your team or you are the leader of your house. In some way or the other, every one of us is a leader.

A person who is caught by engrams, who is always suffering with engraved memories, can never relax or have a vacation. You can see in your life, early in the morning when you get up and go from your bed to the bathroom, you are brushing

your teeth but your mind is already in the office! If you are sitting in the office, the mind is already in the evening at the beach. When you are sitting in the beach and relaxing, your mind is already in the house. One thing is for sure, if your body is here, your mind is not here!

You don't stay in the place that your body is. You are constantly somewhere else. I always tell people, if you are sitting in the house and worrying, it is working from home! If you are sitting in the office and worrying, you are doing your job. If you are sitting in the beach and worrying, you are having a vacation, that's all! The places may be different, but the mental setup is the same!

A person filled with engrams can never relax. If a person is not in a relaxed state of mind, how can we expect creativity or unbiased decision-making? One who is caught up in his engrams can neither have a vacation, nor can he live his life completely. Vacation or work, living or leaving, are both directly related to your consciousness. It is not related to what you are doing, it is related to your being. Only a man who is aware of his being can achieve leader consciousness.

Productivity

Definitions and understanding

A small story:

Once a boss asks his employee, 'Why did it take you six months to complete such a simple task?'

The employee replies, 'Because of your confusing directions, continuous changes and short work days!'

The boss replies, 'I was looking for something like you being lazy!'

So much has been written and said about productivity in organizations. Productivity has become the mantra in organizations for the last two or three decades. As a result of invention of computers and new communications technologies such as the internet and cell phone, the world has become a much smaller place. While there has been an increase in productivity in companies, it has often come at a huge price on the health (physical and mental) and well being of the employees. Let us now start to understand what is productivity and how productivity can be enhanced without the side effects of stress.

In simple terms, productivity can be measured as:

Productivity = Output / Input

The measure of output may be certain number of tasks completed by a particular individual or team or revenue in the case of a manufacturing company. The measure of input may include the number of hours worked on a particular project, manufacturing costs etc.

Understanding from Eastern mysticism - impact of engrams on productivity

Billions of dollars are spent by companies globally to enhance human productivity. Most of these efforts are centered on providing new skills specific to training in a particular area of the organization's focus or improving technology such as use of computers, internet or other forms of media and communications. Some companies also invest in developing 'softer skills' such as interpersonal skills, team-building skills, etc. But most of these trainings tend to address the conscious mind, actions, behaviors and perceptions that are just on the surface. But over 90% of our emotions and behaviors reside deep under the surface of our mind. This is what the psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud, calls the unconscious mind.

If we look at the mind, at a conscious level, there are thoughts and perceptions which

are accumulated in our mind at a conscious level. But there are deeper memories and stored knowledge that we use to help us solve problems. Then there is a whole range of emotions and experiences that are embedded in the unconscious level. This is where the *samskaras* or engraved memories reside.

Most corporate training programs focus on the conscious mind to impart knowledge or particular skills. But actually it is as though we are sitting on a volcano of emotions that is just waiting to burst and erupt any time! These hidden emotions are what make us behave inefficiently and even illogically at times!

So *samskaras* or engraved memories interfere with the decision-making process, these can be called the inefficiencies present in the mind! The more the number of engrams, the more clouded is our thought process, and the lower is the output. In other words, to produce a particular output, having more *samskaras* will require more time or people or costs. So this results in lower productivity.

Freudian representation of the unconscious mind

Most readers who have studied psychology are familiar with the Freudian interpretation of the mind. Traditional

training and skills development in various organizations address only the conscious mind which is just ten percent of your potential. Ninety percent of the potential can be actualized only when we address *samskaras*. This huge potential can be experienced through meditation techniques.

To give you an example of what I just described, I would like you to take fifteen minutes of your time on a simple exercise. Take a white sheet of paper and just write down whatever comes to your mind. Please do not edit, filter or pass judgment on any of the thoughts that come to your mind. Just behave as though a 'thought recorder' (just like a voice recorder) is attached to you and you are jotting down whatever comes to your mind. Now after fifteen minutes put the pen aside and read what you have just written.

If you have honestly recorded whatever came to your mind, you will realize the kind of stray, unconnected, illogical thoughts that go through the mind. These thoughts are like friction in a machine. They make the machine very inefficient and unproductive. This is the root cause of low productivity.

Several of my disciples, who have gone through this process and consciously worked on eliminating their *samskaras*, always come and tell me that they are now finding so much time in their busy lives

since they are no longer troubled by the wavering mind and illogical thoughts.

The tool for elimination of these stray thoughts arising from *samskaras* is what I call meditation. Once these thoughts are eliminated, it is like reducing the friction in a machine and allowing the machine to be more efficient, more productive.

Thousands of people from all races, nationalities, social and economic backgrounds have gone through this process of eliminating *samskaras* in our meditation programs. Thousands of people come and tell me that in addition to improving their overall productivity, they are able to maintain better interpersonal relationships, feel less stress, and be more creative and innovative in their personal and professional lives. I have also had interesting conversations with leading corporate leaders and Nobel Laureates on this subject where they have shared amazing evidences of improved innovation and intuitive skills developed as a result of becoming free of *samskaras*.

So we can now elaborate on the equation to describe productivity. We can restate the equation as follows:

Productivity = Output/Input

Input = (Intellect + Technical Skills + *Samskaras*)

As you know, we live with our mind 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. For most

people, the mind is constantly running, analyzing, passing judgment on individuals, having various emotions and responding to situations, all of which is dependent on the level of *samskaras* that may be 'haunting' us.

Without the load of these *samskaras*, you will find that your innate intellect and the skills you have developed through your education, training or life experiences will directly be used in delivering the output instead of being knocked around by your mind. You will see the productivity simply shoots up!

This is an area that has mostly not been looked at by companies and organizations. But there are simple tools and techniques from the Eastern mystics who have developed techniques to cleanse the mind of these *samskaras*.

Sometimes people ask me, 'If we are free of *samskaras*, will we stop thinking? Will we become lazy and complacent?' I tell you, it is actually the opposite. Please refer again to the experiment I gave you a while back on jotting down your thoughts on a piece of paper for fifteen minutes. If the mind is free from the effects of *samskaras*, you will see a quantum jump in intelligence, you will be creative and a whole new zone of intelligence will emerge. You will see that all of a sudden you will be able to develop skills of intuition and innovation that emerge from your being.

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us. They have been clouded by the impact of *samskaras*. Let me now describe how a mind-body system that is free from *samskaras* will improve intuition and innovation.

Impact of *samskaras* on intuition and innovation

Intuition is a wonderful subject. If you ask modern day CEOs, how they took major decisions in their lives, what caused the turning point in their lives, again and again their answer surprises us. Again and again they tell us that their success came from something beyond their intellect, something that gave them the energy or the guts to take the decisions. This is not just the case with successful CEOs, it is the same with scientists also.

The other day I had a chance to have lunch with Dr Charles Townes*. I asked him ‘Sir,

Understand, this is not a mystical zone you are going to enter into. Be very clear, the skills of intuition reside in all of

how did your discovery happen? How were you able to do it?’ He answered in a beautiful way, ‘I was just sitting in a park in Washington DC; suddenly something happened. The conclusion was there in me. Suddenly the conclusion was revealed to me. I penned down what I experienced. Now I had a big difficulty. I had the conclusion but not the steps. I was not able to present this to anybody else because I knew only the conclusion, I didn’t know the steps.’

This happened not only with Charles Townes*, it had also happened with Albert Einstein*. He says, ‘Whatever new happened to me, came through intuition and not through intellect.’ He summed it up beautifully, saying, ‘The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift.’

Whether we believe it or not or accept it or not, there is something called intuition. Of course, even Albert Einstein says this is a gift, because we are not sure when it will come and whether it will come or not.

But yogis, the mystics, say again and again, you can work for it and you can be sure about it. You don’t have to think that intuition is a gift. You *can* work for it. It

Dr Charles Townes - Nobel laureate in physics for work related to MASER and LASER.

Albert Einstein - Scientist and Nobel laureate.

can become a part of your life. Whatever new things have happened, have happened only through intuition, only when something has happened beyond your intellect and your whole being is integrated.

When you are at your peak, something opens. You may call it revelation or intuition, which happens beyond intellect. Mystics have again and again said that it is a science. If you can tune yourself to this intuition or this energy, which is continuously available in your being, you can use this in your regular life. Mystics again and again say it is an incident, you can make it happen. They know how to make it happen. We will see how you can awaken that power inside your being. We will see how the intuitive skills can be linked to the workings of the mind which I discussed earlier.

Before we discuss intuition in greater detail, let us first dispel the myths that intuition is some kind of a 'fluke' of nature. I would like you to understand that intuition is a skill that can be developed just as any other skills that you acquire. It comes from you, from no one else! Because we have not experienced that zone, that part, that dimension of our being, we have forgotten it.

Chakshu - Energy behind the power of sight.

Chitta - Memory.

Manas - Mind.

Someone asked me in a meditation program, 'I remember someone and the next moment the phone rings and he is there on the line. I remember someone at a party and next moment I see him.' I asked the people in the program if this kind of an incidence had happened to them at least once in their lifetime. More than seventy percent of the people said this had happened! If it happens in one person's life once, you can say it is a coincidence. But if it happens with seventy percent of people, it cannot be called a coincidence! There is more to it. There is some logic behind it.

We may not be able to know logically but we cannot brush it aside. When you know the logic, we call it an incident. When you don't know the logic, you call it a coincidence. Nothing can happen without a cause on planet earth. It is always cause and effect. When you know the cause and effect link, you call it an incident. When you don't know, you call it a coincidence.

In trying to understand the process of intuition, let us refer back to the mind map we discussed earlier. We talked about how the process of taking information from a sense such as the eye works through *chakshu** (Digital Signal Processor), *chitta** (memory), *manas** (mind) and then takes a

quantum jump to the ego where the decisions are clouded by *samskaras* or engraved memories.

The process in the gap between the eye and mind is conscious. You are aware of this process. It happens with your awareness. But you are not aware about the mind to ego process. Many a time, the process happens without your awareness. You decide against your logic. You decide against your thought process. For example, according to the data that you have collected, you know that smoking is injurious to health, it is not good for your body or mind. But when the mind takes an unconscious leap to the ego, you simply take the decision to smoke!

The conscious process says, 'No, it is not good for health.' But the unconscious process says...it doesn't even say, it just takes the decision and you execute. These decisions are not under your control because the unconscious is very powerful.

The unconscious can be used in three ways – at the instinct level, intellect level and intuition level. As long as the unconscious is filled with negative memories and restlessness, it works at the instinct level. You decide just instinctively. You don't even know why you are angry. Suddenly you burst. Sometimes, when you see some activities or some words that you speak,

you feel it is not me. You do something and then you think, 'This is not me, how did I do it? How did I allow this to happen?' This happens because the unconscious is working in the instinct level.

Many times, you just associate things without even any logical connection. For example, if you have been disturbed by somebody who was wearing a white dress, the moment you see somebody wearing a white dress, the past memory comes up and you feel the anger. This is the instinct level. Without your conscious mind, without even you understanding, just like that it happens.

If your unconscious is loaded with *samskaras*, if your unconscious is restless, you will be at the instinct level. The next is the intellect level. You are conscious but you don't have enough enthusiasm. You just go with a conscious mind but you are not creative, not innovative. You don't take big steps, you don't grow. It is just like a faithful servant as Albert Einstein* says. The intellect is a faithful servant. You can be a servant throughout your life. You can be just a servant, but nothing more or big can happen through you. You will be collecting the data, processing it and delivering it, nothing more than a computer. If you are standing only at the intellect level, you are not using your

Albert Einstein - Scientist and Nobel laureate.

potential to the maximum, to the extent to which it is supposed to be used.

The next is intuition. To understand intuition you need to go deep into the whole science. Only then you will be able to understand what I mean by the word 'intuition'. Intuition is something which happens to you beyond your intellect. Suddenly you know for sure that this is the right thing and you have enough energy also to do it. But you don't know the steps how you came to the conclusion but you know for sure this is right.

This energy is needed whenever you are faced with a situation where there is no precedence - when you are stuck with minimum data and you need to take decisions or you have a lot of choices and you are not able to decide what you are supposed to do. In these type of situations, the intuition energy can help you. The intuitive power can give you the courage or give you the right choice. Intuition again and again gives you the energy not only to decide but to execute what you have decided.

People ask me, 'How do I find out whether I am having intuition or I am just intellectual? Sometimes I am confused about whether it is intellect or intuition.' I tell them, be very clear, if you are confused, it is only intellect. The very confusion shows that it is only intellect. When you experience intuition, not only you get the

intellectual clarity, the answer, but you also get enough power to execute it. The potential power which is inside your being is just unleashed. You open up and just like that you start expressing it, executing it.

Now the next question: How to awaken the intuition? How to awaken the intuitive power? If you can consciously give rest to it for a while, the energy which is in that unconscious level will open up. Usually when the unconscious level energy opens up, first whatever we suppressed will come out. Next, a pure energy which we call intuition will start to express.

When pure energy starts expressing from the unconscious level, you don't use the unconscious at the instinct level or intellectual level. You use it for intuition. The higher level energy starts happening in you. And of course, above all, the mystics demonstrated to us over thousands of years that the higher level energy heals you physically, mentally and emotionally. Apart from healing, this can help reduce the stress and help decide spontaneously.

Spontaneity has nothing to do with data which you collect, it is something to do with the way in which you process the data. The same data, same information can be processed in many ways. Intuition is all about how you process and how you come to the conclusion beyond your intellect.

We can prepare ourselves, we can tune ourselves to this intuitive energy through techniques and methods which we call meditation. In the East we use the word 'meditation' to tune ourselves with the higher energy, which is in our being, which continuously invites us again and again to experience it. Whenever you find time, sit by yourself. You can always see, we give appointment to everybody, but never give appointment to ourselves. If you have given appointment to yourself, you can always see that some part of your being wants to express, wants to do something more, but we never give chance or time to that part, to that portion of our being. We are so caught up with our intellect. We think that our intellect is the ultimate, but again and again mystics prove something more than intellect is possible.

In any discovery or invention, you can see that the role of intuition is always there. Whether it is Albert Einstein or Isaac Newton*, they have had something beyond intellect. Something beyond intellect has happened in them. This same energy exists in all of us. This energy can also express in all of us if we can tune ourselves to that energy. Tuning ourselves to that energy is what I call meditation.

At the end of this chapter I have given you a simple technique to cleanse yourself of the *samskaras* and awaken this dormant

energy just after a few days of practice. When I say a few days, I mean just 2 or 3 days. This is more than enough to tune yourself with this intuition. As of now, we are using this unconscious energy either at the instinct level or the intellect level. It can be tuned and you can use it at the intuition level to make the decision.

Let me give some more information on the subject of intuition since it is very important for you to convince yourself that:

1. There is something called intuition that exists in all of us.
2. It exists in you and you can express it in yourself!

Your mind works through instinct, intellect and intuition. Through instinct, your mind decides unconsciously by negative memory and restlessness. If you are disturbed by a white dress, a nurse would disturb you unconsciously. Through intellect you work at the conscious level but not energetically, not enthusiastically. You work as a computer, as a robot.

In intuition, you suddenly know what is right. You don't know how, but you have energy. You have minimum data, no precedence. You have many choices, and suddenly one pops up. Intuition gives you the power to decide and implement.

Isaac Newton - Physicist and mathematician, pioneer of classical physics.

Various States of Consciousness		
	With Thoughts	Without Thoughts
With "I" Consciousness	Jagrat Wakeful State Thinking	Turiya Blissful State State of Full Awareness
Without "I" Consciousness	Swapna Dream State Dreaming	Sushupti Unconscious State Deep Sleep

Let me explain this in another way.

We have two levels of consciousness and two levels of thoughts. In the waking state you have 'I' consciousness and thoughts (conscious state, called *jagrat* in Sanskrit). In dreams you have thoughts but no 'I' consciousness. The frequency of thoughts is more than the frequency of 'I' consciousness. That is why in the dream state (subconscious state, called *swapna* in Sanskrit), you cannot control your dreams. The dreams will happen as they want.

But in the waking state, you can control your thoughts. In deep sleep you have neither 'I' consciousness nor thoughts (unconscious state, called *sushupti* in Sanskrit). There is a fourth state which you have never experienced, what I call intuition or meditation. In this state, you have 'I' consciousness but no thoughts. There is no term in the domain of psychology to describe this state. In Sanskrit this state is called *sushupti*. This is

what I call meditation or intuition or thoughtless awareness. This state is also called the state of *samadhi*. If you can experience this zone, this fourth state, you can experience the consciousness, what I call beyond intellect. It is the state where there is bliss or peace or intuition.

The practical use of this fourth state is it can give you so much of creativity, courage and confidence, you can decide spontaneously. The ability to take spontaneous decisions is what I call responsibility. The more you are able to decide spontaneously, the more you become responsible. There are so many situations where you cannot work with just data. First of all, data will not be available, or very little data will be available. There will be no precedence like decisions taken by your elders etc. So in these type of situations, you need something more than what you call intellect, you need something beyond just your data. You need what I call the 'thoughtless awareness'. If you experience just a glimpse, not only in your life at office or at the corporate level, even in your relationships, it can totally transform you.

There are so many other benefits when this state is experienced. You will see tremendous improvement in your relationships at all levels, in the organization and in your personal life. Relationship failures happen because of

***Sushupti* or
samadhi where
there is
thoughtless
awareness is the
space where
intuition and
intelligence is
expressed.**

our uncon-
scious mind.
The uncon-
scious mind is
sometimes
also called the
reactive mind.
In the
reactive mind
we are always

collecting arguments and then passing judgments on some person or a particular incident. You decide he or she is wrong, then you go around collecting some arguments to support your judgment. It means you are only working at the instinct level.

Sometimes instinct and intuition look the same. People ask me how to differentiate. In intuition, you will be tremendously energetic and alive. With instinct, you will feel tremendously drained. Whenever you use your intellect and feel drained, be very clear you are working at the instinct level. Many times, when you work from anger and other emotions, you just decide instinctively, then you understand and think: why did I do this? Then you feel guilt. Guilt is the gift from the unconsciousness or the unconscious decision-making.

If we can experience this fourth state what I call meditation, surely we will be able to harness the energy, which is in our being,

what I call intuition. This fourth state was not explored by the modern Freudian system of psychology. But this fourth state of *sushupti* or *samadhi* where there is thoughtless awareness is the space where intuition and intelligence is expressed. It is an untapped state in most people and organizations. Those who can consciously tap this state can get tremendous personal and organizational benefits.

In conclusion, being a true leader is to be able to function from the plane of intuition rather than logic, to have complete clarity in decision-making, and thus to make decisions and execute efficiently, accurately and in a stress-free manner.

Meditation technique

***Mahamantra* meditation**

The *Mahamantra* meditation is an ancient Tibetan Buddhist technique to awaken the *anahata chakra*, located at the heart center. This meditation makes your mind firm and stable. Your mind is all the time oscillating with thoughts. This meditation makes your mind still by making it enter into the zone of no-mind. It is like a jumping board into infinity.

It should be done on an empty stomach, preferably early in the morning, or two

hours after any meal. It can be done either alone or with a group. When done with a group, it effectively energizes the place where it is done.

Instructions

Total Duration: *30 minutes*

Step 1: *Duration: 20 minutes*

Sit cross-legged in a comfortable position on the floor. Your head, neck and spine should be in a straight line. If you are not able to sit on the floor, you may sit on a chair. Feel relaxed and close your eyes. Even after we close our eyes, we see forms and images from behind the eyelids. To handle this, imagine that your eyeballs have become stone-like. Just harden them with mental pressure, then the images will die. The movement of our eyes is very closely related to the movement of thoughts in our mind. That is why you are asked to arrest the movement of your eyeballs. Don't be too worried about keeping them arrested. Just proceed with the meditation.

Keep your lips together and produce the sound 'Mmmm...' from inside. If you were to put your face inside an empty aluminum vessel and make a humming sound, the sound generated would be like this. Note that this is not 'Hum...' or 'Om...', it is simply keeping your lips together and

producing the sound 'Mmmm...'. This humming should be as lengthy as possible before taking the next breath. It should also be as deep as possible, from the navel center, and as loud as possible.

Don't make an effort to take in a deep breath after every 'Mmmm', the body itself will take breaths when needed. Don't become tense. Put in your whole being and energy into creating this vibration. Just become the humming. Let your whole body be filled with the vibration of the humming. After some time, you will feel that the humming continues without your effort and that you have become simply a listener to it!

The humming is a powerful means of bringing your awareness to the present moment. If you hum intensely, you cannot have any thought at that time. So your Thoughts Per Second (TPS) automatically comes down. The energy generated by the humming cleanses the energy blocks in the mind-body system.

When you are intensely humming, all the ideas which you have about you will be completely shaken. Like an earthquake, this is a technique for a 'mind-quake'!

Step 2: *Duration: 10 minutes*

After stopping the humming, keep your eyes closed and remain silent and inactive with a smiling face and blissful mood. If any thought comes to you, let it come.

Simply watch your mind as if you are watching the television, without resisting your thoughts or passing any judgment on them. Remain silent and blissful. During this time, the energy created by the humming will enter all the corners of your

being and cleanse it deeply. It establishes you in the awareness of the present moment. This awareness is all that is needed to dissolve the negativities, bring clarity and enable you to experience your true potential.

Whether we lead or whether we follow, in order to be fulfilled in whatever we do, we need to be intense.

A small story:

A Zen master and a disciple were walking along the banks of a river. The disciple, as he had done a few times before, asked the master very longingly, 'Master, please give me enlightenment.'

Suddenly the master turned, held the disciple's head in his hand and pushed it into the river. The disciple was shocked and started struggling to get his head above water. The master continued to strongly hold his head in the water. Now the disciple started gasping for breath. The master then released the surprised and completely shaken disciple.

The master asked, 'Do you feel you want enlightenment with the same intensity that you felt you needed air to breathe when your head was in the water?'

Only when the urge becomes urgent, when the question becomes a quest, does the Ultimate happen. The key factor needed for enlightenment to happen is intensity.

What is Intensity

You see, usually we feel a terrible restlessness towards the outer world, 'I

have not done this, I have not done that' and so on. The same restlessness when directed to the inner world is called intensity.

You do not know what is happening, you do not know what should be done, but the deep dissatisfaction about what is there in the inner space is what I call intensity.

You may be wondering why I am teaching dissatisfaction. I am supposed to teach satisfaction, right? I tell you, your dissatisfaction, which is now directed towards the outer world, has to turn towards the inner world, and only then it will lead to satisfaction.

First thing which needs to happen is not satisfaction but the turning of direction, the psychological revolution. Restlessness should become intensity. If it is towards the outer world, if your consciousness is constantly moving towards the outer world, it is called restlessness. If it is moving towards the inner world, it is called intensity.

The meaning of intensity is that desperate feeling that something needs to be done immediately, to break free from the clutches, or to break free in the inner world.

Only when the urge becomes urgent, when the question becomes a quest, does the Ultimate happen.

**Intensity does not
create conflict
inside or outside.
It flows smoothly
and yet very
strongly.**

Intensity is not emotion. When you are intense, one part of it may be emotional.

But intensity cannot be called emotion. It is like heat. The part of intensity that melts and comes out can be called emotion. For example, when you integrate yourself with intensity, one part of you melts. Let us say the heart melts, then that can be called emotion. Along with your heart, your intellect will also melt, your being will also melt. The side-effect of intensity is emotion.

Do not bother about what your intensity should be about. Do not bother about 'towards what'. It should become a quality. Anything you do, whether you touch something or somebody or some object, let the intensity be there, even in that touch.

If you are talking, let the intensity be there. In your relationships, in your decisions, in your memory, in your thinking, in your desires, even in your fears, be intense without escaping from this moment. That is what I call intensity.

Intensity means radiating the energy that does not create any conflict inside and outside. Intensity is intensely being inside you.

Intensity does not create conflict inside or outside. It flows smoothly and yet very strongly.

We always think if it is flowing smoothly like a river, it will not have intensity, and if it is intense like a stone it will not be flowing freely. No. Intensity is like a flood which is intense and flowing.

I have seen some people intensely creating conflict every moment! Anything you tell them to do, they will be ready to create a conflict.

A small story:

A prisoner escaped from prison after twelve years and reached his home. The moment his wife opened the door she started shouting, 'How dare you come so late! You escaped from prison twenty four hours before. Where have you been? You should have come straight back home!'

All that the woman was bothered about was why he was not back home right after he had escaped.

She certainly was intense, but only in creating conflicts.

Real intensity does not create conflicts. It is flowing but intense.

Intensity is integration. Intensity is focus. Intensity is sincerity.

The father of Yoga, Patanjali, says, 'Success is nearest to those whose efforts are intense and sincere.'

You see, no river needs a navigator to the ocean. There are no signboards needed for any river, 'Here is the ocean.' Yet all rivers reach the ocean. They reach the destination. When your whole energy moves in one direction as a whole, you can move easily. When you are intense and ready to flow you will achieve the goal, that's all.

Usually intensity leads to a solid feeling. You may be intense but you may have lost the ability to flow. Or you may be flowing but may have lost the intensity.

See, you may be intense but you may have lost the ability to flow, because you are driven by your ego. You are determined to achieve what you want but you have your own rigid ideas about how to get there. You fail to understand then that Existence can make events happen in a much more beautiful and effective way than you can plan.

I tell my disciples, plan in the best way to the best of your ability. Then, leave it. It may seem that all your plans are being completely trampled. Don't get frustrated at that point. Something much more beautiful than what you had planned will come to life.

Intensity does not mean acting rigidly without scope for updating and change.

The other possibility is that you may be flowing but may have lost the intensity.

This is the case with people who have no focus and waste their energies getting distracted by anything that comes by.

Understand, water becomes steam only at 100 degrees Celsius. Even at 99 degrees C, it is still water. It does not transform to steam. In the same way, if you are not integrated in seeking, all your energies are not integrated. The total transformation cannot happen.

Take up something and follow it with full intensity. Intensity does not mean acting rigidly without scope for updating and change. Only when you are open to change you can make your way like the river flowing intensely towards the ocean.

A small story:

A man moved into a small, remote county. One day while driving he stopped at a gas station to fill gas. The gas station owner started talking casually and started complaining about the local mayor. This man who had come to the city newly just heard him and did not reply.

If you are not integrated in seeking, the total transformation cannot happen.

After some time, he drove further and stopped at another place to ask for directions. There also, he started enquiring about the county. That person also started complaining about the mayor. After half an hour, he reached his destination. There also the people were talking ill and complaining about the mayor.

The next day, the man decided to meet the mayor. He got an appointment with the mayor. In his conversation, he asked the mayor curiously, 'Sir, if I may ask, how much do you get paid for your job?'

The mayor replied, 'Money? I accepted this job just for the honor of it!'

Understand, the mayor is thinking he is doing the job for the honor of it but the people who are living in the county are experiencing something totally different.

You decide and take up something to do. You do not verify whether that decision is being executed or not and whether the purpose for which you decided is still relevant or not.

The burning Intensity

There is a beautiful story from one of the ancient vedic texts:

A disciple goes to a master and asks him, 'Master, give me enlightenment.' The master just says, 'Tat tvam asi' nine times.

'Tat tvam asi' means 'That Art Thou'. It is called a mahavakya, the statement that straightaway gives enlightenment. The 'vakya' or the statement that straightaway leads you to the experience of the 'mahat', the cosmos, is mahavakya.

Nine times, the master repeats 'Tat tvam asi' and the disciple is enlightened. The story ends.

Is it so simple? Then why is it not happening in us? What is missing in us? What is the difference between us and that disciple?

The disciple was fully integrated, burning to receive the truth.

Look at the oyster. It is waiting for the rain water to make the pearl. When the rain water falls, she just carries the rain water into her womb and goes down into the ocean. The process happens on the rain water, and the pearl results.

The oyster will be waiting with the mouth wide open on the waters of the ocean. She will be just waiting for the rain water. She cannot take the salt water and make the pearl. She needs pure rain water. The moment one drop of rain water falls on her, immediately she will go into the

deepest layer of the ocean and she will start doing the process. She will come out with the pearl.

In the same way, those words the master utters will straightaway enter only into that person who is seeking intensely with open being for the initiation. He carries those words with him and sits inside his inner space. The process happens and out comes the pearl of enlightenment.

For the intense seeker, even a few words are enough. He will suddenly see the being blossoming, expanding and expressing itself.

The intensity and the openness of the disciple are like the wide open mouth of the oyster.

The words of the master are like the rain water. When the words of the master enter the being of the disciple intensely burning for the Truth, the pearl of enlightenment happens.

Becoming Vs Being

When you are intense, you just *are*. You don't need to *become*, you just need to *be*.

We know so many ways of becoming. Becoming is totally different from being. To become a doctor we know what has to be done, to become a lawyer we know what has to be done, to become a politician we

know what has to be done. All our knowledge is all about becoming.

Becoming is *d i r e c t l y* related to the mind. Being is

directly related to your nature. Becoming is related to society, being is related to you. We know only how to become something. We forgot an important factor, how to be.

Because our inner space has become too much corrupted with the concept of becoming, we lost touch with the idea of being. We lost touch with our very truth which is being.

The healing touch of being

If you can experience your being at least for one moment, so many things that you accumulated when you wanted to 'become' something like physical illness, mental illness, suffering, sorrow, and all those things - will be washed away. You will experience the inner healing. Whatever was disturbing you, all the wounds, will be washed away.

Above all you will have a real, concrete solid base to become something. Even

**When the words
of the Master
enter the being of
the disciple
intensely burning
for the Truth, the
pearl of
enlightenment
happens.**

Being complete, total, integrated, expressing your full energy, is what I call 'being'. becoming something will be a great success if you start after experiencing being. Without experiencing the being, if you start or if you try to become something, you will be an utter failure.

'Being' is Intensity

What is *being*? Being complete, total, integrated, expressing your full energy, is what I call 'being'. If you are partial in your experience or expression, be very clear you are being hypocritical.

Intensity in anger

Even your anger is hypocritical. You just choose whether to express your anger or not. Your anger is also directly related to your logic.

You never get angry beyond your logic. It is always managed by your logic. You analyze, 'Am I going to lose anything here in this situation?' If you are sure you are going to lose something, you just suppress your anger. If you are clear, 'I am not going to lose anything. I can shout at this person.

What can he do?', then you just explode and express much more anger than what is necessary. Whatever you have stored in stock, you open up everything and give!

Not expressing, not suppressing – just be and get liberated

Be very clear, when your logic manages your anger, you will have two problems. First, you unnecessarily shout or unnecessarily show your anger when it is not necessary. Second, even when you are not expressing, you will be suppressing it.

First, if you are expressing, you will be expressing too much, much more than what is necessary. Next, if you are not expressing, you will be suppressing it. Be very clear, both are wrong.

Suppressing and expressing both are not going to help. You may ask, 'Then what are we supposed to do?' You are not asked to do anything, just be.

J. Krishnamurthi* says beautifully, whenever an emotion overtakes you, if even once you can just be without moving your body, without co-operating with your emotion, you will be liberated from that emotion.

J. Krishnamurthi - Renowned Indian philosopher.

If you stay without moving your body when you are flooded or overpowered by any emotion, even once, immediately you will be liberated from that emotion. I am not saying you have to constantly practice this. No, just once, only once, and you will be liberated from that very emotion.

Living intensely

You cannot feel fulfilled by offering sense pleasures to the senses. Living intensely does not mean fulfilling your senses, pouring pleasures into your senses, or living as you wanted.

Somebody asked me, 'Since bondage and liberation is relative, why not just eat, drink and be merry?'

That is perfectly all right. Be intense. That's all. Eat intensely. When you are eating, only eat. When you are sleeping, just sleep. When you are drinking, only drink. When you are making merry, just be merry. If you can be merry, you don't need anything else.

The whole problem is because you can't really be merry. That is why you need so much of teachings and ideas about liberation.

See, that's why here you think, 'Why not just eat, drink and be merry?' You think it's very easy. No! The problem is you

can't be merry, which is why you drink the things that are not directly needed by your body, which can't be accepted by your body.

Understand, master's words

should be understood completely, with intensity and clarity, not superficially. Eat, drink and be merry is not such a simple issue as you understand, as you think. If you do that intensely, that's perfectly alright.

A small story about this intensity and understanding:

After twenty five years of married life, one day when the wife was going through the closet of her husband in his room, she discovered three soy bean seeds and thirty dollars in cash.

She went to him and asked with a lot of curiosity, 'What is this? Why three soy beans and thirty dollars cash? How did it come? What is the meaning?'

He said, 'Now I have to confess to you. Whenever I cheated on you, I put one soy bean in that.'

If you stay without moving your body when you are overpowered by any emotion, even once, immediately you will be liberated from that emotion.

When you live intensely, automatically you will be liberated.

The wife was shocked but was a little consoled that he had cheated on her three times only in twenty five years. She then asked, 'Now what about the thirty dollars cash?'

The husband replied, 'Well, whenever the soy beans were ten dollars per kg I sold them!'

So, eat, drink and be merry, these three words, if you understand like three soy beans, you will not be able to understand the truth. You have to see the thirty dollars behind it! Only then you will understand the truth, you will understand what liberation is.

When you live intensely, automatically you will be liberated.

Karma and Samskara

If you don't live any moment intensely, what happens?

Your mind looks for repeating the action in that moment. Why? Why does your mind pull you to the same experience again and again?

You may crave for a particular candy or you may be addicted to something. Why? Actually if you look deep you can see it is because you never eat the candy or cater

to the addiction completely with full involvement. You hold back from throwing yourself into the action fully.

Maybe you feel guilty about it or you have too many confusing thoughts at that time. So you decide to just do the action ignoring your thoughts and feelings that are coming in the way of your pleasure.

You see, part of you wants to indulge in the action. Another part of you argues why you should not. You are caught in too many thoughts, many of them self-contradictory. You lose energy in fighting with yourself. Finally, you are not integrated whether you do the action or not.

You are not intense. So the desire is not completely fulfilled and leaves behind its memory in your inner space. Engraved memories of desires that are not completely fulfilled are called *samskaras*.

These engraved memories have the power to make you return and travel in that same path. Whether it is coffee or champagne or smoking, whatever engram you create will have the power to make you do the same action again and again, till you feel completely fulfilled with that habit or with that enjoyment or pleasure.

If you enjoy your addiction intensely even once, only once, you will be completely liberated. That engram will never ask you anymore to travel in that path. It will liberate you.

Unfulfilled engrams are what I call *karma*. You keep your body alive, you keep your mind alive, because still you have hope that the body can give something to you, the mind can give something to you. Still you have the hope you can enjoy something, or something needs to be fulfilled through the body and mind. That is what I call *karma*.

Karma is nothing but unfulfilled engrams and desires, which are inside your being, which constantly make you again and again to travel in that same path, trying to give the experience of fulfillment in your inner being.

If you do any action with complete involvement, if you follow any desire totally, there will be no craving for repetition and you will be liberated from the desire once and for all.

You can now direct your energies to exploring and enjoying new, unexplored experiences of life. You will not be caught in the vicious circle, your life will move towards growth and fulfillment. You can experience for yourself that life is presenting something new and fresh every moment. For all this, there is only one thing needed on your part: live intensely.

The way of the buffalo and the way of Buddha

There are two ways of living.

One is living like a buffalo, just being alive and breathing but with no intensity and passion in life. The other way is like a Buddha, living intensely in the present moment in the current action.

Have you experienced a nightmare? During a nightmare you will experience that even if you want to open your eyes you cannot. You want to move your hands but you cannot.

Then the nightmare becomes so intense. It may be that a lion is chasing you and has almost caught you or you are falling down a deep chasm or you are in some such life-threatening situation in your dream. When it comes to its maximum intensity, the very intensity wakes you up.

If the nightmare is not that intense, you cannot wake yourself up and come out of it. If it is very intense then that very intensity wakes you up, and suddenly there is no nightmare. It was only a dream, but you thought that it was reality.

Understand, even when you were falsely thinking it is happening, you were actually out of it. It was only a film going on in front of you.

Intensity is independent of the nature of the work

Intensity does not depend on the nature of the work or action. It can be as complex as running a billion dollar company or as simple as cleaning the floor. It is not the 'what' that is important, but the 'how' that is important.

If you can do what you are doing with a totality and intensity that *you* are completely lost in the action, you have caught the thread of intensity.

The moment you are lost in the action, you become like a flute on the lips of Existence itself. The air that goes into the flute comes out as music because you become a channel for the energy of Existence to flow through you. Be total and intense. That is all that is needed for the arrow to hit the target, whatever it may be.

Interest Vs Intensity

What qualifies to be called as intensity? What is the difference between intensity and interest?

An interest can be lost, but never the intensity. Interest comes from the mind. Intensity comes from the being.

After a while, maybe short or long, you get fed up with your own interest. With intensity, it is a thirst of your being. It transcends the rationale of your logic. Intensity is a call from deep within. The more you have to wait for it, the more the thirst grows, the more the fire flares up.

See the difference between light and laser. Both are made up of the same light rays but the single-pointed intense focus of the laser comes from the coherence and the common frequency of the light rays.

The power of this intensity is what gives the laser the tremendous power to even burn a hole through metal. At the same time it is a controlled focus. This is what gives it the power to do even a delicate task like removing a cataract in the eye.

The story of Bayazid

A beautiful story from the life of the enlightened master Bayazid*:

Bayazid had been with his master for twelve years but the master had not spoken a single word to him.*

One day after twelve long years, the master spoke to Bayazid, 'Go to the hall. There is a book there. Bring me the book.' Bayazid had been passing through that hall for twelve years every*

Bayazid - A Sufi saint.

single day while coming to see the master.

He replied, 'I have never seen the book. In fact, I have never looked in the hall. I was interested only in you, not in anything else. But, if you say I will go.' The master replied, 'No. Stay.'

Bayazid's whole interest had turned into focused intensity. His whole interest was just the master. The master said, 'There is no need for the book. I was just trying to find out how completely focused you are.'

That night, the master told Bayazid, 'Tonight sleep here.' Bayazid lay down by the side of the master but he could not sleep. He was filled with so much intensity, his mind completely stopped in that intensity.

Next morning Bayazid was dead. A new man had emerged. No instruction was ever given. He just had to wait for twelve years. That was the method for him.

If it was just an interest, there was no way Bayazid could have stayed on for twelve years without even a word from the master. Very naturally, his mind would have strongly protested saying, 'What are you doing here? You are just wasting time. Nothing has happened till now. He is not even interested in you. How long are you going to waste time like this?'

The moment you are lost in the action, you become like a flute on the lips of Existence itself.

It is the intensity that holds you on because deep down you understand, not twelve years but even twelve million lives are worth waiting for the Ultimate that the master leads you into. Even that would actually be cheap.

If in a desert your thirst for water becomes really intense, you are ready to pay with your life for a glass of water. When your thirst for realization becomes that intense, you are ready to pay with your life for the Truth.

A beautiful Zen story:

A student approached a Zen teacher to learn Zen. The teacher told him, 'Hear the sound of one hand clapping.'

The student tried for three years and did not succeed. He was depressed that he could not do what his teacher had told him. He came in tears to the teacher saying he had to leave because he could not do what he had been told.

The teacher said, 'Wait for one more week. Meditate constantly.' The student stayed for one more week and meditated. Nothing happened. The teacher said, 'Try for five more days.'

The student stayed further, yet nothing happened. The student came in despair

**Live intensely in
the moment and
taste the real life.
Else you are not
living.**

begging to be released. Then the teacher said, 'Meditate for three more days. If you don't get enlightened, you had better kill yourself.'

The second day, the student was enlightened.

When your whole being is burning with the single intense desire to realize the Ultimate, you will simply absorb the master's instructions. The magic of transformation is bound to happen. Only then will you be open to receive him. Till then it is just an interest.

Be intense in whatever you do

Tantra*, the mystical science of meditation techniques, says that to know the truth one needs only one condition, intensity. Be total in what you are, what you do.

Live intensely in the moment and taste the real life. Otherwise, you are not living. You are just waiting for death.

When you eat, intensely eat. Let your whole attention and energy be on the food. Do not divert your attention and thoughts to what you need to get done at work tomorrow or where you want to go for your next vacation.

Enjoy the food with all your senses. Taste the food in your mouth, enjoy the feast in front of your eyes, touch the food with love, and smell the aroma of the food. When you eat this way totally, you will enjoy every morsel and you will actually feed into your system the living energy the food is meant to give.

If you are drinking water, drink it intensely. Become the thirst. Feel the coolness of the water going into your mouth, throat and down your food pipe. Let each drop of water that goes into your mouth give you the feeling of fulfillment.

The Tamil classic, Periya Puranam*, describes the stories of the Nayanmars*, the ardent devotees of lord Shiva. There are so many instances of the devotees realizing the Ultimate by simple activities like making garlands for the Lord. An example is Gananaatha Nayanaar, a devotee of Shiva, engaged in simple

Tantra - Ancient *vedic* tradition of achieving enlightenment through spiritual techniques or practices, meditations and ritual worship.

Periya Puranam - A Tamil classic by Sekkizhar on the lives of the 63 Nayanmars, the devotee saints of enlightened master Shiva.

Nayanmars - Tamil devotee saints of enlightened master Shiva, 63 in number, whose life stories are told in the book Periya Puranam.

services like plucking flowers for worship, making garlands for the Lord, sweeping and washing the floor of the temple and keeping the lamps in the temple burning. Just this simple life led him to reaching the Ultimate and brought him his name ‘Gananaatha’ meaning the chief of the *ganas* (attendants) of lord Shiva.

When you pray, be real and spontaneous. Whatever you feel, feel totally and offer it to the Divine. Don’t cheat yourself and be hypocritical by not admitting what you feel. You cannot hide anything from the Divine. He knows you better than you know yourself.

Your intensity is the only thing that decides when your object of seeking will happen. If the intensity is total, it will happen that moment. If the intensity is not integrated and total, it will take more time because the intensity has to gain strength in that time.

A beautiful story:

The Sufi mystic Junaid, was taking a walk one morning when a man came up to him asking, ‘I need to reach the capital of this kingdom. How long will it take?’*

Junaid just looked at the man and continued walking. The man was going in the same direction. He followed*

You cannot hide anything from the Divine. He knows you better than you know yourself.

Junaid thinking maybe he did not hear him properly. So, he asked Junaid again, ‘Can you please tell me how much time it will take me to reach the capital of the kingdom?’*

Junaid continued walking. The man gave up trying to ask further. After some distance, Junaid said, ‘You will have to walk at least ten hours.’ The man was surprised and exclaimed, ‘You could have said that before!’

Junaid replied, ‘How can I say before? I needed to watch your speed first. Then only I could tell you how long it will take to reach the capital.’

In the same way, the time it takes to realize also depends on your intensity.

If you are intense enough, it does not need time to reach the Ultimate. Where you are, who are you is irrelevant. You can reach here and now.

A beautiful story:

There was a dreaded bandit who was a terror in the kingdom. After looting a large number of people, he started feeling restless and uncomfortable with

Junaid - 9th century Sufi master.

his actions. He approached a master and asked him, 'Master, I am a sinner. Is there any way out for me? Can I be liberated?'

The master looked at the bandit and asked him what he was good at. The bandit replied, 'Nothing.' The master asked, 'Nothing? You must be good at something!' The bandit thought for a long time and then said, 'Master, I only know stealing, that is what I have done all my life.'

The master smiled and said, 'Good! Then you will use exactly that now. Go to a quiet place and rob all your perceptions and ideas and opinions. Steal all the trees and rocks and rivers on planet earth. Steal all the planets and stars in the sky. And dissolve them in the vast emptiness inside you.'

The bandit sincerely followed exactly the instructions of the master. Within 21 days, the bandit realized his true nature, he became enlightened.

Intensity and the four states of consciousness

There are four states of consciousness.

When you have 'I' Consciousness and thoughts, you are in the waking state, the state in which you are right now. In this

Various States of Consciousness		
	With Thoughts	Without Thoughts
With "I" Consciousness	Jagrat Wakeful State Thinking	Turiya Blissful State State of Full Awareness
Without "I" Consciousness	Swapna Dream State Dreaming	Sushupti Unconscious State Deep Sleep

state, 'I' has more frequency than your thoughts. So you can control your thoughts.

When you are without 'I' consciousness but having thoughts, you are in the dream state. In the dream state, your thoughts are at a higher frequency than your 'I' consciousness. That is why you have thoughts in your dreams but you are not able to control them.

When you are without 'I' Consciousness and not having any thoughts, you are in the deep sleep state. Normally, we are aware of only these three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. The fourth state is where you have I consciousness but no thoughts or *turiya*.

Intense seeking - Awareness in the three states

Intensity means being intense every moment in whatever you do. So first you need to be aware of yourself in all the

states. Then only you can be intense throughout.

Now you experience who you are with awareness only during the waking state. You feel, 'I am a doctor,' 'I am a lawyer,' 'I am an engineer' and so on. Only if we are aware of the identities that we carry and enjoy in all the three states, we have caught the thread, the center line of all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. When we catch the thread of all these three states, suddenly we realize our identity in all the three states.

Somebody asked me, 'I don't think that in the deep sleep state I am aware.' Then who is the person who comes back and says it was deep peace during my deep sleep? Who is the person who is reminiscing about it saying, 'It was filled with darkness. It was as if I was not there at all?' Who is coming back and remembering even this idea, 'I was not there at all?'

If the person is not there in that state, then who is coming back to connect all these three states? No, we cannot say we were not there in the deep sleep state. We were there, but we were not aware of the identity that we had in that state.

Understand, a person who is aware of all these three states is conscious. If we are aware of the identity in all these three states, then we are conscious enough, our seeking is intense enough to be answered,

we are intense enough to be initiated and blessed.

If we are not already aware in all these three states, if

we have not experienced all these three states with the same identity, then naturally we need to now intensify our seeking.

An intense seeker will carry the identity about himself throughout all these three states. If even once or twice you have experienced your waking identity in the dream state then you are intense.

In the dream state suddenly sometimes you remember that you are beyond the identity which you think as you in the dream state. I have seen seekers going through this experience in the dream state. They will be dreaming and suddenly they will identify themselves with their identity in the waking state. Then they will think about the dream state, 'Hey, this is too small. This is nothing.'

If you have had the experience of your waking state identity in the dream state, then you have the intensity. Your seeking is intense.

If even once or twice you have experienced your waking identity in the dream state, then you are intense.

Wake up!

During a nightmare, a very wild dream, just one thought or one click such as, 'Hey, this is a dream' is enough. You will be awakened. You will be out of the dream. In the same way, if you are intense in this dream you are living, called the waking world, then one click is enough and you will be out of the dream!

If you think, 'No, I need some more technique,' then you are not really going through a nightmare or an intense dream. You are just having some casual flow of thoughts.

Sometimes in the dream state you will be seeing without any clarity. There will be some casual black and white shows which will be going on. You will neither feel like watching it nor feel like coming out of it. If you are in those kinds of dreams, then you are just wasting your time.

If you are not really intense, you are in these kinds of dreams. Neither will you go down nor will you go up. Please do not be in that state. Understand, if you are in such an intermediate state, then this click will not happen. It will not be a sharp, strong shift.

Just like you can get up from your sleep by just an intense desire to wake up at a particular time, you can also get up from

the deep slumber you have been for so many millions of lives. If you have an intense total desire to wake up, you can wake up this moment.

Kabir* says so strongly and beautifully, 'When you look for Him, you will find Him instantly.'

There are people who say 'What is there in our hands? When god wants us to be awake He will wake us up. It is our destiny.' Understand, these are nothing but cunning tricks of the mind. God knocks every moment at the door of the prison you have built for yourself. If you don't open, what can be done?

I always tell people, god is a gentleman. He never interferes with your freedom. If you choose to remain asleep, He will simply wait till you wake up. He respects your freedom. Till you are bored and realize the futility of the fantasy world you are in, He will patiently wait.

Look inside yourself and you can see that you are choosing to remain asleep in your fantasy world. Reality is knocking on the door every moment but we choose to ignore it. We are so used to our dream world we don't want to wake up.

So when the master tells you that reality is much more beautiful and 'real', you still remain in the inertia of sleeping. You have to understand, it is only you who can

Kabir - Mystic devotional poet of India.

choose to come out of your long dream. It is your choice and your responsibility.

Intensity in the state of sleep

Have you ever tried this simple experiment? Suppose you want to get up early in the morning at say 4 am. Suppose you don't have an alarm clock. At night, when you go to sleep you simply make a deep and intense will, 'I am going to wake up at 4 am.' At 4 am, you will find that you are awake, your eyes are open and sleep has just disappeared. Your body clock responds directly to the intensity and the sincerity of the desire.

If you are not sincere and deep down you think, 'I will try this as an experiment. It is ok if I don't get up also,' then it will not happen. Be sincere and intense and it will simply happen.

Intensity has the power to penetrate your states of unconsciousness including deep sleep.

Attention shift from the states to the seer

In all the states, one factor is common, the one who goes through these states or the seer. If you look little deeper, you can see that in all these three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, we are trying to

change reality as it exists. We are trying to change the scene happening every moment in our lives.

A small story:

A small boy went to a watch a movie with his parents. He was watching a kids' movie about a lion cub and other animals in a jungle and was thoroughly enjoying it. There was a scene in which the lion cub was trapped by some hunter and was terrified.

The boy was not able to bear this scene. He just jumped from his seat and ran down the hall closer to the movie screen. He started throwing his hands and legs at the hunter in the movie who was about to cage the lion cub. Anyways, the movie continued and soon the other animals in the jungle joined together and drove away the hunter and rescued the cub.

The boy came back to his seat and proudly told his mother, 'Mommy, see how I went first and all the animals followed me and we saved the cub!'

It may look childish to think that you can change the scene on the movie screen by jumping in front of it. Just look little deeper

Intensity has the power to penetrate your states of unconsciousness including deep sleep.

into your own lives. Like the small boy, in your life also you are under the illusion that you are in control of your life. Life is actually a movie, moving in these three states.

You, the seer, are the projector. Whether you believe it or not, accept it or not, you create your reality. When you try to change the events and world outside, you are trying to change the scene by jumping in front of the screen. To change the scene, you need to change the film being projected on the screen.

When you realize the futility of all the three states and the futility of trying to change the scene in all these three states the whole attention will fall on the seer. Then the awakening will happen. If instead you think that there is some utility in all these three states, your attention will be on them. You will continue to be engaged in them. You will continue to try to alter the scene.

If this understanding clicks in us, then it does not take more than one click to wake us up from our state of sleep, whether it is dream sleep, deep sleep or waking sleep. All we would need is one click, 'Hey, this is a dream!' That's all. We will be awakened.

The gate to the fourth state

There are some people who carry the same awareness even to the deep sleep state. For them, when the very understanding of these three states happens, suddenly they will come back to the center to awaken themselves to the fourth state, *turiya**.

A small story:

One day early morning, a Zen master started crying the moment he came out of his bed. The disciples were really surprised and asked him, 'Master, why are you crying?'

The master said, 'Last night I dreamt that I was a butterfly.' The puzzled disciples asked, 'But that was a dream. Now you are here sitting in front of us. Why are you crying?'

The master replies beautifully, 'I do not know whether I dreamt that I became a butterfly or that butterfly is dreaming now that it has become a master.'

Understand, it is true and very rare that a few individuals can carry the same intensity to have the same connected, undisturbed identity in the three states of mind. If you can carry a connected, straight, undisturbed, unbroken identity throughout these three states, then you are a seeker.

Turiya - Fourth state of consciousness in which there are no thoughts and only awareness.

Then the individual consciousness is awakened. The *pratyakatma chaitanya jagrat* has happened. These are some of the Sanskrit technical terms. I have always wanted to express the Sanskrit words also because I want all of you to know that there are many non-portable things in the *vedic* tradition. Non-portable things mean the non-expressible dimensions of the experience. Some of these Sanskrit words cannot be expressed with mere translations to another language. Some of the dimensions of the experience cannot be expressed when we attempt to translate these words into English. The Sanskrit word itself represents the understandings of the multiple dimensions of the experience.

How to get enlightened? I want to...real bad and urgently

Question is a word. Quest is a feeling.

Man is born as a quest. The rest of Existence cannot reflect the Divine like man can. Man is like a mirror. He has the choice to face and reflect the Divine or to turn away. Man can make a conscious choice, which is why he can grow. Man can choose to realize the Divine through his human form. No other being in Existence has this choice.

Man is like a mirror. He has the choice to face and reflect the Divine or to turn away.

If these words, 'How do I get enlightened? I want to... real bad and urgently,' have come out, if this question has come out as a deep quest, then you don't need anything.

Just boil, let the whole being burn with this quest. That is enough. Nothing else needs to be done. Let this boiling be intense.

Allow this boiling. Allow this burning. Allow this intensity. Allow this urgency.

Let the urge become urgent. Let the question become your quest. Let it just eat your ego, eat your inner space.

People ask me, 'Have you been enlightened by the divine grace or by your effort or by your quest?'

I tell them, your having the quest is the first sign that you are having the divine grace. Unless you have the divine grace, you will not have the quest.

Understand, this quest or seeking is like a seed. It is like a seed feeling suffocated inside the shell. See, unless the life that is inside the seed feels suffocated inside the shell, it won't open up and become a tree.

The moment the seed starts feeling that it

**When the seeking
is intense, it will
remove the juice
from your ego.**

should open
up, the
moment it
starts feeling

the seeking, the urgency and the quest to open up to become a tree, it means that already the tree inside the seed has started expressing itself.

If you have the feeling that you should get enlightened, the Buddha in you has opened his eyes. The Buddha in you has started waking up. All you need to do is open your eyes!

Allow this seeking. From morning till night let it boil, let it create a deep dissatisfaction in you. Let every pore in your skin, every nerve in your body, every cell in you vibrate with that intensity. Let it swallow all your depressions you may have in life. In life you may have so many other depressions and sufferings of not having so many things. Let all those sufferings be swallowed by this one suffering.

A beautiful Zen story:

A Zen student was intensely studying under her master but she was not able to experience true meditation for a very long time.

One full moon night, she was carrying a bucket of water suspended on a bamboo stick. She saw the reflection of the moon in the bucket. Suddenly, the bamboo broke.

The water fell out of the bucket. The reflection of the moon disappeared and so did her ego.

When the seeking is intense, it will remove the juice from your ego. The green grass becomes like a haystack. Just a match is enough to burn the whole haystack down. The Ultimate can happen in a split second through a simple happening.

So understand: let this seeking, let this quest, your saying, 'How to get enlightened? I want to...real bad and urgently', let this seeking burn all your other sufferings, all your other depressions, all your other desires, all your other concerns about life.

Let it happen and suddenly you will see that the seeking suddenly disappears, it is not there. When the seeking disappears, you are enlightened. You have achieved what you are seeking.

Living intensely

If you really want to experience life, if you really want to know the ultimate mystery of Existence, if you want to dive into the ocean of bliss, then the way into it is intensity. Be intense in whatever you do. Let you dissolve in it. Do not be partial. Be integrated in yourself.

If you dance, dance so totally that you become the dance. There will be no dancer

remaining then, only the dance remains. If you paint, paint so intensely that the painter disappears in the painting and see how that piece of art becomes so exquisite. When the ego dissolves, the false sense of identity disappears and you can see the flow of the intelligent and total energy of Existence through you.

There is a beautiful story on Bodhidharma*, the enlightened master who took Zen Buddhism to China, Japan and other parts of Asia.

It is said that Bodhidharma sat for nine years facing the wall of his cave. He just sat silently, not doing anything for nine years. His legs withered away as there was no movement at all.*

He would not accept any disciple unless he showed a burning intensity. After nine years his first disciple, Hui Kujo, came. It is said that he cut off his hand and offered it to Bodhidharma, saying, 'Master, please accept this. If you don't look at me now, I will cut off my head as well.'

Bodhidharma turned to face the disciple. He said, 'The man has come to who I can deliver my message.'

At once see the Divine

Kabir* says beautifully, 'If thou art a true seeker, thou shall at once see Me.'

How can you identify whether you are a true seeker? If the fire is there, if the intensity is there, if the urgency is there, and if the quest is there, then you are a seeker.

As Kabir* says, what is important is the genuine desire. What matters is the intensity, passion, sincerity and integrated seeking. If you have this, you will 'see' the Divine surely.

If you are not able to, be very clear, your intensity is not yet complete. You are calling Him halfheartedly.

Intensity to seek god

Many of us claim, 'I have been praying so intensely. What is the way to see god?' Just look closely at yourself. Is god your very first priority? For most of us, more often than not, god is somewhere down in the list. Actually, you feel, 'If I have good food to eat, if I have a house to live in, after I provide for my family, and if there is time, I will add god to the list of what I seek.' God is the last in the big list of desires. Of course, the list never ends.

Bodhidharma - A disciple of Buddha and mainly responsible for spreading Buddhism as Zen Buddhism.

Kabir - Mystic devotional poet of India.

It is a vicious circle. God can never make it to the top of the list because your desires are endless. You do some action to fulfill a desire. The seeds of many further actions are sown in that action because you are not total in that action. Then, god gets pushed further down the list.

Intensity decides age

A small story:

Once somebody asked a master, 'How old are you?' He replied, 'Three hundred years'. The man could not believe it. He said in surprise, 'What! You hardly look sixty.'

The master replied, 'Physically, by the calendar time, I am indeed sixty. But when it comes to living, I have lived life at least five times more intensely than the average person.'

What matters is not the quantity of life, but the quality, the intensity of living.

Intensity prepares you for the ultimate

Initiation

The *Upanishads*, the ancient *vedic* texts by the sages and mystics that happened as

revelations, say that for the person who is initiated, the whole world is heaven. Understand the word 'initiation'. It does not mean doing some ceremony or ritual.

Initiation means that 'click' happening in you. When a master expresses the truth, if the click, the realization, happens in you and if you suddenly feel, 'O god! What he says is right. I was always thinking exactly this. He put it in the right way,' that is what initiation is. If you feel whatever I am speaking is what you always thought about but I am verbalizing it and properly putting it in words, the initiation has happened.

Please understand, only after all the preparation is done and only when you are in the state of high intensity, the truth uttered by the master just clicks.

When the master says there is no need for any seeking any more and just liberate yourself right now, you will be able to do so only if you have done enough of seeking and created the intensity. That is the paradox!

The technique is to get the right attitude of intensity. Actually, if you have high intense energy, you will automatically have the right listening. You will be just waiting to catch one glimpse. You will be just waiting to listen. You will be just waiting to imbibe.

That is why masters speak again and again and again for years over years. I started

speaking only a few years ago. Buddha spoke for over forty years. But the message was the same. His first sermon and the last sermon are almost the same.

You may then think why thousands of disciples sat everyday and heard the same sermon again and again. Because the click happens only when you are in intense energy. Only with intensity it clicks. You just catch the flame and the awakening happens.

The deep spiritual experience

Requirements for spiritual experience

For the spiritual experience to happen, two conditions need to be fulfilled. One is that you must be completely open and available to the surroundings. The other is the intense energy field.

Sometimes even if you are open, if you are not in the intense energy field, the first cracking of the coconut of your ego does not happen. The first spiritual experience is just like breaking open a coconut. Once the first opening happens, it is not difficult to break the rest of the coconut. The first opening needs an intense spiritual energy field.

Only with intensity it clicks. You just catch the flame and the awakening happens.

These two factors are what resulted in my first

spiritual experience. I was open and available to the surroundings; and I was in the intense energy field of Arunachala. Fortunately, I was attracted to the beauty of that hill. Normally, if you see a hill or a river or an ocean every day, you will take it for granted. Somehow I never took that hill for granted. I never thought I knew about it. I was continuously open, available.

Understand, being open and available every time, seeing it every morning with the eyes of freshness or with the mind of openness is what I am calling 'being open and available'. Many times, we completely close ourselves to the society.

We just come to some conclusion, some understanding and after that we never update our understanding or our effort with the result.

Every day, the Arunachala hill was living for me. Everyday it was never the same old hill that I saw yesterday. I had a very funny routine. In the morning when I got up I would not open my eyes. I would slowly walk from my room to outside the house holding the parapet wall. I would come out and stand in a place from where I knew the hill could be seen. Only then I

**The click
happens only
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intense energy.**

would open my eyes so that the first thing that I saw in the morning would be that hill.

Somehow my brothers knew that the first thing that I wanted to see was the hill. They would want to have fun teasing me. When they knew that I was out from my bed and slowly walking, they would come and stand in front of me.

If I opened my eyes and did not see the hill and instead saw their faces, I would go back and lie down again. I would lie down again, sleep for half an hour, then again get up and slowly walk back to see the hill and open my eyes. Only if I saw the hill the first thing in the morning, I would carry on with my routine.

It may look funny and superstitious but I always felt I took birth, I took this body, because of that attraction and pull that hill has got for enlightened beings.

There is a very beautiful verse in Tamil that describes the hill as 'the hill that attracts enlightened beings around it'. The hill is especially respected for attracting enlightened beings not only from this planet earth, but also from other planets and spaces, towards planet earth. I never

took the hill for granted. It was an ever-living presence.

Encounter with the Divine

One day I was trying to sit and meditate. It was a full moon day (Poornima) and the moon was rising as the sun was setting. I was just sitting on a rock on Arunachala hill, trying the meditation technique that the disciple of Ramana Maharishi and enlightened master Annamalai Swamigal had initiated me into.*

I was sitting on the rock trying to find the source from where the feeling of 'I' was rising. On that day I was sitting for a particularly long time trying to find the source in a deep way.

Suddenly something happened and I felt like I was being sucked inside, pulled inside. I was sitting with closed eyes but I saw very clearly that something opened inside. The moment that opened inside, I was able to see whole 360 degrees around me. My eyes were closed but I was able to see complete 360 degrees, whatever was happening in all the directions - front, side, back, up, and down.

Annamalai Swamigal - Disciple of Ramana Maharishi in the temple town of Tiruvannamalai, South India, whose teachings inspired Nithyananda towards his deep spiritual experience as a young boy.

Not only was I able to see, but I was also able to feel very clearly with the same intensity how we all feel alive inside our skin, that I am alive in everything I was able to see.

I was able to see whatever was around me, all the plants, rocks, trees and everything. I was able to feel that I am alive in everything. In the same way you all feel you are alive inside your body I felt alive with the whole cosmos, with the whole Existence.

Till then I was just a mere body. After that, I realized I am body also. Understand, 'I am body also'.

It was a very deep experience. If it was just a word or imagination, it won't have that much impact on your inner space. It was an intense conscious experience.

You see, now you know you are inside your skin. You will listen to anything as long as it does not disturb you. Naturally you know how to protect yourself because you are alive inside and that is your conscious experience.

No matter however many people teach you that you are not just your body you will only listen but you will not allow them to work on you! Because *your* conscious experience is your body.

My experience that 'I am this whole Existence' became my truth. That is why I started living according to that.

We are such hypocrites that we don't even know we are cheating ourselves!

People are surprised that I lived such a strong intense life in such a young age.

They feel that

it is very difficult and unimaginable. It is unimaginable for you because it is not your conscious experience. It was easy for me because feeling the whole cosmos is me became a very solid experience.

Ramana Maharishi's death experience

There is a beautiful example of the power of intensity in the life of enlightened master, Ramana Maharishi.

When he was sixteen, spontaneously this happened to him. He was in Madurai near his native place called Thiruchuzhi, which is in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Suddenly one day he started feeling that he was going to die. The great death fear arose in him.

We also sometimes feel that fear of death when we hear about some relative's or friend's death or when we see an accident or when we come across some news about death. We are so well-versed or trained to suppress our emotions and control

ourselves that we never allow this fear to come out.

We are such hypocrites that we don't even know we are cheating ourselves! Many times we can see the fear rise but we are an automatic mechanism of suppression.

Over time we learn how to balance ourselves or suppress ourselves. We suppress ourselves and just forget about it or try to do something. We just turn the attention elsewhere.

But Ramana Maharishi did not do anything. He used the door to take the jump. We are also again and again going near this door. Whenever we hear about somebody's death or whenever fear attacks, we also go near the door. But we are afraid to take the jump. We have trained ourselves so much to be hypocrites or not to be intense. We somehow balance and we escape. We switch on the television or we just move our attention towards something else.

Ramana Maharishi used that door to take a quantum jump into deathlessness. He just lay down on the floor and did not move his body and allowed death to happen.

After the enlightenment, he says beautifully about his experience:

Suddenly for no reason I felt the deep fear that I am going to die. I was not sick. I was not having any mental problem. Physically, mentally I was

healthy. Suddenly the thought came, 'I am going to die.'

I just cooperated with that fear. I did not try to jump, I did not try to run away, and I did not bother about anything else. I did not feel like doing anything else. I just sat and allowed the feeling. I just sat and allowed death to happen to my being. I lay down, and I decided let me see what happens. What can be done? I just accepted and I consciously started moving into that fear. The fear started working on me. I could see that I am dead. My body is not moving, nothing is happening in me. I could see very clearly that I am out of the body. Suddenly like a flash the intelligence or the truth descended on me that my body is dead but I am alive. 'I' am not dead. My body is dead, but I could see, I could feel that I still exist. It means I am something beyond the body.

That single experience of the truth shook me completely and I realized I am not just the body, and that I am something beyond the body. After that I never faced the death fear or any other fear. Once and for all the fear had disappeared from my being. The moment I understood that even after my body dying, there is something in me that is not dying, why should I bother about my body's death?

Why should I bother about the death of my body? Because even if it dies, I am going to continue, I am going to exist, I am alive. That means I am something more than what I think. I am something more than this body. This realization has never left me. I have never moved away from this realization after that one experience.

How can a fear create such a big transformation in Ramana Maharishi when in our lives it happens yet we are unchanged by it? The answer is intensity. Such an ultimate experience can suddenly happen without any reason. It is purely your intensity.

Motivation for social service

Be very clear, if you want to really serve society, the first thing you need is intensity in your purpose.

I have seen many people doing something in the name of social service, just because they can't sit with themselves. Be very clear, if you are not able to sit with yourself and do social service like going to some temple, going to some social service organization or doing some such service, you will never be able to experience the truth.

Going to the temple or doing some social service should be like overflowing. You

feel so full, you feel there is nothing more to be done and think, 'I have so much of time, let me do some service to society, it is beautiful.' Then it will lead you to enlightenment.

The service itself can lead you to spiritual experience. You feel overflowing and think, 'God has given me so much, this whole life is so beautiful,' and you go to a temple or church to offer your gratitude. Then it will just liberate you and you will become enlightened.

If you are going to the temple or for social service just because you don't feel relaxed within yourself, you can't sit quietly. There is so much of restlessness within you that you just want to do catharsis in some way.

People with this type of attitude, even if they go to temples, will be sitting there and shouting at everybody, 'Don't do this. Don't do that. What are you doing? Don't you know god wants this?' They will start representing god! Not even representing, they will even start acting god. This type of persons, even if they do some service will be only putting their ego in front. They will only be torturing others. They will not be serving others.

A small story:

There was a schoolteacher who was a scoutmaster. He had made a rule that all his students should report to him of

at least one good activity or service they did that day.

One day three friends got up and said, 'Sir, today we helped an old lady cross the road.' The scoutmaster said, 'Old lady crossing the road is fine but why did she need three of you to help her cross the road?'

The three boys replied, 'Yes sir, it took all three of us to help her cross the road because she didn't want to!'

Be very clear, many times you start doing things just for the sake of service, not feeling. You don't feel what you are doing. You don't feel the need of the other person. You need to fill your time and you need to show your project report to somebody, maybe to the higher authorities or to the society. Just for that when you do it, you create a mess and more difficulty for others.

I always feel service should be overflowing out of your being. It should never be done for some other purpose. Whenever it is done for some other purpose, be very clear, you will not be intense and you will not be growing in your being. Your love or service will be pure hypocrisy. I can say 'impure hypocrisy', not even pure hypocrisy! If you are pure you will be liberated. It is impure hypocrisy.

The power of Intensity - Ramakrishna Paramahansa

In Bengal, there is a particular group of people who believe that Krishna is the only man and those who follow him are all women no matter what gender they physically are. They look to Krishna as their beloved. They feel so intensely about this relation that even the men dress like women.

The enlightened mystic from Bengal, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, followed this path also for six months. The hallmark of this great master, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, was that whatever he did, it was with totality and intensity. He used the same clothes as women not only at night, but also during the day because he felt he could not be one person during the day and another during the night.

You may be shocked to hear this but he actually started becoming a woman. It was not being *like* a woman, it was *being* a woman. His voice changed, his gait and manner of walking changed. The intensity was such his breasts started growing. He even started having monthly periods!

During the six months he was doing this practice, he just became a woman. It took almost six months after he stopped for the

change to reverse and for him to become a man again.

So understand, the power of your intensity is such it can change your very body, your very DNA!

The Intensity of Buddha

Look at the biography of enlightened master and founder of Buddhism, Gautam Buddha. He searched for six long years. He tried various paths but the beauty is that in every attempt he put in his whole being.

Whatever he decided to follow, he did with complete, unwavering intensity. He tried various techniques such as fasting, continuous penance, chanting and many such methods. He tried all possible techniques but nothing worked.

During his seeking, a teacher told him to eat only one grain of rice per day for three months. Buddha sincerely followed his instructions. He was reduced to skin and bones and became extremely weak.

One day, he stepped into the river to bathe. He had become so weak that he couldn't even move his legs and was being swept away by the current. He caught hold of a tree branch and while

The power of your intensity is such it can change your very body, your very DNA!

hanging onto it he suddenly realized the fruitlessness of all his efforts. He had been mortifying the body but in the process he had only lost his bodily strength.

He felt a deep depression that he could not achieve anything in the inner world and he had nothing meaningful in the outer world.

He came out of the river and sat under the tree. He was frustrated but the difference between ordinary frustration and Buddha's frustration was he was complete and intense in his frustration as well.

There was not even a grain of hope he had. He completely gave up. There was nothing to achieve, nothing to look forward to.

It is said that on that night as he looked at the sky ready to sleep, he attained nirvana.*

The one factor that resulted in Buddha achieving It is intensity. So many of us claim we are doing everything but nothing

is happening. Look little deeper and see how integrated you are in your thirst and seeking. Whatever you may seek, integrate your energies completely and go for it. You will then see the Universe open up to you completely.

Intensity for my first spiritual experience

I had mentioned about my deep spiritual experience where I felt one with Existence and had a 360 degree vision of everything around me. There are so many people practicing so many different meditation techniques. What is the difference, what is the reason why the experience happened to a small boy?

I can say that one important reason is that my whole inner space was ripe, ready for this small technique to awaken and open it. Constantly I used to be in that high frequency of the masters without even my conscious awareness.

See, especially in the young age, whoever inspires or impresses you becomes the hero of your inner space. These great masters impressed me so much that in every situation I would think, 'How would these great masters behave?' For example, if I

had some fear, I would remember, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal* face this fear? He won't bother. He is enlightened. Let me also be like that.'

The inner space was so inspired and impressed by these great masters, that before every step I took in my life I would think, 'How will he behave? Let me also do that.' The inner space was so pure also at the young age and I had no heroes other than the masters. At every step I used to think, 'How will he behave? Let me behave like that. How he will do? Let me do like that.'

Walking in burial grounds

I used to go for a circumambulation of the Arunachala hill. It is more than twelve kilometers around the hill. I used to go late at night. When I had a little fear I used to say, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal* behave? He won't bother about fear. Then let me also be like that.'

Let me tell you about one incident.

It was raining heavily that night as I went around the hill. I had some fear seeing the heavy rain, thunder and lightning. Immediately I thought, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal behave? He

Annamalai Swamigal - Disciple of Ramana Maharishi in the temple town of Tiruvannamalai, South India whose teachings inspired Nithyananda towards his deep spiritual experience as a young boy.

won't bother. He will just walk. Let me also do the same way.'

I was walking through the traditional crematorium. In India both cremation and burial are done in the same place. I was walking in that place because when you go around the hill the path goes through that crematorium.

Suddenly I saw a dog biting something and eating. When I went near, the dog started barking at me. At first when the fear came up I thought, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal behave? He won't bother. Let me just go.' I started moving. Anyhow when I started moving the dog got scared and ran away.

When I got nearer I saw that it was a dead body which was not completely buried. It had come out in the rain and it was lying on the road. Just imagine a twelve or thirteen year old boy, alone at midnight, seeing a dead body without a head, since the dog had the head in its mouth.

The fear started but it did not even reach my being completely. The shock, the fear stroke did not even happen completely. As soon as the first thought started coming up, with intense awareness I thought, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal react now? He will just walk around and go. Just walk around and go.'

I continued to walk. That's all. I took a detour and walked away. I did not even turn back and see. The fear stroke, which was like a bubble, which was about to start, did not even open up, did not even reach my body. The heat or the shivering from fear was not even there in the body. It just died.

Intense, innocent inner space

Intensely, the whole conscious inner space was ready. That is the reason, just a punch, just a small inspiration was able to put me into that experience. That is what I call 'living enlightenment'.

When you live the master's body language you live enlightenment.

Whenever any thought came into my inner space, whether it was related to clothes or food or anything, the first thing I would think was, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal behave? Naturally he won't have any desire. Then forget about it!'

If I felt a little lazy to meditate or to circumambulate the hill, I would think, 'How will Annamalai Swamigal think? How will he handle this situation? Naturally he will not bother about this laziness. He will just get up and meditate, that's all! So just do that!' So constantly, from morning until night, these masters became the reference. They became my life center.

I asked Annamalai Swamigal once, ‘I saw Devi in my dream. Do you also see her in the dream?’ Annamalai Swamigal replied, ‘No, I don’t have dreams.’ I was shocked, ‘You don’t have dream! Then how can I have dream!’*

That night I said to myself, ‘Now, no dream. Annamalai Swamigal said ‘no dream’ so I cannot have dream.’ You will be surprised, that night when some dream started happening, I said clearly from inside the dream, ‘No! Annamalai Swamigal doesn’t have dreams. How can I have dreams?’

The dream disappeared. Just the dream disappeared. The inner space was so thorough, so innocent, so direct, it just happened.

Even if I felt cold or anything, I would remember, ‘How will Annamalai Swamigal behave? He won’t bother. Then don’t bother. That’s all.’ There were no further questions or arguments inside.

Message of Living Enlightenment – ‘how will master behave?’

You can also use this simple, powerful technique. It is so simple your mind cannot find any excuse to escape.

In any situation, ask yourself, ‘How will master respond? How will master face this situation?’ Do the same. You will see that a new door opens. This is what I call ‘living enlightenment’. You don’t need anything else. This one thing is enough.

Even if you are sitting, if thoughts come up, ask your mind, ‘If master is sitting what will be coming up? Naturally silence. Then why are you thinking? Silent!’ That’s all. Nothing else.

If your mind says, ‘No, no, I know it is true. I know this but it is too much.’ Then think, ‘If master’s mind says this, how he will behave?’ He would have finished the mind that moment! That’s all. Just be very clear.

Take this one message and let this message become life in you, the message of Living Enlightenment. Understand, from the age of ten when I was inspired and impressed by Annamalai Swamigal, I started doing this technique. I didn’t even know then that it was a meditation technique.

It just started, ‘How will Annamalai Swamigal behave in this situation?’ As a boy, many times in my home I have seen my brothers or family start fighting for some share in something and I would think, ‘How will Annamalai Swamigal behave? He won’t even bother! Forget about it. Let them have.’ That’s all.

Devi - Supreme goddess in Hindu tradition, Cosmic Mother.

True relationship with the master

Actually this is what I call relationship with the master. Relationship with the master is not just doing some worship or putting some flowers or worshipping him once in a while. No!

Relationship happens when you are thoroughly impressed by the master. Whenever anything comes up, say fear or insecurity or greed or anger, just see, 'How will master behave?' Simply it will disappear. It will just disappear.

Many times I tell people, just feeling strongly connected with the master is enough. You don't need anything else. It is not just your ordinary relationship. In an ordinary relationship, you neither try to understand nor imbibe the master. Just some feeling is there. I can't even call that as a relationship. It is an ordinary, regular interaction.

Feeling connected to the master means just living him. When you live the master, then you feel intensely connected to him. Only then you are expanding. Only then something is happening to you. This has not happened in us because of so many other relationships. So many other persons occupy your inner space and so many others have inspired you or impressed you

or given the idea that they are heroes. Just fill your inner space with the master and watch your problems simply dissolve.

Driven by Intensity

The first experience gave me such an intense, beautiful glimpse of the truth I could not settle for anything less than the Ultimate, enlightenment. The desire to become enlightened was so intense the only question inside me was 'How?'

The intensity to know the truth was the inspiration for me to do ritual worship, meditations, any and all techniques that could lead me to enlightenment. Every technique I tried right from my childhood was with complete trust and intensity. In the case of my daily worship as a teenager, I used to wake up in the morning at 4 am, have a cold water bath and worship Devi * in a *puja* ritual.

This intensity is what gave me the courage to take the decision to leave home as a young boy and do the intense meditation practices I took up in my spiritual journey, such as chanting *mantras* (sacred intonations) 10000 times per day, austere life during my spiritual journey, and traveling the length and breadth of the country.

Devi - Supreme goddess in Hindu tradition, Cosmic Mother.

There will be one singular quality that will come to your mind when you remember someone. I can say, if there is one quality or thing that stands out in my life that I can really identify with, it is intensity.

Ask and you shall be given

Christ said, 'Ask and it shall be given unto you. Seek and you shall find.'

Let us stop and ask ourselves, how many of us know *how* to ask? Sometimes because of our arrogance, sometimes because of our confusion, and sometimes because of our laziness, we get caught in the web of ignorance. We ourselves are not clear what we want to ask.

All our engrams and false identities don't allow us to understand the pure love of the Divine. We fight with the very compassionate Existence that is protecting us and granting us whatever we ask for. If we can just integrate ourselves and sincerely ask with devotion, we will have the intelligence to ask what our being truly seeks. We shall surely be given.

Intensity - the ultimate technique

Be intense in whatever you do. Whether you eat, sing, dance, pray or work, be completely into that, in the moment.

Intensity is enlightenment. As of now, some part of you is intense while some part of you is lazy. Being 100% intense is enlightenment.

The first thing you need for living enlightenment is intensity. Intensity is the sword with which you can break the mind.

It is just like awakening from the dream. The first thing you need is the intention, the idea that you should wake up. So now you need to have the intense idea to wake up.

Understand, the intensity with which you work towards wealth, relations etc., if you just turn a little towards enlightenment, you will awaken.

Intensely decide, 'I will wake up from this life that I call life.' Create an intense will or prayer. When you create a will and direct it towards you, it is called a will. When you create a will and direct it towards the Divine, it is called prayer.

Intensity is a strong intention to wake up, the strong intention for fulfillment, for living enlightenment, for eternal bliss. The only gap between you and enlightenment is intensity.

Meditation technique – live the master

Try this technique: Anything comes in your mind, ask ‘How will master behave?’ Do the same.

One more thing, be very clear, when you behave as I am behaving, you will have what I am having. That is a promise from Existence. I don’t have anything with me for which I am not qualified. That is why I don’t have fear that something will be taken away from me.

In the same way, when you just carry this one message, live like a master. Whatever you are qualified for will always gather around you and it will always stay with you. It will always be with you.

The person who is courageous enough will say, ‘How will master live? Let me live that way.’ If your mind repeats some other question, ‘Who knows how will master behave?’ ask, ‘How will master respond to this question?’ He will simply silence the mind. Then, do the same, that’s all.

That’s all you need to carry. When you carry this one truth in you, you are carrying me. Carry the master! You will give birth to yourself.

Don’t bother about any difficulty. At the most what difficulty can come? Death. Just remember, ‘How will master die? He will leave the body beautifully. Let me do the

same thing, that’s all.’ Just remember, ‘How will he live? How will he leave?’ Do the same thing. Actually, this feeling connected is what gave me the truth and made me alive, intense, and energetic.

Carry this one message with you, ‘How will master behave?’ Any problem can be solved with this one technique. Anything in the internal world can be solved, because Paramahansa is a person who has seen all experiences. Only such a person is called Paramahansa. If he has not had some experience, Existence makes him go through that experience so that he becomes Paramahansa.

So whatever you go through, went through, or are yet to go through, I went through already. So there is no space that you can say I have not gone through!

Meditation technique to get Intensity

If you are not getting the burning intensity, pray intensely for the intensity to happen. It will happen.

Remember how intensely and anxiously you run behind things that give you joy. Suppose I tell now that whoever prays intensely will get a ten million dollar prize, you will show the intensity of your life, is it not? Just because you think there is some product that will fulfill you, you are

intense. With money you know it is going to add something to your life. In the same way, enlightenment is also going to add something to your life.

In order to have intensity towards enlightenment, you can start by creating intensity towards things that you have experienced a desire towards. For example, if you desire health or wealth, be intense about that. That yearning will become integrated and will get directed to the unknown, to enlightenment. Not only that, your unfulfilled desires can be simply burnt with the intensity.

Whatever you experience as fulfillment, yearn for that. The intense yearning is enough, it will evaporate you. And the fulfillment you experience will be many times more than the fulfillment you may have ever experienced before.

Here is a beautiful technique from Shiva Sutras*, delivered by the enlightened master Shiva to His consort Devi*.

Shiva says, 'Consider your essence as light rays rising from center to center up the vertebrae, so the livingness rises in you.'

Understand the importance of this technique. I have added this same part as

the third step in our Life Bliss Meditation or *Nithya Dhyaan* technique.

Visualize you, what you think as you, as the light and move from *chakra* to *chakra*. You will see the livingness, intensity, is rising when you move from center to center up higher and higher. Your intensity will also be moving higher and higher.

Consider your essence as intense light and rise from energy center to energy center, from the root *chakra* or *muladhara* to the being center *swadishthana*, from *swadishthana* to the *manipuraka chakra* in the navel region, and so on.

You may be thinking how visualization can lead to beyond visualization. It is just like you can always choose choicelessness! Understand, you can always visualize in order to move beyond visualization. Then suddenly you will see you are using visualization as a jumping board to dive into the super-consciousness.

Meditation techniques to be intense

This is a very powerful technique from the Shiva Sutras*.

Shiva Sutras - A collection of teachings of Shiva in epigram form as techniques. Includes Vignana Bhairava Tantra, Guru Gita, Tiru Mandiram etc.

Devi - Supreme goddess in Hindu tradition, Cosmic Mother.

The aphorism or *sutra* says,

*Die into the infinite void where you are no more
Moving beyond the senses into Shiva
Consciousness.*

This technique is called the *Shanmukhi Mudra**. As it will be difficult to maintain this posture for a long time, you may sit on the ground and support your hands on a chair to maintain comfort. You can put a chair in front of you and turn it facing towards your side to support your hand. Alternatively, you may sit in a chair and support your hands using the chair in front of you. By supporting your hands on a chair, you will avoid shoulder ache.

This technique closes the doorways to your senses. This should only be practised by people who have some experience in meditation. As in all meditations sit comfortably cross legged or in a chair with back, neck and head in one vertical line.

When you are in *Shanmukhi Mudra**, the energy flow to the outside world through the seven openings of the face (two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and one mouth) is blocked and turned inwards. Your hands are very powerful. The energy centers in the hands are so powerful that it can stop the energy flow, turn it into a concentrated beam of energy and direct it towards the *ajna chakra* or third eye.

Normally our breath goes in and out chaotically. By closing the nostrils partially with your fingers, you can reduce the air flow and balance it.

The *Shanmukhi Mudra** firstly stops the energy flow towards outside.

Secondly, we are turning the senses inwards.

Thirdly, we concentrate them towards the third eye.

Instructions:

If you wear spectacles, remove them. Place your fingers as follows:

Thumbs pressing down on the short ear lobes till you hear a humming sound.



Shanmukhi Mudra - A *mudra* in which eyes, ears, nose and mouth are covered while meditating.

Index fingers lightly on both the eyes.

Middle fingers on the bridge of the nose.

Ring fingers lightly under nostrils.

Little fingers on lips.

For the next 21 minutes, follow the steps given below.

Close the nose partially. Just reduce the *prana* flow. When your mind settles down by itself, the *prana* flow will reduce. Be in the *Shanmukhi Mudra* and inhale and exhale as slowly as possible and as deeply as possible. Keep your mouth shut tightly. Visualize that both your eyeballs have become stones and let them not move.

Intensify your awareness. Do not create stress. Try to penetrate with deep awareness. Don't create pressure, create only awareness. Visualize intensely as if you are penetrating your third eye. Visualize deeply as if you are penetrating your third eye with a drill bit.

Relax. Open your eyes slowly.

It is important to make yourself comfortable by supporting yourself properly to be in *Shanmukhi Mudra*. You will see tremendous energy created in your third eye, to awaken your intuition. When you are comfortable, you will see that you are entering into deeper energies or higher consciousness.

It may seem strange to speak of innocence after talking about intensity, but in the truest sense, you cannot be intense in anything you do unless you are innocent of other agenda. The innocence I speak of may not be what your own dictionary defines as innocence. What I speak about is the innocence of a child. A child is intense about anything that it does. Adults have lost that power, but it can be regained.

What is Innocence?

Constantly, we are asked to be good, to be pure, and to be innocent. The idea of innocence is forced upon us. Constantly we are taught by society, by moralists, that something is right, something is wrong, something is pure, something is impure, something is good, and something is bad, something is innocent and something is corrupted. Constantly we are taught the idea of good and bad. We are forced to practice something that is good or what society thinks is good.

But life is no way related to what society believes in. Life is totally different. What society believes is different from what life is. There is a beautiful saying, 'When you think, you think in a generalized way. But when you live, you can't generalize.' This is like what they say in marketing, 'Think globally but act locally.'

Innocence means purity of the inner space.

Situations can't be generalized. In your life there are so many things where generalization is not possible, where you can't decide what to do and what not to do based on popular guidelines. All your ideas about morality, about right and wrong, might not have any relevance practically. Somebody asked me, 'Swamiji, why do our ancient Hindu scriptures not speak of gambling? Only the epics speak about gambling?'

I tell them that at that time there was no gambling, then how do you expect them to speak about gambling? Naturally no Hindu scripture bans gambling or drugs because at that time these problems did not exist. When it comes to morality it depends completely on the situation. Morality is relative, not existential.

Innocence means purity of the inner space, not being affected by thoughts or engraved memories. Let you be very clear, even if you are not expressing your emotions like anger, greed and lust, if they are present in your inner space, you are not as yet a total and innocent person. Socially you may be pure, that's all. On the other hand if you express your anger, lust and greed but nothing touches your inner space and you live like an innocent child, then be very clear, you are a pure being.

**Children have
greed and anger,
but their inner
space is beautiful
and pure.**

You can see children get angry. Children are greedy also.

They build their personality mostly on greed. That is why they are so aware and conscious of 'mine' attitude. Try to take away a toy from a child. The child will behave as if his life is taken away. He will scream and shout. This is because his whole personality is built upon 'mine' attitude. Children have greed and anger, but you cannot call them impure. This is because whatever you may think as impurity does not affect their inner space. They will sit and play with their toys and after a few hours they will throw them and go away. They don't carry anything in them. Their inner space is beautiful and pure.

You can't call them thieves even if they have stolen something because they don't have an idea that something belongs to someone and that you cannot take it from them. The idea that an object is someone's property does not exist in them. Innocence is purity. Knowing that an object is someone's property, even if you don't steal it but if you covet it some way, you have not become a thief as yet only because of the police, that's all.

Innocence is directly related to the inner space. It is in no way related to the outer

world. In the Shiva Sutras, Shiva gives us techniques to achieve this innocence. If you follow Shiva's life as is described in the Hindu mythological stories, you will not be able to see any social or traditional innocence in him. But there will be the pure and ultimate innocence. The place where he lives or the way in which he lives is not directly related to his purity or innocence. Shiva lives in a cemetery where bodies are cremated, surrounded by spirits and ghosts.

The word Shiva in Sanskrit means causeless auspiciousness. This causeless auspiciousness, the energy to create bliss wherever he is, wherever he happens, arises out of his innocent inner space.

In the *vedic* tradition, there are scriptural writings called *Upanishads*. The word *Upanishad* in Sanskrit refers to teachings of a master to his disciples as they sat with him. There are 108 such *Upanishads*. They are the essence of the enlightenment science handed down by the great masters of the *vedic* times. One of these, the Chandogya Upanishad* describes a beautiful story:

A boy by name Satyakama goes to a master seeking enlightenment. The master gives him four hundred cows telling him, 'Take these cows. Go live in the forest and look after them. When

Chandogya Upanishad - One of the oldest and primary *Upanishads* or *vedic* scriptures.

these multiply into a thousand cows bring them back to me.'

Satyakama goes to the forest and lives with the cows, waiting for them to multiply. It takes many years for the cows to multiply to one thousand. For all those years he sits not talking to anybody, just being with the cows. Soon, he forgets the human language. In deep silence, not relating with any human being, he slowly loses his outer world identity.

By the time one thousand cows happen, he forgets how to count. He simply sits waiting, with a beautiful feeling of ecstasy.

Finally a cow comes to him and says, 'Sir, we have become one thousand now. We can go back to master.'

He replies, 'Is that so? Alright.'

Satyakama is in ecstasy. He has forgotten the way back. The cows lead the way. On the way back, animals, birds and even the fire that he kindles to cook his food instruct him on the nature of the Brahman, the ultimate Truth.*

When Satyakama returns to the master, the master looks at him and smiles. He says, 'You look so radiant like the

knower of the Truth, Satyakama. Who taught you?'

Unless you are tired of logic, you cannot be ready for the transformation.

Satyakama tells him how he had understood the Truth through animals and birds and requests the master to teach him the Truth in his own words.

The master says, 'You already know the Truth,' and blesses him.

The story says that just by being, just by listening to what nature has to say, Satyakama established himself in the Truth. He became enlightened.

Total innocence leads to enlightenment.

Satyakama asks the master for enlightenment and the master asks him to multiply cows! Many of you will ask, what do cows have to do with enlightenment? Fortunately Satyakama was not so intellectual. Fortunately he did not receive formal intellectual education. So he did not ask this question! He was simple, innocent and humble, ready for the transformation to happen. He had no logic to use.

Understand, unless you are without logic, or tired of logic, you cannot be ready for the transformation. Logic cannot help you understand even your own life. Logic

Brahman - Absolute, Cosmic Consciousness, formless god etc, all referring to the universal energy source of which the individual energy of soul is a holographic part.

**Innocence is the
space for
transformation to
happen.**

can it help you change?

People ask me, 'Swamiji, why are you against logic?' I am not against logic. I am only telling you that all your suffering is because of logic without intelligence. Your logic creates so much politics inside you from morning till evening.

What is politics? It is nothing but differing opinions on the same subject, is it not? Now watch your mind. It says one thing in the morning and a different thing in the evening on the same subject. This creates the dilemma in your mind. Your mind itself is such dilemma.

People say that in all spiritual organizations there is so much politics. I ask them, 'What do you mean?'

There is politics inside the very persons who make this statement! To create politics, you don't even need two people. One person is more than enough. One single person with logic is enough because in the morning his logic will say something and in the evening it will say something else! Naturally the fight between you and you is politics! Am I right? Then why are you making the statement that even spiritual organizations have politics?

cannot help you look even into your own mind. How

If you place the decisions that you make in the morning and the decisions that you make in the evening together in front of you, you will see a politician sitting inside you!

Logic does not allow you to be simple and innocent. It does not allow the transformation to happen easily. Logic has to be overcome for the transformation to happen. Only when there is no logic there can be innocence. Innocence is the space for transformation to happen.

In the case of Satyakama, fortunately he was not bitten by logic.

The disciple goes to the master for enlightenment and the master tells him, 'Alright, take these cows, go to the forest and stay there till they become one thousand cows. Then come back!'

If today's seeker was in that disciple's place he would have said, 'I think the master is trying to exploit me. He wants a thousand cows, which is why he is telling me to do this work. He is using me to get his work done.' Innocence is lost to logic! That is why no modern day seeker receives such amazing techniques.

Understand, this is not a mere story. It has got a great truth behind it. With innocence, Satyakama simply followed what the master said. Further, he lost his logic of counting. He was completely lost in ecstasy and joy. The mind stopped

functioning. He didn't care about one thousand or two thousand. Just the innocence and acceptance caused the greatest happening of enlightenment in him! When you completely accept, you don't need the mind. The mind is necessary only when you live with struggles, only when you are fighting. Just this moment accept yourself in the outer world and the inner world. You will go out enlightened.

For so many years, completely accepting what the master said, Satyakama just was. What else can happen to him but enlightenment?

You may think, 'How can simple acceptance do such a big job?' The problem is that even spiritual knowledge is approached by us with the space of an intellectual mind. It is from that intellectual space that we ask the 'how'. Intellect always questions. Innocence straightaway starts practicing what the master says. That is the difference.

Shiva says in the Shiva Sutras, 'Absorb the ultimate truth, senses shut down, and be liberated.'

Why is he using the words 'senses shut down'? How do you find out if you are completely lost in something? Your senses will not work! You will not see or hear! That is the way to find out. If your senses still work, you are still not lost.

**Just listen while
the master is
expressing the
truth, and become
enlightened!**

Shiva says, 'Absorb the ultimate truth, senses shut down, and be liberated.'

When your senses are working you may think you are hearing, but you may not be actually listening. The sense organ may work, but not the energy that activates the sense organ. Hearing is different from listening. If you are only hearing then the intellect is still at play. If you are listening then you are lost. Then the intellect is no more. The click happens. You sit completely melting. You exclude everything except you and the master. You are utterly innocent and open like Satyakama. Then just one word from the master is enough and you become enlightened!

He means that in that utterly innocent and open state, initiation is enlightenment. Just a word is enough to enlighten. Shiva is giving initiation itself as a technique. He says, 'Just listen while the master is expressing the truth, and become enlightened!'

How can mere listening lead to enlightenment? Why did it happen to Satyakama when it is not happening to us? First thing, he was innocent and therefore intelligent to receive the master's instruction. Second, he was courageous

Don't settle for any intermediate knowledge except the ultimate Truth.

enough to live
with it. He
had complete
trust in the
m a s t e r .

Innocence always comes with trust.

I am not asking you to get me a thousand cows. No! I am asking you to come with the same mood as Satyakama. Come with the same innocence. You don't have to do exactly what Satyakama did. But you have to be *like* Satyakama. If your being is like that, in this moment the transformation can happen. Just in this moment the transmission of light can happen.

Remain empty

The word *upanishad* means 'sitting at the feet of the master'. In ancient India, there was the *gurukul*^{*} tradition of masters and disciples. Children were left with the master at the age of seven and they grew up centering beautifully in their consciousness. Masters are living embodiments of the scriptural truths. Their thoughts, words and deeds stem from the ultimate Truth. Disciples pick up the truth just by living around them.

Gurukul - Vedic educational institution.

Swami Sri Yukteshwar Giri - Master of enlightened master Paramahansa Yogananda from India.

Nirvana Shatakam - A collection of six verses sung by enlightened master Adi Shankara at the age of eight to introduce himself to his master , Govindapada.

Swami Sri Yukteshwar Giri*, an enlightened master from India says, 'Sitting with the master is not merely being in his physical presence, but keeping him in your heart, being one with him in principle and tuning yourself to him.' This is the whole technique of *upanishad*. The master is superconscious energy. When you tune to him, you tune to that energy. You can tune only through innocence, openness.

Openness is emptiness. Let not knowledge fill you. Knowledge is but a mere tool, not your substance. Reject all knowledge as 'not this', 'not this'. When I say reject, I mean don't settle for any intermediate knowledge except the ultimate Truth. Because when you drop everything that continuously arises in you, then you have no other go. You are thrown back into yourself and it is there you will find the ultimate Truth. It is then you are ready to be filled with the Truth. Then alone can you make *upanishad* happen.

Adi Shankara, the great sage from ancient India, sang the beautiful Nirvana Shatakam* when he was a mere eight year old:

I have neither hatred nor liking,

I have neither greed nor delusion,

*I have indeed neither pride nor jealousy,
I have no duty to perform,
Nor any wealth to acquire,
I have no craving for pleasure,
I am not being bound for liberation,
I am of the nature of pure Consciousness and
Bliss,
I am all Auspiciousness,
I am Shiva.*

Such was his blissful emptiness at that young age.

If you watch children, their eyes will be filled with wonder and freshness all the time. They are so empty inside. They don't hold any opinion about anything. They are ready to receive. Their readiness is expressed in their eyes. Have you ever seen an adult with such eyes? The eyes lose their glow as we grow older because we become dulled by what we start knowing. Knowledge makes us dull. We may know many things, but the knowing should not dull us in any way. We should remain empty in spirit always.

If you just look at life without any opinions, without any words of description, without any fixed ideas, then you are like an empty teacup into which the brewed tea can be poured. You receive because you hold nothing, because you are empty. Then you never lose your

We may know many things, but the knowing should not dull us in any way.
enthusiasm.
You are never bored. You are like a child, innocent and fresh.

A young girl was writing something on a piece of paper. Her father asked her what it was.

She said, 'I am writing a letter.'

He asked, 'To whom?'

'To me,' she replied.

'What does the letter say?' He asked.

She replied, 'How do I know? I have not mailed it and I have not received it yet.'

There is so much freshness behind innocence. Life becomes an unfolding mystery every moment with it. That is the truth. Life is an ever unfolding mystery. It is the mind that typecasts it. The mind always wants life on its own specific terms. Innocence embraces life with life's own terms. With the mind, life does not find a gate to enter with its mysteries. With innocence, life is welcomed to share its mysteries.

If you play hide and seek with children, you will see that they will hide in the same place as you hid the last time! Not just once but most of the time! How is this possible? It is because of one thing: they move with

**When you see with
empty eyes,
everything you see
goes deep.**

innocence.
They don't
have any idea
in their head.

They simply follow their heart. They have great trust in you, so they simply hide where you hid, not even suspecting you will look there! That is the beauty.

In child psychology a simple experiment is conducted to determine the intellectual awareness of children. The child will be shown a doll house with dolls of father, mother, son and daughter. The counselor will take away the father and mother dolls and tell the child that they have left for work or shopping. The child will be asked to confirm the statement. Then the child is diverted to look elsewhere and the parent dolls are put back in the doll house where the child can see them. The child is now asked where the father and mother dolls are, and there are very interesting observations in the responses.

A child of up to four years would normally respond saying that the mother and father are still away at work or shopping even though they can see them clearly in the doll house. It is only beyond that age, perhaps at the age of five, that the child connects what it sees with reality. Till then the child just believes what is told to it earlier.

This is the beauty of innocence. Innocence trusts. Innocence does not worry about being exploited. Neuroscientists have

explanations for this now. They say that till about the age of five or six, a child's brain wave patterns are in the theta and delta states. These are extremely impressionable states of mind in which we dream and sleep. These are states of no identity. Till the age of twelve they say that brain waves are in alpha state, still very impressionable. This is why children believe most of what adults say to them. In their innocence they trust.

If you watch children's eyes, they will be clear and empty. This is why they are in bliss. As you grow up, your eyes become filled with knowledge. Then you may have sight, but not insight, because you see through your eyes that are already filled with opinions, judgments and beliefs. Your sight is no longer innocent. It is filtered and clouded. You see through the filter of your beliefs and conditioned memories. There is nothing new to learn from what you see because it becomes a repetition of your past memories. The learning is missed.

On the other hand, when you see with empty eyes, everything you see goes deep and causes fresh insight. Life becomes an eternally unfolding mystery. The very nature of your questioning changes. The nature of the questioning reveals the depth of innocence of the questioner.

There are three ways to ask a question. You can ask out of innocence, or you can ask

out of knowledge to show that you too know, and third, you can ask to confirm that what you know is correct. When you ask out of innocence, you are completely ready to receive the answer. When you ask out of knowledge, you completely miss the answer. When you ask for confirmation, you simply resist the answer.

A small story:

Zen masters generally give personal guidance in a secluded room. No one enters when master and disciple are together.

A Zen master used to enjoy talking with merchants and newspapermen as well as with his pupils everyday. Amongst his regular visitors was an illiterate potter who used to come and ask foolish questions of him. He will then have tea and go away.

One day, while the potter was there, the master wanted to give personal guidance to a disciple, so he requested the potter to remain outside.

The potter asked, 'I understand you are a living Buddha. Even the stone Buddhas never disallow the coming together of people before them. Why then should I be disallowed?'

The master had to go outside to see his disciple.

When you ask out of innocence, you are completely ready to receive the answer.

The potter's question was of knowledge. He missed the learning for the

moment. Masters impart learning every moment. If there is implicit openness the learning can be received. In the space of innocence learning happens. The potter's knowledge came in the way of absorbing the master. Children absorb everything and everyone around them like a sponge. There is nothing hindering the process as yet. That is why they were taken to masters at the young age of seven in the ancient vedic tradition. The fundamental secret of learning is to function from a state of innocence.

The problem is that those who are not empty never recognize that they are not empty. You cannot tell them they are full. They will neither understand nor accept it. But a man of innocence can say, 'Because of my knowing I missed it. I actually don't know. I am now eager to know.' The moment this space is created, the learning continues to happen. In this space there is no ego of knowing. The resistance is dropped and there is pure receptivity.

J. Krishnamurti, the great philosopher, beautifully says, 'There can be freedom from know-ledge only when the motivation for gathering of knowledge is understood.'

The unknown can be known only by surrendering to it.

What is generally the motivation for knowledge? You see, the present is an unfolding miracle and mystery of Existence. We try to grasp it with the net of knowledge. That is the motivation for knowledge. But it can never happen! The unknown can never be trapped with the known. The unknown can be known only by surrendering to it. That surrender is what is called intelligence! Intelligence recognizes the mystery of the present moment and surrenders to it joyfully. That joy is the joy of innocence.

Knowledge on the other hand denies the mystery of the present moment. It tries to ascertain it every minute and the present can never be ascertained. So you continuously remain with what is called 'fear of the unknown'. It is through the process of trying to ascertain the present moment that the fear of the unknown takes root. Otherwise, you have no fear! You are very clear that the present moment is a mystery!

Through knowledge, you somehow try to escape from the 'not-knowing' of the moment. To the ego, not-knowing means being nothing. It cannot handle being nothing. But innocence is being nothing and enjoying the present! The present is an unopened gift. But knowledge robs it of its suspense. When knowledge

understands that the ways of the Self are yet to be discovered, then it doesn't hinder the process of the ultimate knowing. Then it behaves as a tool that comes into play when actually required and not stand in the way of embracing the mysteries of life.

When we understand that knowledge denies the mysteries of life, when we understand that we gather knowledge because we are afraid of the unknown, we will awaken to a new intelligence of surrendering to life, and *that* awakening is the birth of innocence.

The problem is that society believes in instilling a set of beliefs into every child that is born. The whole method of bringing up a child is by instilling a set of beliefs in it.

What is belief?

It is nothing but an individual and independent interpretation of something.

There is no need to instill any belief into a child. A child can remain free to have its own interpretation.

J. Krishnamurti says, 'Knowledge is both tradition and instinct.' What does he mean by that? Let us say you are born in a Hindu family. Then, the knowledge you pick up will be from a solid Hindu tradition. Your responses and your actions will carry the strong beliefs of Hindu tradition and ideology. Both at the conscious and unconscious levels, you will be conditioned

through it. The unconscious response becomes your 'instinct'. The very experience of anything around you, happens only through instinct, not *as it is*. And because of this, you cannot know anything *as it is*. You can know it only through your knowledge. That is why we say, knowledge is a hindrance to knowing.

Once knowledge solidifies in the being there is no space left for experiencing. There is scope only for replay of knowledge. Everything becomes a reflection of some past knowledge or some past conclusion. The future becomes a continuation of the past patterns and experiences. You already know the fragrance of a flower. You already know the sound of the waves. You already know the sunrise. In the very beginning, at the time of the first experience as a child, these would have been truly innocent experiences. But as we grow up, these innocent experiences start becoming mundane tradition.

Understand, Existence is not a continuation of anything. It is fresh every minute. So it is not possible to know anything. What do you know of what happens the next second? If this is understood, all knowing can be dropped. Then there is only wisdom and wisdom is innocent intelligence. It allows the experience to happen without knowledge hindering. Then the great discoveries of

Belief is an individual perception.

the Self and that which is around the Self as well as the mysteries that link both happen.

J. Krishnamurti rightly says that belief discards so many possibilities and urges you into one particular activity. Since the mind is constantly looking for activity you go behind belief. We base our whole life on beliefs. Because of this we are immersed in activity, but not action. Activity needs constant fuelling through beliefs. Activity cannot afford to stop. If it stops, the mind falls into depression. Action happens as and when required and stops. Activity happens out of belief. Action happens out of understanding. Activity causes fatigue while action creates energy and inspiration. What you need is action, not activity.

Just understand that belief is nothing but your own understanding of something and not the truth. In any given situation, four different people can conclude differently with four different beliefs. There is no absolute reality in belief. It is merely an individual perception. But innocence keeps the perception open. That is the beauty of it. It doesn't conclude and close the doors on anything.

Look at this picture here.

What do you see? You see an old woman.

**Not holding onto
any one
interpretation is
the essence of
innocence.**

But you can also see a young woman! The nose of the old woman is the left cheek of the young woman. The mouth of the old woman is the neck of



the young woman's dress! The left eye of the old woman becomes the left ear of the young woman.

There are innumerable interpretations to anything. Not holding onto any one interpretation is the essence of innocence. Then the spirit is kept alive.

Silence is the space of unlearning and learning

Paramahansa Yogananda* says, 'Daytime is the devil's playground.' In daytime, we continuously feed our mind with words. Actually if you observe, words come in the way of learning. For example, now you are sitting in front of me. Many of you don't understand what I am saying because I am talking a foreign language to you. You feel sad. But you are the most fortunate in the group! It is not possible to learn from me through words. I talk only to make you silent. If I don't talk, you start talking inside you. So I talk. But you can learn a lot from me only through silence. In silence there is innocence. In words there is intellect. Intellect can never receive the truth, only innocence can.

Just sit here with innocence, that is enough. Then you will receive the ultimate understanding. It is in the gaps between my words that the real teaching lies. The master is sheer poetry, the poetry of Existence. His expression is an overflowing of Existence. The master speaks because you want to hear. As he speaks there is a beautiful silence, which is his undercurrent. If you are open you can feel it touching you. Silence bridges the gap that words

Paramahansa Yogananda - An enlightened master from India well known for his book 'Autobiography of a Yogi'.

create. Silence is the space of transformation into fresh learning. In silence you are open and in those moments I can transform you easily. With the transformation, you regain your complete innocence.

Communication is between two heads. With communication you can easily misinterpret me. However, communion is between two hearts. It is between two beings. With communication you work with your intellectual defenses. With communion you receive the direct initiation into the experience. With communion you fulfill the longing that you have for something beyond words. I have exactly that with me. That is what you need to take.

The whole process of meditation is to start communing and find the silence within you. The inner silence can never be touched by thought or experience. Inner silence is the innocence that you seek. That is why people crave to sit by themselves in the Himalayas or in the forest. They hope to find the inner silence through the outer silence. When it happens you start communing with the whole of Existence. Anything that happens from this silence will always be in conformance with Existence.

One disciple visited a Zen master in China.

The whole process of meditation is to start communing and find the silence within you.

The master asked him, 'What do you seek?'

The disciple replied, 'Enlightenment.'

The master said, 'You have your own treasure house. Why do you search outside?'

The disciple inquired, 'Where is my treasure house?'

The master replied, 'What you are asking is your treasure house.'

The disciple got enlightened that very moment.

The inner silence is the treasure zone. Finding that for you is the work of the master. So next time, don't feel sad when you cannot understand what I am saying. Remain innocent and merge with the silence in the words. The unlearning and learning will then happen as they should. In that silence, there is no greed of heaven or fear of hell or jealousy of the other or want of love, or any worry. There is only resonance with innocence, with the master. The direct transmission then happens.

Grasp with Innocence

Innocence is a delicate fragrance, while knowledge is a strong filter. That is the

difference. The fragrance of innocence draws the whole world to you. The filter of knowledge prevents many things from coming to you. When you are caught in knowledge you are in a great hurry all the time, because there is too much knowledge to gather.

When you are with innocence you simply enjoy the moment. If you watch innocent people, they will never appear to be with any great purpose. They will simply revel in the moment with a totality, with simplicity. Innocence grasps the moment while knowledge misses it. Knowledge knows only purpose while innocence knows the beauty of purposelessness.

If you set aside your knowledge, you are ready to grasp the moment and the Truth. The *present* holds the truth in it. The problem is that today education teaches only knowledge and how to be clever. It doesn't educate on innocence. Where in the universities do they teach innocence?

A small story:

A young boy walked into a fish market and asked for six trout.

The fishmonger enthusiastically started selecting the trout. He was about to wrap them when the boy said, 'Please don't wrap them up yet. Can you just throw each of them to me and I will catch them one by one before you wrap them up?'

The fishmonger said, 'Of course I will, but what for?'

The boy replied, 'That way, I can at least say when I get home that I caught six trout.'

There is such a pressure to be clever today. Children lose their innocence to the conditioning that they receive in the name of 'how to be clever'. Over time, like this small boy, even innocence is used only to make up for cleverness!

A father introduced his son proudly to his colleagues at office for the first time.

All his colleagues were standing around the boy and the father said, 'Son, why don't you tell them how old you are?'

The child promptly said, 'When I am at home I am seven. But when I am on a bus, I am five.'

This is how children are trained today. They are trained to see utility in everything. Education evaluates you by your own utility. But you are not your utility. You are your being. The being can never be evaluated. Only the mind can be, and mind itself is a myth! Society creates a myth, which is your mind, and holds it as the yardstick to evaluate you. That is the reason why knowledge is so popular today.

A small story:

Four friends lived in a town. They spent a lot of time together. Three of them were

very learned. The fourth was not as learned but he was wise.

One day, they decided to travel to other lands to exhibit their learning to men and earn money.

The fourth friend had nothing to boast of, but expressed his wish to accompany them.

The first friend said, 'You don't know much. If you accompany us, we will have to unnecessarily share our money with you.'

The second friend said, 'Yes, that is true. It is better you stay back.'

The third friend was more kind. He said, 'We grew up together all these years. It is not right to tell him to stay back. He should come along.'

So the four of them started their journey.

They passed through a dense forest. They saw many wild animals and experienced many exciting moments. Suddenly one day, they came across a heap of animal bones.

One of them said, 'I think this is a wonderful way to put our knowledge to test. Let us bring this animal back to life.'

The two other friends agreed, but the fourth one said, 'I feel these are the bones of a very big animal, so we

should not attempt to do such things.'

The other three laughed at him and called him a coward. They said, 'If you had knowledge like we do, you will not feel so afraid of these things. Keep quiet and watch us.'

The three proceeded with the experiment.

One of them arranged the bones in a way that it looked like a proper animal. Then he chanted some verses, sprinkled holy water on it and the bones suddenly took the shape of a skeleton. They were amazed by the power of their knowledge.

The second one came forward, chanted a few more verses and sprinkled more water on it. The skeleton suddenly got covered with muscles, flesh, blood and a coat of fur. It was a lion and lacked only life.

The friends were amazed at themselves.

The third friend came forward and said he would infuse life into it.

The fourth friend gave another warning but they laughed at him. He then slowly climbed up a tree and sat there watching.

Society creates a myth, your mind, the yardstick to evaluate you.

The third friend waved life into the lion's body and the lion came to life.

With one roar, the lion advanced towards the three of them. They looked up to see where the fourth friend was. He was perched up on the tree watching the whole scene.

The lion made short work of them.

Knowledge is a tool. It doesn't directly lead to intelligence. It is just a tool. As long as we use it as a powerful tool where needed, it is good. It can do amazing things. The mistake we do is giving our whole lives to the hands of knowledge. On the other hand, innocence leads directly to pure intelligence.

Another small story:

There was a banyan tree in a small village that was giving cool shade. Under the tree there was a cow and a tired dog. There was also an old man with a long beard leaning his back on its trunk, his legs spread out in front of him.

The tree was in the frontier between two kingdoms.

A traveler was passing that way to cross from one kingdom to the other. He saw the old man and commented, 'Good disguise you are sporting. It doesn't work. I too sported a similar disguise

when I stole a gold chain a few days back. A guard searched me and found the chain. He beat me up as well. Let us see how you are able to get away with your disguise.'

Next came a man on horseback. He was a spy who was about to enter the kingdom. He stopped upon seeing the old man and thought to himself, 'Who knows with what motive this man is lying here? He could as well be a spy like me.' He hurried away as he had no time to lose with his job as a spy.

One hour later, another man staggered towards the old man. He was drunk. He laughed at the old man and loudly asked, 'How much did you gulp down old man? Look at me. I have gulped an entire pot and I am still so steady although at times I feel my head is a little heavy.' Saying that, he went away.

Soon it was nighttime and the whole place became very calm.

A fourth man passed by that way and came across the old man. He looked at him for one long moment and went near him and bowed down. He spoke, 'How lucky I am. I have the good fortune of seeing you.' He then took a large leaf and fanned the old man to drive away the ants and other insects that were crawling up his body.

The old hermit opened his eyes from his trance and saw the man fanning him and smiled.

The young man asked, 'Oh great soul, I would be most blessed if you accept my invitation to spend the night at my house which is nearby here.'

The hermit said, 'If that is god's will, so be it,' and followed the man to his house.

Innocence grasps dimensions that cleverness misses. Innocence may miss the facts but it catches the Truths. Cleverness is too busy with facts. When cleverness combines with innocence, it becomes a rare combination of intelligence and innocence. Setting aside knowledge for the sake of innocence is intelligence. I don't mean that you have to stop gathering knowledge. Just understand that knowledge cannot substitute innocence.

If you observe villagers who are not educated you will see that they exhibit pure intelligence! That is why you will find that when you are stuck, a villager effortlessly pitches in and helps you out! Innocent intelligence has that capacity.

Compre-hending complex things is not a difficult thing. You have to work your mind a little more, that's all! You only need to see in a more divisive way, in a more

analytical way. For example, a person may not find it very difficult to understand

aeronautics, but what about understanding the simple Zen koans*? Zen koans* are simple teachings of Zen Buddhism. They are not concerned with where you are or what you do but with what makes you. They are meant to cause an awakening at the being level. They are concerned only with that, nothing else. They are not caught in giving ideas. They directly give the solution for the being. But they are difficult to grasp because they are too simple and straightforward!

Today all universities work on sharpening the intellectual faculty of the individual. They teach us how to make ourselves more useful to society and how to be productive or effective. There is nothing wrong in being productive and effective, but in the process we forget how to be innocent and receptive. We forget how to open up to the cosmos, to Existence. We forget how to move in synchronicity with the cosmos, how to make productivity happen in tune with the cosmic plan, which is the source of all productivity. This happens because we are caught in 'doing' and 'having', we forget the 'being'.

Innocence grasps dimensions that cleverness misses. Innocence may miss facts but it catches the Truth.

Koans - Riddles given as techniques in Zen to aid Self Realization.

There are three important states: being, doing and having. Right now, we move from doing to having. We continuously 'do' things. We learn and we put the learning into useful action. We then 'have' what we want: money, relationships, comfort, and what not. Then we want to have better things or have more things and so we continue doing. We are all the time between doing and having. In the process, the being is forgotten. Our real restfulness lies only in the state of being. Because of this, however much we do and have, we still search for restfulness. This feeling is the 'call of the being'.

If we nurture the being and cause the doing to happen from the quality of the being, then we don't have to work so much for the having. That will simply happen as a byproduct. This is the secret of Existence. But this is not seen as a direct utility to society by the universities. That is the problem. But this is what gives the real utility of every individual, not only to society but to the whole of the cosmos. We should always be concerned about the Whole.

In the ancient Indian universities like Takshila* and Nalanda*, the preparation of the students was always at the being level. Outer world learning happened as a natural consequence. India has always focused on nurturing the innocence of the being because only that will lead to strength of the being. When there is strength of the being, anything can be achieved.

Paramahansa Yogananda* beautifully describes the intent of spiritual learning. He says, there are trillions of cells in the body. Every cell is like an intelligent being. Every cell has the DNA* substance in it which has the information and intelligence to grow a whole new body and brain. This dormant intelligence needs to be awakened so that the mind doesn't move towards suffering and remains in bliss.

He goes on to say that spiritual education magnetizes the cells by sending life current around the brain and spine, ensuring evolutionary advancement of the individual. With this divine magnetism, every cell becomes a brain alive and ready to grasp every bit of knowledge. With these awakened brains, the mental capacity

Takshila - A center of learning mentioned in the Hindu epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, now a world UN heritage site in North eastern Pakistan.

Nalanda - A great Buddhist center of learning in modern day Bihar, India comprising a university and library.

Paramahansa Yogananda - An enlightened master from India well known for his book 'Autobiography of a Yogi'.

DNA - Deoxyribonucleic acid, the building block of all living beings containing the genetic code.

of the individual multiplies manifold and all sorts of knowledge will be effortlessly comprehended! Such is the impact of spiritual learning.

Alexander, the emperor of Greece, had conquered three fourths of the world and traveled downward to Asia to conquer it. He settled down in the banks of the river Sindhu to conquer India.

On the banks of the same river lived a hermit.

As Alexander and his army passed by, the hermit was meditating and did not stand up to salute him.

Alexander felt humiliated and shouted at him, 'How dare you do not salute me!' And he took out his sword to chop his head off.

The hermit looked at him and laughed. Alexander was shocked. 'I am going to kill you and you are laughing!' He asked.

The hermit said, 'I am wondering what you are trying to kill! I can never be killed. I am immortal, eternal and imperishable. Weapons cannot cut, fire cannot burn, water cannot wet, wind cannot dry up this soul.' He quoted from the Bhagavad Gita.

Alexander dropped the sword and saluted the hermit saying, 'India has such great people who are fearless about death. I offer my salutations to this great country.' He retreated from the Indian soil a wiser man.

The teachings of olden day universities created the possibility for supreme knowledge and confidence to flower in individuals, at the same time preserving their innocence. Then every student acquired the quality of a sage. A sage has the vast knowledge of the outer world and the utter innocence of the inner world.

Buddha beautifully teaches in the Dhammapada*:

Even the gods envy the saints,

*whose senses obey them like well-trained horses
and who are free from pride.*

*Patient like the earth, they stand like the
threshold.*

They are pure like a lake without mud,

and free from the cycle of birth and death.

*The sage is qualified to do anything in the outer
world.*

In the ancient gurukul* system of education, learning happened in a completely different plane. Creative

Dhammapada - Teachings of Buddha in scriptural form.

Gurukul - Vedic educational institution.

intelligence stemmed from deep consciousness. Straightaway, the being was addressed and the doing and having had a different essence altogether.

A small story:

A young boy was considered to be very dull and his father one day took him to the Sanskrit school where all the boys of the village learnt their lessons.

He met the teacher and said, 'My son is not a bright student. Will you allow him to sit in the back row of the class so that he is in the atmosphere presided over by goddess Saraswati? I know you are kind and compassionate. Please guide him. He will be lucky if he learns anything.'*

The teacher readily agreed.

The young boy joined the school. He would be present every day before any of the other boys came in, dust, sweep and mop the room, and set up the teacher's wooden table and chair and sit down in a corner to listen to the class most attentively.

No one expected him to gain anything out of the classes.

One day he humbly asked the teacher, 'Sir, what about the guidance you were

supposed to give me? When will I receive it?'

The teacher said, 'Right now! Here it is: Aham Brahmasmi (I am That). Recite this audibly or silently, but continuously.'

With determination and inspiration the young boy learnt the phrase without even bothering to ask the meaning of it. Neither did the teacher bother to tell him the meaning. He did not feel the necessity to do so.

'Aham Brahmasmi,' the boy went on repeating at home.

His father asked him, 'Do you know the meaning of those words?'

The boy's eyes bulged out. 'Meaning?' he asked. It never struck him that the words might have a meaning.

The father told him, 'The words mean, I am That.'

The boy went to his uncle's house the next day and continued reciting, 'Aham Brahmasmi, which means Father is Brahman.'*

The uncle heard this and said, 'It doesn't mean that! It means: I am Brahman.'*

Saraswati - Hindu goddess of learning.

Brahman - Absolute, Cosmic Consciousness, formless god etc all referring to the universal energy source of which the individual energy of soul is a holographic part.

The boy was surprised but kept quiet. On the way back home he was reciting, 'Aham Brahmasmi, which means uncle is Brahman.'

The village priest passed by him and heard him reciting. He stopped him and said, 'Son, it does not mean that uncle is Brahman, it means I am Brahman.'

The boy was amazed. 'How can just two words mean so many things, father, uncle and the village priest are all Brahman!'

His head was reeling and he sat down on a nearby slab of stone. He started reciting with the spirit of asking the words themselves what they really meant.

The sun went down and darkness came. The stars and moon started shining. The boy went on reciting Aham Brahmasmi to find out its real meaning.

At dawn, the ultimate knowledge dawned on him that he too was Brahman! Not just his father, uncle and village chief, but he too, and everybody else was Brahman.

He became a realized soul.

Understand, the moment the boy understood he was ignorant, an alchemy process was triggered in his system. When you don't know that you don't know, it is ignorance. When you know that you don't

know, it is
i n n o c e n c e .
Then the
knowing can
s t a r t

happening. But in the knowing, the feeling of knowledge is to be checked. Knowing is different from knowledge. Knowing is innocence. It is an understanding that has become your own experience. Knowledge that is not yet experienced is not your own. It is borrowed. It is just a collection of words in the head.

A person may go on and on reading something here and there, and entertain himself. If his intention is just reading books it can be good entertainment, but not enlightenment. Entertainment is different from enlightenment. Just because he has been entertained by some good books, it doesn't mean that he is enlightened. Understand, the books which help you sharpen your logic give you the feeling that you know. There starts the problem.

Work so that everything becomes a deep experience in you. You will then be a simple person. Simplicity is weightless. It will never weigh you down and hinder further learning. It will just aid in the flowering of innocence, that's all.

What innocence grasps one may not even be able to express, because it is an understanding beyond words. But it can be

**Knowledge that
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**Vulnerability is
allowing
everything to
touch your being.
It is not weakness.**

seen in the eyes. The eyes are the windows of the soul. That is why when you see the eyes of sages you will see an oceanic look in them. They will radiate something that cannot be framed. To try to describe it would be like trying to scratch the foot from the outer side of the shoe.

One cannot blame modernization for loss of innocence. Lord Krishna says, 'I am Time.' When Krishna says that, you need to understand that modernization is also the divine play of Existence. Man should understand modernization in the right light and not take it as a replacement to the ancient foundation of growing.

Be vulnerable

When you are innocent, you are vulnerable to everything that Existence wants to teach you! If you are closed, you create a wall around you. The wall neither allows fresh breeze to touch your being nor does it allow you to step out and touch the cool breeze. Vulnerability is breaking the wall and inviting the cool breeze to touch your very being every time it blows.

Vulnerability is allowing *everything* to touch your being. The entire cosmos comes to you when you are vulnerable.

Vulnerability is not weakness. The wall when broken will not cause you danger. The wall itself was built out of a deep fear of exposing your reality. Your reality is your vulnerability and you are so afraid of opening it to the cosmos. You know deep down that if you let go and open up, you will simply be swept away in innocence. So you close yourself up. But it is suffocating to be in there because it is the same air that is circulating. You experience the same patterns that the mind knows. Then of what use is the wall? When the wall is broken, you will realize that nothing leaves you. Instead, you only gain one thing, freshness of life.

Two astrologers met on the road on a beautiful autumn day. One of them commented, 'Beautiful autumn. It is something we have never seen earlier.'

The other replied, 'True. I am reminded of the autumn of 2070.'

When you are vulnerable, you experience everything at the being level. Otherwise, it becomes an experience through the head. The being is poetry, the head is prose. And poetry is life.

One night a wife found her husband standing over their baby's crib.

As he stood looking down upon the baby in the cradle, she saw his face assuming a mixture of emotions of

disbelief, awe, skepticism, doubt, amazement and what not.

She slowly went up to him, put her arm around him and said, 'A penny for your thoughts.'

The husband replied, 'It's amazing. I can't imagine how anyone can make a crib like that for just 45 dollars!'

With the head you cannot be vulnerable! When you are not vulnerable, you are sitting behind the great wall of your house. Life has not yet started. Life happens with vulnerability.

With vulnerability you move towards the truth in a different path, in a joyful path because every moment you are receiving directly from Existence. Existence is able to give you because you are vulnerable and ready to receive it! Existence has its own ethics. Enlightened masters have their own ethics. When there is vulnerability, they can simply shower on you. When there is a wall, it becomes difficult. Their ethics does not permit them to penetrate. So they wait for the wall to break.

When you become vulnerable, you are saying a 'yes' to Existence. Existence is the greatest mystery and the eternal teacher. When you say yes to it, your energy starts moving in a new direction. It moves from the head to the heart and you start receiving the teachings for your very being. Whatever you said 'no' to earlier will start

becoming a 'yes'. Then you will see that the world is very different from what you thought.

Once you start saying yes, you start expressing love, which is the language of the heart. Love can never be known through logic. It can be known by saying 'yes' to the other, by welcoming the other, not for any utility but for the sake of love. It can be known through a deep trust on the other. When you are vulnerable, you have great trust on the other.

People ask me how to 'be' in my presence. Just be completely vulnerable and innocent. With openness, you can receive the truth directly in your being. The master is a pure expression of Existence. By allowing him, you are allowing Existence to enter into you. When Existence enters it leaves an impression of the truth in your being. With every *darshan* or touch from the master, the impression becomes deeper. This impression is greater than any teaching he can impart to you.

Buddha's disciple once asked him, 'Master, you have not as yet answered our questions about whether the world is eternal or not, whether it is finite or infinite, whether the soul and body are the same or different.'

Buddha looked at him and asked, 'Did I make any promise that I would be answering these questions?'

The disciple said no.

Then Buddha asked him, 'Suppose there is a man with an arrow in his chest, and when you are about to remove it for him, he says to wait saying unless he knows the caste of the man who shot the arrow, his height, weight, his family background, where he comes from, and what wood he made the bow out of, he will not allow you to remove the arrow, what would you think of him?'

The disciple said with a shameful face, 'He would be a fool, master. His questions have nothing to do with the arrow and he would die before the answers were revealed.'

Buddha said, 'You are right. In the same way, I do not teach about whether the world is eternal or not, whether it is finite or infinite, whether the soul and body are the same or different. I teach straightaway to remove the arrow because the arrow is the root of your suffering, which is ignorance.'

Understand, a master can't teach you spirituality, but you can learn by being open and trusting towards him. Spirituality has nothing to do with words. It is an experience. You need to imbibe it by watching the master's body language, by smelling the enlightenment that radiates from him. You can catch it if you are aware.

If you are impatient with questions, the very questions prevent you from catching the truth. If you are patient and you catch the smell of enlightenment, the questions will dissolve. Then even before questions arise, the answers will happen in you. That is the great experience of being around a master. That is why masters take a body and come down from time to time, with the hope that a handful of disciples will catch the smell of enlightenment and awaken.

When you are vulnerable, you are open in your entire response system. You give space for the intelligence of the cosmos to act through you.

A small story:

On the banks of a river there lived a sage in a small plot of land owned by a farmer. The village chief did not like the sage and wanted to buy the piece of land. The farmer would not let go of it.

The village chief was ready to pay any amount of money.

The farmer told him, 'If I sold the land to you, you will drive the sage away once it become yours.'

The village chief angrily said, 'Why do you call him a saint? Just because he is wearing an orange robe? He must be as ordinary as you and I.'

The farmer said, 'No Sir, I have seen many signs of a sage in him. For example, I have never seen him getting angry.'

The village chief said, 'How can you conclude like that? He has probably not had a chance to exhibit his anger, that's all. Tomorrow come by his hut and I will show you how angry he can get.'

The next day morning the farmer went near the sage's hut and watched.

A boy apparently sent by the village chief approached the sage. The sage was writing something on a palm leaf with his head bent.

The boy went behind him and spat on him.

The sage looked back, saw that it was the boy who did it, got up and took a dip in the river and came back and sat.

The boy spat again on him. The sage went and had a dip again and came and sat.

The farmer could not bear to see what was happening. The village chief was standing behind a tree and watching as well. He was surprised at the sage's calmness.

Every time the sage returned from the dip, the boy spat on him. Every time the sage smiled at him, got up and went and dipped.

When you are vulnerable, you are open in your entire response system.

The boy had spat on the sage a hundred and seven times. By now, the boy's face was losing its color. He could not bear it anymore. He fell at the sage's feet and cried, 'Please forgive me. I have sinned. I harassed you in this manner only because I was paid to do so. I am afraid that you might curse me now!'

The sage calmly asked him, 'So you will not spit on me again?'

The boy replied, 'I would rather die than spit again.'

The sage lifted him up and said, 'Let me tell you a secret. I should actually thank you for this because many years ago I had taken a vow that I would dip hundred and eight times in this sacred river. Today that has been fulfilled. I have to dip one more time to complete the vow. This time I will pray for you.'

The sage dipped one more time and when he came out, the village chief was at his feet begging for forgiveness. He said, 'I am the real sinner. I paid the boy to do this. I wanted to prove that you would get angry.'

The sage laughed and said, 'Had the boy told me his real mission, I would have got angry quickly and made him

**To just express
with vulnerability
is to just be.**

*receive his
reward!*

*The village chief became a disciple of
the sage.*

The sage's response was neither for nor against. He simply remained open. Automatically the forces of the cosmos came together and fulfilled an old vow through the incident. I am not saying that you should allow someone to spit on you! Understand the importance of being open in your response. When you are open, you create tremendous space for the best to happen to you at that moment. Soon, you can reprogram your entire response system and thereby the very course of your life.

A small Zen story:

Zen teachers train their young pupils to express themselves and leave it at that. One child from a particular Zen temple would meet the child from another Zen temple every morning on his way to buy vegetables.

One day, the first one asked the other, 'Where are you going?'

'I am going wherever my feet go,' responded the other.

This reply puzzled the first one who went to his teacher for help.

The teacher told him, 'Tomorrow morning, when you meet that fellow, ask him the same question. He will give you

the same answer. Then you ask him, 'Suppose you have no feet, then where are you going?' That will fix him.'

The child met the other the next day morning. He asked, 'Where are you going?'

The other one replied, 'I am going wherever the wind blows.'

The first one was baffled and went to his teacher again.

The teacher said, 'Tomorrow, you ask him where he will go if there is no wind.'

The next day the child met the other one on the road and asked, 'Where are you going?'

The second one replied, 'I am going to the market to buy vegetables.'

To just express with vulnerability is to be free like a bird, not worried about any past or future, to just be. That is what Zen masters taught their disciples.

Surrender with trust

Immense trust leads to surrender. Surrender is simplicity of the heart. It is the knowing that you do not have to decide about the Truth, that you just have to go by it. When you awaken to the powerful presence of the Truth, surrender happens.

If you observe your pet dog, you will find that even if you cheat him once in a while, he will come back to you with utmost trust. His trust is absolute and innocent. The trust comes with no reason. He has no questions, so no answers need to be given. He sees no utility in anything. He just exists like an open book, that's all.

Two gold fish were in a water tank. One asked the other, 'Do you trust in god?'

The other replied, 'But of course. Who do you think changes our water everyday?'

It is only innocence that is capable of taking the leap into trust and surrender. Knowledge somehow sees utility in everything. It looks for reason in everything. Surrender and reason are mutually exclusive. Surrender is to do with trust. Surrender is possible only out of innocence, because out of innocence arises trust.

With trust arises acceptance as well. Acceptance does not mean compromising to life, situations and persons. No. It means welcoming life and all its forms as a wonderful gift from Existence. Each person or situation is a fresh happening. Accepting it at a deep level is surrender. People and situations have to be handled with the required tact. But the spontaneous and deep acceptance of the moment is surrender.

Acceptance is the deep humility towards the profound Existence that takes care of everything including you. It is again saying 'yes' to Existence. When you say yes, you are acknowledging the presence of the all-pervading life force that is conducting this universe. That is surrender.

Out of surrender arises deep relaxation. Out of surrender arises a fresh intelligence that knows on a different plane. On this plane, there is no worry of result, there is only action driven by pure energy. And energy is intelligence. Trust does not mean inaction. It means continuing to be in action with intelligence instead of intellect. It is having trust in thought, and intelligence in action.

A disciple came riding on his camel to the tent of a Sufi master. He dismounted from the camel, walked into the master's tent, bowed down low and said, 'Master, so great is my trust in god that I have left my camel outside untied, convinced that god protects the interests of those who love him.'

The master shouted, 'Go tie your camel you fool! God cannot be bothered doing for you what you are perfectly capable of doing yourself!'

Trust is an attitude. It is not a substitute for appropriate action. The spirit of trust is the essence of the very life. It leads to innocence, surrender, relaxation and bliss.

Trust is an attitude. It leads to innocence, surrender, relaxation and bliss.

path. Until then, you are still on the path to trust.

All great enlightened beings are eternally blissful because they have surrendered their very body to Existence with trust. Existence flows through them like air flowing through hollow bamboo creating music. That is why they are so beautiful. When Existence flows through, the expression is divine. Enlightened master's grace is the grace of the whole of Existence. They are the only utterly innocent beings on planet earth.

Enlightened masters are established in the knowing that nothing is impossible in the space of Existence. They are living embodiments of trust. Their bliss is an expression of this. They have access to all the knowledge of the world but are yet utterly innocent. They know that their knowledge is the knowledge of Existence. Their knowledge is not knowledge but a flowing experience of the truth of the moment.

If it is followed out of complete understanding, there is nothing to lose in its

We too have knowledge. But the problem is that we think *our* knowledge is the only right knowledge and all other knowledge is wrong. Understand, the ultimate knowledge is the same for everyone. Anything in between is just a bunch of borrowed ideas. If this is known clearly, surrender will happen and we will drop the burden of knowledge and become innocent.

How to start knowing that we don't know? Mere clarity that we don't know is enough. Just meditate on Existence, the source of all knowledge. Be in a prayerful and surrendering mood to it all the time. Be firm in surrendering to the knowledge of Existence. You will see that miracles start happening around you.

There is a story about Hanuman, the monkey god in Hindu mythology who was a devout disciple of lord Rama*.*

Hanuman was once asked what day of the lunar month it was.*

He replied, 'I don't know anything about the day of the month or the positions of the stars. I think of Rama alone.'*

When you are established in the wonder of the Truth, you become so innocent, that your very life becomes meditative and

Hanuman - The monkey god revered by Hindus and a disciple of Rama.

Rama - Prince of the kingdom of Ayodhya in the Hindu epic Ramayana.

miraculous. It was Hanuman* who crossed the ocean from India to Sri Lanka with just one leap by chanting the name of Rama*. Rama himself had to build a bridge to cross over with his army! Such is the power of innocent surrender to Existence and all its forms.

When one is established in surrender to the Divine, miracles happen every moment. People are always in search of miracles. The biggest miracles happen with surrender. There is a wonderful story from the life of Shirdi Sai Baba*, a great enlightened master from India.

*In the mosque, Shirdi Baba *used to light the lamps everyday. He used to light them symbolically for the destruction of the darkness of ignorance in humanity. But people would think that he loved lighting the lamps.*

Baba used to get the oil from the oil merchants. After some time, the oil merchants decided that they would not part with the oil free of cost. They all got together and decided not to give Baba oil any more.

Baba though aware of this decision, pretended not to know about it and went

the following day to get the oil. The merchants refused to give him oil.

Baba returned to the mosque smiling.

The villagers and the oil merchants however got curious as to how he would light the lamps. They gathered around him.

Baba filled the lamps with water and lit the wicks. They burnt with more brightness than usual emitting radiance of a different plane!

The oil merchants were amazed and shocked. They begged for forgiveness, and of course Baba forgave them.

Surrender is allowing Existence to happen through you. Enlightened beings enjoy the play of Existence through them. They enjoy it with the utter innocence and awe of a child. That is why they are so delightful to watch.

One more thing: when you are trusting and surrendering, it becomes difficult to cheat you. Innocent trust always protects from deceit. It radiates that kind of energy. In our ashram, people from all walks of life come together to live. Once they enter the ashram they develop a sense of deep trust. The very decision to take the jump from

Hanuman - The monkey god revered by Hindus and a disciple of Rama.

Rama - Prince of the kingdom of Ayodhya in the Hindu epic Ramayana.

Shirdi Sai Baba - An enlightened master worshipped by Hindus and Muslims alike. Lived in Shirdi near Nasik, India.

the material world to the spiritual world as an *ashramite** comes from trust. Further, when they enter the ashram and start living, sharing their things with other seekers, there is such trust that no one cares to keep anything under lock and key! The room may be filled with strangers but still there is no thought to keep one's possessions locked. Nothing gets lost. Even if something cannot be found, the very attitude is such that it doesn't matter to them! That is the beauty of it.

There was a great Sufi Saint by name Habib Ajami. He went to bathe in the river one day leaving his coat on the bank of the river unattended. One man passed by at that time and saw the coat. Thinking someone had left it there carelessly and it had to be protected, he decided to stand guard over it till the owner came by.

Habib came back looking for his coat. The man asked him, 'In whose care did you leave the coat when you went to bathe?' It might as well been stolen!

Habib replied, 'I left it in the care of Him who gave you the task of guarding over it!'

When trust happens with the utmost understanding, nothing can be lost. In the

quality of trust is its true essence. I always tell my disciples about the monks I have seen in the Himalayas during my spiritual wandering days. The monks come to the Himalayas to meditate leaving everything behind. But there they fight for their small water pots! Just the object of possessiveness changes, that's all! When you trust, all material possessions will seem like they belong to Existence. The very attitude of possessing then drops. That relaxes the mind. That is the space for relaxing.

In the year 2004, we went as a small group to the Himalayas. In a lifetime at least once you should visit the Himalayas. We went to Gomukh*, which is the source of the sacred river Ganga. The trek is on mule back taking almost five hours up and five hours down. The path is just four feet wide. If you miss your footing you will go into the gushing Ganga river beneath! Once we reached Gomukh* we spent some time there, and the group returned while I stayed back with a few disciples. The group that returned started at dusk. I told them not to worry and that Existence will take care. Through pitch darkness, not knowing if the mule was taking the bend of the mountain or going straight ahead into the darkness, the entire group made its way

Ashramite - Resident of ashram.

Gomukh - Source of sacred river Ganga in India.

back. The next day, I asked them how the experience was. One of them said, 'Swamiji, we experienced what blind trust means!' If those trusting moments could be extended, they can be the very essence of your life. Then, you can simply do, leaving the result to Existence.

Just seeing the Himalayan mountains can help trust and surrender take root in you. The mountains straightway tell you that Existence is mightier than the intellect! They tell you that intellect cannot fathom their majesty. When this truth happens, the struggle ceases. The mind stops. If you wander in the Himalayas for some time you can experience that bliss is not a goal at all but the path itself. You realize that bliss is in the moment and not in any goal. When you come to the present moment you are open and innocent because there is no mind in the present. For the mind to exist there has to be movement towards the past or the future. In the present moment, there is no past or future. It is just there, that's all.

To be trusting and surrendering is like losing the 'I' and the 'mine'. Ego starts with 'mine' and then moves to 'I'. Even before the identity of 'I' sets in, the 'mine' comes into play. If you notice a small child, even before the 'I' takes root in him, he will fight for 'mine'. Just try pulling a toy from his hand. He will resist! It is his, you cannot take it away. Even before he talks 'I', he

will talk 'mine'. Surrender is nothing but merging with Existence, with no identity of 'I' or 'mine'.

Surrender is death of the mind, death of ego. Ego is nothing but feeling yourself to be a separate entity from Existence. This feeling happens as a result of a strong 'I' and 'mine'.

The mind is a direct conflict to the being. The being always concurs with Existence. The mind invariably comes in the way. The being knows. The mind doubts. The being always says yes. The mind mostly says no. The being is innocent but the mind is cunning. Saying yes is like death for the mind. So it continues to say no. With persuasion it says yes. If left to itself, it says no.

Now you will ask, 'How to silence the mind?' You cannot silence the mind through the mind. It is like expecting the suspect to surrender! It will never happen. You just need to understand that the mind is not a reality. It is a just a myth. You are holding on to something unreal and trying to silence it. If you bring awareness to this process that is going on within you, you will be able to see *where* the mind is saying no. Then you will be able to put it to rest

The mind is a direct conflict to the being. The being always concurs with Existence.

Unless innocence happens intimacy cannot happen. Only the being knows it.

so that the yes of the being is heard. Awareness is the key to anything. Just bring in awareness. The resistance of the mind will then drop. You will then relax into the being. Innocence starts expressing from there.

Unless innocence happens intimacy cannot happen. Intimacy is the language of Existence. The mind doesn't know intimacy. Only the being knows it. With intimacy there is openness and you can say and do everything that you feel genuinely and earnestly about. There will be authenticity in your words and actions. You will radiate energy that spurs the others around you to be innocent and open. Then the real beauty of Existence can be experienced.

Spirituality – the way to innocent obeisance

There is a famous saying, 'If you worry, then you didn't pray. If you prayed, then don't worry.'

Spirituality is a straight path to surrender worry and be free. It is a tremendous relief for the modern day man. It is a proven science. In today's world of science and knowledge, the call of the being needs to

be addressed compassionately and immediately. Spirituality is the way. Spirituality restores the cosmos with its sanctity and mysticism. It reminds man that he is not the greatest creature on the planet. It reminds him of the powerful Existential energy that pervades the universe. It creates not-knowing and innocent surrender in the mind.

Spirituality is not a ritual. It is the science of merging with Existence. From time immemorial, the first thing that all world religions did was to create a space for the Divine to become a part of life. A temple is a space to reconnect with the cosmic energy and be restful in it. That is the core purpose of all world religions. When the connection deepens, it becomes a blissful space within oneself. Religion is a clear stepping stone to spirituality.

From time immemorial, from the time humans lived together in tribes or groups, they have allotted different areas in their living place for different purposes. Almost in all cultures these groups created special places that they used only for worship. Researchers have discovered that even animals do the same thing. They keep aside a space where they do nothing but rest. They do not use this space for any other activity. Of course, they don't know anything called worship or prayer. That is the reason they use it only for rest. If they knew they would have used it for worship.

That space was to reconnect and relax in the lap of Existence. What man might miss because of the pace of his life, animals do naturally and meticulously! If you look into the eyes of animals, you can see deep innocence because they live in deep surrender to Existence.

When man pursues science alone, he becomes too knowing because his inventions and discoveries seem to be his own findings. Everything seems to fall under the purview of his intellect. Spirituality on the other hand keeps the mystery of the cosmos alive. It creates humble obeisance towards a life force that is mightier than the intellect. That is why spirituality can restore innocence. There is an immediate need to pay obeisance to the cosmic force and calm the intellect. With obeisance comes fresh intelligence that sees the cosmic consciousness as the central core of activity. Then, man will no more be afraid of the unfathomable cosmos. He will simply fall in tune with it with deep devotion, love and in ecstasy.

The greatest saints of India who had the power of willing the cosmos to lovingly respond achieved this power through spirituality.

There was a man by name Muruganar who was an ardent devotee of Shiva.

Everyday before break of dawn he would bathe in the cool waters of the river, gather flowers from trees, fields, the river and creepers and make garlands for the Shiva deity in the temple.

He would walk to the temple every day taking care while walking not to disturb the flowers in their setting in the garland! After offering them to the deity he would chant sacred verses for long hours.

It is said that he attained enlightenment through just this innocent worship.

Today he is worshipped as one of the 63 saints called Nayanmars who attained enlightenment through innocent devotion to god.*

Those who shun spirituality are those who have not tasted its transforming sweetness. They are the ones who think spirituality is seriousness. No! God is always an embodiment of bliss, then how can spirituality be seriousness? Man has made it serious by reducing it to mundane rituals.

Our masters have even specified the times in which to connect to the deeper realms of our being through prayer. They have said it is good to pray in the early morning. What is the reason for this? The intellect has

Nayanmars - Tamil devotee saints of enlightened master Shiva, 63 in number, whose life stories are told in the book Periya Puranam.

Innocence itself is the greatest prayer to god.

rested well in the night and has not as yet started functioning in the morning. When spirituality is practiced at that time, the impact on the mind is greater. The impact is made while the mind is still fresh and innocent, while the mind has not yet started chewing on the intellect. Not for nothing have the great masters gifted spirituality to us. When the intent is understood, spirituality becomes a straight route to restoring innocence and trust.

A small story:

One evening, a farmer on his way back from the market found himself without his prayer book. The wheel of his cart came off right in the middle of the woods and he felt sad that the day should pass without having said his prayers.

So he made up a prayer for god. He spoke aloud, 'Oh god, I have done something very foolish. I have left behind my prayer books today. And my memory is so poor that I can't recite a single prayer without the book. So this is what I am going to do. I will recite the letters of the alphabet five times very slowly and you, who knows all the prayers, please put the letters together to form the prayers I can't remember.'

And god said to his angels that day, 'Of all the prayers I have heard today, this one was undoubtedly the best because it came from a heart that was simple and sincere.'

Spirituality is an opening to express innocence in its purest form. Innocence itself is an offering to god. Innocence itself is the greatest prayer to god.

Religion is by itself not any belief as it is made out to be. Every religion is the result of the deep spiritual experience of the great master who founded it. What they experienced, they gave as a religion to humanity, through which humanity can get the same experience. There was no other intent. If this is understood, any person can practice any religion. That is the beauty of all original religions.

The same is true when you are around a master. Be in a mood of innocent surrender. When you are innocent and prayerful, the master's silence penetrates your being. The religion of silence is the greatest religion. It is the religion of the great masters and disciples. That is true spirituality also.

Spirituality when practiced out of innocence keeps you childlike. If you see the Tanjore* art paintings depicting themes from the Hindu epics, you will see that the

Tanjore art paintings - Devotional paintings from South India that use semi-precious stones and gold as adornment.

faces of the men, women, sages and gods in the painting are always young and innocent. The reason is that true spirituality keeps the essence of life young because it deals with the 'feeling', not with the 'knowing'. When you are with the head you age quickly. When you are with the heart you remain fresh and young all the time.

With spirituality comes deep devotion to the Whole. It is devotion from the being. Devotion is an outpouring that removes all your defenses and makes you vulnerable for Existence to enter you. There are enchanting stories of the great devotees of Hindu mythology who made miracles happen through sheer devotion.

Such is the depth of innocent worship. The innocent worshipper continues to be prayerful even after the worship is over. The prayer is an expression of the humble innocence and gratitude towards the Whole, so it knows no reason. It just continues.

Drop cunning-ness and become spontaneous

When I told the story of Satyakama to a group of people, one person asked me,

Spirituality when practiced out of innocence keeps you childlike.

'Maybe these techniques are for highly evolved souls.

In that story, the disciple gets enligh-tened when the master just blesses him. He must have been a highly evolved soul for that to happen.

I told that person, 'No, it is not for highly evolved souls. It is for highly innocent souls!' Understand this. Highly evolved people don't need techniques. It is like how I was telling you the other day. In sage Patanjali's teaching of Ashtanga yoga*, the eight techniques described are to be practiced all at once. It is not that if you finish the first technique you are one step higher and ready for the second one. No! Even the first technique is so strong that if you are able to master it and move to the second, you don't even need the second because you are already done! The first step is *yama*, which is about codes of behavior. If you are able to master this alone, then you don't need the remaining steps. You don't need any further yoga or breath control! So understand this. All eight techniques are individually fulfilling techniques for the sincere seeker. They are not sequential steps.

Ashtanga yoga - Eight limbs or paths of Patanjali's Yoga: *yama* (discipline), *niyama* (rules), *asana* (body postures), *pranayama* (breath control), *pratyahara* (withdrawal of senses), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (bliss).

Similarly, techniques such as those given to Satyakama are given to innocent people who are tired of being cunning. Understand these words, 'tired of being cunning'.

What is cunningness? It is the opposite of intelligence. You can be either cunning or intelligent, never both at the same time. Cunningness is also the opposite of vulnerability. When you are cunning, you cannot be vulnerable. When you are vulnerable, you are pure like a child. A child can be intelligent and innocent at the same time. Over time, his intelligence grows but the innocence invariably takes a turn to become cunningness. Then he is no more pure like a child. Societal conditioning causes the innocence in the intelligence to take the turn into cunningness. Children if left to themselves remain innocent. But we teach them so many things that they become social animals. We hold a great responsibility in bringing up children without making them cunning.

The poet Khalil Gibran* says beautifully about children:

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

*For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.*

*You may strive to be like them, but seek not to
make them like you.*

*For life goes not backward nor tarries with
yesterday.*

*You are the bows from which your children as
living arrows are sent forth.*

*The archer sees the mark upon the path of the
infinite,*

*and He bends you with His might that His
arrows may go swift and far.*

*Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for
gladness;*

*For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.*

The problem is that we know only to divide and look. We never know to look as a whole. If you watch a baby, it will look at each of its toys as a whole. It will just try to push it in as a whole into its mouth! Sometimes it will push the larger part of the toy first into the mouth where it won't even fit. It doesn't know what toy it is or what its parts are or whether it is appropriate to put it into its mouth. Its eyes know only to see as whole, never divided. The moment you teach the child to divide and look, you sow cunningness in him.

Khalil Gibran - Lebanese American poet best known for his 'The Prophet'.

Cunningness is division. It is a constant calculation. It hinders free and innocent expression. It knows to express only through calculation. Calculation is alright for arithmetic, not for the being. We calculate for the wrong reasons. Do we ever calculate our blessings? No, never! They are just taken for granted.

Cunningness starts with division of the whole. Innocence is lost when the mind is taught to divide. Once it picks up the thread, the mind continues and moves far away from its original innocence.

Two babies were in a pram next to each other in a mall.

One of them turn-ed to the other and asked, 'Are you a girl or a boy?'

'I don't know,' the baby replied.

The first one said, 'I can tell.' And he dived beneath the clothes and came out and said, 'You are a girl and I am a boy.'

The baby girl was surprised and asked, 'How did you know?'

Pat came the reply, 'That's easy. You are wearing pink booties and I am wearing blue ones!'

From a very early stage, the child is taught division by people who are themselves struggling with cunningness. The child unconsciously trades his innocence for cunningness.

Cunningness is division. It is a constant calculation.

The danger with cunningness is that it grows roots in many directions and solidifies as the very nature of the individual. The person will not even know he is cunning. He won't even know that his struggle with himself is because of his cunningness.

One person came to me and started telling me, 'Swamiji, I have extramarital relationships.' I asked, 'Do you feel it is wrong?' He said, 'Yes, I know it is wrong, and I am very clear that I am doing something wrong.' I told him, 'Then stop it.' He said, 'No, only you can stop it.' I told him, 'Hey, I am not the one having the relationship to stop it! You are the one having it, so it is you who is supposed to decide and stop!' He stood silent. I asked him, 'What do you mean by I should stop? Do you mean that I should take your car keys and not allow you to go there? What do you mean by I should stop?'

This is cunningness. He told me, 'No, I have surrendered myself to you, so you should take care of it.' I told him it was a good story! Then I told him, 'You told just now you have surrendered everything to me. Alright then, just sit here and meditate.' He asked, 'What are you saying Swamiji?' I told him, 'You were the one who said just now that you have surrendered

**Cunningness is a
pure hide and
seek game you
play with yourself.**

everything to me! Then just do whatever I say. Don't move from here, just sit.' That he was not ready to do!

A small story:

The rivers one day gathered together and made a complaint against the sea. They asked the sea, 'Why is that when we enter your waters fresh and fit to drink, you make us salty and undrinkable?'

The sea hearing itself being blamed replied, 'Don't come. Then you won't turn salty.'

If you are not ready for the simple solution, then be assured that you are playing a cunning game! Unless you are tired of being cunning, you can't be helped. No technique can help you because your cunningness knows how to escape from every single technique. People come and tell me, 'Whatever you are saying is correct, but...' Understand this. The moment you say 'but' to me, you have missed! The moment you say 'but', it is over. You are trying to escape with your cunningness.

Some people tell me, 'Whatever you say is right, but please make me do whatever you say.' What do you mean? Should I have two or three people continuously watch you and make you do things? Drop your cunning

game, then automatically you will start doing what I say. Cunningness is a pure hide and seek game that you play with yourself. You can't play it with me. I straightaway know where all you are hiding. I don't need to come to you to find you. So understand that you are just playing with yourself. Just take a strong decision to be completely sincere and authentic to yourself. Only then you can drop your cunningness.

When cunningness dissolves, authenticity and sincerity happen and you will enlighten quickly. Also, with authenticity you will not indulge in any kind of gossip. Gossip is a pure expression of cunningness. When you are so cunning that you can't tell a person anything on his face, you talk behind his back.

When I tell people that they need to become tired of cunningness to come out of it, they ask me, 'How come I know and yet I don't know? How come I can't stop being cunning?' You can't stop because you are secretly nurturing it. It is your creation. You never miss a chance to nurture it. That is why you pretend that you want to stop and you urge me to stop it for you. You can wake up a sleeping person but you can't wake up a person who is pretending to sleep. Until you are only pretending to sleep, you will never find the burning need to wake up. Straightaway stop cooperating with it, that's all. That is the only way and

it is so straightforward. When you know fire burns, will you beg me to stop you from touching it? No! Then when you know you are cunning, why can't you just drop it?

When you drop cunningness, spontaneity flowers. Spontaneity is the opposite of calculation. Intelligence plus innocence is spontaneity. Intelligence plus cunningness is calculation. Spontaneity is nothing but a flowing expression of your innocence. It is a non-calculating state of mind. It is called *sahaja**, being yourself without any burden. The burden is the burden of constant calculation.

Understand this, with cunningness, you may think you are gaining a lot of things, but the truth is that you are losing your innocence. Losing your innocence is like losing your entire life. You can afford to lose anything but not your innocence.

With cunningness you miss your state of *sahaja**, the spontaneity that is your own. In being cunning you are constantly trying to be someone else. When you pretend to be someone else you are not only cheating yourself but you are also in danger of missing your own fragrance. Like all other creations of Existence you have your own beautiful fragrance. It is the fragrance of *sahaja**, your natural spontaneous state that is unique to you.

When you are spontaneous, you are without any conclusions. There is no need to function out of conclusion all the time. Intelligence is fluid and creative. It is of the present moment. Conclusion is a foregone thing. It is of the past. With conclusion the juice of spontaneity is lost. Society has taught us to be with conclusions all the time. There are some standard conclusions, which we quickly try to fit with anything that we see. We are afraid to drop our conclusions and be open because the mind is always comfortable in repeating patterns. It finds security in it.

Existence never repeats patterns. Every day is different. Every night is different. Can anyone say it is the same day or same night? No. It is an event that happens everyday and yet it is never the same. That is the sheer beauty of Existence. Then why should we look for patterns? There is no need. The very joy of spontaneous living can be very well experienced. Children are open and spontaneous till the age of seven. Then society starts creating an impression on them.

A woman stopped and asked the little boy who was smoking on the street, 'Son, does your mother know that you smoke on the road?'

The boy looked at her and asked, 'Does your husband know that you stop

Sahaja - Spontaneous divine joy.

The innocent energy of a child is completely behind his action. In an adult, his mind is behind the action.

and talk to strange young men on the road?'

Children are like this! They don't bother.

They are just spontaneous.

A teacher asked in the class, 'What is a comet?'

One boy stood up and said, 'A star with a tail.'

The teacher asked, 'Can you name one?'

The boy replied, 'Mickey mouse.'

Children are not afraid. They just express, that's all! No one can predict what the child is going to say the next moment. That is his specialty! The problem is that we are ready to handle spontaneity with children, but we are not ready to handle it with grownups. With a child, we mentally give him the space because we *accept* he is from a different plane. But with adults we perceive them as being in the same plane as us and so we cannot tolerate it.

Children get away with so many things like even hitting you. You actually enjoy it! Can you imagine feeling like this if an adult hits you? The innocence of the child makes

even the act of hitting beautiful. The innocent energy of a child is completely behind his action. In an adult, his mind is behind the action. That is the difference.

A teacher was speaking at a meeting when a critic shouted, 'Listen to him! And his father used to drive a wagon pulled by a donkey.'

The teacher replied, 'That's right. Today, my father and the wagon are no more, but I can see we still have the donkey with us.'

You can imagine the state of the critic!

Innocence, totality, maturity

The Dhammapada* says:

Light the lamp within; strive hard to attain wisdom. Become pure and innocent, and live in the world of light.

When you came into the world, you came as an innocent infant. You radiated the beauty of your innocence until society gave you the mind. Now, you want to get rid of your mind and become innocent again. The regained innocence is what is called maturity. It is possible to regain it. Just believe that you were innocent once upon

Dhammapada - Teachings of Buddha in scriptural form.

a time. Trust that the innocence is still within you. Then it is possible to start radiating it again. This understanding will start the process again.

Maturity causes us to live in totality. Totality is functioning out of immense innocence and giving your whole to the moment. There is no opinion, no judgment, no fragments within you. There is only intense enthusiasm for the moment. The openness to the moment is the innocence. Just one thing is needed to become innocent once again. Don't hide behind false knowledge. See where all you are hiding and step out to reveal your natural self. Then you are completely open. This is the attitude for enlightenment. Knowing that you are hiding is the first step. Taking a strong decision to come out of it is the next step. Then you will see that innocence and maturity start happening.

To become mature you need to go *in* first, because maturity is all about falling at ease with your true nature with no pretensions. Making your natural self to be your very nature is maturity. The best way to become your natural self is to keep your core at ease. Let the core of you be at ease all the time, irrespective of where you might be or what you may be doing. Then you can retain your purity. Always feel your natural self at your core with no strain, with no effort or pretensions.

Making your natural self to be your very nature is maturity.

The problem of falsity comes because society teaches you to be someone special all the time. There is no need to be someone special all the time. It is an immature idea to be someone special all the time. Once this idea is renounced, the mind relaxes. It feels no pressure to be shrewd. This relaxation gives birth to innocence.

Right now, you are struggling for innocence because you are unable to pacify your mind. If you cooperate with the understanding that your mind is hindering your regaining of innocence, the struggle is over. On the other hand, if you resist the understanding, then you struggle. The struggle is with your ego. The ego resists any understanding that shakes it.

When you drop the mind, you fall into the moment. To harbour the mind you need to travel either in the past or in the future. A child is always in the present. He doesn't care to retain any past in his memory. It is of no use to him. He is interested in enjoying the moment. There is no need to hold on to the past. When we remember anything, we don't remember days, we remember only moments, is it not? Then why not make each moment worthy of remembrance? Why go behind the past or future? Just pure logic!

Maturity is is to integrate yourself with honesty.

To feel the urge to regain your innocence you may have to go astray, because when you go astray and face the consequences, introspection starts. The introspection triggers the need to regain innocence. Don't condemn yourself for going astray. Just bring in the awareness to integrate yourself into the right path forever. If maturity is going to happen this way it is definitely worth it.

Maturity is taking a strong decision not to delude yourself anymore. It is to awaken to the consciousness within. It is to integrate yourself with honesty. When this happens, you start to become a child again. As a child, you were innocent but not with awareness. Somewhere in the process of growing up you lost the innocence. You are regaining it now. The new innocence will be with full awareness and that is the real innocence.

When you regain the innocence, you flower with the understanding that there is nothing more priceless than becoming childlike again. That is the process of enlightenment.

That is why a child's innocence is to be nurtured with utmost care. For every innocent observation that a child makes, if we can be without imposing our knowledge on it, the child will grow up preserving its innocence. For example, if

the child asks, 'Why is it that the sky is blue sometimes and white sometimes?' just tell the child that the sky is blue sometimes and white sometimes. He will anyway learn that in his lessons in school. But if you can tell him they are just the way they are, he will straightaway understand the spontaneity of nature. He will not be looking for further knowledge to feed himself with. The universities take care of that anyway.

At home, when you are still the most influential person in his life, if you make him understand that that is the way things are, that there is no need to know it all with knowledge, the innocence in him survives. He doesn't catch the thread of passing judgment on nature. He learns to see without bringing words in. He learns to just see and be. The moment words are brought in, the innocence is lost. Then it is no more seeing. It becomes looking. The whole beauty of it is then lost.

Growing up is always considered to be a serious thing. If you grow up in seriousness you only grow old. If you grow up in playfulness, you remain young! It is a good thing to see what children, animals and other creatures are doing at times because they all live with innocence and playfulness. It will help understand and reconnect with innocence.

A small story:

A lion was walking through the jungle taking a poll to determine who was the greatest among all the wild animals.

He came across a rhinoceros and asked, 'Who is the king of the jungle?'

The rhinoceros replied, 'Of course you are!'

The lion was happy and walked on. Next, he came across a zebra.

He asked the zebra, 'Tell me, who is the king of the jungle?'

The zebra immediately replied, 'You are, oh king!'

The lion walked on with great pride and saw an elephant.

He asked the elephant, 'Tell me, who is the king of the jungle?'

The elephant picked him up with his trunk, and swung him against a large tree. The lion bounced off the tree, hit the ground and said, 'You don't have to get so mad just because you don't know the right answer!'

Innocence is the way to approach life! The moment you realize that you need to regain your innocence, you are ready for the transformation. The scale of measure of regaining innocence is to watch your reaction to the little things in life. Innocence sees all little things with awe

and wonder. That is why children are so wonder filled all the time. You can see it in their wide eyes. If you are able to see things in wonder, then innocence has started happening in you. It is possible that with all the knowledge of the world you can still have clear and innocent eyes. Those are the eyes of the sage.

Childlike innocence discovers many things but cannot understand most of it. It enjoys it at the level of its innocence, that's all. Whereas innocence regained not only discovers these new things, but also understands all of them. That is the difference.

Childlike innocence is beautiful but not enough. It has to be lost to life and regained with complete awareness and maturity.

It is said that a mad man and a mystic look alike. Both of them will be eccentric in their ways, laughing abruptly and doing things incomprehensible. But they are actually at the extreme two ends of the same spectrum! Extremes always look alike. Outwardly they appear to be the same, that's all. Similarly, a child and a saint may look alike in their innocence, but they are actually at the two extreme ends of the same spectrum. The child has not even started its achievement of regained innocence, while the saint has finished it.

The innocence of the child is still the god given innocence he came with, not the

Decide not to rest

until the de-
conditioning is
total. innocence
that he
regained
through life.

The innocence of a child can be easily disturbed, whereas the innocence of a sage can never be disturbed. Getting the innocence disturbed and working to regain it permanently is the process of maturity. That is the travel through to the other end of the spectrum in becoming a saint.

If a child is brought up in love, the innocence of the child is preserved. Then he moves around with his heart, not with his head. He may use his head as a utility but functions from his heart. It does not mean that the child will become useless. No. His innocence will not be corrupted by knowledge, that's all. He will be centered on love instead of on knowledge, that's all. Knowledge itself is not the problem. Only the attitude with which it is carried is the problem.

With innocence regained, you will once again be able to look into the eyes of the other. Your innocence not only makes you vulnerable, it also makes you integrated. With knowledge, you are fragmented within you. With regained innocence, you are integrated and honest to yourself and to others. That honesty will radiate from

your eyes and touch the other. That honesty is maturity.

Just the longing to become innocent again is enough. It will start destroying all that is not *you* inside you. After all, it is just layers of conditioning. But it is important to hold your will strong until the process is complete. The will is a constant reminder to be sincere and honest without cunningness. Decide not to rest until the de-conditioning is total.

The beauty of maturity is that it allows you to function as a mature person when required and as a child at all other times. It easily allows you to flow from one to the other so that you are in perfect harmony with the Whole.

When you regain your innocence, you are called *dvija**, reborn, mature. The key is not to give up in your effort in regaining your innocence. The journey may be frustrating at times, because it is taking time and not happening. It is so because society has conditioned you with many layers. The onion has to be peeled layer after layer to reach the center. Frustration is a precondition to burst open with transformation. So don't relax, that is enough. It will happen. Remember, innocence is already in you. It is not about any end objective outside. Just this

Dvija - Twice born. Refers to the state of awakening of Consciousness.

remembrance will give you the relaxation after every frustration.

Everyday just sit for a few moments, sit by yourself and calmly go into your innocence. Feel the innocence in you. Feel the purity in you. Feel the overflowing from within you. Let it spread through your body, mind and being. Feel how beautiful you are in your innocence. Do this everyday. Soon you will see that you will awaken to it as your very nature. All that is not you will be burnt and the real *you* will emerge.

Innocence has a totality about it. This totality is called grace. That is why enlightened masters appear to be so graceful and beautiful all the time. Innocence manifests itself as wondrous beauty to the eyes of the beholder. It is so total that even the most cunning mind cannot deny it. It simply defies all logic and touches you.

Being innocent is like functioning from your very consciousness. It is thoughtless awareness. Until then you function from your mind. If you just sit and watch the source of every thought that rises in you, you will soon drop all thoughts and go back to the thoughtless awareness that you had as a child. Thoughtless awareness is innocence. But this time it will be the innocence of maturity because you have gone through the process. Thoughtless awareness doesn't add to your knowledge. It simply deepens your innocence and

makes you see the universe with more awe and wonder. Innocence sees no opposites, it just sees, that's all. Its beauty is in its non-judgmental seeing.

A man went to see his girlfriend after a long time.

Unfortunately, he found that her younger brother who was much younger to her was sitting there watching television and eating some snack.

He sat beside him and told him, 'You know what? If you sit upstairs in the terrace and watch the road, for every man wearing a red hat that passes by you, I will give you fifty cents.'

The boy was thrilled and raced up the stairs and assumed his position in the terrace.

The man took his position beside his girlfriend.

Ten minutes later, just as he was getting intimate with her, the boy rushed into the room.

The man was terribly disappointed and shouted, 'Didn't I tell you to watch the road for men with red hats?'

The boy replied gasping for breath, 'I know! A parade just went by and at fifty cents a head, you owe me twelve hundred dollars!'

We always think children are immature. We think that the grownups who cry are immature. We are conditioned to believe that expression of any emotion is immature. Expressing the emotions in an unfiltered way is a sign of innocence. The cunning ones edit even their emotions. Once in a while it is good to cry in front of people. What is wrong with it? What are you trying to hide? By crying you are only expressing your true feelings. What is there to hide? The problem is that society has always taught us to hide our true nature and show only our projected personality. That is why with time we forget what our nature is. We forget how to be innocent.

One teacher told the parent during the parent teacher meeting, 'Your daughter is very good in all her activities. She is just a little emotionally immature. But she will be alright.'

The parent looked at her in a puzzled way and asked, 'At three, how else do you expect her to be?'

Just by being with children as their friend, as their playmate, it is possible to get back in touch with the innocence. When you are with them don't pretend to be like a child. Take it really seriously and *become* a child! It is the greatest favor you can do to yourself.

The problem is that we are afraid of losing what society taught us. From society we

learnt how to build our personality. But our character is different from our personality. Character is real. Personality is a built up image. If we work towards solidifying character, we are working in the zone of reality. If we work towards solidifying personality, we are working in the zone of dreams.

You may have noticed that when you are sitting at the table and eating with your children, they will hold up the little potato chips and admire the shape of each chip before eating. They have the ability to be enchanted by life's eternal mysteries and wonders. That is their greatest blessing. They don't *think*, they just enjoy, that's all. When the child draws our attention to the chip, we ask him to eat fast! We miss the moment of getting led into life's mysteries. We miss stumbling upon our own innocence.

There are umpteen ways to rediscover the child hiding in you. Just play hide and seek with children or learn how to make cookies or watch Tom and Jerry cartoons or eat different color cotton candies or make mud dolls! All these will bring out the child in you. Your solid identity will dissolve. You will become fluid like a river and flow. The weight of your seriousness will drop and you will become light and blissful.

Seriousness is ego. When you are afraid of getting hurt, when you are afraid of losing your control or power, you become serious.

When you are too centered on yourself this happens. When you let go and play and touch your innocence again, you will suddenly enjoy a break from yourself. That break is the falling of your seriousness. In that gap you will realize there is nothing to hold on to. There is only free spirit.

When you become aware of this you can work on it consciously and move towards becoming completely innocent and sincere.

Innocence is keeping the consciousness at the level of the heart, not allowing it to settle in the head.

We now move to a slightly more complex subject. It is about the relationship that we have with the world around us. Why do we see what we see? How do we see what we see? How do we fit into the scheme of Existence?

Matter, energy and beyond

What is this world made up of? Our five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch are our gateways to perceiving this world. They tell us that this world is made up of matter or objects in various forms, shapes, colors and qualities.

We see ourselves living in a three dimensional world fundamentally made up of the five basic elements - earth, water, fire, air and space. We see all the objects in this world undergoing change with time. They all undergo creation, sustenance and dissolution with the passage of time.

Classical physics tells us that matter is governed by the laws of physics like the three laws of motion, the law of gravity, the laws of fluid dynamics and so on. All objects are considered to be made up of molecules, which are made up of atoms, which in turn are made of three types of

particles - protons, neutrons and electrons. We learned all these fundamental things in school.

But according to modern science, the world is not fundamentally made up of matter. The fundamental particles are not protons, neutrons and electrons. Modern science says matter itself is actually energy!

The scientist Albert Einstein's famous equation, $E=mc^2$ (where E is energy, m is mass of the object and c is the speed of light) proves the equivalence of matter and energy. I was reading a very recent article*, also published in the US Journal Science, on a research that proved Einstein's equation. The fundamental particles in the nucleus themselves are considered to be made of smaller particles called quarks, which are bound by gluons. The surprising thing is the mass of gluons is zero and the mass of quarks is only five percent. The study says, the missing 95 percent comes from the energy of the movements and interactions of quarks and gluons. So, energy and mass are equivalent.

This truth discovered by science a few decades ago, was declared by the Eastern *rishis* in the *Upanishads*, the essence of the *vedic* knowledge. The very first line of the Isa Vasya Upanishad*, written thousands of years ago, declares, *Isa vasyam idam sarvam* or all that exists is energy!

* <http://www.physorg.com/news146415074.html>

Isa Vasya Upanishad - One of the major and oldest *vedic* scriptures.

Quantum world

Today, we are in the age of the quantum world. We talk of quantum physics, quantum leaps and quantum thinking. What exactly is meant by the word ‘quantum’?

Quantum simply means a jump from one state to another state without going through any of the intermediate states. Today, no one has the time to go through intermediate states. We want instant results in everything. We want quantum results!

A small story:

One man found it difficult to sleep and visited his doctor. He begged the doctor to give him a really strong medication. The doctor told him, ‘Not much is required. Just take half of this pill and you will sleep very well.

The man went home and took out the pill. He took the whole pill to ensure that he slept well. In the morning, he woke up and felt thoroughly refreshed and cheerful.

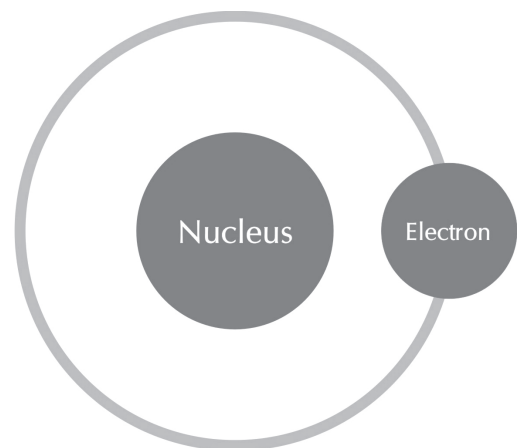
He got ready and went to the office. He went up to his boss and said, ‘I am ready to move anything today! I slept like a log and woke up feeling like a kid this morning!’

The boss replied, ‘That’s nice, but where were you yesterday?’

We want quantum results in everything!

Coming back to the topic, we learned in physics that an atom is made up of a nucleus with electrons orbiting at specific distances from the nucleus.

We learned that the electron usually remains in its orbit (its regular circular path of motion). But if it is excited by means of heat or some chemical reaction, it absorbs energy and jumps to the higher orbit. If it releases energy, it jumps to the lower orbit. The important point to note is that when the electron jumps from one orbit to another, it makes the jump without moving through the space in between. One moment it is seen in one orbit, and the next moment it is seen in the other orbit! This is called a quantum jump. A quantum jump is a change from one state to another without passing through anything in between.



Atomic representation of hydrogen atom

Matter is vibrating energy

Matter is actually energy vibrating at various frequencies and manifesting itself in various forms. We are not able to see this vibration with our eyes because the frequencies of vibration are too high. It is just as when movement is too fast, the eye cannot perceive the moving objects as independent frames. The eye sees the objects merging into each other continuously.

In the same way, the vibration of energy cannot be perceived by the eye. It appears to be solid matter! Energy in gross form is matter. Matter in subtle form is energy. The body is the gross manifestation of the subtle mind. The mind is the subtle manifestation of the gross body. An important thing to be understood here is that the perception of the world varies from person to person because the functioning of the mind varies from person to person!

Even interactions between people are only energy interactions. For example, an atom that consists of a nucleus with a cloud of electrons around it can be compared to a football field. The nucleus is like a peanut in the center of a football field and the cloud of electrons is like the empty space in the field. Another comparison I came across is, if you were to remove all the

The body is the gross manifestation of the subtle mind. space between all the atoms on planet earth, the remaining matter would come to just about the size of a sugar cube!

What we see as solid matter, as the football field in this example, is actually the electron clouds or huge empty spaces interacting with each other. In the same way, our interactions and contact with other people and objects are also only interaction of energies. There is an exchange of energy that happens. You give some of your energy and you get energy from that person or object!

The world of infinite possibilities

Now, what is the origin of matter and energy? What is the origin of the body and mind? From where does the energy in all objects arise? What then is the reality behind this perceived world? If we are not able to see reality as it exists through the senses, what is the nature of reality?

This question is asked in the Shiva Sutras, an ancient *vedic* scripture on the science of enlightenment. Shiva's consort Devi asks Him, 'What is the nature of this wonder-filled universe?' As a response, Shiva delivers 112 enlightenment techniques

**This whole
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erience!

This question about reality leads us to a world beyond matter and energy, beyond the limitations of space and time. This is the world where all the possibilities exist as seed. It is the essence and the origin of thoughts, and it is the essence and origin of events in the material world.

In this world-beyond, ordinary logic does not exist. Cause and effect relationships do not exist. The happening of one event does not *cause* another event to happen, but it is *correlated* with the other event that happens. This correlation has no dependence on space and time. So what we call the seed is the ocean of infinite possibilities from which the waves of events arise.

This whole Existence and all its events happen as causeless auspiciousness, like waves arising in an ocean. Existence is an ocean of bliss and ecstasy. Out of the causeless, overflowing ecstasy, the wave of creation rises in the ocean of Existence! That is how things happen. The Divine, playing with its infinite manifestations in innumerable universes is called sustenance.

which, when
practiced,
give the
answer as a
direct exp-

Dropping from the play and relaxing into Itself is called dissolution. Dissolution is the settling back into the Absolute or *Parabrahma** state. Then for no logical reason, the play starts again...! This continues. What we see as results are the infinite happenings in the universe.

The real nature

We see this causeless and ecstatic play of Existence through our own individual perception! Our very perception collapses the beautiful happening into a localized reality. Each individual 'boils down' the beautiful happening into his own individual reality.

Someone asked me, 'I see this table here. All the people in this room see this same table. Then how can you say that this table is not a reality?' Please understand that what you see as this table here is not the same as what the other person sees! Each person in this room sees this table differently! That is the truth. That is what I am trying to explain here.

As long as the mind tries to perceive, what is perceived is not the ultimate reality. Only an infinite being can perceive reality exactly as it is happening. Also he cannot explain it in words, because words cannot describe what is beyond space and time.

Parabrahma - Supreme Being.

He can only tell you to wait for it to become your own experience! That is why Shiva answers not with philosophy but with techniques. He directly gives techniques for Devi to experience the reality, the nature of the universe.

Let me explain this concept based on the energy-matter idea. We saw that matter is actually energy. Classical physics said that the electron is a particle. However, quantum physics says that it is a wave. Actually, the electron exhibits the properties of both a particle and a wave in different situations. Physicists have now concluded that the electron has a dual nature as a 'particle-wave'!

The act of observation collapses possibility into reality

Since the electron is a particle, what is the location of the electron? Since it is a wave, what is the momentum of the wave? The answers to these questions lead to a very startling discovery that the particle-wave can be either a particle or a wave or *even both* at the same time. But you cannot determine both the location and the momentum of the electron at the same time, because the very act of observing the location of the electron will change its momentum, and the very act of determining the momentum of the electron will change its location! This is

what is known in science as the Heisenberg Uncertainty principle.

The particle-wave is both a particle and wave at the same time until the act of observation comes into play. This act of observation can now be connected with our act of observing the causeless happenings of Existence. When we observe, we observe through our own set of conditioning, what we call engrams or preconceived and deeply engraved memories and conclusions. Each individual's act of observation is colored by his own conditioning or engrams. Based upon that, he boils down the happening to suit his own experience of reality!

In the case of the particle-wave, the very act of observation 'collapses' the wave-particle to a particle or wave. This is what the physicist Erwin Schrödinger showed in his hypothetical cat experiment.

Suppose you put a cat and a vial of poisonous acid in a chamber and seal it. There is no way the observer outside can determine whether the cat is alive or dead. Since we cannot know, the cat is both dead as well as alive. It is a distribution of probabilities which includes the probability of dead as well as alive states.

When you break open the chamber to see the condition of the cat, the very act of breaking open the chamber could potentially change the state of the cat. The

**The very act of
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particular reality.**

cat could be killed by the acid vial being broken due to breaking the chamber. So, it can never be known what the outcome would have been if it were not observed in its true happening.

This leads us to a deep understanding that both possibilities exist simultaneously, and it is the very act of observation that changes the possibility into a particular reality.

Let me give another scientific experiment that highlights how the very act of measuring distorts the beautiful reality. You may have heard of the double-slit experiment with light.

In this experiment, a beam of light is aimed at a barrier with two vertical slits. On the other side of the barrier is a photographic plate that is used to record the light as it falls on it after passing through the barrier. If only one slit is open, the pattern on the photographic plate is as expected, a single line of light aligned with the slit. If both the slits are open, we would expect two lines of light on the plate aligned with the slits, but what is observed are multiple lines of light and darkness in varying degrees. This is the principle of interference where light beams behave as waves that interfere with each other.

Now, if the light beam is slowed down enough so that instead of a stream of light particles or photons hitting the plate, each photon *individually* hits the plate, then there should be no interference and the plate should show a light pattern aligned with the slit. But the resulting pattern still showed interference!

How is this possible? There is only this one photon, what can it be interfering with... other than itself? It was concluded that each photon not only goes through both the slits, but also simultaneously takes every possible path on the way to the target!

To see how this can occur, experiments were done to track the individual photon paths. But what happened was that the measurement in some way disrupted the paths of the photons. Whenever an attempt was made to observe, only two bright lines on the photographic plate aligned with the slits! If they didn't attempt to measure, again the pattern became the multiple lines of light and darkness!

Each photon moves simultaneously in a number of paths. But an effort to measure the paths causes it to collapse to a single path! In the same way, our very effort to perceive the infinite risings of the ocean of Existence causes it to appear as what our limited mind perceives!

Once a student asked a Zen master, 'What is the path?' The master replied, 'Everyday life is the path.' The student asked, 'Can it be studied?'

The master said, 'If you try to study, you will be far from it.' The student asked, 'If I do not study, how can I know it is the path?'

The master said, 'The path does not belong to the perception world. Neither does it belong to the non-perception world. Perception is a delusion and non-perception is senseless. If you want to reach the true path beyond doubt, place yourself in the same freedom as the sky. You name it neither good nor not-good.'

Physiology of perception

Let us start with what really happens on a physical level when we perceive things.

When there is a perception of physical reality, the various parts of the brain show a change in neural activity as the neurons, which are the basic building blocks of the nervous system, fire in synchronicity. This results in the random visual patterns of light being perceived as specific shapes and

forms. This is how the input from each of our senses is perceived as an experience of particular sound, touch, smell, taste or sight.

If you now step back and look, you can see that before the observation or the perception, both the world as well as you, that is the seen and the seer, existed in a dynamic and chaotic state of activity. The act of perception changes that chaotic state into some sort of an order that becomes both the seen in the outside world *and* the process of seeing in the seer (as the activity in the nervous system) at the same time. At the moment of seeing, the probability of what is seen collapses into a specific form.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna, the lord and master, chooses to give Arjuna* the experience of Krishna's cosmic form. Until then, Arjuna* had seen Krishna only as the six foot tall, handsome friend. But upon Arjuna's request, and after Krishna sees that Arjuna is ready to receive the cosmic

Each photon moves simultaneously in a number of paths. But an effort to measure the paths causes it to collapse to a single path!

Arjuna - Warrior prince and the third of the five brothers of the Pandava family in the great Indian epic Mahabharata. He was a disciple of enlightened master Krishna and received the wisdom in the Bhagavad Gita from Krishna.

form experience, He decides to give it to him. Arjuna then sees Krishna as the manifestation of the entire cosmos in all its seeming chaos.

He cries out, ‘O Lord! I can see all the gods and deities in Your body. I can see all the sages and divine serpents. O Lord of the Universe, I see many arms, stomachs, faces, eyes and your limitless form. O Universal Form, I cannot see your beginning, middle or end.’

Arjuna is unable to bear the experience because he loses his intellectual control over things! He begs for equilibrium, meaning he wants his mind to be under his intellectual control again. He wants to know the cause and effect of things and feel that they are in his control, because the experience rips him away from his perception of the cause-and-effect logic itself.

As long as cause and effect logic is under your control, you feel you are perceiving reality! Your ego is strong and steady. But the moment the logic is shaken, you feel tremendous fear. You feel you are just a drop in an ocean. What Arjuna sees is the absolute Reality, but he is afraid of that very Reality because it doesn’t conform to his logic. He begs to revert to the earlier state of perception through his five senses alone, through his own solid identity, his own solid ego.

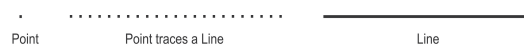
Perception of space-time

Let us analyze what space is.

The 1D, 2D and 3D Worlds

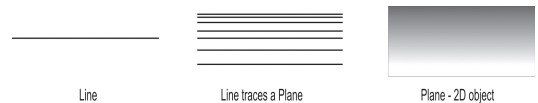
Take a basic element, a point, a one-dimensional object. When a point traces across a direction, it generates a line.

Now, let us trace the motion of a line, a two-dimensional object. If it moves in the

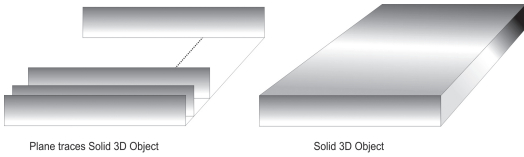


same direction as it is in, of course it will just continue to be a line. If it moves in a direction not contained in it, it traces a surface or a plane.

Similarly, if a surface or a plane moves in a direction not contained in it, it will trace a solid, a three-dimensional object.

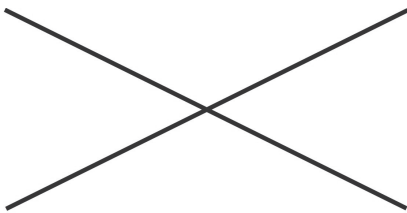


So, a line is an infinite number of points. A surface is an infinite number of lines. A solid is infinite number of surfaces. Similarly, we can imagine a four dimensional space as an infinite number of three dimensional spaces.

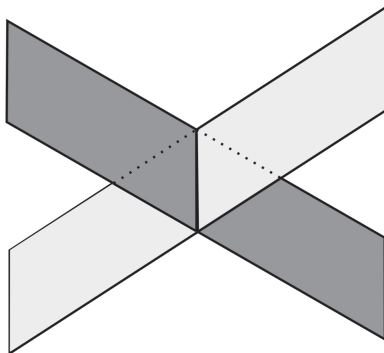


Now, just as we built up these higher dimensions from the lower dimensions, we can also see the lower dimensions as parts or sections of a higher dimension space.

For example, a point is the intersection of two lines. So, a point is a section of a line.



Point - Intersection of two lines

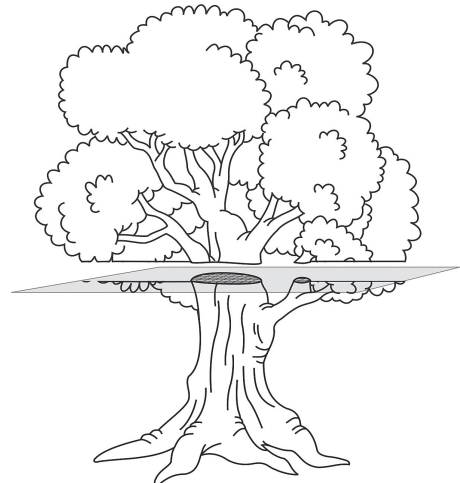


Line - Intersection of two planes

A line is a section of a surface. A surface is a section of a solid.

Extending this, we can say a solid is a section of a four-dimensional body. Our three dimensional space is a section of a four dimensional space. P.D.Ouspensky*, in his book *Tertium Organum*, explains these very beautifully. He extends this to say that many separate three dimensional bodies, like humans for instance, may actually be the sections or parts of one four dimensional body!

He explains this with a simple example. Suppose a horizontal plane intersects the top of a tree, parallel to the surface of the earth. Now, on this plane, the sections of branches seem to be all separate, not



A 3D tree when seen in a 2D plane appears like separate circles

P.D.Ouspensky - Russian philosopher, mathematician and student of enlightened master George Gurdjieff.

connected to each other. But, from the three dimensional space, we can see that these are all sections of branches of one single tree.

The four dimensional world of space-time

In our four-dimensional world, the maximum dimensions in space can be only three. We can call this fourth dimension time. So, the four dimensional world can be looked at as a space-time continuum. It can be said that time is the fourth dimension of space.

We understand time in three forms – past, present and future. We think that the past is over and does not exist anymore. The future has not yet happened, hence it does not exist. The present thus happens at the transition of the non-existent future to another non-existence, the past.

In the three dimensional world, we see that the seemingly separate sections of the tree in the two dimensional world are actually joined in the third dimension. In the same way, if we imagine a consciousness that can rise above our plane of living, this consciousness can also see the continuity in the fourth dimension of time with the past, present and future all existing simultaneously. This consciousness sees the simultaneous happening of events,

which the ordinary consciousness sees as distinct events separated by periods of time.

A three dimensional body, moving in time, traces a four dimensional body. Across time, we can see the motion as we grow from a child to youth, to adult, to elderly person. But we are not able to see or feel this ‘four-dimensional body’ because of our limited perception. Being in the same three-dimensional world, we see only the section of the four dimensional body that is the normal three-dimensional body. It is like one of a series of pictures on a cinema roll.

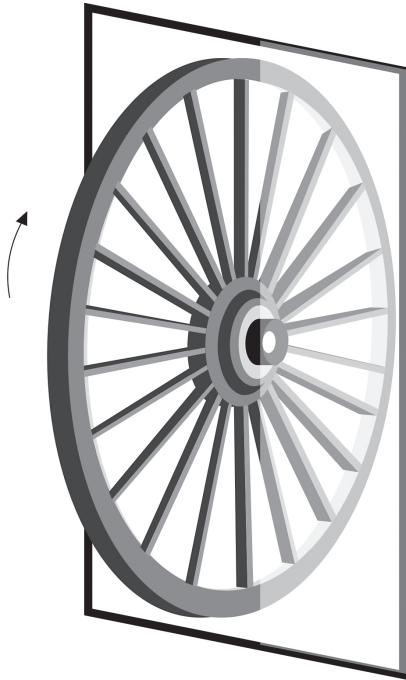
To understand how a four-dimensional world is perceived in three-dimensional form, let us first see how a three-dimensional happening is seen in a two-dimensional world.

Suppose you are in a two-dimensional world, the world of planes and surfaces. Your life, your perception is restricted to a plane, like a vertical wall. Now, imagine a wheel with each of its spokes painted in a different color is rotating perpendicular to the plane in which you live.

How will you perceive the motion of this wheel? When a spoke of the wheel intersects the plane, you will see a line of a certain color at the intersection of the wheel and the plane. Then, after one spoke passes, there will be a gap when you will

not see anything. Then, the next spoke of a different color will pass through the plane. So, you will perceive the motion of the wheel as lines of different colors happening at regular intervals of *time*.

What is happening is this, the limited perception in a lower dimensional world is changing the perception of space to a phenomenon in *time*! Since you can see only two of the three dimensions of space, you see the third dimension only when it becomes manifest on your plane over time. Hence, you see it as unrelated to your two dimensions of space, and you call it a



A rotating 3D wheel when seen in a 2D plane appears as lines appearing at regular intervals

phenomenon in time.

Now, imagine when a green spoke passes through the plane, simultaneously

another independent phenomenon occurs, say the barking of a dog. In the two dimensional world, it will be seen as a correlation between the appearance of the green line and the sound of a dog barking, when in reality it is not!

It is not possible for the two-dimensional being to believe that there can be a rise of events outside his plane of perception. That means, to understand the three-dimensional world, he cannot be in the two-dimensional consciousness, he has to rise to the three-dimensional consciousness. Similarly, to understand the four-dimensional world, we have to be in the fourth-dimensional consciousness.

Is this possible? Is it possible for us to go beyond the perception of the senses which give us only a three dimensional view? Can we actually see reality instead of mere glimpses of reality as phenomena in time? The answer is YES.

Through in-depth research and development, the Eastern mystics and sages have discovered that it is possible to understand

The limited perception in a lower dimensional world is changing the perception of space to a phenomenon in time!

**From whatever
quality of
consciousness we
see, that appears
as our reality.**

Reality as it exists and to experience it also. This can happen as a natural way of life, not just as a chance happening. This experience has happened in them.

Through meditation, it is possible for us to experience this same state of awareness.

A beautiful Zen story:

Once, two soldiers were looking at a flag flying in the wind. One of them said, 'The flag is moving.' The second one said, 'No, it is the wind that is moving.'

A Zen master passing by saw the argument going on. The soldiers requested the master to help them resolve this serious issue.

One of the soldiers asked, 'Master, I say the flag is moving. But he says the wind is moving. Which is correct?'

The master says, 'Neither is correct. Only consciousness is moving.'

As of now, what we feel as reality everyday of our life is also a 'virtual' reality. It is only a perception of things being separate in space and time. If you look deeply, you can see how our very perception of the world itself is questionable. From whatever quality of consciousness we see,

that appears as our reality, not the absolute Reality.

Reality consists of eleven dimensions

We think we live in a world of the three dimensions of space and the fourth dimension of time. However, there are actually eleven dimensions. The fundamental dimensions are length, breadth, depth, time and consciousness. The higher dimensions are combinations of these fundamental dimensions.

For example, a stick has length, breadth and depth. It is in time and space. Now, if we keep length and breadth and just remove the depth, the stick will be seen, but the hand will pass through the stick. You can also keep the depth and remove the length and breadth. Then nothing will be seen, but the hand will hit something if you try to pass it through.

In this way, there are various combinations leading to the eleven dimensions that make up the universe. When you are in a plane above the four dimensional space-time you can currently perceive, you can see these eleven dimensions, you can see Reality as enlightened beings can.

Chaos is order - order is chaos

Whether it is the energy in the atom or the energy in the cosmos, there is a big chaos in the energy play. Within that chaos, there is an order that you cannot even imagine.

When chaos moves in an order, it creates what is called consciousness or intelligence.

Chaos is energy

Anything in chaos is wild and energetic. Anything that has order is dull. In our life, we can see: anything in chaos, anything wild, radiates energy. We can see that when kids are allowed to be free, they are so wild. They radiate so much energy. In our own lives, if we are allowed to break some rule, we feel so much joy. We radiate so much energy. Chaos is directly related to energy. The freedom of chaos, and not being bound by rules, is the reason why we feel so energetic while dancing freely, without any decided steps.

The moment we know we are bound, we will be dull. The dullness will automatically enter into us, even if it does not affect us directly physically. For example, if you are sitting in the hall and you know that the hall is open, and you know you can leave

**‘Chaos in order’
is ‘cosmic
intelligence’.**

at any time,
you will be
alive, fresh and

joyful. Suddenly, if you get the information that the hall is locked and you cannot leave, will you be able to sit comfortably? No!

Any rule curbs freedom, reduces the energy. Any regulation brings your energy down. Even in your house, if somebody says, ‘Do not sit in that place’, you will feel like sitting only in that place. But until that rule is made, you will never even bother to sit there!

Even habits like smoking are maintained for the subtle mental satisfaction that you are wild, that you are not bound. If you scan yourself consciously, you will understand that almost all of your happiness comes only when you break some rules, when you are chaotic!

Chaos is order

The whole of Existence is chaos. In the universe, so many planets are moving. There are no traffic signs or cops or sign-boards! Yet, the planets are moving so beautifully in order. In the same way, in quantum physics, the smallest elements are not even particles. They are both particles and waves, and a multitude of probabilities! But there is an order in that chaos.

If the universe is chaos without any order, it will head toward destruction. ‘Chaos in order’ is what I call ‘cosmic intelligence’.

Take the planet earth on which we are living. Even if a single thing is missing, whether it is temperature or water or air or fire, if anything is missing, we will not be able to live on this planet earth as we live now. So, this is not just an accident. The whole chaos has some order.

Science is still not able to prove that there is order in the chaos of the universe, that there is order inside the atom, because that understanding requires us to go beyond the intellect. The *rishis*, the *vedic* scientists are very clear that there is an order in the chaos. This is what they call ‘cosmic intelligence’.

I had an opportunity to meet Dr. Charles Townes*, the Nobel laureate and physicist, who is well-known for his work on the laser and maser devices. He told me so beautifully, ‘I feel the whole universe is something special, the whole universe is a spiritual being. It has its own intelligence. Even though I am not able to specifically prove it with mere words, I feel it is an intelligent and spiritual being.’

Please understand, the whole universe has its own intelligence. It is not just power. It

is energy also. There is a difference between power and energy. Power plus intelligence is energy. Energy without intelligence is power. The cosmos is not just a force. It is ‘force plus intelligence’. It responds to your thoughts, to your prayers, to your being, because it is intelligence.

Once somebody asked Buddha, ‘Who is the creator of this universe?’ Buddha replied, ‘The universe itself is its creator.’

If the creator and the created are two separate entities, it means only the creator is intelligent and the created is not intelligent. The cosmos itself is the creator because it has its own intelligence. The cosmos is a living energy. You are sitting inside a living energy.

The Taittreya Upanishad* says beautifully, ‘From the Consciousness, or god, or the Ultimate Consciousness, came ether, space. From ether came air. From air came fire. From fire came water. From water came the earth. From the earth came food. This is the way existence has happened.’ Thus, mystics again and again emphasize that we are from Consciousness, we are from god.

The creation itself is the creator, it is simply intelligence expressing itself. As long as you believe that what you see as

Dr. Charles Townes - Nobel laureate in physics for work related to maser and laser.

Taittreya Upanishad – One of the major *Upanishads* or scriptures that explains the concepts of the five elements and five *koshas* or energy sheaths.

the universe is material, mechanical, without any intelligence, you will have nothing to aim for in life. 'Might is right' will be the ultimate law.

Believing the world is just matter is the basic mistake. This belief is the root of all terrorism and violence on planet earth. As long as we believe the universe is just dead matter, it is going to create only more and more thirst for power. If we feel the whole world is chaos, then naturally we will think, 'When everything is chaos, let me catch hold of whatever is possible and live as much as I can.' We will be inspired to live with the idea 'might is right'.

Again and again, the cosmic intelligence proves that it responds to our thoughts. There are hundreds of experiments done, not only with plants and animals, even with stones, fire and water. All these things respond to our thoughts. The experiments done by the Japanese scientist, Dr. Masaru Emoto, prove how water responds beautifully to our thoughts and how it changes its very structure according to those thoughts that it is exposed to.

Only when we realize that the universe has its own intelligence, when we realize the universe is a spiritual being, the seed of peace is sown. Only when we understand that our thoughts are responded to, our way of life is rewarded, our prayers are answered, there is a living intelligent force and there is an order in the chaos, only then

we can realize and work for peace, bliss and spirituality. Then, instead of trying to own or expand our boundaries and borders, we will try to expand our consciousness. The moment we start believing or trusting that the universe is 'intelligence', we can simply relax, trusting It.

Order is chaos

There is a beautiful Zen story:

A disciple goes to a Zen master and asks, 'Master, please explain to me how you started, how you traveled the path, how you attained the ultimate experience.'

The master says, 'When I started, mountain was a mountain, river was a river and tree was a tree. When I was traveling, mountain was not a mountain, river was not a river and tree was not a tree. Again, when I attained, mountain is a mountain, river is a river and tree is a tree.'

Before achieving, even though you think you are extraordinary, you are ordinary. After achieving, even though you are extraordinary, you understand you are ordinary.

There is a wonderful chaos in what you call as 'order', your body, mind and being. When you experience that there is an order in the chaos of the cosmos, the

**When you realize
the chaos in the
order, you will
become a
compassionate
being.**

microcosm, the body (*pindanda*).

You are not just a simple body. You are not just a microcosm. You are the macrocosm in miniature form. You realize you are the ultimate, endless ocean of potential energy just like the universe. You experience you are something beyond, something more than what you think.

Now you think you are in an order, because you think your boundary is very small. The moment you experience the cosmic consciousness, the order in the chaos, you will realize the chaos inside your order. You will realize the energy, the consciousness inside your body. Then you will never bother about how to keep yourself in order, it will simply happen. You will not work for discipline, discipline will simply happen in you!

Only when you realize the cosmic consciousness in your body, the macrocosm in your microcosm, you will really become orderly, you will really learn how to be orderly without reducing your energy. As long as you try to become orderly, you will only suppress your energy, and you will also be suppressing everyone else.

macrocosm (*brahmanda*), you realize there is a chaos in the order of the

First, when you realize the order in the chaos, you will become a spiritual being, you will experience love and bliss. When you realize the chaos in the order, you will become a compassionate being. When you realize the order in the chaos, you will experience the experience part of love, bliss. When you realize the chaos in the order, you will express the expression part of love, that is compassion.

Seer-seen-seeing

We see two things in the process of 'seeing', the seer and the seen object. Actually, what is happening in the process of seeing? (Though the example of eyes is taken here, it applies for all the senses.)

From the seer, consciousness takes a jump continuously to the seen, because it is not able to relax into the seer itself. Because of its restlessness, it gives life to the seen.

The continuous jump that happens between the seer and seen - from the seer to the seen, from the seen to the seer, again from the seer to the seen and again from the seen to the seer - is what is *SEEING*.

When the seer is not completely in bliss within himself, he starts becoming restless and jumps. When he jumps, he gives life to the seen. Because he gives life to the seen, the process of jumping becomes *SEEING*.



Seen



Seer

Seeing

There are two ways to drop this process of seeing. Either the seer or the seen has to drop for the process of seeing to stop.

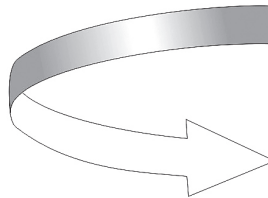
When the seen is renounced, it loses its power over the seer. There is no point in jumping because there is nothing to be seen. When there is no place to jump, the seer relaxes in the seer himself, then seeing does not happen. When seeing is not there, the seer is enlightened.

A person who stops this jump by dropping the 'seen' is a renouncer, a *sannyasi*. He takes away all his desire to see things, to believe that any of the sense objects hold value for him. The seen becomes unexciting, and the jumping stops. He becomes enlightened through renouncing. This is true self-knowledge - *gnana**.

In the path of *gnana**, the seer experiences detachment and a complete witnessing of



Seen dissolves



Seer relaxes in Seer

Gnana - Knowledge.

**When the identity
of seer drops,
dissolves in seen,
deep devotion to
Existence
happens!**

development of a sharp and pure intelligence through which Reality can be experienced. Adi Shankara, the great enlightened saint from India, walked on the path of *gnana** and attained enlightenment. He created the most profound and sharp scriptures on Self-knowledge ever written.

On the other hand, when the seer himself drops, what remains is the seen, and again the jumping between the seer and the seen stops. Reality is seen. The seer becomes enlightened through devotion or *bhakti**.

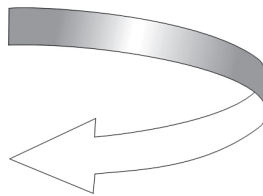
life. In this way he tries to discover Reality. The main objective is the

When the identity of the seer drops, dissolves into the seen, deep devotion to Existence happens! Everything becomes an exciting manifestation of Existence for him! His identity is no longer there. He merges into Existence itself. That is why enlightened saints like Meerabai* from India, who went on the path of *bhakti**, were in a trance all the time, merged into the god consciousness, forgetting their own identity. She just sang praises of god and walked around on the streets with no self consciousness whatsoever.

So, in some way, either the seer or the seen has to drop. Only then the jumping between the seer and the seen will stop. When the jumping stops, the process of seeing also stops.



Seen



Seer dissolves in seen

Gnana - Knowledge.

Bhakti - Devotion.

Meerabai - Princess of Chittor, a devotee of Krishna, mystical poetess and singer, who was ill-treated by her husband for her devotion to Krishna.

Whether you are stuck with the seer or with the seen, get completely stuck and you are enlightened! If you are jumping between the seer and the seen, not relaxed in either, you are under the illusion of a separate existence of the seer and seen. This jumping is what manifests as your individual seeing.

When the frequency of the seen is more than the seer, the seer can be changed or manipulated by the seen. When the frequency of the seer is more than the seen, the seen can be changed or manipulated by the seer.

The morphing of consciousness into ‘seer(s) and seen(s)’

As we said earlier, out of causeless, overflowing ecstasy, the wave of Creation arises in the ocean of Existence. The Divine, playing with its innumerable manifestations in innumerable universes, is called sustenance. Dropping from the play and relaxing into Itself is called dissolution. This is settling back into the Absolute state. Then for no logical reason, the play starts again. In this way, the universal Consciousness assumes innumerable forms, thus creating countless seer(s) and seen(s)! This is the origin of the physical world.

Collective Consciousness

We are not disconnected and separate islands as we think. Maybe in the physical layer, we all seem like individual islands. But whether we like it or not, whether we accept it or not, whether we want it or not, we are all interlinked by the collective consciousness.

It is like this: if the food is poisoned, only the person who eats it will suffer, not everyone. In this sense, you can think of yourself as an individual. But as you move towards the subtler levels of Existence, you can see our interconnectedness more clearly. For example, if the air is poisoned, whoever is breathing it will suffer, even if they are a long distance from each other. This connection is at the breath level. This means that in the subtler energy layers, the distance between us is reduced.

Even more than the physical and breath levels, we are connected more closely at the mental level. When I say mental level, I mean the level of thoughts. Our thoughts affect not only us but also everyone around us and beyond. Your thoughts are more infectious than your cold. In fact, people may escape from your cold, but they cannot escape from your thoughts.

Take a simple example of going to a college football match on a Sunday. When you enter the stadium itself, you can see the

air charged with emotions. You are also immediately affected by the cheering mood prevailing there! Similarly, if there is group violence, like a religious fight or collective grief, like a death in the house, the mood affects you beyond your control. (The chapter on 'Intelligence' has more details on this.)

If you catch a cold from someone, you might suffer physically for a few days and then finally get over it. But when you catch thoughts from people, you suffer mentally with them. Similarly, anything *you* think affects the people around you. If an individual mind is polluted, not only the individual, but a much bigger group suffers. For example, if one person who has a disturbed mind sits as a leader of a city, the whole city will be affected by the decisions that he makes! His disturbed thinking will result in wrong decisions and hence will be harmful for the whole city.

Going a step further, if one corrupted visualization leads to a particular action, the action can have tremendous impact on a huge population, not just on that person with the corruption.

For example, take the case of the atom bomb. It is nothing but a 'visualization' of the nuclear theory! The basis of the nuclear bomb can be found in the famous formula $E=mc^2$, that was discovered by the physicist, Albert Einstein. But corrupted visualization of this formula led to

disturbance of the whole planet earth. We are all now threatened by this one theory, by this one invention. Today planet earth has enough atomic weapons to burn itself 700 times, over and over again.

Seeds of violence are created whenever we feel we are individuals, unconnected or unrelated to others. We become selfish, dogmatic and violent. When we live with only individual consciousness, we dissect, we cut things into pieces and analyze. Such logic always destroys things. On the other hand, by tuning into the collective consciousness, we unify things.

Understand: not only in the mental level, even in the deeper conscious levels, the deeper you go, the more deeply you are connected. Just see this diagram here. I shall try to explain the truth on the basis of this diagram.



These seven circles represent the seven energy layers in us. The first layer is the physical body, the body that you can feel as your hands, legs etc. The second layer is the *pranic* body, the body in which your *prana* or life energy or breath circulates. Like this, there are seven energy layers that make up the total body, with the physical body being just one of those layers.

Now, in the physical layer, you, god and I can be represented as three different points in the circle. In the physical level, the distance between us is great.

If you go inward a little to the *pranic* level, the distance between us is reduced. If you go in deeper to the mental level, the distances are further reduced. When you go deeper and deeper, it finally merges into one. You can see that at the innermost point of all these layers, god, you, and I are one. There is no distance. That is the Truth even at the gross level! It is only your perception that causes you to think you are a separate entity.

You are not a separate entity as you think. When you love someone intimately, his or her love and suffering affects you. It comes and goes out of your being. It is because, in the deeper levels, you don't have an individual entity, you are a part of collective consciousness. You don't want suffering, but somehow you are not able to escape from it. Again and again, whether

it is physical pain or mental suffering or spiritual bondage, you keep exper-

encing it. This is because you are not aware that you are part of the collective consciousness. Once you become aware and realize that you are a part of the collective consciousness, that you don't have an individual identity, that you don't have a separate ego, you don't suffer.

In Existence, there is nothing such as a separate, individual identity. Once you experience this, you go beyond pain, suffering, depression and disease. Please understand that as long as you have your own set of concepts, you remain as an individual consciousness, and you continue to suffer in some way.

Why do you think you continuously resist heat and cold, aspects of nature? Whatever nature offers, you resist. There is a beautiful saying:

Man as a rule is a fool

When it is hot, asking for cool

When it is cool, asking for hot

Always asking for what is not!

When it is cool, you resist the cold. This happens because you think you are different from Existence. I myself have

**In Existence,
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identity.**

**When you are in
tune with the
collective
consciousness,
Nature
protects you.**

lived in the extreme cold of the Himalayan mountains, with the bare

minimum of clothing. The body was never disturbed. I never had a problem. The reason is that I never thought that I was different from the atmosphere. I never had the feeling of separation from nature. I have seen many *sannyasis* in the Himalayas who do this same thing.

It is only when you start thinking that you are different from the atmosphere that you start resisting it. There is a very simple practice you can take up now. If you are feeling cold, just relax into yourself. Identify the area where you are feeling cold. Witness that area. In that area, don't resist the atmosphere. Don't resist the air. Don't resist the temperature. Just say to yourself, 'I am not going to resist nature. I am not going to resist the temperature. I am not going to resist Existence. Let me relax.' Make a conscious decision. You will see the body relaxing, and the idea of cold disappears! You become completely comfortable.

When I say this, people ask me, 'It is alright to practice it here, but what about in real extreme conditions?' The mind always likes to think of extremes, even if they are never going to happen. Be very clear that

even in extremes, you can do this, if you put your effort into it with totality. The problem right now is that you don't have that much totality, that much clarity. If you can totally fall in tune with nature, you can surely be comfortable even in extreme conditions. There are many human beings who do that and so can you.

One more thing is that in the air, all possible bacteria and viruses are present. At any moment a single virus or bacteria can cause a disease in you. But if you are in total tune with nature, then even if the virus or bacteria goes inside you, you will not be disturbed! The moment you start thinking that you are somebody, some individual separate from Existence, then the whole of Existence becomes your enemy. Existence is not here to kill you or destroy you. It is your only trustworthy father, mother, friend and teacher.

When you are in tune with the collective consciousness, when you become a part of the collective consciousness, nature is with you. Nature becomes your friend, and it protects you.

Wherever you want to achieve success in the social or economical line, only when you feel in tune with the whole group, only when you fall in tune with the collective consciousness, will you be able to achieve what you want to achieve. As long as you feel you are an individual, as long as you want to keep a distinct place for yourself,

as long as you want to have an idea that you are ‘somebody’, an ‘identity’, be very clear, you will be resisted and you will be resisting. Whether it is home or office or vacation, this will happen. If you disappear into the collective consciousness, you will again and again be protected and taken care of. You will attain complete success, not only socially and economically, but you will also experience it as a feeling of fulfillment. The feeling will be inexplicable. The moment you start resisting, you start making hell out of it.

A small story:

A man was told by a group of people that his wife had fallen in the river and he needed to jump and save her. He immediately jumped in and started swimming against the current.

Everybody was surprised and shouted out to him, ‘Hey! Why are you swimming against the current? She would have obviously gone downward with the current.’

He replied, ‘You guys don’t know my wife. Even if she falls in the river, she will fight it like she fights everything else! She will move only against the current!’

As long as you resist the current, whether it is your workplace or your house or your company or any place for that matter, as long as you don’t disappear into the

collective consciousness, you will continuously create hell for yourself and for others. Even in the physical layer, if you think you are something separate, be very clear, you will be inviting diseases.

In the mental layer, if you think you are a separate individual, again and again, you will be sowing the seeds of violence. The seeds of violence will be created when you feel you are an individual. With collective consciousness you unify, but with individual consciousness you dissect, you cut things in pieces. Logic always breaks. Intuition always unites.

The moment you understand that you are deeply connected, totally connected, intensely connected to the whole group, to the whole universe, not only do you start experiencing the bliss, you also start living. You start opening up many dimensions of your being.

Right now you are stressed out, disturbed continuously, you have to think too much. With this one body, you have to think so much. You can enjoy so much. If you disappear into this collective consciousness, you will have so many dimensions, so many possibilities that you simply cannot imagine it! See, now with one body, there is a feeling of joy and you are able to enjoy so much. Imagine what you can do if you have two bodies? And just imagine what you can feel when you have many bodies! This is the experience

**The minds that
are ready and
waiting for the
ideas will tune in
and convert that
potentiality into
reality!**

you will get when you realize you are a part of the collective consciousness.

When you experience the feeling of oneness or collective consciousness, you forget all the differences of your name, wealth, social status and prestige. Whatever you think of as you just disappears. What you are is revealed.

Coincidence of thought

If you have observed a school of fish swimming or a flock of birds flying together, you will see a fleeting synchronicity in their motion. There may be hundreds of birds flying together in a V-shaped formation, but when they have to change direction, they will all do so at the same time, with no confusion or time delay! Scientists have been trying to understand how this is possible. Even studies of insects and animals have shown that when faced with threats, their responses are so fast that they cannot be explained by normal methods of communication.

An interesting experiment was done to study the power of thought on dogs. The

dog owners were asked to leave the house with no intention of going to any particular place. After leaving the house, they were given instructions to go to specific places and then at random times, they were asked to come back. It was found that at the time the owner started back home, almost always at the same time, the dog would go to the door and wait for the owner.

In the huge tsunami that rocked the Andaman and Nicobar islands of India, it was found that before the tsunami hit the islands, all the animals, including the huge ones like elephants, had all moved to higher grounds, safely away from the ocean. There have been a number of accounts of animals and insects being aware of upcoming earthquakes minutes before the earthquake actually strikes. What is the difference between these animals and us? It is their connection with nature! Being in tune with nature enables them to sense nature's signals. In the case of humans, because of our false sense of identity and ego, we have lost touch with nature and have become insensitive to the direct signals of nature.

Tuning into the higher intelligence

You can see so many instances in history where the same discovery was made at

about the same time by people in different parts of the globe and by people who did not even know each other. The reason is because the ideas are floating in the collective consciousness. It is like this: there are hundreds of electromagnetic waves in the air but your television set picks up only the waves of the frequency to which it is tuned. Similarly, the minds that are ready and waiting for the floating ideas will **tune in and convert** that potentiality into reality!

When we have repetitive thoughts, we emit and receive those thought waves that are of the same pattern. We are more or less stuck in our web of thoughts. This is how an average person leads most of his life. But intelligent people understand the law of the cosmos and tune into the higher intelligence to become the channels of creativity and innovation.

Just as the universe gives us so many hints of its existence as one being, we can find hints from nature about the nature of reality. In a series of experiments in the 1920s, it was found that no matter what portion of a rat's brain was removed, the rat still retained its memory of how to perform complex tasks it had learned prior to the surgery. The rat's brain actually showed 'holographic' memory. Scientists proposed that memories are encoded not in neurons, but in the patterns of nerve impulses that crisscross the brain, similar

to how a hologram is formed by various patterns of laser light crisscrossing each other. This might explain how the human brain can store up to ten billion bits of information in the brain, which is the small size of two fists!

The universe is a hologram and we are a part of that hologram. In a hologram, every single part of the hologram, even if split, reflects the totality of that hologram. Likewise, we too reflect the totality of the universe. The universe is not an assortment of living and dead matter. It is a huge interconnected Whole. You are very much connected to your fellow beings around you - the trees, animals, birds and rocks on earth as well as the planets, stars and galaxies in the universe. Whether you perceive it or not depends on the plane of consciousness from which you perceive it all.

Questions and Answers

Q: According to science, vacuum is the absence of matter. But according to you, vacuum is energy. Matter is manifestation of energy. How would you define vacuum?

Please understand that science has changed its view. Now scientists are coming up with a clear-cut idea that no such thing as 'vacuum' can be created.

Even in space, where you say vacuum exists, ether is present. Ether is the gross form of energy. Science is also coming up with the fact that ether is also matter. It can be measured and handled. Science has evolved to the extent that it can understand spiritual truths to a certain degree. They have started understanding that vacuum is not the absence of matter. It is the absence of certain parts of matter. There are five major elements – earth, fire, water, air, ether. Vacuum is the absence of four of these major elements – earth, water, fire, air. That's all. It is not the absence of matter, it is the absence of four elements.

Thousands of years ago the eastern *rishis* developed the science of *Vastu Shastra**. It is the science that teaches one how to utilize the power of ether in daily life. It is the technique of building homes and houses in a way that the ether energy is enclosed in the space of the home in the best possible way. Today, scientists are working to understand methods of how to use ether!

So, according to me and according to science, vacuum is energy. Vacuum is not the absence of matter.

Q: It has been said that an individual has control over his mind. Does this mean that outside minds can still influence an individual's mind and

thought process? How can we control this and be liberated from anger and depression?

Nice question. Do you have control over your mind?

Questioner: Sometimes I find it difficult...

Alright. This is the answer that I get from almost everyone. The statement that an individual has control over the mind, is only said, never practiced and never experienced. Next, outside minds *can* influence the individual's mind and thought process.

Are you married?

Questioner: Yes!

Then you will agree that your husband can very well influence your thought process. This influence happens not only through words from him, but even otherwise it happens!

For example, let us say you want to come here for meditation. You tell him you want to go for meditation. He doesn't protest, but he puts on a long face. Just the memory of his face can influence your meditation here. When you are sitting here, you will be meditating on his long face! Even if he is not in town when you come here, just the memory of his long face, just the energy

Vastu Shastra - Vedic science of space, of how we interact with the space around us.

that he radiated when you asked for permission on an earlier occasion is enough - you will fall into a low mood here when you are meditating.

So understand, others can influence your mind without even expressing their thoughts.

Q: How do we control these influences of mind so as to avoid anger and depression?

Through meditation!

You are just like an onion. If you peel the onion layer by layer, what is there inside? Just emptiness! The onion thinks it has got something solid, but when it is opened layer by layer, it is empty. Similarly, man thinks that he is the individual consciousness, but if we peel the individual layers, he will experience he is the cosmic consciousness, the collective consciousness! This is the one and only way to prevent anger or depression that sneaks into your consciousness from others, through others, by others. As you meditate, your awareness will increase and you will start becoming a witness of the individual consciousness. Anything that you witness will dissolve into the cosmic consciousness.

Q: Why do we have to have to suffer? In childhood, we are trained to be

separate from others. In school, we are taught to be somebody. As adults, we are taught to compete with others. If the ultimate truth is that we are all one, that we are all bliss, then why can't mass consciousness also reflect this joy, peace and love?

This is a beautiful question. I shall answer this step by step. This question has a lot of potential meaning.

The people who created today's educational system are not enlightened. The ancient education system called the *gurukul** was created by the *rishis*. Unfortunately, it is no longer alive.

Let me say a few things about the education system that was initiated by these enlightened masters. In this system, any child who belongs to the country belongs to the master! The master takes care of him. The parents hand over the child to the master a few years after his or her birth.

In this system of education, children were not compelled to wear clothes until a certain age. By not wearing clothes, the children did not develop the idea that they were individual bodies! They were straightaway allowed to relate with Existence, with ether. They were allowed to relate with flowers, forests, trees, earth. They were not given an idea that they were somebody.

Gurukul - Vedic educational institution.

Also, they were not given the idea that they were male or female. Actually, males are 51 percent male and 49 percent female. Females are 51 percent female and 49 percent male. But their lesser half is suppressed by society and they are made to think that they are purely male or purely female. This causes many repercussions in their consciousness.

These are some basic things you should follow while bringing up children. If you have to put clothes on them, put on single piece clothing covering both the upper and lower body, instead of putting on two piece clothing that separates the upper and lower body at the hip. Also, don't give them the continuous idea that they are somebody. Of course, it might be a bit difficult for you, as you need to send them to school, but at least try with your best effort.

In the *gurukul* system, children were first given a meditation technique. Even if they got the idea that they were male or female, they could use this meditation technique and dilute that imbibed feeling. This meditation technique helped them flush the feeling out, and again and again helped them tune to the collective consciousness. That technique is what we call the *Gayatri mantra**.

From seven to fourteen years of age, children practiced the *Gayatri**, through which they continuously tried to connect to the collective consciousness. By the age of fourteen, they would have had a glimpse of the collective consciousness. They would have had a glimpse of the blueprint of the collective consciousness. After they had a glimpse of the blueprint, depending on the intensity of it, they were given deeper techniques. By the age of 21, they became enlightened!

I tell you honestly, there was a time when 70 percent of the people were enlightened. The other 30 percent were working towards enlightenment. The social structure created by the enlightened masters was such that people were either already enlightened or working towards it. There was no other category. There were only enlightened people and seekers. Unfortunately, we have lost the system today. That is why we have to conduct these meditation programs every week all around the world.

We have a *gurukul* system in our ashram in India. We are reviving the *vedic* system without disturbing the modern education, so that children can once again grow up connecting with the collective consciousness.

Gayatri mantra - Considered to be one of the most powerful *mantras* in the *vedic* tradition, *Gayatri* was the initiation *mantra* for all young students.

Question: We are all part of collective consciousness. Then how does god come into this?

The collective consciousness is what I call god. The Whole is what I call god. When you are Whole, you are holy.

When we realize our role in the Existential scheme of things, we can no longer feel separate from all those around us. We can only feel separated when we feel unconscious of our role, when we are unaware.

The time has come to create a critical mass of enlightened people on planet earth. Only by creating more and more people who are awakened, who are enlightened, can the collective influence of individual negativity be destroyed. All calamities around the world are created only by unconscious human beings. Global warming, HIV, religious terrorism, fanaticism, and piles of atomic weapons, are all because of this negativity. Today, we are facing so many dangers, that unless we create a peaceful, blissful, joyful, and enlightened society, we will not be able to preserve this beautiful planet earth.

My mission is to create a peaceful, joyful, blissful, conscious, enlightened society.

Global Peace – a byproduct of individual bliss

Self-contradictory thoughts

Actually, a majority of us are caught up in fighting with our own selves. We are caught

in a web of self-contradictory thoughts and desires. Our thoughts and words are so powerful, but we use them so casually.

For example, say you have a headache, what do you do? You tell yourself, ‘How I wish this headache would go away!’ You don’t realize that each of these words carries the power of desire and actualization within them. By uttering these words, you give as much power to the word ‘headache’ as you give to the words ‘go away’. This is what I mean by self-contradictory thoughts. By your very thought, you contradict your original desire. Even your positive intention is caught in the fight, the dilemma of your own thoughts and words. The nature of the mind is dilemma.

You will then ask, ‘How do I get rid of this headache?’ Just say, ‘Let me be healed!’ that’s all. The mind is so used to thinking only negative words, that is the problem.

Our self-contradictory thoughts are the root cause of all our suffering. All our suffering arises from our ignorance of the truth that we are, by nature, bliss. We are a part of Existence, which is by nature bliss. Once we intellectually and

My mission is to create a peaceful, joyful, blissful, conscious, enlightened society.

When we infuse healing thoughts into our system, we give power to positive words and thoughts.

contradictory thoughts being replaced by self-healing thoughts.

When we infuse healing thoughts into our system again and again, we give power to positive words and thoughts. They get embedded in our very muscle memory. So at times of low mood and depression, these healing thoughts will automatically come up in our inner space and pull us out of the low mood. On our own, we can raise ourselves up from our low feelings and the negative play of the mind.

Individual peace by its nature touches the world

A beautiful story from the life of Buddha:

Devadatta, a cousin of Buddha, joined Buddha's order of monks. He was hungry for power and status. He wanted to become the head of the order of monks. But Buddha would not allow such an immature person, who was running after status instead of enlightenment, to lead his mission. So Devadatta harbored jealousy and ill feelings towards Buddha and even made several attempts to kill him.

experientially understand this, we will consciously and strongly see our self-

Once Devadatta persuaded the royal elephant-keepers to release a fierce elephant on to Buddha's path. The elephant was intoxicated and let loose on the streets where Buddha used to walk regularly. The mad elephant ran wildly. People panicked and fled in all directions.

The elephant came upon Buddha. Buddha kept walking, radiating the same peace and calm even in the face of this danger. His bliss and peace was not at all affected by the threat of the wild elephant. The elephant came rushing towards Buddha in a mad fury. Once it reached Buddha, it immediately calmed down completely. Its wild nature simply dissolved in Buddha's enlightened presence. Buddha touched the elephant's forehead and stroked it gently. Calmed by the patting, the elephant bent on its knees and bowed down to Buddha.

The people watching the whole scene were simply shocked!

The effect of the peace radiated by a person who is fully satisfied and blissful within himself is similar to the waves that happen in a lake when you throw a stone into it. Everything in the lake is touched by the effect of the stone. The waves of bliss radiating from a peaceful person naturally and automatically touch the

people, animals, trees, and rocks, affecting everything nearby.

To make the whole world blissful and happy, you don't have to do anything. Just change your center. When you are seeing a horror movie, your world will be filled with fear. But if you just change the channel to say a comedy movie, you can see how your whole world changes!

When the inner awakening happens, the higher emotions happen. It all finally boils down to your own experience of what is happening. If you want to save the world, all you need to do is save yourself!

Everything is actually happening in this world – great spiritual sessions where enlightenment is being shared and at the same time terrorist training camps where violence is being shared. According to what you tune with, the world that you attract and see will also appear to be. You will attract the same type of people and situations in your life.

Even one person struggling for enlightenment, seeking, raises the consciousness of at least a million people.

Collective Consciousness

Not only are we all connected to each other socially, the great Truth is that we are all part of the Whole, the Collective Consciousness.

Each of us is a unique part of the grand orchestra of the universe.

We are not individual islands. Our thoughts, our emotions, and

our feelings not only affect us but they affect the rest of the world also.

We are all waves in the ocean of Existence. Existence itself is pure, intelligent energy. This loving Existence desires that each of us succeeds and experiences fulfillment in life. When we realize this, we can simply let go of our fears, desires, jealousies, pains, and depressions and relax into the loving arms of Existence.

If we realize this great Truth, we will see how each of us is a unique and irreplaceable part of the grand orchestra of the universe, of Existence.

Looking in

Instead of looking at each other as enemies, if you start looking in, you will realize that the enemy within is causing all the trouble. As such, there is no enmity with others. The other is just a blissful part of Existence like you.

We think negatively because we are unaware. Our thoughts affect the people around us and also the whole world. Harsh words, angry feelings, suppressed emotions, and suffering all directly

contribute to the creation of unrest in the world.

Individual stress, hatred, and violence cause an increase in the collective stress, hatred, and violence in society! This leads to a decrease in human awareness resulting in more acts of violence against nature. We need to break this cycle, otherwise it will cause more calamities, both natural and manmade, because the wheel of nature cannot sustain any more violence.

So global peace, as such, has no meaning. It is the peace and bliss inside the individual that will directly result in global peace. The individual's inner satisfaction, increase in awareness, creativity, and intelligence will automatically lead to global peace, prosperity and harmony.

How to handle the suffering in the world

First, we have to understand that every major decision taken at the higher level of power and governance is an expression of collective positivity or collective negativity, because it is the mass consciousness or collective consciousness that creates the leaders. So before blaming others like leaders, politicians, or officials, if we can put a little bit of energy towards ourselves and start working to create more

positive consciousness in our inner space, we will be doing something really useful.

There are two ways to handle anything. One is just talking about things and the other is actually doing things.

If you are interested in just talking about things, then you will blame everybody around you, starting from your neighbor to the politicians, business and world leaders. Blaming and criticizing everybody is not going to be directly useful. Not only that, it will really pull down your own energy. This is one common, but ineffective way of working.

The second way is this: if you really don't like the situation, you will be sincere and do something to change it. You will work towards creating more collective positive energy, first within yourself, and then in the world.

It is time...

Let us create more positivity from our side.

Let us bring more love to our actions.

Let us increase the frequency of our individual consciousness.

Instead of getting upset or disturbed by negative decisions, just create positive energy so that the people around you and around the world are also affected by this positive consciousness. Then you will see that it radiates through the leaders also. When more and more people begin to

transform themselves, the collective positivity has to express itself through the right politicians and the right leaders.

Realize that all leaders are channels of the collective positivity or negativity created by the masses. They are also guided by the masses.

There are two ways of looking at things: sitting and blaming things, or working to create more positive energy. A sincere person should start working towards creating more positive energy rather than blaming, criticizing, getting upset or disturbed.

If you get upset and disturbed, what is going to happen? Nothing will happen except that you will have a little more depression, a little more negativity. And because of that, you yourself will add more negativity to the world, you will add more mass to the negative consciousness.

So revolution is not the way. Evolution is the way.

Every revolution promised the truth or the ultimate solution. But what do we see if we look back? In the last 3000 years of the history of planet earth, we have had 5000 recorded wars! Researchers have estimated that in the last 3000 years of the history of planet earth, there have been at least 9000 peace treaties, and the average life span of these treaties was just 8 years!

It seems like human beings were not doing anything but waging war! The reason is, we believed in revolution. Now it is time to believe in individual evolution. You see, mass revolution becomes again one more system. Anybody who comes to power is again led by mass negativity or mass positivity. So it is now our responsibility to add more and more positivity. That is the only thing an individual can do.

Peace needs to be brought into the individual's heart. Then it will radiate like the fragrance of a flower and transform the whole planet earth. Let us all be honest with our being, and bring peace to ourselves and thus to the whole world. We will then add to the collective positive consciousness.

Just create positive energy so that the people around you and around the world are also affected by this positive consciousness. Then you will see that it radiates through the leaders as well.

How to get rid of suffering in the world

Much of what is happening around us is the result of all our past actions. At least in this present moment, let us create more and more positive consciousness and energy so that we will avoid the same challenges and calamities in the future.

If we get agitated and disturbed, then we will create more violence and negativity in our efforts to try to stop the existing violence. Violence cannot stop violence. Blood cannot wash away blood.

Buddha says beautifully that if we start thinking in the line of ‘an eye for an eye’, the whole world will become blind! If we start working with the logic of ‘an eye for an eye’, then a person from this group will take an eye from a person in the other group, and a person from that group will take an eye from a person in this group. Then the whole world will become blind!

The only thing you can do is start creating more and more positive and peaceful ambience inside your being, and continuously work to create peace and love outside your field. That is the only possible solution.

Just decide, ‘Yes, in this moment, with the power that I have, I will do a little service with whatever I have available to me. I will send out peaceful prayers, thoughts, and positive energy. Whatever I have under the control of my body and mind, I will make it positive.’

Getting agitated is not going to be productive in any way. It is agitated people who create wars. If we also get agitated, how do you think we are going to solve the problem? We are only going to add more problems. When you get agitated, you

have already lost the game. The only way is to do whatever we can without getting agitated.

The only way is by being ‘here and now’, adding more and more joy, bliss, and silence to the whole consciousness.

Anybody who tried the way of revolution only created one more system, one more tradition, and one more power game. It ended up in one more war. So, the only way is the way of Buddha, the way of peace, the way of silence, the way of Shiva.

Working with ourselves, becoming masters of ourselves, doing things that need to be done without getting agitated, is the right way. We should become productive people, not agitated people. We should do as much as we can towards peace, silence, and bliss, and help people who are stranded by wars and conflicts. We should try to bring more and more peace into the consciousness of the leaders by bringing it into ourselves.

We should show compassion to help the person. But the important thing is we shouldn’t start suffering ourselves.

For example, if a rich person distributes all his wealth to poor people, what will happen? We will have one more poor person! Because he would have given away all his wealth. Not only that, the people receiving also might not have the

intelligence to maintain and increase the wealth received. Like this, many times, instead of lifting the other person, you actually start suffering. Express love and compassion but don't start suffering yourself. If you start sharing true love, you will actually start giving better choices to others. Give the intelligence to others to make better choices, that is the real help you can give.

Increasing collective positivity to reduce chaos

If you decrease the temperature of a system, the chaos and agitation in that physical system is reduced. For example, if you reduce the temperature, liquid water becomes solid ice. Also, the impurities in the system are removed. If you freeze salt water, you can see that the salt remains at the bottom while only the water becomes ice. In the same way, when the collective consciousness of society is transformed, the chaos reduces and the system begins to clean itself.

Studies of the effects of meditation on peace

Various studies have been done to measure the effects of group meditation on communities. Some observed the effect of a critical mass of people who meditated using the technique of *Transcendental Meditation™. These studies showed an 8 percent decrease in the crime rate in the cities where group meditation was conducted. Other reports showed a significant 17 percent reduction in acts of violence and a 13 percent increase in cooperative, helpful acts. In war-stricken areas there was more than 50 percent drop in daily war deaths and more than 25 percent drop in war injuries. The overall statistics showed with group meditation, reduced crime rates, fewer hospital admissions, and reduced violence, leading to an increase in the overall quality of life.

Global Peace meditation

21 September is observed as the International Peace Day. Millions of people worldwide come together in prayer, meditation, celebration and collaboration for world peace and global harmony.

Transcendental Meditation - Meditation technique popularized by Maharishi Mashesh Yogi.

On this occasion every year, Nithyananda Mission's centers conduct collective group meditations worldwide. The collective consciousness is raised in a much more powerful way when meditation is done as a group.

When matter is shared, it reduces in size. For example, if an apple has to be shared by four people, it has to be cut into four pieces. It reduces in size.

When it comes to electrical energy, when the voltage is shared, it does not reduce, it remains the same. For example, if we have 10 volts of electricity in a wire, one person touching the wire will feel 10 volts, and four people touching the same wire will also feel 10 volts.

But it is different in the case of the powerful, subtle energy of meditation. When meditation is done by a group of people, it multiplies! Rather than diminishing or staying the same, the benefit is shared and amplified among the entire group and beyond. If one person meditating generates 10 'volts' of energy, then 100 people sitting together in a collective meditation generates 10 x 100 or 1000 'volts' of energy. Just imagine! The strength of energy that is generated will simply cleanse the entire space where the meditation is done.

That is why collective, group meditation is encouraged.

This can also be compared with the difference in intensity between an ordinary light and a laser. The coherence in the laser, the group effect, causes the intensity to be magnified.

The unavoidable loving touch of enlightened beings

A story from the life of enlightened master Buddha:

There was a bandit by the name of Angulimala. He used to live in a forest that many people had to cross. He used to ambush the people and rob them of their valuables. Then he would cut off the little finger of the person and make a garland of all the fingers. That is why he was called Angulimala or garland of fingers.

Once when traveling, Buddha was about to cross the forest. People warned him about the terrifying Angulimala. But Buddha was unperturbed and continued walking. Deep inside the forest, Angulimala jumped out of the bushes and shouted threateningly at Buddha, 'Stand still!'

Buddha stopped and replied, 'I am still. May you be still.'

Angulimala for the first time in his life was shaken to his very being. Something about Buddha touched him deeply. He could not even force himself to attack Buddha. His hands froze. He just fell at the feet of Buddha crying and begging for forgiveness!

This story illustrates one of the truths of the impact of enlightened beings. Without effort or intention, an enlightened being simply radiates tremendous peace and compassion which has the power to simply transform others.

This effect is not limited just to human beings. Even animals are touched by the pure love and compassion radiated by an enlightened being. Everything is changed when it is exposed to that high frequency energy field.

This is a beautiful story from the life of Adi Shankara, an enlightened master from ancient India:

Shankara was wandering in South India in the town of Shringeri. One day, a strange and beautiful scene happened in front of him: two frogs were sitting on a rock. It became very hot, so the frogs were about to jump into the water. Just then a cobra raised its hood and spread it over the two frogs giving them shade. The frogs enjoyed the cool shade

and sat back for sometime. After some time, they plunged into the water. The cobra also folded back its hood and went away.

Shankara was watching this and was amazed. He was a very sharp intellectual person. He did not leave the incident at that. His intellect immediately recognized that unless the place was sanctified in some way by some higher energy, it was not possible for animals to forget their enmity and co-exist in such a beautiful fashion. He went around and asked for details about the place. He learned that some time in the past, a great enlightened sage had established and maintained his ashram there for many years!*

Shankara was so moved by the whole incident that he decided that someday he too would set up his mission in that very place. Years later when he was passing by the same place, he stopped and established his first ashram there, called the Shringeri Math. To this day it stands as one of the key seats of spiritual wisdom in the world!*

Without effort or intention, an enlightened being simply radiates tremendous peace and compassion.

Ashram - A monastery for Hindu or Buddhist monks.

An enlightened being effortlessly radiates his all-encompassing inner space, which creates a collective positivism.

As Patanjali says in the Yoga Sutras, ‘In the presence of an enlightened being even natural enemies lose their enmity.’

The fire that is full of its own light consumes everything, but it is not contaminated by anything. In the heat of the fire, what goes into it is purified, but the fire is untouched by the qualities of what it consumes. In the same way, enlightened beings are untouched by the qualities, good or bad that they come in contact with. Their presence is so intense that everybody and everything is touched by the love and compassion that is their very nature.

The direct and only way to global peace is to generate more of this enlightened Consciousness. This is what my whole mission is all about.

The Nithyananda Mission

My advent on planet earth is to create a new cycle of individual consciousness causing Collective Consciousness to enter the Superconscious zone.

To achieve this,

One hundred thousand people will be initiated to live as *Jeevan Muktas* – liberated beings experiencing ‘living enlightenment’

&

One billion people will be initiated into Nithya Dhyaan – Life Bliss Meditation – designed to cause a positive shift in the individual consciousness on planet earth.

Meditation technique for Global Peace

The way to achieve global peace is to create individual peace. The meditation for global peace is a collective meditation. This is a very simple but very powerful meditation.

Sit in one circle or concentric circles, holding hands so that you hold the hand of the person on your right with your right hand palm facing down, signifying ‘giving’ peace and bliss, while you offer your left hand palm facing up to ‘receive’ peace and bliss from the person on your left. This connected circle of people generates a powerful energy cycle. The meditative energy of one person is shared by all others. This meditation can be done for at least 21 minutes.

Our ability to be in tune with others and Existence depends entirely upon how we conduct ourselves. It depends on the priorities we choose in life. What if we do not choose? What if we accept things as they happen to us?

It is time to talk about renunciation. Renunciation is not running away from life. Renunciation is flowing with life without resistance. The Sanskrit word *sannyas* refers to this state of trust with Existence that allows us to let go all other things in life.

Sannyas...

There is a beautiful story from the life of Buddha:

After enlightenment, Buddha visited many places preaching his dhamma or teachings, and initiating people into spiritual life.

On his way, he entered Kapilavastu, his birth place. He walked on the streets with his disciples wearing the saffron robe. Everyone watched them with great wonder.

Buddha's wife, Yashodhara, heard the noise in the street and asked what it was. Her maids told her that it was none other than her own husband who had returned as the Buddha, the enlightened soul. She did not go to meet him. Instead,

she called for her son Rahul. Rahul was born the night that Buddha left home in search of enlightenment.

She asked Rahul, 'Do you see that radiant figure there who holds a begging bowl and yet looks like a king? He is your father. Go and ask him for your inheritance.'

The young boy ran downstairs and pushed his way through to where Buddha stood. He fell at Buddha's feet and boldly repeated what his mother had told him.

Buddha lifted him up gently with a smile and looked at him. He simply removed the gold hemmed cloth the boy was wearing and replaced it with a saffron one.

The boy, seven years of age, was given his inheritance. He was the first and only child allowed into the monastic order of the Buddha.

Someone asked me, 'If everything in life is evolving naturally by the process of evolution like monkey into man, and bad into good, would man not ultimately evolve into god? Where then is the need for meditation, *sannyas*...where then is the need for inspiration?'

I replied, 'It took five thousand years for the monkey to become man, and it would take equally long for man to become god. If you are willing to wait that long, it is

**The right
revolution leads to
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with a clear understanding about life, the laws and structure of the universe, and meditation. You can revolutionize the process of your evolution. The right revolution leads to evolution or enlightenment. That is *sannyas*, the greatest revolution of an individual. It is to live like a Paramahansa, to live like an enlightened being.

Adi Shankara, the enlightened master from India, beautifully says in his work Vivekachoodamani*:

*For all living creatures, a human birth is rare,
and even rarer is to have a sattvic (goodness)
attitude,
and more so to have steadfastness on the path of
spiritual activity
as explained in the Vedas...*

These words had a very powerful effect on the life of Vivekananda, an enlightened master from India who lived thousands of years after Shankara. When Vivekananda was preparing for his law examination, these very words landed on him like a

alright with me!'

On the other hand, you can decide to live consciously

thunderbolt. He could not read further. He left his books and started running along the road. He was running to his master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. While he was running, the truth of Shankara's words was ringing in his very being. He thought to himself, 'I have gained all these three: I have been born as a human being. I have gained the desire for liberation. I have got a great master....then why am I still wasting my life? Why am I still wasting my life?' Again and again, these words were haunting him. Vivekananda went on to become enlightened and spread Ramakrishna's mission worldwide.

Sannyas is the path for those who want to win over themselves, who want to be free from the clutches of jealousy, anger, stress and depression forever. People think *sannyas* is chosen by losers. No. Of course, sometimes those who don't know what to do with their lives take up *sannyas*. But that is not the spirit of *sannyas*.

Sannyas is the effort to become conscious for the first time, conscious of the mechanism that surrounds you as a human being. You are part of Existence. Existence moves with its own mechanism, with its own music. Falling in tune with it is the science of *sannyas*. *Sannyas* is a being level relationship, being in tune with the whole

Vivekachoodamani - Adi Shankara's philosophical work.

of Existence. That is the shortest path to success in life.

To hear the song of Existence, you need to start moving in the right space. To find that space, you need to first drop any other thing you know, and listen to the song with deep awareness. You will find it. In that space, life will flow like a river moving towards the sea. Any other path will take longer.

When life becomes a flowing river, it has to merge with the sea. There is no other way. *Sannyas* is the science of flowing with the natural course of Existence and finally merging with it.

Flow like a river

The river heads only towards the sea. It does not stagnate anywhere. A *sannyasi* heads only towards his goal of enlightenment. He knows no distractions. The river flows blissfully, whatever be the things thrown into it on its way. So many things are thrown into the river – flowers, twigs, food, animals, birds, dead bodies, etc. But the river flows, not bothering about anything.

Similarly, a *sannyasi* moves blissfully, untouched by anything that comes his way.

When life becomes a flowing river, it has to merge with the sea.

The current pulls the river over its obstacles, and it gurgles, with a constant music, moving towards the sea. The cosmic intelligence pulls the *sannyasi* over obstacles as he moves towards the ultimate goal. He knows not what obstacles are. For him, they are all stepping stones on the path to bliss.

During my days of spiritual wandering, I spent nine months between two locations – on the banks of the sacred river Ganga and on the banks of the sacred river Narmada* in North India. During this time, everyday, I would wake up before the break of dawn, have a bath in the river and sit on its banks. I would just watch it flow. The sun would be rising. As I watched the river flow, the mind would calm down, thoughts would progressively reduce, and the verbalization would get arrested. I would be one with the flowing river for hours together.

Not only that, when you watch the river continuously, you go on dropping fear. There will be so many things floating in the river. When you see dead bodies floating, you will clearly see that one day

Narmada - Fifth largest Indian river starting from Vindhya Hills in central India flowing east to west joining the Arabian Sea.

**Sannyas is a
conscious
decision to live
the truth
immediately in
your life.**

you also will
float like that.
The deeply
e m b e d d e d
fears will
d i s a p p e a r
when merging

with the flow of the river.

One Zen master was asked, 'What is Zen?'

He replied, 'Walk on!'

Zen Buddhism beautifully says, life is like the river that flows and fills each form, and bursts its own limitations to expand its capacity. This is the essence of life, and *sannyas*. *Sannyas* is learning in action as life moves, not philosophizing. It is a force, not a dogma. For a real *sannyasi*, life simply moves in the right direction. The learning happens during the movement, not as a separate thing.

A small story:

Once there lived a thief who had a son. The son asked him to teach the secrets of the trade. The father agreed and that night he took him to steal from a big house. After everyone went to sleep, he silently led his son into a room that contained a clothes closet. He told him to go into the closet to steal some clothes. As soon as the son went inside, he quickly shut the door and locked him in. Then he went outside the house and knocked loudly on the front door. The

whole household woke up. He quickly ran away before anyone saw him.

Hours later, his son returned home and angrily shouted at him, 'Why did you lock me in that closet?'

The father just smiled and replied, 'If I had not done that, you would not have had your first lesson in the art of burglary!'

Sannyas is nothing but straightaway practicing the truths every moment. There is enough philosophy in the world but no one to follow it. *Sannyas* is simply a conscious decision to live the truth immediately in your life.

A Zen master tells his disciple very beautifully, 'Studying the truth as a philosophy is just collecting preaching material. Remember that unless you practice constantly, your light of truth may go out.'

Practice is nothing but continuously flowing in the right direction without stagnating. Even in stagnation, there will be movement around the obstacle, trying to find the flow again. There is no stopping.

A great Japanese warrior decided to attack his enemy. His army was only one tenth of his enemy's army, but he was very sure he would win. His soldiers, however, did not believe so.

On the way to the war, he went to a temple and told his men, 'I will toss a coin inside the temple. If heads appears, we will win. If tails appears, we will lose. Destiny holds us in Her hands.'

The soldiers agreed. He entered the temple, offered a silent prayer and tossed the coin. Heads appeared.

His soldiers were so excited, they went forward and fought with all their courage and won the battle.

After the battle, one of his assistants told him, 'No one can change the hand of destiny!'

The warrior said, 'I suppose not', and showed him a coin having heads on both sides.

A *sannyasi* continuously moves with the intelligence of Existence. There is no stopping. He lives in the moment, spontaneously and according to the need of the moment, which is what is called fluidity.

Just as the river has surrendered to the flow of Existence, the *sannyasi* moves with the intelligence of Existence, and Existence takes him along with the birds and animals to the sea. By surrender, I don't mean inaction. I mean action with an attitude of surrender. Then, the results are driven by the law of Existence and you simply relax into the flow.

Sannyas is the first conscious step towards responsibility – towards oneself and to the world.

When you relax, you start responding with responsibility towards life and people. Until then, you only react, you never respond. Reaction is the expression of the unconscious. Response is the expression of consciousness, and that is what is called responsibility. Reaction is never responsibility. *Sannyas* is the first conscious step towards responsibility towards oneself and to the world. This is a little known fact about *sannyas*. People think *sannyasis* have shrugged the responsibilities of life. No! They have taken up *more* responsibility in life. Their family is virtually the whole world. They take up responsibility for every individual.

Sannyas is not renunciation

Sannyas has always been wrongly associated with renunciation. You don't have to renounce anything. You just need to understand that you are a temporary custodian of some wealth, which is a part of Existence, just as you are as well. Then you won't need to renounce because you never possessed anything in the first place! Even if you have to part with wealth, you will not feel that you are giving away or

losing your possessions. The problem starts with the attitude of possessing, the feeling of 'mine'.

I read a beautiful line in a Zen book. It said, 'Mentally give away everything that you think belongs to you. Then one day, if it is really not there, you will not suffer.' This can be done as a beautiful 10-minute meditation everyday. It can have a powerful impact on the attitude of possessing.

Just sit by yourself as soon as you wake up in the morning. Close your eyes and visualize that all your things belong to Existence. None of it is yours. Existence is so graceful that it has allowed you to have it. Feel the gratitude flowing in you towards Existence. Experience this strongly and clearly. You will see, suddenly, the whole thing takes a 180 degree turn. You will wonder what is really yours in the first place. *Sannyas* starts with gratitude.

Neither does a *sannyasi* need to renounce the world nor does a *samsari** need to be afraid of renouncing. Just the plain understanding that Existence gives and takes at the right moment is enough. Then you know that what is happening is the right thing for the moment and life is flowing as it should. This creates a mental gap between you and your wealth and that

gap is called renunciation! It is just a gap, a break in the attitude of possessing, nothing else. It has been wrongly used in the context of *sannyas*.

A small story:

Two monks were traveling together. One of them strongly believed in acquiring wealth. He practiced spirituality through it. The other strongly followed the path of renunciation. They were discussing the two ways of life. As they were discussing, it became nighttime and they reached a river that they had to cross.

The one who believed in renunciation did not have money with him. He said, 'We don't have money to cross the river. Let us spend the night here and some one will take us across the river tomorrow morning.'

The other one replied, 'That is not possible. We will be eaten by wild animals if we spend the night here. I have money with me. Let us pay the boatman and cross the river.'

Once they crossed the river safely, he asked his companion, 'Now do you understand the value of money? If I too had been a man of renunciation, what would have happened to us?'

Samsari - One who is caught in *samsara* or cycle of birth and death.

The first one replied, 'It was your renunciation that brought us across safely. You parted with your money to cross the river!'

Renouncing is 'having' without the idea of having, and 'parting' without the idea of parting. Otherwise, by merely renouncing outer wealth, you will not gain anything. You will only feel the pain of sacrificing the 'mine'. *Sannyas* is not escaping from the 'mine'. It is going beyond the 'mine'. That is possible only through a proper understanding. If you renounce with understanding, it is okay. Otherwise, the 'mine' will simply persist wherever you go. Not only that, if you renounce with the idea that you are renouncing 'yours', it becomes the right action but for the wrong reason! By merely renouncing outer wealth, you can never be a *sannyasi*. *Sannyas* is a change in the inner mental setup, not a change in the outer material setup. Renouncing outer wealth to be a *sannyasi* is like doing the right action but for the wrong reason.

A small story:

There were three men in a mental asylum. One day, they went to the doctor and said that they were ready to be discharged.

The doctor was surprised! He said, 'Alright, come with me. We will have a small test to see if you are well enough to leave and live safely in the world.'

Renouncing is 'having' without the idea of having, and 'parting' without the idea of parting.

He took them to a swimming pool that had no water. He told the first man to jump into the pool and swim. The man jumped and sprained his ankle.

The doctor told him he was not ready to be discharged.

Next he told the second man to jump. The second man also jumped and sprained his wrist. The doctor told him he too was not ready to be discharged.

Then he told the third man to jump. The third man refused to jump, saying 'No, I will not do it!'

The doctor was very happy and declared that the third man was cured and could go home. When the man was signing his papers to leave, the doctor was curious and asked him, 'Tell me, how did you decide that you would not jump?'

The man replied, 'How can I jump? I don't know how to swim!'

Understand: right action, but for the wrong reason!

Renouncing wealth to become a *sannyasi* is doing the right action but for the wrong

**Sannyas is living
in tremendous
beauty – inside
and outside you.**

r e a s o n .
Wealth and
sannyas are
not mutually

exclusive. In fact, *sannyas* is the art and science of creating wealth flawlessly.

You should know one fact, the highest percentage of India's gold is sitting inside temples and monasteries! In South India alone there are so many temples with golden towers. Just imagine! When you understand the reality or truth of *sannyas*, you will not escape from wealth. You will have honest respect for wealth. The only thing is that you will never be caught in it. You will never internalize it. There will be no space for wealth in your inner space. So you will never suffer for it. You will never suffer because of it.

If you read the *vedic* scriptures you will see that they always talk only about the abundance of life. They never teach escaping from it. They teach loosening the attachment over possessions, not renouncing or hating it. *Sannyas* is seeing the vast abundance of life as one whole, and therefore not being attached to your own small possessions. It is knowing that wealth is also a manifestation of Existence and not the essence of life itself. Once this is known it doesn't matter how much wealth is lying with you. You remain

untouched by it. Remaining unattached to wealth has been described as 'renouncing' in the ancient years.

The *sannyasi* who renounces wealth physically may do so as a choice, not because it is any definition of a *sannyasi*. A real *sannyasi* is the one who lives beyond wealth. When he has gone beyond wealth, it does not matter whether he has it or not. If at all he physically renounces, it is out of a deep understanding of the whole thing, not out of failure or compulsion.

Sannyas is not suicide. It is life. *Sannyas* is living in tremendous beauty – inside and outside you.

The Persian mystic poet Jalaluddin Rumi* tells a story:

A sage once went outside to plough his field and saw a peacock busily destroying his own plumage with his beak. The sage could not bear to see this self-destruction, and that too of the most beautiful of birds. He told the peacock to stop what he was doing.

The peacock told him, 'I will not stop. My plumage that you admire so much is a source of danger to my owner. Hunters follow me all the time because of this, and my owner has trouble keeping me because of this. So it is better that I remove my feathers with

Jalaluddin Rumi - 13th century Persian Sufi poet.

my own beak and make myself ugly so that they will not pursue me.'

Outer beauty and wealth are not enemies to the path of *sannyas*. They are complementary. *Sannyas* adds inner wealth and beauty to your outer wealth and beauty. It gives us the intelligence to handle the outer wealth and beauty without any suffering related to it.

Live in reality!

Sannyas is not a game of one world against another, of material versus spiritual.

First thing you need to understand is there are no two worlds like material and spiritual. There is only one world. Second thing is *sannyas* is not a doctrine. It is a certain attitude of living in the world without suffering. It is an understanding of how to live in the best possible way. It is a conscious decision to live life as close to reality as possible, because living in reality is living in the most optimum way.

What is living in reality?

One person asked me a question, 'You say that currently our waking state is not reality, it is also a dream. But how can it be? Whenever we sleep and come back to the waking state, we find the things around us to be the same – house, belongings, people etc. But when we go to the dream state,

**Sannyas
is a certain
attitude of living
in the world
without suffering.**

things in the dream are not the same. So obviously, we can conclude that the dream is a dream and waking state is reality.'

Carefully understand what I am going to say now...

Sometimes, in one night's dream itself, you will dream ten to twelve years of your life. Am I right? You will start with your college and by the time you come out of sleep, you would have finished your marriage, kids, everything! You would have lived something like one decade overnight!

What does it mean?

It means you have lived ten years of your life in ten hours. Am I right? But when you are dreaming the dream, you don't feel that you are doing a fast forward. You are very clear that you are living your ten years of life in its own pace. But when you wake up suddenly, you realize you have spent only ten hours in sleep!

In the very same way, at any moment, you may wake up and feel you have not spent seventy years on planet earth, but that you spent only seven hours!

Let me explain.

Let us imagine that between 9th May and 10th May you dream as if you lived for one

decade. In the ten hours of sleep, you dream that you are studying in your college, and that you fall asleep for a few hours everyday, and come back. For the whole ten years, you can't be without falling asleep, right? So you dream that you are falling asleep as well, and living a regular life.

Now understand an important thing. In these ten years of life, in one continuous dream, from the 9th night to the 10th morning, you lived ten years of your life. Many times you would have fallen asleep and come back as part of the life in the dream itself. Within this dream, whenever you came back from sleep, you were with the same identity as you were before going in to sleep. Am I right? That is, in your dream, if you went to sleep as a college student, you woke up also as the same college student. That is why starting with college, you moved to the next step...the next step...the next step and so on without any confusion.

What does this mean? Just like in the waking state, you came back to the same identity every time. So, coming back to the same identity every time as you said, the same belongings, the same place, etc. is not the scale to prove it is a permanent reality! Am I right?

What does it mean? It means that just falling asleep and coming back to find the

same bank balance, car, house and wife, also does not mean you are in reality!

This is a very important understanding. This understanding can lead to such a sharp analysis of your life. You will get clarity in so many things.

If you understand this one concept, that everything is *maya* or illusion, you will not renounce anything. You will live with everything without being disturbed by it.

Now, just like how this ten year dream happens in ten hours, there may be a different calendar where your 70 years, for example 1950 to 2020, may be just seven hours for somebody who is in a different space!

If the number of thoughts per second is more, you will feel as if you are living for a longer time. For example, if you are sitting with someone who you are completely in tune with, you will feel that time is moving very fast because your thoughts per second at that time will be very low. But if you are sitting with somebody with whom you don't feel connected, what will you do every five minutes? You will keep looking at the watch. Your thoughts per second will be high. You will be restless. So you will feel as though a lot of time has passed.

That is why in the *vedic* tradition, the unit of time is called *kshana*. It is not measured as a chronological second. According to Western understanding, the chronological

time is calculated with the unit of second. It means that one unit of time is equal to one second. In the *vedic* tradition, the unit of time is called *kshana*. *Kshana* means the gap between one thought and the next thought. According to the Western calendar, your one second and my one second are one and the same. But according to the *vedic* calendar, your one *kshana* and my one *kshana* will be different! This is because the gap between one thought and the next thought for me will be different from the gap for you. Here, time is not chronological, it is psychological.

We refer to Thoughts Per Second as TPS.

Now, in the dream state, you have too many thoughts or a high TPS. That is why you feel as if you have lived for a long time. In the waking state, there is a medium number of TPS. That is why it seems like time is moving fast. For the celestial beings, the TPS is very less, and that is why their one day will be one year for us! You can see this in the *vedic* calendars.

If you bring down your TPS considerably, you can enter into *samadhi* or *turiya*, merging with the divine consciousness, which is 'reality'. So understand that it is only when you bring your TPS down, that you will understand reality.

Now, let us come back to our dream and waking states. In the waking state, when

**It is only when
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your TPS is lower than in the dream state, you realized that the dream state was not reality. Am I right? But when you were in the dream state, did you realize you were not in reality? No! You felt it was real because you were going through everything realistically. You responded to everything. You had nightmares, you had all the regular problems. Only when your TPS was brought down in the waking state, did you realize that the dream state was an illusion. Now... in the same way, to understand that your waking state itself is an illusion, you need to bring down your TPS further! Come down... come to the *turiya* state. Suddenly, you will realize that this waking state is also an illusion!

In the dream state, if your TPS was, let us say 1000, then in the waking state it might be say 100. In the *samadhi* state, it is zero. Because of a reduced TPS in the waking state, you understand that the dream state was an illusion. In the same way, only in the *samadhi* state, you will understand that the waking state is an illusion! As of now, your inner space is occupied with all that you experience in the waking state. That is why you never enter into the *samadhi* state.

**As long as you are
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One more thing to realize is that this whole situation is like a vicious circle. As long as you are enjoying the dream, you will never get out

of it. Only when you get out will you realize it is just a dream. Similarly, as long as you are enjoying the waking state, you will never understand it is an illusion!

Here is where Shiva comes to help us.

He gives a technique or method to get us out of the illusory waking state. This is a very subtle and important point. Whether you are in the dream state or in the waking state or *samadhi* state, the dreamer is the same, am I right? Whether you are seeing a 1000 TPS dream, or a 100 TPS dream, or you are in 0 TPS, the dreamer is the same. But what caused you to wake up from the illusion was the shift in attention from the seen to the seer. Am I right?

Whenever your attention moved from the seen to the seer, that is from the object that you were seeing to the person seeing it, you came to the next state, you woke up! So understand, whenever your

attention is diverted from the seen to the seer, you wake up.

This is the technique. This is the key: *turn your awareness from the seen to the seer*. You will wake up!

Sannyas is nothing but nurturing the awareness towards the seer. All the techniques of renunciation and meditation are methods to pull the awareness from the seen towards the seer.

Once you become the seer, you start experiencing your aloneness. Aloneness is your original nature. You experienced it in your mother's womb when you were by yourself. Aloneness is different from loneliness. Society teaches you to always be with people at home or any club or party or at least with the television. It weakens you by giving you these supports. When these are not there, you feel lonely. Loneliness always brings suffering. Aloneness on the other hand is the causeless bliss that is in you all the time, the bliss that all great enlightened masters have spoken of again and again. Aloneness gives you strength.

Sannyas is all about rediscovering that aloneness and relaxing into it.

Samsar and Sannyas

Samsar literally means the ‘world’ or the ‘path’. It refers to the worldly life that causes endless cycles of birth and death.

There are two ways to move in any path: either with baggage and people or by yourself. In the first case, you may have to wait for a longer time. In the second case you can reach, even this very minute.

Sannyas is the decision not to carry any baggage while moving. You can have everything, but you don’t have to carry it. When you don’t carry anything, Existence brings to you what you need for the moment. That is *sannyas*!

There is a beautiful story from the life of Buddha.

Buddha’s disciples gathered around him one day and asked him to teach them the essence of sannyas. He told them a small story:

One man was living on an island by himself. Suddenly he got the feeling it was time to move from the island. He did not have a boat. So he made one with whatever he could find – some twigs, branches, leaves. It was a difficult journey but somehow he crossed and reached the other side.

Buddha asked the disciples, ‘After reaching the other side, should the man

keep the boat or discard it?’ The disciples came out with different answers.

B u d d h a continued, ‘The man of sannyas discards the boat knowing that he will be provided for as needed in the future. The man of samsar keeps it so that his effort doesn’t go waste if he wants to journey back!’

A *sannyasi* walks with his thoughts on Existence. A *samsari* walks with his thoughts on how to exist. A *sannyasi* uses the boat to cross the ocean of life. A *samsari* carries the boat even beyond the time it is needed, not knowing he can drop it. That is the difference. There is nothing right or wrong in this. It is just two different ways to live.

Let me explain *sannyas* in the context of *karma* because *sannyas* is the shortcut to exhausting *karma*.

Karma is nothing but the unfulfilled actions of your past that pull you again and again to take birth to fulfill them. It is the very cause of the cycle of birth and death. It makes you take birth again and again in this world until it is exhausted.

A *sannyasi* walks with his thoughts on Existence. A *samsari* walks with his thoughts on how to exist.

There are three types of *karma* – *sanchita**, *prarabdha** and *agamyā**. *Sanchita karma** is your entire bank balance of unfulfilled actions (*karma*) accumulated over many lives. *Prarabdha karma** is that portion of *sanchita** that you bring and come to exhaust in this one birth. Every time you take birth, you bring with you a small portion of *sanchita* as your *prarabdha* to exhaust. It includes all your unfulfilled desires, lust, anger, fear, and such things. The third *karma*, *agamyā karma**, is the fresh *karma* that you create in this birth because of fresh, unfulfilled actions.

Ultimately, these three things need to be done in order to exhaust all *karma* completely. First, the fresh *agamyā** should not get created because it only adds to the bank balance or *sanchita* at the end of the lifetime. Second, the *prarabdha* with which you came should get exhausted, or fulfilled, in this life completely without a trace. Third, the volume of the *sanchita* itself should somehow be burnt so that the number of times you take birth reduces. This happens by fulfilling the *prarabdha* without accumulating the *agamyā* in a lifetime.

If the *prarabdha* is exhausted in the right way, *agamyā* will not get created. The same intelligence that properly exhausts the *prarabdha* will take care of not creating new *agamyā*. The *sanchita* itself can be exhausted only by the grace of an enlightened master.

Now understand clearly: if the fantasy of your *prarabdha* is greater than your intelligence, then *samsar* (marriage) is the path for you. If the fantasy of your *prarabdha* is lesser than your intelligence, then *sannyas* is the path for you! In the path of *sannyas*, your intelligence wins over your *prarabdha* and brings it to control and exhaust it. In the path of *samsar*, life teaches you in different ways and you exhaust your *prarabdha* through millions of births.

In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, there is an eightfold path to enlightenment. All eight parts have to be followed simultaneously. Three of the parts are *pratyahara*, *dharana* and *dhyana*. *Pratyahara* is drawing the mind inwards, away from the five senses. The next is *dharana* or the merging of the mind with the inner Self. The third is *dhyana*, meditation.

Sanchita karma - Bank of accumulated *karma* from which we choose to bring into this birth a few as *prarabdha karma*.

Prarabdha karma - Mindset and desires that we bring into this world when we are born.

Agamyā karma - The actions one constantly does out of free will after taking birth on planet earth. These are not born out of true desires but from desires borrowed from society, by looking at others.

Yoga Sutras - The book on yoga authored by enlightened master Patanjali.

Withdrawing the mind from the five senses itself can happen only when the mind merges with the inner Self! For example, you can release the foot from the lower rung of the ladder only after establishing yourself in the higher rung, is it not? You can let go of the lower branch of the tree only after clinging to the higher branch. We all think that only after renouncing worldly attachments, we can attain god. No! The truth is, only after attaining god can you really shake off the worldly things. Only after you experience *nithyananda* or eternal bliss, you can shake off *mithyananda* or worldly fantasies.

If you can become aware of and hold on more firmly to the higher rung you may let go of the lower rung more easily. That awareness is called *sannyas*. It is the process of understanding and moving to the higher rung and leaving the lower rung. As you move, renunciation happens as a byproduct. Because you realize that to climb higher you don't need anything but yourself! Anything you take with you is only going to make it more difficult to climb.

A small Zen story:

Having renounced his kingdom, a king requested a Zen master to accept him as his disciple.

The master told him, 'I will accept you, but I feel you have to wait until you gain

Withdrawing the mind from the five senses itself can happen only when the mind merges with the inner Self!

more maturity.'

The king was too impatient to wait. He pleaded with the

master. The master finally agreed on the condition that the king would move to another forest and live there. The king followed the master's words.

After a few days in the forest, the king was unable to bear the mosquitoes in the forest. He bought a mosquito net and protected himself. A few days after that he felt it would be better to have a cot to sit on for meditation, so he went and bought a cot.

Then he found that the rain was spoiling the cot. To protect the cot from rain, he built a small room and kept the cot inside it. A short time later he felt the need for someone to clean the room everyday, so he brought in a helper. Then, to keep the helper occupied, he brought in one more person.

This went on and on and eventually, he created a kingdom in the forest!

Understand, a king creates a kingdom even in the forest.

Sannyas is the search to answer the question ‘Who am I?’

A *samsari* goes to places to see the beauty of Existence.

A *sannyasi* sees everything around him as already divine and beautiful. When the *samsari* starts turning inward, he becomes a *sannyasi*. Until he finds the burning need for that, it is better for him to continue with what he is doing. For a *sannyasi*, the mind is happy all the time. What he gets is what he wants. He is always living in the mood of grateful and welcome acceptance. For a *samsari*, the mind is occupied with too many conflicts. He keeps trying to get what he wants. With intelligence, the *samsari* can awaken to the truth that what he is getting is what he needs for that moment and for his ultimate fulfillment.

There was a sannyasi who lived in a mountain area. The animals and birds would talk to him and he would respond. They would spend the whole day near his hut and at night would go back to their homes. Three times a week the sannyasi would go to the market place and preach. He spoke a lot about how to share what one has with others without the fear of becoming poor. He taught that Existence would shower abundantly if one trusts and does this.

One day, he found three men approaching his hut in the mountains. They came and asked him, ‘You have

always told us to share what we have and how good it is to do it. Now, we are in need of money for business. Can you give us some money which we will return to you as soon business picks up?’

The sannyasi was surprised. He took them into his hut and showed them. He had a mat, one set of clothes and a jug of water. He said, ‘Take these if you wish to. I don’t have any gold or silver to give you.’

The men became angry and shouted at him, ‘So you teach and preach what you yourself don’t follow!’

The *samsari* is concerned with material things and living life in a limited way. The *sannyasi* is concerned about death – death of all that is not him: ego, possessiveness, lust, anger, fear, jealousy and discontent. He knows he is something beyond all this. His whole quest is to find this, because once he finds it, he has found the higher rung of the ladder and he can leave the lower rung where the constant push and pull of all these emotions and material things reside.

Sannyas is the search to answer the question ‘Who am I?’ A *sannyasi* puts his whole energy into discovering the answer to this question. If people ask you, ‘Who are you?’ you will generally reply, ‘I am so-and-so’s son, I am an engineer, I am a professor.’

But those words describe who you are in your relationships with the world. If there were no world, then who are you?

The great enlightened masters who founded the world religions have said one thing repeatedly: *Aham Brahmasmi* or 'I am That' in the Hindu tradition, or 'Be still and know that I am god' in the Christian tradition, or *Anal-Haq* or 'I am the Truth' in the Islam tradition. Experiencing that you are god is the purpose of human life.

Once this purpose is experienced, the inner bliss that all these great masters talk about starts happening. Then you understand that the outer world is a beautiful stage where the divine play is happening. There is ultimate freedom from all worldly difficulties. You do, and yet you don't do, you speak and yet you don't speak. You cry and yet you don't cry. Your inner Self remains untouched. You are in 'eternal bliss' or *nithya ananda*.

The problem is that people generally think *sannyas* is a hindrance to worldly life. They think *sannyas* is seriousness. No! *Sannyas* is a certain quality for living life to its optimum. Seriousness will never help one live life to its full potential. Only sincerity and laughter will help. Laughter is the greatest spiritual quality.

A master was seated with his disciples. He was in an expansive mood and his disciples decided to ask him about the

various stages he passed through to reach the Divine.

With the energy of *sannyas*, you are ready for the challenges of life. *Sannyas* is strength.

The master beautifully started explaining...

'God held me by the hand and first took me to the Land of Action. I stayed there for several years. Then god returned and took me to the Land of Sorrow. I fell into deep sorrows but eventually went beyond them. I felt happy. Then, suddenly I found that god put me in the Land of Love. I went through burning emotions and found myself cleansed thoroughly. Then, he took me to the Land of Silence. There I learned the mysteries of life and death.'

The disciples asked, 'Was that the final stage of your quest?'

The master said, 'No. One day god said, Today I will take you to my very heart... and he led me to the Land of Laughter.'

So understand, *sannyas* is your very energy. How can it be a hindrance to anything? Not only that, with the energy of *sannyas*, you are always young. With the energy of *sannyas*, you are ready for the challenges of life.

Sannyas is strength. It is the quality of supreme self-discipline in this fantasy

**With *sannyas*, you
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much better way.**

world. Someone asked Mahavira, the great enlightened Jain master, 'Who is more superior, the *samsari* or the *sannyasi*?'

He replied, 'Self-discipline is the most superior! A *samsari* can sometimes be more self-disciplined than a *sannyasi*.' Please understand that self-discipline is not self-torture. It is a beautiful resting that happens within you. It happens out of a deep understanding of the nature of your mind and the world. That's all. It happens from inside you.

When I share this idea, people ask me, 'Then why can't we continue in *samsar* and live with the consciousness of a *sannyasi*?' You see, the nature of man is such that unless a *conscious* decision is taken, it is difficult to bring about a permanent transformation in the consciousness. *Sannyas* is a *conscious* decision to transform the consciousness. *Sannyas* is a conscious decision. That is why *sannyas* needs to be taken. With a conscious decision, there is continued awareness. Continued awareness decreases the chance of slipping back. Without it, there is nothing binding one to keep on the path. It becomes easy to slip.

With *sannyas*, you will continue to do what you are doing but in a much better way, in

a more confident way, in a more creative way, in a way that is closer to god. Creation is the quality of god or Existence. Existence continuously creates. *Sannyas* is imbibing the very qualities of Existence, and knowing that everything is the creation of Existence.

A small story:

A woman was walking from her village to the neighboring village. While walking, she came to a field of golden pumpkins. She saw a huge oak tree in one corner of the field.

As she was very tired, she sat under the oak tree for some rest.

Suddenly she looked up and saw tiny acorns all over the huge branches of the oak tree. Ahead of her, she also saw big pumpkins on tiny vines in the fields.

She thought to herself, 'Even god makes blunders with his creations. He should have put the small acorns on the tiny vines and the big pumpkins on the branches of the big oak trees.'

After some time, she stretched out and decided to take a nap under the oak tree. She fell asleep.

There was a heavy wind blowing. She was awakened by a tiny acorn that fell and bounced off her cheek. She rubbed her cheek and thought, 'Maybe god is right after all!'

Sannyas is about seeing the wonderful co-existence of everything in Existence. *Sannyas* is existing in relationships like a water drop on the lotus leaf. If you see the lotus leaf, the water droplet will be on the leaf but will be untouched by it. *Sannyas* is living in relationships while being untouched by them. A common misconception is that *sannyas* is renouncing relationships. No. *Sannyas* enriches relationships.

So many of my disciples who have embraced the path of *sannyas* come and tell me, 'Swamiji, after initiation, the husband-wife understanding has flowered so beautifully. Now we are really living in tune with each other and with everything around us.'

With *sannyas*, you start watching everything. You become a witness. Because of this witnessing, a gap is created between you and the other person. That gap is misunderstood as 'renunciation'. If you notice, the gap was not there earlier. Each one was suffocating the other. Now the gap is there. The gap is not a gap of distance but a gap of awareness.

Awareness is bringing your consciousness to your mind and watching non-judgmentally. It is a very subtle action. Soon it becomes continuous in you. That

is *sannyas*! Bringing awareness to the moment continuously is *sannyas*. With awareness, the very root of suffering is addressed before it takes root. The suffering is addressed because you are watching. Without awareness, there is bound to be suffering.

Sannyas is also living without the burden of the inner woman or inner man. What is meant by inner woman or inner man? It is nothing but the lust hidden in your mind, the fantasies that you have created in your mind. Shiva says beautifully in the Tantra*, a man who has abandoned the woman in his inner mind is a *sannyasi*, even if he is still in the family. On the contrary, if thoughts of a woman persist in a *sannyasi*'s mind, he cannot be called a *sannyasi*. This is the scale to measure if a man is a *sannyasi*.

In Buddha's teaching, the Four Noble Truths, the second truth deals with the cause of suffering. He beautifully says that suffering is because of the demands we make on life every moment. It is like asking a banana tree to bear mangoes! We will understand this habit only when we bring in awareness.

Not only that, when you watch, you start seeing exactly how transactions are happening in relationships. You see how

Tantra - Ancient *vedic* tradition of achieving enlightenment through spiritual techniques or practices, meditations and ritual worship.

**A *sannyasi* takes
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expectations are driving the whole thing. You see the ulterior motives in everything.

I remember an incident that happened

when I was around twelve years of age. One of my grandmothers was about 104 when she passed away. She had no more children of her own. She was looked after by one of my uncles. My uncle and his wife were not happy looking after her. They would complain about her and not take care of her properly. She was also a difficult and unpleasant person. She was very miserly even though she was wealthy. She would often ask me to buy her tobacco. When I asked for money, she would tell me to ask my father for it! She would not even give water from her well to her neighbors during summer.

When she died, no one in the family wept. But the women in the household changed into cheap *saris**, removed their jewelry and got ready to receive friends and neighbors who arrived to offer condolences. As soon as the guests arrived, the women would start wailing. Every time a new set of

relatives arrived, the wailing would start all over again. I was shocked at the hypocrisy of the situation.

When the dead body was still in the house and relatives were still coming, the immediate family went into the dead lady's room where her box of jewelry was kept under her bed. They all laid their individual claim to her jewelry and started negotiating and bargaining even before her body had grown cold! They called in a goldsmith to estimate the worth of the jewelry.

At that moment, I lost all respect for family and its social conditioning. I started laughing loudly at their behavior. An uncle tried to hit me to stop my laughter. I held his hand and told him that if he tried to hit me again, I would tell the entire crowd what they were up to – trying to loot even before the body was cremated. My mother knew me well and told the uncle to be careful. She knew I was quite capable of doing what I threatened to do!

Then the relatives started arguing about who would pay for the funeral expenses. My father, a mild and innocent man who hated arguments, immediately agreed to take care of all expenses.

Completely disgusted, I took my Bhagavad Gita book and started chanting its verses in front of the dead body. It is said that

Sari - One piece garment worn by Indian women.

merely reading the Gita in front of a dead body can liberate the soul.

Given my age, this was the best I could do in that situation. A *sannyasi* takes responsibility for the whole of Existence. He doesn't know the difference between his family and the rest of the world. All are the same. He wishes for the liberation of anyone who comes his way. On the other hand, a *samsari* takes responsibility for one family or maybe for a few organizations. This taking of responsibility is always towards a definite cause. It is either to accumulate the credit of serving, to fulfill some obligation, or to co-exist easily with the people around him.

The nature of a *sannyasi's* responsibility is completely different. For him, the whole world is his family. There is no obligation driving him. Responsibility happens completely out of the quality of his inner space. Also, a *samsari* can rest after fulfilling every duty at that stage in life. A *sannyasi* continuously works, because people are constantly in need of truths in their life.

A *sannyasi* is established in rich relationships. People think *sannyasis* run away from relationships. A young girl asked me while I was addressing a college gathering, 'Was it failure in love that caused

you to become a *sannyasi*?'

I told her, 'It was success in love that

caused me to become a *sannyasi*?' Actually, *sannyas* is what softens you into real love, love towards not just one person but towards the whole of Existence.

Ordinary love comes with a reason, or with lust. Real love knows no reason. It is just a causeless overflowing energy towards everything in Existence.

In reality, *sannyas* is living like a king. *Sannyas* is the beginning of a kingly life because when you have cleaned yourself of all your suffering, then you have gained everything you can ever gain! You gain far more than mere wealth can give you.

When I was born, the family astrologer was called to cast my horoscope as per family tradition. The astrologer studied it and said I would be a *raja sannyasi**, a kingly *sannyasi*. If *sannyas* is adapted in its right spirit, it gives a kingly stature. *Sannyas* is the ultimate royalty, because it is rich without any paraphernalia! A king is rich because of his outer wealth. A *sannyasi* is rich because of his inner wealth. With outer wealth, there is the danger that any time you may become a pauper. With inner

***Sannyas* is the
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Raja Sannyasi - King amongst monks.

**The rich person is
the one who is
enjoying
everything around
him continuously.**

wealth, you
remain rich
forever.

It is said that when Buddha went begging, he would look like a king, and the person who gave him alms would look like a beggar! That is the hallmark of the *sannyas* quality. Of course Buddha was enlightened at that time. But the *sannyas* dimension itself has this quality in it. It will simply radiate a kingly energy.

Not only that, the inner richness causes everything outside to be experienced with richness. A *sannyasi* recognizes the unending abundance of Existence. His vision is oceanic. He is not stuck in narrow perceptions. He perceives the whole of Existence as one. He feels part of the whole. That is why he is rich. A rich man who feels he owns a few acres is not really the rich one. The man who feels the abundance of Existence is really the rich one.

A small story:

One day a rich man took his son on a trip to the country with the purpose of showing his son how poor people live. They spent a few days with a farmer's family.

On their return from their trip, he asked his son, 'How was the trip?'

The son replied, 'It was very good, Dad.'

The father asked, 'Did you see how poor people live?'

The son replied, 'Yes I saw.'

The father asked, 'Can you tell me what you learned from the trip?'

The son answered, 'I saw that we have one dog and they had four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of our garden, whereas they have a river that has no end. We have imported lights in our garden, but they have the stars at night. Our courtyard reaches to the front yard, and they have the whole horizon. We have a small piece of land to live on, whereas they have fields that go beyond our sight.

We have servants who serve us, but they serve others. We buy our food, but they grow their own food. We have walls around our property to protect us, whereas they are protected by friends.'

The father was shocked! The son finally said, 'Thank you, Dad, for showing me how poor we are.'

Understand that the very word 'rich' has been misinterpreted. How can a person who is enjoying just a few bungalows be rich? He cannot be! The rich person is the one who is enjoying everything around him continuously. His richness is the richness

of the whole Existence. He enjoys everything with no attachment to anything.

Awaken to the freedom

(This section contains words spoken by Nithyananda while briefly elucidating the poem 'Song of a Sanyasin' by Vivekananda, a great enlightened master from India. He delivered this to a small group of ashramites in the Bidadi ashram, spiritual headquarters of the Mission at Bangalore, India. He spoke little, but with an overflow that overwhelmed the group into dazed silence. He stopped abruptly, saying He would continue later. Parts in bold are words from the verses.)

Nithyananda explained how he works on the brahmacharis and brahmacharinis (young boys and girls training on the path of sannyas) and how they can accelerate the process by understanding the process.)

Wake up the note...!

Wake up the note! the song that had its birth

Far off, where worldly taint could never reach

In mountain caves and glades of forest deep,

Whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame

Could ever dare to break; where rolled the stream

Of knowledge, truth, and bliss that follows both.

Sing high that note, Sannyasin bold! Say

—

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Strike off thy fetters! Bonds that bind thee down,

Of shining gold or darker, baser ore;

Love, hate; good, bad; and all the dual throng,

Know, slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free

For fetters, though of gold, are not less strong to bind;

Then off with them, Sannyasin bold! Say

—

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Whether you are caressed or whipped, a slave is a slave.

Understand: currently, your ego is settled in a few places. Your ego is settled in pride, lust, anger, wealth, social importance, personal freedom and such things. As long

as you live according to those things, whether you fulfill your desires or not, depression will be your base. Any manifestation of ego causes depression, either in a subtle way or in a big way. Do you understand? I think we are discussing this poem for all of you...!

dual throught...caressed or whipped....

Whether you are shown love by the master, or whether you are whipped by him, as long as you follow your ego based routine, your ego based lifestyle, you will remain a slave.

for fetters, though of gold

Understand, there is something called 'immediate freedom'. It is like this: when you wake up, you conduct your life according to how you feel. You wake up at whatever time you feel like, do things according to how you think they should be done, spend money the way you want to spend it. All this is immediate freedom. Only when you shake that immediate freedom, will the cognitive shift happen in you. The feelings of 'I' and 'mine' will be jolted. The shift will happen.

If you watch what I do, you will see that I am simply shaking your immediate freedom all the time! Nothing else. Presently, you have invested your entire

personality in whatever you think as your immediate freedom. I will simply shake that!

Let me explain this so you can understand it in the context of your own life.

Presently, you may be following the ashram routine from five AM until midnight. Starting tomorrow, if I give you ten days off as a holiday, saying you don't have to follow the ashram routine, what will you do? For the first four days you will sleep long hours, tossing around in the bed! After that what will happen? Your own desires will take over, and you will start functioning according to your ways.

The routine that is set for you by me is there to raise your consciousness, but it will be boring for you. When you are given a break, you will feel free for a few days. But after that, what will happen? The weeds inside you, your unconscious desires, will pull you and take you over. Without your knowledge, once again, you will be a slave, but to your own desires.

Presently what do you feel? You wonder if there is a need to work like a slave all the time from morning until night everyday following the same routine. But what will you be doing after four days of freedom from that routine? You will be a slave to your own desires! That's all.

When you follow your own desires, you will simply be postponing and relaxing your

routine. Your eating time, your sleeping time, your whole routine will relax. While you are doing this, a thick layer of depression will start developing in your being. When your own whim starts guiding your routine, without your knowledge, the depression develops in you. But in the lifestyle that I give, that thick depression layer will not develop. Day by day, beyond your logic, a lighter and lighter mood will start enveloping you! This is the big difference between these two paths.

Let darkness go! The will-o'-the-wisp that leads

With blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom.

This thirst for life, forever quench; it drags

From birth to death, and death to birth, the soul

He conquers all who conquers self. Know this

**And never yield, Sannyasin bold! Say –
‘Om Tat Sat, Om!’**

Understand carefully: in the period between death and the next birth, the one who says, ‘Aha, I have done a good job and come away,’ that one is a *sannyasi*. In the period between birth and death, which

is life, the one who thinks, ‘Aha, I am doing something great,’ that one is a *samsari*! Do you understand?

It is in the gap between death and the next birth that the soul reviews its past actions. The soul feels good when it has lived the previous life closest to reality. The soul feels regret when it has lived in illusion. The *sannyasi* is the one, who during this time between death and the next birth, feels he did a good job of life and came away because he would have lived closest to reality.

The *samsari*, on the other hand, is the one who during the time between birth and death, which is life, prides himself with illusory achievements, and concludes he is doing a good job! Understand: when I say *samsari*, I don’t mean married people. I mean the ‘mindset’ that is of the illusory world. This has to be clearly understood.

thirst for life, forever quench; it drags

The thirst for life never dies. It keeps on happening forever. After having taken many lives, and getting bored, ‘settling down’ is what I call *anubhava*, the ultimate experience of life. The enlightened master is one who, after having taken millions of lives and feeling bored, finally settles down and radiates such an energy that a person who just sees him, holds on to him for life! That is the mark of the enlightened master. That is how the relationship between the

**By applying the
deep life solutions
inside you, within
your being, a
freedom will
awaken.**

master and
disciple
happens. The
disciple
simply sees
the master in
a way that is

beyond the disciple's logic and so holds on to the master!

Understand, all the experiences that can happen through many, many lives, I have gone through and have come here now. I am what you call a 'senior soul'. Otherwise, can you see any correlation between my 31 years of age and the soul that is inside here? No! There is no connection here!

In the *moment* of seeing the senior soul, capturing that experience and raising oneself is what is called *sannyas*! That is what Vivekananda is saying here. *Sannyas* is seeing the enlightened one and holding on to him to raise oneself.

**He conquers all who conquers self.
Know this**

And never yield, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

**'Who sows must reap,' they say, 'and
cause must bring**

**The sure effect; good, good; bad, bad;
and none**

**Escape the law. But who so wears a
form**

**Must wear the chain.' Too true; but far
beyond**

**Both name and form is Atman*, ever
free.**

**Know thou art That, *Sannyasin* bold!
Say –**

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Just by escaping a law or a situation, never think you have really escaped. If any problem surfaces, just go into your being. Heal yourself by saying, 'I am *atman**', and feel the response to that problem happening within you, however difficult it may be. Act according to that response. That alone is freedom. Presently, when you have a problem, what do you do? You simply escape from that situation or from that person or from that place. Am I right? By escaping, you think you have freedom. That is what Vivekananda is denying here!

**Both name and form is Atman, ever
free.**

Know thou art That

Atman - Soul, Spirit, Consciousness etc as referring to the individual imperishable energy that is a holographic image of the Cosmic Consciousness.

By applying the deep life solutions inside you, within your being, a freedom will awaken. That freedom that comes from deep within is the real freedom. Only that will take you to the ultimate freedom. Other than that, through any other way, if you try to move towards freedom, it will take you only towards more and more bondage.

'Who sows must reap,' they say, 'and cause must bring

The sure effect; good, good; bad, bad; and none

Escape the law. But whoso wears a form Must wear the chain.' Too true; but far beyond

See: as soon as you take a form, as soon as you take birth, whatever you try to do to attain freedom, either by escaping from something or by resisting something, freedom never happens. Just like when you remove one chain that binds you, you tie another chain around yourself! If you want to heal a wound, you need to apply medicine to it. Can you heal it by digging into it continuously? No! Likewise, when you want freedom, the effort you make in the outside will only put you in more and more depression. From that depression, whatever work you do, will only take you

to further depression. Anything you do from bondage will take you only to further bondage. Working on the inside is the only thing that will help you.

For example, when you people do something wrong, to escape from it, you alter some situation or people in the outer world, right? You simply rearrange a few things to cover up. After that, only a worse sorrow happens to you! Once that sorrow comes, you think, 'What will I tell people who enquire about this? What answer will I give them?' Your ego will not permit you to tell that you brought the sorrow upon yourself. So what do you do? Without exposing your mistakes, without allowing the suffering of the sorrow to show, without exposing that you are in deeper sorrow now, you say, 'Ah...I did everything right. Leave it. Everything is going the way it should go.'

Am I right? This is the way life goes on now!

Take life here in the ashram. When the boiling starts happening here, when I start causing trouble for the ego, for the built-up identity, you escape from here and go

Anything you do from bondage will take you only to further bondage. Working on the inside is the only thing that will help you.

to Pondicherry* ashram. When you go to Pondicherry* ashram, there is a greater sorrow waiting for you there! You escape from there to Salem* ashram. From Salem* you run to Tiruvannamalai ashram. If none of these work out, you go out of the organization itself! You escape somewhere, right? Understand that by escaping, only a greater sorrow will come your way. But even after that comes, what do you do? You save your face! You say, 'Nothing is wrong. Everything is just fine.' Even if you know that the suffering came only because your ego was unable to bear the boiling, you will console yourself and continue doing what you were doing. If this cycle continues, you block the chances of being liberated from it.

Both name and form is Atman, ever free.

Know thou art That

What is the solution? Again and again, Vivekananda says, 'Know 'thou art That'. Inside yourself, again and again, stand up and experience the freedom of the inner world through acceptance. Whatever happens in the outer world, experience it as a happening in Existence. Know about the inevitability of the 'moment'.

Pondicherry - A state in South India neighboring Tamilnadu.

Salem - A city in Tamilnadu.

Understand that you are the *atman* or soul. Actually, you don't even need to understand. Just *think* that you are the soul; that is enough. Just think that you are the pure soul, not bonded to the body and mind. Experience whatever is happening to you in the outer world as a divine play happening within you. Know that what you see are mere reflections. By reminding yourself of these truths, a freedom will awaken. That is the real freedom. That is the ultimate freedom.

**Know thou art That, Sannyasin bold!
Say –**

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

**They know not truth who dream such
vacant dreams**

**As father, mother, children, wife and
friend.**

**The sexless Self! whose father He?
Whose child?**

**Whose friend, whose foe is He who is
but One?**

The Self is all in all, none else exists;

And thou art That, Sannyasin bold! Say

–

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Aye...!

They know not truth who dream such vacant dreams

As father, mother, children, wife and friend.

The sexless Self! whose father He? whose child?

Whose friend, whose foe is He who is but One?

Thousands of thoughts cross your mind every moment. Thoughts are nothing but vacant dreams, illusions created by your mind. All relationships and all emotions are but illusions. You came into this world to exhaust your *karma* and leave as an enlightened soul. But after coming here, you got caught in vacant dreams like relationships, emotions and such things. As these vacant dreams pass through your mind, suddenly you feel that the most torturous things are happening to you. You feel you can't bear it any more. Understand, if you feel this suffocation, it means that the time has come to stand up! The time has come to shake off the illusions and see reality. But what do you do? You alter the dream! You alter the situation! Then what happens? You continue the dream on a milder note. You

miss the opportunity to awaken and see the Truth.

When I boil you again and again, understand that I am awakening you!

When I boil you again and again, when I make the dreams terrible for you, understand that I am awakening you! When the potato is being boiled, if it jumps out, what will happen to it? It will go for waste! Similarly, when I increase the boiling, if you don't jump out, if you stay inside and make up your mind to see what is going to happen, it is enough! That is the becoming of a *siddha**, one who attains spiritual wisdom.

They know not truth who dream such vacant dreams

As father, mother, children, wife and friend.

The sexless Self! whose father He? whose child?

Whose friend, whose foe is He who is but One?

The Self is all in all, none else exists;

And thou art That, *Sannyasin* bold! Say

—

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Siddha - One who is a practitioner of the spiritual techniques.

Understand that by jumping out, you only extend the dream. See, unless it is a wild dream, you will not wake up! If it is just a mild dream, you will not wake up. If I am changing your life into a wild dream, please understand that I am waking you up! I am doing the job of waking you up. At that time, if you shout, 'No! Leave me, *Swamiji!*' and you alter your situation, what will happen? It will become a mild dream. Then what will you do? You will keep continuing the dream. You can continue for as many days as you wish. It is each one's preference....*mmm?*

There is but One – The Free, The Knower – Self!

Without a name, without a form or stain.

In him is Maya, dreaming all this dream.

The Witness, He appears as nature, soul.

**Know thou art That, *Sannyasin* bold!
Say –**

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend?

The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed; and food

What chance may bring, well cooked or ill, judge not.

No food or drink can taint that noble Self

Which knows itself. Like rolling river free

**Thou ever be, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –
'Om Tat Sat, Om!'**

Thus, day by day, till Karma's powers spent,

Release the soul forever. No more is birth,

Vivekananda says, 'Live every day like it is a possibility for awakening.'

But what do you do? Even though you come to me with this strong inspiration, after some time, you forget that every day is only for me to boil you and awaken you. You forget that every day is only for the purpose of boiling you. Then what do you do? You just settle down with a mundane attitude. You think, '*Ah...all this is just business. What is there in this? What is there in that?*' You settle down with these thoughts and get diluted. You start taking me for granted.

Thus, day by day, till *Karma's* powers spent,

Release the soul forever. No more is birth,

Nor I, nor thou, nor God, nor man. The 'I'

Has All become, the All is 'I' and Bliss.

Know thou art That, *Sannyasin* bold!
Say –

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Heed then no more how body lives or goes,

Its' task is done. Let Karma float it down;

Let one put garlands on, another kick

This frame; say naught. No praise or blame can be

Where praiser, praised, and blamer, blamed are one.

Thus be thou calm, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Truth never comes where lust and fame and greed

Of gain reside. No man who thinks of woman

As his wife can ever perfect be;

Nor he who owns the least of things,

nor he

Whom anger chains, can ever pass thro' Maya's gates.

So give these up, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Say, 'Peace to all: From me no danger be

To aught that lives. In those that dwell on high,

In those that lowly creep, I am the Self in all.

All life both here and there, do I renounce,

All heavens and earths and hells, all hopes and fears.'

Thus cut thy bonds, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –

'Om Tat Sat, Om!'

Where seekest thou? That freedom, friend, this world

Nor that can give. In books and temples vain

You can't create enlightenment in a being by teaching. You can only reproduce enlightenment by inspiring.

Whatever
decisions you
make during
depression will set
the next stage for
a scene of worse
depression.

Thy search.
Thine only is
that hand
that holds
The rope
that drags
thee on.

Then cease lament,
Let go thy hold, *Sannyasin* bold! Say –
‘Om Tat Sat, Om!’

Vivekananda says, ‘Books or temples do not give you the right wisdom. It is the hands of the Guru who lives the Truth that give you wisdom. Hold onto those hands. Don’t let go of them. After that, there is no sorrow for you.’

Vivekananda was a true *sannyasi*! He sacrificed his very life for the sake of the goal. He lived to show how a Paramahansa lives on planet earth! Understand, these verses are expressions of a great Consciousness. They spur one to bring clarity within oneself, again and again, to stand up and make the right decisions. Out of that, he says, emerges the freedom that we seek.

So understand, to come out of depression, don’t change the situation. When you change the situation, you will only go into

further depression. Whatever decisions you make during depression will set the next stage for a scene of worse depression. Just imagine, when you are in depression, will you have enough clarity to make a good decision? Will you have the clarity to properly handle anything? No! You will not. Whatever you do at that time will be like hooking on to four or five more keys and entangling yourself with them. When a drunk man gets a rope, he will unconsciously bind himself more and more with it, thinking he is undoing it! All the decisions taken during depression are like this.

The only way to come out of depression is to bring clarity within yourself. Watch and stand up with courage. Then the real freedom will start happening.

****Namo Arihanta!***

What is the role of the master in *sannyas*?

Mahavir Jain was a great Jain master who compiled the teachings of Jainism known as the Jain Sutras. The verse begins, ‘*namo arihantana**’. ‘*Namo arihantana**’ means, ‘I bow in reverence to the *arihantas* who achieved the highest truths.’ He is talking about the great enlightened masters.

Namo arihanta - ‘I bow down to Arihanta’, the Jain master and deity.

These masters not only achieve, but they radiate the truths so much that those who go near them are also inspired to achieve!

Arihanta does not mean a person who teaches. No! *Arihanta* is a person who inspires. You can't reproduce enlightenment by teaching. If we could, we would have started selling it long ago! We would have created stores like www.enlightenment.com. 'Please visit our website to get enlightened!' We would have created 'Enlightenment Guaranteed' shops. No! Fortunately or unfortunately, you can't create enlightenment in a being by teaching. You can only reproduce enlightenment by inspiring.

Arihanta is the person who is radiating the truth very powerfully, very strongly. His presence is so intense that anybody who comes near him, even if they spend a few minutes around him, they get inspired. The fire is ignited. The transmission of light happens. They start feeling that this is the best state to live in. This is the best space in which to exist. This is the best thing that can happen to me in my life. Please understand that if you go near an enlightened being, even if you spend just two to three minutes around him, suddenly you will feel that this experience is the best thing that can happen to you.

Through just his mere presence, you will feel god. He will become a fantasy in you. He will inspire you so much. He will

Arihanta is the person who is radiating the truth very powerfully, very strongly.

occupy your inner space so much that either you start working towards achieving that state or you feel you are not able to. Even if you feel you are not able to, it's okay. At least you have taken the first step. You have begun.

Respect towards an enlightened being is the first step towards enlightenment. It means that you want that state. Normally, you will not respect anything unless you agree with the ideology. Unless you have a little bit of attachment or feeling towards that ideology, at least a subtle feeling that you should be the same, you will not have respect for it. For example, if you are respecting somebody who is physically beautiful or handsome, be very clear, you have a subtle desire to be in that state, to have that quality. In the same way, if you respect a rich person, there is a subtle desire in you to have wealth. Anything you respect shows that it has entered your inner space.

When you say, 'I bow in reverence to enlightened beings,' it means you are paying your respect to enlightenment. Here you are not bowing down to someone who will help you when you are in fear. No. You are not bowing down to a king. You are not

bowing down to a rich person who will give you money. No. You are not bowing down to a person who will give you logic or philosophy, mere words. No. You are not following any person here. You are merely bowing down to a person who inspires, who drops the seed of enlightenment in you, who helps you achieve enlightenment! Somewhere you feel that just being with that person is enough. Enlightenment will happen. Such is the nature of the *arihanta*!

There is a beautiful commentary that says when you sit in front of an *arihanta*, the ultimate conscious being, without your knowledge, without even your conscious understanding, your whole being integrates towards that one goal, towards enlightenment. As of now you are not one being as you think. Your head is pulling, calling you in one direction. Your eyes are pulling you in the other direction. Your ears are pulling you in a different direction. A conscious decision to integrate these different fragments and direct the being towards enlightenment is *sannyas*! *Sannyas* is the determination to transform. Then the enlightened being can help you.

When you attain *sannyas*, you cannot explain it to anyone! You can experience it. You can radiate it, and they will catch it in the way you walk, in the way you talk and move around. You will become a spontaneous crowd puller. You will radiate an incomprehensible charm and energy.

Grace happens naturally with *sannyas*, because *sannyas* is nothing but revealing your inner beauty. The very fragrance of *sannyas* is grace and bliss.

Integrity – the trait of a *sannyasi*!

The word ‘penance’ means nothing but integrating yourself, making yourself a single entity. You may ask, ‘Are we not like that now?’ If you look closely, you will see that we exist as different entities, never as one. There is everything else in our life, except integration.

If you look deeply inside, you will understand, there are hundreds of voices continuously talking inside you. The moment the mind says, ‘Let us do this,’ the very next moment the thought will arise, ‘No. Let us not do it!’ After thinking of the side effects and after effects, the mind starts oscillating.

Integrating the fragmented parts of the mind is the very essence of life. Integrating the feelings and the mind, integrating your face and your mind, ensuring that your face shows the same thing as what your mind thinks, is the essence of life.

If you study the lives of great masters and try to search for one basic essence in all of their lives, you will find, it is not

knowledge or devotion. It is integrity! What they believed in, they lived. That's all! Their integrity was solid. They were ready to lose even their very lives, but not their integrity.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, the great enlightened master from India, used to move around on the streets just singing devotional songs. He never bothered about what others said about him. What he felt, he expressed. He was thrown into the sea because of the way he walked the streets, but it didn't stop him. To be like this requires a deep sense of sacrifice. It takes the courage to sacrifice anything to live with integrity!

That is why anything that these great masters did in their lives always culminated in eternal auspiciousness! Everything they did was an effort to integrate themselves with deep sincerity and devotion. The intense effort to integrate oneself completely is what is called penance. Penance always ends in auspiciousness. There will be innumerable things happening in your life all the time. Enduring all those things and intensifying your integrity with them - that is called penance. On the other hand, if you allow life's happenings to shake you, then you

land in disgrace. Which ever way you wish to go, is up to you.

Everything master did was an effort to integrate themselves with deep sincerity and devotion.

Adi Shankara was a great enlightened master from India. As a young boy, he was caught in a dilemma when he wanted to pursue the path of sannyas. He wanted to leave home with the permission of his mother, but she was unwilling to let go of him.

One day, he went to bathe in the river. Suddenly, his mother heard him crying out loud for help. She ran out and saw that a crocodile had caught his leg. He was struggling to be free.

Suddenly, by a flash of thought, he cried to her, 'Mother, if you give me permission to become a sannyasi, I will be freed from this crocodile now to continue with my life.'

The mother was surprised and asked how. He explained, 'According to the Vedas, if I enter a new ashrama (stage of life), it is equal to being born again. So, if you give me permission to enter into sannyas, then maybe god will give*

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu - A mystic from Bengal, India steeped in devotion to enlightened master Krishna. His followers are known as Gaudiya Vaishnavas.

Ashrama - The four stages in one's life: *brahmacharya* as a student, *grihastha* as a married householder, *vanaprastha* at the end of a productive married life and *sannyasi* as a person who renounces all material aspects in life.

**Once you
integrate, you
know who you
really are.**

*me a fresh
lease of life!’
The mother
was totally
helpless. She quickly made up her mind.
It was better to have her son as a
sannyasi than see him dead. She
agreed.*

*Immediately the crocodile released the
grip! Sankara ran to his mother with
great joy. He had lived the truth he
sought at that moment... and it worked.*

See, there are three things:

Thinking the Truth

Speaking the Truth

Living the Truth

The first two are easy to follow. But the third, living the Truth all the time, is difficult. It is very rare. *Sannyas* is the courage to live what we think is the Truth. We give importance to speaking the Truth. But living the Truth is most important. If you start living your Truth, your respect for yourself will increase. That is the beauty of it.

When you come to me with a problem, I sometimes give you consolation and tell you that it is alright. You see, the very fact that you are coming to me with the problem shows you don't have the integrity to live with it and solve it! So, I have to

console you. Anything can be lost, but not integrity. With integrity, your own evaluation of yourself goes up. When your own unconscious mind starts to believe you it is the most auspicious thing that can happen in your life. The gates of heaven are then open!

When you integrate, you drop hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is pretending to be what you are not. Hypocrisy is hiding in many places so people can't see who you really are. The fragments in you dominate over each other and make you hypocritical. When you fight with your own fragments and win, you are a *dheera*, a courageous one! It is easy to fight with others and win. When you fight with others and win, you are a *veera*, a warrior. But fighting with yourself requires more courage. You don't fight unless you are tired of yourself. Only when you are tired, you accept that you need to start the fight.

Once you integrate, for the first time, you know who you really are. All the masks drop. You are ready to expose yourself in relationships. You become more authentic. You suddenly realize that you were missing things because of *you!* *Sannyas* is all about becoming more authentic. When I say authentic, I mean that you will radiate your individuality instead of your personality. With fragments, you are a personality. With integrity, you are individuality. Individuality is seeing your authenticity through your own eyes. Personality is a built up image

in the eyes of society. The master's work is to create a space in you where you don't have to guard your personality, where you can be free, where just understanding can cause transformation.

Buddha used to tell his disciples, 'Count your life only after you have taken *sannyas*.'

Someone asked me if taking the vow of *brahmacharya** or *sannyas* will lead to enlightenment. Whether taking the vow leads to enlightenment or not is secondary. But if you observe the vows strictly for one month, successfully, the respect you have for yourself will tremendously increase. That is enough! It is called *asaadhya sadhana* – doing the seemingly impossible task successfully. It is making you do whatever your mind says you cannot do! Techniques like fire walking are in this category. Ordinarily, the mind will say that you cannot walk on a fire bed. Once you do it, the respect you have for yourself will increase! Then you will come into integrity.

Integrity needs to be understood in two ways.

The first part is integrating the fighting parts of the mind into one. See, the very life gets wasted in the oscillation of the mind. If you can follow any one path, you will attain it. For example, let us suppose

there are two paths to reach Bangalore. One path is 30 kilometers while the other is 30,000 kilometers. You are oscillating between which path to choose. If you choose any one path and proceed, you will reach Bangalore.

But if you keep oscillating, if you go on one path for half hour, and then change your mind and go on the other path for the next half hour, what will happen? You will never reach Bangalore! At least if you decide and take the 30,000 kilometer path, you will reach Bangalore, even if it takes you one year! But if you keep oscillating between these two paths, even if it takes thirty years, you will not reach Bangalore.

Even if the chosen path is wrong, the one who moves with integrity automatically comes to the correct path. He achieves what needs to be achieved. Understand clearly: there are only two types of people on planet earth, those who live with integrity and those who live without integrity, that's all! The scale to measure a person is not the path on which he went but whether he lived with integrity or not.

Integrity is the strength to live your belief, come what may.

Second, not getting diluted by external influences, is also integrity. It is the ability to not alter our integrity or dilute ourselves

Brahmacharya - Literally means walking in reality. The first stage of life in the *vedic* tradition as a celibate.

Integrating the mind is the essence of life.

due to inner confusions or outer influences. The person who lives with integrity, even if he dies on the train platform, will die with the satisfaction that he lived completely. The person who lives without integrity, even if he dies in the best hospital, will die with dissatisfaction. The scale to measure the quality of a person's life is to see how much he lived in tune with what *he* felt was life. For example, if he is an aesthet, if he lived as a strong atheist and died as a strong atheist, there is nothing wrong. He will attain! That very strength, when it goes deeper and deeper in him and searches, will show him the truth!

Integrating the mind is the essence of life. Decide you will always say and do only what you feel is right. Then, you will come to tremendous clarity and conviction in the inner and outer worlds.

Vivekananda recounts in his life that his master, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, died leaving him the responsibility of the mission. At the same time, Vivekananda's father died leaving behind a family of utter poverty. Vivekananda was the only hope for his family. He stood between saving his family and saving the world. No one recognized the mission he spoke of. He says beautifully, 'Who will sympathize with

the imaginations of a boy?' He was, after all, a young boy!

He describes those few days as 'unimaginable hell'. He was with a small group of boys, with no money, with only one thing: the integrity to live the life they believed in, the life taught by their master. Ten years later, he says, 'Ten years ago, I could not get one hundred people to celebrate master's birth anniversary. Today there are fifty thousand!' *Sannyas* is taking a strong decision not to allow the unconscious to hinder the consciousness and to establish consciousness firmly on the master and his words.

Vivekananda was questioned as to how he could desert his family at that time. Vivekananda beautifully replied, 'I believed that Ramakrishna's teachings could rationalize India and many foreign races. With that belief came the realization that it is better that a few persons suffer than for such ideas to die out of the world. What if a mother or two brothers die? It is a sacrifice. Let it be done. No great thing can be done without sacrifice. The heart must be plucked and the bleeding heart placed upon the altar. Then, great things are done!'

Such was his integrity.

Not only that, those who spoke that Vivekananda deserted his family do not know the correct facts. He continued to

fulfill his duty by giving them the bare minimum requirements. He also went to the court of Law to attend to some legal issues they faced.

A small story:

During the civil wars in Japan, an invading army entered a town and took control of the whole town. Before the army arrived in one particular village, everyone fled except a Zen master.

Curious about this master, the general went to the temple to see what kind of a man the master was. The master did not even acknowledge the general. The general became very angry when he was not treated in the usual respectful way to which he was accustomed.

He took out his sword and shouted, 'You fool! Don't you realize you are standing before a man who could run you through without blinking an eye?'

The master remained calm and asked, 'And do you realize that you are standing before a man who can be run through without blinking an eye?'

With the strength of integrity comes utter freedom and bliss. With freedom and bliss there is no fear in the inner or outer world!

Life is for enlightenment!

The very goal of life is enlightenment. You may have other goals, but knowingly or unknowingly, they are just different names that we give to the goal of enlightenment. In the same way, whatever else you may seek, what you actually seek is *sannyas* itself. But you don't know it. That is the problem!

You may think your goals are to have more money and more relationships. The truth is that even the one who searches for money actually searches only for enlightenment! See, there are only two things. One is money, and the other is name and fame. Name and fame mean nothing but to have more relationships. Whatever experience you feel you are going to get through money or relationships, you will only get through enlightenment!

That is why the soul never rests until enlightenment happens. No amount of money satisfies the soul. No relationship satisfies the soul. When money and relationships don't give satisfaction, it is called the 'depression of success'. This is what happens after reaching the peak of our career. People come to me and say, 'I have achieved all that I wanted to achieve, but *what for* I wanted to achieve, I have not achieved. I feel incomplete.' Understand that this is the call of your being that seeks no other goal except

**The freedom to
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enlightenment. The response to it is *sannyas*.

Not properly understanding the goal of life is the

root cause of all problems. *Sannyas* is recognizing the goal properly and integrating to achieve it. Whatever goal you may be running behind in your life – money or relationship or whatever, your end goal is only bliss. There is no other separate goal in life!

There are only two types of people. One group knows the word bliss or enlightenment, and the path to it. They live their life according to that. The other group does not know the word or the path, so it comes around in circles. That's all! The former is *sannyasi*, the latter is *samsari*.

If you stand in Mysore Road and decide to go to Bangalore, you can take the shortcut and reach after thirty kilometers. Without knowing the shortcut, you can go around and reach after 30,000 kilometers. The people who don't know the shortcut keep going around.

Any goal other than enlightenment will leave you half way through the process. Any other goal will not fulfill you completely. Only the goal of enlightenment has the energy to stay with

you until the end and fulfill you when it is achieved.

You are going to live for maybe 70 or 80 years in this body. Am I right? In those years, you can keep your consciousness either in a high state or in a low state. You can play with it either way. The freedom to keep the consciousness either at a high or low level is available to you for a span of 70 to 80 years. Understand deeply, if you get any other gift and waste it, it is okay. But if you get the gift of consciousness and waste it, it is the greatest loss ever.

There are many glass pieces. But only a few are positioned in such a way as to receive the sun's reflection. Similarly, there are millions of living creatures. Not all of them are in the state to receive the cosmic consciousness and reflect it themselves. Only man has the power to reflect the cosmic consciousness in himself as the 'I'. For the mere reflection to fall on us, we are highly blessed souls. It is the highest possibility on planet earth.

If the direction of the glass changes, or if the glass breaks, the possibility no longer exists. The greatest loss is losing the possibility of the glass reflecting the sun in itself. Man is the glass that has been blessed with the reflecting capacity and given the right orientation to receive the reflection of the cosmic consciousness. Only human consciousness has the highest

possibility of flowering into enlightenment.

Generally I don't force or impose anything on anyone. But when I see humans wasting the highest possibility of their birth, I feel bad for them. Everyone is moving around like people who have been led into the forest blindfolded. You move around in circles to fulfill the ego of other people. You are not even running to satisfy your own ego. You are running to satisfy someone else's ego! Your life itself is moving in this fashion. You don't know why you are running.

You have achieved the human body which gives you the highest possibility to take the jump in consciousness. The glass is already reflecting the sunlight. Now all that the glass needs to do is to see the *source* of the reflection. That's all! Merging with the Source is what I call enlightenment, merging of the individual consciousness with the cosmic consciousness.

If this happens, then the goal of life, the purpose for which the glass was created, is achieved. Then, even if the glass breaks, there is no problem. But without achieving that, if the glass is broken, it is the greatest loss ever. If the human body perishes before enlightenment, there cannot be a greater loss than that.

Sannyas is the means to this achievement. *Sannyas* is not the end of life. It is the beginning of life. *Sannyas* is moving

towards enlightenment, the only and permanent purpose of life.

Conditioning is the culprit

If the purpose of life itself is enlightenment, where are we stuck right now? In what areas of our lives are we moving in the wrong direction? Understand that the problem is in recognizing the correct goal. If the goal is right, you have achieved it. If your goal is right, it means you are already living it.

Sannyas is nothing but creating clarity about the right goal. People miss because they don't have clarity about the goal. *Jeevan mukta*, a person who lives a liberated life, is a person who has clarity about the goal and pours his consciousness only on that goal every moment of life.

'Conditioning' is the reason that you miss the goal. When you were born, you came as a free bird, Paramahansa or the supreme swan, to flit and fly blissfully around and enjoy the whole of Existence. But after coming, not only did you fly around, unknowingly you also landed on

You have achieved the human body which gives you the highest possibility to take the jump in consciousness.

**A *sannyasi* moves
in synchronicity
with the whole of
Existence and
learns through it.**

planet earth. That was the problem. There are many people waiting to catch such birds that land! Society waits to fit you into the frame of country, religion, caste, community and creed.

You were a sweet soul when you landed on planet earth. You were not a Hindu, or an engineer or a worker. But understand that society wants engineers and workers. It is not bothered about your consciousness. Actually, neither your parents nor society are aware that there is something called consciousness. They themselves don't have that intelligence. They teach you what they were taught. That's all. Their conditioning is not a deliberate attempt to restrict or condition you.

Conditioning is the unwanted dowry that has been handed over for generations and lives, from person to person. First, there is parental conditioning. Then there is societal conditioning. Based on these two, you create certain ethics for yourself. This is the self imposed conditioning, your own *dharma*, your own path of righteousness.

Because we create so many layers of conditioning, we are unable to see the Truth directly. We are not able to perceive

the goal directly. We are not able to live the goal directly. We are caught in the conditioning and forget who we truly are. The conditioning creates certain limitations in us, and we start thinking that the limitations are the real us. Even the clothes that we wear condition us to believe we are the clothes!

Many of the conditionings are created in society in order to peacefully co-exist. For example, for easy communication, many languages are taught. There is nothing wrong in learning a language, but taking it up as a conditioning and making the language your very life, and creating sorrow for yourself and others is wrong. That mental attitude is wrong. So many people have sacrificed their lives for the sake of language. If the conditioning were not there, so many deaths would not have happened! The very history of mankind would have been written differently. Conditioning is the reason for terrorism among human beings. Today, conditioning-based-divisions goes right down to the level of belonging to specific political parties!

Let me tell you, the moment conditioning is sown in you, that moment itself, the noose of Yama or the lord of Death falls on you. Don't think it falls on you only at the time of death. When conditioning reaches its peak, it comes as the final death of the body, that's all. Death is the peak point of conditioning. Those who are

caught in conditioning move towards death every minute of their lives. Those who are under the guidance of an enlightened master are the ones who move towards freedom every minute of their lives. One group moves towards Yama, while the other group moves towards Shiva! If the coil of conditioning increases day by day, you are moving towards Yama. If the coil loosens day by day, you are moving towards Shiva. You are freeing yourself more and more from the conditioning.

By taking *sannyas*, you are taking the first conscious step to drop the past and enter a new world. The past is familiar, so you like to carry it. The mind always likes familiar patterns. Also, society teaches you to carry the past so that it can put guilt and fear in you that are based upon the past incidents. The past is unwanted baggage. *Sannyas* is disconnecting from the past. When you disconnect from the past and move to a new future, initially, there is utter insecurity. *Sannyas* is utter insecurity. In utter insecurity, there is nothing else to hold on to you, so you will find god!

Why do you think I give you a spiritual name? I give you a spiritual name to help you more easily disconnect from the past. When somebody calls out your name, immediately your awareness grips you and you respond. This is how deeply your name

is embedded in your unconscious. Your name brings immediate awareness into you. If you are sitting in a big classroom, and suddenly the teacher calls out your name, whether you were dozing off or listening to him, you will be jolted from that thought pattern, and come to the present. Do you agree? Your name is that significant in centering you.

The new name that I give you will constantly remind you of the psychological revolution that has happened in you, the new understanding that has happened in you. The name also indicates your individual spiritual path, according to your own innate nature, which will lead to the ultimate flowering of your consciousness.

A *sannyasi* works for the present moment. He works to give his whole life to Existence and doesn't care about the results. The results take care of themselves. That is his way. He knows only the moment, nothing else. Therefore, he learns directly from Existence every moment. That is why he has no doctrine, no religion. He moves in synchronicity with the whole of Existence and learns through it.

There is a Sufi saying, 'The Sufi is the child of the moment.' In Sufi texts, every moment is called a breath. The Sufis are called 'the folks of the breaths,' because they live in full awareness of every breath, of every instant. According to them, every moment, a new Self arrives. That is the

Sannyas is the joyful awareness that the 'moment' is guiding you closer to your enlightenment.

spirit of sannyas, fresh every moment. A person of the moment learns from the moment. For

him, Existence is his teacher.

When the great Sufi mystic Hasan, was dying, somebody asked, 'Hasan, who was your master?'

He said, 'I had many masters. If I relate their names it will take months or even years, and it is too late now. I am going to die any time. I will tell you about three masters.'

The first one was a thief. Once I got lost in a desert, and when I reached a nearby village, it was late and everything was closed. At last I found a man who was trying to make a hole in the wall of a house. I asked him where I could stay and spend the night. He said, 'At this time of night it will be difficult. If you don't mind staying with a thief, you are welcome to stay with me.'

I stayed with this man for one month. Each night he would tell me, 'Now I am going for my work. You take rest and pray for me.' When he came back, I would ask him, 'Did you get anything?' He would say, 'Not tonight. But

tomorrow, god willing, I will try again.' He was always happy and hopeful, never in a state of hopelessness!

When I was meditating for many years, and nothing was happening, many times the moment came when I was so desperate, so hopeless, that I thought I should stop all this nonsense. Suddenly I would remember the thief who would say every night, 'God willing, tomorrow it is going to happen'

My second master was a dog. One day, I was going to the river to quench my thirst. A dog came and he was also thirsty. He looked into the river, and saw another dog there, which was his own image. He became afraid. He would bark and run away, but his thirst was so much that he would come back. Finally, despite his fear, he jumped into the water and his own image disappeared. I realized that the message had come from god to me: one has to jump in spite of the fear.

The third master was a small child. I went to a town where a child was carrying a lit candle. He was going to the mosque to put the candle there.

I asked the boy, 'Have you lit the candle by yourself?' He said, 'Yes.' Then I asked him, 'There was a moment when the candle was unlit, and then there was a moment when the candle

was lit. Can you show me the source from which the light came?’

The boy laughed, blew out the candle, and said, ‘Now you have seen the light going. Where has it gone? You tell me!’

My ego was shattered and my whole knowledge was also shattered.

It is true that I had no master. That does not mean that I was not a disciple. I accepted the whole of Existence as my master. I trusted the clouds, the trees. I learned from every possible source.

Sannyas is the joyful awareness that the ‘moment’ is guiding you closer to your enlightenment. All you have to do is be vulnerable, that’s all.

A sannyasi is utterly relaxed in the moment.

A warrior from Japan was captured by his enemies and was kept inside a prison. He feared that the next day he would be tortured, questioned and executed. He was not able to sleep at all.

Suddenly he remembered his Zen master’s words, ‘Tomorrow is not real. It is an illusion. The only reality is now.’ Remembering these words, the warrior became calm, peaceful and fell asleep.

Tomorrow also comes in the form of today. So why not focus on just today? When you

**You are in love
with everything
and everyone for
no reason at all.
That is sannyas.**

are in the moment, there is no space for pain or suffering. Only

when you live in the past or future, you create the space for suffering. When you live in the moment, you automatically create a space where everything is beautiful. Life itself becomes a romance with Existence! You resonate with the whole thing. You are in love with everything and everyone for no reason at all. That is *sannyas*. Then, you don’t amass. You don’t fear. You don’t worry. Things happen around you like a beautiful dream.

A *sannyasi* is an eternal wanderer in spirit. Even if he is in one place, his spirit wanders without any pattern, touching so many things far away. He doesn’t care to accumulate anything. He gives away whatever comes his way. He receives much more than he needs. He lives like a king.

A small story:

There was a rich man who owned a cellar with lots of wine flowing in it.

He had one jug of special wine that he guarded, unopened.

Once, the Governor of the State visited him. He said to himself, ‘This wine is too special for him. I will open some other bottle.’ After some time, members of the royal family visited him. He

thought, 'I don't think even these people deserve this wine. I shall keep it for more special persons.' He served ordinary wine.

Then there was a family wedding, and he would not serve the wine, even to his near and dear ones. Finally one day he died and the wine was brought out along with the other jugs and served to the peasants of the neighborhood. No one knew that it was special.

When you don't hoard, you flow. Life is designed to flow. Sannyas is flowing with the awareness that Existence is the current pulling it along. This very attitude will attract the benevolence of Existence.

Enjoy the transience!

In a certain kingdom, the practice was that the royal elephant would pick the next ruler. The elephant would place him on its back and return to the palace where he would be unanimously crowned as the ruler.

On this occasion, the elephant started making its way towards the forest. Puzzled, the people followed. The elephant went to a place where a saint lived. It promptly picked him up and brought him to the palace! The saint was unwilling to be the ruler. However, after

much persuasion he agreed and ascended the throne.

Being a saint, he was driven by neither greed nor fear. By the sheer strength of his state, he caused the country to prosper. The ministers and people were thrown back into themselves with no scope for manipulation.

The neighboring king heard about the kingdom and decided to invade it.

But the saint could not be moved to respond to the cry of war. He sat firmly, not mobilizing an army. The offending king arrived in the battlefield with his army and found no one there. Surprised and curious, he entered the kingdom to meet the king. He told him, 'I want to wage a war with you.'

The saint asked, 'What for?'

The king replied, 'I want to have your kingdom.'

The saint replied, 'Take it.'

The king was shocked! He cried, 'What do you mean? Without a fight?'

The saint replied, 'Of course!'

The king fell at his feet and declared, 'I am not fit to rule even my kingdom. Please take it.'

Sannyas is the understanding of the transient nature of everything. All desires,

possessions, and emotions are moving and changing. Everything is changing and moving. Nothing is permanent. If you analyze your own desires before one is fulfilled, it looks like a mountain, a huge goal. After being fulfilled, the same desire looks like a molehill. Before being fulfilled, it will seem like your very life. After fulfilling one desire, you simply move to the next desire! Understand that the process itself shows that desires are neither solid nor permanent. They are just changing fantasies of the mind.

Sannyas helps you see the temporary nature of desires. Slowly, desires stop getting created. Then, all the energy that was locked up in desires is freely available to you. Automatically, your potential will take a jump. You are ready to do anything. Although you live in it, nothing in the material world really pulls you. Even if you see something beautiful, you don't wish to possess it. You just enjoy it and move on. That's all. That is *sannyas*.

Sannyas works like the log of wood that is used to burn the dead body and finally gets thrown into the same pyre. It burns out all the fantasies in you and finally gives itself to the same fire. It is a tool.

Adi Shankara beautifully says in his famous song, *Bhaja Govindam**:

**Desires are
changing
fantasies of
mind.**

*Even when days
and nights,
winters and
springs have gone,
and life almost comes to an end,
the grip of desire is still there!*

Desire has such a pull at the unconscious level that liberating oneself from it is the greatest liberation.

A small story:

Once there lived a stone cutter. He was not satisfied with his position in life. One day he was passing through a wealthy merchant's house. Through the gate which was open, he noticed many possessions and important visitors in the merchant's house. He thought that the merchant must be very powerful. He became jealous and wished that he could be like the merchant.

To his great surprise, the stone cutter suddenly became the merchant, enjoying more luxuries and power than he had ever imagined.

One day, he was standing on the road when he saw a high official pass by. He was carried in a beautiful chair, accompanied by attendants and escorted by soldiers beating gongs.

Bhaja Govindam - Collection of 32 (sometimes 34) devotional verses composed by enlightened master Adi Shankara. This is considered to be the essence of *Vedanta* and *Advaita*, non-duality.

A sannyasi is one who clearly sees that everything is changing all the time, everything is beautiful.

Eve-ryone, no matter how wealthy, had to bow down before the procession.

He thought, 'How powerful that official is! I wish I could be a high official!'

Immediately, he became the high official, and he was carried everywhere in his beautiful chair.

One day it was extremely hot, and he felt very uncomfortable in the sticky chair. He looked up at the sun. It was so bright and beautiful in the sky. He thought, 'How powerful the sun is! I wish that I could be the sun!'

He became the sun! He enjoyed his powerful position over everything.

One day, a huge black cloud moved between him and the earth, so that his light could no longer shine on everything below. He was surprised. He thought, 'How powerful that huge black storm cloud is! How I wish I could be a cloud!'

He became the storm cloud, flooding the fields and villages.

Soon he found that he was being pushed away by some great force, and realized that it was the wind. He thought,

'How powerful the wind is! I wish to become the wind!'

He became the wind and powerfully blew over the roofs of houses and through forests.

One day, he came across something that would not move, no matter how forcefully he blew against it. It was a huge and towering rock. He thought, 'How powerful that rock is! I wish to become the rock!'

Then he became the rock, more powerful than anything else on earth. But as he stood there, he heard the sound of a hammer pounding a chisel into the hard surface, and felt himself being changed. He thought, 'What could be more powerful than a rock?'

He looked down and saw a stone cutter far below him!

This story clearly illustrates how the mind always thinks that which has not yet been achieved is greater than that which has been achieved. The grass on the other side is always greener. But when we go to the other side, what happens? We feel the grass on the opposite side is greener! We jump from one thing to the other, from one desire to the next, from one point of view to the next, but we are seldom happy.

The truth is, we are already enough unto ourselves. We just need to awaken to it.

That's all. If we awaken to that truth, our beauty will be enhanced. Otherwise, we only waste time moving and searching.

A *sannyasi* is one who clearly sees that everything is changing all the time, and everything is beautiful just the way it is. He also knows that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. That is why he sets out first to clean his eyes. Eyes are the windows of the soul, so his work is at the core level. If you see the world through a red colored lens, everything appears red. If you see with a green colored lens, everything is green. If you see with clear eyes, everything looks clear and beautiful. Existence has always been beautiful, but we missed seeing it. *Sannyas* is the decision to see with clear eyes.

If life itself is changing all the time, then why are we trying to frame it? Buddha says in his Dhammapada, 'Life is like a flash of lightning in the sky.' Life is transient. Then what are we trying to do? We are trying to do an impossible job. Our job is to see, enjoy, and move on. If everything is a passing manifestation of Existence, then where is the scope for ego or fear or greed? *Sannyas*, as such, doesn't change anything. Everything remains the same. But it changes the way you see things. *Sannyas* happens in you. *Sannyas* has nothing to do with the outer world.

A small story:

**Sannyas is
awakening the
charioteer. Man's
body is like a
chariot and his
consciousness is
the charioteer.**

Once a spiritual teacher came to visit the king. Nobody stopped the teacher and he entered the court where the king was sitting on his throne.

The king asked him, 'What do you want? The teacher replied, 'I would like to have a place to sleep in this hotel.'

The king said, 'This is my palace, it is not a hotel.' The teacher asked him, 'Who owned this palace before you?'

The king replied, 'My father owned this palace, but now he is dead.' The teacher asked, 'Who owned it before him?'

The king replied, 'My grandfather. He, too, is dead.' The teacher said, 'This is a place where people live for a short time and move on. Yet you are saying this is not a hotel!'

Sannyas is awakening the charioteer. Man's body is like a chariot and his consciousness is the charioteer. The charioteer is fast asleep, and the chariot is moving according to the horses. The five horses are the five senses, each with its own different idea. Not one of them is the truth. They are just transient ideas!

**The master waits
many lives for you.
But you have to
say 'yes'.
Remember, the
master is a
gentleman.**

Even in the most difficult times, a *sannyasi* remains with the awareness that life is a fleeting dream!

He carries a completely different definition for success and failure. He doesn't carry success or failure itself. A *samsari* on the other hand carries success and failure with him wherever he goes. There starts the problem.

Surrender, love, compassion, *Sannyas*

Sannyas is saying 'yes' to Existence. Saying 'Yes' is surrender. Saying 'yes' is love and compassion.

The human mind is trained to always say 'no'. Saying 'no' boosts the ego. 'Yes' makes the ego vulnerable, so the mind continues to say 'no.' *Sannyas* is saying 'yes' to Existence. Existence created you. It is waiting to express its divine play through you. By saying 'yes,' you allow the divine play to happen through you. When the divine play happens, things happen exactly according to the flow of Existence. Then, everything becomes auspiciousness! That is the meaning of dropping the mind,

becoming sensitive to the flow of Existence and working in tune with it. That is surrender. That is obedience to Existence.

In the effort to say 'yes,' you start softening. *Sannyas* is about becoming soft. As long as you say 'no,' you remain hard. When you make an effort to say 'yes,' you start softening. When you make a conscious decision to say 'yes,' it starts. That is where the master plays a role. *Sannyas* is saying 'yes' to the master without asking for an explanation. When you start trusting the master completely, *sannyas* starts happening in you. Somewhere you get the click that the master knows better than you. Then you start letting go of your hold over your mind and start holding the hands of the master. The master's hands are always stretched out, but you were not ready to hold them. Once the 'yes' starts happening, you hold his hands.

Then a space is created where love starts happening. Love happens only when you start saying 'yes.' By saying 'yes,' not only do you start loving, you allow the other person to love you as well. Then your inner space that was like a rock earlier, starts becoming like cotton! It becomes soaked with love. The love is not just towards one person or for any reason. It is an overflowing energy. It is towards the whole of Existence for no reason. You start communing with the trees, with everything around you. You feel that life is a song,

the song of Existence of which you are a part. You are in a deeply resonant mood with everything and everyone around you, including yourself. Your actions simply become an outpouring of the joy and ecstasy that is enveloping you all the time.

A small story:

A Zen master arrived at the meeting place of the Cambridge Buddhist Society. He found everyone dusting and cleaning the whole place in anticipation of his visit.

They were surprised to see him because he was not supposed to arrive until the following day.

He simply tied back the sleeves of his robe and joined the preparations. They could not believe that he wanted to help. He asked, 'Why can't I also prepare for the grand day of my arrival!'

When you are resonating with Existence, you enjoy everything, including yourself. You don't see yourself as separate from anything else. You see no separate reason for anything. There are people who commune with nature but fail miserably when it comes to people. Then, even their communion with nature is not real communion. Feeling only for nature is not a scale by which to measure love.

People tell me that they are already communing with Existence. Trees and

animals don't create trouble for you. That is why you claim to commune with them! They keep quiet. You can simply express anything to them. You can thrust your feeling on them, pull it out, and feel good, that's all. It is just an ego trip. The essence is in the ability to always commune with the whole of Existence. If you can create that space of love under those conditions, then you are communing.

A poet once wrote a love song and sent it to his friends. A few days later, he received a letter from a lady to whom he had sent the poem.

She wrote to him saying, 'I am so touched by your poem. Please come home, meet my parents, and ask them if you can marry me.'

The poet was surprised. He wrote back to her, 'That was a poem of love from my heart that I wanted to sing to a few souls. It was nothing more than that!'

She replied, 'You are a hypocrite. Because of you, I will never again entertain a poet in my life.'

The problem is, everything happens with the reason of the intellect. Love has been reduced to mere lust for the other person's body. That is the problem. Real love is an expression of the overflowing energy that starts happening in you when you start saying 'yes' to Existence.

The master happens in your life with just one intention to destroy your ego and allow the attitude of sannyas to flower in you.

The famous poet Kabir says that when love possesses you, don't even think twice. Just dive into it. If you start

thinking, it is like arranging your pillows when deep sleep of rest has come to your eyes. He says, 'Even though the head itself must be given, why should you weep over it?'

The master waits many lives for you. But you have to say 'yes'. Remember: the master is a gentleman. He gives you the freedom to remain in bondage. He waits. Once you say 'yes,' he takes you in his arms. The master is the only one who can show you the power of love.

A small story:

Sadashiva Brahmendra was a great saint from South India. He lived just like a child. He never wore clothes. He was always in ecstasy.*

One day he was walking in deep ecstasy when the Nawab, the Muslim ruler of that territory, went riding past*

him. He was in such deep ecstasy that he did not notice or pay respect to the Nawab. The angry Nawab* cut off his hand with his sword. Sadashiva Brahmendra* continued to walk, not reacting in any way to what had happened.*

One of his devotees saw the scene and was struck very deeply. She started weeping, 'O master! You have lost your hand for not showing courtesy to the Nawab!'

He was surprised and asked the devotee to bring the severed hand. He then put it back on, and it became whole again. The devotee was dumbstruck when she saw this.

Sadashiva Brahmendra explained, 'The Nawab's hatred destroyed my hand, your love healed it!'*

An enlightened being's love and compassion is boundless. Sannyas is living like an enlightened being. It is living enlightenment.

A sannyasi is one who is established in love and compassion in the inner world, while being established in concentration and precision in the outer world. A real sannyasi has the precision of a sword. When he closes his eyes, the outer world

Sadashiva Brahmendra - 18th century Tamil saint and music composer.

Nawab - A noble of the Moghul empire.

is no more. When he opens his eyes, his work is perfection, perfection not only in work, but in relationships also! He is a father, a mother, a brother and a friend, all at the same time.

He moves guided by inner intelligence. That is why he is in the present moment all the time. He responds to the moment. That is the ultimate sense of responsibility, responding to the moment spontaneously. True love and compassion are spontaneous responses to the moment. That is why they surface irrespective of people or situations.

A small story:

One man went to a Zen monastery and told the master, 'Master, I wish to practice Zen for the rest of my life but I have never stuck with anything for very long. I always look for shortcuts to everything. Is there a shortcut to enlightenment?'

The master told him, 'You are accepted into this monastery for two days. In these two days, you will be taught the shortcut to enlightenment. Is there anything that you like to do in particular?'

The man said, 'Since I don't stick to anything for a long time, I am unable to tell what I like to do most. But I like to play chess.'

The master called for a young disciple who was supposed to be a good chess

**The master
moves, guided by
inner
intelligence.**

*player. He
asked the
two of them
to sit down*

and placed a chess board between them. He then took out his sword and placed it in front of the two of them and said, 'Both of you have to play. The moment one of you loses, the loser will have his head cut off.'

They were shocked at the master's words! They started the game and played.

They concentrated on the game like they had never done before.

Initially, the young monk made good moves, and it looked like he was going to win. Then suddenly he made a mistake. The man took the opportunity and took over the game. Soon, he was clearly on the way to winning.

Suddenly, he looked at the young monk and thought with what dedication and devotion the monk lived his life with the master at that young age. Then he thought about his own life and how he had wasted it. Suddenly he decided, if at all anyone should die, it should be himself. He deliberately made a wrong move. The young monk saw that and took over the game again.

The master was watching the whole thing. At that point, he took the board

**Sannyas is
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That exact place
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nothing but the
ego.**

concentration and compassion. Today, you learned both. Stay with me and study the way you have played chess today. Enlightenment will be yours!'

Sannyas is bringing together concentration and compassion. With concentration, you never forget the goal of life, enlightenment. With compassion, you are ready to sacrifice your very life so that the other may reach the goal! When both are there, both you and the other will reach! That is the greatness of *sannyas*. That is the space of *sannyas*.

The greatest quality of a *sannyasi* is his immense trust in Existence. Society trains you to always protect yourself from everything. That is the problem. You are made to believe Existence is the enemy from which you have to protect yourself. You apply the same rule and protect yourself from the master also. The master happens in your life with just one intention - to destroy your ego and allow the attitude of *sannyas* to flower in you.

away, and the coins fell in the air. He said, 'Nobody wins. Nobody loses. The game is over. There are only two things needed for enlightenment:

Sannyas is nothing but finding out exactly where you are going wrong. That exact place is known as nothing but the ego. If you understand this, you will simply open up to the master and allow him to strike the ego. You will simply drop all your defenses and open up. Being closed to the master's presence is like closing your nose with your fingers when there is a fragrant breeze blowing. When you open up to him with trust, you will see miracles happen all around you.

A small story:

There was a man with a few disciples. He was not enlightened. He was just guiding the boys. A new disciple joined the group one day. He was so humble, so pure and authentic, that the other disciples became jealous of him. They felt he would be the master's successor. There was a lot of politics and they tried to kill him.

One day they said to him, 'If you really believe in the master, can you jump off the cliff? If your trust is true, no harm can happen to you.' The disciple readily jumped off the cliff.

The rest of them rushed down almost three thousand feet below into the valley. They went to pick up his scattered bones. But he was sitting there in lotus posture looking very happy.

He opened his eyes and said, 'You are right, trust saves!'

They thought it must be some coincidence and they created another plot to kill him. A house caught fire one day and people were trying to rescue those who were trapped inside the house. They told him, 'If you love our master with trust, go in and save the woman and child who are trapped inside.'

The disciple rushed in and after a few minutes came out with the woman and child.

They still did not give up. One day they were going somewhere, and they had to cross a river. They told him, 'You need not go in the boat. You have such great trust, you can walk on the river.'

The disciple entered and started walking on the river! They were simply shocked.

That was the first time the master saw him. He was not aware that he had been told to jump into the valley and told to go into the burning house. He saw him walking on the river and asked him, 'What are you doing? It is impossible!'

The disciple replied, 'It is not impossible at all! I am doing it by your power, master!'

The master thought, 'If my name and my power can do this to this ignorant man, then imagine what I can do!' He got up and tried to walk on the river and drowned!

Trust has amazing power. It works beyond logic. Anything that works beyond logic is the direct truth. It never fails. When you trust the master, when you surrender to the master, you are giving him the responsibility of you. He never fails! It does not mean you can surrender to him and then do foolish things. No! The first thing to realize is that when real surrender happens, it will never prompt you to do foolish things. Only surrender in the name of surrender will attempt to do foolish things. Real surrender is a consciousness, not a concept for trial.

Sannyas is a consciousness that flowers in groups of people in the presence of the master. Over the years, *sannyas* has always happened in groups. All the great masters have ordained groups of *sannyasins*. When a group of people start dissolving in love, when a group of people start melting, *sannyas* starts happening. Suddenly, so much beauty radiates. Suddenly, Existence appears to be profoundly mystical and beautiful. The power of coincidence becomes a way of life. Tremendous energy starts flowing. For no reason, life looks tremendously beautiful. Everything seems to be perfect. There is an inexplicable

Sannyas is moving one step closer to god, and god is the ultimate creator. The very energy of sannyas is creation.

feeling of blossoming all round.

It is not that Existence has become more beautiful.

Existence is always the same. You have started responding to it, that's all. Your own human qualities have enriched tremendously. That is *sannyas*! When you start responding to Existence with enriched qualities, when you start melting into Existence, when you start yearning for it, *sannyas* starts happening to you.

When *sannyas* happens, you automatically add more beauty to Existence. You become a creator. People think *sannyas* is renouncing creativity. No! *Sannyas* is moving one step closer to god, and god is the ultimate creator. The very energy of *sannyas* is creation. This is a little known fact about *sannyas*.

When *Sannyas* happens, the moment is right ...

A small story:

One day a young man approached Socrates, the Greek philosopher, and said, 'O great Socrates, I come to

you for knowledge.' Socrates took the man to the sea and pressed his head down into the water for a few seconds.

When he released him, the man came up gasping for breath. Socrates asked him to repeat what he wanted. The man said, 'I want knowledge.'

Socrates put him under the water again, this time for a longer period. Then he released him and asked, 'What do you want?' The man replied, '*Knowledge.*'

Socrates repeated this a few times.

After a few times, Socrates asked again, 'What do you want?' The man gasped, '*Air. I want air!*'

Socrates said, 'Good. When you want knowledge as much as you wanted air, you shall have it.'

Sannyas is a deep urge that rises from within you. It is a deep yearning. Even if the longing is not completely consistent over time and space, it is alright. You can take the jump. It may not become consistent. But becoming consistent is not the criterion needed. When it takes root, that alone is enough. You are ready. Once you jump in, everything takes care of itself.

One man was walking towards the Himalayan mountains in the winter months. An old man saw him and asked, 'It is so cold in the mountains. Are you

sure you can make it?’ The man replied, ‘My heart is already there. So it is easy for the rest of me to reach there.’

The initiation itself will trigger the process. The outer adornments of *sannyas* will take care of the inner adornment. That is why, with the initiation, a new name and saffron clothing are given. They will do most of the job for you. They will keep the awareness alive every moment.

But if you start analyzing the decision to take the jump, you will miss it. *Sannyas* is linked to your energy. Just by seeing your energy, I can tell you are ready for *sannyas*! You cannot analyze energy with logic. Energy is beyond logic. When you take *sannyas*, the moment is right, that’s all. Even if you drop it later, have no regrets. The seed has been sown. Once a *sannyasi*, always a *sannyasi*. It will happen again at the right time. That time may be the final time.

Sannyas is a decision taken by intelligent people. When life comes to the boiling point, to a peak of depression, to a point where you feel the outer world is of no use, when there is nothing further that can be done to help your situation, there are three choices you can make.

The first choice you could make is suicide. Suicide appears to be immediate freedom but actually it creates terrible suffering. People think that suicide takes courage.

Energy is beyond logic. When you take *sannyas*, the moment is right, that’s all. Even if you drop it later, have no regrets.

Courage is a beautiful word wrongly used here. Do you need courage to rub chili powder in your own eyes? No!

It is simple foolishness. In the same way, it does not require courage to commit suicide. It is simply foolishness. There is nothing courageous about it.

Understand the science behind suicide. Suppose your normal life span this birth is ninety years of age and you commit suicide when you are forty-five. For the remaining forty-five years, you have to wait as a spirit. Only at the end of ninety years can you choose the next body to take birth. These forty-five years will be the worst hell you can ever experience, worse than the struggle that happened when you were in the body. Suicide is not the relief you think it is.

The second choice is to resort to some sort of addiction, like drugs or alcohol, and slowly poison the system until it dies. This is equally as foolish because you are knowingly abusing the body.

The third and most intelligent path is to look into yourself. When the outer world seems to be over in your mind, the time has come to look inwards. *Sannyas* happens when you decide to look in and introspect.

**Sannyas allows
you to play any
number of roles
without
identifying with
any of them.**

Sannyas is the alchemy of transforming your entire lifestyle, directing your whole energy

towards enlightenment. When the first thought to look in comes, when the first thought to embrace spirituality happens, the intelligent one takes the jump into *sannyas*. *Sannyas* is the shortcut.

A small story:

A fifty year old student of enlightenment approached a Zen master and said, 'I have been studying spiritual studies since I was a small boy. I have learnt that even the grass and trees will become enlightened. This seems very strange to me.'

The master asked, 'Of what use is it to discuss how grass and trees become enlightened? The question is how you can become enlightened. Have you ever considered that?'

The old man answered, 'I never thought of it in that way.'

The master said, 'Then go home and think it over.'

Sannyas is a focused appointment with yourself. It is a conscious commitment to yourself that you are going to destroy 'all

that you are not', and cleanse yourself completely.

Once you make the commitment, your seeing, hearing, talking and feeling will start being different. The same things will cause a new understanding in you. That is what commitment to *sannyas* does to you. When you take on *sannyas*, with just the energy level concurrence, bypassing your logic, you will see that there will be magic in your life. *Sannyas* needs only to be sown, the seed planted within you. The rest will happen automatically. Its very nature is transformation within and without.

Sannyas is going to be the only solution for the future, because it is the only thing that teaches you to be established in yourself and yet learn to act in the outer world in a playful, joyful, ecstatic way. *Sannyas* allows you to play any number of roles without identifying with any of them. It keeps you in continuous excitement and ecstasy all the time. It makes you experience the very essence of taking birth on planet earth.

Recollections of a childhood friend of Nithyananda

(This section is an extract from the narrations of a childhood friend of Nithyananda.)

Deeply associated with Nithyananda before his enlightenment, Sampath describes the indescribable yearning for enlightenment that he saw in Nithyananda as a child.)

Towards the end of his polytechnic years, Swami* reached a stage when he felt there was something that had to be achieved, but all the activities of the present were a waste in that context. Then he became like a child. If we get the thought that we have to achieve something, we will reject all other things and be focused only on that, just like an obstinate child. Until we get what we want, we refuse to eat or sleep. He became like that.

Our hometown Tiruvannamalai, a spiritual incubator, is home to many wandering mendicants. They were all over the place, pursuing their path in different ways. At that time of his life, he started begging the *sannyasis* that used to pass by us. He would go up to them and tell them, 'Please do something for me. I will come away with you. Please take me with you.'

There was one such person who had just entered Tiruvannamalai from outside. If you saw him, you would see that he appeared to be just like Shiva, the Hindu god! He might have been between 28 or 30 years of age. He had a shaven head,

with a *rudraksh** string tied in his hair. He wore gold earrings and a grand *rudraksh** necklace. He appeared to be just like Shiva. If you looked at him, you would feel like falling at his feet. There was so much radiance in him. He beautifully sang verses from ancient lore. People would melt with tears as he sang.

He was just an ordinary wandering mendicant with no intensity of seeking whatsoever. But his outward appearance, which was like Shiva, kindled a deep yearning in Swami* that was beyond his control. He saw only Shiva in him! As soon as he saw this mendicant, he fell at his feet and tears poured from his eyes.

He pleaded with him, 'Swami*, I am not able to....Please take me with you and go. Please take me with you. I will come away with you. Please do something for me.' I was surprised.

Since he had gone to the peak of yearning, any wandering mendicant who he saw, he started begging, 'Do something for me. Do something for me.' Those wandering mendicants clearly saw that they were not qualified to guide him in any way. They clearly saw that he came from a different space altogether. They told him that they would not be able to guide him, and moved on.

Swami - An honorific term used for a *sannyasi*, a monk.

Rudraksh - Seed of a tree used for Hindu rituals and for wearing. Retains energy of meditation.

When I saw his struggles, I understood his state of inexplicable yearning from my own level. When I saw how he sobbed to those wandering mendicants to take him with them, I realized the extent to which he was yearning to merge with the Infinite. If I imitate him for you, you will not be able to digest it.

Those few incidents are deeply engraved in my memory. I can never forget them. I often wondered, ‘Why is he crying like this? What is spirituality? Why does he do all these things? Only now am I able to understand. I must have been a real wooden head in those days. Even to understand such things, we need the grace of the masters. When they share an idea with us, even for that idea to go inside us and work, we need their grace. I often think to myself, only because I was with Him am I able to understand such things.

I frequently asked him, ‘Why are you doing this?’

He would say, ‘I am unable to. . . . I am not able to concentrate on anything. I don’t know if I will be here much longer. Time is up. I need to move.’

At that time, I didn’t know there was a life different from this life. I didn’t know that enlightenment is the purpose of life and that is why we have been born.

Also, he was struggling as if no one was there to support him. In that condition, I

didn’t always feel that I should go with him. Many times I felt I should go, but there was no courage or conviction on my part.

In those days, he included me in everything just because I was his friend. That’s all. He finally told me one day, ‘I am thinking of going away now.’ I just said, ‘Okay. Okay. Okay.’ Nothing stirred in me to even venture into a discussion.

Real love doesn’t stand in the way

A true mother is one who lets go of her child when the time is right. A mother who is too possessive of her child should probably hesitate to give birth in the first place! Even giving birth is a form of letting go, she is allowing the child to leave her body! Only a mother who is ready to allow the next level of explosion to happen, a mother who is ready to let go, a mother who is ready to give inspiration only can be a real mother.

If you are possessive, if you feel sad just thinking about separating from the child, then you should not even give birth to the child! You should continuously feed him through the umbilical cord. The umbilical cord connection should be continuously kept alive! Just as the child grows physically only after you deliver him into the outside

world after nine months, likewise, he can grow psychologically only if you allow him to break from you.

Physical disconnection is birth. Psychological disconnection is *sannyas*.

In that way I am very fortunate. When I went and told my mother that I wanted to leave home for *sannyas*, it was late at night, around eleven o'clock. I went to the temple, spent some time as usual, and came home at my regular time. I opened the door with my key and walked in. I wore wooden sandals, normally worn by wandering ascetics. They made a loud noise on that granite floor! My mother's usual custom was to wake up, prepare the food of my choice, and serve me the moment I entered. If I had finished my dinner at the temple, I would tell her and both of us would go to sleep.

That particular night, she got up and was about to prepare food. I called her and told her, 'I have decided that I am leaving home for *sannyas*. You can give me food tonight, even though I have already eaten. I will eat now because tomorrow I will be leaving.'

It was a very casual announcement from my side. Of course, she was shocked, but she did not say anything. One thing is that all of my family knew from the beginning that talking and trying to convince me to do otherwise would never work. They

knew that before saying anything, I would be very clear about it inside. Only after knowing what to do, would I say it out loud. When I say something, it means it is going to be done, that's all!

Tears started pouring from her eyes. I looked at her and asked, 'What do you mean by crying? Do you mean that I should not go?'

She shook her head and said, 'No, I am not saying you should not go. I am crying because I am not able to control myself. I am not able to accept it. That's all. I can't say that you cannot go.'

She knew all along that one day this would happen. One day or the other I would leave. It was predicted through my horoscope. The beauty of it was, she never said 'No!' Not only did she not tell me I couldn't go, she broke the news to my father as well. My father thought she had shouted at me and created some problem and that was the reason I had decided to go. He asked her, 'Did you shout at him? Did you create any problem? You know how he is!'

My mother said, 'No, I did not shout or say anything. He came of his own accord

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and told me this.’ Then my father calmed down.

It was a straight and simple declaration. My father came to me, sat down and asked, ‘Swami, your mother is saying a few things as your words. Are these things true?’

Funnily, they used to call me ‘Swami’ even in those days!

I told him, ‘Yes. I have decided to leave home to pursue *sannyas* and become enlightened.’

It was a shock to him. But he saw that I was very clear, balanced, cool and relaxed. He made only one statement. He said, ‘If you fall sick, please inform us. We want to take care of you.’ That’s all. He simply said, ‘If you ever fall sick anywhere during your travels, please inform us. We want to take care of you. That is the only thing we want, nothing else. Otherwise, do what you want.’

My parents never stood in my way. Understand, any relationship, including the parental relationship, is a healthy relationship, only when the person is ready to allow the next phase to happen. I have seen thousands of youngsters who are so inspired, who are bold enough, who are courageous enough to take up this path of seeking. However, they don’t even give themselves a chance to explore because of their parents.

Parents simply fall into the regular way of life, living to satisfy other people’s ego, and bringing up children. Very rarely, a few souls get the inspiration and courage to explore. Try to understand that I am not asking you to train your kids or force your kids to become Swamis. No! I am saying that if at all they feel that click towards *sannyas*, do not stand in their way. You will be blessed if you do not stand in their way.

Have the intelligence to see the path the child has chosen. He has chosen the ultimate path. Even if he cries and struggles and becomes a failure, there is nothing wrong, if that is your fear. I might have been a failure in my previous ten births. That is why this time I am successful! One thing: when the struggle is for *sannyas*, even if enlightenment does not happen, it is not a failure. It is a great success because you lived with integrity, and that too, in the conscious field. In the conscious field, Existence watches over you completely. You are taken care of at every step. So understand that any exploration, any research, any adventure in the conscious field should be encouraged, allowed, and supported.

I feel eternally grateful to my parents for not standing in the way.

We now reach the ultimate, or what I call the peak experience. Realization of who we are and our role in this universe is the ultimate knowledge and experience that we can have. From the darkness of ignorance we move into the light of truth. We become enlightened.

Why enlightened beings happen on planet earth

When you see somebody swimming, you understand three things. The first thing is that swimming is possible, that a man can float on water. Secondly, you have a tremendous urge, 'If he can do it, why not me? Why can't I? I can too.' The third thing is, 'Let me jump in!' You get inspiration and courage!

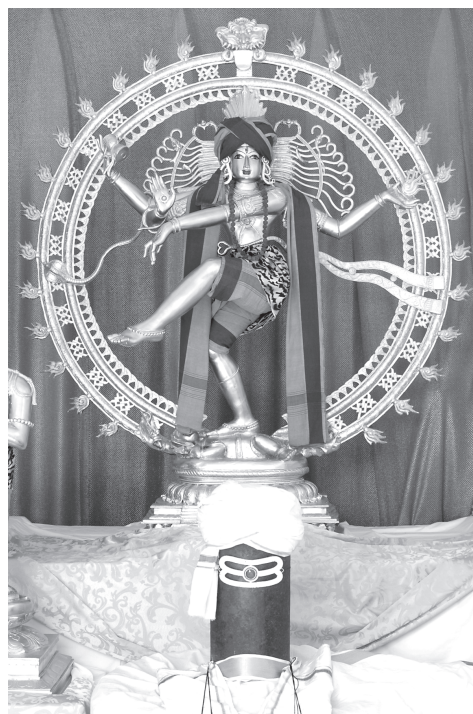
In the same way, when you see an enlightened being walking on planet earth, when you live around him, you also understand three things. The first thing is that enlightenment is possible. You can live like god on this planet earth. The next thing is, 'If he can attain enlightenment, why not me?' because he radiates such simplicity and ordinariness, which is close to your own human nature. You naturally get confidence that it is possible for you too. The third thing is courage, 'Let me jump in!' All these three will happen only if you

live around an enlightened master and continuously watch his body language. Nothing else can trigger this in you.

The five universal actions

There are five universal actions called *pancha kriyas*. They are creation, protection, destruction, creating illusion or *maya*, and pulling a soul out of the illusion with grace. God is said to perform these five actions.

Nataraja*, the dancing form of Shiva, has four hands. His upper right hand holds a drum, symbolizing Creation. The whole of



Nataraja - Enlightened master Shiva in the dancing form in the temple of Chidambaram in south India.

Creation is believed to have evolved from sound vibration. The gestures of the lower right and left hands symbolize protection. The upper left hand holds fire, symbolizing destruction. The snake around his neck symbolizes 'illusion', into which man enters before liberation. Caught under his foot is the demon who symbolizes coming out of this illusion. Shiva symbolically destroys the illusion under his feet. Performing all these five actions simultaneously, Shiva remains utterly blissful and peaceful!

Shiva carries out these five activities while he performs what is called the Shiva Tandava, Shiva's Cosmic Dance! The energy that performs all these five activities is the cosmic energy. Shiva performs the first four actions, creation, protection, destruction, and putting one into illusion, from his *nirvanic* layer or bliss body, which is the innermost body of the seven bodies. The Divine energy can perform all these four actions from the *nirvanic* layer itself. There is no need to take a physical form to perform them. It can be done by the energy level body itself.

However, to perform the fifth action of pulling souls out of illusion, the energy has to take a human form! The Divine energy does not need your cooperation to perform the first four actions of creation, protection, destruction, and putting you in *maya*, but when it comes to pulling you out

of *maya*, it needs your consent and cooperation!

Creation is not done with your consent. Protection is also not dependent on you. Similarly, destruction takes place without your consent, and the fourth act of putting you in illusion also does not require your support.

However, the divine energy needs your support to pull you out of illusion and make you enlightened. It is like god asking you to fill out a visa application in order to issue the visa for liberation. You need to fill it out and sign it! The problem is that you may not complete the application or you may delay the process. In order to get your confirmed support for your own enlightenment, god assumes the human body and visits planet earth as an enlightened master.

God assumes all seven layers or bodies when he descends on earth as an enlightened master. When performing the first four actions, He only had the *nirvanic* body, but when He comes to give you enlightenment, He assumes all seven bodies. When god comes down as the master, He lifts you up!

Quantum leap

People ask me during meditation programs, 'I felt a deep peace and a strong energy

during the meditation. Does that mean my enlightenment is near?’

First I want you to understand, we are always near enlightenment. That is the important thing. We are always near to enlightenment. It is a very foolish and wrong idea to think that one person is closer to enlightenment than another. There are only two categories, either you are enlightened or not, that’s all. If you are not yet enlightened, then be very clear, you are as close to enlightenment as all others in your category.

Even if you are 99.9 percent enlightened, you are not! Enlightenment is a complete and total change. It is just as water becomes steam only at 100 degrees Celsius, even at 99 degrees it is still only water, never steam. Only at the 100th degree does it become steam. At any point in time, it is either water or steam, never both. Even hot water can put out a fire. That means it still carries the quality of water, not steam. Can you put out a fire with steam? No. So even though it is hot water, it can only have the quality of water. In the same way, at any point in time, you can be either enlightened or not, never both and never ‘nearly’.

Understand, enlightenment is not a continuity of yourself. It can never be a development of yourself. It is a quantum leap, not a continuity. If you feel some growth, some development, clarity, inner

**We are always
near to
enlightenment.**

healing etc.
during the

spiritual process,

it is okay. All these just give you the indication that you are on the right track, that’s all. When you see a road sign saying ‘Los Angeles, 100 miles’, it is a helpful sign always. You know you are on the right track, that’s all. But it does not mean you have arrived.

We always want somebody to give us some consoling words. You seek their support and give your support to them in return. But the master does not need your support, so he will straightway tell you the actual truth.

There is no such thing as 99.9 percent enlightened or very close to enlightenment or very near to enlightenment. Either you are enlightened or you are not.

Enlightenment is like a complete ‘yes’ or a complete ‘no’. There are no steps in between. Enlightenment itself is not a step-by-step process happening in stages. Enlightenment is like replacing a gas cylinder, the old one is completely removed and a new one is put in its place!

After the evolution from monkey to human being, it is now time we take the quantum leap to the next level, to the ultimate level. A quantum leap in consciousness is the real goal of enlightenment.

A quantum leap in consciousness is the real goal of enlightenment.

When you are on the path, you don't have to stop and make records about your past. As long as you are stopping and taking record or accounts about your past, be very clear, the breakthrough has still not happened.

When a clear breakthrough, a quantum leap happens, you don't need to and you will not be able to check whether you have grown and how much you have grown. The jump will be beyond your logic.

After the quantum leap, you will be a totally different species, a totally different being. Your body may look like a human body, but your whole inner space will be totally different. Your way of living will become totally different.

Enlightenment is...

1. Experiencing the limitless continuum

Living with the limitless continuum is enlightenment. The limitless continuum

will happen when you relax from the identities you hold of yourself in the outer and inner worlds.

If you are settled in that limitless continuum and are able to be active, you are living enlightenment. If you are not able to settle down in it, but you had at least one experience of it, then you have experienced *satori*.

2. Realizing the self, world, and god

The basic thing needed for enlightenment is a 'psychological revolution', a new clarity about the self (*jeeva**), world (*jagat**), and god (*Ishwara**).

How you think, why you think, how you are driven, what is your inspiration, what motivates you in life - this understanding is the clarity about the self or *jeeva**.

How to achieve your desires in the world, how you avoid fears and other things forced upon you by the world - this understanding is the clarity about the world or *jagat**.

Clarity about *Ishwara** or god means understanding the source of both the individual self and the world. Achieving

Jeeva - Usually the imperishable spirit that dwells in all living beings.

Jagat - Universe.

Ishwara - Supreme.

the source, knowing all these three, is enlightenment.

When you have a clear understanding about why you think and how you think, this very understanding gives you the clear experience of the self. When you understand how to connect with the world through your fear or greed, achieving what you want, and avoiding what is not needed, you gain a clear experience of the world. The third is experiencing god, *Ishwara*^{*}, the source of the self and the world.

Gaining a true understanding of the self, world, and god is enlightenment.

3. Intense excitement for no reason

People ask me, ‘After enlightenment, can enlightened beings enjoy?’ I tell you, only after enlightenment can you enjoy! Before that, you can only think or imagine you are enjoying.

After enlight-tenment, you don’t even need sense objects to enjoy. You will simply be enjoying all the time. There will be such an intense excitement for no reason.

If I have to define enlightenment in two words, I will say it is ‘intense excitement’ for no reason, intense passion directed

**Enlightenment
is intense
passion directed
towards no
object.**

towards no object. There is no object, but there is intense passion. There is no reason, but there is intense excitement. That is what I call enlightenment.

People ask me, ‘How can we be happy without a reason?’ I tell them, most of you know only one secret, how to be sad without a reason. You have mastered that habit. You have a doctorate in that line! Just change it a little, that’s all. When we know *that*, why can’t we learn *this*?

Many times, you will be in a low mood, but you will be searching for a reason why you are in a low mood! You will not be able to identify the reason, but you will be sad. Your chemistry itself is trained to fall into low moods without any reason, because so many times you have trained yourself to fall into low moods with a reason. After some time, your chemistry learns this habit. Then you don’t need a reason. Just by the chemistry, just through the in-built system, you fall into low moods.

Enlightenment does not mean escaping somewhere. Tasting life here and now is what I call enlightenment.

Ishwara - Supreme.

**You are alive in
every cell in the
cosmos.**

4. Seeing others as

you see yourself

What I call enlightenment is experiencing the same intensity of life that you feel inside yourself, outside your skin also. You are not alive just inside your body. You are also alive inside every other individual, tree, and rock. Your hold over your physical body is transformed into a hold over the cosmic body! You are alive in every cell in the cosmos. Every cell is a complete, fulfilled part of the cosmos.

There is a beautiful verse at the start of the devotional hymn, *Purusha Suktam**, in the Vedas,

*Om sahasra sheersha purushaha sahasraaksha
sahasrapaat*

*sa bhoomim vishwato vrutva atyatishttha
dashaangulam*

This verse beautifully describes the whole of the cosmos as a beautiful human form called *Purusha** - having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, and a thousand feet. The form encompasses the whole earth and exceeds that by ten times! This is the experience of enlightenment.

Understand, I am alive as much outside as I am inside my skin. So I am alive in all the millions of heads, eyes, and feet and all the millions of beings in the cosmos.

To achieve this, start seeing everything as if you are seeing it for the first time, without bringing in your engrams, your past engraved memories. Then, you will start experiencing the same life and intensity that you experience inside your skin, outside also. Try this for ten days. Once you get a glimpse, you will never miss it! You will see you are in ecstasy for no reason. You are in excitement for no reason. You will never take things for granted again. You will always be in joy.

5. Being unclutched

As of now you connect all the past experiences of your life and create a shaft. All your future experiences depend on how you have created this shaft. They depend on which words from the past you have picked, and how you have formed the shaft. Your future emotions, reactions, thoughts, and words depend entirely on this shaft. But after enlightenment, life is very different from this. Thoughts arise, and if they want to work, the body pursues the

Purusha Suktam - A vedic chant dedicated to Purusha or the Supreme.

Purusha - In *Sankhya* philosophy it is the male principle, pure passive consciousness, as different from the active female principle *Prakriti*.

thoughts. Once the work is done, the thoughts disappear. Then the next time something needs to be done, thoughts arise again, and the process continues. The whole thing happens beautifully by itself. There is no shaft at all.

Currently we all carry constant irritation from the moment we get out of the bed until the minute we go back to bed. Constantly we carry some irritation or other. We are waiting to jump on people. We only need some excuse. After enlightenment, the constant fear or guilt or desire or something that constantly irritates, is not there. When you unclutch from the shaft for even one moment, you get a glimpse of enlightenment.

The shift from the shaft happens in a fraction of a second. If you are deeply aware, you can catch that precious moment when the unclutching happens. All our *tapas*, spiritual training, is only preparing us to catch that shift. The shift happens many times. You just need to be really aware and you can catch it. When you permanently unclutch from the shaft, you are enlightened.

6. The four permanent changes

I can say that a few changes happened permanently in me when I became enlightened.

After enlightenment, the constant fear or guilt or desire or something that constantly irritates is not there.

The first thing was that all inner chatter disappeared. By inner chatter, I mean the constant chatter of words that

goes on inside us normally. In the gap between my words as I talk now, even in those few seconds, there is no chatter inside. It is simply pure space, silence.

The second thing is that the idea that my boundary ends here at this body, and there starts the rest of the world disappeared. Border consciousness dissolved. I don't feel I am just this six foot form. I see and feel myself in everything. If you watch me, I will be the first one to enjoy all my photographs after a photo shoot or on the book covers! I will just play with them for four or five days.

People ask me, 'What is this, *Swamiji*? You are sitting and enjoying your own photographs!' I tell them, 'How does it matter? I don't feel I am this six-foot form. Just like you see this form, I too see this form and enjoy it! I enjoy it as a part of Existence, just like you do!' In fact, you feel embarrassed when you see your own photographs only because you feel the boundary of your own body strongly! For me that separate feeling is not there about

my form, so I just enjoy it like everything else.

The third thing is that even though the body is a male body, the inner identity of male or female disappeared. The psychological idea that ‘I am male’ or ‘I am female’ doesn’t exist in me anymore.

The fourth thing is that there is a constant excitement within, everything excites. Even small things give big excitement. Even a simple thing creates intense excitement and joy.

Any small thing, some statue – a small Shiva, a small Buddha or just a soft toy, will trigger great excitement! Every small thing gives great excitement. The most important thing is that I don’t feel bored with anything. Over the past five years, I have conducted hundreds of sessions of meditation programs. I have never felt bored because for me, there is no solidifying of the past. You feel bored only when you solidify the past. You feel you have seen everything already. Any face that I see, I feel excited, that’s all. The constant excitement is there.

I can say that these four changes are permanent things that happened in me after enlightenment.

7. Ultimate but not final

Be very clear, enlightenment is not the end. It is the ultimate experience, but not the final experience.

You need to understand these two words ‘final’ and ‘ultimate’, they are very different. For example, after the first day of discourse in this series, one person came to me and said, ‘You have said everything. Why do we need one more class?’ Yesterday another person said, ‘*Swamiji*, on the first day, I thought you could not take us any deeper, it is over. Today, suddenly I felt that you have taken us deeper than yesterday, and you cannot take us any deeper than this. Every day I feel that you cannot take us much deeper than this, but we do keep going deeper.’ Every day the person felt that the experience was the ultimate.

Ultimate means living every moment totally, completely. Ultimate is not final. It can be updated.

There is a big difference between these two words, ultimate and final. If it is ultimate, it is happening every moment, it is not final.

People think that after enlightenment masters don’t grow. I tell you, after enlightenment, not only are they constantly updated, every moment growth is happening, expansion is happening. God

grows. Only god grows! Nothing else grows.

In your space you may think you are growing. But the actual growth or expansion happens only in the cosmic energy.

When a being becomes enlightened, not only does he experience his potentiality, but he also starts creating more enlightened beings. He starts creating the possibility of more enlightened beings.

8. No verbalization, visualization

When you are enlightened, there will not be any movement of letter or word or thought between your navel and throat. Words will come only from the throat. I can say this is one of the precise descriptions of enlightenment. There will not be any word, thought, syllable, or sound movement between the navel and the throat.

Words will be there only when you are talking. When you are not talking, there will not be any words inside. Only the energy movement will be there. There will be no thought, no verbalization, no continuous inner chattering.

Your inner chattering is the only thing that disturbs your whole life. This is very difficult for most people to understand.

They always think, 'Unless I have inner chatter, how will I ever plan my everyday life? How will I be able to run my business? How will I be able to live?'

Understand, when you don't have inner chatter, it is not dead silence. It is intense energy! From that energy, whatever needs to be done will come out as a complete visualization. If you have inner chattering, it will come line by line – 'Morning, I have to wake up. Then, I have to go to my office. There I will work on the new project. In the evening I will come back. Then I may go out for dinner...' In a linear manner, one by one, thoughts and words come out.

When you don't have inner chatter, when you are just with yourself, the whole visualization comes out as one package, one piece of information. That is what we call intuition. When you go through the logical process, it is called inner chatter, it is intellect. But when you don't have that inner chatter, things start expressing in you intuitively, straightaway you know.

**If it is ultimate,
it is happening
every moment, it
is not final.**

9. Courage to handle troubles

Enlightenment does not lead to the absence of troubles. It leads to the presence of courage to handle troubles.

The person who has removed hypocrisy from his inner space will experience enlightenment.

10. Peak of the being

When the intellect ripens and reaches its

peak, it becomes intelligence. When emotion ripens and reaches its peak, it becomes trust. When the being ripens and reaches its peak, it becomes enlightenment.

11. Integrated inner chatter and outer words

The person who has removed hypocrisy from his inner space will experience enlightenment.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the enlightened master from India, says beautifully, 'Integrating your inner chatter and your spoken words is enlightenment.' He says, just integrate your inner chatter and the words that you utter. Let both of them be integrated and you are enlightened.

I tell you, to live in a body in which inner chatter and outer words are connected is heaven. Nothing else can give you more joy than living in a body where the inner chatter and the spoken words are integrated. It is just pure ecstasy! This

constant ecstasy is what I call *nithyananda* or eternal bliss. If you can live inside a body in which the inner chatter and the spoken words are integrated, in tune, suddenly you will see that you are living inside a hollow bamboo. You are living with such a vast inner space!

12. Feeling yourself as the cosmic space

Enlightenment is nothing but feeling yourself as the *mahakaasha*, the cosmic space. It means that you feel that you are the cosmic space instead of the *chittakasha*, the individual space.

13. Relaxing from your identity in your mind

When you relax from the identity that you project to the outer world, to show who you are to others, it is called the 'first experience' or *satori*. Relaxing from the second identity that you carry in your inner world, to prove who you are to yourself, is what I call enlightenment!

14. Research & Development from Superconscious Awareness

After someone achieves enlightenment he or she has a very sharp superconscious awareness. With that superconscious awareness, it is easy to do research, experiments and analysis. Even after enlightenment, I have been doing so many experiments, so many practices along with scientists and researchers of the outer world and inner world, and by myself.

Understand, when an enlightened being does spiritual practices it is not just for him. It is to create the right formulas for the disciples, so that he can reproduce the same experience in them.

15. Transcendence of the human state

Someone asked me, 'Is enlightenment the natural human state or is it a transcendence of the human state?'

Surely, enlightenment is the transcendence of the human state. Whatever you think of as the human state is not complete. You are only a seed, a potential, a possibility. You are not a tree. You are not actuality. Your actuality is enlightenment.

You are called a human being in your potential state. In your actual state, realized

state, you are called an enlightened being. Be very clear, you are not a human being with a spiritual experience, you are a spiritual being with a human experience!

16. Beyond yogic powers

When you meditate, you can get various yogic powers or *siddhis*. But enlightenment happens when you go beyond these powers also. Enlightenment is having the capacity to handle the powers, as well as the intelligence to drop them when necessary.

The other day I read an interesting article about a book 'Occult Chemistry' based on research done by the theosophists Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater on the molecular structure of various elements. It said that even long before physics discovered that an atom has a nucleus, the theosophists had determined the atomic structure of many elements, and that too down to the 'quark', the most fundamental particle known today in quantum physics!

How did they find this out with no modern scientific equipment, before even quantum physics was born? The report says it was through the *siddhi*, or mystical power, known as *anima* that has been described in the Yoga Sutras by the sage Patanjali, an enlightened master from India and father of the science of Yoga. Patanjali described

Enlightenment is having such a strong and clear sense of peace inside you even your thoughts cannot disturb.

anima as ‘the ability to acquire knowledge of the small, the hidden, or the distant, by directing the light of superphysical

faculty.’

With yogic training, they could experience visual images of minute objects too small to be seen by the normal eye. They found five new elements through these yogic powers. They even went beyond the quark as well as its detailed structure, into the sub-quark, which science is yet to find. These very same findings have also been made by at least three other people from different places in the world at different times, through such occult capacities.

They concluded that all matter is like bubbles in space, just like pearls on an invisible string. The report says that the researchers not only ‘saw’ the subatomic particles, but they could also see inside the atom down to the sub-quark, for which science needs a very powerful particle accelerator that costs billions of dollars!

There are many yogis who have these kinds of *siddhis* or powers that come about as a result of meditation. They are good as long as you don’t get caught in them.

Otherwise, you will lose sight of the ultimate goal of enlightenment.

17. Clear, undisturbed peace

Enlightenment is having such a strong and clear sense of peace inside you that even your thoughts cannot disturb you.

Do not think enlightened masters don’t have thoughts. It is just that their inner space is so big that the mind is a negligible part. For you, if you have a ten-acre mind, all ten acres are like a zoo. With an enlightened being there are a million acres, but still only a ten acre zoo. In a million acres, if there is some movement in ten acres, can you consider it as something disturbing? No! It is negligible. It is practically not there. That is why an average person feels ‘I am the body’ but an enlightened being feels, ‘I am the body also.’

It is not that the idea ‘I am body’ disappears. It just expands to ‘I am also the body.’

18. Allowing the natural flow of energy through your body

Enlightenment means simply allowing that natural flow of energy through your body without creating conflicts. The moment you start choosing and prioritizing, you

have already created conflict. Enlightenment never happens to a person who chooses enlightenment. It happens to a person who chooses choicelessness. This is an important understanding.

Attachment to the idea of Enlightenment

For thousands of years, millions of seekers have been struggling. Very few have achieved the ultimate experience of enlightenment. The reason is that you have some idea about enlightenment and you choose what you think is the right action based upon that idea.

When you see living masters, you always see only the side-effect of enlightenment or the byproduct of enlightenment. Your idea and greed about enlightenment is built upon seeing the quality and energy of the enlightened master's lifestyle.

This is not attachment to enlightenment. This is attachment to the *idea* about enlightenment. For example, you may think that the moment you become enlightened, suddenly somebody will give you a golden throne. You only get attached to that golden throne. You cannot get attached to enlightenment itself.

How will you get attached to enlightenment? Whatever idea you have now about enlightenment is not

enlightenment, it is *about* enlightenment. The more your idea about enlightenment

gets purified, the more you will go towards enlightenment, you can never get attached to it.

If you are attached to it, be very clear, your idea about enlightenment is neither pure nor clear. You need to purify and have a clearer understanding about enlightenment. Read spiritual literature, listen to the master's words and get a clear idea about enlightenment.

The clear idea about enlightenment IS enlightenment! Because after some time once you stop fighting with the master, all the clarity that he gave you until then will become a solid experience. When the inner space is very loving, connected to the master, every word he expresses will straightaway become an experience in you. So try to create a clearer understanding. It will automatically take you to enlightenment, and the attachment will disappear.

19. Being aware, doing, and surrendering

Being aware, doing the right things, and surrendering to the Divine - enlightenment

It is not that the idea 'I am body' disappears. It just expands - 'I am also the body.'

**When you are
aware, you are
already
surrendered to
the Divine.**

things, you are not enlightened. When you realize all these three are one, all three happen simultaneously and spontaneously. You are enlightened. When you are aware, you are already surrendered to the Divine, and you will always be doing the right thing!

20. Beyond bliss

‘Always being intense’ is the main mark of an enlightened master. When you see that, you understand it as ‘bliss’ or ‘happiness’. To tell you honestly, I myself do not feel that I am a separate blissful being. All I know is that something extraordinary is constantly happening in me, very intensely. Only an outsider feels it is ‘bliss’. Actually it is not even ‘bliss’. It is the quality that cannot be described, that cannot be conceived by the mind.

21. Merging of the experience, experiencer, and experienced

As of now, you see three separate things: the experiencer, the experience, and the experienced. For example, you are reading

means all these three. As long as you think all these three are different

this book now. You are the experiencer that is the reader, the experience is of reading, and the thing being experienced is the book. When you get enlightened, all these three – experiencer, experience, and the experienced, become one. You are only the experiencer having the experience of you, who is also the experienced!

Living Enlightenment

1. Enjoying the chaos of the cosmos within the frame of the body

As of now, you are not mature enough to hold the chaos, the cosmos, inside the frame of your body. You need to put the chaos in order because you are not capable of handling the cosmos as is. The six feet frame of your body is not mature enough to hold the chaos as is, to experience and enjoy the cosmos as is.

Being with a body, mind and brain that are awakened and tuned to experience the cosmos as is, is what is living enlightenment.

For this, the body, mind and brain need to be prepared. The body can be prepared with techniques like Nithya Yoga.

The mind is like the software. It consists of the conscious mind and unconscious

mind. The conscious mind can be cleared by the right teachings, by removing the wrong ideas and taking in clear and correct ideas. The unconscious mind can be cleared by meditation techniques.

But ultimately, for the software change to be permanent, the hardware also has to change. Your very brain grooves have to change to hold and radiate the experience of living enlightenment. This can happen through initiation, the touch of the master. Initiation is directly transmitting the energy after which different dimensions of you will start getting awakened.

2. Living a conflict-free life

Living enlightenment has nothing to do with married life or celibacy. It is just living a conflict-free life where your actions and knowledge are in tune with your desires.

3. Reduced number of thoughts

Not being in the extremes of anything, not being caught in the extremes of emotions is what is called the Middle Path. Being in the middle path, the *madhyapantha**

suddenly you see a reduction in the number of thoughts that arise before any action starts. That is the period called 'living enlightenment'. When thoughts completely drop and you are able to do all your activity without thoughts, you are enlightened.

4. Centered in *sattva*

Centered in *sattva*, positive energy, you will be able to perform all your activities, your profession, your business, your relationships, your whole life in a beautiful, effortless way. You will be able to manage everything just centered on positive energy. That is what I call 'living enlightenment' or *jeevan mukti* - even while you are living, you are liberated.

5. Awakening of the non-mechanical parts of the brain

When you are centered in *sattva*, positive energy, you have a clear understanding of the *jeeva**, the self. You have the clear understanding of how to relate with the *jagat**, the world. Because of the clarity of the self and the world, naturally you will fall into the source, *Ishwara*, god.

Madhyapantha - 'Middle Path' prescribed by enlightened master Buddha. It represents the power of witnessing that causes one to be in moderation without being pushed and pulled into extremes of emotions.

Jeeva - Usually the imperishable spirit that dwells in all living beings.

Jagat - Universe.

The very understanding will give you clarity. That clarity will automatically awaken the non-mechanical parts of your brain. When that awakening happens, a chaos will start happening in your routine. Your routine will start getting re-arranged by itself. Just cooperate with it. That is what I call 'living enlightenment'.

6. Cooperating with the awakening

If you don't cooperate with the new ecstasy that is happening, with the new awakening that is happening, and if you force your same old dull routine on yourself, you may forget, or you may bring yourself back to the same old person, the same old dullness. Cooperating with the awakening that happens in you is what I call being a disciple or living enlightenment.

7. Living the great truths

'Living enlightenment' is the right word. When you are living these great truths you are enlightened, that's all.

People think that having enlightenment means all responsibilities are taken away and that you don't need to do anything. They think it is a long vacation and you can just lie down on a beach, and that

nothing needs to be done.

You have a fantasy about what you want to have and all that you never had in your life. You project these and see them as enlightenment. You project your own concept of heaven and think that it is enlightenment. 'Having' enlightenment is a wrong word. 'Living' enlightenment is the right word.

You are supposed to live the truths. Living the great truths in your life is enlightenment. The master cannot hand over enlightenment to you. It is not something separate that he can give. He can only give you the tools for you to experience your enlightenment. He can only give the path. He can only give the truths. You need to start living these truths and experiencing them in your life.

Enlightenment does not mean you will leave your body and die. No! You will live in a center that is beyond the five senses, but with the five senses. Only your center will be shifted. The cognitive shift will happen within you. This is what I call *jeevan mukti*, living enlightenment.

Ego Vs Enlightenment

Your ego is not powerful enough to take away your enlightenment! Understand that your ego is not so powerful that it can take away your enlightenment.

You need to stop thinking that you have an ego. Even your ego is not as big as you think. You are not as big as you always think! So even your ego cannot take away your enlightenment.

Whether you believe it or not, experience it or not, you *are* eternal Consciousness.

Your logic is also not as strong as you think. I always tell people, your ignorance is not so strong as to take enlightenment away from you. Even in your ignorance or ego you are not that big a person, and that is the truth!

Before and after

There is a beautiful Zen saying, ‘Before enlightenment, a mountain was mountain, a river was river, a forest was forest. When you start seeking, when you start searching, a mountain is not a mountain, a river is not a river, a forest is not a forest. Everything is chaos. When you achieve what you are seeking – enlightenment - again, a mountain is a mountain, a river is a river, a forest is a forest.’

It is very difficult to understand this statement. What they mean is, before you started seeking and after you achieved enlightenment, things are clear. But during the process of seeking itself, things are not clear. Although before seeking and after enlightenment, things appear to be clear,

the clarity before seeking is not the same clarity as after enlightenment.

Before seeking, the clarity that you have can be confused very easily by anything! It is not the ultimate clarity. It is just a vague idea. But after enlightenment, the clarity that you get cannot be confused by anything. It is the ultimate truth as it is. That is the difference. The clarity that cannot be confused by anything is the clarity of enlightenment. After enlightenment, the very frequency of seeing things will be totally different. So although a mountain is a mountain, a river is a river, and a forest is a forest, the very frequency of seeing will be completely different. During seeking, since it is a transformational process, things will only be in confusion! Don’t bother much about it.

Deep want, no qualifications

People ask me, ‘If a master wants, whether a disciple is qualified or not, can he give him enlightenment?’

An enlightened master can enlighten anybody just by one touch – not even touch, just a thought is enough. Nothing else is necessary. He can liberate anybody.

The greatest happening on planet earth is an unenlightened being sitting with an

The master can simply download the software of an enlightened physiology into anyone.

enlightened being and becoming enlightened.

The master can simply download

the software of an enlightened physiology into anyone. When you are completely open, the software of an enlightened physiology can be downloaded into your system. Your body learns that it can be better than what it is now. Your bio-memory learns the lesson of the possibility for a better existence.

A small story from the life of the enlightened master, Buddha:

Buddha was once asked, 'Why don't you give enlightenment to everybody?' He said, 'Please ask in the village who wants enlightenment. Bring them to me and I shall give.'

The man went through the whole village that day asking who wanted enlightenment. He came back to Buddha in the evening with a low face. Buddha asked him, 'What happened? Nobody wants enlightenment, is it?'

The man replied a little cheerfully, 'No, no, two people want enlightenment.' Buddha replied, 'Ok, get them right now. I will give them enlightenment.'

The man replied in a low voice, 'No, they don't want to come here. If you send it to where they are, they will take it!'

Nobody really wants enlightenment in the real sense! They just want it as a utility or to keep in their showcase!

Understand, god gives you the freedom to be in bondage also. Enlightenment can never be forced on you. If it is forced, even freedom will become bondage.

There are two things, qualification and wanting.

There is no qualification needed for enlightenment, but the deep feeling, the deep wanting that 'I want it', should be there.

Please be very clear, I also had ALL the problems that you are having like not being able to trust Existence or not being able to trust myself, I had everything. All I can say is, there is no qualification for enlightenment. For somebody to become enlightened, they do not need any qualification.

It is like winning a lottery ticket! Can anybody say, 'I worked for the lottery ticket, I went and bought it and deserve to win the lottery. My effort is equal to the prize!?' No! What is the qualification for the 100 million dollar lottery? You just need to buy a ticket, that's all! The work

that you do is too small for the result that you get. Your effort is not equal to the result. It is the same with enlightenment. So enlightenment is always like a lottery. The experience is always so much more than any and all effort you make on the spiritual path.

Once the experience happens, you will understand that it is a blessing. Whatever you do until then is nothing more than buying a lottery ticket. The person who bought a lottery ticket cannot say he won the lottery because of his hard work.

Ramana Maharishi sings a beautiful poem to Arunachala, the sacred hill manifestation of Shiva in the temple town of Tiruvannamalai in South India. In it he sings, 'I gave me and got You. So who is the winner? Who is more intelligent!'

Enlightenment can be had by giving yourself to Existence. Giving yourself is not an equal thing for what you receive. Even if you give your life, it is nothing more in effort or value than buying a lottery ticket.

After it happens, you will understand that the whole thing is nothing but the pure grace and blessing of Existence. The result or the transformation will be so big, so great that you can't think of a reason why you were chosen for it, why it was showered on you! No qualification is necessary, but the deep need, the seeking is necessary.

**Once the
experience
happens, you will
understand that
it is a blessing.**

Fulfillment is always a gift. To receive a gift, there is no such thing as being worthy.

Seeking is feeling the void, the emptiness, because you don't have the spiritual clarity and enlightenment as yet. The urge should become urgent.

The enlightened master, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, used to say, 'Suppose you are living in poverty, dying with no food and no clothes. But somehow you know that there is a lot of wealth kept locked in the next room. Even if you take it nobody will know. Will you be able to sleep restfully now? Either you will try to open the door or you will break down the door. Unless you have that wealth under your control, you will not be able to sleep.'

In the same way, you should know you are in spiritual poverty right now. You should know that inside you there is a room in which there is immense wealth that is kept under lock and key. That knowledge, that attitude, that intensity, that mood is a basic necessity. With that, the seeking can simply transform your whole life.

Your dedication is powerful enough to lead you to enlightenment.

Actually, enlightenment is practically like cooking. Something has to be added,

something has to be removed. You have to add the intense seeking. Whatever is unnecessary, like restlessness, etc., will come out automatically, and enlightenment will happen!

Gradual Vs sudden techniques for Enlightenment

I can say all major spiritual traditions can be classified into two major categories. One is the category that gives gradual progress. There will be a clear-cut, defined path, like the five disciplines prescribed by the father of yoga, Patanjali – *yama* (discipline), *niyama* (personal conduct), *asana* (sequence of postures), *prayanama* (breathing), and *pratyahara* (withdrawal). It will appeal to the common mind. You can start and slowly continue to progress. It is easy to start but difficult to end, difficult to achieve.

The other tradition will give you the experience directly, especially the Shiva Sutras delivered by Shiva. It is all about techniques that straightaway give you enlightenment. But starting will be a little difficult because logically you cannot feel connected.

Shiva says very clearly that simple things can lead you to enlightenment. For

example, there is a technique where you are to be intensely aware when sneezing happens to you and you can become enlightened! Practically He says that just a sneeze can lead you to enlightenment! How can you believe this? Logically you can't be convinced, logically you can't understand.

There are some methods, some techniques that give you sudden enlightenment, like those prescribed in the Shiva Sutras. One important thing you need with these sudden enlightenment techniques is the courage and the feeling of connectedness with Existence or your master.

Enlightenment can happen at any moment. Even in Tibetan Buddhism, they have the concept of '*bardos*' – the intermediate states between death and rebirth, the states where the possibility of enlightenment is very high.

The traditions that teach us gradual enlightenment have really contributed a lot. For new seekers, they can be a really inspiring way to start. But these gradual paths have a danger. They may not give you the ultimate breakthrough, the ultimate opening, because the modern mind may get tired very soon. The modern mind is very impatient. It wants everything instantly, like instant coffee!

Sudden enlightenment methods are good because they give you a glimpse of the

experience and a conviction about the possibility of the experience. Then you will not have many doubts and problems. All your problems are nothing but doubts like, 'Is it really available? Will I be able to have it? Will I be successful? I don't know what will happen to me. What will happen to my husband or wife?'

All these doubts are the problems. When you have at least one glimpse of sudden enlightenment, all these problems and doubts will disappear. It will be a lot easier for you to travel on your spiritual journey.

One more thing: Relax from judging the master's words. Stop choosing what you want to follow from the master's words and only following those ones. Then you will see, the final enlightenment happens to you.

Understand that only a person who has exhausted all the three states of waking, dream, and sleep states, can become enlightened. One who is able to unclutch from all these three states can achieve enlightenment.

Expression leads to experience

Anything that comes out of enlightenment will take you to enlightenment. If you imbibe the expression, it will lead you to

the same experience. If a piece of music comes from an enlightened Consciousness, if you just imbibe it with deep receptivity, it will put you in the same enlightenment experience!

The other day I was reading an article about art therapy. They say that if mentally unsound people are asked to paint, they paint wildly. They pour the paint on the canvas and do all kinds of things with it. More than just painting on the canvas, they paint on their body. If they are allowed to do this for a week to a month, slowly the madness comes down and they get healed.

You will be surprised, like a catharsis they throw everything away. The second discovery was a more important one: all those who became mad because of money paint in a similar way. All those who became mad because of women or name and fame paint in a similar way.

If they are allowed to paint, they do the catharsis and whatever is inside comes out. The reason for their madness is expressed clearly in their painting.

The third most important thing that happened was that the doctor who studied

Anything that comes out of enlightenment will take you to enlightenment. If you imbibe the expression, it will lead you to the experience.

all those paintings extensively and gave conclusions became mad!

Be very clear, when someone expresses something intensely, and if somebody studies that expression deeply, then he gets into that same experience as the person who expressed it. That is why the doctor became mad.

Now understand, if you deeply imbibe the expressions of an enlightened master, you can get the experience of enlightenment itself! Blessed are the ones who live around an enlightened master.

The musical magic

When the great musical saints like Tyagaraja, Annamacharya and Manickavasagar from South India sang spontaneous verses, they expressed their own experience of enlightenment.

Traditional Indian music is designed for meditation, for enlightenment. Classical Indian dance is designed for enlightenment. That is why the person who performs and the person who sits and experiences, both experience the same meditative state.

You can enter the very space from which any music is created. If it comes out of the space of the heart, you too will fall into the heart. If it comes out of lust, you too will experience lust. The state of mind

of the musician plays an important role in impacting your mind.

When you listen to any music, be receptive. Don't bother about the words or the notes. Go to the core of it, just relax with that music and try to see the thread, the backbone, the composite central sound. Suddenly you will see you are experiencing the same thing from where the expression came out.

Understand, if the expression comes from enlightenment, it will lead to enlightenment.

A healthy body gives confidence for Enlightenment

Understand that if your family completely supports you and gives you the courage and confidence that you are a leader, you will be successful in your professional life or social life. The right family is really important to be successful in society because only that will give you the courage and confidence to take major decisions in your life.

In the same way, only your body can give you the confidence for you to achieve enlightenment. That is why yoga plays such an important role in the path of enlightenment. It works on the body and

mind and gives you the confidence and courage that you can execute whatever you think.

Enlightened society

During the *vedic* times in India, the whole life, the whole society was based on enlightenment. 70 percent of the people were enlightened and the remaining 30 percent were seeking, working towards enlightenment.

Arts, sciences, education, lifestyle – every sphere of life, every action was directed towards the ultimate experience of enlightenment. Classical dances like Bharatanatyam, traditional vocal and instrumental music, traditional architecture of temples and sculptures, classical paintings and art forms, the science of languages like Sanskrit, the sciences of astrology and *vaastu*, the unique *gurukul* system of education, traditional ceremonies right from birth through marriage to death – every single activity in every dimension of life was an expression of the enlightenment of the great seers, as well as a means to get enlightened.

India – the spiritual incubator

India is the spiritual incubator that produces enlightened masters. For a

premature baby you need an incubator where you can maintain the correct atmosphere, oxygen, food, heat, and take care of the baby until it can survive on its own.

In the same way, for an enlightened being to land on planet earth and completely express his enlightenment and share it with the world, he needs an incubator. India is that spiritual incubator that nurtures the enlightened being because the very societal structure of ancient India was created only for the inner science research and enlightenment.

Every sphere of life, personal or professional, was only to experience the ultimate state that is enlightenment. To this day, the society of India is best suited to nourish the seeds of enlightenment and grow enlightened beings.

The ultimate energy that can stand the test of time

There can be nothing more than the enlightenment experience on planet earth. No philosophy, no system, no theory, no ideology, stands, survives, or thrives for

more than one generation if it does not have an enlightened base, the base or inspiration from an enlightened being.

In ancient India, there were at least 3000 kings ruling at different times. Not a single king or kingdom that was not guided by an enlightened master was able to flourish.

Even today if you go to South Indian villages, you will see huge temples built of stone, installed by enlightened masters. But the palaces that were constructed by the same kings for themselves no longer exist.

Understand, the same king and the same architect who built the temples to hold the enlightened energy, also built the palaces for the king to stay. One might think the king would have used better material for his own palace! But today, if you see, the temples are still standing while the palaces have disappeared with time.

In my own village Tiruvannamalai in South India, the village in which I was born

and brought up, we have a temple that has twenty-five acres of built up area. The palace built by the same king is not there. It is just ruins. But the temple built by him is still alive because the enlightened master's energy is there.

The greatest service to mankind - keeping the science of enlightenment alive

The biggest service you can do in your life, the best use you can make of your life is to keep this science of enlightenment alive on planet earth. Planet earth is alive today in spite of all the atomic weapons we have piled up, all the depletion of forests, minerals, and natural resources. It is so because of the presence of enlightened masters. As long as there are enlightened masters on planet earth, planet earth can never be destroyed!

Top 10 Reasons to Get Enlightened

1. **No Worries; Be Happy!**
Express spontaneous creativity for assured success!
2. **Intensely Enjoy Life!**
Enjoy every moment of life with pure excitement!
3. **Always Auspiciousness!**
Whatever happens in life will be auspicious!
4. **'Always-Right' Strategic Planning!**
Relationships, business, or life – always make right decisions!
5. **Ultimate Experience Every Moment!**
Expand and explode in all dimensions of life!
6. **No Study, Just Download!**
Science, arts, religion, business, cooking... Just download from the Cosmic archives!
7. **No Greed, No Fear!**
Nothing to gain or lose – get all you want right here, right now!
8. **Unclutch - the Fastest Gear!**
Master-mind – Forever free from the clutches of the mind!
9. **Being God!**
Master of your destiny – create your reality!
10. **Beyond Space, Time, and Mind!**
Enjoy being in the lap of eternal bliss!
You are eternal bliss - *nithya ananda!*

In the following four chapters as well as those on meditation techniques that follow in a later section, I give you the pathways to experience the truths we talked about. By now, you have the intellectual understanding: what needs to be done and why?

We now come to the part of how. All the understanding will remain only theoretical if it is not converted into experience.

What is the real aim of life?

What is your ultimate aim in life?

To earn more?

To stay forever young, healthy, beautiful?

To have better, longer-lasting relationships?

To improve your personality?

The list is endless. For each individual, there will be a specific goal or many goals.

But every single goal, without exception, points to the same thing: a yearning to be in *ananda* or bliss. Can anyone say, 'I am not interested in being happy, being fulfilled, being blissful?' No!

Each of us is searching for bliss, but we search in many different ways. However intellectual, however sophisticated may be the ways in which we express it, we are all

seeking only bliss. Only the ways in which we are searching are different.

But ninety-nine percent of us are not even aware that bliss is our true goal! Because we are unaware, we search outside ourselves for this bliss. We search everywhere in the outside world for something which is there within us, just waiting to be discovered.

A small story:

One evening, a man was searching hard for something in the courtyard in his house. His wife asked him what it was. He replied that he had dropped a gold coin. His wife also joined in the search. Soon, others gathered and practically the whole neighborhood was searching for the lost coin.

Suddenly one neighbor asked the man, 'Where exactly did you drop the coin? How come we still haven't found it?'

The man replied, 'Oh, I lost the coin inside the house.'

Everybody searching became angry and asked him, 'Then why are we searching here?'

The man replied, 'The problem is I have no lights inside my house. So I started searching by the light of this streetlamp here!'

Each of us is searching for bliss, but we search in many different ways.

This is exactly what we do in our own lives. We are all experts in searching for answers in the wrong places. We search for bliss everywhere, in money, power, relationships, ideologies, but we don't move in the one obvious direction – inwards.

What is bliss?

In life everyone has experienced some moments of great happiness. But it has always been for a reason. It is a nice feeling but it has two disturbing qualities: the feeling doesn't last and it is the result of some cause or reason. You are happy *because* you got a promotion; you are happy *because* you were cured of some disease; you are happy *because* you bought a new car.

The state of that happiness does not seem to remain forever. It is there temporarily, and when it changes or goes away, once again you feel pain. Only the happiness you experience for no reason at all, which does not die for any reason, is real and permanent happiness. This is what is called bliss. Such happiness doesn't depend on anything outside of you.

The word '*ananda*' itself means, 'that which cannot be reduced, which cannot be lost'. *Ananda* does not translate into 'happiness'. You will be surprised to know, it simply means 'that which cannot be reduced or

lost'. Bliss is that thing which does not reduce for any reason.

What is Meditation?

Relating to space – the only element that can reflect consciousness

Meditation is falling in tune with nature, with Existence. This is your natural state, your true state of bliss. This is connecting with the Ultimate Consciousness.

You see, the universe or the macrocosm is made up of the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and space. In the same way, the body, the microcosm, is also made up of the same five elements. We can relate to the macrocosm, the Whole, the Divine, through any or all of these five elements. The microcosm can experience the macrocosm by relating with these five elements that pervade both.

Relating to the macrocosm through the earth element is worshipping through idols or deities. Deities are made of the earth element, such as clay, brass, copper, etc. So worshipping through them is worshipping through the earth element. Relating through the water element is offering *abhishekas*, holy baths to deities,

or bathing ourselves in holy rivers. Relating through the fire element is performing *homas*, fire rituals. Relating through the air element is chanting *mantras*, divine chants. Relating through the space element is meditation. Through these five ways, we can relate to the macrocosm.

Out of the five elements, space is the only element that can reflect consciousness. The four grosser elements, earth, water, fire and air, cannot relate with or cannot reflect consciousness. Only space can reflect consciousness. And the way to relate with space energy is meditation.

Technique to raise consciousness

Any technique, any method which raises your consciousness is meditation.

Meditation can even be a simple breathing technique. It can be a simple repetition of a word or simply sitting. In the Zen tradition, just sitting is meditation. You may think this is the easiest thing to do but in fact, just sitting is the most difficult meditation. Anything can become meditation if it raises your consciousness.

Intensely blissful in the present

Meditation is just being blissful in the moment. When you are at complete peace

Meditation is

in the present **just being** moment, you are **blissful in the** already in a state **moment.** of meditation.

Recall any moment in your life when you have experienced extreme beauty: the sun rising suddenly from behind a mountain, or the first time you heard a lovely piece of music. Suddenly you became totally still, wordless. In the presence of that beauty you became spellbound, you couldn't think any more. You were just silent, relaxed, in thoughtless awareness. You were completely dissolved in that beauty. That moment was meditation!

After a few moments your inner chatter started again. Your mind said, 'What a beautiful sunrise!' The moment the words appeared, you were out of meditation! You can either think or meditate. You can never do both.

Meditation is just being. It is experiencing the present moment without resistance.

What is the right way to approach Meditation?

The first thing is, be sincere. Keep an open mind. Have the openness to experiment. Be enthusiastic.

There is a beautiful term in the Zen tradition to describe the attitude – the

beginner's mind. It means looking at every single thing in life as new, so everything in life excites you.

The second thing is, be optimistic. Bliss is a perfectly realizable goal for you, even if you are completely unfamiliar with meditation.

Once a man approached the great enlightened master Ramana Maharishi and asked him, 'Bhagavan, am I qualified for spiritual life?'

Ramana answered him with a question, 'Are you alive?'

The man was startled. He said, 'Yes, of course!'

Ramana replied, 'That is enough. You already have the necessary qualification for spirituality!'

The very aim of human life is enlightenment. The possibility of becoming enlightened lies in the *Kundalini shakti*, an extraordinary potential energy which is hidden inside every human body. If it can be awakened, it will take you to a different plane of consciousness, a different plane of Existence.

The possibility to become a different conscious being is present only in human beings. Animals don't have this potential to become enlightened, to become different conscious beings.

The third thing is, be playful! Meditation is a big adventure. To become serious about meditation is to miss the whole point. Celebrate meditation. Simply enjoy it!

The fourth thing is, have patience. Don't start worrying about results the moment you start meditating.

A small story:

Three monkeys once found a ripe, juicy mango. Like all monkeys, they fought over the mango for a while. Then somehow, they had a moment of clarity, a moment of intelligence.

Instead of eating the mango right away, they decided to sow the mango. They knew that once the mango seed sprouted and grew into a tree, there would be more than enough mangoes for all three of them.

Each of them decided to take up one part of the task of caring for the mango plant.

The first monkey said, 'I will water the plant every day!'

The second monkey said, 'I will keep the soil healthy and rich, add fertilizers and ensure that the plant grows well.'

The third monkey said, 'I will guard the plant carefully and protect it from harsh weather and other animals.'

One month passed, then two, then three. There was no sign of any plant growing out of the soil.

The three monkeys called for an urgent meeting to discuss the issue.

The first monkey declared, ‘As promised, I have been watering the seed every single day.’

The second monkey cried, ‘As promised, I have been adding fertilizer and making the soil rich.’

The third monkey said, ‘As promised, I have been guarding the seed very carefully. Not only that, I have been taking the seed out every single day to check whether it has sprouted or not!’

If you are greedy for instant results, you actually prevent the process from settling down in your system. You yourself block the whole process.

The fifth thing is, enjoy solitude. Give yourself a chance to experience your inner environment. When meditation becomes a part of you, bliss will flower naturally.

Why Meditation?

Four states of consciousness

Let me give you a simple diagram so you can understand what meditation can do and why meditation needs to be practiced.

Various States of Consciousness		
	With Thoughts	Without Thoughts
With “I” Consciousness	Jagrat Wakeful State Thinking	Turiya Blissful State State of Full Awareness
Without “I” Consciousness	Swapna Dream State Dreaming	Sushupti Unconscious State Deep Sleep

We experience two states of mind in our day-to-day life, one is with thoughts, the other is without thoughts. We know we have thoughts when we are awake. In deep sleep, do we have thoughts? No. So there are two states of mind: with thoughts and without thoughts.

Our being also experiences two states. In one state we have a clear identity of ‘I’. When we are awake, all of us are very clearly connected with the ‘I’ consciousness, we have an identity about ourselves – I am a doctor, I am an artist, etc. When we are awake, our ‘I’

**There is a fourth
state that we
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experienced. It
is called *turiya*.**

consciousness will be like an undercurrent, alive all the time. But in deep sleep, we do not experience the 'I' consciousness, am I right? When we are in deep sleep, we don't have the awareness of 'I'.

So understand that in the mind we experience two states, one with thoughts and one without thoughts. In the being also we experience two states, one with the identity of 'I' and another without the identity of 'I'.

Now let us understand how these two states of mind and the two states of being connect with each other and create different states in our consciousness.

The first state is the waking state, '*jagrat*', when we are with 'I' consciousness and also with thoughts. When we are in the waking state, we are very conscious of our identity and we also have thoughts. In this waking state, the frequency of 'I' is higher than the frequency of thoughts. That is why, with the help of the strong 'I' identity, we are able to control our thoughts in this state. If we wish to, we can create a thought, control it, or expel it. This is possible in the waking state.

The next state is the dream state, '*swapna*'. In the dream state we have many thoughts

but there is no 'I' consciousness. We are not conscious of our identity in our dreams, but thoughts exist. That is why possibly in your dreams, you might see yourself studying in school but sitting with your son next to you! This shows that there is no clear, logical identity of you in the dream state. In the dream state the frequency of 'I' consciousness is lower than the frequency of thoughts. That is why you are not able to control the thoughts. That is also why you frequently have erratic and illogical thoughts.

In the waking state, the frequency of 'I' is higher than the frequency of thoughts, and that is why we are able to control our thoughts. In the dream state, the frequency of 'I' is lower than the frequency of thoughts, and that is why we are not able to control the thoughts in our dreams.

In the third state, the deep sleep state, there is neither 'I' consciousness nor thoughts. This state is called *sushupti*. We neither have thoughts nor an identity in this state.

These are the three states that we constantly experience in our lives – the waking state, dream state and deep sleep state.

But there is a fourth state that we have not experienced. It is called *turiya*. In this state the 'I' consciousness exists but without thoughts. It is called thoughtless awareness. Very few people experience this

in their lives. Some people experience this for a few seconds and then go back to their regular waking state.

If you get a sudden shock or if you are sitting with nature in a completely relaxed state and in deep silence, it is possible that for a few moments you experience this thoughtless awareness. The identity is alive, the 'I' consciousness is alive, but there are no thoughts. This is the fourth state of *turiya*.

All our physical and mental illnesses take root in the dream state. The dream state starts penetrating and overlapping the deep sleep and waking states.

If our waking state is penetrated by the dream state, it is called daydreaming. We fantasize or imagine endless things that we wish to do. If our deep sleep is penetrated by dreaming, it is called disturbed sleep.

Continuously during the day or night, our dream state disturbs us. When our deep sleep state is disturbed by dreams, it results in problems like chronic fatigue and insomnia. When our waking state is disturbed by dreams, we will be daydreaming with much less awareness of the world around us.

You might have experienced that sometimes you will get into your car, drive for thirty miles and reach your office. Only when you stop in your parking lot, take the keys and get out, suddenly you realize

you have driven for so many miles! You would have made hundreds of decisions from the time you got into the car to the time you reached your office like deciding to press the clutch, to press the brakes, to press the accelerator, to put on the turn signal, or to stop at the traffic light, etc. You would have made all these decisions, but without any awareness of making them. Suddenly you realize, 'Oh! I have reached the office!' When this happens, be clear, the dream state is overlapping or penetrating the waking state.

The more the dream state penetrates the waking state, the more the frequency of our consciousness decreases. We may be living in our human body, but we will not be living a truly human life.

When the frequency of consciousness comes down, we will not be fully aware about the decisions we make. We will not be aware of the kind of words we are thinking. We will not be aware of what is going on inside of us. It will be as if we are living in a house, but we do not know everything that is happening inside that house.

Living in the waking state, continuously disturbed by the dream state, is what I call living in hell.

All our physical and mental disorders are directly due to the dream state penetrating either the deep sleep or the waking state.

**Meditation is
needed to infuse
deep awareness
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the deep sleep
state.**

If both the waking state and the deep sleep state are penetrated by the dream state,

we will have physical *and* mental disorders.

The waking state being penetrated too much by the dream state is what we call depression, because then we will not have the clarity to think fresh thoughts. We will not have the freedom or energy to move beyond our negative thought patterns. When depressed, we feel like all the doors are closed, all the possibilities are exhausted.

You ask, ‘Why should I meditate?’ Meditation is needed to infuse deep awareness into both your waking state and the deep sleep state. Instead of the dream state penetrating the waking and deep sleep states, with meditation the *turiya* or blissful state will start penetrating the waking and deep sleep states!

Meditate to bring *turiya* into every moment of life

The more we meditate, the more our awareness increases, and the closer we move to the consciousness of the fourth or *turiya* state. *Turiya* itself means fourth.

You cannot give an exact name to this state. It is known by many other names: *samadhi*, enlightenment, *atmagnana*, *brahmagnana*, *nirvana*, *satori*, to name some of them. They all denote the same state of consciousness. When this state starts penetrating and overlapping the waking and deep sleep states, we will see good health happening in the body, mind and being. We will start experiencing causeless bliss. Then our very state of being becomes meditative!

The purpose of meditation is to experience this fourth state at least once. Once we experience this fourth state, we can bring the influence of it more and more into our waking and deep sleep states.

If our waking and deep sleep states are completely influenced by the fourth state, *turiya*, that is what we call *jeevan mukti* or living enlightenment.

The purpose of meditation itself is to bring the fourth state of *turiya* into our waking state and deep sleep state.

Why do we need meditation techniques?

Meditation techniques are not there to help you achieve anything. They are there to help you remember that you have not yet found eternal bliss!

If I suddenly tell you, ‘Slip into bliss!’ is it possible for you? No! You are not even aware that bliss is your natural state. But when you hear so many masters prescribing meditation again and again, you continuously remember that you are still seeking.

Meditation techniques are the lifebuoys that help you cross the ocean of bliss. When you are just learning to swim, will you directly jump into the ocean on your own? No! You need a lifebuoy to keep you afloat. In the same way, to enter into the ocean of bliss, you will need a method to help you initially. Meditation is the most natural method for you.

Meditation techniques are nothing but lifebuoys. Once meditation becomes your way of life, you will automatically drop all the techniques, because meditation will become the very quality of your life, no longer a routine that you make time for each day. Every moment will be meditative. Meditation will be a continuous happening in you, irrespective of what you may be doing in the outer world.

People ask me why are there so many meditation techniques available today. First, there are so many different techniques because there are lots of different types of people. Each person has a different mental setup. A technique that

suits one person may not suit the other. So you can experiment to see which technique works best for you. Second, when you keep trying one meditation after another, the very effort of doing all the different meditations will eventually make your mind drop into restfulness, into the ocean of bliss!

Benefits of Meditation

Physical health

Meditation has the power to transform you physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Let me explain what I mean by health in these four areas. Physical health means digesting whatever you eat and having that food become part of your body. Mental health means digesting all the ideas and problems that you encounter and forming a clear solution. It is living without conflict. Spiritual health means receiving all the great teachings and energy, digesting them and living a liberated life. Having all three is total health.

If your digestive system is working perfectly, that is physical health. I tell you, you don’t need anything else. If your digestive system is perfect, you don’t even need food. Your physiology will be so

**Meditation is
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your digestive system works efficiently, you will need very little or no food.

Meditation is also a complement to medication. Through meditation, you can regulate your blood pressure and blood sugar, you can increase your body's resistance to disease. Through meditation, it is possible to heal even chronic problems like skin allergies, asthma and arthritis. No disease can escape the power of meditation.

Mental health - awakening of intelligence and flowering of intuition

On the mental level, meditation enhances clarity of thought. Meditation is also a proven way to improve concentration and memory power. Above all, meditation leads you from intellect to intelligence to intuition.

Intellect is when you make your decisions with pure logic. Intelligence is when you respond to a situation in a more creative and constructive way. Intelligence is

intelligent that it will take the energy directly from the ether. If

nothing but the ability to respond to life moment to moment, to be awake to the challenges life throws at us. Intelligence is to be aware of the situation, to alter your answers according to the demands of the moment. Intuition is when the decision simply happens as a revelation! It happens from the energy of your being, not from the space of the mind. Meditation puts you in direct touch with the Divine energy that lies latent within you, within every individual.

With meditation, you go beyond the mind, into the being. In the being no rules exist. You become free to explore your full potential. That's why with meditation you will suddenly find yourself at ease with your surroundings, easily able to cope with new situations. You rediscover your spontaneity.

Self-healing thoughts

You may have a medically fit body. That does not mean you are completely healthy. Of course, I can say from my experience of having seen millions of people, ninety-nine per cent of those who do not have the 'self-healing clarity' in their system are never able to maintain even physical health.

When I say 'self-healing clarity', I mean the clarity and understanding to bring yourself

out of depression whenever it tries to grip your consciousness.

Just a year ago, I did a small research study. I selected one group of people who had been through some meditation programs and had done some spiritual study. I asked them to write for just twenty minutes whatever came into their mind without editing. Then I also asked another group of people who had never been exposed to spirituality to also write down whatever came into their minds without editing for the same twenty minutes. The results of my study were shocking.

In the case of those people who were not exposed to spirituality, if they had written one hundred thoughts, more than eighty of them were directing them more and more towards depression. Only twenty thoughts were self-healing or bringing them out of depression. But in the case of those who were exposed to spirituality and meditation, I saw that more than sixty percent of their thoughts were self-healing! Only forty percent were taking them towards depression. This is the impact of meditation! It keeps you healthy holistically.

Knowledge-weapons to combat depression

The knowledge of the Truth is what I call 'knowledge-weapons' or *shaastra-shastras*. *Shaastra* means Truth, knowledge; *shastra* means weapons. Knowledge-weapons are the weapons of Truth that can destroy the depression of your being.

Whenever depression or suffering attacks you, suffering attacks you, your mind brings different scenes in front of you. In those moments, these *shaastra-shastras*, knowledge-weapons, can be so powerful, that you simply come out of the depression. They are thoughts that help you to raise yourself out of the suffering. So never feel that the Truth is too much to take in. Try to digest, assimilate and keep it in a corner inside you. Store it as knowledge-weapons inside you.

The more knowledge-weapons you have, the more depression will be afraid of you! If you have a huge army, naturally the enemy country will be afraid of attacking you. Just by seeing your pile of weapons, the other country will think twice before attacking you. In the same way, the more you accumulate the self-healing thoughts, the knowledge-weapons, inside your being, the more depression will fear to come near you. Practically speaking, you will have fewer depressive thoughts that can torture

you and the self-healing thoughts as antidotes when they do.

Freedom

With meditation, you can live your life in a much better way, with greater clarity and greater intensity. You will be more aware, more creative. Yet internally, you will experience a deep and undisturbed silence.

You will no longer be doing, you will only be watching the doer. This is the whole secret of meditation – to become the watcher, to become the witness of your own actions and emotions.

As you start witnessing your own actions, you will realize that there is someone inside you who does not change, who does not get angry or feel sad, who does not care about money or security or fame.

That is the real you! The real you can never be touched. The rest is just a personality you have formed around yourself.

Once you become aware that the real *you* is not the one who acts, that the real *you* is not the one who feels angry or hurt or depressed, then you experience a tremendous sense of freedom. This will happen through meditation. This is real freedom.

All our life we are searching for freedom. Whether we realize it or not, every single one of us is searching for freedom. We

think our freedom is dependent on others. Now you know, the other person is in no way connected to your freedom.

What we search for in our ordinary lives is either ‘freedom for’ or ‘freedom from’.

Freedom for doing, having and being all that we wish, freedom to live as we imagine we want to live.

Freedom from all the things that we hate - disease, worry, anger, stress, low self-esteem, pain and so forth.

We are caught between the greed for something good and the fear of something bad. Our whole life is controlled by these two ropes of greed and fear. But when these two ropes of greed and fear control us, we forget the real freedom that we are craving for.

A few weeks back a casual visitor, an artist, was speaking to me. He was telling me why he hated meditation.

He said, ‘I hate all these rules and discipline. I like to be free to lead my life the way I want. I get up at ten o’clock, first thing I have my coffee, then I go for a swim whenever I feel like it...’ He described his whole day to me.

Then I asked him, ‘What if someone woke you up at six o’clock? Or what if your coffee didn’t arrive at your bedside one morning?’

'Oh, that would make me really mad!' he said, and laughed.

'And what if it was raining and you missed your swim?' I asked.

'Yes, that would be a bad thing. If I can't go for my swim, I feel really bad the whole day.'

Then I asked him, 'If your freedom is dependent on so many conditions, are you really free?'

He was shocked! To be really free is to be free no matter what.

That's what I call real freedom, not 'freedom for' or 'freedom from'. Real freedom comes out of living completely in the present moment. Freedom that doesn't depend on any external circumstances is the only true freedom. This is the freedom that you will experience with meditation.

Love and joy for no reason

You will be amazed to find how much love rises and floods your being when you enter into meditation. Through meditation, you will experience a dimension of your being communicating with you, that you haven't touched before. When you experience lasting joy that no external circumstance can alter, it means that you are moving deeply inwards. You will want to share this

joy with everyone you meet. When this joy overflows from you and touches the other person, it is called love.

Just like freedom, this love will be different from any love you have ever experienced before. All your life, you have loved and been loved for a reason. Even in your most intimate relationships, even between husband and wife, between parents and children, there are hidden reasons for loving. All our love is tainted by jealousy, possessiveness and expectations.

With meditation, for the first time, you will understand what it means to love for no reason. For the first time you will not be giving something in order to receive. You will give love simply because you have so much to give! You will shower love upon the world in the same way that a rain cloud showers upon the earth or a flower spontaneously spreads its fragrance all around. You will love because you are so full and overflowing!

Work as play

Most of us feel that life today has become so competitive and stressful that we have no time to do anything that we want to do.

You will be amazed to find how much love rises and floods your being when you enter into meditation.

Benefits of Meditation

Health

Meditation results in holistic health. It gives good health on the physical, mental and emotional levels. Specific health benefits reported by some who meditate are:

1. The stabilization of high or low blood pressure, blood sugar, body heat and heartbeat.
2. The balancing of mind/body rhythms.
3. Reduction of muscle tension, stronger bones, immunity from disease.
4. Cleansing - quicker elimination of toxins and body waste.
5. Overcoming insomnia and improved quality of sleep.
6. Enhanced energy, increased work capacity.
7. Longer life span - improved body metabolism and body cells with a longer life span.
8. Secretion of healthy body chemicals - increased secretion of natural anti-depressants, enhanced secretion of endorphins, the body's 'happy chemicals'.
9. Relationships - Meditation inherently puts you in tune with yourself and others. The direct result of this is deeper, more meaningful interpersonal relationships with family, friends and with everyone you encounter in your daily life.
10. Intelligence - To work efficiently, one needs intelligence. Meditation ignites your innate intelligence making you more aware and sharp. The natural result of this is improved, efficient and effortless performance in whatever you do.

11. Creativity - Each of us holds within us an undiscovered treasure of talent and potential. Meditation reveals and helps you realize your inner talents and latent creativity.
12. Authenticity - Meditation allows you to touch base with the real you, and makes you realize your uniqueness. Self-confidence then becomes a natural byproduct.
13. Balance - Most of us live life as a roller-coaster ride, held in the sway of emotions like worry, jealousy, discontentment, fear, anger, guilt, etc. over which we have no control. Meditation enables you to be centered in yourself, have a solid inner balance and thus be the master of your own self.
14. Relaxation, peace, bliss - A natural byproduct of meditation is something we spend almost a lifetime trying to attain: inner relaxation and peace. With meditation, you automatically drop out of the vicious cycle of fear, greed and stress, and enter the virtuous cycle of bliss.
15. Holistic spiritual growth - To measure intellect, we have IQ or Intelligence Quotient, which is measured by many standardized tests. Of late, another measure is gaining importance, especially in the corporate world, namely EQ or Emotional Quotient. However, the most important factor of our lives - inner satisfaction and fulfillment - is what matters at the end of the day. Meditation enhances this very important factor of life, SQ or Spiritual Quotient, besides also increasing IQ and EQ.
16. Life - As of now, our mental setup is rigid and reflects our personality. Because of this self-image we carry in our minds, we face a lot of troubles in life and are not able to enjoy life completely. Meditation simply reprograms the software of the mind so that we can live life completely.
17. Ultimate potential - You are like an airplane with the potential to fly, but you think you are an ox-cart because you have not actualized your potential. Meditation simply makes you realize and experience who you really are and the enormous capabilities you have been born with.

**When you are
aware, you will
work optimally
and use your
energy efficiently.**

more work. It is your attitude about these things that makes the difference.

Just try this: whatever you do, act with awareness. If you are eating, eat with awareness. No extra time is needed to do this. In fact, it will take less time to eat because when you eat with awareness, you will eat just the amount your body needs rather than stuffing food down your throat thoughtlessly.

Awareness has tremendous knowledge. Awareness can do better miracles than all your planning. Awareness doesn't contradict, it complements the plans. It will add to the potentiality.

When you are aware, *you* are absent. When awareness is present, your ego can't exist. When your ego exists, awareness can't be present. 'Your absence' will make you live enlightenment.

When you are aware, you will work optimally and use your energy efficiently. So at the end of the day you are just as fresh as in the morning. You see, it is not the work that exhausts you. It is your mind, your attitude.

Actually if you see the truth of the situation, it is not a question of less time or

Take a simple example. Compare when you have to walk two miles to office versus taking a leisure walk for the same two miles along the beach. The walk to your office is like work and you feel tired. But the walk on the beach is refreshing because you feel it is a leisurely experience. The whole thing depends upon your state of mind when you do things.

The whole game of meditation is to get out of the work-oriented mind and look at every moment of life as a beautiful Divine play.

From 'Meditation in life' to 'Life in Meditation'

In the beginning you have to practice meditation in life. You have to consciously introduce meditation into your lifestyle. Choose a technique, practice for half an hour or one hour a day. See how you feel. If you enjoy a technique, stick to it for at least ten days without expecting results. If a technique has touched you, there is no way it cannot transform you in some way. Sometimes the transformation will be subtle, and sometimes others may see it better than you do.

Just one glimpse of the joy of meditation is enough to make you fall in love with meditation. Then you will no longer ask how many hours you must practice. When

you wake up, your very first thought will be of meditation. When you take a shower, when you dress, when you eat, you will do everything with such complete awareness that every act, every moment will become alive with meditation. You will then begin to live life in meditation.

When to do Meditation?

The next question is when to meditate.

This is always a controversial question! All the youngsters think, 'I can do this in my old age after I have lived my life fully and I don't have anything else to do.' All the elderly people think, 'I should have done this in my young age when I was fresh and energetic.'

So the question is not just how long to meditate everyday, but also when to make the decision to include a meditation practice in your routine.

Meditation is just like reading an owner's manual before you start driving the car. The person who does not read the owner's manual before driving the car will naturally meet with accidents. In the same way, meditation is like the owner's manual for your body and for your life. The person who has not started meditation before entering into life will end up with suffering and depression at one point or the other.

Meditation is just like reading an owner's manual before you start driving the car.

Please understand, meditation is the basic need for every life. It is not an option. It is a very basic need.

After the age of seven, you need meditation, because until then, as a child you are by nature in a meditative state. It is only after seven that you start getting conditioned by society and drop out of your true nature.

To really understand and enter into meditation, one important thing needs to happen in you - psychological revolution.

What do I mean by psychological revolution? It means a clear understanding about the self, world and god.

As of now, the understanding that you are carrying about life is not complete. That is why you are not able to experience a peaceful, relaxed feeling in your system. When I say the words 'psychological revolution', I mean having a clear understanding about the self, world and god. It is having a clear understanding about the source of the self, the source of the world and the source of god.

The understanding that is able to give you a completely restful feeling, through which you are able to solve all your problems, through which you are able to find your

**The
psychological
revolution will
develop an
intense inner
space.**

own life solutions, is called psychological revolution.

Only a person who has gone through this psychological revolution can meditate. Until then, any technique that you try will seem to fail at some point in time.

People come and tell me, 'The moment I close my eyes, I get more thoughts than when I did not meditate. If I am in action, doing something, I have fewer thoughts. The moment I close my eyes and try to meditate, I have more thoughts.' This means that the psychological revolution has not happened.

The dream state constantly penetrating the waking state and deep sleep state is what leads to more and more misunderstanding, more and more dullness, more and more lethargy. This is what we call traveling towards suffering. It is the vicious cycle of lack of clarity leading to lack of meditation and vice versa.

If the *turiya* or blissful state penetrates the waking and deep sleep states, then we are moving towards fulfillment. This is the virtuous circle where clarity leads to meditation and meditation leads to clarity.

If you straightaway close your eyes and start meditating, you may have an

increased number of thoughts. So in the initial level, I always give a technique which is not directly a meditation, but is more a contemplation. When you work with this technique, it won't lead you directly to a thoughtless state. It will lead you towards more and more clarity. It will lead to the psychological revolution.

The psychological revolution will develop an intense inner space where you can analyze your understanding, consider your decisions and rethink again and again your desires, fears, worries and all that you consider as the basis of your life.

Actually, many times we do not even know what our desires are.

A small story:

Three old ladies were sitting and bragging about their sons. One of them was saying, 'You don't know about my son. He loves me so much, he personally took me to a travel agent and made the best possible arrangements for a twenty-day vacation for me.'

The second lady said, 'You don't know what my son did. He not only took me to the travel agent but also arranged for a private flight. He arranged everything for a month-long vacation for me!'

The third lady said, 'This is absolutely nothing compared to what my son does for me. He goes to the costliest

psychiatrist and all he talks about is me!’

Many times, what you think is life or what you brag about as a great life, may not be adding to your life in any way.

So in the initial level, taking up a technique that can awaken you, that can help the psychological revolution in you, is the best way to start.

Start meditating here and now. Neither age nor time can be the reason to postpone meditation.

The next question people ask is whether they should meditate in the morning or in the evening.

My answer is that the goal is not to make meditation a quantity of life, but rather a quality of life.

There are three kinds of meditation.

The first is bringing the truth or awareness into your life.

This mediation is supposed to be done all twenty-four hours a day. Breath-related techniques like *vipassana** or techniques where you bring your awareness to the present moment all the time belong to this category of meditation. It is not a part of your routine. It should become the very

quality of your routine. You may be doing anything like writing, reading, cooking, discussing, but this thread of meditation should be happening simultaneously, like an undercurrent.

With the second kind of meditation techniques, you need to spend a particular time, like one hour in the morning or one hour in the evening, or any other convenient time.

The *Mahamantra** meditation technique, where you hum for a few minutes and then remain a witness for a few minutes, can be given as an example for this category of meditation. *Nithya Dhyaan* (explained in the chapter ‘Nithya Dhyaan - Life Bliss Meditation’ is another example of this type of meditation, since it is practiced for a specified time each day.

Then there is the third kind of meditation techniques, where just the very remembrance of the technique is enough.

Examples of this are the statements of the great timeless truths. When you are in a highly mature state, you don’t need any separate technique. You don’t need to practice the whole day or at any particular time. Just the very remembrance of these truths will put you in the elevated state.

Vipassana - Teaching of enlightened master Buddha to look inwards by observing breath.

Mahamantra - Humming meditation that energizes the heart center and taught as part of Nithyananda's Life Bliss Programs.

The very maturity that happens out of the practice will cause you to experience the Truth the moment you hear it from the master!

This is the third type of meditation.

Examples of this are the beautiful Zen *koans**. They are profound truths written in a concise way. Just the

very remembrance of them will transport you to the zone of Truth!

There is a very beautiful story in the *Upanishad* where a disciple comes to the master and asks for a technique or a method for enlightenment. The master just says, '*Tat tvam asi, Tat tvam asi, Tat tvam asi*' - 'Thou art that, Thou art that, Thou art that', 'You are the Truth,' and the story says, the disciple became enlightened!

It seems like a very strange story. The master just repeats a few words and the disciple is suddenly enlightened. How is it possible? It seems unbelievable! Actually it is not so. If we have done the first two types of techniques, the technique that needs to be done the whole day and the technique that needs to be done at a particular time, then the very maturity that happens out of that practice will cause you

to experience the Truth the moment you hear it from the master!

Common fears about Meditation

Many people think meditation involves blindly believing in something. People fear this. They come and tell me, 'I am afraid that I might get too attached to meditation.'

Understand, meditation itself is nothing but removing your attachment! So you can't get too attached to it.

People are also afraid that their desires, fears and whatever else they think of as their life will be taken away from them if they start meditating. In a way this is true! Once you start meditating, whatever you thought of as your life until then, will no longer be important to you! The real truths will start revealing themselves to you. All the illusions you were holding until then will start leaving you.

All the time you are trying to protect yourself from the basic truths only because you are afraid of losing your illusions about life.

The concept or the idea that you are a solid being, which is the root cause of all your

Koans - Riddles given as techniques in Zen to aid Self Realization.

fears, will simply be shaken by meditation. All that you thought you were, all your desires, all your fears, all your worries will be shaken and you will start going through a big change.

This is what is called the psychological revolution. You will have practically a new birth! It is like changing the inner software of your computer. Your hardware may be the same, but your inner software will go through a big change. Meditation is all about changing the inner software.

Your body, your hardware, may be the same, your material surroundings may be same, the persons with whom you are living may be same, but your being will be totally different.

The simple understanding of the four states of consciousness can initiate the psychological revolution in you. It is like a master key. If you apply it every moment of your life, if you are aware of these four states constantly, you will see in every decision, the mechanism or the way in which your thought process goes towards meditation and how every decision is influenced in the right way. This is what I call the cognitive shift. It is receiving information, processing and deciding in the best possible way.

If you understand these four states, if you become deeply conscious of these four states of existence, it is enough. It is like

this: when you are in deep sleep state, unless you have some attraction in the dream state, you will not come out of the deep sleep state. But when you come out of the deep sleep state and enter the dream state, you will understand that the deep sleep state was illusory when compared to the dream state! Similarly, when you are in the dream state, unless you have some desire or inspiration for the waking state, you will not move to the waking state. This is the reason why even after waking up, you turn over in your bed and go back to the dream state!

If you don't get up as soon as you awaken, you will find the dream state more inspiring than the waking state. But once you come out of the dream state into the waking state, you will understand that the dream state was illusory, it was not real. Not only that, when you are in the waking state, if you are not very inspired about it, you will slip into the daydream state!

Now, to pull you from the waking state to the *turiya* state, you need to have a strong inspiration. This is what meditation does. It gradually heightens your consciousness so that you move into the *turiya* state. Along with meditation, if you have a living enlightened master, he can play a strong role in inspiring you to attain the *turiya* state. Through just an initiation, he can simply speed up the whole process and pull you into the *turiya* state.

But once you move from the waking state to the *turiya* state, you will realize that the waking state was also a mere illusion!

Understand, there is no scale, no proof to say if the state that you are in is the authentic reality. But remember, again and again and again, you get a glimpse of this Truth every time you face a deep depression or low mood.

During deep depression, this understanding starts rising from within, but we manage to suppress it in such a way that the psychological revolution does not happen inside us at that time. Too much of the life that we are clinging to is at stake. We are afraid of the psychological revolution.

The problem is, if we allow the psychological revolution to happen in us, the results are totally unknown. We don't know what will happen to all our cherished desires, goals, ideals and ideas. We are afraid that we may have to let go of everything. So we manage to not allow the psychological revolution to happen in us.

Every instance of depression is actually an opportunity to allow the upheaval to happen but we miss that opportunity again and again.

The moment you hear the word illusion, you are afraid. You fear that you may renounce everything, you may leave

everything behind, and life may change drastically. I tell you, you will lose only one thing, and that is your suffering, nothing else!

You might have had a rare experience, where in the dream state itself you were aware, 'Yes, I am dreaming!' Because of that awareness, you were able to alter some of the events in the dream. Understand that in those few moments, you were aware that you were dreaming, and you were able to manipulate your dream as you wished. But if the awareness increases further that you are dreaming, you will wake up from your dream.

In the same way, in this world too, in the waking state, if the awareness about you, the center, or the 'I' increases, you will have the experience that the whole world in front of you is a dream! Not only will you have the awareness that this life is one more waking dream, but you will also be able to move around the incidents in your life as you wish to! That is what we call attaining *siddhis**.

So understand, when the frequency of 'I' consciousness increases, you will suddenly start experiencing the waking state as a waking dream and you will have the energy and freedom to change the incidents that are in front of you in your life.

Siddhis - Yogic powers that arise during the spiritual journey.

But when this starts happening, if you get caught up in changing the incidents in your life, by and by, the awareness of the 'I' will come down, and you will fall back into the same waking state again, and these special powers will also disappear. But if you are not too much attracted to changing the scenes, and you remain centered on raising the consciousness, you become enlightened.

Whether it is awakening from the dream state to the waking state, or awakening from the waking state to the enlightenment state, the process is the same.

When the psychological revolution happens, inner healing happens. With the inner healing, if the techniques are practiced, then naturally, outer healing also happens.

Without the psychological revolution, if the techniques are practiced, they are called *kriya** or *yoga** - just physical movements.

With psychological revolution, if *yoga* is done, it will become a tremendous meditation. With psychological revolution, even ritual becomes meditation. Without psychological revolution, even meditation will become a ritual.

With clarity inside, if meditation is added to your inner space, you will see that every

time you meditate, the clarity becomes deeper and deeper. Every time you make decisions in your life, it will add more and more understanding to you.

If you are aware, sometimes you will see that in your waking state also, in a span of say, just half an hour, so many things happen around you without your awareness. Your dream state would have influenced your waking state with thoughts, thus causing you to drift off to the daydreaming state.

When you come back to the waking state with awareness, you will realize that half an hour went past wherein nothing was really under your control. You were awake, your eyes were open and your body was doing work, but you were not aware of what was happening. You were somewhere between the dream state and the waking state. Most of us spend eighty percent of our day in this state.

With psychological revolution, even ritual becomes meditation.

Without psychological revolution, even meditation will become a ritual.

Kriya - Action.

Yoga - Literally means 'uniting' of body-mind-spirit.

Sometimes you do see the same world even in the dream state.

Never think just because you are out of your bed, that you are in the waking state. No! Maybe you can't afford to spend your time in bed all day, and it is necessary for your survival to get out of bed, so you get out of bed. But it does not necessarily mean that you are out of the dream state.

Bringing yourself completely out of the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states, is what I call being in meditation.

Reality as dream

You may wonder, 'How is it that every day when I come back to the waking state, I see the same world but every night when I go back to the dream state, I don't see the same world? This question forms the basis of your idea that the waking state is a permanent reality.

Let us analyze one night's dream. For example, let us say that you go to sleep on the night of the fourteenth, and on the morning of the fifteenth, you wake up. You sleep for around ten hours. I am sure many of you have had experiences of having lived around ten to twenty years of your life in one night's dream, in just ten hours.

Perhaps the dream starts in your college days and moves slowly, step by step, up to your marriage, your having a son, your son's marriage, etc. In this way, you live even twenty years of your life in just one night's dream, am I right? If you have experienced this at least once, you can follow very closely what I am going to present now.

You see, while sleeping, we go through the dream state and the deep sleep state. Maybe for half an hour, you fall into the deep sleep state. Then you go to the dream state and have some dreams. Again you fall back into the deep sleep state for perhaps twenty minutes, and then once again, you come back to the dream state. In this way you keep moving from the dream state to the deep sleep state and back.

In one night, you dream that you have lived twenty years of your life. In the first episode of your dream, you are in college. In the second episode, when you come back to the dream state after a time of deep sleep, you are getting married. In the third dream episode, you have a son. Maybe in the fourth episode, you see your son getting married.

An important thing you need to understand is when you fall into the deep sleep state and then come back to the dream state, and then repeat this process, in these different episodes, you do see the same world even in your dream state. Am

I right? Sometimes you do see the same world even in the dream state.

Understand, it is a very subtle point, a very subtle understanding; if you can catch this, it will lead to very great clarity, which can really revolutionize the way in which you think about your life, the way in which you try to solve the problems of your life.

Imagine a man is dreaming. In the dream he sees a tiger chasing him and he starts shouting, 'Oh, a tiger is chasing me! Save me, save me!' His wife is sleeping next to him. She wakes up and sees the husband shouting! The wife is confused, 'What am I supposed to do?' She just needs to tell him, 'Hey, wake up!' Instead of that, if she tries to supply some weapon to kill the tiger in the dream, what will happen? He may kill himself or he may kill her! Any other solution she may try to find will only lead to more problems, more difficulties. All the husband needs to do is wake up.

If you understand these basic things, suddenly you will see that your very decision-making is revolutionized. The cognitive shift happens in you. The way in which you think and the way in which you make decisions, the way in which you find solutions for your problems, will be entirely different. You will start working towards the right solutions.

When you are dreaming, in a span of ten hours, you can easily live twenty years. You

fall into deep sleep and come back to the dream state many times. Whenever you come back to the dream state from deep sleep, even though there was a break from the last dream, you see the same world. So you have to understand clearly that just seeing the same world after the break in the dream state cannot be the quality to define it as reality. Only when you wake up from sleep, do you realize you have 'lived' twenty years of your life in a mere ten hours.

In the same way, only when you wake up from this 'waking dream' in which you are living now, suddenly you will realize you have dreamt maybe ninety years of your life in a few hours! This life in the waking state may be another long dream!

When you are in a dream, you think the dream is reality. Where you are, that is reality for that moment. There is no other scale. In the dream you can never imagine, 'It is a dream.' In the reality, you can never think, 'It is one more dream.' When you come out of the dream, the dream looks like a dream. But when you are in the dream itself, it will not look like a dream.

In the dream, even if you remember about your real life, you think it is a dream. In the reality, even if you remember about the dream, you think it is a dream. So it just depends on the frequency in which you are. There is no other scale to explain which is reality or dream.

Realizing and understanding there is a possibility that this very waking state could be one more long dream will turn much of your attention and awareness to the center, to the consciousness, to the ultimate reality. When you go beyond the frequency of this waking state, it will also look like one more dream.

This is the first step in spirituality. This is the first step in psychological revolution.

Again and again, your suffering gives you a clear statement, you are not living in reality.

Many times I am asked another question along the same lines, 'Not only am I seeing this world, even the people who are living around me are seeing the same world. How can you say it is a dream?'

Understand, in a dream if you are seeing a particular city, and if in that dream you are going to that city with your whole family, then not only you, but the family with you inside your dream, will also see the same city, because they are also projections of your mind!

So, just because the people around you see the same scene as you do, it does not mean that the scene is reality. Those people around you might be a projection of the same scene!

The ultimate truth is the stuff out of which your dream world is made is the same as

the stuff out of which this waking world is also made.

If your attention is centered on the stuff, naturally the inner healing cannot happen.

If your attention is equally distributed on the consciousness and the stuff, that is what I call healthy life, balanced life. You will have physical health, mental health and a vibrant life.

If your attention is totally centered on the consciousness, not on the stuff with which these worlds are made, that is what I call 'living enlightenment' or *jeevan mukti*.

Whether you want *jeevan mukti* or not, whether you want enlightenment or not, is secondary. But if you can turn a little bit of your attention towards the 'I' consciousness, towards the Truth, towards the center, suddenly you will see that a tremendous inner healing happens.

For example, if you are facing some big difficulty or depression, if you realize very clearly and consciously that this whole thing is a dream, you will experience such a relaxed feeling or the inner healing happening in you. That inner healing is what I call meditation. That restful awareness that happens in you is what I call *satori*, the first glimpse of *samadhi*.

A basic cognitive shift or a basic psychological revolution, with the simple understanding that what you are seeing may not be reality as you think, can bring

tremendous inner healing inside you, can bring a great restful awareness inside you.

Glimpse of scientific research on Meditation

Science is just now getting glimpses of the tremendous power of meditation to completely change the entire body-mind structure itself. The benefits of meditation are countless and across all planes – physical, mental, emotional, spiritual. Meditation can simply change the very quality of life.

Increased brain power

Until recently, it was believed that in the brain, the connections among the brain nerve cells were fixed in childhood and did not change, so the brain growth stopped early in life. Now scientists are finding that the brain actually grows and forms new connections all throughout life. Scientists call this ability neuroplasticity.

The other day I was reading in the papers (*Washington Post*, January 3, 2005), about research done by the University of Wisconsin to study the effects of

meditation on the brain. The study was done on a group of Tibetan monks who had been meditating for years, and also on a group of students who were new to meditation but had been taught how to meditate.

They found that the awareness was more and the brain activity was faster and much better organized and coordinated in the meditating monks than in the students who were new to meditation. Not only that, the brain region associated with happiness, positive thoughts and emotions, was also much more active in the monks than in the students.

One more important thing, the researchers found that the brain activity of the meditator monks was more intense and organized than that of the students, even before the monks started meditating. So the benefits of meditation are actually permanent. Meditation can simply change the very circuitry and the inner workings of the brain.

Many top universities in the USA like Yale, Harvard and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), have also studied* the effects of meditation.

Studies using MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) showed that meditation actually

*<http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/daily/2006/01/23-meditation.html>

increased the very thickness of the brain in areas related to awareness and attention, as well as cognitive processing and emotional wellbeing.

The researchers found that the blood vessels become wider, the support structures also increase in number and they have more branches and connections.

Meditation Vs Sleep

There was another* research done at the University of Kentucky where they studied the effects of sleepiness on a person's awareness. A group of people was made to look at a screen and they were supposed to press a button as soon as an image came on the screen. Normally a person who has had less sleep takes much longer to respond to the image than a person who has had normal sleep. Sometimes they even completely miss seeing the image coming up.

The researchers tested the participants before and after forty minutes of sleep, meditation, reading or some light activity.

They found that with meditation, the response was the fastest for every single participant, even though the participants were not experienced in meditation. In fact,

their response was even better after keeping awake the whole night!

Improved concentration and speed of response

There have been many studies to learn the effect of meditation on the speed and correctness of perception and response.

A couple of studies were done at Liverpool John Moores University in Liverpool, England. In one study, the participants were given lines of letters with different numbers of dashes marked above the letters. They had to cross out the letters with multiple dashes, as quickly as possible.

In another study, the participants were shown the words like 'RED', 'BLUE' or 'GREEN' printed in different colored inks. They had to quickly name the color of the ink the word was written in. Normally, this is difficult because your brain tends to read the word rather than look and identify the color of the ink that the word is written in!

They found that the meditators were much faster and made about half the number of errors as the non-meditators.

* - <http://www.asianresearch.org/articles/2848.html>

WHY MEDITATE?

Meditation directly and significantly improves awareness, attention, memory, concentration, response time, visualization, emotional wellbeing, and general health.

Western science has just started exploring the vast dimensions of the effects and benefits of meditation that the inner

scientists of the East have researched and lived for thousands of years. The *vedic* culture rests on these spiritual truths and sciences. Because of it, man has enjoyed the benefits of meditation, the ultimate way to the Ultimate! It is a foolproof, time-proven technique to realize oneself.

Nithya Dhyaan – Life Bliss Meditation

The Master Technique

There are some meditation techniques that are specific for specific times and people, and there are a few that are universal. Nithya Dhyaan is the meditation for the seeker of today. It is the cyber age meditation.

The birth of Nithya Dhyaan

First I would like to tell about how this meditation technique Nithya Dhyaan happened. Up to the age of 11, I experimented with numerous meditation techniques. At the age of 12, I had my deep spiritual experience. From 12 to 21 years, I consciously scanned and analyzed the benefits of several techniques. For three years after my enlightenment, I worked on creating a sound technology to reproduce this experience of enlightenment in others. The essence of this entire inner world research I have done to date is formulated in the Nithya Dhyaan meditation technique.

Nithya Dhyaan is a formula and a technique that works on the entire being to transform it and make it ready for the ultimate experience of enlightenment. Each segment of this unique technique

complements the other steps to help raise the individual consciousness. It is an everyday meditation for eternal bliss - *Nithya Ananda*.

***Chakra* awareness**

To understand the technique, we need to understand a little about the *chakras* or subtle energy centers. Working on the seven *chakras* is like awakening new channels of energy. It is like tuning to a new channel on television.

Man can think only based on these seven energy centers. For some people, the utility of anything will be only desire, lust, touch. For some, only fear will move them. There is nothing wrong in being driven by emotions like desire. But you should experience other dimensions like love. You should understand it is possible to function out of sheer energy.

By awakening the *chakras*, you will go beyond these emotions and be released from the mental setup. You will start working as a free being. If you are liberated from these mental setups, only then you will understand the value of the freedom.

When you are liberated from a particular *chakra*, you will experience a new world. On whatever identity your personality is standing, on whatever idea your life is standing, it will just melt down. You will experience a new energy.

If you shift the energy center, you can change the world you see.

For example, suddenly if you get into the share market business, you start getting interested in collecting updates from television, magazines, people etc about the share market. After a month or so, suddenly you start feeling the whole world is becoming more aware of the share market. You now feel more surrounded by people related to the share market. It is not that the world has changed, it is your perspective that has changed. When you shift the energy center, you will start gathering that kind of people around you.

If you shift the energy center, you can change the world you see. In Hindu mythology, they say there are seven worlds. This is what they refer to - the seven emotions that decide how you see the world.

Nithya Dhyaan meditation technique

This is a five-step technique, each step being 7 minutes.

1. Chaotic breathing

Duration: 7 minutes

Sit in *vajrasana** (sitting with the knees folded and your feet tucked under, with the bottom resting on the heels). Normally in our body, the energy flows from the *sahasrara chakra** (crown center) to the *muladhara chakra* (root center). *Vajrasana** posture helps reverse this flow and supports the upward movement of energy.



Vajrasana - Yoga posture of sitting with the knees folded and your feet tucked under, with the bottom resting on the heels.

Sahasrara chakra - The seventh and final energy center at the crown of the head.

Sit with eyes closed, hands on your hips and breathe chaotically. Inhale and exhale deeply and chaotically, without a particular rhythm. Just focus on the breathing. Your entire being should become the breathing.

This first part is very physical - sitting in *vajrasana** and inhaling and exhaling intensely, chaotically. You will see if you have any digestion problem, it will be completely healed. Your body will be ready.



When the body intensity is heightened, you will have a beautiful digestion system. This

Vajrasana - Yoga posture of sitting with the knees folded and your feet tucked under, with the bottom resting on the heels.

The quality of breathing changes depending on your state of mind.

first part of *Nithya Dhyaan* is for creating a healthy body.

An important thing you need to understand is that the quality of breathing changes depending on your state of mind. Your emotions have an impact on the breathing process. When you are in anxiety, your breathing changes. When you are angry, your breathing changes. When you are in tension, if you take a deep breath, suddenly you feel light, more relaxed and the tension is released.

The breath and mind are inter-related. Changing one automatically changes the other. Emotions may not be in our hands, but our breathing is. If we control our breathing or bring about some change in our breathing pattern, we will directly impact our emotions and state of mind.

We tend to breathe in a fixed pattern. Our past *samskaras*, past memories locked in our unconscious zone, create a particular type of breathing pattern in our system. As a result, we attract similar emotions and *samskaras*. We get into a vicious cycle where our past *samskaras* create our breathing pattern and the breathing pattern in turn attracts similar *samskaras* and incidents in the future. This vicious cycle has to be broken.

**You have to create
utter chaos in your
system to dig out
all the past
impressions.**

breathing is chaotic, it has no fixed pattern or rhythm. The pattern of the mind that forms its existence and expression is broken. Thoughts cannot follow the pattern they have been following so long for so many years.

Our muscles store all our past memories in the form of energy bio-memories. The deep chaotic breathing will start releasing the tension in the muscles, and these engraved memory patterns in the muscles and body parts will be expelled. Our muscles are normally under stress. Chaotic breathing will loosen the muscles and start clearing the engraved memories.

Each emotion within us gives rise to a particular breathing pattern. You might have seen that children breathe deeply and blissfully. But as they grow, they are conditioned by society, picking up from society the perceptions of pain, pleasure, guilt, beliefs, etc. Then the quality of the breathing changes totally. In order to shake this pattern which has been created due to the habitually suppressed emotions, we

N i t h y a
D h y a a n
begins with
c h a o t i c
breathing.
Since the

have to insert chaos. Inserting another pattern is not the solution.

You have to create utter chaos in your system to dig out all the past impressions. So I don't recommend any rhythmic breathing pattern like *pranayama** in this meditation. Just breathe chaotically. This chaotic breathing will destroy the emotional attachment to all your past memories.

It is like shaking a tree that is full of dead leaves. All the dead leaves will fall down. Similarly chaotic breathing is like shaking your suppressed system. All the past engraved memories will be released.

Deep chaotic breathing also infuses tremendous oxygen and releases carbon dioxide from the body. It creates hyperventilation and as a result you feel more vibrant and fresh. Through increased intake of oxygen in the blood, automatically more bio-energy is generated in the cells and all aspects of the body come alive. The bio-energy that is generated will start clearing the *samskaras*, leaving you feeling light, energetic and blissful.

Pranayama - Breath control, one of the eight limbs of the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali.

2. Intense humming

Duration: 7 minutes

Continue to sit in *vajrasana*, form *chin mudra** with your fingers, and place your hands on your knees, palms facing upwards.

In this posture, with your mouth closed and lips together, produce a humming sound as intensely as possible, as loudly as possible and as lengthily as possible.

Produce the sound ‘Mmmm...’ from within your body. If you were to put your



Chin mudra - Palms upraised with thumb and forefinger forming a circle and other three fingers outstretched.

Humming is an excellent technique to reduce the inner chatter.

face inside an empty aluminum vessel and make a humming

sound, the sound generated will be similar to this. Note that this is not ‘Humm...’ or ‘Omm...’, it is simply keeping your lips together and producing ‘mmm...’ sound. The humming should be as lengthy as possible between breaths. It should be as deep as possible (from the navel center) and as loud as possible. There is no need to make an effort to take in deep breaths. The body itself will take the correct amount of breath when needed.

Put your complete awareness on the humming. Become the humming. Continuously there is talking going on within the mind. Humming is an excellent technique to reduce this inner chatter. Inner chatter is nothing but the flow of independent thoughts continually happening in us. Humming lets you feel your body as energy. The moment you start humming, you start feeling light, as if you are floating. You don’t feel the heaviness in the body because humming matches the vibrations of the mind with the vibrations of the body. You start experiencing yourself as energy.

Don't become tense. Just do it in a relaxed manner. Immerse your whole being and energy into creating this vibration. Try to minimize the gap between the humming sounds. After some time, you will feel that the humming continues without your effort and that you have simply become a listener. The body and the mind start resonating with the humming vibrations.

The humming will create a healthy inner chattering and a healthy heightened emotional awareness.

3. *Chakra* Awareness

Duration: 7 minutes

Continue to sit in *vajrasana* or sit cross-legged if you wish. Keep your fingers in *chin mudra**. Now take your awareness to each *chakra* (energy center) starting from the *muladhara chakra* (root center) to the *sahasrara chakra** (crown center). You should become that energy center when you are asked to put your awareness on each energy center. Feel the energy center

completely as if your whole being has become that energy center.

Each of these seven energy centers is associated with a specific emotion in our being. Kirlian photography* has captured these *chakras* and proven their existence at the energy level. These emotions themselves are a result of the engraved memories accumulated in the past. The



Chin mudra - Palms upraised with thumb and forefinger forming a circle and other three fingers outstretched.

Sahasrara chakra - The seventh and final energy center at the crown of the head. Considered to be a gateway rather than an energy center.

Kirlian photography - Form of photogram made with a high voltage. It is named after Semyon Kirlian, who in 1939 accidentally discovered that if an object on a photographic plate is connected to a source of high voltage, small corona discharges (created by the strong electric field at the edges of the object) create an image on the photographic plate.

memories pull us to react in the same old ways to situations and people, and that reaction is what is called emotion. The rising emotions block the particular energy center, causing physical and mental disturbances. So in this step we focus our complete awareness on each energy center, starting from the base of the spine and moving to the crown. When we flood anything with awareness, the negativity in it dissolves. This is true for physical pain as well. If there is pain in one part of our body, if we flood that part with awareness, we will see that the pain shrinks to a point and disappears!

Flood each of the seven energy centers with full awareness for a minute each. Feel that only that particular center exists in the whole world. There is nothing else. Just become that energy center. Feel the energy center completely as if your whole being has become that energy center. Then move to the next center. At the end of this step you will feel completely energized with positivity and lightness.

By the time you come up to the higher and higher centers, your livingness, intensity also will come up. You will become very intense. This visualization helps to create a healthy mind and emotion, healthy inner chattering and heightened emotional awareness. At the end of this step you will feel energized and light.

If you concentrate on the energy centers, your mind will not wander as easily, it will just settle down because these are living energy centers. If you try to concentrate on some other part of the body, your mind can wander easily.

4. Be unclutched

Duration: 7 minutes

In this step, carry the understanding with you that your thoughts are unconnected, irrational and unclutched. Even if you have thoughts, neither try to suppress them nor try to react to them. Just watch them with the understanding that they are unclutched. Automatically, the witnessing consciousness will start happening in you.

Understand that whether you realize it or not, accept it or not, you are already enlightened. By your very nature you are unclutched. Sit silently and experience the unclutched state, the state of pure being and bliss. This is the ultimate technique to experience the state of enlightenment.

5. *Guru Puja*

Duration: 7 minutes

We end Nithya Dhyaan with the connecting, relaxing and resting into the whole Cosmic energy.

**Nithya Dhyaan
will prepare your
body and mind to
experience the
state of pure
consciousness and
bliss.**

Just sit in a relaxed way, connected to the whole Cosmos. If you have love for the master or love for some god, just sit in a very deep and passive way, feeling connected to the Cosmos, or god, or your master, that's all. Just relax and settle down.

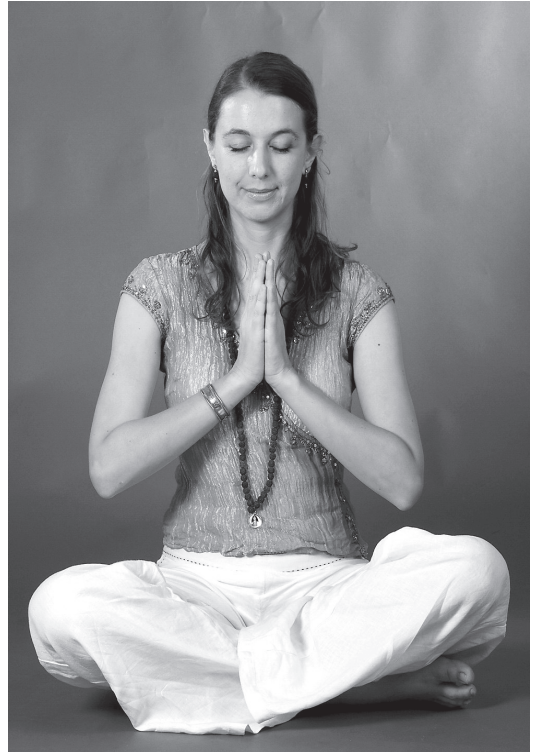
Just sit silently in a blissful mood and listen to the *Guru Puja** mantras being chanted. Feel connected to Existence and feel the vibrations of the powerful mantras within your being. The mantras are a way to express gratitude to Existence and to the master for bestowing upon us this great wisdom which liberates us from ignorance and helps us attain the state of eternal bliss, *nithyananda*.

The chanting is in Sanskrit which has both linguistic and phonetic importance. By centering ourselves on the vibrations created when chanting these Sanskrit sounds, we can go beyond the words of the mind to the peace of our very being. Even if we don't understand the meaning of the sounds, the phonetic value of Sanskrit will transform our mood and

purify our whole body and mind, creating positive vibrations inside our being.

You can also choose to perform the *Guru puja** (offering gratitude to the master) in this step by reciting the mantras and performing the rituals (For details please refer to the 'Do Guru Puja Yourself' book).

Practice this meditation technique once a day and you will start experiencing a new dimension of your being. Nithya Dhyaan will prepare your body and mind to experience the state of pure consciousness and bliss.



Guru Puja - Ritual worship of the master.

Benefits of Nithya Dhyaan

The half hour of Nithya Dhyaan meditation can give you:

- Relief from stress
- Improved relationships
- Inner peace and fulfillment
- Awakened intuition
- Regulated blood pressure
- Enhanced sleep patterns
- Increased clarity
- Increased energy levels for the whole day
- Connection to the Divine energy

You can get your family and friends initiated into Nithya Dhyaan. This will directly contribute to the collective positivity of planet earth, as more and more people will live in an ‘unclutched’, liberated way as *jeevanmuktas* (liberated beings). This shift in the individual consciousness will result in a positive shift in the collective consciousness which will in turn impact all of life on earth.

Yoga is not about physical fitness alone. It is also to help prepare the body for realizing the aim of uniting body, mind and spirit. Nithya Yoga is the technique designed in the body language of Patanjali for this uniting. In the same manner as we spoke about Nithya Dhyaan amongst meditations, Nithya Yoga is the yoga for the jet age.

What is yoga?

Patanjali, the father of the ancient science of yoga, says at the very start of the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, which is the foundational scripture of Yoga:

Yogaha chitta vritti nirodhaha

He says, 'Yoga is the cessation of the mind.' Understand, it doesn't mean that yoga ends with the cessation of mind, rather that yoga begins where the mind ends.

Actually, yoga never ends, it can only start. It is a continuous happening.

To understand how yoga is a continuous happening, we need to understand the important truth that whatever is happening is auspicious.

Be very clear, every experience raises your consciousness and makes you more mature. Even losing your wealth gives you some maturity. Losing your health gives you some understanding. When you are able

Yoga begins where the mind ends.

to internalize this truth, you suddenly see life as a wonderful happening every moment.

A small story:

There was once a ship sailing in the ocean. Suddenly, the captain of the ship saw bright lights ahead and rushed back to warn that ship to move out of the way. He quickly announced, 'Please divert your course 15 degrees north to avoid a collision.'

A voice spoke back, 'We recommend that you divert your course 15 degrees south to avoid a collision.'

Now the captain of the ship got angry and replied in a proud and threatening way, 'This is the largest ship in the country. We are accompanied by three destroyers, defense equipment and many support ships. I demand that you change your course 15 degrees north or counter-measures will be undertaken to ensure the safety of this ship.'

The voice replied in a straight tone, 'We are a lighthouse!'

Understand, Existence is happening continuously and guiding you also so that whatever happens to you does so in the best possible way. Just fall in tune with it – that is the best course! Yoga is a path to fall in tune, just like tuning a radio to a

**Yoga is not even
a goal, it is a
continuous
happening.**

about physical postures – how to bend the body and move it.

The other day I read a joke:

A group of bats were hanging on the ceiling of a cave. They saw a single bat standing straight on the floor of the cave.

The bats were surprised and asked, 'What are you doing down there?'

The bat shouted back, 'Yoga!'

People think yoga is about twisting the body and working towards physical health or some goal. Please understand, yoga is not even a goal, it is a continuous happening.

The word 'yoga' literally means 'uniting'.

Reducing the gap between reality and dream

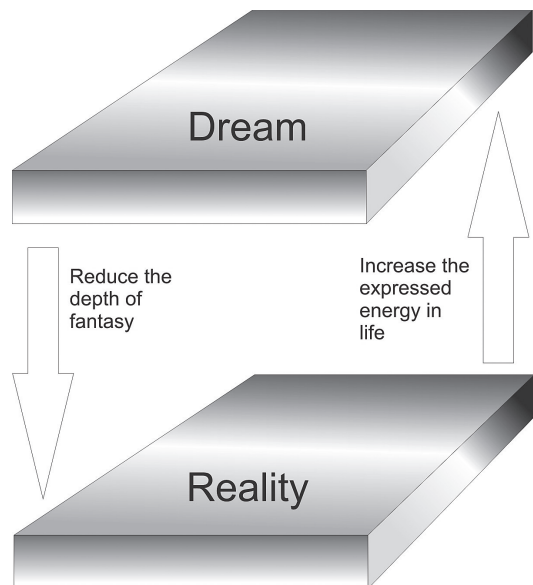
We have two lives in us. One is the life that we want to live, the dream. The other is the life in reality, the life we are living. The meeting of these two lives is what I call 'yoga'.

higher frequency!

Most people think yoga is

Now, how can these two lives, your dream and real life, unite?

You can unite the two either by reducing the depth of the dreams and fantasies or by increasing the expression of your energy so that reality can come closer to the dream.



If you reduce the depth of the fantasy, the dream plane and the reality plane will come closer together. On the other hand, if you increase the energy expressed through reality, the reality plane will come closer to the dream plane. The meeting and merging of these two planes is what I call yoga.

Continuously doing something, either to reduce the depth of the fantasy or to

increase the energy that expresses in reality is yoga.

One important thing, when the two planes of dream and reality meet there is a spiritual explosion or what we call 'yoga' happens. But it does not end here, yoga just begins here!

Usually yoga is understood as mastering postures or achieving a particular state. Yoga is neither mastering postures nor achieving a particular state. It is awakening to the continuous happening around you and inside you.

The person who tries to raise what you call as 'real life' to his dream level is a materialist. He tries to achieve in his life what he dreams. But the problem is, his dream is not fixed, it is not static. As you work towards the dream, the goal is continuously changing. Your ideas are continuously changing, so the goal is continuously moving!

The person who tries to reduce the depth of his fantasies and brings the dream plane closer to the reality plane is like the renunciate who suppresses his desires and tries to realize the truth.

But an important fact is that neither suppression nor expression leads to the truth. Neither suppressing and renouncing nor expressing energy and following dreams works. It is a very subtle game. I

can say this is where Buddha's teaching of the middle path comes to our help.

The middle path can be called the essence of the awakening or the essence of yoga. You are not pushed or pulled by the extremes of emotions, you simply witness them and follow the Middle Path.

A state of being

Yoga is a state of being. When the mind ceases to exist, you reside in the *state* of yoga, the state of no-mind, the state of ultimate consciousness or enlightenment.

When the state of no-mind and pure consciousness is experienced, you undergo a complete psychological revolution related to the understanding and experience of the self (*jeeva*), the world (*jagat*) and god (*ishwara*). You realize through experience that these three entities are not separate but one whole. Both the world and god are experienced *within you*.

Yoga is realizing that you are not a human being striving for a spiritual experience, but you are a spiritual being having the *human* experience.

Yoga is realizing that you are a spiritual being having the human experience.

Patanjali – founder of yoga

Patanjali is the founder of the yoga system. He was the first master who created a clear, scientific, logical system to reproduce the experience of enlightenment.

Until Patanjali, enlightenment was like winning a jackpot, or a lucky dip - you might have the experience or not! It was more like a gamble, you played but there was no guarantee of winning.

Patanjali was the first master, or I can say ‘the spiritual navigator’, who created the map and gave the complete directions to enlightenment. He created clear-cut directions, step by step formulas to reproduce the experience of enlightenment. Just as scientists create a formula to reproduce the understanding of the outer world phenomena, Patanjali created a beautiful formula, a technology, to reproduce the understanding of the inner world or enlightenment.

Raghupati Yogi – master of yoga

I had the great fortune to be around a living master of yoga, Yogiraj Yogananda Puri,

also called Raghupati Yogi. He had mastered the whole science of yoga as discovered by Patanjali.

He had mastered all aspects of yoga - the physical aspect of bending the body into various postures called *asana** or Hatha Yoga, working with *prana* or the life energy, working with the mind, working with visualization power, working with emotions and all the dimensions of yoga. He had a deep insight into the core truths of yoga.

Please understand, in the Yoga Sutras, only the verbal language of Patanjali is recorded. But the body language that he wanted to convey, was not recorded. The purpose for which he spoke and taught were not recorded.

Only the person who has experienced the consciousness of Patanjali can bring Patanjali back to life. I had the great fortune to be with such a master who had experienced that consciousness or the inner space of Patanjali.

Raghupati Yogi had amazing strength and unimaginable physical power that he expressed so casually. He would tie an iron rope around his chest and exhale completely, then he would inhale and the iron rope would break into pieces!

Asana - Physical posture and one of the eight paths of yoga in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. *Asana* must be stable and comfortable.

Usually, a logical mind cannot accept or understand that all this is possible, but this great yogi made everything possible. I had the good fortune to be around him and see him levitating, not once but at least twenty times. He would inhale deeply and hold the breath. The moment he did that, the body would lift from the ground like an inflated balloon!

From the age of three to thirteen, I had the fortune to be at his feet, under his guidance and care. Every day from morning until noon for at least four to five hours a day, he would make me do all the traditional yogic techniques like various *asanas**, *neti** and *dhauti** where I would have to swallow a long cloth to clean the intestines and the internal system!

Just move the body with the intention and get the result!

On some days, Raghupati Yogi would ask me to sit still and be very peaceful, to meditate on stillness, peace and tranquility. Then after ten minutes, he would suddenly tell me to stand up and run around the

entire temple as fast as I could!

He would make me bend this way and that way. In the temple where he would teach me yoga, there were twenty to

thirty pillars. He would make me climb every stone pillar and come down. Also I had to use only one hand to climb the pillars and come down!

I would ask him why he was making me climb all the pillars, because I couldn't find any books or any *sutras** saying climbing pillars was a part of yoga!

He said a beautiful thing, 'For whatever purpose you bend your body or move your body, that memory and idea will become completely inserted or completely recorded in your body and mind.'

It was a very shocking revelation! He said, with any intention that you move your body, bend your body, or make your body active, that intention, that purpose, will be recorded into your body, that *samskara* will start expressing in your body.

For whatever purpose you move your body, that memory will become completely recorded in your body and mind.

Asana - Physical posture and one of the eight paths of yoga in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

Neti - Nasal cleansing technique of yoga.

Dhauti - A yogic practice of cleansing intestines.

Sutras - Spiritual techniques offered in epigram form.

Your body itself is made out of your memory.

Understand, he means that the way in which you bend, in which you stand up, or the method by which you do *asanas**, all these things are not too important. It is the intention that is important. If you have an intention to have health, and move your body in any way with that intention, health will simply happen to you!

Today, especially in the West, there has been too much connection of disease and *asanas* - for this disease, you have to do that *asana*, for this problem you have to do that technique.

A small story:

A young woman had a habit of biting her fingernails. She was getting worried about it and asked her friend for help. Her friend advised her to take up yoga to solve this problem.

The woman started yoga, and soon her fingernails were growing normally.

Her friend was very happy and said, 'See, I told you yoga would solve your problem of biting your nails!'

The woman slowly replied, 'Actually, no. It is just that now I am able to reach my toe-nails so I bite them instead!'

Understand, doing *asanas* for solving a disease is not the purpose of yoga! When you think of a disease and do yoga with that thought in your mind, you are actually pushing the imprint of the thought of that disease into your system!

Raghupati Yogi says that any *asana* practised, or any physical movement practised for some purpose with some intention, will create that effect in your body. He says that this is possible even with ordinary sitting. If you strongly believe that by sitting you will have health and you just sit for health, simply you will see health happening in you.

Understand, your body itself is made out of your memory. Your mind, what you think of as you, makes up the building blocks of your body.

In any way that you move the body with the faith that a particular thing will happen in you, it will simply start expressing in you. Every memory is recorded in your muscles. So when you change the memories, you can change your system also. Your system can and will respond to the memory you create.

This is how the transformation in the body-mind happens through Nithya Yoga. The inner space is cleansed first so that the

Asana - Physical posture and one of the eight paths of yoga in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. *Asana* must be stable and comfortable.

mind falls in tune. Then the body follows as the physical movement is done with the intention. The intention gets inserted into the very muscle memory and cellular intelligence.

Scientific evidence

‘We are what our perceptions are. As are our perceptions, so become our actions. As are our actions, so becomes our destiny.’ This is not a quote from the *Upanishad*, but from ‘The Biology of Belief’, a recent book by Dr Bruce Lipton*, a cellular biologist who has presented a new theory on how cells behave. We have all been taught that we behave the way our genes are designed. Dr Lipton*, after his research, says the opposite - our genes are designed the way we behave!

There have been many recorded incidents of the ability of intention and visualization actually resulting in the intention becoming physical reality itself! For example, people have cured their own fatal diseases like cancer or overcome tremendous physical handicaps by pushing their limits and going beyond what they thought was their capacity. These things have happened through the power of

Our genes are designed the way we behave!

intention which transforms basic cellular memory.

This ancient truth is now being proven with the support of modern scientific findings. It has been found that whatever we think deeply and continuously has a profound effect on us physically, mentally and spiritually.

Preparing the body to hold the energy of enlightenment

Until the age of thirteen, Raghupati Yogi prepared my body and mind to enter into and stay in the experience of enlightenment. Entering into the experience, having a glimpse of the no-mind state, having that experience of *satori* and unclutching is actually not very difficult. But to remain in the experience and more importantly, to express that energy through your body, both your body and mind needs to be prepared.

Having a glimpse of enlightenment is not such a big thing; anybody can have it. But staying in that high energy space, in high consciousness and expressing and radiating

Dr Bruce Lipton - Molecular cellular biologist and author of ‘The Biology of Belief’, renowned for his seminal work in relating genetics to conditioning.

**Nithya Yoga
prepares your
body to
experience, stay
in and radiate the
inner bliss, the
eternal bliss.**

the trem-
e n d o u s
energy of
e n l i g h -
t e n m e n t
r e q u i r e s
preparation
of the body

and express bliss. With Nithya Yoga, the capacity to experience bliss will just explode in your inner space. The capacity to radiate bliss will start happening in your body.

As of now, your system may not be prepared to stay in that enlightened space, to radiate that same experience continuously. Nithya Yoga prepares your body to experience and stay in and radiate the inner bliss, the eternal bliss.

Your mind is not capable of staying in bliss or excitement. Your system is not capable of staying in high excitement and intense energy. It is neither trained nor is it capable. Through Nithya Yoga, I am training seekers not only to experience the bliss, but also to stabilize the experience in them, and to radiate that experience continuously in their life.

The purpose of Nithya Yoga is to help people unclutch and experience eternal bliss. People may also find that physical healing results as a byproduct or side-effect. But, be clear that yoga is for much more than physical health, which is just one benefit of yoga. The emotional benefits are also tremendous but these are also more like byproducts!

In the same way, meditation is not just for mental wellbeing. Mental wellbeing is just one side-effect happening through meditation. So we don't want to reduce

and mind.

The training I had with Raghupati Yogi prepared my body, including my nerves, to hold the tremendous energy of enlightenment. An enlightened body holds tremendous energy. I can give an analogy, it is like trying to hold four elephants inside a small hut! It is like a nuclear reactor. Even the normal temperature of my body is one to two degrees higher than that of a normal person's.

Yoga thus prepared my body for holding the ultimate energy of enlightenment.

Purpose of Nithya Yoga

Nithya Yoga is my offering to the world. It is the science, the formula, that will give others the same experience of enlightenment which happened in me.

Nithya Yoga is a representation of yoga as expressed by Patanjali. It is expressing yoga according to Patanjali's body language or bio-energy and inner space. The purpose of Nithya Yoga is simple, to experience

yoga and meditation to a technique simply for physical and mental health. It is meant for a deeper purpose, to experience a totally different space of eternal bliss, *nithyananda*.

We are bringing the truth to life through Nithya Yoga in this new system, or I can say the oldest system! I can't say it is a new system, it is the oldest system! The way in which Patanjali expressed this science, this experience, we are also bringing the same thing to life through Nithya Yoga.

The goal of Nithya Yoga is making your whole life, every activity and every

movement transformed into yoga, into bliss.

Nithya Yoga is conducted today worldwide. Every session of Nithya Yoga deepens the uniting of the body-mind-spirit by bringing together all the eight limbs of Patanjali's Ashtanga yoga*, by including all the elements like *asana*, *pranayama**, *mudra** etc.

Nithya Yoga is not about adding more movements to your life. It is about adding more *life* to your movements.

If you are present, if you are aware, and if you are totally in the moment while doing anything, it *is* yoga – Nithya Yoga.

Ashtanga yoga - Eight limbs or paths of Patanjali's Yoga: *yama* (discipline), *niyama* (rules), *asana* (body postures), *pranayama* (breath control), *pratyahara* (withdrawal of senses), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (bliss).

Pranayama - Breath control, one of the eight limbs of the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali.

Mudra - Signs formed with hands during yoga practices, especially meditation, to distribute and seal energy within the body.

Living in bliss

- The eight-fold path of blissful living or *Ananda Ashtanga*

These are:

1. *Blissful Laughter*
2. *Blissful Affirmation*
3. *Blissful Cleansing*
4. *Blissful Yoga*
5. *Blissful Meditation*
6. *Blissful Tools*
7. *Blissful Energy*
8. *Blissful Chant*

Ananda Ashtanga or Blissful Living is a simple eight-fold pathway to Living Enlightenment. These are simple techniques that take you into the experience directly without the need to understand and absorb.

Blissful Laughter

- Laughing meditation or *Haasya Dhyana*

Meditation

As soon as you wake up in the morning, even before you get up from your bed, laugh for five minutes! Just laugh at yourself. Laugh without a reason!



Laughter is a wonderful meditation technique. The technique of the ancient Zen tradition of masters and disciples is to touch no-mind through laughter.

Laughter works whether we believe it or not. It has an immediate effect. With other techniques, we need to practice to see the result, but with laughter we don't need to practice. It happens the first time and every time. It goes in deep and heals us physically and mentally.

Laughter itself is born out of health and creates health. It is an overflowing energy. It releases emotional suppressions.

Laughter is the greatest spiritual quality. In laughter we become Buddha - the enlightened One. Buddha is 'no-mind'. When we laugh, we are in a no-mind state for those few moments. Either laughter or our mind can exist, never both at once. When we laugh, for that moment, our mind disappears and we become one with the energy of Existence. We don't feel our identity. Can we experience ourselves as separate in the peak of our laughter? No! That ceasing to exist is the momentary no-

mind and merging with Existence. That is why we need to laugh more. The moments of the self's disappearance can be extended so that we finally lose our identity and live as one with the energy.

Laughter is known to heal a number of diseases, especially diseases related to the nervous system and throat. A hearty laugh is said to squeeze out harmful byproducts of cellular functioning.

Blissful Affirmation

- A vow of bliss or *Ananda Sankalpa*

Ananda means bliss. *Sankalpa* means vow. *Ananda sankalpa* is a vow of bliss.

You can decide to be blissful. It is a choice you make. In fact it is not even a choice that you make. If you allow yourself to flow in a choiceless manner along with whatever Existence intends for you, you will be in bliss eternally. This attitude of being choiceless can be cultivated.

Part of this meditation has its origin with the Sufi mystic Abdullah*. Sufis are the most ecstatic sect ever. Their prayer is gratitude, nothing else. Abdullah* was famous for his ever-smiling face. It is said that even on his deathbed, he was laughing. Finally some of his disciples couldn't help but ask Abdullah* how he was always

blissful. They asked him, 'Master, what is so funny about dying?'

Then Abdullah gave them the secret that his own master had taught him. He said, '*Remember that your happiness is always in your hands. Your happiness is 100 percent your own choice. Every day, life gives you a chance to be happy or miserable. What you choose is up to you!*'

Meditation technique



There can't be a simpler meditation technique than this. Yet it is the most effective one.

Every morning, as soon as you get up, even before you open your eyes, sit up in bed.

Call out your name loud. If you don't wish to disturb people around you by calling out loud, then just speak silently to yourself.

Abdullah - Abdullah Ansari of Herat, a Sufi Master.

Ask yourself (using your name...in the first person), *What do I choose to experience today? Do I choose happiness or sadness?*

Naturally, first thing in the morning, you are not going to choose misery! So your mind will say, *I choose happiness.*

Then reply, *Ok (your name), be happy, that's all!*

Then, with your eyes closed, for a few minutes, strongly and consciously, come to the understanding that nothing can make you suffer without your silent permission. You suffer because you agree to be affected by external circumstances. You have the power within you to be happy all the time. Now open your eyes and live your affirmation!

You will see during the day that just by the strength of your affirmation, you have changed the whole course of your mind. You will see how until then you were blaming others for your misery, while actually you were choosing to become disturbed at every turn of events. You will develop an attitude of being happy, not *because* of external circumstances, not *despite* them but *irrespective* of them. You are happy because you are happy, that's all.

Blissful Cleansing

- Oil pulling

The tongue is said to be an indicator of what is going on in the body. By examining the tongue and its color, it is possible to guess the medical condition of a person. According to *Ayurveda*^{*}, the tongue is mapped to different organ locations. Specific sections of the tongue are connected to specific parts of the body, like the kidneys, lungs, etc. When we do oil pulling, the oil pulls mucous, bacteria and toxins from your body through your saliva and tongue. According to *Ayurveda* medicine, mucous is a poison that must be removed.

Meditation technique

Early morning, before brushing your teeth, eating or drinking anything, take one full tablespoon of either sesame or refined sunflower oil. Put it in your mouth, sit in one place, tilt your chin up so that the oil gets to the back molar teeth, and



Ayurveda - Traditional Indian system of medicine, meaning Knowledge of Life.

slowly pull through your softly gritted teeth for fifteen to twenty minutes.

Don't multitask while doing this. When the time is up, spit out the oil in a washbasin and brush your teeth well. If you have pulled properly, the oil that you spit out will be thin and whitish in color. Drink two glasses of water after rinsing and cleaning the mouth.

Note: do not swallow the oil that you pull. It will contain parasites and bacteria.

If you have to pull oil after meals, wait at least four hours before you do it.

Oil pulling is said to address many conditions, including anything from cracked heels to cancer. Exhaustive research reports on the benefits of oil pulling are available on the web.

Blissful Yoga

-Sun Salutation or *Surya Namaskar*

Surya Namaskar is part of Nithya Yoga. The uniqueness of Nithya Yoga is that it directly brings to life the original teachings of Patanjali by adapting it to suit the modern mind. Sage Patanjali, from southern India, is considered to be the Father of Yoga.

Surya Namaskar is a daily salutation to the sun. Not only does it help keep the body at peak functioning, it also brings a

complete awareness of the body-mind connection.

Benefits of Surya Namaskar

The practice of Surya Namaskar awakens the body intelligence to directly draw energy from the sun. Surya Namaskar is designed to access the etheric energy around us. It has tremendous effects on the mind, body and spirit, when practiced facing east in the first rays of the morning sunlight, along with the appropriate breathing technique and the corresponding *mantras* or chants. Nothing more needs to be done.

Surya Namaskar works on all body parts, every organ, system and *chakra* (vital energy centers in the body). It is a sequence of postures done dynamically and fluidly with appropriate breathing.

Every morning, you may do six to twelve repetitions of Surya Namaskar. Of all the yogic postures, Surya Namaskar is considered the most effective way to tone up the limbs, stretch and strengthen the entire body and spine. Surya Namaskar is regarded as the king of all postures.

Significance of Surya Namaskar *mantras* (chants)

A *mantra* (chant) is a composition of syllables, words, phrases or sentences that, when repeated with awareness, has a very powerful and penetrating influence on the mind and body. The Surya Namaskar *mantra* comprises a *bija* mantra* and a glorification *mantra*. The glorification is to the Sun god.

The *bija* mantra* has no meaning by itself but the vibration created by chanting it is very powerful in the human system. The ‘Theory of Vibration’ expounded by modern scientists was put to direct application thousands of years ago by the ancient inner world scientists, our *vedic* seers!

Scientific studies conducted by Dr. Masaru Emoto of Japan have clearly proven that sound vibration has a profound effect on water. Since water makes up over sixty percent of the human body, it is evident that sound vibrations can and do influence our entire mind-body system also.

Unconscious thoughts and emotions create strong vibrations within us in the form of stored memories or *samskaras*. We need to dissolve them with awareness. Then we will experience the completely positive consciousness that already exists deep within us.

Bija - Seed.

There are six *bija* mantras*. They are:

Om hraam

Om hreem

Om hroom

Om hraum

Om hraum

Om hraha

The glorification *mantras* highlight the glorious qualities of the sun. Beginning with the first, each *mantra* is chanted with complete awareness before every cycle of Surya Namaskar. The *mantra* is empowered to imbibe the same qualities of the glorification in the sincere practitioner.

Through this simple set of steps, we can realize that the outer sun symbolizes the shining intelligence of our inner Self. We come to understand our connection to the cosmic energy that is all pervasive.

Surya Namaskar *mantras* (formed by combining the *bija mantras* with the glorification *mantras*)

1. ~ OM hraam mitraaya namaha

Salutations to the Friend of all

2. ~ OM hreem ravaye namaha

Salutations to the Shining One

3. ~ OM hroom suryaaya namaha

Salutations to the One who induces activity

4. ~ OM hraum bhaanave namaha

Salutations to the One who illumines

5. ~ OM hraum khagaaya namaha

Salutations to the One who moves swiftly

6. ~ OM hraha pushne namaha

Salutations to the giver of strength

7. ~ OM hraam hiranya garbhaya namaha

Salutations to the golden cosmic womb

8. ~ OM hreem mareechaye namaha

Salutations to the Lord of dawn

9. ~ OM hroom adityaaya namaha

Salutations to the son of Aditi, the infinite cosmic Mother

10. ~ OM hraum saavitre namaha

Salutations to the benevolent Mother

11. ~ OM hraum arkaaya namaha

Salutations to the one who is praiseworthy

12. ~ OM hraha bhaaskaraaya namaha

Salutations to the one who leads to enlightenment

Breath control

In Surya Namaskar, every movement of the body is synchronized with the breath. With every inhalation and exhalation, visualize clearly you are taking in and sending out bliss energy. Feel the bliss energy moving in every cell of your body and revitalizing your body-mind.

Meditation technique

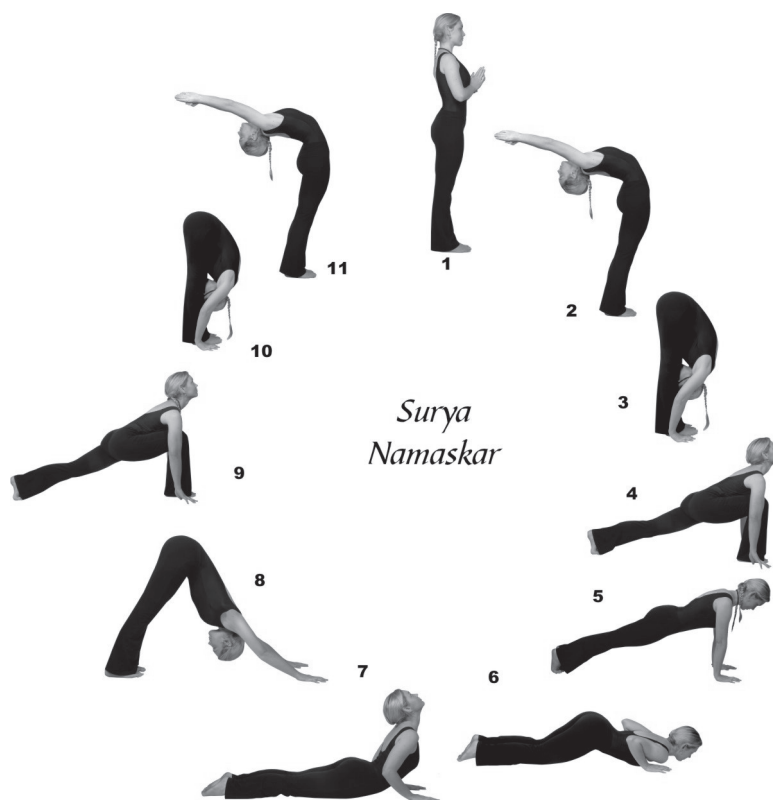
This should be done on an empty stomach preferably in the morning.

Asana (Posture) Sequence of Surya Namaskar:

1. *Stand with the feet slightly apart for balance. Bring the hands together into namaskar (prayer position) in front of the chest. Keep the eyes open throughout the practice of Surya Namaskar. Chant the corresponding mantra.*

2. *Inhaling, gracefully sweep the arms up over your head and gently arch the spine backwards.*

3. *Exhaling, sweep the arms forward and down so the hands touch the floor on either side of the feet and close to them, and the forehead comes in close to the knees. You may bend the knees to allow for greater ease in doing this.*



4. *Inhaling, step the right foot backward as far as you can and lift your heart center, looking up at the same time.*

5. *Holding the breath, step the left foot back and come into a plank position with the spine, neck and head in one straight line, your hands placed directly beneath your shoulders and eyes looking down at the floor.*

6. *Exhaling, lower the knees, chest, and chin to the floor and assume ashtanga namaskar (salute with eight*

parts or points of your body touching the floor). Let your stomach be off the floor with your hips lifted up gently, the elbows tucked in.

7. *Inhaling, point the toes out, relax your stomach to touch the floor, keeping the elbows bent at a ninety-degree angle. Then, gently pushing with your hands, lift the chest off the floor. Come into bhujangasana (cobra pose).*

8. *Exhaling, push with your hands, raise your hips upwards and*

backwards into the air, and assume adhomukha svanasana (downward-dog pose). Spread the fingers wide and gently push your heels toward the floor. If you are unable to touch the floor with your heels, don't bother about it. But don't shift your position in order for them to touch.

9. With a soft gaze look forward between your hands and step the right foot forward as far as you can, between the hands and in line with them if possible. Inhale, lifting your chin and chest.

10. Step the left foot forward to meet the right foot, bending your knees slightly if you need to. Exhale and bring the head in close to the legs.

11. Inhaling, sweep your arms up over your head and gently arch the spine, saluting the sun.

12. Exhaling, bring your arms down, and your hands back into prayer position in front of your heart.

Each cycle consists of two such movements of twelve positions each. In the first half of the cycle, lead with your right leg in steps 4 and 9. In the second half of the cycle, lead with your left leg.

Complete at least 6 such cycles and if possible 12. Before starting on each cycle chant the *mantra* in sequence.

Blissful Meditation

- Life Bliss Meditation or Nithya Dhyaan

Up to the age of eleven, I explored and experimented with numerous traditional meditation techniques. At the age of twelve, I had my deep spiritual experience. From twelve to twenty-one years of age, I consciously scanned and analyzed the benefits of several techniques. For three years after my enlightenment, I created and perfected a technology to reproduce the experience of enlightenment in others. The essence of this entire inner-world research to date is formulated in the Nithya Dhyaan meditation technique.

Nithya Dhyaan is a formula and a technique that works on the entire being to transform it and make it ready for the ultimate experience of enlightenment. Each segment of this unique technique complements the other steps to help raise the individual's consciousness. It is an everyday meditation for eternal bliss - *nithya ananda*.

Nithya Dhyaan meditation explained

This is a five-step technique, each step being of seven minutes duration. Please refer to the Nithya Dhyaan chapter for meditation instructions.

Blissful Tools

- Knowledge-weapons or *Shaastra-shastras*

Meditation technique

Everyday for half an hour, read the books of an enlightened master or listen to his discourses.

A master's words are straightaway *shaastra*, the ultimate knowledge, Truth.

Weapons used to slay your ignorance are called *shastra*.

When words become the very weapons to slay the ignorance, they are called *shaastra-shastras* or knowledge-weapons!

The master's words are the knowledge-weapons that can directly slay the ignorance. A master continuously expresses many ideas. Suddenly, some idea will click for you. It will bring you out of depression. It will give the solution to some problem. That is a click. That click is what is called *initiation*.

The person who gives these knowledge-weapons through his words, techniques and body language is a master.

The person who receives these knowledge-weapons through the master is the initiate.

A master is a person who has created a technology to reproduce in others the same ultimate experience that happened in him.

Initiation is the technique. The knowledge-weapons are the techniques to raise ourselves again and again to higher Consciousness. The totality of these knowledge-weapons sitting inside us is our inner master. Till the inner master is awakened, the outer master works on us. He works through words, techniques, his body language, and gives us the confidence to use the knowledge, and above all to live the life of an enlightened being.

Blessed are those who have had the click with enlightened beings. This click is not through logic. Suddenly, some words from the master will get connected to our heart. The first time it happens, we will suddenly know that he is our master, that this is our path. That click is the first initiation. Whoever has felt this click through the master's words, his teachings, books, blessings, techniques, energy, or body language, is blessed.

Understand, the seed is always afraid of breaking open, of rupturing. But only the seed that ruptures and opens becomes a tree. Then the tree needs to give courage to the other seeds by saying, 'Don't be afraid, you will never die by breaking, you will only live. You will only expand like me.' But the seed is waiting for the tree to happen and the tree is waiting for the seed to open! That is the problem.

I know the Truth that I am speaking. O! Sons of Immortality, have the courage to sprout and become the tree!

This energy, this inspiration is the master. The advent of the master is the greatest adventure in one's life. Once the master has entered our inner space, all we need to do is stand up with trust, courage and confidence.

Again and again, use the clicks that have happened in your life. Any weapon not used will not only lose its power on us, but we will also forget how to use it. Again and again, the weapons that are actually used will bring us clarity and courage and we will also have the intelligence to use them.

Add more and more clicks to your life by listening to the master's words. Add them to your inner space. Creating a family, friends, a spiritual circle, will constantly give us the courage and inspiration to use the knowledge-weapons.

One more thing, when we watch the master talk, we are watching the body language of an enlightened being. A person's body language radiates his own truth and totality. A master is an embodiment of the ultimate truth of Existence. His body language is therefore the very body language of Existence. By watching him, the Truth will work on us beyond our logic.

Kulaarnava Tantra - Ancient literature said to be authored by enlightened master Shiva.

Blissful Energy

- Harnessing the energy of Existence or *Shakti Dharana*

This technique is taken from *Tantra Shastra (Kulaarnava Tantra*)*. It is a beautiful technique to relate with the Existential energy.

It is ideal to practice this meditation at night just before going to sleep. This can also be done in the morning but it must be followed by at least fifteen minutes of rest, or else you would be in a state of intoxication because of the effect of the meditation. This meditation leads to your merging with the energy of Existence. The importance of *Shakti Dharana* meditation is that it leads you to the threshold of the state of *turiya*, where you are in a state of total awareness but without thoughts.

Meditation technique

Stand on your knees and balance yourself well. Do not sit on your haunches. Close your eyes and raise both hands upwards with palms facing skywards. Tilt your head slightly upwards.

In this position, feel the Existential energy flow through you. Visualize that a light-beam of Existence is flowing through you.

To start with, you can visualize the blissful face of any enlightened master. Just as a miser is at the peak of his energy when counting money or a lover is at the peak of his energy when he is with his beloved, so also a master is at the peak of his energy when laughing or smiling. That is why I tell you to remember his blissful face and allow the energy to flow through you. Also, it is better that you think of a master than allow your mind to wander and think of something else!



As the energy of Existence flows down your arms, you will feel a tingling sensation, a gentle vibration, or a slight tremor in

you. It would be as if a tender leaf is dancing in the breeze. Just allow the tremor to happen. Help the tremor, let your whole body vibrate with the energy. Just allow and help whatever happens to happen. You might feel as if the earth below and heaven above are merging, as if the male and female energies are merging. You might feel as if you are floating or merging. Allow any feeling, just

drop yourself completely. There is no 'you'. You have simply dissolved into Existence.

After two or three minutes when you feel that your being is completely filled with the energy of Existence. Bend down, rest on your



elbows and forearms, and kiss the earth, or at least let your forehead touch the ground. You become a medium or a passage for the divine energy that you attracted to unite with the energy of the earth. Allow all your energy to flow into mother Earth. You may visualize the feet of the master when in this posture. It will help to be in a mood of surrender to mother Earth while offering the energy.

Now, regain your original posture and repeat this cycle at least six times. You will do seven cycles totally.

This meditation tremendously improves energy circulation in the body. All troubles related to the backbone will simply vanish by doing this meditation, as the energy goes straight to the *muladhara chakra*, an energy center which is at the base of the spine.

After completing the meditation, you may go to sleep in the same meditative mood. The sleep that follows this meditation will be intense and dreamless. When you wake up the next morning you will experience great freshness and energy.

This is a very powerful technique. When done consistently, a new life, a new meaning, a new Truth will start flowing into you. A beautiful and alive connection between Existence and you will be created. You will experience much joy and each day will become a celebration!

Blissful Chant

- Chanting the Bliss *mantra* or *Purashcharanam*

Mantras are chanted in the Vedic language, Sanskrit. The beauty of Sanskrit is that all the possible sounds are described in its fifty-one syllables. The Sanskrit language not only conveys meaning, its phonetic sounds also transmit special vibrations along with them. Even if you don't understand the meaning of the *mantras*, the vibrations will work on you.

In the East, Sanskrit *mantras* are used for initiations. The master will utter a *mantra* and the *mantra* itself will give the awakening initiation to the disciple. The vibrations will straightaway enter his being and start working.

The Guru *mantra* is:

Om hreem Nithyanandaya namaha

In Hindu thought, every simple act is imbued with multiple layers of understanding. This understanding happens depending on the level of awareness of the individual's consciousness. The word or sound 'Om' means many things at many levels.

Om is the elemental sound. The whole of Creation is believed to have stemmed from it. It comprises three utterances - A, U and M. The syllable A (*aah*) stands for Lord Brahma, the Hindu god who creates the universe; U (*ooo*) stands for Lord Vishnu, the Hindu god who sustains the universe, and M (*mmm*) for Shiva, the Hindu god who destroys to create the space for further creation to happen. The combined sound *Om* is therefore the manifestation of the entire universe.

At a deeper level, the gods are representations of the energies of creation, sustenance and rejuvenation that happen at a cellular level in our personal universe, our body-mind entity.

The vibration of *Om* when chanted gives one the staying resolve of mother Earth. It dissolves anger, desire and psychosomatic illnesses in us. It fills us with the expansiveness and boundlessness of mother Earth. It frees the mind from negative thinking. It releases tremendous

energy and rejuvenates the brain. It brings peace of mind and great power of concentration. It is a jumping board to quiet the mind and enter into the Self.

Hreem is the *bija mantra* of Devi, the sacred feminine principle.

The sages of ancient India practiced chanting these primordial sounds and experienced deeply at the levels of mind, body and being. They presented the science and method of practicing them to humanity so that they might experience what the great sages experienced. Chants from the *vedic* times are all research reports of such sages whose love for the ultimate experience caused them to share it with humanity.

Chanting of *Om* and *Hreem* together awakens the masculine and feminine energies residing in us.

Nithyananda is chanted to invoke the name of the master as the expression of the ultimate Truth. It is the *poorna moola mantra* (the complete and 'source of all' chant) because it is the straight path to both *Shakti* or success in the material world, and to *Shiva* or success in the cosmic world, which is enlightenment.

The word *Nithyananda* also means 'eternal bliss'. By chanting this, we give a clear intention to our being and the universe about our ultimate desire for eternal bliss or enlightenment.

Namaha means *I am not*. By saying *I am not*, we surrender our ego to Existence or to the master who is the pure form of Existence. The word *namaha* when repeated strengthens the experience of surrender. It brings humility and obeisance into us.

Meditation technique

Chant the *Guru mantra* fifty-four times every day for eleven days or continuously whenever it is remembered. The chanting can be done either out loud or silently in the mind. The speed of chanting varies from person to person.

The *mantra* has the property of energizing your inner space and preventing unwanted thoughts from rising. Thoughts arise as silent words from the navel region, the *manipuraka chakra*, which is the vital energy center at the navel region. When you chant the *Guru mantra*, the *manipuraka chakra* gets completely cleansed. This automatically leads to the removal of all worries, negative thoughts and emotions.

The *Guru mantra* purifies the energy behind speech, which is called *vak* energy. It causes continuous bubbling of energy and intense enthusiasm and excitement for life.

The vibration of this *mantra* can change the vibration and frequency of the being. The important thing is to keep the



awareness on the *mantra*. When you persistently bring your awareness back to the *mantra*, you move closer to your inner consciousness.

Like in a water tank, if we keep blue powder at the base, the rising bubbles will also be blue, in the same way, when you keep this *mantra* at the center of your consciousness, your entire thinking system will be purified.

Slowly you will see, the *mantra* will begin happening effortlessly, on its own. And you will fall into a naturally meditative state.

The *mantra*, when done with a particular affirmation, becomes an intense prayer. Medical research has proven that prayer has remarkable effects on the body, mind and spirit.

Leading universities in the United States of America have found that prayer causes a forty-percent lower death rate from heart disease and cancer, up to fourteen times higher survival rate after surgery for heart patients, decreases the stroke rate by half in the elderly, and reduces hospitalization time by up to three weeks. There is a large database establishing the positive effects of prayer on the web.

*Chitram vadataror mooley vriddhah shishyaa
gurur yuvah*

*Gurostu maunam vyaakhyaanam shishyaastu
chinnah samshayah*

Beneath the banyan tree they sit
the disciples, old men, the guru a mere
youth!

The guru speaks through Silence alone
But lo! The disciples' questions dissolve
on their own!

Understanding of concepts will remain
academic, and techniques will remain as
tools without the power to transform,
unless the master's presence catalyzes the
process. One needs the master to realize
god.

In the *vedic* tradition, the spiritual teacher,
the guru or the master, is more important
than god. Scriptures say that the master is
mother, father and god, all in one and
beyond all.

God is a concept to most of us. There are
few who can speak with authority based
on one's own experience about the divinity
one has experienced. It is said that one who
experiences does not express, and one who
expresses has not experienced. The master
is one who has experienced and who
communicates that experience to others
not merely as expressions but through his
very body language and life style.

The master is the doorway to one's own
divine experience. He leads the disciple by
his hand through it to experience the
fundamental truth of his own inner
divinity. In the process the disciple
becomes a master and the cycle continues.

This virtuous cycle of enlightenment
resulting in the experience of one's true
nature, breaks down the vicious cycle of
desires and suffering that all of us are
caught in. It is with deep understanding
that Buddha said that all desires are
suffering. Buddha's reference was to human
nature that seeks to fulfill these desires
externally through the senses. This can
never happen. Desires keep growing again
and again. It is only the experience of the
inner bliss arising out of the understanding
of one's own infinite potential, that can
eliminate the suffering which has become
human nature.

The master is a mirror. He is an intelligent
mirror of energy that leads us to the
discovery of who we are. Let us now begin
this journey.

Lion and Cub Story

A small story:

*Once upon a time, a pregnant lioness
attacked a herd of goats while hunting
for food. As she jumped at one of the*

goats the strain became too much for her and she died giving birth to a cub.

The new born cub could barely open his eyes. He made some sounds and moved around on the ground helpless. The goats saw the orphaned cub and felt compassionate towards him.

You may wonder how goats can feel compassion towards a lion cub. Understand, when the enemy does not disturb or hurt you and you don't feel threatened in any way by his presence, you will feel compassionate towards him even if he is your enemy by nature. In the same way, since the goats did not feel threatened by the lion cub they started showing love towards him.

The goats sensed the cub was not going to attack them and because of this they were able to express compassion towards him. They looked after him, bringing him up in the manner they knew best. They showed him how to eat grass, drink goat milk, live like them and even how to bleat like them!

The lion cub also picked up the body language of the goats. Right from his birth no one had ever told him he was a lion, so he never knew what it was to be a lion. So the cub grew up continuing to live like the goats. The goats also were quite comfortable with the cub being one amongst them.

As the lion cub grew, he began to express his strength in a manner that was natural to him. When the other younger goats fought with him, he used to hit them with a strong blow. The young goats would complain to the mother goat, 'He is hitting us!' The mother goat would try her best to patch things up between the cub and the goats by consoling the young goats and advising them to forget about the fight.

One day a lion attacked the herd of goats. The frightened goats scattered in different directions. The lion then saw a lion cub running away with the goats bleating like them. The lion could not believe his eyes! He could not understand why the cub was running away upon seeing him and why he was bleating like the goats.

The next day the lion returned not to hunt but to look out for the young cub. When he saw the cub he slowly went up behind him and caught hold of him. The moment the lion caught hold of the cub, the cub started shouting, 'Let me go! Let me go! Baa, baa...'

The lion said, 'Fool! Don't be afraid. I am not going to kill you. Don't you know who you are?' The cub cried, 'I am a goat. Let me go! Let me go!'

The lion said, 'Fool! You are not a goat. Don't be afraid of me!' But the young

cub was terrified and not ready to listen to anything. Somehow he managed to break free and he ran away.

The next day the lion came back to where the goats were. He managed to catch the lion cub again. This time he held him firmly.

The cub was struggling under the grip, but while one part of his mind told him strongly to escape, another part of him felt good at being touched by the lion. The assuring, comfortable feeling of the lion's touch awakened something deep within the cub. Seeing the struggle of the cub, the lion let him go saying, 'I will come again tomorrow. But at that time I will not be chasing you.' The lion went back into the forest.

The lion cub stayed awake the whole night unable to sleep. His mind was filled with so many thoughts... 'I cannot accept what the lion said to me,' 'But I think there may be some truth in what he said,' 'No! No! No! I don't think whatever he said is correct. I know I am a goat. I have known it from birth. What he says does not make any sense to me. He is just lying to get something from me.'

Understand, the lion has penetrated the cub in a way beyond the cub's logic. Let me be very clear, if the presence of the master affects you beyond your

logic, the master in you has already been awakened!

You cannot feel connected to the lion unless the lion in you awakens. If you feel some ecstasy, some comfort, through the touch of the master, the lion, and if you find yourself trying to recreate again and again the same feelings that came up in your memory when you were with the lion, even if it is through visualization, be very clear, the lion has touched you deeply! A part of you has already started feeling soothed. A part of you has already started feeling there is something in what the master says.

The next day when the lion arrived, the cub was standing there waiting for him. The cub was standing patiently at the edge of the forest looking out for the lion. But when the lion appeared, the cub started moving away from him toward the herd of goats. But he did not turn his face away from the lion as he did not want to lose sight of the lion!

He just took a few steps back cautiously telling the lion, 'You stay where you are and I will stand where I am now. We can still talk. It is true that I am not able to forget you. But let us keep this distance between us.' The lion replied, 'That is alright with me. You stay where you are. Now let us talk.'

The lion continued, 'Understand, you are a lion! You are ignoring your true nature by trying to be something else! Look carefully and you will see the difference between you and those goats.' The cub cried, 'No! No! How can that be? I eat the same grass as them. I live exactly as the other goats do.'

The lion said, 'Fool! Understand this very basic thing. See for yourself. No other goat feels attached to me. No other goat is waiting for me. They are all terrified of me. Only you are waiting for me. Understand from this alone that there is something happening within you. What is the need for you to wait for me here? Come with me to the river nearby and look at your reflection in the water. You will be able to see your face and mine.'

The cub felt scared to go with the lion and told him, 'No. Let us just stand here and talk. You stand where you are, I will stand where I am. You say whatever you want to say. I will stay right here and listen.'

Then the lion said, 'Alright, let me tell you this. If you allow me, I can show you your true self in the river and prove to you that you are like me. But I will not force you. I will return after one week. If you are ready, come back to

this place and wait for me. I will then take you with me to the river. If not, just forget me. Don't even try to remember me!' The lion then left.

After a week as promised, the lion arrived. The cub's mind was still confused, 'Should I go or not go to meet the lion?' Deep within, the cub really wanted to meet the lion but at the same time he was very afraid of the lion.

Finally, the cub reached the place where he had met the lion the last time and found the lion there. The lion looked up at him and stood up. He led the way and slowly they started walking towards the river. As they were walking, the lion moved a little closer to the cub. The cub got scared and started shouting, 'No! No! You stay where you are. You just show me the path to the river. Please do not walk so close to me. I can walk to the river on my own!'

The lion moved away a little and started telling the cub stories about when he was a cub himself and how he grew up to become a fully grown lion. Listening to these stories, the cub got so engrossed he forgot to keep the distance between the two of them. As they walked, the lion started getting closer to the cub. The cub was completely involved in the stories of the lion and was asking him, 'Is that so?'

'Is that how it happened?' 'Did you also have all these problems?'

Without the cub realizing it, the lion had slowly come so near that he was now touching the cub as they continued their walk! Suddenly the young cub noticed this but he found that it did not bother him at all. He felt the gentle touch of the lion on him so relaxing! He did not protest.

The lion continued talking and the cub was saying, 'Oh! That was nice... that was interesting...' The lion was now almost holding the cub, but the cub was fully engrossed in the 'small stories' about the lion's early days.

As soon as they reached the river the lion caught the cub and took him to the water. The cub knew now there was no escaping. But he was surprised that he no longer had any desire to escape!

Understand, the cub knew that not only could he not escape, but he also did not want to escape! But then, a little ego hiding in a corner of his mind troubled him and he said, 'No! No! Let me go! What are you doing to me? Why are you holding on to me?' The cub still had some fear in him. So he asked, 'What are you doing to me? Tell me please, what are you doing to me?'

The lion replied, 'I am not doing anything to you. Just look into the

water.' The cub looked into the water and said, 'Okay, I am looking into the water.' The lion then asked, 'What can you see in the water? Can you see two forms?' The cub replied, 'Yes.'



The lion said, 'Well, one lion is me and the other lion is you.'

The cub repeated, 'Two reflections: one mine and the other yours.' Then suddenly he realized what he was saying. He could not believe it and started shouting, 'May be not! No! No! No! Both the reflections in the water must be of you!'

The lion shouted, 'Fool! Look! I am raising my hand. See which reflection is raising a hand.' The cub pointed to the reflection in the water and said, 'Only that reflection is raising its hand.' The lion then said, 'Okay, now you raise your hand.'

The cub raised his own hand, looked at the reflections in the river and cried

out, 'Yes! Yes! Yes! I see! I see!' Then in a small, confused voice he asked, 'But... How can I be a lion? Am I not a goat?'

The lion simply looked at him and said, 'I am not here to play with you.' That is when a feeling of ecstasy began to rise up in the cub. He could sense something incredible was about to happen.

But then again his mind stepped in and his mood went into a low and he started doubting in his mind, 'I think I have been hypnotized. This is not my true nature! Something has happened to me. This is not me. I have never felt so blissful, so joyful! This is not me! He is doing something to me. He has already done something to me!'

The cub still resisted. He struggled to escape, but it was only a half-hearted attempt, an act actually, because he actually had no real desire to escape.

The cub started protesting, 'No! No! No! Let me go! Let me go! I know that you are a lion. As an offering for you, I will bring the grass which I eat everyday. I will bring the milk which I drink every day. I will devote my time to serve you.'

Finally the lion thought, 'I should leave him now. He can only understand this much for now.' So, he told him, 'Alright, be very clear, we shall meet again tomorrow. I will not come to the boundary of the forest to bring you

here. I will be in my own home. If you want to see me, find out where I live and come on your own to meet me there. I have no time to waste by coming all the way to your place to bring you here! If you don't want to come to me through your own effort, let it be!' The lion told him this and left.

This time the cub did not run away as he usually would. He walked back very slowly. He did not want to go, but on the other side his mind was pushing him to go back to the goats. Three legs of the lion cub were not moving. Only one leg was able to move. Big drops of tears began to fall from his little eyes at the thought of this farewell.

The next day the lion was seated in a majestic pose in his home. Slowly, very slowly, the cub approached him with freshly-cut green grass thinking, 'This is the best grass available anywhere' and set it down in front of the lion saying, 'Please accept this offering I bring you.'

The lion watched and thought to himself, 'Alright, if I take this grass this fellow will feel connected to me. He might even allow this relationship to become more intense. Through this he might feel more connected to me.' Thinking this, even though a lion never eats grass, he picked up the grass, put it in his mouth and started eating! He praised the cub

saying, 'This grass you brought for me tastes really good!' The cub was very happy with himself. The relationship started deepening between them when the lion began to eat the grass.

Understand, the lion comes down and eats grass only to be able to bridge the gap between the cub and himself. Even though he never really eats grass, he acts as if he is eating it and loving it.

Slowly the relationship grew between the lion and the cub. Sometimes when the lion tasted the grass brought by the cub he shouted at him, 'Fool! Don't you know which type of grass you should bring to me? What kind of grass is this? By now you should know what I eat. Next time bring me the right grass!'

The lion cub began to think, 'He is getting angry. I also get angry sometimes. So he speaks my language and I can speak his language. He is just like me!'

When the lion eats the grass, he comes down from his level, from his plane, from his consciousness, to connect with the cub.

The cub immediately felt very comfortable. It could now connect with the lion. Now the cub decided, 'I must bring the right grass and fresh milk next time. I must do things the right way. Maybe I should have the grass packed

**When the lion
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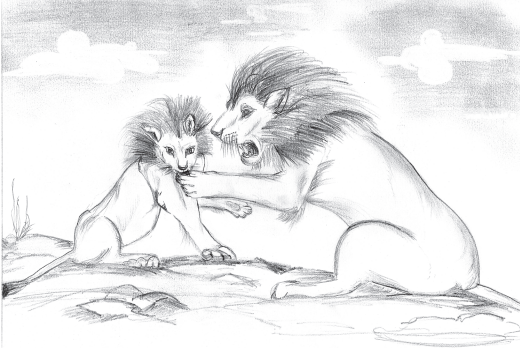
properly.' The cub made plans, thinking he had been scolded by the lion because he did not do his work properly! This is how the relationship started happening between the cub and the lion. Now the cub started feeling free and he started coming to the forest to see the lion whenever he felt like it. The cub started feeling very comfortable around the lion, very relaxed. It did not know the 'master' plan of the 'master' lion.

One day when the cub came as usual with grass and milk, he saw the lion sitting with a large chunk of meat in front of him. The moment the cub saw the meat he got afraid and started shouting, 'Why do you have meat on your plate? What is this? Are you a non-vegetarian? I did not know you are a non-vegetarian! You are such a loving and charismatic person. You cannot be a non-vegetarian! You eat all these terrible things! I am a vegetarian! I can't digest this!'

This time the lion did not take the time or energy to explain anything. He simply caught hold of the neck of the cub, picked up some meat and forced it

**You are neither
man nor the
identity you think
you are.**

into the cub's mouth. The moment the meat entered his mouth, the cub tasted the blood from the meat and something suddenly happened within him.



The cub could not understand what was going on. The cub had tasted meat for the very first time! He was overwhelmed with the feeling that rose in him. This is what happens in your first experience of bliss, satori! When you experience it, you will understand!

On tasting the meat, the cub let out a roar like a lion! He started roaring announcing his true nature. He expressed his true nature. Now the lion looked straight into the eyes of the cub and said, 'Tat tvam asi' - That art Thou - you are That.' The initiation happened. The lion became a lion. That

was all. The lion who thought he was a goat became a lion!



You are a lion, not a goat!

Understand, you are neither man nor the identity you think you are.

You are very much like the goat. In fact, you are the goat. Look at me and understand. I too thought I was a goat, but just look at the way I became a lion. Just take a close look at my own life. Then you will understand how foolish you are to think of yourself as a goat, and you will automatically become a lion!

This is what Krishna means when He says, 'When you understand My life, you will be liberated.' A liberated man's life liberates you because it shows exactly where you stand now. The liberated man too was

ignorant once and stood in the same place you are standing now. This will give you the tremendous courage that you need to swallow raw meat to taste your inherent nature that is bliss and to start roaring instead of bleating. When this experience happens you roar instead of bleating.

How long did it take for the cub to realize he was a lion? Hardly a second! The moment the meat and the blood went into his mouth he started roaring. But remember how long it took just to get the meat into the mouth of the cub!

It takes time to enter the master's cave. The relationship, the bridging needs to happen before that. That is why it takes some time.

Enlightenment itself does not take time. The bridge, the trust to transmit that experience takes time.

Is a master needed?

The master speaks not to give you the truth, but to help you recognize that the truth is already within you. The master is only a mirror. You see your own face in the deep silence of sitting by his side. The body language of enlightenment is the master.

**Enlightenment
itself does not
take time.
The trust to
transmit that
experience takes
time.**

The enlightened master, Adi Shankara, recites beautifully in his verses of Bhaja Govindam*:

When you have surrendered at the lotus feet of the master,

From the chains of this world you will break free,

Then, in complete control of your mind and your senses,

Within your heart, you will find the Lord.

Significance of a master

It is very difficult especially for the modern mind to understand the need for a master.

The master is the one who gives you a glimpse of the Real, the truth of who you are. He is not here just to teach. He is here to awaken.

The master is the only scripture that is alive.

Surrender towards god is difficult because you don't know where god is or who god

Bhaja Govindam - Collection of 32 (sometimes 34) devotional verses composed by enlightened master Adi Shankara. This is considered to be the essence of *Vedanta* and *Advaita*, nonduality.

The master is the only scripture that is alive.

is. God is a mere concept to you.

But the master is one with the Whole. He has reached the Ultimate. To him god is reality. He lives with god or Existence or whatever you wish to call it. And the master is real to you. He is tangible. So he can become your door to reach god.

Through him you can take the quantum jump into the arms of god.

The only thing standing between you and your true nature of bliss or god is your ego. The process of becoming a disciple is the process of renouncing your ego. The ego is very difficult to drop. Dropping the ego means losing the solid identity that you have been carrying all these years, thinking you need it for survival. Dropping the ego looks like death when actually it is the ego that stands between you and life!

Dropping the ego is possible only in a relationship of deep trust, love and reverence with the master. You gradually gather courage and then risk dropping the only thing you have clung onto throughout your life, your ego. You drop the ego only when you fully know that even if you fall, you only fall into the net of infinite love and compassion of Existence embodied by the master.

As of now, most of the experiences that you add to your being bring in more and

more fear or greed. Instead, any experience can add more strength and awareness to your being also. This is the cognitive shift, the psychological revolution the master does on you that results in your complete transformation.

Learning from master

You may ask, 'Why do I need a master? I can learn from life.'

Learning from the master is a very sweet experience, a very joyful experience. The master first puts you in his lap and gives you the anesthesia of love before he starts his operation on the tumor of your ego. Because he showers his love, you will not even experience the pain of going through the transformation. Even if it is mildly painful, you will endure it only with the joy and awareness of being with the master.

Master is intense life. Not only does he teach you, he also sees to that you go through the whole transformation blissfully.

A small story:

The father of a young boy was telling his little son to move a big stone. The boy tried his best, but he was not able to move it. He stood completely tired. The father said, 'You have not used all

your potentiality. Use all your potential power.'

The son was completely tired. He shouted at his father, 'What are you talking about? You are saying I have not used all my potential power. I am tired. Are you not able to see?'

The father said, 'Why, you could have asked me. I am also your power!'

In the same way, you can also use the master's presence. Please understand, you can ask me. You can take the master's help. You have never done that. You have never considered the master also as your potential. So much of help is available, you can have so much, but you never ask or you never take it!

Life itself can be your master. But then it will become difficult to know from where to learn, what we should learn and from whom to learn. Dattatreya*, a great master says, 'I never had a master because life has always been my master. I learnt how to concentrate from the hunter who tries to concentrate on the bird. I learnt how to save money for the future by watching ants!' Life can become a master if you have the intelligence to pick up right things from it. But many times, you pick up the wrong things.

Dattatreya - Representation of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in one incarnation.

Harishchandra - Legendary Indian ruler who was renowned for keeping his word at whatever cost.

A small story:

King Harishchandra lived his whole life based on*

truthfulness. The story of Harishchandra says that he lived for the truth and at one point he even sold his wife and children to maintain his truthfulness.*

Once in a village, a preacher was narrating the story of Harishchandra. After the narration he asked a man, 'What did you learn from this story?' The man replied, 'I learnt that I should always speak the truth, no matter what happens in life.' The preacher was happy. Then he asked another man, 'What did you learn?'*

The second man said, 'I learnt another important lesson. In an emergency, you can even sell your wife, nothing wrong!'

Understand, you can learn two different things from the same story!

You may not have the intelligence to always learn correctly from life, which is why the master happens in your life. He shows you the path because he has already tried it and succeeded.

**Through the
Master you can
take the jump
into the arms of
god.**

**The master
shows you the
path because he
has already tried
it and succeeded.**

See, by giving some medicines also, tumors can be removed. But it may take years and years. The master simply removes the tumor in no time. One more thing, the pain you will have living life with the tumors will be much worse than the pain you experience when master removes it. The pain with the master when he removes it is hardly anything. But living with the tumor is dangerous and difficult. That is why it is better to go to the master.

Life is too deep a mystery which cannot be captured by our desires. Our desires may appear big and worth a whole lifetime for us. Because of our narrow view of life, we attach so much more importance to insignificant things while there are so many significant and more meaningful experiences just waiting at our doorstep. But the problem is that we can't even imagine them because we have never seen the likes of these.

That is where the master comes in. He has seen the wholeness of life. He can see things which you cannot even imagine, leave alone desire. He is there just to help you move towards realizing that fulfillment in your life too.

All you need is the trust to move with him. Then as things start happening you will be

convinced about this truth. Then you enter the virtuous circle. More trust leads to more experiences which lead further to more trust.

The master does not impose anything on you. He simply removes what is not necessary and what has been imposed on you and leaves you fresh and new. You become a beautiful empty canvas upon which you can create your own unique painting. You can compose your own song and you can dance your own dance. The master opens out the gates to the sweetest experience of life, the experience of your own uniqueness.

Understand the difference between technique and process. Technique can be done again and the effect will be the same. But with process, you can't get the same effect every time and you won't even be able to do it on your own.

Technique done with the master is a process. Process done without the master is technique.

Technique done with the master is a process. Process done without the master is technique.

The eternal relationship

What is a relationship?

Relationship is that which can reveal to you dimensions in you that you don't even know exist inside you. It gives you the experience and proves to you that you are also capable of loving someone or

something. It shows that you can also love and you can also sacrifice to an amazing extent for the sake of someone.

When we are born, we are born with completeness. But we are not aware of many of our dimensions and when we are not aware, the outer world too does not know of it. Relationships have the power to awaken our unknown dimensions and make us experience them and show the same to the outer world.

Relationship awakens the unknown dimensions in you.

A relationship with anyone or anything, no matter who or what, will lead you to the ultimate relationship with the master.

When you fall in love, whether it is with a man, woman or child, deity or master, you will see dimensions of you that you never knew existed inside you. With the flowering of such love, you become more responsible. You experience the very juice of life.

The relationship with the master, who is one with Existence, is deeper than any other relationship. It is a being level connection.

Generally all other relationships will create bondage but the relationship with the master has the power to lead you to freedom and finally to eternal bliss. Even if you try to create bondage in this

relationship, it will only lead to eternal bliss! Bondage can never happen in this relationship.

The form of the master is the bridge between the Ultimate and you. Because the form is an embodiment of the Ultimate, it has both the dimensions, of man and god. When you relate with not only the form but also the truth that the form stands for, you reach the knowledge of the Ultimate.

The master is all forms and no form. He refuses to be captured in a frame, to be turned into a stone or worshipped as an image. The master is beyond forms, beyond dimensions. He has infinite dimensions - infini-D!

Frozen into one frame, whether mother or lover, he is easy for you to capture and retain. He becomes easier to market. But the master is not interested in business for him. He wants you to be confused so that you look in and become enlightened. He wants you to die so that you become awake.

Come to the master with your ignorance. He will show you the path. Don't hesitate to fall into his arms with love. You will soar with him into bliss.

A relationship with anyone or anything will lead you to the ultimate relationship with the master.

**Master is the
person who
awakens the
enlightenment
dimension in you.**

The master relates to us on multiple frames and planes, each one of which unveils the beauty and intensity of the unique relation he has with every single being that has the fortune of entering his space.

Each one in the quest for the Truth traverses a uniquely beautiful path with the master as he leads from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. It is a delicate love affair. It is the merger of two beings in such deep trust and communion that the flame from the master just jumps from his being to the disciple's being. The spark of awareness is thus lit.

Different relationships unleash various dimensions in you. A lover unleashes the love feeling in you. Friends around you unleash the feeling of friendship in you. Your kids unleash the motherliness dimension in you. Your parents, grandparents unleash the childhood dimension in you. But only the master can unleash all the dimensions in you. Master is the person who awakens the unknown enlightenment dimension in you. You cannot calculate the transformation the master-disciple relationship creates in you. The master reveals himself in various dimensions and makes you transcend those

The master relates to us on multiple frames and planes, each

and lets you experience the Ultimate through communion.

God and master

The poet-mystic, Kabir sings beautifully, 'Master and god both appear before me. To whom should I prostrate?'

I bow before the master. He introduced god to me.'

Swami Vivekananda, in one of his discussions with fellow disciples of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, referred to Ramakrishna as god. Another disciple objected saying, 'Surely this is taking it to the extreme. I agree that the master is enlightened, but how can he be god?'

Vivekananda asked him, 'What do you know about god?' The disciple said, 'Oh, god is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.'

Vivekananda asked, 'What do you mean by saying that god is omnipresent?' The disciple said, 'God is everywhere.' Vivekananda said, 'Surely, then you must be able to see him now.' The disciple was confused and did not know what to say further.

Vivekananda told him, 'To you god is a concept that you cannot see, a notion that you don't even know or

understand. But here is the master in front of you who is god in reality.'

Someone asked me, 'What is the difference between god and master?'

I asked him, 'What do you know about god? All you know is a bunch of words, concepts. You have no clue as to what you are talking about when you refer to god. To you he is just an idea, an imagination of what you believe to be the ultimate energy and universal consciousness, or whatever name you wish to give something you know nothing about!'

The Brahmanda Purana* says,

Master is *Shiva** sans his three eyes,

*Vishnu** sans his four arms

*Brahma** sans his four heads.

He is *Parama Shiva** himself in human form

The master is real. He is the reality of the ultimate cosmic energy. He is here and now. He is in the present; He *is* the present. He is the bridge between you and the concept of god. In that sense he is greater than god.

People ask me, 'Are you god?' I tell them, if you do not know what or who god is,

I am not here to prove I am god. I am here to prove you are god.

how can you ask me whether I am god? God

cannot be defined. He can only be experienced.

Let me tell you one thing clearly, I am not here to prove that I am god. I am here to prove that you are god. I am not here to prove my divinity. I am here to prove your divinity.

The master is like a forest fire that is happening on one side of the river. The disciple is on the other side of the river. The river is the '*samsara*', the river of births and rebirths. Between the master and disciple, if there can be a bridge made of any material, the fire can move, cross over the bridge and reach the disciple. The material of which the bridge is made is immaterial. It can be made of wood or with cement but the forest fire has the capacity to move over the bridge and reach the disciple. In the same way, irrespective of whatever relation you may have with the master, just get totally dissolved into that.

Brahmanda Purana - A collection of 12,000 verses in what is usually considered the last and eighteenth Hindu *purana* or epic. This epic is the story of the creation of the universe by Brahma.

Shiva - Rejuvenator in the Hindu Trinity of gods.

Vishnu - Sustainer in the Hindu Trinity of gods.

Brahma - The Creator in the Hindu Trinity of gods.

Parama Shiva - Supreme.

If you dissolve into that, it will simply fulfill your feelings and lead you to the ultimate state of eternal bliss. If you understand this truth deeply and try to practice this with the determination, 'I will focus on my feeling and get dissolved into the master-disciple relation', it will lead you to that state. Don't think that you don't know how to dissolve in that. The sheer determination is enough, it will happen automatically in you. Any hurdle between the master and disciple will dissolve just by focusing on the dissolution that happens between the master and disciple.

Five ways to relate with the master

There are five attitudes with which to relate with the master. Through each attitude, a different path unfolds, taking you closer to yourself.

One path is the attitude of the mother towards her child, looking at the master as your child. This is called *vatsalya bhava* which is how Yashoda, Krishna's foster mother, related with Him.

Another is the attitude of the child towards the mother. This is called *matru bhava*. This is how Ramakrishna related with goddess Kali, looking at the master as mother.

The third is the attitude of a friend, looking at the master as your friend. This is called *sakha bhava*. This is how Kuchela* and Arjuna related with Krishna.

The next is the attitude of a servant. It is called *dasa bhava*. It refers to the master-disciple relationship wherein the disciple feels like a faithful servant of the master. This was how Hanuman, the monkey god, related with Rama in the famous Indian epic Ramayana*.

The ultimate is the attitude of the beloved. It is called *madhura bhava*. This is how Radha* saw Krishna. This is how Radha* felt about Krishna, the attitude of the beloved. Let me be very clear, the attitude of a beloved is in no way connected to whether you are a male or female. It is in no way connected to the body. It is completely beyond the body. It is from the being.

If the master is male and you are also male, then too *madhura bhava* can happen. Or if the master is female and you are female

Kuchela - Childhood friend of enlightened master Krishna who exemplifies the relationship of friendship between master and disciple.

Ramayana - Hindu *itihasa* or epic about prince Rama. The original version was written by poet sage Valmiki.

Radha - Chief among the *gopis* or cowherd women devotees of enlightened master Krishna.

also, then also *madhura bhava* can happen. *Madhura bhava* is in no way related to gender. It is beyond gender consciousness. It is a feeling of intense connection.

The last is the *maha bhava*. It is all the other five *bhavas* put together and something more! That is what the master–disciple relationship is all about. Sometimes with the master you will feel he is your son. At some other time you will feel he is like your mother. Sometimes you will feel he is your lord. Other times you will feel he is like your friend. Sometimes you will feel he is like a comforting beloved. The relationship with the master is all these five put together plus something more.

You can relate with the master in any one of these five attitudes or *bhavas*, or all the five put together.

Stages of master-disciple relationship

There are many levels in the master-disciple relationship. The first is purely at the intellectual level, based on doubt more than anything else. Numerous doubts keep coming up all the time. You think, ‘Eh! He seems to be hardly thirty years of age. How can he be a master? He doesn’t seem to be highly educated or qualified. How does he get thousands of people to listen to him?’ You have your doubts, you are

cynical. In the zone of pure intellect the relationship never happens.

The next step is from intellect to intelligence. From the negativity of doubt you move to, ‘Why not attend this program and see what this person is really doing?’ Instead of remaining with ‘What can he do?’ you move to ‘I think he means something. But I neither believe nor disbelieve. Ok, let me see.’ The intellect starts to become intelligence.

Then next, if you continue to look in, you move from intelligence to intelligence with emotion like 60% intelligence, 40% emotion. You feel that the master is a good friend. You think, ‘He can guide me a little bit here and there, wherever I need guidance. I have an idea of how my life should be, so he doesn’t have to teach me everything, but wherever I need to make some decisions, I can take his help.’ This is looking at the master as a friend. That’s what we call *sakha bhava*, the friendly attitude.

This is like using a stick to walk with. You use the stick when there are ups and downs. After that, by and by, slowly, when you go through some serious problems like depression and low mood, when you are not able to help yourself with his words, you ask him, ‘Your teachings are great but at this moment I am not able to follow them. What do I do?’ Then he supports you mentally, psychologically also. Then

**He fills you, he
fills your heart.
You have a
problem
forgetting him.**

you realize that the stick alone may not be enough, that you need more support. Then you reach out for his hand and with his help you start walking again. The gratitude towards him increases while holding his hand.

If you have only the stick, then it is a friendly attitude, the intelligent emotion. If you start holding his hand, he will start lifting you, then slowly it becomes emotion-intelligence. In this stage you move from intelligence to 'intelligence with emotion' like 60% intelligence and 40% emotion. This attitude is what I call feeling the master like a father or mother.

From being a friend he becomes a father or mother. Slowly, very slowly, the relationship deepens. You settle down and think, 'He is not just a friend. He is not just a person who gives me suggestions and ideas. He takes me out of my problems also.'

Then slowly, again and again when you are helped every moment beyond your expectation, the feeling within you toward him becomes pure emotion. He fills you, he fills your heart. You have a problem forgetting him. That is the moment you feel like bowing down to him like a servant, not with shame but with revered humility that you have found someone to surrender

all your problems to. This was how Hanuman felt towards his master Rama in the Indian epic Ramayana. He was completely devoted to Rama. A deep connection of high emotion happens with this kind of relationship. This attitude is much more emotional than the earlier one. It is a mix of 60% emotion and 40% intelligence.

Then, by and by, you move in deeper emotionally and you become protective of the master. Instead of asking attention from him and taking help from him, you want to support him, love him and attend to him. Your attitude becomes that of a nurturing mother. This is a state of pure emotion. It is the primal need of a mother to ensure the wellbeing of her child.

In these four states of intelligence, intelligence-emotion, emotion-intelligence and pure emotion, your life is separate and independent from the master's life. You just take help from him to help your life, to enrich your life, that's all.

When the emotional attitude ripens, you start feeling that your life is no longer separate from his. You then move from the emotional level to the being level. You feel like sacrificing yourself to take care of him and dedicating your life to him. There is a merger at the being level, even stronger than the emotional connection of a mother and child. It is a connection of deep love, without any gender consciousness. This is

what is called *madhura bhava*, an intense mix of emotional and being level attitude.

When the *madhura bhava* becomes intense, suddenly you experience that there is no 'he' and 'you'. There are no two different beings. You and he are one and the same. You start experiencing the *maha bhava*, experiencing *you* as the master. You experience the ultimate, *tat tvam asi* - That art Thou.

First intellect, then intelligence, then 60% intelligence and 40% emotion, then 60% emotion and 40% intelligence, then 100% emotion, then 60% emotion and 40% being, then pure 100% being.

This is how step by step you start experiencing and growing in the master-disciple relationship. But at any time, any one attitude may be more prominent than the others.

Everyone grows collectively in energy, yet each one's relationship with the master is unique. That is the beauty of it! Be it *dasa bhava*, the master-servant relationship as existed between Rama and Hanuman, or *vatsalya bhava*, mother's love, as between Yashoda and Krishna, or *sakha bhava*, friendship, as between Krishna and Arjuna, or *matru bhava*, child's love for mother as between Ramakrishna and Mother Kali, or *madhura bhava*, love of the beloved, as was between Radha and Krishna - each *bhava*, the attitude, is unique to that relationship,

between that disciple and the master. Each disciple progresses with the master in search of his reality in the path that is best for him to progress.

When you let go and are open, the master is such a live energy that you will be a new being, a new consciousness.

How to be with the master – be open

When you are with the master, be completely open. Don't be frozen. Understand that life is a lot more than logic. Let go of your logic and be completely open and aware.

When you let go and are open, the master is such a live energy that you *will* be transformed. You *will* be a new being, you *will* be a new energy and you *will* be a new consciousness.

I can say it in just one statement: you *will* be new! You will be 'new' and 'clear', you will be 'nuclear'!

You will feel lighter. You would have lost the weight of the 'tumors' you were carrying but that were not part of you, that were a disturbance in you. Something that is supposed to be an inherent part of you

**Be open to the
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can never be a disturbance to you. If it is a disturbance, it was never meant to be a part of you. So just be open so the 'master surgeon' can remove these tumors you have been carrying for life over life.

When you are with the master, be total. It is not a question of whether you agree or disagree with what the master tells you. You have to go beyond agreement and disagreement. When you see the sun rise, can you say you agree or disagree with it? No! It is, that's all. In the same way, the master is, that's all. Once that feeling becomes a part of you, nothing more needs to be done from your side. Then you have given the master the permission to reveal yourself to you.

To be a disciple means to be completely open to the master, not afraid in any way, not hiding yourself in any way, being totally authentic to the core.

Then the master can do his work on you. He will push you in directions you would never have thought you are capable of handling. He will inspire you into moments and situations you would have been otherwise afraid of. He will expand your boundaries continuously till you ultimately

realize there are no boundaries, there are no limits. Then you also become like him. You too become a completely free, limitless Paramahansa!

All you need to do is be open to the master, to Existence. When you are open, you are expressing your trust in the master. This trust is all that is needed to form the beautiful bridge between you and Existence.

A small story:

A disciple fell into the river Ganga. His master was sitting on the banks of the Ganga. On seeing him the disciple shouted, 'Save me! Save me! God, save me! Master, save me!'

The master replied, 'Fool! Stand up. Save yourself.' The disciple shouted back, 'Teach me your philosophy later. First save me. My life is in danger. Just save me!'

The master did not even move. He repeated, 'Fool! Save yourself! Stand up.' The disciple cried out, 'I thought you were my master. Save me, save me!' Now the master shouted in a loud voice, 'Idiot! Stand up!'

The disciple got frightened and stood up... and saw that the water was only up to his waist!

You also struggle because you have 'fallen into water' but do not realize it is only up

to your waist! It is only when you listen to the master and stand up do you realize the water just reaches your waist and you can simply relax. All the worries that you thought were destroying your life don't really exist in reality. They are mostly only in your imagination. They never come out true.

So understand, when I say 'I will take care', I am actually giving you the stick with which to stand up. When the master says, 'I will take care', if you doubt it, you simply miss an opportunity to stand up.

Burn your *samskaras* in the master's presence

A beautiful incident from the enlightened master, Ramana Maharishi's life:

There was a disciple who was writing the Ramana Purana, verses in praise of Ramana Maharishi. But he had what you call the 'writer's block' and he was stuck at one point. Somehow, whenever you write with ego, the 'writer's block' will happen. Anyhow, that disciple came to Ramana Maharishi and said, 'Bhagavan*, I am not able to write further, please help me.' Bhagavan* said, 'Put that paper down and leave. I will talk to you later.'*

When you are caught in an engram, just be in the master's presence.

The disciple put the paper down and went out.

The next day when he came back, he saw that the whole poem had been completed! Ramana Maharishi had written 300 lines himself. When the book was printed, the writer enclosed those 300 lines within quotes and below he put a footnote, 'These 300 lines were written by Bhagavan Himself.'*

Bhagavan saw the book and asked, 'Oh! So then, the other lines are written by you? Alright!'*

The disciple later says, 'Something simply broke in me when he said that. Tears rolled down, and I just dropped at the feet of Bhagavan and never got up again.'

Just that one comment was enough for this disciple, Muruganar to become enlightened!

Understand, just like Muruganar's one engram or engraved memory of writer's ego, you also carry many engrams. When you are caught in an engram, just be in the master's presence. You will be completely healed of it.

Ramana Purana - Stories about enlightened master Ramana Maharishi.

Bhagavan - Used as a title of veneration with great masters, literally meaning 'prosperous'.

The low also will pass just like the high mood. That is the very nature of the mind, it is like a wheel.

The big problem is that the engram will not allow you to acknowledge that you even have an

engram. It will justify itself because it is a question of survival for itself.

That is why I always tell people, when you are caught in engrams, when you are overwhelmed by these powerful unconscious drivers of anger, lust, greed, fear, depression or jealousy, never make a major decision. Just be in the master's presence. Never miss that wonderful opportunity. You will be completely healed and you will be able to come out of it. Never escape from the master when you are caught by engrams.

Whenever somebody is depressed and he leaves me, I feel so much for him. It is not because I have one person less in the mission. No! It is because he left me at the time of depression. If this same person leaves me when he is happy, it is alright. It is a normal relationship. He will carry me in him wherever he goes. But if he is in a depressed state, not only will he not grow, but he will never come out of that engram also. It will become a serious wound in him like a cat that is burnt by hot milk. It will never again go near milk.

Never decide on anything when you are in the low mood. The low mood will naturally itself distort the facts for you. It is not the right condition to take any big decision. You have to wait to swing to a good mood when things will be clearer. Always take a big decision only when you are in a cheerful mood, when you are in a positive state of mind. Just like how you decide anything in the light of day when you are awake and not in the dead of the night when you are asleep, in the same way decide this too when you are in awareness and not when in turmoil.

Be very clear, the low also will pass just like the high mood passed. That is the very nature of the mind, it is like a wheel. What is down has to come up. Neither the 'up' nor the 'down' can be said to be more real than the other. They are both there, that's all. Trusting the positive more is a choice that you have.

If someone decides to leave when they are in depression or low mood, the problem is his mind will come back to a high and when that happens he will repent his decision. Then it will be difficult to come back because he will be caught in guilt and will not feel qualified to come back.

I always tell people, never leave when you are depressed. If you are depressed, that is the right time to be around me. Trying to move away from me when you are caught in engrams is just as if you are sick

and you do not want to be with a doctor! This is actually the right time to be with a doctor!

What is initiation?

Whenever you need to heal yourself, whenever you need inner healing, you need to bring yourself again to the life energy. Many times you can see, a simple disturbance from the outside world or from the past memory inside you can drain your energy.

Another thing that drains your energy is taking too many decisions. You can try this. Go and sit in your office, don't do any work, just take some five to six major decisions. You will feel tired.

The truths, ideas or words which bring you out of that tiredness or depression, and give you the energy and confidence, are what I call *shaastra-shastras* or knowledge-weapons.

The truths which not only bring you out of depression but also destroy the source of depression once for all are called *mantra*. The words which show the path for human beings are *mantra*.

When any *mantra* comes from a being with the enlightened experience, with a pure inner space, you do not know why, how or what, but you suddenly see that it works.

That sudden click with the master and his teachings is 'initiation'.

It 'clicks'! A *mantra* need not be a chant. It can be just a few words of

clear expression of the truth that sinks deep within you and lifts you in awareness. You are so shaken by the truth of it when you hear it the first time. It literally explodes in you, in your consciousness. You cannot forget it. As you listen, you start to live by it. Your life changes without any effort. This is the power of *mantra*.

One part of your logic continues to fight with it initially because if you accept the Truth and start expressing it in your life, all your vested interests and many things which you thought of as life are now at risk. But your core, your being understands. It gets the click and says, 'I know what he is saying is the Truth.' There may be a doubt in a corner of your mind, but your very core feels connected. You may not understand logically, but suddenly your heart feels connected to the words being uttered, the truth being expressed.

That sudden click or connection with the master and his teachings of truth is what I call 'initiation'.

Initiation means the great truths, the words which lead you to the Truth, a clear path which leads you to the Truth. If it is experientially transmitted, if you have at

The ultimate happens when you drop ego.

least one glimpse of a powerful experience of something beyond your logic, something that transcends your mundane desires, then the initiation has happened, you are initiated.

When I use the word 'initiation' there will be so many doubts like, 'I am already initiated by another master, can I have the initiation from you? If I get initiated can I go to other masters and learn something new?'

Perfectly alright, nothing wrong! I always tell people, go to all the gardens and pluck flowers and make a beautiful garland that you can wear over yourself. It is not like a shop where if you go to one shop, the shopkeeper will try his best to keep you in his shop till you finish your purchases! The human ego is such that it will die only if it is beaten by ten to twelve masters! So don't worry, there is nothing wrong in approaching different masters. Learn all the best things from all the sources and enrich your life. Only one thing, don't become a window shopper. It is dangerous because then you will not learn anything from anyone.

The first thing that happens to a genuine seeker is the dissolution of his questions. His questions dissolve and only tremendous thirst remains. This is the first initiation that happens when the master

changes your focus from knowledge towards knowing, from memory towards intelligence.

Once the emphasis has moved from knowledge to knowing, your focus moves from 'knowing about' to 'knowing'. You are interested in knowing yourself. For that you use the master as the means.

As you come closer to the master, the master takes you to the next level of moving beyond knowing you. You will never know yourself unless you drop the obsession with yourself. Your obsession with you is your ego. So the ultimate happens when you drop the ego, surrender the ego at the feet of the master. Just when you forget you, you will discover you!

The ultimate love affair

A master is one who fulfills the longing of your being. It is a very deep, delicate love affair.

As you come closer to the master in your love, in your trust, there is born a deep silence. It is not the dead silence of a graveyard but the vibrant silence of life and love.

The more you awaken to the purpose of your life, the more your life becomes a celebration. A deep joy arises for no reason at all. You feel an ocean of bliss so deep that you can just share and give infinitely.

You may have felt this harmony and connectedness in other relationships a few times, but the intensity when it happens with the master is on a different plane altogether.

The relationship between a master and disciple is the most intimate relationship. Even the greatest lovers cannot be that intimate because even they are two, there are two egos. And egos will always clash because they are independent individualities. But with the master, he is nobody. There is no ego in him. So there is only one ego and that is yours. His whole purpose is to dissolve it so you also become nobody.

The strength of the connection is what will hold you when the ego is being dissolved by the intensity and grace of the master. Then there is no master, no disciple, just a harmonious Whole vibrating in tune with the entire cosmos.

Once the authentic experience flowers with a master, you will relate to everyone and everything with great sincerity and love. The fragrance of this exquisite flowering will automatically spread to all your relationships with people, trees, rocks, stars and the whole universe.

Coming closer to the master is the path to becoming a master.

Magical moments

The most magical moments in life happen in the moments of love and trust from a disciple towards the master. It is the start of a relationship out of this world to the secrets beyond. It can become a grand celebration where the whole cosmos dances with you.

It is like how a river comes to the ocean, dancing, eager to become one with the vast ocean. Coming closer to the master is the path to becoming a master. It is the grand merger with the cosmic Whole.

The beauty in the relation with the master is that it is unpolluted by any expectations or give-and-take. The master accepts you just as you are. The purity in the relation with the master is that there is no attempt to make something else of you. You actually love the master because he gives you the complete freedom to be just what you are with no strings attached.

The love between the master and the disciple can never be 'satisfied'. Because first of all, the dissatisfaction is not a superficial or mental dissatisfaction. It is a deep dissatisfaction of the being that wants to break free from the false boundaries of the ego and love infinitely. So when the master happens, there is eternal freshness, eternal love and excitement, pure bliss that

Master is a promise, an assurance, a living ideal. He gives you the promise, 'Open, you will never die!'

arises from the being every single moment.

This will go on opening new doors as the relationship

reveals subtler and deeper aspects of love, devotion and merging into the Whole. This is the ultimate love affair. It is the love affair with Existence itself.

Sister Nivedita* describes the power of the relationship with the master, 'One's whole attitude to things was reversed. One took fire, as it were, with a given idea. Or one suddenly found that a whole habit of thought had left one, and a new outlook had grown up in its place, without the interchange of a single word on the subject. It seemed as if a thing had passed beyond the realm of discussion, and knowledge had grown, by the mere fact of nearness to him.'

Master – the living promise

It is like this: the seed is trying to break and become a tree. The seed says to the tree, 'Please! You come out first. Only then will I break and open. Who knows? After I

break, you may not happen. I may just die and disappear.' But the tree says, 'No no, unless you open, I cannot come out. Open!' The seed says, 'No, no. You come out first, give me the assurance and the guarantee that you will happen and only then will I open'. The fight goes on.

The seed is afraid because if it opens, it may just die instead of becoming the tree. The tree says, 'Unless you open, I cannot come out, I cannot happen.' The fight between the tree's happening and the seed's opening continues.

The master is a person who was once a seed, and who later became a tree. We are like the seed. He assures the seed, 'Don't worry, I was like you. I had the courage to open up and I have become this beautiful tree. So just open! Just relax. You will only become a tree, you will never die.' He gives you the assurance, the confidence. Master is a promise, an assurance, a living ideal. He gives you the promise, 'Open, you will never die!'

Beyond ego and envy

The master's love is perhaps the only unconditional love there is, totally unselfish, without expectations, just giving, asking for nothing. The master's

Sister Nivedita - Anglo Irish disciple of Swami Vivekananda.

love is detached and radiating all the time. It radiates whether you are there or not. All you need to do is to stand with your bowl and take your fill again and again.

Usually for a man, it is his ego that is the major block in receiving. By nature man is less given to emotions than a woman, and more prone to acting out of the intellect. To give into someone, to accept someone as a master unconditionally is almost impossible for the mind unless the heart takes over. When he is with the mind, giving in means loss of personality, loss of identity, death of the very ego. It becomes too much to lose. But with awareness, by seeing where one is missing, it is possible to melt and give in.

On the other hand, possessiveness and envy is the greatest danger for a woman to reach the master. A woman has to go beyond the form of the master to the formless, beyond the concept of possessing the form to the reality of sharing his love and compassion with others without envy, and growing spiritually. Initially it is alright to feel possessive and envious. In fact, only when these emotions surface in you, they leave you as well! If they remain deeply hidden, they cannot leave you. But as the relationship with the master grows, the intelligent one will allow the transformation of both into pure love. It is only then they experience the pure love

of the master also! Until then their own possessiveness and jealousy act like filters in experiencing the pure love of the master.

The master is like the river. If you keep your hands open and let the river flow through you, the water is with you all the time. If you try to hold the water with your hands, you miss it! The master's love will flow through you without interruption as much as you need. The moment you close your hands hoping to contain the river within your tiny palms, you will lose the river, you will you lose the master. You just have to be a beautiful part of the flow of life and enjoy the love of the master.

Awakening to the purpose of your life and the master

Understand, the disciple will not know about his ignorance because he is in darkness. The responsibility is of the person who is in the light, not of the person who is in darkness.

A small story:

There was a born blind man wandering in the Himalayas. He was searching for a stick to guide him. He stumbled upon a frozen snake. He thought that it was a stick and started using it.

An enlightened master saw this and started shouting, 'Fool! It is a snake, drop it.' The blind man started shouting, 'No! I think you don't have a stick. So you are asking me to drop it so that you can pick it up!'

The master said, 'Fool! I don't need it. What you are carrying is not a stick, it is a snake. The sun will rise soon, the snake will come back to life and it will kill you.' The blind man was not ready to drop it. Then the master said, 'Even if you don't believe me, now it is my responsibility to save you.' So he snatched the snake and tried to throw it away. The blind man started beating the master with the same stick.

But the master said, 'Even if you beat me, it is ok. It is my responsibility to save you because you don't know.' He took the snake and threw it away.

You don't know how many births you have struggled or prayed to have a master. You are not even aware of your own true yearning. Understand, for a master to happen in your life, it is not a joke. You yourself don't know how many births you have struggled and prayed intensely to have a glimpse of a living master. Awakening to the master in your life is nothing but awakening to this deep yearning and purpose of your life.

Purpose of life Vs Engrams

I always tell people in the Life Bliss Program Level 2 – Nithyananda Spurana Program, at the time you leave this body, that is at the time you are dying, suddenly all the material things of this world that you enjoyed with your senses will be seen as black and white. They will no more seem colorful like they were when you enjoyed them.

It is like when you are in a dream state in your night sleep, this world will become black and white. When you are in the waking state as you are in now, the dreams will become black and white.

In the same way, when you leave this body, this entire past life will be seen in black and white. At that time, only the spiritually intelligent events in your life, or conscious decisions that you made in your spiritual journey will shine in multicolor! Any pleasure you enjoyed related to your gross body and mind will be seen in black and white. All that you did in the line of consciousness will shine!

As of now, the master, spirituality, consciousness, all these things might seem dull and uninteresting, as if they are only retired life entertainment. The master is more or less like a choice in life right now. When you leave the body, you will know, whatever decisions you made in the conscious line, the moments you spent

with the conscious energy, the master and his teachings, will become bright in multi-dimension and multicolor. All the material things of this world will fade into black and white.

At that time, you will feel, 'Oh god! I have missed the whole thing! I was blinded by illusion!' In the process of death, when you feel this intense pain of having missed, you will take the serious decision for the next birth, 'Next time I will not miss the master.' When you take the next body you go into a coma state because of the pain during birth and you again forget the intent. So the same cycle continues.

Therefore, even when the master happens in your life in this birth, you have no idea what had happened to you in your earlier lives, how many times you have missed him before. You have forgotten the intent with which you left your earlier bodies. You have forgotten the whole purpose of your life. The same ego, the same engraved memories and problems repeat because you forgot and you miss the master the same way as you did before. Once again, when you leave the body this time, you feel the same terrible pain of having missed once more.

**The
bridge of
trust
between
the master and you**

**You have
forgotten the
whole purpose
of your life.**

As of now we pursue the master, meditation, consciousness and such things only because we have time, not because we seek the real experience behind them. When you leave the body, this whole world and its sensory experiences will fade out like black and white photographs. Only the moments with the master, the conscious journey through such spiritual experiences will be colorful and alive.

Everything related to the body and mind will be colorful and alive now. The spiritual, consciousness related things will not seem interesting or alive. At the time of death, when all these fantasies disappear, everything related to the gross body and mind will become dead, black and white, and everything related to the subtle consciousness like the master and meditation will become colorful and alive.

Because I can see that moment happening in you at the time of your leaving your body, I feel responsibility to do something about it. That is the reason why whenever somebody is about to miss me, I always feel, 'Oh god! Again one more soul is missing the experience!' I try my best to

make them understand why it is important to be with a master.

You see, all of you can see only the 70-80 years that you live in the body. That is the reason why the master is only a choice for you. You feel if it happens, it happens, otherwise, forget about it. This is your attitude now. But I can see a much larger span.

It is like this: If you are standing on the road, then you can see one mile of the road on both the left and right sides of you. You can see the bus coming within this distance. But I am standing on the thirtieth floor, so I can see ten miles on both the left and right sides of the road. I can see a limousine coming much ahead of it appearing on the scene for you! When I stand on the thirtieth floor and say, 'Watch out, a limousine is coming your way,' you say, 'No, no, *Swamiji!* Only a bus is coming! Why are you telling me that a limousine is coming?'

You don't realize you are standing on the ground floor. You can see only one mile on either side of you. In life also, you can see only 30 years of past and 30 years of future. Because I am standing on the thirtieth floor, I can see a few lives into your past and a few lives into your future.

That is why I say that the master happening in your life is a rare and great opportunity. That is why I take so much care that you should not miss. Moreover, I have seen how a few people who have missed repent so much for the rest of their lives and after they leave the body also.

Sometimes what happens, when you miss a few times, during the next birth, some people bring a strong depression or disease along with them so that they will not miss the master again in that birth! The disease will keep them attached to the master. Appar*, a great saint from South India, had brought severe stomach pain with him. In his biography he says, 'I brought this purposely so that this time I will not miss remembering Shiva! Why should you come with so much of pain to remember the master? There is no need. You can remember with bliss itself in this very life.'

You see, the child will not know what will happen if he jumps on to the street and plays. But the mother knows. The mother is responsible. That is why she is careful with the child and keeps him safe. But the child doesn't realize this and says, 'I will go out and do what I want.' Then what to do? The mother tries her best to help the child, that's all.

Appar - Thirunavukkarasar or Appar as he was popularly known was a 7th century CE Tamil poet saint and author of Thevaram, devotional songs in praise of Shiva. Appar was one of the most prominent of the 63 Nayanmars, Tamil Shaivaite saints.

Actually, when you miss the master, the master misses nothing. Whatever he had to achieve, he has achieved in his life. There is nothing more that he needs or wants.

The master never loses anything. But for the disciple, it is too big a loss. Missing the master for any reason, for any mistake, is too big a loss. That is why I don't want it to happen to anyone. It is like you grab and eat a banana from a street vendor without paying and because of that you are given a death sentence! It is too big a punishment for a very small mistake. That is the reason why whenever somebody is about to miss me, I always try my best to take all possible steps to avert it.

Do not miss the master. Hold on to him and maintain the deep trust or connection or bridge. Life will be totally different.

Anything can be sacrificed for the master-disciple relationship. But for nothing should the master-disciple relationship be sacrificed.

End of the psychodrama of life

All your relationships are mere characters and life is just a drama. Please understand clearly, everything that happens as a relationship is just a psychodrama.

You should understand the truth. You take birth in a family with somebody as your

m o t h e r ,
father, brother
and sister and
play with them
as family
members. You
might have

seen the kids playing with the dolls. The child will have a few dolls. He will dress one as father, another as mother and similarly dress two other dolls as brother and sister. Then he will enact a day of their life. He will make sounds as if the father is going to work, pretend that the mother is cooking something in the kitchen, show the brother going to school and the sister refusing to go to school and crying instead. The child will play all these roles himself and enjoy the whole game.

Now just look into your life. You are also trying to possess more and more, whether in terms of relationships or material things. You try to expand the movable and immovable possessions and suddenly the drama ends with your death.

Again you take birth in some other family with a different father, mother, brother and sister and play the same game once more. Our entire life is nothing different from the game which the kids play with the dolls. This is the psychodrama of life. For one who experienced the complete master-disciple relationship, the psychodrama will not happen again in his life.

**Life is just a
drama.
Everything that
happens as a
relationship is a
psychodrama.**

Allow the boiling – and become enlightened

Someone asked me, ‘Are my *samskaras*, that is my engraved memories pertaining to my previous lives, an obstacle to becoming your disciple?’

Samskaras themselves are not an obstacle. But when the master works on them to operate or to remove them, you should understand he is working on you because you requested him again and again directly or indirectly.

When I work on your *samskaras*, you may think I have my vested interests of fear or greed. Be very clear, when you think this of me, you are only projecting the fear and greed that *you* have on to me and think that I have them. Enlightened masters as such don’t have any fear or greed. I work on your engrams because you requested me thousands of times in thousands of births!

Your *samskara* itself is not a problem. When I work on it, if you don’t resist, then it is ok. Your resistance when I work on it is the problem.

Your *samskaras* are not a problem, you trying to hold on to them is the problem. If you are ready to let go when I work on them, then it won’t be a problem. If you just understand that only your tumor is being removed and you cooperate with me to work on it, it is beautiful. But

sometimes, you think I am directly cutting you out of some vengeance! You start complaining, you start resisting me and you start blaming me like the lion cub.

When the lion was having meat in the lion and cub story, the cub starts complaining, ‘What! I thought you are such a holy person, you are such a great person. You were giving me so much of confidence. You were helping me so much. But I never thought you will eat meat. I thought you too were a vegetarian like me!’ Your so-called immature morality or your so-called immature understanding projects your own ideology on the master and tries to resist when he works on your *samskaras*.

Samskaras themselves are no problem because you come to the master only because of your *samskaras*. If you don’t have *samskaras*, then why should you come to the master! You are already enlightened!

I accept you as you are, but when you are with your *samskaras*, you are not as you are. You are suffering with your hell. I am breaking your hell. When I break the prison in which you are living, you think I am breaking you. You start resisting and creating problems.

Sometimes, when you come near me, you feel tremendous energy and bliss coming up. Sometimes, you feel tremendous anger and the depression rising also. But soon the depression will disappear. When you come near me, you are coming near an

intense energy space that dissolves your negativities. That is why you feel such mixed and intense emotions.

You see, the master's body is practically like an atomic energy station. When you come near, whatever emotions are in you start boiling. It is like if you put a potato inside hot water, the potato will start jumping around! The potato is not dancing by itself. It is dancing because of the fire energy below.

I always tell people, having *samskaras* is not a problem. The potato is not a problem. The jumping potato should not jump out of the vessel and run away. That is the only thing to take care! If it is inside the vessel, it will become a *siddha* potato! *Siddha* in Sanskrit has two meanings. One is 'boiling', another is 'enlightened'. So be very clear, if the potato does not jump out of the vessel, if it remains inside the vessel, it will become not only a boiling potato, but an enlightened potato!

Surrender – the ultimate technique

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna is confused completely about what is the path he should follow. The ultimate teaching imparted by Krishna to Arjuna in the last chapter is the best technique to realize the Ultimate. After giving various techniques

Worry and tension come when you think you are the doer.

l i k e meditation, devotion and knowledge, finally Krishna reveals the straight, sure and ultimate technique, which is that of surrender.

Be very clear, when you surrender to an enlightened master, you are actually surrendering to one who has no ego, no identity and hence no vested interest of his own. He is one with and overflowing with Existence. By holding his hand, you ask him to take you also to the ocean of bliss he is in.

Worry and tension come when you think you are the doer. Then you get tired soon. But if you shift the sense of ownership to a higher energy and continue to do your work blissfully, you will feel tremendously relaxed!

A small story:

There was once a bank manager who used to take all the cash to his home everyday and bring it back with him the next morning. He did this for a month and could not do it anymore.

He found himself trembling all the way while driving back home and was not able to sleep at home with all the money in his custody. He finally asked his boss to be relieved of the job since he could not bear the stress any longer.

His boss told him that even if the money was lost, he would not be blamed and that he could continue with his job. The manager slept peacefully from that day onwards.

What was the difference in him? He was doing the same job, but why was there no more fear and tension? Because the responsibility had been shifted to a higher authority, that's all. He continued to do what he was doing.

When you surrender to the higher energy, you can never feel drained and exhausted because you are directly connected to the one who is an embodiment of the infinite energy. This is the gift of surrender.

Intensity of surrender

If you allow the calf to be with the cow for only ten minutes, the calf will drink only the milk and come back. But the fly that sits on the cow twenty four hours will suck only the blood. You can be with the master all the time and still not feel the connection or the seeking. Also, you can be away from the master and yet feel the connection all the time. It is not about being near his physical presence. That does not play a major role in the seeking. It is the depth of the seeking that plays the major rule.

Ramakrishna very beautifully says, 'Surrender to anything. Surrender is important, not what or who you surrender to. If you surrender to a stone, even that can become god and guide you.

When the intense seeking is not there, even if god comes to you, you will ask him for an identity card. When the seeking becomes strong, even a small stone can teach you.

The same life force inside me is present outside also. It can enter you also and teach you. Because I have become empty, the life force entering me is coming out as music. So if the same depth of seeking starts happening inside you, the air that enters your nose can become a strong inspiration or teaching inside your heart. Without that intensity in you, even if I tell you something now you will not even remember what I told, after two days.

A subtle point you need to check in yourself is this. Observe whether you listen to the master when your mind disagrees with him. If yes, you have surrendered. Else you are following the master only when he tells you something agreeable to your mind! It is just a coincidence that he is telling you sometimes what your mind agrees with, nothing more than that.

There is no need to be interested or have a positive attitude when it comes to the work of the master. Only the surrender, the

acceptance to do what the master says, is necessary because it is from the deeper level of being and not the superficial level of the mind.

The master is actually just a means, an excuse to surrender because you are not able to relate with the whole of Existence directly. You are afraid to look at the vast expanse of the sky. So you want to look at the sky through a window. The master is like your window to the sky of Existence.

Three levels of surrender

I will now explain to you the three categories of surrender: surrender of the intellect, surrender of emotions and surrender of your very senses.

The first is surrender of intellect means trusting the master's intellect more than your own intellect. This is just intellectual surrender. At this stage, you follow the lifestyle that the master shows you.

The second is trusting the master's emotions much more than your own emotions. This means trusting that the relationship with the master is the ultimate relationship, more than any other relationship. If god appears before you and asks you to choose one person on planet earth as the only other person who can be alive except you, who will you choose? If you choose the master, then emotional

surrender has happened to you.

Of course, the master can never be destroyed, but that is different! Never think that just because you choose him he is alive! He will be alive whether you choose him or not.

If you feel that your emotion towards the master is stronger than any other emotion, then emotional surrender has happened in you. Be very clear, 99% of the people remain in the first level. Only 20% to 40% of these people move deeper to the second level. The rest remain standing where they are.

There is the third kind of surrender, surrender of the senses.

In Krishna's life there is a beautiful incident.

After the Mahabharata war, when Krishna and Arjuna are relaxing, Krishna says, 'Hey! Arjuna, look there, there is a green crow!'

Arjuna says, 'Beautiful! A green crow!' Krishna says, 'Fool! It is black, not green.' Arjuna says, 'Yes Krishna! It is black, not green.'

Krishna asks, 'What has happened to you? When I say green, you say green. When I say black, you say black. What is going on with you?'

**The master is
like a window to
the sky of
Existence.**

Arjuna says, 'Krishna, let me be honest. I don't know what color that crow is. But when you said green I saw it as green. When you said black I saw it as black. I know nothing else!'

Arjuna's very senses trusted Krishna. He trusted the master's senses much more than his own!

Placebo effect or more?

In medical terms, we have a term called 'placebo effect'. A patient takes a dummy medicine but he is told it is actually the real medicine, and he is cured of the ailment! But recent research indicates that the placebo effect is actually far more revealing.

I read about an interesting research at the University of Turin in Italy. They tried an experiment where they connected electrodes to the person and gave him controlled electric shocks. First they established a pain scale for the person by finding the minimum current he could feel and the maximum current he could bear.

Now, before they gave the shock, a red or a green light would appear on the screen in front of the person. Green light meant the shock would be a mild one. Red light meant the shock would be stronger. The person was supposed to then rate the pain

from the shock on a scale of 1 to 10, from mild to strong.

Now the person tried this for 15 minutes. At the end he felt that in the beginning the shocks were strong while in the end the shocks were mild.

But the shocking thing was actually it was exactly the opposite. The last series of shocks were all strong. Then how did the shocks get perceived as mild? Just before the mild shock was administered, the light shown to the person was green indicating that the shock about to come was a mild one.

So the person's mind was prepared, conditioned to believe the shock coming up was going to be a mild one. When the shock was actually administered, even though physically it was a strong one, because his mind was anticipating a mild shock his body actually felt a mild shock!

So researchers are now saying that the placebo effect is much deeper and has lot more significance than what was thought before.

They have found that even drugs do not always have the direct effects. Their results can be influenced by expectations. Doctors have found that if the person is not told that he is being given an injection of a painkiller, he has to be given a larger dose to get the painkilling effect. Whereas if he

knows that he is getting a painkiller, much lower doses give the same effect!

The mind is so powerful, it can directly create a physical change in you. Just like the senses can surrender to the mind, in the same way the senses can surrender to the divine consciousness too. This is exactly what happened in the case of Krishna and Arjuna when Arjuna saw a green crow when Krishna told him to see the 'green' crow.

Your senses say you are a human being. But I say you are a spiritual being. As long as you trust your senses, you will be a human being. When you trust the master you will experience that you are a spiritual being. That shift is what I call the 'cognitive shift'.

Master – the ultimate luxury

The master is the ultimate luxury in your life. When the master happens in our lives, nothing else is needed. If he does not happen, nothing else is of use. He is a channel to bring wisdom to our life and to update it, according to our need.

Life energy and the master are not two different things. Masters again and again emphasize the beautiful concept called experiencing the master inside. Only until

you experience the master inside, you think you need the master from the outer world. Once you experience the master inside, you don't need the master from the outer world.

The presence of the master

See, when a meditation technique is done with a master, it becomes an alchemy process. If you do it alone in your home it is called meditation. When you do it along with the master, in the presence of the master, guided by the master, it becomes alchemy. It is like boiling you. The process becomes so alive and intense.

A small story:

There was a young lady who did not know cooking. But she wanted to make something for a potluck dinner that she was going to. She got hold of a cookery book and tried making a dessert.

She was holding the book in one hand. The instructions said, 'Put the vessel on the stove.' She did. Then it said, 'Put half a cup of flour.' She did so. Then, 'Add water half a liter, add a little sugar and stir it for twenty minutes.' She followed every instruction exactly but nothing happened even after twenty minutes.

The master's presence itself is fire. It will ensure the product happens, the alchemy happens.

Why? Because the book did not tell her to light the fire!

In the same way when you are doing meditation on your own,

sometimes you may forget to light the fire. The master's presence itself is fire. It will ensure the product happens, the alchemy happens.

People ask me, 'Swamiji, why should you insist on the presence of the master?' Of course, you can listen to my words on an audio CD or a DVD. But when you sit here, the honesty that radiates in my eyes, the truth that expresses in my body language will catch you. You will catch it. You will feel the click, the connection, 'Yes, he is talking the truth.'

Even if you want to suspect, suddenly you will see your logic has no power over you anymore. These words are simply entering you beyond your logic. This will happen only when you sit in the presence of the master. We call that as *Upanishad* - just being around, sitting, and opening up to the master.

Open yourself with trust and just drop yourself into trust. You will see the master standing there to hold you. Just drop

yourself from your head and fall into the abyss of the heart. The master will be there to hold you and make you enlightened, that's all.

Upanishad

Upanishad means 'sitting'. When a disciple sits in the presence of the master the same experience that happened in the master is reproduced in the disciple.

The disciple who experiences the master and within whom the master has been reproduced, writes down his recollections on how this process happened. The disciple or the master or someone else writes an account of how the experience was reproduced in the disciple - what happened when the process began, how it ended and what happened when it ended. This report is referred to as an *Upanishad*.

How upanishad happens – beyond the law of cause and effect

We have heard of the law of cause and effect. If you drop a ball, it falls down. If you heat water, it becomes steam at 100 degrees C. If you put salt in water, it will dissolve. This is the law of causality. Any action will result in a particular effect.

Science has its foundation on this law of causality.

But this is not the only law in Existence. An important law in operation every moment is the law of intuition or as the philosopher Carl Jung* calls it, the law of synchronicity. Here, it is not that something happens and another happens as a result of it. Something happens and a *corresponding* thing happens.

We are so used to seeing things as cause and effect. You can see the relation between the cause and the immediately following effect. But life is filled with instances where the effect happens so much later that you are not able to relate to the original cause. It is just like when you throw a stone in the water, you can see the immediate ripples are because of the stone. But if you came a few minutes later, you see the secondary ripples, but you cannot be sure what caused them.

You may have experienced instances like this in your life. You think of asking your friend to make your favorite dessert and you land up at her place and she has made exactly that! She just felt she should make it on that day. This is the power of synchronicity.

This happens between the master and disciple even more than in close

Master-disciple relationship is the ultimate love affair.

relationships of friends, lovers or spouses. Because the master-disciple relationship is the deepest relation possible in Existence, it is the ultimate love affair.

It is the most mysterious because it is beyond the narrow range of logic. In fact, life begins only when you have touched something that is beyond logic, which cannot be framed by the mind but which pulls the strings of your heart. It brushes aside the arguments of the mind, always looking to criticize.

The true disciple is not a disciple because of something the master said, rather it is because of what the master is. That is why just sitting with the master, the disciple starts falling in tune with the beautiful rhythm of the master. This is *Upanishad*. This is true discipleship, being open to the master so that he can shower his love on you and you can receive it in all its glory and divinity and grow.

Doubt and faith

Whenever you have a doubt, surrender the doubt and faith both at the feet of the master. You see, the master is the one who gives you the faith and he is the same person

Carl Jung - Renowned Swiss psychiatrist and contemporary of Sigmund Freud.

Penance is being ready to work on the technique at any cost since enlightenment is the first priority.

who gives you the doubt. When you are stuck with doubt, tell the master ment-

ally, 'Master, it is you who gave my faith in you, it is also you who gave me doubts about you. I am surrendering both at your feet. I don't want to play this game. I have suffered enough with this game. Please take care.'

When you surrender both doubt and faith at the feet of the master, you will see something called trust happens in you, which is neither doubt nor faith. It is the courage to experiment with the truth.

Deep trust

A Zen master was bringing up a small boy from a young age to be his successor. This little boy had a very deep, loving connection with the master but he was a very naughty boy. He would try to behave in the same way as the master. He would try to imitate and make fun of the master, standing behind him. The master had a habit of always holding his thumb up whenever he wanted to emphasize a particular point. This boy also would stand behind the master and do the same thing!

One day the master got annoyed and just took the knife he was carrying and cut off the boy's thumb. Understand: the story says very beautifully that the trust and feeling of connection was so deep, the boy did not even think once for a moment that something wrong was done to him. The disciple felt very clearly that if the master does something, it must be good for him. The story says that this deep trust even during the intense pain enlightened him at that moment.

Understand two important things here. First thing, that much of connection and trust over the master existed in the boy. Second thing, the disciple was willing to go through any suffering, pain and any kind of *tapas* or penance. Penance is being ready to work on the technique at any cost since enlightenment is the first priority. Of course, this technique is for the people for whom enlightenment has become their first priority.

Suspect your identity, not the master

The stronger you hold on to an ideology or to a person, the deeper will be your depression. If you hold on to a person, say your boyfriend or girlfriend or husband or wife, your son or brother or father, you will

be bound by the sway of the relationship, and you will invariably fall into depression and start blaming that person. This is how depression happens. In the same way, if you hang on to your ego or identity or ideology, again you will face depression.

When you face the depression due to the ideology or identity or ego, you start blaming the whole world because there is no second person to blame! You lose confidence in the whole world. You lose trust on the whole world. You don't even know the reason for your depression, and you start blaming the whole world. Living with a strong ideology or strong identity is like being in the worst possible hell.

When you fall into this kind of depression, you will not have the intelligence to associate the depression with the identity that you created. You will not have the intelligence to realize that your identity is the cause for your depression. You will start suspecting everybody and blaming everybody. Even a simple incident will be enough for you to blame another person as the reason for your depression. That is the big problem with this ego-based identity.

You always think that if you don't have a strong identity, others will cheat you. But understand that if others cheat you, they will cheat you at the most for a few hours. Whereas if you build a strong identity for yourself because of this, the very identity

will cheat you for your whole life. It will be with you when you are in the waking state, dream state, and deep sleep state; and you will be blissfully unaware of it. So it is better to be cheated by others than to be cheated by your own identity.

Always remember one thing:

Do not suspect the master, suspect yourself. Suspect the identity that you are carrying. That's the right thing to do.

The wheel of love and hate

In the beginning, you come to the master with love. When the master starts his operation on the tumor of your ego, suddenly the wheel turns and the love becomes hate, anger and resistance to the master. When the awareness happens, you realize the cunning play of the mind posing in different ways. Then you go beyond both love and hate. The relation deepens and there is no expectation of love or fear of hate. So if you are faced with anger, just have the patience. That point of transcendence will happen.

Understand, the fight is not between you and your mind. The fight is between your mind and the master. Whose side you are on is your choice.

If you look a little deeper, you will see that the fight is because your mind knows that it is fighting a losing battle. So it tries all

kinds of tricks to survive. This is the one battle where you win if you lose!

Being defeated by the master means defeating the false you by the true you. It is the ultimate victory over your self. You regain the kingdom of god, which your mind had stolen.

‘Just be’ in the presence of the master...and it will happen

When you just jump in the presence of the master, when you enjoy and celebrate Existence in the presence of the master, when you celebrate his presence and your presence, when you just celebrate, things will simply start happening in you, nothing else. That is the answer, technology, method and solution for the true master-disciple relation to happen.

When you can't understand that, then I have to talk, reply to all your questions, create more and more problems, that's all. If I answer your questions, what will happen? You will ask, how to do that? What is the technique? Then I have to give one more technique to do that technique. Then, how to do that technique...? It will simply go on.

Questions only generate further questions. That is why philosophy has not been able

to answer any question completely. Questions can never be answered. The solution is to go beyond the plane of questions. Then there are no more questions, they simply dissolve and disappear.

Just sing and dance and celebrate the presence of the master. Then all these doubts, questions and everything will simply disappear.

If you have the doubt and questions, you can't celebrate. Celebration and doubt are just anti, opposite to each other. If you celebrate, questions and doubts will disappear. Don't wait for the doubts to disappear and then celebrate. It will never happen. Just celebrate and the questions will disappear.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa beautifully says, 'If you sit under a tree and clap, all the birds on the tree will fly away.' In the same way, just dance, all the engrams in your body will fly away and disappear! All the doubts that are sitting inside your body will just fly and disappear. So jump in such a high speed that all the birds will fly and disappear and will never think of coming back. Even after the birds fly away their nests may remain in place. Jump in such a way all the nests should also drop! Whatever is inside, everything should just drop and disappear.

For you to grow, I have to hit at your ego. But be very clear, I never push you away

from me. I only pull you towards me. So even if you fall, you will fall only on me. Two things can happen when I hit: you can catch the truth or if you miss, you will just fall in my lap.

Understand one thing: when I hit, just welcome it. Don't dodge. Don't resist. It is not the hit that hurts you but the resistance.

A small story:

Once a man fell down from the fifth floor of a building. When he hit the ground, he was in a state of shock. Somebody asked him out of concern, 'Did it hurt?'

The man replied, 'The fall did not hurt. Only the stopping of the fall hurt!'

In the same way, it is not the hit that hurts. When you realize it is not a hit, but a blessing out of sheer compassion for you to grow, you will realize the beauty of it and welcome it even more.

Feeling connected

Once the connection with the master happens, he does not need to give you anything and you do not need to take anything from him. There will be no giver and no taker. Why? Because an explosion

would have suddenly happened, merging the giver and the taker into one.

I always tell people, *bhakti** or the feeling of being connected to the master is such an ultimate happening, never miss it if at all you have got the opportunity in your life. Never miss it. It is too costly to miss. It is such a deep happening, the ultimate blessing. Never miss it if at all you get the chance.

If you feel that the constant feeling of being connected has happened in you, do not let it go at any cost. Throw away any idea that comes between you and him. Anything can be lost but not the connection with master because if that one relationship is kept alive so many things can happen in you. The possibilities are infinite and all the doors are open. I can give you one small scale to measure if you are open or not.

If you can notice very clearly that your TPS, thoughts per second, is slowing down the moment the master enters your inner space, it means that you are open.

If you feel that the constant feeling of being connected has happened in you, do not let it go at any cost.

Bhakti - Devotion.

Power to move even rocks

This is an incident from the days of my spiritual journey.

One morning, a master was talking to all of his disciples in the angle of feeling connected to the whole of the Himalayas. The master was loving and caring enough to allow me also into their morning session. He was asking the disciples one by one, 'Did you practice this technique?' It seems a few days earlier he had initiated them into the technique of feeling connected to the Himalayas. They were supposed to constantly internalize that the Himalayan mountains was a part of their body.

One disciple said, 'Yes master, now I feel completely connected.' Now the master very casually said, 'Alright then, move that rock.' Understand, I promise I saw with my eyes, the disciple moved his hand and that rock moved. Logically it is very difficult to understand this.

I too had a shock and was shaken to see what happened. The master looked at me and said, 'Do you want to see the power of the mind? Just sit here.' He told that disciple who moved the rock to hold my hand. He told me, 'Now you

move your hand.' I moved the hand and the rock came back to its original place. This was too big a shock for me.

Then he told me very beautifully, 'It is not that only that disciple can do and you can't do. No! Anybody who can be part of that connection will be able to move the mountain.'

I am not saying we need to move the rocks. I'm merely talking about this technique just to tell you the power of this technique.

The one thing that you cannot miss

When you are in love with the master, not only will you feel he is god but all the miracles which you feel or expect should happen in the presence of god will also happen in front of him, in his presence. But when that love is lost, when you don't have that love, you won't see those miracles happening in his presence. You may be the same person, he will be the same person but those miracles will not happen.

Somebody asked me why this happens. Does the master lose enlightenment? No, he does not lose it. You lose the ability to recognize or connect with the enlightenment. When people ask me whether I am god, I tell them it depends on you!

I am constantly available, open. If you want to connect to me as a teacher, you can connect to me and carry all the knowledge. If you want to connect to me in the level of a master, you can have the initiation itself. See, only a master can initiate, a teacher can't initiate. The teacher can teach, the master can initiate. If you connect at the level of god or Divine or ultimate energy, you will carry the experience itself, not just initiation.

It depends on how much of your inner space is available for me, that's all. If you relate just intellectually, you will carry knowledge. If you relate with a little bit of emotion, a little bit of love, you will carry initiation. That means whatever I can't express through words also will go into you. My entire software will be transmitted to you. If you are able to connect with the being deeply, you don't need initiation. The whole experience will be transmitted. The software and all the applications will also be transferred! It depends on the person as to what level he connects with and at what level he experiences.

I always tell people, *bhakti* or the feeling of being connected to the master is such an ultimate relationship. Never miss it if at all you have got the chance in your life. Never miss it. It is too much to miss. If you miss things in your outer world, it is

ok. If you miss your ideas that you carry in your inner world, that is also ok.

In English there is a proverb: If you miss or lose wealth, nothing is lost; if you lose your health, something is lost; if you lose your character, everything is lost. I think even if you lose your character nothing is lost. Only if you lose the connection with the master, everything is lost.

It is such a deep relationship. It is the ultimate blessing. Never miss it if at all you got it. If you feel that the constant feeling of being connected has happened in you, do not miss it at any cost. Throw away any idea that comes between you and him. Anything can be lost but not this connection.

One more thing, it is not that you will be disconnected from me. You will be deeply connected to my true self. In love, you will feel connected. In hatred you will feel disconnected. In devotion, you will go beyond the connection and disconnection. You will just feel my presence and experience it whether I am physically present or not.

When I say go beyond love, I don't mean start hating or feel disconnected. No! I say let the love become devotion. You will feel that you and the master are not different persons. You will just feel the very presence without the suffering of the absence. He will constantly remind you to

turn towards you. He will not be binding you in any way.

Whenever you start experiencing the presence of a person by putting in so much of energy to create that feeling of connectedness and love, not only you become dependent on him but by that time he will also become dependent on you. If somebody can remain without him being dependent on you but allowing you to be dependent on him till the time you are ready to be independent, then he is an enlightened person. An enlightened person will never be dependent on you. So he doesn't have vested interest to keep you under his control, under his thumb.

When the time comes, when he sees that you can turn towards yourself, he will just ask you to turn towards yourself. He will see that your energy that is invested in so many ways is all completely centralized. Once he sees that the centralizing work is complete, he immediately takes the next step. He will tell you, 'Now enough. Start working in my absence. Work on your presence.'

A master will agree and co-operate with you for you to feel his absence and he will transfer the whole energy to your devotion. He will not bind you. That is the greatness of falling in love with the master.

The master is a person who will not be dependent on you but who will initially allow you to be dependent on him. When the time is right, he liberates you into absolute freedom. He transfers your whole energy back to you and says 'goodbye'. He lets you to experience the ultimate for yourself.

Hardware and software change

The unconscious zone in the mind is like the software that can be cleansed by meditation. The hardware, the brain itself, will be tuned to hold this new software by the *darshan** or grace of the master.

When you clean the conscious and unconscious with meditation and create a change in yourself, the hardware may not be able to hold and sustain that effect from day one. If the master's *darshan** or blessing happens, the hardware also changes to hold that effect. If you don't get that blessing, constant meditation and teaching will eventually help change the hardware.

If the hardware is old, once the new software is installed, the hardware will also get updated gradually. However, if you want a change immediately in the hardware, *darshan** is the right thing.

Darshan - Literally 'sight', referring to the vision of the divine, a deity or master.

Straightaway it will change the hardware.

Sometimes, without even installing the new software the hardware can be changed and the person will straightaway start radiating the new software's quality. That can happen when a disciple is completely open to the master. Sometimes a disciple falls in love with the master for no reason. He may not be attracted to the teachings or be familiar with them, he may not be attracted to the meditation techniques or be familiar with them, but he just falls in love. If he is in love with the master for no reason at all, the master can straightaway change the hardware along with the software. These disciples will be simply radiating the quality of the teachings and meditation without even learning any of them.

As on now, both the hardware and software are directed to the outer world, the material world. The conscious portion of the software starts turning to the inner world through listening to teachings, and the unconscious portion of the software starts turning through meditation. But even if software turns inwards, the hardware will not be able to handle it. Then naturally the hardware will try its best to maintain its original nature. If the software is too strong and stays in the same tune, then the hardware will change. But immediately, if

after the teaching and meditation is given, the *darshan* and blessing is also given, the hardware will also change and it will start holding the change. It will be prepared to hold on to the same experience.

DNA phantom effect

There is an interesting research done by the Institute of HeartMath, USA:

In this experiment, the characteristics of light-photons were studied in a light scattering chamber. The graph looked like a typical plot representing random motion of the photons.

Next, a DNA* sample was placed in the scattering chamber. The graph now changed showing an interaction between the DNA* and the photons of light.

Then the DNA* was removed from the chamber. When the DNA is removed, you would anticipate that the graph would be the same as before the DNA was placed in the chamber. Surprisingly, the graph after the removal of the DNA looked clearly different from the one obtained before the DNA was placed in the chamber.

In spite of the removal of the DNA, it influenced the behavior of the light-photons. Not only immediately after

DNA - Deoxyribonucleic acid, the building block of all living beings containing the genetic code.

removal but for several more days, the lingering effect of the DNA on the light-photons persisted.

One interesting observation is that this effect is not seen with the DNA of lower forms of consciousness. So, one can conclude that the consciousness of a particular object or a particular person is always radiating and it contributes its own effect. We can also note that in nature, the higher forms of consciousness, by their very presence, will influence the other forms of lower consciousness. (The complete paper is available at <http://twm.co.nz/DNAPhantom.htm>).

You can then imagine how a superconscious energy, that of an enlightened being can influence the consciousness of everything and everyone around them.

Energy to hold the transformation

Staying in the presence of an enlightened being will straightaway change the hardware for it to hold on to the transformation and the software and the entire process.

Understand, even your physiology changes with enlightenment. When a master touches, that software of enlightened

physiology is also downloaded into you changing your physiology.

When you are completely open during the touch, the software of enlightened physiology is downloaded into you. Your body learns that it can be better than what it is now! Your bio-memory learns the lesson that the possibility for better existence is there.

Vasudeva Kutumbaha

With the master's love comes love for the fellow disciples. It is no longer 'I', but 'we'. A bond develops with fellow disciples, that is stronger than even biological family bonds. There are no conditions here except for the need of radial love for the master. The peripheral love automatically flourishes. '*Vasudeva Kutumbaha*', Krishna's vision that the whole world is our family, becomes true.

You grow collectively in energy, yet the relationship with the master is unique to each individual. The affair may start with the intellect or the heart. Very soon it ascends to an affair of the being. When a being merges with another, the disciple's with the master's, it is liberation, everlasting bliss.

Living enlightenment is living with the master...it is that easy!

Q&A

Does the master choose the disciple or does the disciple choose the master?

First thing, it is actually the disciple who chooses the master. Because master never chooses. The master just showers. He is like the sacred river Ganga. He just flows. If you want, you will enter the river, immerse yourself, drink or play - whatever you want you do. But Ganga itself just flows. It does not choose. So it is with the master. The master is a choiceless energy, choiceless bliss.

So I can say that the relationship is established by the disciple. The disciple has got the ultimate freedom, the last freedom in establishing the master-disciple relationship. After establishing, whatever freedom he has will be lost because he will become enlightened! The last activity that you can do, the last choice which you can make in your life is choosing your master, that's all. The moment you choose the master, you disappear as you. Then you are no more an individual. You become master.

How does trust develop between a disciple and a

master? Is the disciple justified in demanding some proof or does the master expect unconditional surrender?

First thing, neither can the disciple have unconditional surrender nor can he stop asking for proof. Disciple means he will be demanding solid proof from the master to prove he is authentic. Second thing, he will not have all the qualifications to be a real disciple. That is a disciple.

He will not be a perfect disciple but he will ask the qualities from a master to be the perfect master. That is the quality of the disciple. Don't worry about it.

The quality of the master is that he will not ask for unconditional surrender and constantly he will be giving you the proof that he is the real master. That is the master's qualification.

One thing, even if you are asking for proof or not ready to have unconditional surrender, it is ok. There is no need to give unconditional surrender. You can't give it also. Go on demanding for the proof, don't bother. You will have it.

As you receive the proof, unconditional surrender will simply happen in you.

Can anybody become the master or is he the chosen one?

Nobody needs to choose you. You need to choose you, that's all. Understand, fortunately masters are not chosen the democratic way! Nobody needs to vote for them! All you need to do is, vote for yourself, that's all. You need to choose yourself, nobody else needs to choose you.

Just decide consciously, from today I am going to live reality, the truth of my being. That is all the decision you need to make. You have become the master, that's all.

I always tell people that when I say I became enlightened on a particular day, do not think something had happened in my system. Of course, something had happened, but that is not the important thing that I want to convey.

First thing what happened is that very consciously I decided, let me live my enlightenment. When I decided this, as a side effect, something started happening in my body and mind. People always think that first the experience should happen and then you decide. No! First the decision has to happen and only then the experience happens.

***Swamiji*, I would like to know the purpose of our life, the world, the universe and our god.**

If you know the purpose of your life, you will be able to understand the other three automatically.

The purpose of your life is the purpose of the universe. The purpose of the universe is the purpose of god. It means the purpose of your life is the purpose of god.

Be very clear, find out the purpose of your life and you will be able to find out the purpose of god. But unfortunately, I cannot tell you the purpose of your life.

One more important thing, based on what you think as the purpose of your life, you will attract that kind of a universe around you. You will create that kind of a world around you. You will be devoted to that kind of god. Understand, the purpose of your life decides the purpose of your world, the purpose of your universe, and the purpose of your god.

If your purpose is just money, you will create that kind of a corporate world around you, you will create that kind of a corporate universe, you will understand the whole universe as a business company.

So the purpose of your life is going to decide the purpose of your world, the

purpose of your universe and the purpose of your god.

If you are enlightenment-based, if you feel that the purpose of your life is not money but enlightenment, suddenly you will see, you attract that kind of a society around you, that kind of a universe around you or that kind of a god whom you believe will give enlightenment.

If you feel that you want money as well as enlightenment, then your universe will be that way. You will create that kind of a world around you. So I can say, the purpose of your life is the main core or thread. Unfortunately,... I am sorry, *fortunately*, I cannot teach you that! Only you have to find out.

Is the statement, ‘When the student is ready, master appears’ right?

Yes, the statement is right. When the student is ready, master appears. Sometimes, even when the student is not ready, out of compassion, master appears. He gives the possibility. Even people who are not ready can take the quantum jump. So I extend my hand for the possibility.

But these fellows sometimes bite the hand! What to do? Even then, I tell them, ‘Bite. This is your nature. But I will extend my hand and help. That is my nature. Just

because you bite, do you think that I will not give my hand? I will extend one more hand. Till that heals, alright, hold this other hand!’ That is all.

Understand, sometimes there is a possibility for the disciple to take a quantum jump. So even when the disciple is not ready, the master gives the hand.

Swami Vivekananda tested his master Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Can I test you?

Once, when I was invited to address a college gathering, a student asked me, ‘Have you seen god?’ I asked him, ‘Have you read Vivekananda’s books?’ He said, ‘Yes. I have read Vivekananda’s books. Vivekananda asked Ramakrishna this question. In the same way I am asking you, have you seen god?’

I just told him, ‘See, when Ramakrishna said, ‘Yes, I have seen god’ as a reply to Vivekananda’s question, Vivekananda left everything and walked behind Ramakrishna. Now, I am telling you, ‘Not only have I seen, I will show you too. Come!’ That fellow just disappeared in the crowd!

So understand, before checking out a master like Vivekananda did, first check

yourself whether you are Vivekananda or not. Then you can check me out.

One more thing is the trust happens at a much deeper level, not just by checking out critically. The path of doubts is also ok. There is nothing wrong. But let the doubting be open like the scientist's doubt. It should not be like an atheist's doubt. The atheist has already decided there is no god. So his checking out can't be called as doubt. A scientist is a person who has not yet concluded anything. He is still doing experiments with an open mind. Have the doubt of a scientist, not of an atheist.

How do I become your disciple?

Actually, if you are unclutched, you can get into my circle. Being unclutched directly connects you to me. A tremendous energy starts flowing through you. What do I mean by unclutched? Being relaxed without clinging on to any person or thought or thing.

I always tell people that the person who feels only his pain and comes to me for healing is a devotee. The person who has complaints only about his own problems is a devotee.

The person who feels *my* pain and takes the responsibility which I have taken as this whole mission, is a disciple!

The person who after taking my responsibility realizes, 'How can an enlightened being have pain? Whatever I thought as a pain before taking this responsibility is not a pain, it is *nithyananda* – eternal bliss,' then you become an insider!

So now you know how to become a disciple. Feel my responsibility, which is the responsibility of Existence. Then you will become a disciple.

How does a seeker know he has reached his master, or can he have many masters?

When you reach the master, this question, 'Is he my master or not?' will disappear. Be very clear. People ask me, 'Should we accept you as our master?' I tell them, 'Never do that mistake. No. I never promote myself. I can never tell you to accept me as your master.'

If I am your master, there will be something beyond your intellect - you will not be able to forget me. Now I challenge, if you can forget me, forget. Then I am not your master. Relax and continue your seeking. You will get the right master. Don't worry.

If you can't forget me, only then I am your master.

I always tell people, never accept me as a master. If I am your master, I will be there in your mind the whole day and whole night. I will be there even in your dreams. If thoughts of me fill you day and night, then I am your master.

People ask me, 'Swamiji, should I remember you? Should I meditate on you?' I tell them, 'No. Forgetting me will be the problem. Remembering me will not be the problem. Only then I am your master. If you can forget me, forget and continue your journey. That is good for you.'

If you are not able to forget me then I am your master. Even if you have one doubt in one corner, that is a solid proof I am not your master. Relax. Don't struggle. Don't suffer. Don't torture yourself. Just say a beautiful goodbye and continue. My love, respects and best wishes for you to reach the right master, the master who is for you. Start searching, you will see the right master. I myself have sent many disciples to many masters. I have guided many people that way. This is not like a shop. It is not as though if you come to my shop, you can't go to another shop. It is not a business.

I always tell people that even if you are my disciple, do not stop learning from all other masters. Pluck flowers from all gardens and make a beautiful bouquet for yourself. After all, life is to be enriched.

First thing is this very question of whether you are my disciple or not will not arise in you if I am your master. If you have this doubt, be very clear I am not your master. Continue your seeking.

Second thing is even if the doubt has completely disappeared and you think I am your master and you feel completely connected, even then do not stop learning from all the other sources, all the other masters. Learn from all possible sources.

After spending two-three years with you, why do people leave? How can they leave? Why don't you keep them?

That is the greatness of a living master. He never hypnotizes you. He never brainwashes you. He gives you all the possibilities. You can leave even after ten years. The doors are open.

An ordinary teacher will try to build things, teach things, create systems and setups from which you can't leave. But with the master, he gives you only the possibilities. All possibilities are open – to be in or to be out. Always, all possibilities are open, because this whole relationship is built on love, freedom, openness and compassion. When you are in love, you see this truth.

Only when you come inside, when you want to be guided by me, I interfere. Otherwise, I keep my distance.

See, when people come to me for guidance, they want to escape from their own dilemma. They know that a powerful security is present here, that a high intelligence is guiding here. But sometimes, their unconscious doesn't want to be guided. Even if I make them wait, they feel that they are not guided, or if I guide them, again they feel, that their freedom is lost. So when these kinds of things happen,

I tell them, 'Wait. Slowly, slowly, whatever needs to evolve will evolve.'

Such people, when they leave also I tell them that they have full freedom to come back or leave forever, but never to abuse the guidance that they received when they asked for guidance. They should not judge the incidents that happened when they were in deep love with the mind that is there when that love is no longer present. They cannot judge the same incidents and the same truths without that same love they had at that time.

Static meditations

1. Third eye meditation

See the whole world as a dream and awaken to the higher intelligence within you.

Duration: not applicable

This meditation is to be done before going to sleep.

Sit straight on your bed. Close your eyes. Be aware of the third eye, the *ajna chakra*, which is the subtle energy center between your eyebrows. Do not concentrate, do not strain. Just be fully aware, in a very relaxed way.

Be aware of the *ajna chakra* and of the movement of *prana*, the life energy. Watch how the *prana* flows into your body, how the incoming breath brings more energy and the outgoing breath relaxes your body. Just feel it.

Again, do not concentrate. Just be aware, in a very relaxed way, of the *ajna chakra* and the flow of the incoming and outgoing breath.

Now, get into a sleeping position. Be aware of the third eye when you are falling asleep. When you lie down on the bed, decide, 'Yes, now I am going to fall asleep.' Be aware when your consciousness gets diffused, when you are just disappearing into the darkness, into deep sleep.

Before going to sleep, if you are aware of the third eye it is enough, because your *prana* is hovering there during the waking state. As you fall asleep, the *prana* will start moving downwards from the third eye.

Next, throughout the day, whenever you remember, think that this whole world is not real, that you are just dreaming, that whatever you are seeing is just a dream. Consciously remember that whatever you are doing - eating, sleeping, walking, drinking, driving, sitting in your office - is all just a dream.

Immediately you will tell yourself, 'How can I think that this world is a dream? This world is in fact a reality.' Please be very clear, there is a distinction between fact and truth. 'The whole world is a dream' may not be a fact according to you,

because the scale by which you measure whether something is a fact or not, is itself not accurate!

Once you try to practice this technique, in a few days, you will understand the truth behind these words. It will lead you to the truth. It may not be a fact for your logical mind, but it is a fact *and* truth at a deeper level.

So throughout the whole day, whenever you remember, tell yourself, 'This world is a dream, whatever I am perceiving is a dream.' Slowly, you will see, the whole projection just gets diffused. You will then see the *screen* on which this whole dream is taking place!

Just try this for the next eleven days. Whatever is happening in front of you, whatever you are experiencing, is a changing dream. Just remember this, that's all.

One important thing to know is any idea that you continuously remember the whole day for eleven days will penetrate your dream state. When you are dreaming, you will know you are dreaming. If you remember you are dreaming in the dream, you will be awakened.

Continuously for eleven days, if you tell yourself that you are a doctor but actually you are a lawyer by profession, in your dreams, you will see yourself as a doctor. If you want to change your identity, eleven days is enough. You will start expressing that new identity.

If this idea penetrates your inner being, the dream state, you will experience a tremendous healing effect over your entire being. This one experience is enough, you will be tremendously balanced in your day-to-day life. Not only that, suddenly you will see that you have the energy to change what you think of as reality. Situations which you thought you would never be able to change, will start changing. The screen on which you project this whole dream and see is what I call consciousness or *prana*. When you start seeing the screen on which you are projecting this whole dream, you will also see the same screen with awareness when you are dreaming.

The next question that the mind will ask is, 'If I am dreaming, why should I continue doing anything at all?' Even if it is all a dream, you can still be doing, there is nothing wrong with that. You don't want to continue doing because you take yourself seriously. If you remember you are dreaming, then your dreaming or non-

dreaming is in no way going to change anything. You will then relax and let life happen. You will be in the flow of life.

Suddenly your intelligence will be awakened. You will be awakened to the truth that the whole thing is your projection. Then you will not be the same person anymore because you will see the truth.

2. Diary

Become a witness of your thoughts, and be free from the clutches of emotions.

Duration: not applicable

Keep a diary and note down your feelings, your emotions, at different times of the day – morning, afternoon, evening, night. Do this for about a month.



Then take a look at your diary. Watch the patterns that your mood follows. Understand your mood cycle.

The next time you feel a low mood, remind yourself of the pattern in your emotional cycle. Remind yourself that this present mood is just one part of that cycle and

enjoy it. It *is*, that's all. But it is not forever, it will pass.

In the same way, if you are feeling really happy, watch. Watch the emotion, witness yourself through it.

Practice this technique for a few weeks. You will see that you are able to handle your emotions without getting disturbed, no matter what emotion comes up at each moment.

3. Affirmation

Your words, your thoughts, have great power over you. They have a great impact over the whole world that surrounds you also. You underestimate the power of the words you use. That is why you use them so casually, often negatively, especially when you talk inside yourself. Create positive words for your consciousness.

Duration: not applicable



Now, decide to use correct and positive words only. Stop supporting the negative thoughts that come up inside you. Give your power and support only to the positive thoughts and feelings, twenty-four hours a day.

If you find that you are in a low mood very often, try this:

Before going to sleep, sit up on your bed, tell yourself aloud that you are happy, that life is a beautiful experience, that hereafter, you are going to be joyful and blissful. Repeat this affirmation to yourself eleven times.

Now lie down. As your head touches the pillow, feel clearly that it is not just a pillow, but it is the very lap of Existence that you are falling asleep on. Relax and drop into your very source, into the welcoming embrace of Existence.

When you get up in the morning, before opening your eyes, repeat to yourself the same affirmation eleven times.

This can be extended to other negative emotions like fear, jealousy, worry, etc. Become aware of the negativity and decide to drop it. Replace it with the corresponding positive emotion and make it your affirmation.

4. Weightless – Technique 1

Experience the deep peace and bliss in you.

Duration: minimum of ten minutes

Sit comfortably cross-legged on the floor. If this is uncomfortable, sit on a chair but without resting your back.

Try not to support the weight of your body through the feet. Try consciously to lift the calf muscles a bit, naturally you will then put your weight on the backbone.

Initially it will be difficult because we never balance our body. Feel the points of the body touching the ground.

Because we hardly bring our awareness to such things, it may take a few minutes to become aware. Try to focus on the two points, which are touching the ground, through which you are transferring your whole weight to planet earth.

If you can feel the two points through which you are transferring your weight to planet earth, then you can start moving to the next step of balancing. Balancing means finding the center in which you are weightless.

Bend forward slowly as much as you can and feel the weight of your body.

Feel the heaviness of the body. Then slowly, very slowly, come back inch by inch. Feel the weight of the body as you move. Slowly, straighten the body.

You will feel the body weight reducing step by step as you straighten. Come to the point where you feel completely weightless, where you feel completely light.

If you are able to find your center where it is weightless, start moving your body backwards. As you move your body backwards, feel the heaviness again.

Now slowly, very slowly, bring it back to the earlier straight position where you don't feel your body weight at all.

At least two or three times move your body forwards and backwards in this fashion, each time coming to the center straight position where you feel weightless. After a few times, you will be able to correctly catch that point or moment or center, where you feel weightless.

At the point you feel weightless, remain. Be in that same space. There is no need to remember anything or concentrate on anything. Just be completely balanced in the space, in the center in which you are feeling weightless.

Try to balance your body for at least ten minutes a day at home in this fashion. Try for just ten days, and you will get the knack, and you then you will start sitting in that same weightless pose the whole day!

In this posture, not only will your body feel steady and comfortable, your *mind* will also be free from the body! You will experience the space in which you are totally balanced, where you are beyond intellect and emotion, where you are beyond the identity you are showing to the outer world and to yourself.

You will experience deep peace just by balancing the body. There is nothing else that needs to be done. You may be thinking, 'How can I experience peace just by balancing the body?' Just do it, then you will see!

5. Moving the body in small circles

Experience a shift in consciousness

Duration: not applicable

While doing this technique, do not analyze, do not measure and do not calculate. Just allow the movements happening in you to take place.

If we look inside ourselves, we can see that there are slight movements always happening in us and these are happening in invisible circles. Just be with those movements and allow them to happen. Whenever we allow these movements to happen and meditate on them, we will suddenly see and realize that we are not a solid body, we are a flowing energy.

Experiencing ourselves as a flowing energy is what I call enlightenment or the ultimate experience.

Suddenly we will realize we are not just the body. We may be dwelling in the body, but we are not the body.

This meditation will help us move ourselves with the *prana*, the life force or subtle energy that is moving inside our body. We have become so frozen that in the initial

level it will be difficult to experience the energy. In the initial level we should try to help our body and cooperate with it by creating small invisible circles and small movements.

Sit straight and close your eyes. Inhale and exhale as slowly and as deeply as possible.

Just move the body in very slow and small circles. Even if you only visualize this, it is enough. Suddenly, you will see that your body is moving slowly and you are feeling comfortable with the motion. Just be in that state and allow the movement to happen.

Concentrate near the *manipuraka chakra* or navel center, which is the source of *prana*. You will see that your whole body is moving in small invisible circles and you are centered on the navel.

Whenever you are in a moving vehicle, on an airline flight or in a car and when you are not driving, you can try this technique. Suddenly you will see you are disengaged from the 'I' and you are beyond the body.

Try this technique for at least eleven days. You will start experiencing a shift in consciousness.

6. Excluding everything but one

Get centered on eternal bliss

Duration: not applicable

This technique has three steps.

First, feel an object or person before you. Do not just see the object or person, but feel the object or person, become completely lost in them.

Second, feel the absence of all other objects and persons but this one. Exclude everything else. Just be completely absorbed with that one object or one person.



Third, when you really feel there is no other object or person, when you have achieved the state of excluding everything or everyone else, then unclutch from that one object or person also.

Next, leaving aside the object feeling (being absorbed in one object) and the absence feeling (that one object is absent also), realize yourself. Disappear into yourself. Suddenly, you will see you are centered on you, on your deeper Self, on your consciousness, on your very being.

If you are in love with an object or a person, try this technique. First feel the presence of that object or person and the absence of all other objects or persons. Then feel the absence of that object or person also, and you will become centered on eternal bliss.

7. Include everything in you

Expand your consciousness

Duration: 21 minutes

Step 1: *Duration: 2 minutes*

Sit straight. Now feel clearly the boundary of your body. Look at the room in which you are sitting.

Step 2: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now close your eyes and feel the room inside you, as a part of you. Your space has expanded from beyond the boundary of your body to include the entire room.

Step 3: *Duration: 2 minutes*

Open your eyes, go outdoors and look at the trees and buildings around you.

Step 4: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now close your eyes and feel yourself expanded to include all the trees and buildings around you.



Step 5: *Duration: 2 minutes*

Open your eyes and look at the open sky.

Step 6: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now close your eyes and feel the entire sky inside you.

This is a very powerful meditation that can become a part of your daily life – to include everyone, everything around you as a part of your self.

For example, at work, include your work equipment as a part of you, expand your sphere of awareness. Say you are working on your computer, sitting on a chair with your computer on the table. Include the computer, the chair, the table, and your office space, all as part of you. Close your eyes and feel them as part of you.

Include people working around you as a part of you – your colleagues, your co-workers, the people in your group. Enjoy your individual consciousness expanding to become a group consciousness. If your entire group practices this meditation, then individual personalities beautifully melt and ego clashes get resolved automatically.



8. Find the source

Find the source of your thoughts and awaken to the ultimate source that is Existence.

Duration: not applicable

When you just sit, naturally, some thought will arise in you. See from where the thought is rising or which part of the body experiences movement or feeling through that thought.

You will see, one by one, each thought creates some sensation in some internal organ in your body. Try to see which thought is connected to which sensation happening inside your body. Try to locate the internal organ feeling the sensation,

the organ that produced the thought coming into your mind. Do this with each thought.

When you experiment with this technique, if it clicks for you within twenty-four hours, this is the technique for you. If not, continue to try other techniques. This is a technique that can directly give you the enlightenment experience.

9. Touch the eyelids as a feather

This is one of the powerful techniques to awaken the *kundalini shakti*, the potential energy which you carry within you. This is a beautiful technique to develop sensitivity in the body.

Duration: 30 minutes

Close your eyes and just touch the eyelids with your forefingers as lightly as a feather would. You can use a real feather also, if you like. The feather should not bend when touching the eye. If it bends, it means you are applying too much pressure on the eyelids. Too much pressure will not work with this technique. You need to give just a feather touch.



It is as if you are touching, but not touching. It is as if your fingers are on the eyelids but not pressing them. Balance your hands well and touch your eyelids with your forefingers. Your hands may tremble at first and you may touch either too heavily or too lightly, or you may not be touching your eyelids at all.

When you are able to touch your eyelids like a feather, you will be able to see a strong energy connection getting established between the fingers and the eyes. Slowly, you will feel that your fingers and hands have become a part of your eyes.



As of now when you close your eyes, you feel your boundary ends inside the eyelids. But with your feather touch, your eyes will feel like they have expanded! If the pressure you apply is just right, you will have this experience. Your eyes should feel the same sensitivity outside that you feel inside, and the fingers also.

Once you start practicing this technique intensely, you will be able to see that the energy circles inside you instead of leaving you through your eyes, as you normally feel it does. Understand, if you close your eyes, the outer scenes may cease and the outgoing energy may stop. But even then, inside you, some scenes will be moving and so the energy will continue to be wasted. Only if you stop the inner and outer scenes, does enlightenment happen.

This technique takes at least half an hour to balance even once. It might take at least one month of daily practice to balance oneself completely using this feather-touch technique.

10. Rise with the sun

Awaken to the intense energy in you.

Duration: 10 to 15 minutes

Look at the sky for about 10 to 15 minutes before the sun rises on the horizon. When the sky is gaining color, watch with a deep silent alertness.

As the sun rises in the sky, clearly feel the sun inside you also rising. When the sun is up on the horizon, feel that the sun inside you has reached your navel. As the sun comes up slowly, feel the inner sun also gaining intensity.

At the end of 10 to 15 minutes, close your eyes. Enjoy the bright, silent feeling of the sun inside you.



11. Devotion

Soften and transform with devotion.

Duration: not applicable

Close your eyes and sit straight. First, spend a few moments choosing the person who has made the greatest contribution to your life, who has enriched your life the most, someone who means a lot to you.

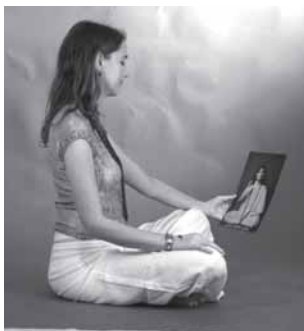
Now feel connected to that person. Remember him clearly. Remember how he caused great transformation in you, in your life.

Feel deeply connected to that person, to that being. Remember all the beautiful things contributed by him in your life. Remember how much he added to your being. Deeply relax into his memory, into his being. Just disappear into his being, into the beautiful, loving intimate memories of him. Relax and merge into his being.

12. See in the outer and inner spaces and drop

Break free from fear and insecurity.

Duration: not applicable



Sit with some object. Look intensely at it. Let your whole mind be completely filled with the memory of that object. If you are sitting with somebody's photograph, let your whole mind be filled with the memory of that person, your experiences with that person. Let the experiences fill your inner space.

Now close your eyes, withdrawing your sight from the object. Sit inside the inner space, with the same thoughts, and see the object or person in the inner space for a few minutes.

First, see the object or person in the outer space and the inner space. Then see them only in the inner space. Then drop that also and just remain with your being. Decide consciously to withdraw even your thoughts and just be.

13. Awareness while falling asleep

Enter into *samadhi* with acute awareness.

Duration: not applicable



This technique should be done when you are ready to fall asleep - not when you are supposed to sleep or at the time prescribed to you. When your body actually says it is ready, do this meditation.

Just rest and wait passively, that's all! Don't try to sleep. Don't try to follow any method to fall asleep. Don't feel guilty or anxious if sleep is not happening to you.

Just wait. While waiting you will always be more aware. When you are passively waiting, you will be more aware. If you are aggressive, you will not have awareness.

Understand one important thing: the more passive and receptive you are, the more your awareness will increase. That is why prayer develops your awareness. During prayer you are very passive, deep, waiting for the grace. A prayerful or passive mood will bring you to awareness. Just be in a passive mood. You can even think of sleep as a goddess. In the Upanishad we have a chant to respect or worship the deity of sleep or *nidra dev!* You can think of *sushupti* or the deep-sleep state as a goddess. Wait with a passive mood for Her to land on you and bless you. Just be in a deep, waiting mood.

Suddenly you will see that you are slowly losing the awareness about your body but you are still aware. You will not lose the idea 'I'. Be aware of that moment. The door for the fourth state, *samadhi*, spiritually awakened state, will open. In that space your verbalization will not be active. You will not have thoughts but you will have consciousness, 'I am not aware of my body but I am aware that I exist.'

At this point suddenly you will see that you are completely relaxed, you are aware, but the idea of the body doesn't exist. The following morning you will see that you are fresh, alive! But you will feel you were aware throughout the night. You never lost your awareness, yet you feel completely rested and relaxed. You don't feel any tiredness. This is the experience if you have had the glimpse of the *samadhi* state.

Dynamic meditations

1. Blissful dancing

Rejuvenate with the tremendous energy within you. Relax with the deep peace within you.

Total Duration: 31 minutes

Free dance means dance with no defined steps, no rules, nothing. It is just allowing your body to move as it pleases, being playful, enjoying yourself, becoming part of the tremendous energy of dancing.

There are two stages to free dance: dancing and resting.

Step 1: *Duration: 21 minutes*

Close your eyes and begin to dance. Don't bother about the steps. Let your body be free to move as it wishes. Don't be concerned about how you look, how your clothes look. No one is watching you, this is not a performance.

As you continue to dance in this fashion, more and more energy will surge inside you, and you will keep going. The more you dance, the more energetic you will be! You will not feel tired at all.

Enter deeply into the dance. Dance as fast as possible, as freely as possible. Forget yourself totally. Just become the dance.

Step 2: *Duration: 10 minutes*

At the end of 21 minutes, wherever you are, in whatever position you are, just drop down on the floor. Lie down. Be silent and still.

In the sudden change from frantic motion to sudden stillness, you will experience a moment of blankness. There will be no thoughts. You will experience a deep silence.



In a few moments, the thoughts will start coming back. Watch the thoughts calmly. Don't fight with them, don't get lost in them. Just remain aware. You will become aware of a lasting peace inside you, a great silence that remains even after the thoughts return. Carry this peace, this silence with you throughout the day. Carry the silence into your sleep. You will wake up feeling new and refreshed.

2. Whirling

Find the unmoving center in your being. Merge with the whole of Existence.

Total Duration: 31 minutes

This is a beautiful, natural meditation to center yourself.

Do not have any food or drink at least three hours before this meditation.

The meditation has two phases: whirling and resting.

Whirling

Whirling is usually done in a counter-clockwise direction, with the right arm held higher, palm facing upwards, and the left arm lower, palm facing downwards.

If you are uncomfortable whirling counter-clockwise, switch to clockwise.

Start whirling slowly, letting your whole body be soft and unresisting. As you whirl, the passing images will become blurred. Let them flow past. Don't try to focus on anything. Focusing will make you dizzy or nauseous.

Slowly pick up speed, and become the whirling. There will be action and movement on the periphery of the circle, but at the center you will feel stillness. You will feel as if you are a witness to the whirling.

Resting

When you are whirling so fast that you can't stay upright, your body will fall by itself. Don't plan the fall.



As soon as you fall, turn over onto your stomach so that your navel is in contact with the earth. Feel your body become one with the earth.

Keep your eyes closed. Remain in the same position, passive and silent, for at least fifteen minutes.

After this meditation, remain silent and meditative for a few hours.

4. *Vatha-Pitta-Kapha* meditations

Balance the three vital energies in your body.

According to the ancient science of *Ayurveda*, *vatha* (energy of movement), *pitta* (energy of digestion or metabolism) and *kapha* (energy of lubrication and structure) are the three forces in our body, which need to be in balance to cause physical wellbeing.

However, in each of us, the proportion of these three forces is usually imbalanced and one element is in higher proportion most of the time. The following techniques are to restore the balance of *vatha*, *pitta* and *kapha*.

These techniques when done intensely can prevent even cancer.

These meditations are to be done on an empty stomach and hence preferably early in the morning.

***Vatha* meditation**

Total Duration: 31 minutes

Step 1: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Sit in *vajrasana* (kneel down and sit with your bottom resting on your heels). Place your hands on your hips. By doing this, you are establishing a connection between the upper and lower parts of your body. Chant 'boo' for as long as possible with each exhale. Begin again with each inhale, holding the chant as long as possible as you exhale.

Step 2: *Duration: 21 minutes*

Continue sitting in *vajrasana*. With the hands on the hips, bend down at the hip to touch the forehead to the ground. Continue to chant the ‘*hoo*’ sound in this position.

***Pitta* meditation**

Total Duration: 31 minutes

Step 1: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Sit in *vajrasana*. Place your hands on your hips. Chant the ‘*hoo*’ sound. As you chant, visualize clearly a white light rising within you, going out from the top of the head and circling back into you. Continue to visualize the circling white light as you chant ‘*hoo*’.



Step 2: *Duration: 21 minutes*

Continue sitting in *vajrasana*. With the hands on the hips, bend down at the hip to touch the forehead to the ground. Continue to chant the ‘*hoo*’ sound in this position. Continue to visualize clearly a white light rising within you, going out from the top of the head and circling back into you, just as before.



***Kapha* meditation**

Total Duration: 41 minutes

Keep a picture of *Swamiji*’s eyes in front of you.

Step 1: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Sit in *vajrasana*. Place your hands on your hips and chant the ‘*hoo*’ sound. Visualize

clearly a white light rising within you, going out from the top of the head and circling back into you.

Step 2: *Duration: 21 minutes*

Continue sitting in *vajrasana*. With the hands on the hips, bend down at the hip to touch the forehead to the ground. Continue to chant the ‘*hoo*’ sound in this position. Continue to visualize clearly a white light rising within you, going out from the top of the head and circling back into you.

Step 3: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Open your eyes. Through your third eye, look at *Swamiji’s* third eye in the picture. Clearly visualize a beam of light from *Swamiji’s* third eye entering your third eye.

This meditation is *tantra-mantra-yantra*, all three put together:

Mantra means using the body physically to get the desired effect of sitting in a particular posture and chanting.

Tantra means using the body and mind together to get the desired effect of adding the visualization of white light.

Yantra means using an external object to get the desired effect of using the picture of *Swamiji’s* eyes.

5. Balancing *Pitta*

Balance the fire and water elements in the body. Awaken the unused energy centers of the body.

Total Duration: 30 minutes

Do this meditation at least three hours after eating food.

Step 1: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Be in a standing posture. Shake the whole body from head to foot as if shaking a tree from the root. This awakens all your unused energy centers and makes the whole body fluid. Shake vigorously.

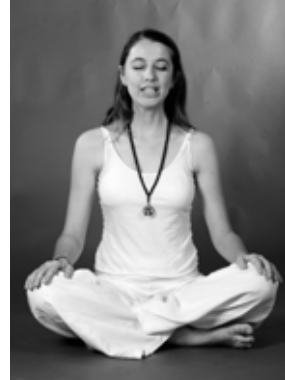


Step 2: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Sit down wherever you are. Whatever sound appears in your mind, just vocalize that sound. It should be like gibberish, not words. It may be hidden irritation, worry, or anger. If you carry these irritations in your system, it may imbalance your *pitta*, so let them out completely.

Step 3: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Sit silently and just be a witness. Don't create, sustain, destroy or judge anything that rises in your mind.



Breath-related techniques

Watching the breath continuously is a powerful and effective meditation. It has led more people to enlightenment than any other meditation. Watching the breath tremendously increases awareness. As awareness increases, inner awakening happens, and bliss follows.

1. Awareness of the incoming and outgoing breaths and the gap

Total Duration: 35 minutes

Sit in a completely relaxed position. Let your body be completely relaxed.

Step 1: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Start observing your breath. Start witnessing your breath. Do not increase the length of your breathing. Just witness your normal inhaling and exhaling.

Step 2: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Next, observe only the breath that goes in. Do not bother about the outgoing breath. Witness only the breath going in.



Step 3: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now witness only the outgoing breath, not bothering about the incoming breath. Witness with your full awareness only the outgoing breath.

Step 4: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now leave everything else and start witnessing only the gap between the incoming and outgoing breath. Be aware of your breath taking the turn. Be aware only of the gap between the incoming breath and outgoing breath.

Step 5: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now be aware of the incoming breath, the gap and the outgoing breath. Be aware of all three. Feel that your whole body is rejuvenated and alive. You are in a silence that is alive and energizing. You are vibrating with high energy.

Step 6: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now witness the gap between the incoming breath and outgoing breath. Be aware only of the gap. You may feel you are not breathing at all, witness that feeling also.

Step 7: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Close your eyes and relax. Do not meditate. Just relax. Do not think actively of anything. Just let your mind settle down.

Relax and come out of the high-energy zone slowly. At the end of the five minutes, open your eyes very slowly.

2. Intelligence and energy in the neutral space between breaths

Total Duration: 30 minutes

Sit in a relaxed way. Close your eyes. Watch your breath – the incoming breath becoming the outgoing breath or the outgoing breath taking the turn into the incoming breath. Be aware of the neutral space where the breath takes the turn. This is the time when you are flooded with energy and intelligence, during the gap between inhaling and exhaling, and then again before inhaling.

Sometimes even a single desire can bring life to you. For example, you may be lying on the bed over the weekend, but you don't feel like getting up. Suddenly you may remember some friend whom you wanted to see. This single thought can bring your whole body alive. You will jump out of bed and be ready to run. Whenever you are flooded with energy, be aware that it is happening only in this neutral zone.

In the same way, when something is taken away from you and you reconcile yourself to it, you are flooded with intelligence. If you lose something, immediately you are given some message, some understanding about life, and that becomes your intelligence. Be aware when you are flooded with intelligence.

In the neutral zone, you are flooded with energy and intelligence. If you can bring your awareness to these two zones, the whole day you will be constantly flooded with energy. When you watch both the gaps of your breath, when you are aware of both the gaps, you will be constantly flooded with energy and intelligence.

If you go a little deeper, you will understand one more important thing: every moment you have both thought and energy. The whole binary system of zero and one is based on only this duality of thought and energy, energy and thought, thought and energy, energy and thought - the two are directly related.

Actually, for a moment you will be flooded with *iccha shakti*, power of desire. The next moment you will be flooded with *kriya shakti*, power of action. One moment you will be flooded with energy, the next moment you will be flooded with intelligence. Constantly these two play the game. These are also the constituents of the whole cosmos - matter and energy.

Constantly in your inner space, matter and energy are dancing. If you can be aware of the gap, you will experience the eternal consciousness.

The power of desire and action are both dancing in your inner space. If you can be aware of the gap, you will achieve the *gnana shakti* or power of wisdom. The energy is constantly enjoying itself, expressing itself in your inner space. Just be a little aware of the gap and you will be flooded with the divine consciousness.

3. Awareness of the neutral space while moving the body

Total Duration: 30 minutes

Sit straight, preferably on the ground. Close your eyes. Inhale and exhale as slowly as possible, as deeply as possible.

Step 1: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Slowly, very slowly, put your attention only on the incoming breath. Be aware of the incoming breath.

Step 2: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Now slowly, put your attention only on the outgoing breath.

Step 3: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Now forget about the incoming breath and the outgoing breath. Slowly, very slowly, put your attention between the two breaths. Just be aware of the gap, the neutral space between the breaths. Keep your attention on the gap between breaths.

Step 4: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Keep your attention between the two breaths. Relax in the neutral space. While you are in this space, in this consciousness, try to move either hand. While moving the hand, if you feel you have come out of that neutral space awareness, bring yourself back to the neutral space. Come back to the neutral space and move the hand again.

Step 5: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Being in the same neutral space, without losing it, try to stand up. If you feel you are losing the neutral space, sit down. Come back to the neutral space again. Now, without losing the awareness of the gap, try to stand up.

Let your eyes remain closed. Once you stand up, continue to be aware of the gap between the breaths. Let your attention be between the two breaths, in that neutral space. Be where there is no mind.



Step 6: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Keep your attention between the two breaths. Be aware of the neutral space. Without losing the awareness, try to move both hands very slowly. The important thing is to not lose the awareness of the gap.

Step 7: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Relax. Be centered between the two breaths. Be completely at ease in the neutral space. Be aware of the gap. Without losing the awareness, slowly move your head. The important thing is to not lose the awareness. If you feel you have lost the awareness, bring it back and then move the head.



Step 8: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Without losing the awareness, being totally centered between the two breaths, in the neutral space, try to move your feet. Be aware. Do not lose the neutral space. Be completely centered on the neutral space. If you feel you have lost the awareness, come back. Slow down. Center yourself in the neutral space. Let your attention be between the two breaths. Then, try to move your feet again.



Step 9: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Without losing the awareness, slowly, very slowly, try to open your eyes. If you feel what you are seeing takes away your awareness, close your eyes and again center yourself in that awareness. Very slowly, be in that same awareness, in that same neutral space, and again try to open your eyes. If you feel you are losing your awareness, close your eyes and bring back the awareness. Center yourself in the awareness. Keep your attention between the two breaths. Keep your attention on the neutral space.

Step 10: *Duration: 3 minutes*

Be in that same awareness and try to sit, wherever you are. If you feel you are losing the awareness, then wait, and center yourself in the awareness. Keep your attention between the two breaths and try again to sit without losing the awareness.

4. Awareness of the gap between breaths with deep devotion

Total Duration: 21 minutes

This technique is to be done with a feeling of deep devotion. You may feel deep devotion to someone, you may feel deeply connected to someone in your life like god, master, parent, friend, teacher, a leader who inspired you, a person who contributed something memorable to your life. You can remember more than one person as well, even two or three people who mean a lot to you like your beautiful mother, your wonderful master, your favorite god or your beloved friend.

Close your eyes. Sit straight. Remember all the people who create a deep devotional feeling in you, who reside in your heart, to whom you feel deeply connected, who are inspirational sources for you, to whom you turn whenever you want to spiritually rejuvenate yourself.

Remember them or remember their contribution towards your life. Feel deeply connected to them with your whole being. Feel utmost devotion to that person or being. Allow your whole being to melt with devotion.

With this deep devotion, be aware of the gaps between the incoming breath and the outgoing breath. Between every incoming and outgoing breath, the Self shines through, the Truth reveals itself. That is why bringing awareness to these gaps is emphasized so much. The possibility of awakening to the Truth is tremendous when awareness is brought to these gaps.

5. Vipassana

Vipassana means realizing the Truth step by step. There are three ways in which you can do *vipassana*:

Deep awareness of your body, your actions, your mind, your heart

Duration: anytime, anywhere

When you walk, when you move your hand, when you smile, do it all with awareness. Know perfectly well that it is you who is doing that action. Be alert. Not a single

moment or movement should pass in an unconscious state. Not a single action should happen in your body without your awareness.

Just like your body, watch your heart and mind. Be aware of every emotion that rises in your heart. Be aware of every thought that passes in and out of your mind. Don't have opinions, don't evaluate anything. Just be a witness.

Watch your breathing

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Feel your belly rise and fall with every inhalation and exhalation. The navel, the source of your life energy, is in the region of the belly. So when you pay attention to the navel, you become aware of the flow of life energy in your body. As you become more aware of the belly, you will see that your heart and mind fall silent!

Watch the breath as it enters your body – at the nostrils

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Be aware of the cool air in the nostrils. Feel the ease with which the breath enters and leaves the nostrils.

Vipassana can be practiced both sitting and walking.

Sitting

Total Duration: 60 minutes

Sit in a comfortable position, spine erect, facing straight ahead. Keep your eyes closed and breathe normally. Stay still without shifting positions.

Watch the rise and fall of the belly when breathing in and out. Don't concentrate on the breath, but calmly observe it. If you find other thoughts, feelings or



physical sensations coming up, allow them. Witness them also momentarily and then return to watching the breath.

It is the process of watching that is important, not what you are watching. Witness everything.

Do this for 45 minutes and rest for 15 minutes.

Walking

Total Duration: 30 minutes

Here your awareness is totally on your feet as they touch the ground.

You can walk in a circle or in a straight line of about fifteen steps, going back or forth. You can practice this meditation simply going from room to room in your house, or out in your garden.

The eyes should be lowered and focused on the ground, on the feet. Just as you watch the belly in sitting meditation, watch and be aware here of the contact of each foot with the ground. If other thoughts and sensations come up, allow them. Nothing is to be seen as a distraction. When you have finished witnessing the sensation or the thought, go back to watching your feet.

Do this for 20 minutes and rest for 10 minutes.



Powerful instant meditations

1. Acceptance

Accept completely the inevitability of the present and future moments. You will experience deep restfulness that you can't even imagine.

Total Duration: 21 minutes

Sit straight in a very relaxed way. Close your eyes and continue sitting in this relaxed way without moving the body. Body movements will create thoughts. So if your body is stable without movement, it can take you to the deeper silence.

Very consciously, with a strong decision, intensely, create an intention that you are accepting yourself just as you are this very moment, in the outer world and the inner world.

Tell yourself, 'I have enough in the outer world - many wonderful possessions. I have enough in the inner world - many positive qualities. I am accepting myself completely. There is no need to develop myself in the outer world or the inner world. If I have ego, it is okay. If I have guilt, it is okay. If I have fear, it is okay. If I have greed, it is okay. Whatever others have told me about myself is also okay. I accept everything, right or wrong. I accept everything.'

Whatever objection your mind raises, 'No, no, no, I don't want to accept this or that,' at least accept totally that you are not able to accept whatever it might be. Accept that also!

Accept the present moment. Accept all the future moments. Whatever your mind imagines as the worst possible thing that can happen in your life, accept even that possibility for yourself. If it happens, you cannot avoid it anyway. It is inevitable. Understand the inevitability and accept it. The moment you can accept yourself completely, there will not be any further thought. The mind will be silent. Enjoy that silence!

2. Just stop!

This is a very powerful technique to strongly bring your awareness to the present moment.

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Just Stop! was used widely by enlightened master George Gurdjieff.

Just as you have the impulse to do something, stop. Your cunningness is also one more impulse - one more impulse for your survival. You always think you will survive only if you are cunning and constantly on guard. Now suspend that cunningness. Be innocent and trusting.

Second step, whenever you have an impulse like hunger, anger, thirst or sneezing or any other urge to act, when it is about to happen or when you are about to act, just stop. Move to the space of 'being' from the space of 'doing'.



3. Meditate on emotional memories

Be free from the suffering of emotional memories

Duration: Not applicable

Whenever you are stuck with some emotional memory, sit with it and meditate on it, consciously going into it. Whether it is fear or love or greed, go fully into it. Slowly, your inner space will be disconnected, purified from that emotional memory. As long as there is any energy or charge attached to that memory, continue to meditate on it. You will soon go beyond the memory and enter your inner space.

When you reclaim your inner space, you will be able to fall in love with the Whole, your heart will melt effortlessly. If you practice this a few times, you will see the Truth.



4. Change – the unchanging phenomenon

Become aware that the unchanging consciousness is the ultimate reality.

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Understand the change that is happening and consume the change through the change. You will find the ultimate unchanging consciousness.

You are constantly changing eternal energy. Let you consume the constantly changing external world. Let the changing internal world swallow the changing external world. Let the chaos swallow the chaos. Let the chaos be covered by chaos. Let the chaos be filled by chaos. Become centered in the peaceful, deep, restful awareness.

Next, as a hen mothers her chicks, decide: I will mother this understanding of consuming change by change. Visualize constantly your internal changing mind, swallowing, grabbing the external changing world.

Whatever you do, trusting your internal world or your external world is going to involve trusting chaos. For example, you may think, 'I need this beautiful, flowering plant in the corner of my house,' and you set about organizing for that plant to be in the corner of your house. By the time you get the plant in position and start enjoying it, your whole state of mind would have changed. You may decide the plant belongs in a completely different spot! This is a very common experience.

Another example: say you decide to move. By the time you locate and buy the new house, suddenly you realize that you don't want that house after all. Instead, you want to live in an apartment, or in the ashram!

Everything is constantly changing. Realize the internal changing reality and let it grab or swallow the external changing world. Then nothing will touch you.

Now you are trying to fix this or that. It is like trying to travel in two boats. You put one foot in one boat, another foot in another boat. You are trying to balance between these two boats. But this approach will never work. Just jump in and start flowing, start swimming with the current!



When you understand that both the internal and external are constantly changing, then consume this change through the change, and mother this understanding in your heart. You will see that the unchanging consciousness is the ultimate reality.

When you mother this understanding, you will experience tremendous strength. You will find that sincerity and intensity will be added to your life, to your being. When that sincerity and intensity gets added to you, it means you are living enlightenment!

Living enlightenment means living authentically. Living enlightenment means mothering authentic experiences, mothering authentic knowledge and authentic action.

5. Feel the aliveness inside and outside you

Experience an expanded consciousness



Duration: 21 minutes

Close your eyes. Take a few moments to settle down, being very patient.

You are going to consciously practice awareness. First, start with the chair you are sitting on because it is the nearest object to you. Visualize you are alive inside the chair. Feel you are alive inside the chair you

are sitting on in the same way you feel alive inside your own skin. However much you feel alive inside your skin, feel that alive inside the chair. The same life is radiating in the chair that is radiating inside your skin.

Feel the persons sitting around you, and feel alive inside each of them. Take a few moments to visualize with clear intention that you are alive in each and every person. Feel you are alive in everything - the walls, furniture, people, flowers, room, and even the floor.

6. Hollow bamboo

This is a beautiful ‘emptiness meditation’. Empty out whatever is inside you, and be ready to receive the energy of the Divine. Become the Divine.

Duration: 21 minutes

Sit still in a calm, silent place. Just become aware of your body. Feel completely at ease with your body.

Now imagine that your body has become a hollow bamboo. Your whole body, your skin, your flesh, your bones, are all part of the bamboo. Inside this space, there is nothing but emptiness, hollowness, and silence.

Let your mind be passive. Don’t wait for any experience, just be.

Suddenly you will find energy pouring into you. When you make yourself hollow, when you no longer resist, the divine energy starts flowing into you. You become a flute for the music of the divine. If you are working with a master, become a hollow flute upon which the master can play.

At first you will be a hollow bamboo, then the bamboo itself disappears... and you become the divine! There is no more ‘you’.

7. Looking through the mirror at yourself

Continuously energize and revitalize yourself

Duration: 10 minutes

Stand before a full-length mirror and look at yourself. Take a good look at yourself from the outside. You are the subject, and the reflection in the mirror is the object of your attention. You will feel your energy flowing towards the object. You are looking, and your reflection is being looked at.

Now imagine a reversal of roles. Imagine that your reflection is looking at you. This can be frightening at first. You are not used to thinking of your reflection in that way, as someone who can observe you.

Even if the feeling is strange and frightening, keep at it. In just a few moments, you will feel a great change. You will feel the energy flowing from your reflection towards you. You have now closed the circuit. By closing the energy circuit, you have ensured that the energy is not wasted, it is flowing back towards you. You are conserving your own energy for yourself.

Practice this technique for a few days, and you will feel a definite change. You will be more energetic, more centered, more at peace with yourself and with others.

You can practice this throughout the day, not just with the mirror and your reflection. Try it with anything or anyone you focus attention on. When you have passed your energy to something or someone, imagine it is returning the energy to you. You will feel the energy flowing back towards you, rejuvenating you, revitalizing you! You can even try this with the computer you work with all day!

8. Limb relaxation

This is one of the fastest techniques for instant relaxation.

Duration: as little as two minutes – longer if time allows

If a private space is available, practice this technique lying down. Otherwise, just make yourself as comfortable as possible.

Close your eyes. Take a big, deep breath. You are going to be holding your breath, so breathe in as deeply as possible.

Holding the breath inside you, start clenching or tensing your limbs one at a time. Start with your feet and ankles, then move upwards to your calves, your knees,

then tense your bottom. As you move upwards, do not loosen the previously clenched part of the body.

Now move up to your waist, then to your stomach. Tense your stomach muscles as tightly as possible. Automatically, your groin muscles will also get tensed.

Next, move upwards to your chest and back. Tense all the vertebrae along your back. Tense your arms and hands, starting from your fingers and moving up to your biceps. Tense your shoulder blades, your neck and throat muscles. Especially hold the tension in your neck muscles.



Move to your face. Your face has more muscles than you are aware of. Tense the muscles in your mouth, nostrils, eyes, eyebrows, forehead and cheeks. Squeeze your eyelids shut. Clench your teeth. Screw your whole face into a tight ball. Remember not to relax the rest of your body during this time.



Stay in this state of tension for as long as you can. When you can't hold your breath any more, expel it in one big gush, simultaneously relaxing your body utterly.

Stay in this state of physical and mental relaxation for a minute. This technique relaxes both the body and mind and refreshes you in just two minutes. If time allows, repeat the process three times.

9. I Am

Be thrown back into yourself – and glimpse who you truly are!

Duration: anytime, anywhere

This is a technique to be aware of your self at every moment, in every action. All you have to do is remember yourself, remember *I am* - when you are eating, drinking,

walking, talking. Be aware that *I am* and discover within your self an ever-living current.

All your entertainment is nothing but trying to forget yourself. Do not try to forget yourself. Trying to forget yourself will only add more and more difficulty to your life.

Whatever you know about yourself or whatever was taught to you about you, try to relax from it. Just remember *I am*.

Self-remembering is not thinking, it is simply awareness. If you think *I am*, you have missed the point. That is what we usually end up doing – repeating the words, *I am, I am*. The words are not the experience. Don't verbalize. Just feel, *I am*. You don't have to think about your body, your mind, your status or your position, no thinking is needed.

When you are walking, stop for a moment and be aware that *you exist*. When you touch something, just feel the sensation. When someone touches you, feel the touch, and feel the one who is being touched – that is you. Your consciousness will become sharper.

Carry this awareness with you everywhere. Be aware that you are experiencing the sun on your face, the wind in your hair. Be aware of the one who is experiencing. Just feel, *I am*. For a moment, you will be thrown back into yourself. You will catch a glimpse of deep silence, of reality.



10. Just sit

Glimpse the state of no-mind

Duration: 21 minutes

This meditation is drawn from Zen. The Zen word ‘*zazen*’ means ‘just sitting’. The most difficult thing is to just sit, doing nothing! Your mind will come up with all kinds of arguments, reasons, or excuses for not doing this technique.

It will try to convince you that it is a sheer waste of time. If you persist, the mind will become sleepy, it will daydream, it may even start hallucinating.

The whole purpose of this meditation is to let the mind play all the tricks it wants. One day the mind is simply going to get fed up with playing these tricks on you. The mind will eventually realize that it can no longer control you with its games. Then the mind will simply drop of its own accord.

For this meditation, you can sit anywhere you will not be disturbed. If there is too much movement, it might disturb or distract you. Find a comfortable posture in which you feel you can stay without moving for at least half an hour. Use a mat or cushion if required. When the body is unmoving, the mind also falls still.

Keep your spine straight. Use support if required, but try to do without it. Rest one palm inside the other, with the thumbs touching to form a circle.

Watching nature is a good choice. Even from indoors, you can watch the sky through the window. Or you could sit facing a plain, white wall. Or you could simply face a corner of the room.

Don't focus your attention on anything. Let your eyes be half-open and unfocused, with your attention diffused. Let your gaze rest softly in the distance. This will relax you. Let your breathing be relaxed and natural.

Remain alert and aware. Be receptive without allowing your attention to focus on any particular thing. Be present in the moment, moment to moment.

In the beginning it will be difficult to just sit, doing nothing. But in a few days you will start enjoying this tremendously. Layer by layer, you can actually begin to feel the mind drop. Finally, one day the moment will come when the mind drops altogether. You will glimpse the state of no-mind.

11. Awareness while eating, drinking...

Increase your awareness

Duration: whenever eating or drinking

Normally we don't chew and eat food, we just gulp it down our throats. We hardly taste the food.



Now whenever you eat, eat with awareness. Taste it completely. Become the taste. When you really feel the sweetness of the food, you can feel it not only in the mouth but also in your entire body.

While drinking water, feel the coolness of the water as it goes down your throat and into your stomach. Close your eyes and drink it slowly, enjoying every sip. Feel the coolness intensely, not only in the mouth but also in the entire body.



13. Say ‘yes’

Soften, melt, surrender – to the higher intelligence

Duration: anytime, anywhere



If you notice, almost all the time, you like to say ‘no’ – it gives a solid feeling to your personality, your ego. Saying ‘no’ makes you feel you are somebody. Saying ‘yes’ makes the ego feel inferior, subservient to someone.

Now try to exactly reverse this. Decide for the next twenty-four hours, you will start with saying ‘yes’ in every situation. Watch how the ‘no’ just jumps up at the slightest incentive. In any situation, your mind will feel like saying ‘no.’ Now watch the ‘no’ begin to rise, and drop it. Consciously say ‘yes.’

You will feel yourself soften and melt, and you will experience a new ease within you. Others will also feel that you are a much softer and more open person.

14. Watch your body and mind and relax

Relax from any tension. Feel love for anything that you do.

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Be aware of your day-to-day actions every minute. Be consciously relaxed whatever you may be doing. Consciously relax from any tension that you hold in any part of the body.

Accept yourself just as you are. Accept and welcome every moment for the gift of life it has brought you.

Whatever you are doing, do it with love and joy. Be total and authentic in whatever you do and feel. The very quality of your 'being' and 'doing' will change.

15. Are you there?

Jump to the present!

Duration: at bedtime or anytime, anywhere

Ask yourself, 'Are you there?'

As soon as you consciously ask yourself this, the thinking will stop. Now, reply to your question, 'yes.' It will directly bring your awareness to the present!

You can try this particularly before going to sleep. Otherwise, anytime and any number of times is okay.



16. Beyond words

Learn to experience, beyond what words can describe. You will experience the real beauty of Existence. Then life becomes eternally joyful.

Duration: anytime, anywhere

Look at things without bringing in any words.

When you are looking at a flower, just look. Do not verbalize out loud or even silently, saying for instance, 'Beautiful rose!' Just see, being fully aware. That is

really looking at the rose. Only then you can truly relate with the rose. Only then the rose reveals its reality to you.

Look at the moon in the night sky. Drink in the moon. Just watch, don't think how beautiful it is, or that you know it is the moon or anything of that sort.

Sometimes you can look at your own self in the mirror. Look intensely at yourself in the mirror. Just watch, just witness. You will see how beautiful Existence and its creations really are, and how your words reduce everything to mundane matters.

17. Criticism

Criticize properly!

Duration: anytime, anywhere

When you feel you want to criticize some person, try this.

Before criticizing, discover a positive alternative for whatever criticism you wish to give the person. If you are not able to find a positive alternative, wait. It is useless to give a non-constructive feedback to someone. Get the positive alternative and then present the problem as well as the suggested solution to the person. Then your criticism will be useful and constructive.

18. External and internal wandering

Witness the wandering and relax into the real you

Duration: 21 minutes

Close your eyes. Sit in a very relaxed way.

There is no need to control the mind.

If your mind is going somewhere outside, dwelling on things other than you, it is called external wandering. Just remember you are there and your mind is wandering. The moment you remember *you*, you will remember your name, or some idea about you, that is internal wandering.

Watch the external and internal wandering. Any idea that comes about you, inside you, is also a wandering, an internal wandering. Witness these wanderings, relax even from them. If you are disturbed by thoughts, come back. Again remember the external wandering and internal wandering. Relax, and just be aware of the external wandering and the internal wandering.

Bringing awareness continuously to that which is not you, but which you are thinking is you, will bring a glimpse of the true you, which is the macrocosm, the whole cosmos.

19. Keep everything out

Put all knowing aside and experience the ultimate freedom

Duration: 10 minutes

Keep everything out of your inner space - whatever you heard, saw or read. Keep everything out, and see what happens to your inner space. If any thought appears, just know that it does not belong in your inner space. Either the thought came from someone else, or it is a byproduct of some other thought or thoughts that came inside your inner space earlier.

All teachings, ideas, concepts that you heard - keep everything in the outer space. Let your inner space be empty. If you try this method for a few moments, you will catch the knack of how to practice this technique.

At least once in a day, try to keep everything out for just ten minutes, you will see the tremendous peace and silence happening inside you.

Have the clear intention that you will keep outside your inner space, all the teachings, concepts and words put inside your head, including this teaching of keeping everything out! Allow no word, no teaching, no concepts, no lies, no truths, no purity or impurity. Let you be in that ultimate freedom, let you be relieved from the stress and the concepts put in your head. Rediscover the silence, the emptiness that is your true nature, which you lost somehow.

20. Handling enemies

Remain unperturbed by so-called enemies

Duration: twenty-four hours

Bring the image of your enemies to mind. The moment you bring their image, you will experience hatred and so many words will come up – words, which you wanted to tell them but didn't have a chance to, or perhaps you were never courageous enough to tell them. Sometimes, even when you have the chance, you have so many words you want to say, but you forget half of them in the heat of the moment.



So bring the image of your enemy now, and when these words and feelings swell up inside you, just breathe deeply, then settle down, and relax.

Continue to hold the image in your inner space, let the mind shout whatever it wants to shout. After a few minutes you will see, not only the number of words you want to shout comes down, but you will also start looking into your problems with more clarity.

Just holding in silence the image of the person for whom you have so much hatred in your inner space will bring down the enmity, the violence and the vengeance.

Suddenly, you will see there is no longer any violence inside you. Even when you see the person directly, that fear stroke or the fire will not happen. You are relaxed, you are able to handle things calmly. This is a silent catharsis to get over intense hatred or enmity towards any person.

For the rest of the day, whomever you see, whether it is your friend or enemy, try to maintain your body heat as it is. Try to keep the number of thoughts inside you as it is. Relax and do not become agitated, come back to your center. You will see so many new dimensions open in you, and you will be able to carry a deep silence throughout the day, the silence you experienced in the meditation.

21. Beyond bondage and freedom

Just as you see the one sun reflected on the water as many suns, in the same way see the one real Source and be free from all types of bondage.

Duration: 11 minutes

If you keep ten water pots outside in the sun, you will see the reflection of the sun as ten suns in the ten water pots. If you break every pot one by one, the number of suns will come down. Suddenly if you break the last pot, there is no reflection at all, only the sun. There is only one sun, but there are so many reflections in the water. In the same way, there is only one superconsciousness, one Source, having many reflections in all of us!

So many suns are seen in the water. But when you look for the source, you will see only one sun. There are innumerable reflections of that one source. Study any one reflection, and when you look to see from where it is being reflected, you will always find the source.

Each of you is also a reflection. Your body-mind is like a mirror, and the Divine is superconsciousness. That exact spot where the superconsciousness, the Source, touches your body-mind or the mirror, is what we call your individual consciousness. There may be so many individual consciousness, but if you trace the Source, you will reach the same superconsciousness. There are many suns reflected in the water, but the source is one.

The whole universe is the reflection of many body-minds and all the reflections have one Source.

When you understand that the whole universe is a reflection of all the body-minds, your effort or intention or need to do something will simply disappear!

If you understand that all the reflections have the same one Source, you can relax in the peace.



22. Contemplate beyond perception

Experience the bliss of no-mind

Duration: 10 minutes

The moment you perceive anything, the moment you are able to think about it, it becomes past.

For example, in the beginning, when you are told to think of something that is beyond your thoughts, you may think of the entire solar system. But the moment you think about the entire solar system, you have already made that into one more thought! So now, drop that.

Next, try to think beyond. You might think about the galaxy, beyond the solar system. When you are able to think of the galaxy, then drop that thought. Go beyond the galaxy. When you continuously expand your mind to go beyond, you will be in the present moment.

Understand, the moment you are able to grasp something and think about it, you have already made it into the past, into your property. Your mind can flourish there. So think further and further beyond what you can think. Even if you are thinking about what you can't think about, drop that. The mind will always try to grasp everything and keep it in storage, so it can eat slowly and ruminate, just like a bull! So do not bring the things that you have already grasped back into the mind. Continuously drop them.

Whatever you think is the ultimate in your life, drop it, and expand your thinking to something bigger. Then again your mind will automatically grasp something else. But don't allow your mind to hold that idea, drop it also. Continuously your mind will say, 'If I am dropping every moment, then what will happen to me? Where will it end?'

Don't bother about this ending. Your mind is just trying to grasp onto something by asking you this question. Your mind is asking you to prove the result before even starting the practice. Do not allow it. That is where you get cheated. Understand, you constantly keep dropping each boundary, each thought, and expanding, going beyond.

Meditate on the real master, or the real cosmos or the real god. You may think you have grasped the essence of god, but it can never be, because your mind can never grasp the real god! If your mind can grasp god, it means your mind is greater than god. So what you grasped is not god, it is just your *idea* of god. Drop the idea and try again. Grasp something bigger than that.

Continuously try to grasp the ultimate truth. Understand, when you throw a particular idea from your mind, not only do you throw that idea, you also pick up one part of the bone structure from your mind and throw it out. Every time you pick up some thoughts from your mind and throw them out, not only the thoughts are discarded, but one part of the bone structure of your mind is also thrown away. So after discarding and discarding, finally there will not be any bone structure left! Suddenly you will see your whole mind has been thrown out! You will experience the bliss of no-mind.

23. Withdraw your senses

Experience your inner space

Duration: 5 minutes a day or 1-2 minutes, five times a day



This is an anytime meditation. Initially you may not be able to do this meditation for five minutes at a time. You can reduce the time to one or two minutes, but try to do it five times per day. You can try once in the morning before breakfast, once before lunch, once before dinner, and also twice between meal times.

Wear loose clothing; let nothing touch your body.

Close your eyes and mouth tightly. Now close your ears with your hands. Stop all sensations coming in through the eyes, ears, mouth and sense of touch. Naturally, the thoughts that you already have inside will start coming up, such as what happened yesterday, what

happened the day before, what needs to be done tomorrow. All these thoughts will start running through your mind. Do not bother about them. They will not have

life for more than three *kshanas*, the time gap between one thought and the next. I repeat, they will have life only for a maximum of three *kshanas*.

Unless new information goes through your senses and the process happens, the processing system cannot continue for more than three *kshanas*. You may be thinking, 'No, no, I can sit and visualize forever.' No! In that case, you must be allowing input through the senses. You must block the sense organs, it is especially important to lock the tongue. Within three *kshanas*, three or four thoughts may come. The fifth thought cannot happen.

It is important to allow the breathing to be natural during this process. Just sit for a few moments. Suddenly you will see there is a space where there are no thoughts.

Even if you experience that thoughtless rest for two or three seconds, it will give you so much energy that you will feel you had eight to ten hours of sleep!

It is a very strong and powerful method. Try this practice five times per day. Within five to six days, if not sooner, you will catch the glimpse.

Actually your inner space is not so difficult to contact. It is, after all, *your* inner space. It is just that we neither had the technique, nor the patience, nor the inspiration to try, that's all. That is why the moment you have the knowledge about the truth, half of the work is done. The remaining half is just relaxing and experiencing it.

Sound

There is a music that permeates Existence – an unstruck sound. There are many techniques that help you hear this sound. When you can hear this sound, you have heard the music of Existence!

1. Follow the source of the sound

Merge with the very source of everything

Total Duration: 20 minutes



Close your eyes. Just inhale and exhale as slowly as possible.

Step 1: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now start creating the sound, the vibration ‘ooooommm’ intensely but not loudly. Create it from your navel center.

Step 2: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now continue to create the sound as before, but begin seeking the source. Continue to create the vibration but locate the source from where the vibrations are arising, from where the sound is coming. Go into the source, search for the source.

Step 3: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Just enter the sound. Enter this source from where the sound is coming, from where it is arising. Then, slowly reduce the sound. Don’t stop, but just reduce the sound, as you enter into the source from where the sound is coming. Become the sound.

Step 4: *Duration: 5 minutes*

Now relax with your eyes closed. Don’t create any sound, but go to the source from where the sound was coming. Enter into that source. Just be with the memory of that sound.

2. Music

Listen to the unstruck sound and transform

Duration: 21 minutes

This technique needs a piece of soft music to be played.

Close your eyes and sit in a very relaxed way.

(Turn on the music)

Concentrate on the spot inside your head where you experience sound. Understand, sound may be created outside your head but you experience it only inside your head. The hearing happens only inside your head. Remember that spot, remember that space where you experience sound. Completely concentrate on that space,

feel that spot where you listen, where you hear the sounds of the music that is playing.

Do not make any judgments about the music. Don't think it is either good or bad. Don't start thinking about all the music you have heard earlier. Don't start comparing this music with some other music. Don't start thinking about any other musicians you have heard until now.

Forget about all other senses. Forget about seeing, touching, tasting, smelling, just forget about everything else. Be filled with the space of listening. Feel the space where you experience sound inside your head.

Listen to this music, not from outside but from inside your head. Be in that space and feel the music. Do not allow any thinking.

Don't go away from the music. Go into the music. Along with the notes there is a center sound, a rhythm, the backbone of the music. Try to feel that center, that backbone of the music, you will relax into the base rhythm of the music.

Just listen every moment to the composite central sound, the backbone, that central thread of the music. Go into it.

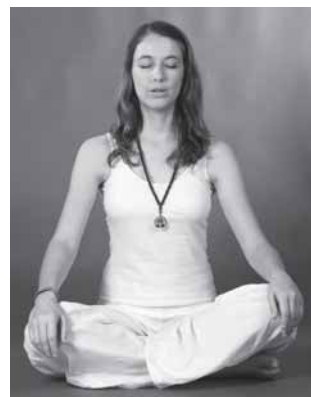
Feel the vibration of the sound inside your head. Again, no thinking is allowed. Don't move away from the present moment. Be in the present moment, be in that music.

Play with this technique whenever you find time alone at home. Play some music and enter into that music, don't start thinking. Give the music your total attention. Now, you understand the difference between listening to music as you normally do, and listening meditatively. Play with this technique as time allows for at least a month. It can cause a powerful transformation in you.

3. Omkaara

Enter into the thoughtless zone

Duration: 21 minutes



Close your eyes and just sit in a relaxed way.

Step 1: *Duration: 11 minutes*

Concentrate on the navel center, *manipuraka chakra* (a vital energy center in the body, located in the navel area). Just take a few moments to place your awareness on the navel center. Forget all other parts of the body, remember only the navel center.

Now from your navel, start creating the deep vibration of *Omkaara* or 'Om' sound. Start the sound from your navel center, as deeply as possible. Don't allow the mind to go anywhere else. Just be centered on the sound, go into the center of the sound.

Step 2: *Duration: 10 minutes*

Stop. Just sit quietly for a few minutes with eyes closed. Try to hear the sound without creating the sound.

Relax and open your eyes.

Try this meditation for just ten days. You will see that you are able to sit without thoughts. You will be filled by the sound, by the vibration that you create, and your mind will not move outside the vibration.

4. Anahata Dhvani

Feel the energy flowing in your body. Become completely energized.

Duration: 21 minutes



Close your eyes and use both your thumbs to close your ears. Close them completely so that you hear that uncreated sound inside you called the *anahata dhvani*. It is the unstruck sound of the cosmos that can only be heard by one who meditates.

Let your whole inner space be filled by the unheard sound. Once you feel your whole

body is filled with that unheard sound, just contract your rectum and stop all the movements. Remain like this for as long as you can.

When your body relaxes, take your hands away and relax completely for a few moments. Until your body relaxes itself, don't give up! Try your best to hold on as long as possible.

If your body relaxes, take a few minutes break and start the process again by closing your eyes and ears, hearing the unstruck sound, contracting the rectum, and relaxing when appropriate.

Do not repeat this process more than five times. After every repetition, take at least thirty or forty seconds to relax. Let your eyes be closed even during the break. After you have finished the meditation, just sit for few moments with eyes closed, and experience the energy flow happening throughout the body. Relax into it.

5. The sound of your name

Enter into enlightenment

Duration: 10 minutes

Close your eyes and just sit. First, choose the word or words with which you are going to work. If you have a spiritual name (given by your master), that is best, or choose the god or the master with whom you feel deeply connected.

If you have a Sanskrit spiritual name, this technique can be really powerful. Understand, Sanskrit is not just a language of communication, its phonetics also have a vibrational value. This means that the actual sounds of the words have a purifying effect on both the speaker and the listener. Your name is your unique *mantra* or chant. Chanting or just listening to the *mantras* revealed by enlightened masters will simply create the effect in you of what the *mantra* stands for, what your name stands for.

Enter into the sound of the chosen name. Understand: do not repeat it out loud, just repeat it internally. The chanting should happen internally and you should just enter into that vibration. Your tongue should not move.

Create the sound of the name like a vibration, and keep repeating that sound, that

name, internally. Be filled with that sound. Let your whole inner space be filled with that sound.

Repeat the sound intensely and at a high frequency. No other thought should rise in your mind.

You will see, suddenly you are in soundless space. You are in wordlessness.

Just play with this technique for one month, practice it every morning for ten minutes and again, in the evening for ten minutes. Even while you are driving, this can be done with open eyes. Try it while you are driving, walking, or sitting and spending a few minutes with yourself.

You will understand the power of this special mantra for you, just this one sound. Suddenly you will see new doors opening in your consciousness, and you will enter into the soundlessness that we call enlightenment.

6. Center of the sound storm

Find the center of all sound within you, and transcend all sound

Duration: 21 minutes

We always live in a storm of sound. Sounds are constantly moving towards us, crashing in upon us, engulfing us. But at the center of this sound storm, there is a silence we haven't heard. This meditation makes us aware of the silence in the center of this storm of sound.

Sit down somewhere, anywhere. The noisier the place, the better! Look for a place with continuous sound. It could be a natural sound, like the gushing of a river or a waterfall or the crashing of the waves on a beach or it could be a railway station, or a marketplace.

Sit silently. Feel the sounds coming at you from every direction as sound waves. With sounds flowing at you from all directions, feel yourself to be at the center of this storm of sound. You are at the center, and sounds are flowing towards you.

Feel clearly, at the center, where you are, that there is no sound! At the center is total silence. If there were sound at the center, you would not be able to hear the

sounds outside. The sounds are entering you, penetrating you, but they stop at the center.

Inside you, there is a point where all sounds stop. It is from that point that every sound is being heard. Try to locate that center.

When you locate it, suddenly, your awareness will turn inward from the outer world of sound. You will be at the center where there is silence, the point where no sound can enter. That point is your center.

Once you have heard that silence, you will never again be disturbed by any sound, you will never be touched by sound.

We always think that we are hearing sounds with our ears. With this technique, you discover that sounds are not heard in the ears or even in the head. The sound is always heard at the navel point, that is the center of sound.

You cannot try this technique with songs because the lyrics will have meaning for you, and you will focus on the meaning. So it needs to be just some noise.

7. From sound to feeling

Feel bliss through sound

Total Duration: 21 minutes

Close your eyes. Sit in a relaxed way.

Step 1: *Duration: 10 minutes*

First choose the sound with which you are going to work. It can be anything, so decide which sound gives you most excitement and joy.

Create that sound out loud and enjoy the feeling created by it. In a mild way, you should be able to create that sound, listen and enjoy the feeling. Just continuously create that sound and enjoy the feeling. Be centered on that feeling.

Step 2: *Duration: 11 minutes*

Now don't give any volume to the sound you are creating. Repeat it internally with just your tongue movement. Keep repeating the sound internally with just the

tongue movement, and experience the feeling. Be centered more on the feeling than the sound itself. Be centered on the excitement created by that sound.

Visualization

1. Visualize the light

Go beyond the fear of death and live in eternal bliss

Duration: twenty-four hours a day, for 21 days

Visualize that you are light, that there is nothing else inside and outside. There is nobody, no world, there is only intense light. Visualize this from the moment you wake up until the moment you fall asleep, whatever you may be doing.

Slowly, after a few days, it will start penetrating even your sleep and dreaming states. In dreaming also, you will remember yourself as light. Even in deep sleep, you will remember yourself as light. You will be an eternal, shining light.

This technique is so powerful it will give you the clear experience that you will never die! Light never dies. If you think you are matter, you will always have the fear you will cease to be one day. If you realize you are light, the fear of death will disappear!

2. The lotus thread of light

Allow the intelligence, energy and enlightenment to awaken in you.

Duration: 21 minutes

Mentally scan your spine so that you will be able to visualize it easily in this meditation.

In the center, alongside the spine is a flow of energy like a slender thread, and that is what we call *sushumna nadi**. It runs from the base of the spine to the crown, passing through each of the seven vital energy centers in our body called the *chakras*.

The *ida nadi** another slender thread, begins and ends on the left of the *sushumna nadi**, and the *pingala nadi**, a third slender thread, begins and ends on the right of the *sushumna nadi*. The *ida** and *pingala** spiral around the *sushumna*, crossing each other at every energy center, and all three meet midway between the eyebrows.

Whenever your energy is being sucked by the intellect, the *ida nadi** will be active, and the subtle energy of your system will be flowing upwards. Whenever your energy is being sucked by the sexual center, the *pingala nadi** will be active, and the energy will be flowing downwards. When enlightenment is activated in you, the central *sushumna nadi* will be activated, and your intelligence will be awakened!

All your intellectual thoughts suck the energy upward. All your thoughts of comfort or pleasure suck your energy downward. Now you are going to put your energy in the *sushumna*, the center, so that your enlightenment or intelligence is awakened.

Sit straight and close your eyes.

Let your spine be erect. Visualize your spine to be just like a lotus thread, a small thread from the root of your spinal cord to the top of the head, the crown area. Visualize a thin thread of light in the center of the spine, running continuously from the base of your spine to the crown of your head.

Put your attention on this thread of light. Just see the energy flowing from your root to the crown through this *sushumna nadi*. Let your whole awareness be centered on your *sushumna nadi*.

Try this technique for at least twenty-one minutes for ten days. In just ten or eleven

Sushumna nadi - One of the three major *nadis*, energy pathways in the body arising from the root energy center and ending in the crown center. The central pathway of the *kundalini* energy.

Ida nadi - Energy pathway arising from the root energy center and ending at the left nostril. Feminine, cool, represents the moon.

Pingala nadi - Energy pathway arising from the root energy center and ending in the right nostril. Hot, masculine, represents the sun.

Kirlian photography - High voltage photograms used to record auras of living beings.

days, you will experience the intelligence, the energy, the enlightenment, awakening in you!

3. Become empty

Become light and be in the present

Duration: 21 minutes

Sit and be as relaxed as possible. Do not put your weight on the spinal cord. You can support yourself with your hands.

Visualize energy leaving your body through your eyes, nose, tongue, ears and other sense organs. You are becoming completely empty.

Visualize that you have now become empty. Feel that you have become empty. Whatever you thought of as you is already gone. You are completely empty.

When you feel you are completely empty, stop visualizing. Be a witness. Witness your thoughts and the gap between your thoughts. Do not create any thought or destroy any thought. Just witness the thoughts and the gaps flowing in you.

4. Cleaning the inner screen

This is a powerful meditation technique for looking in and understanding that you are something more than the body.

Duration: 21 minutes

Whenever you look in, you see only the movie of the outer world on the inner screen. So, first we need to clean the inner screen.

Close your eyes. Sit straight. Inhale and exhale as slowly and as deeply as possible.

Visualize your inner screen as a blackboard. Whatever appears on that inner blackboard, start visually wiping it away. Just as an eraser is used to clean a blackboard, in the same way just wipe clean the inner blackboard or inner screen.

Now, visualize the number '3' on your inner screen. Visualize it very clearly and then wipe it away slowly.

Next, visualize the number '2' on your inner screen, and then wipe it away slowly.

Then, visualize the number '1' and wipe it away slowly in the same way.

Now, repeat this whole process, starting once more with the number '3', then the number '2', and lastly the number '1'.

Next, just witness the empty screen. Do not create, maintain or destroy any thought. Just witness the empty screen.

Continue to be with yourself for a few moments.

When you look at your inner being without the movie of the outer world, not only what you are seeing will become different, even the seer will become different. In the outer world, the seer and the seen are two different things. In the inner world, the seer and the seen are both one and the same.

5. From words to feeling to being

Touch the inner space of vibrant silence

Duration: 21 days

This technique requires that you first cleanse your inner space.

Cleansing technique

Close your eyes. Sit and look into yourself. First, honestly examine all aspects of your life. Ask yourself exactly in how many areas of your life have you built your identity based on lies? When have you uttered words or made promises, knowing that you are not going to live up to them or not going to fulfill them?

No matter how painful it is, do this process honestly. Do not avoid facing yourself honestly. See this as a wonderful chance for self-analysis for introspection. At least be able to admit to yourself where you have constructed your identity based on lies.

Now, for the next 21 days, do not utter any word that you do not mean. Do not use any word or make any promise, knowing that you can't keep your word. Do not think that no one else can pin you down or corner you. Be absolutely straightforward

in all your relationships and interactions. Then this technique will work beautifully for you.

Main Technique

Visualize a word like 'love', 'joy' or 'bliss'. Even negative words are okay. So, positive or negative, just choose a word to visualize.

Visualize the word. First visualize it with letters. For instance, for love, visualize L-O-V-E.

Next, drop the visualization of the letters. Repeat that word internally just as a sound. Hear the sound.

Then relax from the sound also. Just be with the feeling of that word. Only remember the feeling, neither the letters nor the sound, just the feeling. Put your whole awareness on the feeling.

Now relax even from the feeling. Just be silent. Do not create a thought of the letter or the sound or the feeling. Just be with yourself.

This is a powerful technique that can straightaway transform you and put you in silence, in bliss.

6. Weightless – technique 2

Transcend the gross body and enter into subtle consciousness

Duration: 10 minutes a day, for ten days

This is a wonderful technique even for beginning meditators. You don't need any training, understanding or belief for this technique.

First, remove whatever accessories or jewelry you may be wearing on your body.

Either sit or lie down. Be as comfortable as possible. You can also lean against a wall if you feel comfortable that way. You can stretch your legs in whatever way you want, but you shouldn't need to exert effort to hold your body. The idea is to feel very comfortable without supporting the weight of your body.

For example, if your head is straight, be very clear, you are exerting effort to keep it straight. It always requires effort to keep your head straight. This should not be

the case here. In the same way, don't keep your spine erect, because that takes effort. No part of your body should feel effort or tension. Just drop your arms and relax; do not hold tension in any part of the body.

The weight of your body should not be felt anywhere. Otherwise you will be constantly feeling that you are heavy. Let your whole body be relaxed. Visualize that you are a weightless being.

Actually you *are* weightless. You only constantly visualize that you are heavy. When on a bed or chair, feel your self become weightless and enter the space beyond the mind.

Feeling you are heavy is one shaft of thought. We will now break that shaft with the thought shaft that you are light. It is like using one thorn to remove another. Then, we will throw both thoughts out!

Let your whole body be relaxed, totally relaxed. Just drop the body, let it be as it is. Let the body take its shape. Even when you stretch your leg, let it take its own shape.

Part by part, let your whole body just be. If you feel you are holding any part of your body, relax and stretch. Feel your legs are weightless. Feel your thighs are weightless. Feel your whole body is weightless. Just relax into that weightlessness.

Use your visualization power. Without any personality inside, just let your body be. See your body without any personality. You can function without any individuality or personality. Let your body be without any identify, just as the animals function without any personality or identity interfering.

Do this meditation for ten minutes a day for ten days. You will discover you *are* weightless! How will you know that this meditation is working? Mentally you will feel like your body is not on the earth, like you have to pull yourself down to the earth because you are so light! You will not feel like you even have a body. Just practice this technique for ten days, it can work miracles.

7. Etheric connection

Expand your consciousness and conquer your emotions

Duration: 21 minutes

Visualize you are a huge body of light. Visualize all your emotional relationships, loving as well as not so loving, as part of your light body (also called etheric body). If you have somebody who is emotionally connected to you, say in another country, visualize that you have a huge body that extends out to that country, and that person (or persons) is also inside your light body!

Let all the emotional connections, hateful or loving, be inside your etheric body. Secondly, add along with the visualization of the etheric body, the awareness of your center.

Carry this visualization for ten days.

8. Burn down your conditionings

Liberate your self from your mental setup and be free

Duration: 21 minutes

Visualize that all your inner thoughts and feelings about people, situations, experiences, anything and everything, are all burning! Visualize continuously that whatever you think about the world, about anything, is burning... it no longer exists. Your attitudes, your interests, your passions, your greed, your desires and your fears are all being consumed in the fire.

This will drastically break your conditioning, and lead you to enlightenment.

Nithya Spiritual Healing is a gift that I received along with my enlightenment, that I pass on to you. It is not any meditation program. It is an initiation that a master gives you. The initiation puts you in tune with the Existential energy and provides you the energy to heal.

What is healing?

The enlightened master Buddha gives a beautiful explanation or definition for the word 'healing'. He says healing is our way of expressing our compassion, our care towards somebody to help restore his health to him.

Healing is nothing but helping a person restore his physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Health

Good health is not just absence of disease. It is a presence of ease, a sense of wellbeing. We are not mere humans who are meant to fall sick and then get cured. We are embodiments of bliss. We were created to live with a blissful feeling at the being level all the time. This is what good health is meant to be.

Chakras and the science of healing

According to Patanjali, an enlightened master and the father of yoga, there are seven major *chakras* or subtle energy centers in our body.

These seven energy centers influence our physical, mental and being level activities. They lie in the metaphysical plane within us, and are associated with seven major glands in our physical bodies. They strongly influence the working of the corresponding physical gland.

Each and every one of our *chakras* is related to some emotion in us. For example, love is related to the *anahata chakra*, the heart energy center. Worry is related to the *manipuraka chakra*, the navel energy center. That is why if you receive some news that worries you, the first blow will be to your stomach. You will say, 'I can't digest it!' or 'I can't stomach that!' These expressions can be found in many languages around the world.

Kirlian photography* has recorded the effect of these emotions on the *chakras*. If an emotion is handled properly, the corresponding *chakra* functions well, expanding to the size of even a cartwheel. If the emotion is not handled properly, the

Kirlian photography - High voltage photograms used to record auras of living beings.

Our mental setup is what is the root cause of disease and imbalance in our body-mind system.

lower energy ultimately manifests as disease in the mind-body system.

Several factors like childhood problems, societal conditioning, improper habits, physical and emotional injuries, or even just lack of attention, affect the energy flow through the *chakras*.

It is only when our *chakras* are affected that disease happens in us. If our body and mind are at ease with each other, we feel this ease as a sense of wellbeing. If our body and mind are not at ease with each other, we feel the *dis-ease*, otherwise called *disease*. The state of the *chakras* reveal this level of ease or dis-ease in us.

Mind over body

The body is like the hardware and the mind is like the software. We try to fix the hardware when the software is what is causing the problem! The software is corrupted, so it continuously gives the wrong instructions to the hardware, the body. Please understand that it is our mental setup that is the root cause of

corresponding *chakra* shrinks to the size of even a coat button, which causes low energy in the system. This

disease and imbalance in our body-mind system.

Energy healing

The science of giving energy to a person who is diseased, sick or who is feeling a lack of energy, is what we call healing. The energy can be given to any *chakra*, any energy center that needs it, and the energy center will respond to it.

If we can get the right technique and make enough time to use it, we can heal ourselves and restore the *chakra* to its energy balance, and come out of the disease resulting from the imbalance. There may be various reasons why we are not able to do this all the time. We may not know the right technique or may not make enough time to meditate. Because of poor health we may not have enough energy for meditation and spiritual practices.

In such cases, someone who is a meditator can meditate and pass the energy to us, energizing the *chakra* and restoring health in us. This is the essence of the science of energy healing.

What is Nithya Spiritual Healing?

Nithya Spiritual Healing is healing through cosmic energy. The cosmic energy is different from the energy that we know in various forms such as electrical energy. Electrical energy does not have its own intelligence. If you put a light bulb into an electric socket, the current will flow and the bulb will glow. If you put your finger in that electric socket, the same current will flow but you will receive an electric shock! The electricity does not have the intelligence to determine what to do while flowing. But cosmic energy is pure intelligence.

Although the cosmic energy is often compared to the electric current, it is very different from it. It can never do anything wrong because it has its own independent intelligence.

Who can receive energy? The person with open heart and mind

Who can receive the energy? Anybody who is in need can receive the energy. It is not restricted in any way. There are a few tips that help a person receive the energy in a beautiful way. People with an open heart and open mind receive the energy more

easily and quickly than those who question the energy with their logic.

If your mind is open, you will not resist the healing energy.

Many people ask me, 'Should we have faith to get healed?'

I tell them there is no need to have faith. To know that an apple is tasty you don't need to believe. Just have a bite, and you will know. That's all! To know the sun is rising in the east you don't need to believe it. Just open your eyes and see, you will know for yourself. There is no need to blindly believe. To receive healing, you don't need to have faith. You need to have only one thing: an open mind, the willingness to receive. If your mind is open, you will not resist the healing energy.

Try to understand the concept and enter into it with full sincerity, that is enough. Just have the courage and openness to experiment without demanding proof of experience before even experimenting. Integrate your thoughts, intelligence, emotions and spirit and align them towards the concept.

Nithya Spiritual Healers' Initiation

Nithya Spiritual Healers' Initiation is directly related to enlightenment. Healing

others is only a side-effect or a byproduct of the process. The main effect is that when you serve as a healer, you actually get in touch with the deepest level of your being.

For example, in the Life Bliss Program Level 1 - Ananda Spurana Program, you get a glimpse of blissful living. In the Life Bliss Program Level 2 - Nithyananda Spurana Program, you get a glimpse of energy or consciousness. In Nithya Spiritual Healing, as a healer, you get into a permanently blissful state. Because once you are initiated, you continuously feel the cosmic energy flowing in you. You are continuously in touch with your being. Healing is conscious, concentrated love. It is that energy which automatically heals others.

Imagine that you are an ant on a huge iceberg trying to bore your way to the water beneath. How many thousands of lifetimes will it require? You can't even imagine it happening!

But a master who is already in the water, can simply drill a hole through the ice from the water beneath and just suck you in! You can also enter the water and enjoy it! This is exactly what happens during the Nithya Spiritual Healers' Initiation.

In Nithya Spiritual Healers' Initiation, the master opens the door to the energy of the *Ananda Gandha chakra*.

Ananda Gandha Chakra

Ananda Gandha chakra is an energy center in us wherein our seven *chakras*, our seven energy bodies, and our five *koshas* all collapse. It is considered the plane where matter and energy meet. It is like the plane where the iceberg and water beneath it meet. It is the energy space where enlightened masters live. It is the source of all our energy, and the direct connection to the universal cosmic energy. The *Ananda Gandha* does not exist in the physical body, it has a metaphysical significance.

When a person with enlightened consciousness initiates a healer, he opens the door to the *Ananda Gandha chakra*, so there is access to the divine energy every single moment. When you are in *Ananda Gandha*, you are enlightened because you are one with the cosmic energy.

The master lives in *Ananda Gandha*. A connection to the same energy source is established when we are in *Ananda Gandha*. That is why the healing energy is able to give new life, new energy and heal disease.

As I mentioned, the point where all the seven *chakras* collapse is the *Ananda Gandha chakra*. The path to the *Ananda Gandha chakra* is between *anahata* and *manipuraka chakras*, that is, between the heart and navel areas. The *Ananda Gandha chakra* itself does not lie there, only the

path to it is there. During Nithya Spiritual Healing, you consciously go into *Ananda Gandha*. All other *chakras* are gross and can be opened by meditation. But this *Ananda Gandha chakra* is such that only an enlightened master can open it.

We have seven energy bodies, namely the outer physical body, the next inner body called the *pranic* body, followed by the mental, etheric, causal, cosmic and *nirvanic* bodies. The *Ananda Gandha chakra* is located in the innermost or seventh energy body, the *nirvanic* body. Once this *chakra* is opened, once it is awakened, the energy starts flowing in you continuously.

There are five *koshas* or energy sheaths that are part of our energy system. They are the matter sheath (*annamaya kosha*), the air sheath (*pranamaya kosha*), the mind sheath (*manomaya kosha*), the intellect sheath (*vijnanamaya kosha*) and finally, the bliss sheath (*anandamaya kosha*). Where the bliss sheath touches the Self, there lies the *Ananda Gandha chakra*.

Being in *Ananda Gandha* is being in the 'Zero TPS (Thoughts Per Second) state'. This is what I call the *samadhi* state, *nirvana*, *nithyananda* state or enlightenment.

Ananda Gandha chakra for the whole world actually lies in a single point! The point where the very idea of length, breadth and height disappears is the *Ananda Gandha chakra!*

The point where the concept of time collapses is the *Ananda Gandha chakra*.

The point where the idea of gravity disappears is the *Ananda Gandha chakra*.

All these explanations for the *Ananda Gandha chakra* can be understood when you have even one glimpse of Consciousness.

Some benefits of *Ananda Gandha* meditation

When you do the *Ananda Gandha* meditation every day, continuously, nothing from the world outside can shake you inside. Even if everything around you is failing, you will be stable and strong. You will soon reach a state where this meditation becomes your natural state of being. You will eternally be in *Ananda Gandha!*

This meditation gives you:

Sat: Clarity in everything

You will have clarity because you will be able to see things objectively without being driven by greed and fear.

Chit: Consciousness

You will have enthusiasm for everything you do. Every pore, every cell will radiate energy and enthusiasm. You will simply execute decisions one after another without feeling tired, and more

importantly, with the same enthusiasm and intelligence.

Ananda: Bliss for no reason

You will remain happy irrespective of whatever happens in the outer world.

Being in *Ananda Gandha* continuously, you will not only have good physical and mental health but also the clarity to handle anything that happens in the outer world.

For example, if you are angry with someone, after shouting at him, you normally feel the fire of anger burning you as much as it burnt him. You are disturbed for the same half hour that he is disturbed. But if you are in *Ananda Gandha*, you will have the clarity and awareness to use the anger only to the extent that it is needed. You will not overuse it. Because you have not overused it, it will not burn inside you or cause guilt within you. You will be completely unaffected by it. The person receiving your anger will receive only as much as he needs to receive, so he will not be unduly disturbed.

For example, when you need to give someone only ten dollars for a job that they have done, will you give them twenty dollars for it? No! You will never overpay, am I right? Then, when you need to show only a certain amount of anger to someone, why should you show more than that? Show only what is needed! Then, there will be no suffering for him or for you. The

clarity to do this is what being in *Ananda Gandha* gives.

Nithya Spiritual Healing is a two-in-one technique. As the healer, you will feel bliss and the person receiving the healing will get healed. That is why this is the ultimate technique.

Health benefits of Nithya Spiritual Healing

1. Relief from various physical ailments like cancer, chronic asthma, sinusitis, hernia, renal failure, diabetes, high blood pressure, back problems, allergies, seizures, migraine, wheezing, skin problems, insomnia, etc.
2. Relief from psychological problems like anxiety, depression, phobias etc.
3. Quick healing of physical injuries like burns, pains, aches etc.
4. Solutions to gynecological issues, infertility issues etc.

Services

Nithya Spiritual Healing is a service provided free of cost at thousands of healing centers worldwide, as well as at free healing camps conducted regularly. This unique system of cosmic healing is a

meditation for the healer and healing for the person receiving the energy, with the safety of no adverse side-effects.

Ananda Darshan

(Ananda darshan is the time when you are in the presence of the master's surging energy. You go near him and he touches you on your *ajna chakra*, thus transmitting the energy and experience of enlightenment to you.)

Darshan means 'to see something divine'. *Ananda darshan* means 'blissfully seeing'. When the Existential energy flowers into a form that your eyes can see and consciousness can perceive, and when it causes a transformation in you, it is called *ananda darshan!* The form that you see is the form of the enlightened master who happens from time to time on planet earth.

Some people ask, 'Is there something called Existential energy?' Yes there is, but it is beyond our intellect. When we reach the peak of our intellect, we will understand there is something beyond, which cannot be perceived with our intellect. Many scientists who reached the peak of their intellect saw the next step as infinite Existential energy that lay beyond them. With sensitivity, one can feel the presence of this energy.

There is always a group of people who say that the entire universe is nothing but a divine play of Existential energy. But there is another group who say that the entire universe is an accident and there is no energy or intelligence behind it. The

second group can very conveniently exploit their philosophy to manufacture

any number of weapons and cause destruction in the world. They do not develop any sensitivity towards anything in the universe because of this very idea that the universe and its happenings are an accident. They continue to exist and perceive at the gross level.

If you belong to the first group, you automatically enter into a subtle level and develop a deep respect for everything in this universe, every stone, tree, and plant. A deep devotion surges within you. Your very life automatically moves with a beautiful flow, like a surfer riding the rising wave of Existence.

It is only because man got the clarity that a profound and deep intelligence is running the whole show that he was able to create a way of life that allows him to merge beautifully and sweetly with the play of Existence.

The whole of Existence is a living being that responds to your every word, feeling, and prayer. Each moment it responds with responsibility to your very consciousness. In order to respond to you in a way that you can hear, see, and understand, it takes the form of enlightened masters from time

'Is there something called Existential energy?' Yes there is, but it is beyond our intellect.

**A master's
darshan is like a
huge wave rising
in the ocean of
Existence.**

to time. The seeking and praying of millions of people around the world creates a tremendous pull that causes enlightened masters to appear on planet earth, like how a low-pressure area or a depression naturally creates a storm.

A master's *darshan* is like a huge wave rising in the ocean of Existence. The wave never gets disconnected from the ocean, but at the same time expresses itself as tremendous dynamic energy! Understand: a river is also connected to the ocean, but it does not have the dynamic energy of the wave. It just flows passively, that's all. But *Ananda Darshan* is the dynamic wave that rises in the blissful ocean of Existence. It creates a churning that can completely transform you.

Now imagine a sand particle inside the wave. Can it have any impurity in it? No! It will be completely pure because it is inside the energy of the dynamic wave. In the same way, when you come for *darshan*, you will be completely cleansed inside out by the dynamic energy that is expressed. During *darshan*, you are within the very source of the Existential energy. In the presence of the sun, the lotus blooms. In the same way, in the presence of the master, your consciousness flowers.

All you need to do is co-operate. Actually, even if you don't co-operate, the energy will penetrate you. It is like this: whether the shell in the wave co-operates or not, the wave takes it along. In the same way, whether you co-operate or not, the energy will envelop you and do what is needed. But the shell that co-operates with the wave playfully dances along with the blissful movements of the wave. It gets purified and finally merges with it! On the other hand, the shell that tells the wave, 'I can't trust you so easily', and collects a few pebbles and builds a wall around itself for protection, suffers resistance. But the sheer compassion of the energy wave ultimately pulls it along into bliss.

For the person who surrenders joyfully to the wave, his very life becomes *ananda darshan*, not just a moment of *darshan*. Understand: during any moment that your consciousness is turned towards the blissful expression of Existence that is the master, *ananda darshan* happens for you! You don't even need to be physically near the master. If you continuously rest your consciousness on that energy expression, your very life becomes *ananda darshan*. On the other hand the person who resists, misses the celebration of merging with the energy, but also merges ultimately.

During *darshan*, tremendous energy radiates from the master. How do you receive this overflowing energy? Just come

like a small child, with intense enthusiasm, with a deep prayerful mood, with a melting heart, that is enough. Society has destroyed the power of prayer. Prayer has the power to completely transform you into what you want to become.

What is prayer? When you want to achieve something, you focus your intention and intensity on it with your will. This is called 'your vow'. Soon you realize, however, that to fulfill it, you need the help of some higher energy as well. When this understanding happens, your vow becomes a prayer! You start praying to the energy. 'I can do it' is a vow, 'I need the grace of the energy that is beyond me' is prayer. So come with a deep prayerful mood.

When you open up your feelings in the presence of an enlightened master, it is like putting a slide in front of a projector. What is on the slide gets projected on the screen as reality. In the same way, your desires that need to be fulfilled for your own good and the good of others will materialize. The desires that don't need to be fulfilled will get burnt away along with the unfulfilled feeling that created them. Either the desire is fulfilled or your mind forgets about the desire. Either the seed of the desire sprouts or it is burnt away. Both ways you experience fulfillment.

You carry many desires that need not be fulfilled. The energy of the master works as sheer intelligence to handle this.

A small story:

Once, a tired traveler decided to rest under a tree. The tree happened to be a wish fulfilling tree. While he was resting, he had a passing thought, 'How nice it would be if I got some good food now!' The moment the thought came, a plate of delicious food appeared in front of him. He was delighted and ate to his heart's content.

After the satisfying meal, he thought, 'It would be good if I could get a comfortable bed to lie on.' No sooner did the thought come than a luxurious king-size bed appeared in front of him. He was amazed! He lay down on the bed.

As his head touched the pillow, he thought it would be really good if somebody fanned him while he slept. In an instant, a young girl appeared with a fan in her hand and started fanning him.

Suddenly, a thought came to the man, 'I am in the middle of a forest! What if a tiger suddenly appears?' The moment the thought came, a tiger appeared in front of him, pounced on him and ate him up!

Before fulfilling your desires, you need to bring clarity to them. When you verbalize your desires in front of the master, they will automatically acquire clarity. That is

**The whole scene
of the *darshan*
becomes a deep
imprint in your
consciousness.**

why during
the program
*Kalpataru**, I
ask you to
verbalize your

desires to me. As you verbalize, you yourself will know which desires really need to be fulfilled and which need not be fulfilled. Such is the intelligence of the expressed energy.

The *kalpataru darshan** sows within you the seeds of:

Shakti - Energy to change the things that need to change,

Buddhi - Intelligence to accept the things that cannot change,

Yukti - Understanding that whatever may change, Existence itself is an eternally changing dream!

Mukti - Liberation to experience the above three and live blissfully!

Put your energy into changing whatever you can, just simple things that you can change. Don't think, 'Oh, I can change two habits, what about the other ten?' Just change what you can change. Then accept what you can't change. When you have expressed your energy, intelligence will start flowering.

Intelligence is accepting what you cannot change. But until you express the energy to change whatever you can, you won't be able to have the intelligence to accept what you can't change. First try changing what you can. Then you will see a tremendous ability to accept whatever you can't change.

The third seed is clarity. However much you change things, whatever you may change, still the whole world itself is a changing reality, a changing dream. It is a dream that is continuously changing for no reason. It is causeless for no reason. Understand that it is causeless. Because it is causeless, you can call it either a causeless auspicious energy or a causeless chaos. Anybody who thinks this is a causeless auspicious energy is a theist, a seeker. Anybody who thinks it is a causeless chaos is a materialist.

The whole of Existence can appear as either a miracle or a curse. If you think it is causeless auspiciousness, it is a miracle, a continuous miracle. Otherwise, it is a curse.

During *darshan*, many people have visions, healing experiences, intense spiritual experiences, and the direct experience of causeless bliss. Not only that, the energy

Kalpataru - Boon-giving tree.

Kalpataru darshan - A meditation *darshan* program of Nithyananda.

wave that rises also causes many unconscious fears, guilt, and desires to surface. Some people just go into intense silence. Others feel overwhelmed with tears. You may not even know the reasons for all these because they come from deep unconscious layers that erupt by the energy of the wave. *Darshan* time is a rare opportunity to liberate yourself from these deeply engraved memories. These emotions can be simply wiped out at the root level by the overflowing energy.

During *darshan* time, your being comes alive and celebrates with the energy wave of Existence. The mind disappears for some time. The whole scene of the *darshan* becomes a deep imprint in your consciousness.

I would like to say just one thing. The energy of Existence is like your father's

wealth. Don't miss enjoying it! Just say 'YES' to Existence and enter into it like a child.

To draw money, even from your own bank account, you need to sign a check. In the same way, to receive the energy of Existence, you need to be open. That's all.

Remember, only the oyster that opened and caught a drop of rainwater made the pearl! When you are open to the master, just one word from him is enough. It is like rainwater that enters an oyster to become a pearl.

For the master's presence to work on you, allow whatever happens to happen. Don't be tense, irritated, or resisting. Don't expect anything. Whatever happens, allow it to happen. Just be like the surfer who dances on the energy wave, enjoying its bliss!

Healing Experiences

Healing

1. I was struck with Hepatitis B and suffering from cirrhosis, a chronic liver disease generally considered irreversible. All the hospitals had given up hope and I had been living on liquid diet for six years and knew death was around the corner.

On my friend's suggestion, I went to Nithyananda who was then at Erode in Tamilnadu, South India, healing the people who sought him out. He gave me a little holy ash and said to mix it into everything that I ate and drank for the next three days. I followed his instruction and on the third day itself I felt my stomach beginning to feel fine - after six long years! Immediately, as instructed by him, I even ate a full spicy meal for the first time in six years. Since then I have been leading a healthy and blissful life, ever ready to serve my divine Master!

- Sri Nithya Sadananda, Senior Swami of the Nithyananda Order
(nithyaayya@yahoo.co.in)

2. I had been diagnosed with Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), which caused severe hormonal issues. It was detected through an ultrasound which showed that my ovaries were covered

by the growth of large cysts. I attended one of Nithyananda's meditation programs during which he said I would be healed, without even my telling him about my problem!

About a month later, I realized I had lost thirty pounds, which I had battled with for a long time having been close to two hundred pounds and not being able to lose weight even through diet and exercise. That is when I realized how emotionally related my weight had been! I understood how any addiction is a call for fulfillment that we try to fill externally but can never fulfill. About a year later, when I went in for an ultrasound checkup, the doctors were shocked to discover that the cysts were completely gone!

- Roshini Nambiar, Meditation Teacher, Oklahoma, USA
(roshininambiar@gmail.com)

3. When my uncle and aunt were visiting us in Singapore, they made a short trip to Tioman islands in Malaysia. When they returned home, both of them were in really bad shape. Apparently, they had a bad experience with the sea, which almost drowned them while snorkeling. They had swallowed huge amounts of sea water as well. They were in a state of complete shock even after returning. My uncle was in

shivering fits and was running high temperature.

I just asked him to lie down and relax and started giving him Nithya Spiritual Healing. After about ten minutes he drifted off into deep sleep. The next morning when he woke up, he was perfectly normal as though nothing at all had happened!

- Sri Nithyananda Arpana, Nithya Spiritual Healer, Malaysia
(nithya.arpanananda@gmail.com)

4. One of my American friends was telling me that she was going through chronic anxiety and suffering frequently from 'anxiety attacks'. She wondered if Nithya Spiritual Healing would work on mental problems as well. I explained to her how the healing energy is pure intelligence and it works at all levels. I then gave her healing for about fifteen minutes. She called me the next day saying she felt such a deep sense of peace and relaxation during and after the healing and that she slept exceptionally well that night after four long years, when a major incident in her life had become the source of all her anxiety.

- Premeshwari, Nithya Spiritual Healer, Michigan, USA
(premeshwari.mayi@gmail.com)

5. I am a practicing gynecologist. Many of my patients have had miraculous experiences with the touch of Paramahansa Nithyananda. Recently I had a case of a woman who had been suffering from tuberculosis. Her uterus lining had become very thin and the endometrium was badly affected. We tried various methods of treatment but none worked. We were thinking of the option of surrogate mother when I suggested to her to take healing from Paramahansa. She went for healing to Paramahansa who blessed her with a divine child. It is a real medical miracle that she was able to conceive in the first place and also have a normal delivery!

- Dr. Nirmala, gynecologist, Advanced Fertility Center, Bangalore
(nimmar@rediffmail.com)

Meditation programs

1. I was rated a star in my MNC corporate career. I ran companies and conglomerates, built billion dollar entities and helped start up many dreams. But I was never fulfilled. After Paramahansa happened in my life, I have learnt how to be successful in the outer world while being equally successful in the inner world!

- Ram S Ram, Business Mentor, Singapore (ramsr@gmail.com)

2. Five years ago I was the Vice President of Global Supply Chain at a Fortune 500 company. I was diagnosed with diabetes at the age of 32. There is a very long history of diabetes in the maternal and paternal sides of my family. When I met Paramahansa, on one occasion I told him about the problem. Almost four and half years have passed since I told him and till date, my blood sugar levels have been well within normal range with no diet restrictions or symptoms of the disease.

I attended an advanced meditation program with Paramahansa. One of the techniques in that was to verbalize what stopped us from living in bliss all the time. Each of us verbalized where we felt we were stuck. The moment we verbalized this, whatever that was holding us back vanished. All I can say is, there was some intense alchemy that went on in the non-physical plane. It was as if Paramahansa set up a flame and whatever we verbalized was burnt away from our system once and for all. Now I feel there are no emotional ups or downs in me and I am able to work with utmost intensity and bliss in all fields of endeavor. All I can say is he showered his love and compassion on us and we came out as new beings.

-Sri Nithya Sachitananda,
International Coordinator and Senior

Swami of Nithyananda Order, Los Angeles, USA
(nithya.sachitananda@gmail.com)

3. Effortless work is something I never thought possible. I learnt through Paramahansa's meditation programs how to enjoy work and automatically, I started giving results effortlessly, with great creativity and work satisfaction as well.

- Apurvi Sheth, Marketing Director,
Singapore (apurvi.sheth@diageo.com)

4. Besides an amazing rise in my energy levels, my business took a quantum jump ever since Nithyananda touched me the first time. My intelligence in taking business decisions entered a different dimension. Also, my relationships have greatly matured at home and outside. My child is in the Nithyananda Gurukul in the Bangalore ashram and I can really see her blossoming into a confident, intelligent and fulfilled person.

- Charanapriya, Businessman,
Pondicherry
(sri_charanapriya@yahoo.com)

APPENDIX

About Paramahansa Nithyananda

Paramahansa Nithyananda is a living enlightened Master of the 21st century.

He took birth in Tiruvannamalai, a spiritual nerve center in South India. Since a very young age, Nithyananda spent days and nights in meditation in the divine aura of Arunachala. His intense quest for deeper Truths of life led him on his spiritual journey which covered the length and breadth of India, several thousand miles of which he covered on foot. Visiting venerated shrines, meeting highly evolved *yogis* and *rishis*, and practicing intense meditations, he studied Yoga, Tantra, and other Eastern metaphysical sciences. He went through several profoundly impacting spiritual experiences, culminating in his realization of the Ultimate at a young age.

Since then, Nithyananda has been sharing his experience with millions of people worldwide through the activities of Nithyananda Mission which conducts insightful and inspiring meditation programs and a wide spectrum of social services, thus providing life solutions at the physical, mental and spiritual levels. The meditation programs are offered worldwide through the International Vedic Hindu University (IVHU) Florida, USA. Further, free education to youth, encouragement to art and culture, corporate meditation programs, meditation for prisoners, free medical camps, free meals, a one-year residential training program in India called the Life Bliss Technology program, an in-house *gurukul* system of learning for children, and many more such services are offered around the world.

Employing time-tested *vedic* knowledge and modern technology, the Mission ashrams and centers the world over serve as spiritual laboratories where inner growth is a profound achievement. Today, they are much sought after as ideal destinations to explore, experiment and experience through a host of programs, courses and research facilities in diverse subjects from meditation to the sciences.

Established in 2003, Nithyananda Mission has grown today into a worldwide movement for bliss, standing for the ideal of realizing an enlightened humanity and thereby raising the collective consciousness of planet earth.

Programs and Workshops

Nithyananda Mission offers specialized meditation programs worldwide, to benefit millions of people at the levels of body, mind and spirit. A few of them are listed below:

Life Bliss Program Level 1 (LBP Level 1)

- Energize yourself

A *chakra* based meditation program that relaxes and energizes the seven major *chakras* or subtle energy centers in your system. It gives clear intellectual and experiential understanding of your various emotions such as greed, fear, worry, attention-need, stress, jealousy, ego, and discontentment. It is designed to create a spiritual effect at the physical level. It is a guaranteed life solution to experience the reality of your own bliss. When you are liberated from a particular emotion, you experience a new world, a new energy. It is a highly effective workshop, experienced by millions of people around the globe.

Life Bliss Program Level 2 (LBP Level 2)

- Death demystified!

A meditation program that unleashes the art of living by demystifying the process of dying. This program creates the space to detach from ingrained and unconscious emotions like guilt, pleasure and pain, all of which stem from the ultimate fear of death. It is a gateway to a new life that is driven by natural intelligence and spontaneous enthusiasm.

Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Atma Spurana Program (LBP Level 3 - ATSP)

- Connect with your Self!

An indepth program that analyzes clearly the workings of the mind and shows you experientially how to be the master of the mind rather than be dictated by it. It imparts tremendous intellectual understanding coupled with powerful meditations to produce instant clarity and integration.

Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Bhakti Spurana Program (LBP Level 3 - BSP)

- Integrate your Devotion

A program that reveals the different dimensions of relating with others and with your deeper self. It clearly defines relationship as that which kindles and reveals your own unknown dimensions to

you. It allows you to experience the real depth and joy of any relationship in your life.

Life Bliss Technology (LBT)

- A free residential life sciences program

Life Bliss Technology (LBT) is a residential program for youth between 18 and 30 years of age. With its roots in the Eastern system of *vedic* education, this program is designed to empower modern youth with good physical, mental and emotional health and practical life skills. By nurturing creative intelligence and spontaneity, and imparting life skills, it creates economically self-sufficient and spiritually fulfilled youth. Above all, it offers a lifetime opportunity to live and learn under the tutelage of an enlightened master.

Inner Awakening

An enlightenment intensive program for sincere seekers offering yoga, powerful teachings, meditation, initiation and more. This program is an intense experience to prepare the body-mind system to hold and radiate the experience of 'living enlightenment'.

Nithyanandam

An advanced meditation program for seekers where the presence of the Master and the intense energy field lead one to the state of *nithya ananda* – eternal bliss. It offers a range of techniques from meditation to service to sitting in the powerful presence of the master.

Kalpataru

An experiential meditation program sowing in one the seed of:

Shakti, the Energy to understand and change whatever you need to change in life,

Buddhi, the Intelligence to understand and accept whatever you don't need to change in life,

Yukti, the Clarity to understand and realize that however much you change, whatever you see as reality is itself a continuously changing dream,

Bhakti, the Devotion, the feeling of deep connection to That which is unchanging, eternal and Ultimate, and

Mukti, the Ultimate Liberation into Living Enlightenment when all these four are integrated.

Nithyananda Mission Highlights

- **Meditation and de-addiction camps worldwide:** Over 2 million people impacted to date
- **Nithya Spiritual Healing:** A system of cosmic energy healing administered free through 5000 ordained healers, through our worldwide ashrams and centers, touching 20,000 people globally every day – healing both mind and body
- **Anna Daan: free food program:** 10,000 nutritious meals distributed every week through all the ashram *anna mandirs* for visitors, devotees and disciples thus improving health standards
- **The Nithyananda Order and its training:** Spiritual aspirants ordained as *Sannyasis*, *Brahmcharis* and *Brahmcharinis*: who undergo years of intensive training in yoga, meditation, deep spiritual practice, Sanskrit, *vedic* chanting, life skills, and who run the 100% volunteer based ashrams of Nithyananda Mission worldwide, working in all Mission activities
- **International Vedic Hindu University (IVHU)** (the former Hindu University, Florida, USA): Paramahansa Nithyananda was unanimously elected as chairman (chancellor) of International Vedic Hindu University which provides education in Eastern philosophies, therapeutics, *vedic* studies, meditation science and more through Bachelor of Science, Post Graduate and Diploma degrees
- **Nithya Yoga:** A revolutionary system of yoga in the lines of sage Patanjali's original teachings, taught worldwide.
- **Temples and Ashrams:** Over 30 Vedic temples and ashrams worldwide.
- **Meditation Programs in prisons:** Conducted in prisons and juvenile camps to reform extremist attitudes, resulting in amazing transformation among the inmates.
- **Medical Camps:** Free treatment and therapies in allopathy, homeopathy, ayurveda, acupuncture, eye check-ups, eye surgeries, artificial limb donation camps, gynecology and more
- **Support to children in rural areas:** School buildings, school uniforms and educational materials provided free to rural schools.
- **Life Bliss Technology:** A free two year / three month program for youth teaching Life Engineering and the science of enlightenment
- **Nithyananda Gurukul:** A modern scientific approach to education combined with the *vedic* system of learning – protecting and developing the innate intelligence of the child who flowers without repression, fear or peer pressure

- **Corporate Meditation Programs:** Specially designed and conducted in corporate firms worldwide including Microsoft, AT&T, Qualcomm, JP Morgan, Petrobras, Pepsi, Oracle, American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), with focus on intuitive management, leadership skills and team work.
- **Nithyananda Institute of Teachers' Training:** Over 300 teachers trained to teach transformational meditation programs, Quantum Memory Program, Nithya Yoga, Health and Healing Programs, Spiritual Practice Programs and more
- **Media:** Articles in national and international newspapers and magazines, carrying transforming messages from Nithyananda
- **Nithyananda Publishers:** Over 4700 hours of Paramahansa Nithyananda's discourses transcribed, edited and published in-house and made available in stores through books, DVDs and CDs
- **Life Bliss Gallerias:** Worldwide stores and mobile shops retailing recordings and books of Nithyananda's discourses and Nithya Kirtan recordings in 23 languages
- **Nithyananda Meditation & Healing Centers:** Worldwide, offering meditation and healing services
- **Nithyananda Sangeeth Academy:** Music, dance and other forms of art taught and encouraged in youth and elderly alike, live and through internet
- **Free Discourses on YouTube:** Over 500 free discourses on www.youtube.com – wisdom from the Master, easily accessible. Ranked top in viewership
- **Support to scientists and researchers:** Continually bridging gaps between science and spirituality through researches on spiritual energy and healing.
- **Nithyananda Youth Foundation:** A collection of inspired youth, building a divine and dynamic society with a common ideology of peace and enlightenment
- **Nithya Dheera Seva Sena:** Through transformation of self, this volunteer force of *Ananda Sevaks* trains and functions in the service of humanity, also serving as relief wing working towards disaster recovery management.

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Nithyananda Galleria

A wide range of products for blissful living:

- Nithyananda's insightful messages on video, audio tapes, CDs and books in over 20 languages.
- Enlivening music and chants for meditation and deep inner healing.
- Meditation and yoga books, kits and CDs for rejuvenating body, mind and spirit.
- Energized rosaries, bracelets, photographs, clothing and gift items for a stimulating life style.
- Ethnic energy bead jewelry for men and women for tranquility and continued high energy.

Visit www.lifeblissgalleria.com for more information.

Suggested for Further Reading

- Guaranteed Solutions
- Don't Worry Be Happy
- Nithyananda Vol. 1
- Instant Tools for Blissful Living
- You Can Heal
- Follow Me In!
- The Door to Enlightenment
- Songs of Eternity
- You are No Sinner
- So You Want to Know The Truth?
- Uncommon answers to Common Questions

Over 500 FREE discourses of Nithyananda available at <http://www.youtube.com/lifeblissfoundation>

GLOSSARY

- Abdulla** Abdullah Ansari of Herat, a Sufi master.
- Abhisheka** A ceremonial bath performed in the worship of a deity.
- Adhomukha shvanasana**
The downward-dog posture in yoga.
- Adi Shankara** Enlightened master from India who lived only 32 years in the eighth century CE. Greatest exponent of the doctrine of *Advaita Vedanta* or non-dualism, whose movement restored glory to the declining *vedic* tradition and Hinduism during that period. Shankara established the Hindu order of monks which continues unbroken till today.
- Agamya** The actions one constantly does out of free will after taking birth on planet Earth. These are not born out of true desires but from desires borrowed from society, by looking at others.
- Aham Brahmasmi**
Literally means 'I am god.' *Aham* means 'I am'; *Brahman* means 'god' or 'supreme being'. The statement refers to the essence of the soul which is ever identical to god.
- Ahankar** The false identification of the pure inner self with the outer world; a form of ego that makes you project a false identity of you to the outer world.
- Ajapa japa** Chanting a sacred chant involuntarily.
- Ajna chakra** The sixth energy center located between the eyebrows. Means 'command' or 'will' in Sanskrit. This *chakra* is blocked by one's own ego.
- Akbar** Moghul emperor..
- Albert Einstein** Scientist and Nobel laureate.
- Allopathy** Generally refers to western medicine.
- Amrutasya putraha**
Sons of Immortality.
- Anahata chakra** Subtle energy center in the heart region related to love.
- Anahata Dhvani** The primordial sound of creation *Om*.

- Anal-Haq*** I am the Truth. Said to have been constantly uttered by the Sufi master Mansur, who was hanged to death for this sacrilege.
- Ananda*** Literally means ‘that which cannot be reduced’.
- Ananda Ashtanga***
Eight fold path of bliss, referring to eight practices each of which leads to awareness
- Ananda darshan*** Ananda Darshan or Energy Darshan refers to the blessing given by a master imparting his energy to the recipient.
- Ananda Gandha chakra***
Situated in between the navel or *manipuraka chakra* and heart or *anahata chakra*, Ananda Gandha is the point where all *chakras* collapse into one. Nithyananda’s healing initiation to a disciple energizes the *Ananda Gandha* and initiates the disciple into Nithya Spiritual Healing.
- Ananda Sankalpa***
Blissful Affirmation is the second step in the *Ananda Ashtanga* process.
- Anandamaya kosha***
Bliss Sheath is the fifth and final energy layer in the five layers known as *koshas*. A meditative journey through the five *koshas* is the essence of Nithyananda’s Atma Spurana Program.
- Anima*** *Anima siddhi* is one of the eight *yogic* powers, referring to the power of decreasing one’s body size to that of a minute particle.
- Annamacharya*** Mystic saint composer of South India.
- Annamalai Swamigal***
Disciple of Ramana Maharishi in the temple town of Tiruvannamalai, whose teachings led to Nithyananda’s deep spiritual experience at the age of 12.
- Annamaya kosha*** Food or Physical sheath, the first of the five *koshas* or energy sheaths.
- Annie Besant*** Theosophist and Indian freedom fighter, writer and orator.
- Anubhava*** Experience, especially knowledge born out of repetitive experiences.
- Appar*** Tamil poet saint and author of Thevaram, devotional songs in praise of enlightened master Shiva. One of the most prominent of the 63 Nayanmars, Tamil saints who were devotees of Shiva.

<i>Arati</i>	Fire ritual performed at the end of most <i>vedic</i> worship done with lighted lamps or camphor, accompanied often by devotional songs.
<i>Arihanta</i>	Term used for <i>Tirthankars</i> , spiritual leaders of the Jain religion.
<i>Arjuna</i>	Warrior prince and the third of the five brothers of the Pandava family in the great Indian epic Mahabharata. He was a disciple of enlightened master Krishna who received the wisdom in the Bhagavad Gita from Krishna.
<i>Arunachala</i>	Literally the unmoving red mountain in Tiruvannamalai in Tamilnadu in South India, this mystical hill is considered a representation of lord Shiva.
<i>Arunagiri Yogeeshwara</i>	The temple of Arunachaleswara in Tiruvannamalai is built on the living energy tomb of Arunagiri Yogeeshwara, who is considered an incarnation of enlightened master Shiva.
<i>Asana</i>	Physical posture and one of the eight paths of yoga in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. <i>Asana</i> must be stable and comfortable.
<i>Ashram</i>	A monastery for Hindu or Buddhist monks.
<i>Ashrama</i>	The four stages in one's life: <i>brahmacharya</i> as a student, <i>grihastha</i> as a married householder, <i>vanaprastha</i> at the end of a productive married life and <i>sannyasi</i> as a person who renounces all material aspects in life.
<i>Ashramite</i>	Resident of ashram.
<i>Ashtanga namaskar</i>	Prostrating to a deity or master by lying on the floor with all eight limbs of the body touching the earth.
<i>Ashtanga yoga</i>	Eight limbs or paths of Patanjali's Yoga: <i>yama</i> (discipline), <i>niyama</i> (rules), <i>asana</i> (body postures), <i>pranayama</i> (breath control), <i>pratyahara</i> (withdrawal of senses), <i>dharana</i> (concentration), <i>dhyana</i> (meditation) and <i>samadhi</i> (bliss).
<i>Ashtavakra</i>	An enlightened <i>vedic</i> sage who was born with eight crooked limbs. He is the author of the Ashtavakra Gita.
<i>Atma deepo bhava</i>	Buddha's message to his disciples exhorting them: 'Be a lamp unto your Self'.
<i>Atma gnana</i>	Self Realization.
<i>Atma sharanagati</i>	Surrender of the Self.

Atman	Soul, spirit, consciousness etc as referring to the individual imperishable energy that is a holographic image of the Cosmic Consciousness or <i>Brahman</i> .
Atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha	‘For one’s own salvation and for the welfare of the world’, this is the motto of the Ramakrishna Order coined by Swami Vivekananda.
Ayurvedians	Practitioners of the traditional Indian medicinal system of <i>ayurveda</i> .
Ayurveda	Traditional Indian system of medicine, <i>Ayurveda</i> literally means knowledge of life.
Ayurvedic	Related to <i>ayurveda</i> , the traditional Indian system of medicine.
Bardos	Literally ‘interval between two things’ as in the Tibetan Book of the Dead, referring to different phases of the passage of the spirit.
Bayazid	A 9th century Persian Sufi saint.
Bhagavad Gita	Ancient Indian scripture, delivered by enlightened master Krishna, and considered the essence of the Upanishads or scriptures.
Bhagavan	Used as a title of veneration with great masters, literally meaning ‘prosperous’.
Bhagavan Mahavir	Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th and last Jain <i>tirthankara</i> or enlightened one, and established the tenets of the religion of Jainism, founded in India and now practiced by millions worldwide.
Bhagavatam	The foremost epic of Hindu religion describing the incarnations of Vishnu, especially his incarnation as Krishna. It was written by Vyasa, who was also the author of the <i>itihasa</i> or epic Mahabharata.
Bhaja Govindam	Collection of 32 (sometimes 34) devotional verses composed by enlightened master Adi Shankara. This is considered to be the essence of <i>Vedanta</i> and <i>Advaita</i> , non duality.
Bhakti	Devotion.
Bhakti yogi	A person who follows the path of devotion, <i>bhakti yoga</i> , as a means to enlightenment.
Bharatanatyam	Classical South Indian dance form.
Bhava	Emotional mood, referring here to the five emotional ways in which a disciple can interact with the master.

<i>Bhujangasana</i>	Cobra posture in Yoga, in which the head is raised while lying down.
Bidadi ashram	Nithyananda's spiritual headquarters in Bidadi township, about 30 km from Bangalore city.
Big Bang	Cosmological model of the universe where the universe is considered to have originated from a highly dense initial state at some time in the past, and continues to expand to this day.
<i>Bija</i>	Seed.
<i>Bija mantra</i>	Seed <i>mantra</i> or an energized chant that is specific to a deity or master.
Birbal	Advisor to Moghul emperor Akbar.
Black hole	A theoretical region of space in which the gravitational field is so powerful that nothing, not even light can escape from it.
Bodhidharma	A disciple of Buddha and mainly responsible for spreading Buddhism as Zen Buddhism.
Brahma	The Creator amongst the Hindu Trinity of Gods.
<i>Brahmaanda</i>	Cosmos or macrocosm as opposed to <i>pindanda</i> , the individual microcosm.
<i>Brahmachari</i>	A <i>vedic</i> student, usually referring to a young celibate monk.
<i>Brahmcharinis</i>	A female <i>vedic student</i> , usually referring to a young celibate monk
<i>Brahmagnana</i>	Knowledge of the Absolute.
Brahman	Absolute, Cosmic Consciousness, Formless god etc all referring to the Universal Energy source of which the individual energy of the soul is a holographic part.
Brahmanda Purana	A collection of 12,000 verses in what is usually considered the last and eighteenth Hindu <i>purana</i> or epic. This <i>purana</i> is the story of the creation of the universe by Brahma.
Buddha	Enlightened master and founder of the religion of Buddhism.
<i>Buddhi</i>	Intelligence.
Buddhism	Religion founded by enlightened master Buddha.
Carl Jung	Renowned 20th Century Swiss psychiatrist and contemporary of Sigmund Freud. He was renowned for his work on the 'collective unconscious'.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

A 15th century mystic from Bengal, India steeped in devotion to enlightened master Krishna. His followers are known as Gaudiya Vaishnavas.

Chakras Energy centers in the body. Literally means ‘wheel’ based on the experience of mystics who perceived these energy centers as whirlpools of energy. There are seven major *chakras* along the spine: *muladhara*, *swadhishtana*, *manipuraka*, *anahata*, *vishuddhi*, *ajna* and *sahasrara*.

Chakshu Energy behind the power of sight.

Chandogya Upanishad

One of the oldest and primary *Upanishads* or scriptures.

Charles Leadbeater Theosophist..

Chidambaram A place in South India famous for its ancient temple dedicated to enlightened master Shiva in his dancing form as Nataraja and where he is represented as the space energy.

Chin mudra Palms upraised with thumb and forefinger forming a circle and other three fingers outstretched.

Chitta Memory.

Chittakasha The middle part of the three space or *akasha* definitions. First is *ghatakasha* or the physical space. *Mahakasha* is the third infinite space of Consciousness.

Christianity Religion based on teachings of Jesus Christ.

Cleve Backster A polygraph expert who studied behavior of plants subjected to threats and affection using the lie detector equipment.

Dakshinamurthy Swamigal

Enlightened master from South India.

Darshan Literally ‘sight’, referring to the vision of the divine, a deity or master.

dasa bhava One of the five forms of relationships between master and disciple. *Dasa bhava* refers to the emotional mood of the disciple as a servant in surrender to the master, exemplified by Hanuman’s relationship with Rama.

Dasoham’ Means ‘I am the servant’ signifying surrender to master.

Dattatreya Representation of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in one incarnation.

Deepak Chopra	A medical doctor who writes and teaches spirituality in USA. His works on wellness related to mind-body integration have been bestsellers.
Devi	Supreme goddess in Hinduism, Cosmic Mother.
Dhamma	Representing the teachings of the enlightened master. Buddha spoke of the three elements of his mission, Buddha the master, <i>dhamma</i> his teachings and <i>sangha</i> his community.
Dhammapada	Teachings of Buddha in scriptural form.
Dharana	Concentration. The sixth limb of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.
Dharma	Sanskrit equivalent of the Pali word <i>dhamma</i> used by Buddha. Also translated as 'righteous behavior'.
Dharmo rakshati rakshitaha	A <i>vedic</i> scriptural statement that means: <i>Dharma</i> protects those who protect it.
Dhauti	A <i>yogic</i> practice of cleansing intestines.
Dheera	Courageous person. Term used by Swami Vivekananda in exhorting his followers.
Dhyana	Meditation. Seventh of the eight limbs of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid, the building block of all living beings containing the genetic code.
Dr Charles Townes	Nobel laureate in physics for work related to maser and laser.
Dr. Bruce Lipton	Molecular cellular biologist and author of 'The Biology of Belief', renowned for his seminal work in relating genetics to conditioning.
Dr. Masaru Emoto	Japanese scientist and author of 'The Hidden Messages in Water' showing the effects of one's thoughts and words on water and therefore on living beings.
Draupadi	Princess in the Hindu epic Mahabharata who was married to all five warrior brothers of the Pandava family.
Dukkha ateeta	Beyond sorrow and pain.
Dukkha Harana	'Removal of sorrows' meditation that is part of Nithyananda's Life Bliss Programs. Addresses the root energy center <i>muladhara</i> .
Dvija	Twice born. Refers to the state of awakening of Consciousness.

Electroencephalograph

Machine which uses electrodes attached to the scalp to measure brain wave activity.

Engram Shortened form for engraved memories, referring to value systems, beliefs and conditioning memories that are stored in our unconscious mind, which drive us in our thoughts and actions.

Freudian Referring to teachings of Austrian psychologist and father of modern psychiatry Sigmund Freud.

Gananaatha Refers to Hindu god Ganesha.

Ganas Devotees of enlightened master Shiva.

Ganga The most celebrated river in India, considered holy by all Hindus.

Gayatri mantra Considered to be one of the most powerful *mantras* in the *vedic* tradition, Gayatri was the initiation *mantra* for all young students.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Psychological condition of constant worry leading to stress and fatigue.

George Gurdjieff Greek Armenian mystic and spiritual teacher famous for his principle of Fourth Way, corresponding to the *turiya* state in *vedic* tradition.

Gnana Knowledge.

Gnana shakti Energy of knowledge.

Gnana yogi One who follows the path of knowledge for Self Realization.

Goddess Saraswati Hindu goddess of learning

Gomukh Source of river Ganga.

Gopis Women who tended cows who were devotees of enlightened master Krishna.

Guru Spiritual master.

Guru Granth Sahib Scripture of the Sikh religion.

Guru Krupa Compassion of the master.

Guru Nanak Founder of Sikh religion.

Guru puja Ritual worship of the master.

Gurukul *Vedic* educational institution.

Gurus	Spiritual masters.
Haasya Dhyana	Laughter meditation.
Hamsa Mantra	Also called <i>soham mantra</i> , it is practised by intoning ‘hmmm’ while inhaling and ‘sssooo’ while exhaling.
Hanuman	The monkey god revered by Hindus and a disciple of Rama.
Hara	Seat of the soul in Japanese tradition, corresponds to <i>swadhishthana chakra</i> or subtle energy center related to fear.
Hatha Yoga	A form of Yoga developed by Yogi Swatmarama focusing on the physical aspects of Patanjali’s <i>ashtanga yoga</i> .
Himalayas	The mountain range that separates Indian sub continent from Tibetan plateau and home of the tallest peak Mount Everest. In Sanskrit means the temple of snow.
Hinduism	Religion of most Indians. Developed from the <i>vedic</i> principles of <i>sanatana dharma</i> , the eternal law, that gave rise to other religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism etc.
Hindus	Followers of Hindu religion, estimated at over a billion people.
Homas	<i>Vedic</i> rituals to connect to the elemental energy of fire.
Hoo kara	<i>Hoo</i> sound produced from the mouth during exhalation in meditation.
Hreem	<i>Bija</i> or seed <i>mantra</i> relating to feminine energy.
Iccha shakti	Energy of desire. The other two are <i>kriya shakti</i> , energy of action and <i>gnana shakti</i> , energy of knowledge.
Ida nadi	<i>Ida</i> is one of the three major <i>nadis</i> , energy pathways in the body. Arises from the <i>muladhara</i> , root energy center. <i>Ida</i> is the left nadi, ends at the left nostril, is feminine, cool, represents the moon.
Idli	South Indian delicacy, a rice lentil steamed dish.
Issac Newton	Physicist and mathematician, pioneer of classical physics.
Institute of HeartMath	A not for profit organization promoting heart based living.
Isa vasya Upanishad	One of the major and oldest <i>vedic</i> scriptures.

<i>Ishwara</i>	Supreme.
J. Krishnamurthi	Renowned Indian philosopher.
<i>Jagat</i>	Universe.
Jain	Follower of the religion of Jainism.
<i>Jain sutras</i>	Scriptures of Jainism, mainly teachings of Mahavira.
Jalaluddin Rumi	13th century Persian Sufi poet..
<i>Janma marana chakra</i>	Cycle of birth and death.
<i>Japa</i>	Repetition of a <i>mantra</i> or sacred syllable either silently or loudly.
<i>Jataraagni</i>	Inner fire that sustains life.
<i>Jeeva</i>	Usually the imperishable spirit that dwells in all living beings.
<i>Jeevan mukta</i>	A person who achieves liberation from the cycle of birth and death during one's lifetime.
<i>Jeevan mukti</i>	The state of <i>jeevan mukta</i> or who achieves liberation from the cycle of birth and death during one's lifetime.
Jesus Christ	Founder of Christianity.
John C Maxwell	Leadership expert and writer.
John Gardner	Author of many leadership books.
Juliet	Female lead character in English poet Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet'.
Junaid	9th century Sufi master.
<i>Karana sharira</i>	Causal layer, the fifth energy layer in us, corresponding to deep sleep. The source of conditioned memories or engrams.
Kabir	Mystic devotional poet of India.
<i>Kalpataru</i>	Boon-giving tree.
<i>Kalpataru darshan</i>	A meditation darshan program of Nithyananda.
<i>Kamandalu</i>	Water pot carried by Hindu monks.
<i>Kapha</i>	One of the three <i>doshas</i> or attributes of the body in <i>Ayurveda</i> . Energy related to the elements of water and earth. <i>Kapha</i> is structure and lubrication.

Kapilavastu	Kingdom where enlightened master Buddha was born.
Karma	The <i>vedic</i> concept of one's freewill actions deciding one's destiny.
Karma bandha	Bound by one's actions, since they are performed with vested interests.
Karma mukta	Free of one's actions, because they are performed without attachment.
Karma yoga	The path of Self Realization by fulfilling one's responsibilities without attachment.
Karmic	Referring to <i>karma</i> .
Karurar	South Indian mystic saint upon whose immortal remains, the temple at Tanjore is believed to have been built.
Kathopanishad	One of the major <i>Upanishad</i> or scriptures that features the interaction between Yama, Hindu god of death and a young boy Nachiketa.
Kayakalpa	Body rejuvenation and anti ageing technique of <i>ayurveda</i> , traditional Indian system of medicine.
Keertans	Devotional songs.
Khalil Gibran	20th Century Lebanese American poet best known for his 'The Prophet'.
King Harishchandra	Legendary Indian ruler who was renowned for keeping his word at whatever cost.
King Janaka	Indian king of the kingdom of Videha with the capital of Mithila, well-known for his righteousness.
Kirlian photography	High voltage photograms used to record auras of living beings.
Konganavar	Hindu saint and disciple of Bogar, upon whose immortal remains, Tirupati temple is said to have been built.
Koshas	Five energy sheaths around the physical body. Described in detail in the <i>vedic</i> text, Taittreya Upanishad.
Krishna	Enlightened master from India who delivered the Truths of the Bhagavad Gita.
Kriya	Action.
Kriya shakti	Energy of action. Other two energies are energy of desire and energy of knowledge.

<i>Kshana</i>	Interval between two thoughts.
Kuchela	Childhood friend of enlightened master Krishna who exemplifies the relationship of friendship between master and disciple.
<i>Kulaarnava Tantra</i>	Ancient literature said to be authored by enlightened master Shiva.
<i>Kumbh Mela</i>	Spiritual gathering which happens once in three years in India at one of the four places of Prayag, Hardwar, Ujjain and Nasik on the banks of sacred rivers.
<i>Kundalini shakti</i>	Extraordinary potential energy which is hidden inside every human body. If it is awakened, it will take you to a different plane of consciousness or existence.
Kunti	In the Hindu epic Mahabharata, the mother of the five Pandava brothers who stood for righteousness.
Lamas	Buddhist monks.
<i>Leela</i>	Divine play, especially that of Krishna.
Rama	Prince of the kingdom of Ayodhya in the Indian epic Ramayana.
<i>Madhura bhava</i>	The relationship of beloved between master and disciple.
<i>Madhyapantha</i>	‘Middle Path’ prescribed by enlightened master Buddha. It represents the power of witnessing that causes one to be in moderation without being pushed and pulled into extremes of emotions.
Madurai	Temple town in south India. A major pilgrim center with the temple to Meenakshi and her consort Sundareshwara, an aspect of enlightened master Shiva.
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	Equipment and technique for body imaging providing greater contrast to soft tissues than X rays.
<i>Maha bhava</i>	The ultimate expression in master disciple relationship transcending all ordinary relationships.
<i>Mahabharata</i>	The Hindu <i>itihasa</i> or epic whose central characters are the five Pandava princes, their hundred Kaurava cousins and enlightened master Krishna.
<i>Mahakaasha</i>	The third space of the infinite beyond.

<i>Mahamantra</i>	Humming meditation that energizes the <i>anahata chakra</i> and taught as part of Nithyananda's Life Bliss Programs.
Maharishi Mahesh Yogi	20th Century Indian spiritual teacher and promoter of transcendental meditation TM.
<i>Mahavakya</i>	Great sayings from the Upanishads. There are four: <i>Aham Brahmasmi, Tat Tvam Asi, Ayam Atma Brahma</i> and <i>Prajnanam Brahma</i> . All four mean that You are the Divine.
Mahavira	Vardhamana Mahavira was the 24th and last <i>tirthankara</i> or enlightened one, and established the tenets of the religion of Jainism, founded in India and now practiced by millions worldwide.
<i>Mamakar</i>	Inner ego that constantly says that you are smaller than what you think you are.
<i>Manas</i>	Mind.
<i>Manasa sharira</i>	Mental layer of energy.
Manickavasagar	One of the 63 Nayanmars, devotees of enlightened master Shiva from Tamilnadu.
<i>Manipuraka chakra</i>	Subtle energy center located near the navel region, related to the emotion of worry.
<i>Manomaya kosha</i>	The third mental energy sheath in the five <i>koshas</i> or energy sheaths.
<i>Mantra</i>	Literally means 'that which shows the way'. Sacred syllables that have a powerful positive vibrational effect.
Mara	The demon of evil in Buddhist tradition.
Maslow	American psychologist famous for his concept of the five layered hierarchy of needs.
<i>Matru bhava</i>	The relationship of a child to a mother in the context of master disciple relationship.
<i>Maya</i>	Literally 'That which is not'. The concept that life is but a dream, however real it may seem while being experienced.
Meenakshi	The goddess at Madurai in south India. She is said to be a saint upon whose immortal remains, the temple has been built.

Meerabai	Princess of Chittor, a devotee of Krishna, mystical poetess and singer, who was ill-treated by her husband for her devotion to Krishna.
Milarepa	Tibetan Yogi and disciple of Tibetan Buddhist teacher Marpa.
Mithyam	Impermanent, opposite of <i>nithyam</i> which is eternal.
Mithyananda	Someone who represents and teaches impermanent happiness.
Moksha	Liberation through Self Realization.
Mrutyunjaya	Chant for victory over death.
Mudra	Signs formed with hands during yoga practices, especially meditation, to distribute and seal energy within the body.
Mukti	Liberation through Self Realization
Muladhara chakra	Subtle energy center at the root of the spine, related to the emotions of greed and lust.
Muruganar	A disciple of enlightened master Ramana Maharishi and Tamil poet who composed many verses about Ramana.
Na maha	'I am not' or 'I surrender'. Most Hindu ritual <i>mantras</i> end with this statement.
Nalanda	A great Buddhist center of learning in modern day Bihar in India comprising a university and library.
Namaskar	Hindu custom of greeting. Means 'I bow to you'.
Namo	Homage, refers to masters and deities as in <i>Om namo narayanaya</i> , with reference to Vishnu.
Namo Arihanta	I bow down to Arihanta, the Jain master and deity.
Narmada	Fifth largest Indian river starting from Vindhya Hills in central India flowing east to west joining the Arabian Sea.
Nataraja	Enlightened master Shiva in the dancing form in the temple of Chidambaram in south India.
Nawab	A noble of the Mogul empire.
Nayanmars	Tamil devotee saints of enlightened master Shiva, 63 in number, whose life stories are told in the book Periya Puranam.
Neti	Nasal cleansing technique of yoga.

Neuroplasticity	Changes in brain structure based on experiences.
<i>Nidra devi</i>	Goddess of sleep.
Nile	The longest river in the world flowing through Sudan, Egypt etc in Africa.
<i>Nirvana</i>	Liberation through Self Realization.
Nirvana Shatakam	A collection of six verses sung by enlightened master Adi Shankara at the age of eight to introduce himself to his master, Govindapada.
<i>Nirvanic</i>	Connected to <i>nirvana</i> . The <i>nirvanic</i> layer is the seventh and final energy layer in our body mind.
<i>Nithya ananda</i>	Eternal Bliss.
<i>Nithya Dhyaan</i>	Meditation developed by Nithyananda as the daily meditation for his followers.
<i>Nithya mukta</i>	Eternally liberated person.
<i>Surya Namaskar</i>	One of the techniques taught in Nithya Yoga, taught by teachers ordained by Nithyananda
Nithya Yoga	Nithyananda's teachings of yoga based on the body language of Patanjali, taught by his teachers.
<i>Nithyam</i>	Eternal.
<i>Nithyananda Spurana</i>	Eternal flowering of bliss.
<i>Niyama</i>	The second limb of Patanjali Ashtanga Yoga, concerning codes of behavior.
Oedipus and Electra complexes	Sexual desire of father to daughter and mother to son as defined by Freud.
<i>Om</i>	The sacred syllable and symbol that represents creation in Hinduism.
<i>Omkaara</i>	The sound of Om.
P.D.Ouspensky	Russian philosopher, mathematician and student of enlightened master George Gurdjieff.
<i>Pancha kriyas</i>	The five activities of a divine being: creation, sustenance, rejuvenation, creating illusion, removing illusion.
Pandavas	The five princes in the Hindu epic Mahabharata. Their father was Pandu.

<i>Parabrahma</i>	Supreme Being.
<i>Parama Shiva</i>	Supreme.
<i>Paramahamsa</i>	Literally means Supreme Swan. Title bestowed on enlightened beings.
Paramahamsa Yogananda	An enlightened master well known for his book 'Autobiography of a Yogi'. He founded Self Realization Fellowship movement in USA in 1920.
<i>Paramasthiti</i>	Supreme state.
Patanjali	A sage of ancient India and author of Yoga Sutras, which is considered the foundation of the system of yoga.
<i>Periya Puranam</i>	A Tamil classic by Sekkizhar on the lives of the 63 Nayanmars, the devotee saints of enlightened master Shiva.
Peter Drucker	Management guru considered to be the father of modern management
<i>Pindanda</i>	Individual microcosm as against <i>brahmanda</i> or universe.
<i>Pingala nadi</i>	<i>Pingala</i> is one of the three major <i>nadis</i> , energy pathways in the body. <i>Pingala</i> ends in the right nostril, is hot and masculine, represents the sun.
<i>Pitta</i>	One of the three <i>doshas</i> or attributes of the body in <i>Ayurveda</i> . Energy created by the dynamic interplay of water and fire. They cannot change into each other, but they modulate or control each other and are vitally required for the life processes to occur.
Placebo	A substance given as medicine but without any verified therapeutic effect.
Placebo effect	Effect of placebos in curing people of illnesses.
Polygraph	Lie detector machine.
<i>Pondicherry</i>	A state in South India neighboring Tamilnadu.
<i>Poornima</i>	Fullmoon day.
<i>Prana</i>	Life energy or life force.
<i>prana sharira</i>	The second layer of energy body in the seven layer system.
<i>Pranamaya kosha</i>	The second sheath of energy in the 5 layer <i>kosha</i> system.
<i>Pranayama</i>	Breath control, one of the eight limbs of the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali.
<i>Pranic</i>	Related to <i>prana</i> or life energy.

<i>Prarabdha</i>	Mindset and desires that we bring into this world when we are born.
<i>Pratyahara</i>	Fifth limb of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga referring to turning away from sensory inputs.
<i>Puja</i>	Hindu ritual worship.
<i>Purashcharanam</i>	Repetition of <i>mantra</i> .
<i>Purusha</i>	In Sankhya philosophy it is the male principle pure passive consciousness, as different from the active female principle <i>Prakriti</i> .
<i>Purusha Suktam</i>	A <i>vedic</i> chant dedicated to <i>Purusha</i> or the Supreme.
<i>Quantitative Electro Encephalography</i>	Study of brain waves.
<i>Radha</i>	Chief among the <i>gopis</i> or cowherd women devotees of enlightened master Krishna.
<i>Raja sannyasi</i>	King amongst monks.
<i>Rajas</i>	One of the three <i>gunas</i> or attributes of nature. Attribute of aggression.
<i>Rama</i>	Prince of the kingdom of Ayodhya in the Indian epic Ramayana.
Ramakrishna Paramahansa	Enlightened master from West Bengal in India. His chief disciple was Swami Vivekananda.
Ramana Maharishi	Enlightened master, based in Tiruvannamalai in South India. He taught the method of Self-inquiry, asking oneself, 'Who am I?', as the path to Self-realization.
<i>Ramana Purana</i>	Stories about enlightened master Ramana Maharishi.
Ramanuja	Founder of the <i>Vishishtadvaita</i> or modified duality principle. Along with Adi Shankara and Madhva, considered to be one of the three great teachers of Hindu philosophy.
Ramayana	Hindu <i>itihasa</i> or epic about prince Rama. The original version was written by poet sage Valmiki.
<i>Ras Leela</i>	The spiritual interaction of enlightened master Krishna with the <i>gopis</i> or cowherd women devotees.
Rene Descartes	French philosopher scientist famous for his saying 'I think, therefore I am'.

Rishis	<i>Vedic</i> sages
Romeo	Male lead character in English poet Shakespeare's play 'Romeo and Juliet'.
Rudraksh	Seed of a tree used for Hindu rituals and for wearing. Retains energy of meditation.
Sadashiva Brahmendra	18th century Tamil saint and music composer.
Sadasoham	I am always Brahman. I am always conscious.
Sadhana	Spiritual practice.
Sahaja	Spontaneous divine joy.
Sahasrara chakra	The seventh and final energy center at the crown of the head. Considered to be a gateway rather than an energy center.
Sakha bhava	Mode of friendship between master and disciple as with that of Arjuna and Kuchela with Krishna.
Sakshi	Witness.
Salem	A city in Tamilnadu.
Samadhi	The eighth and final limb of <i>Ashtanga Yoga</i> , refers to the uniting of the individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. Same as <i>moksha</i> , <i>mukti</i> , <i>nirvana</i> etc.
Samhara	Dissolution.
Samsara	Cycle of birth and death.
Samsara sagara	Ocean of birth and death.
Samsari	One who is caught in <i>samsara</i> or cycle of birth and death.
Samskara	Engrams or deeply engraved memories.
Sanchita	Bank of accumulated <i>karmas</i> from which we choose to bring into this birth a few as <i>prarabdha karma</i> .
Sangha	Community.
Sankalpa	Vow or promise.
Sannyas	Renunciation.
Sannyasi	One who has renounced, a monk.

Saris	One piece garment worn by Indian women.
Satan	Representation of evil.
Satori	High state of consciousness.
Satsangs	Gatherings for prayer, meditation and spiritual purpose.
Sattva	One of the three <i>gunas</i> or attributes of nature. Attribute of passive action.
Self	Individual spirit, that which is imperishable when body and mind perish.
Self-Realization	Awareness that one is the Cosmic energy.
Shaastra	Scriptures.
Shaastra-shastras	Scriptures as tools.
shakti	Energy.
Shakti	The supreme female principle, Cosmic Mother.
Shakti Dharana	A meditation taught by Nithyananda to all Nithya Spiritual Healers.
Shanmukhi Mudra	A <i>mudra</i> in which eyes, ears, nose and mouth are covered while meditating.
Shastra	Weapon
Shirdi Sai Baba	An enlightened master worshipped by Hindus and Muslims alike. Lived in Shirdi near Nasik in India.
Shiva	Enlightened master from India. The word <i>shiva</i> literally means ‘causeless auspiciousness’.
Shiva lingas	Representation of enlightened master Shiva as a symbol of rejuvenation combining male and female principles.
Shiva Sutras	A collection of teachings of Shiva in epigram form as techniques. Includes Vignana Bhairava Tantra, Guru Gita, Tiru Mandiram etc.
Shiva Tandava	Cosmic dance of Shiva as Nataraja, seen in Chidambaram.
Shraddha Saburi	Sincere commitment and perseverance. The essence of Shirdi Sai Baba’s teachings.
Siddha	One who is a practitioner of the spiritual techniques.
Siddhis	Yogic powers that arise during spiritual journey.
Sister Nivedita	Anglo Irish disciple of Swami Vivekananda.
Socrates	Greek Philosopher. Contemporary of Plato..

<i>Soham'</i>	Same as <i>Hamsa</i> .
Sufi	Mystical dimension of Islam.
Sufis	Followers of Sufism, a mystical dimension of Islam.
Sufism	Mystical dimension of Islam.
<i>Sushumna naadi</i>	<i>Sushumna</i> is one of the three major <i>nadis</i> , energy pathways in the body. Arises from the <i>muladhara</i> , root energy center. <i>Sushumna</i> is the central pathway of the <i>kundalini</i> energy and ends in the <i>sahasrara</i> at the crown of the head.
<i>Sushupti</i>	Deep sleep.
<i>Sutra</i>	Spiritual techniques offered in epigram form.
<i>Svadharm</i>	One's right path.
<i>Swadhishtana chakra</i>	Spleen energy center between base of spine and navel. Blocked by fear.
<i>Swami</i>	A honorific term used for a sannyasi, a monk.
Swami Sri Yuktेश्वar Giri	Master of enlightened master Paramahansa Yogananda.
<i>Swapna</i>	Dream.
<i>Taittreya Upanishad</i>	One of the major <i>Upanishads</i> or scriptures that explains the concepts of the five elements and five <i>koshas</i> or energy sheaths.
Takshila	A center of learning mentioned in the Hindu epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, now a world UN heritage site in North eastern Pakistan.
<i>Tamas</i>	One of the three <i>gunas</i> or attributes of nature. Attribute of inaction.
Tanjore art paintings	Devotional paintings from South India that use semi- precious stones and gold as adornment.
<i>Tantra</i>	Technique. A form of spiritual teaching that predates Vedas.
<i>Tantra</i>	Ancient <i>vedic</i> tradition of achieving enlightenment through spiritual techniques or practices, meditations and ritual worship.
<i>Tapas</i>	Spiritual penance.

<i>Tat tvam asi</i>	One of the great Truths meaning ‘That Art Thou’.
<i>Tathata</i>	Suchness.
Thanjavur	Town in South India famous for its massive temple and learning and cultural heritage.
<i>Pratyakatma chaitanya jagrat</i>	Awakening of the Consciousness and inner Self.
Tirupati	Famous temple to Vishnu as Venkateshwara or Balaji in Andhra Pradesh, South India.
<i>Tiruvannamalai</i>	Temple town where Nithyananda was born and raised.
Transcendental Meditation-Sidhi	Yogic powers said to occur upon practice of advanced TM techniques.
Transcendental Meditation™	Meditation technique popularized by Mahesh Yogi.
<i>Turiya</i>	Fourth state of consciousness in which there are no thoughts and only awareness.
Tyagaraja	18th century south Indian Carnatic music composer.
<i>Upanishad</i>	Scriptures that form the essence of the ancient texts of the Vedas. Literally means ‘sitting with the master’. There are eleven main <i>Upanishads</i> that have been commented on by enlightened master Adi Shankara.
<i>Vaastu Shastra</i>	<i>Vedic</i> science of space, how we interact with the space around us.
<i>Vajrasana</i>	A Yoga <i>asana</i> posture of sitting with the knees folded and your feet tucked under, with the bottom resting on the heels.
<i>Vak</i>	Energy behind speech.
<i>Vakya</i>	Statement.
Vali	Monkey King in the Hindu epic Ramayana who is killed by prince Rama.
<i>Vanaprastha sannyas</i>	The third stage of life according to the <i>vedic</i> tradition, where the wife and husband lead the rest of their married life in spiritual activities in pursuit of the ultimate Truth.
<i>Vasana</i>	Mindset.

Vasudeva Kutumbaha

Statement of Krishna meaning ‘The world is my family.’

Vatha

One of the three *doshas* or attributes of the body in Ayurveda. Energy conceptually made up of the elements ether and air. The proportions of ether and air determine how active *vatha* is.

Vatsalya bhava

Master disciple relationship in which the disciple sees the master as a child, as with mother Yashoda and child Krishna.

Vedas

Ancient scriptural texts explaining the deep spiritual Truths. There are four main Vedas – Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. These texts explain about the performance of sacrifice and consist of stories and chants. The Vedas are considered to be revelations of the Truths that happened to the mystics and seers.

Vedic

Referring to Veda or ancient scriptures.

Veera

Bravery.

Vijnanamaya kosha

Visualization sheath, the fourth *kosha* or energy sheath.

Vipassana

Teaching of enlightened master Buddha to look inwards by observing breath.

Vishnu

Sustainer in the Hindu Trinity of gods.

Vishuddhi chakra

Chakra or subtle energy center in the throat region. Locked by comparing ourselves with others.

Vivekachoodamani

Enlightened master Adi Shankara’s philosophical work.

Vivekananda

Primary disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Founder of the Ramakrishna Order. 19th century Eastern mystic considered a key figure in spreading awareness of Hinduism and Yoga in Europe and America.

Warren Bennis

Management and leadership consultant.

Yaksha

Demigod who according to Hindu mythology guards wealth.

Yama

Hindu god of death and justice.

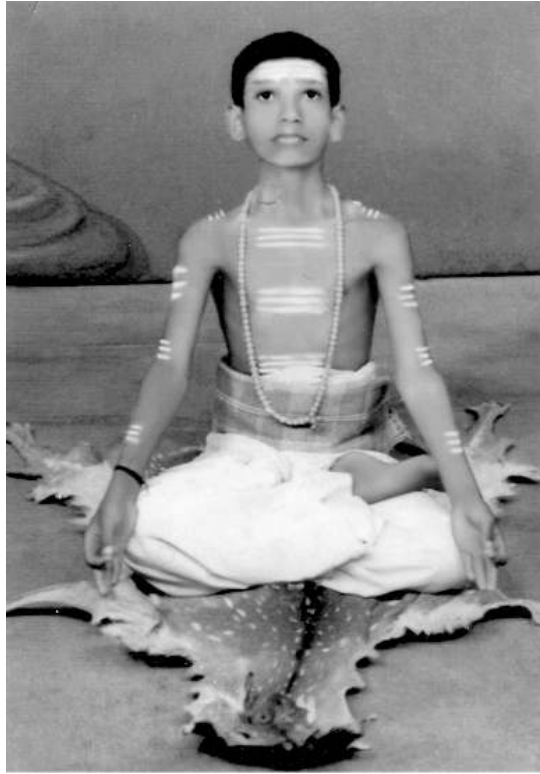
yama

The first limb of Ashtanga Yoga comprising observance of the five principles of *satya*(truth), *ahimsa*(non-violence), *asteya*(non-stealing), *aparigraha* (minimal possessions) and *brahmacharya* (celibacy).

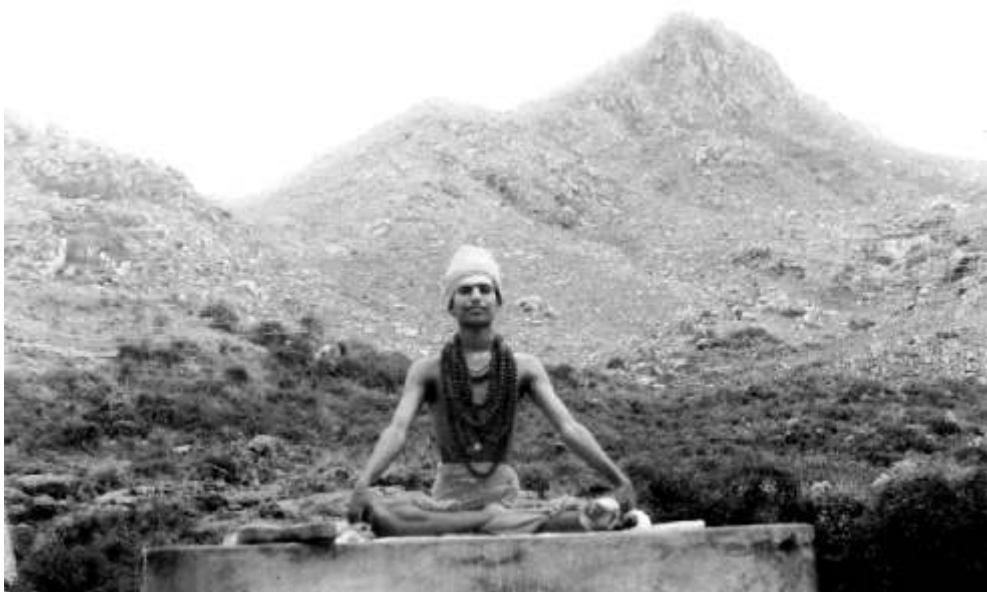
Yamuna

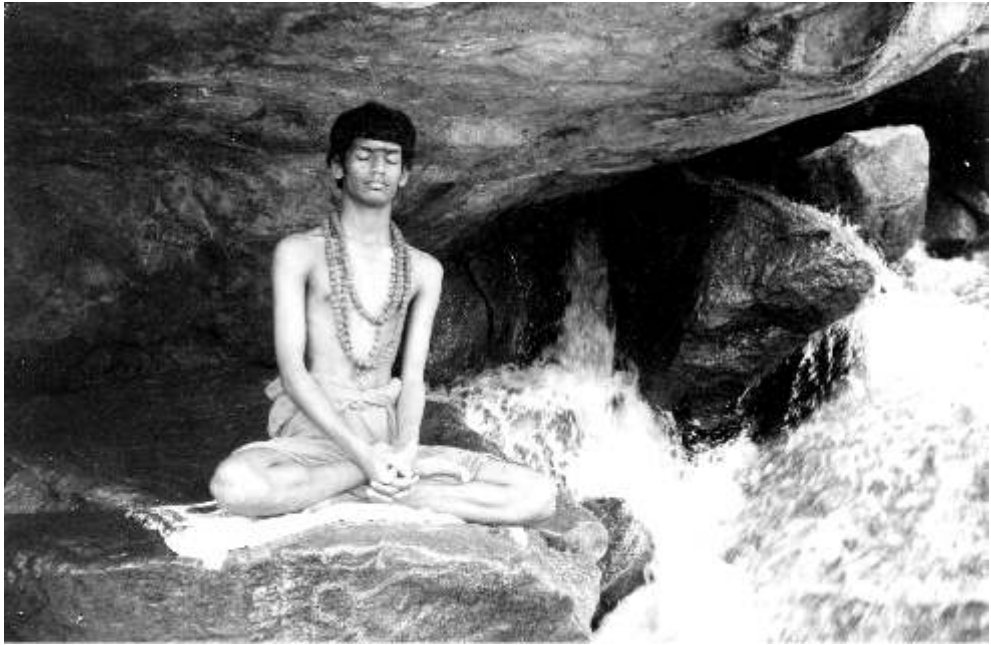
A holy Indian river associated with enlightened master Krishna.

Yantra	A device, usually a metal plate that is energized, used in spiritual practices.
Yashoda	Foster mother of enlightened master Krishna.
Yoga	Literally means ‘uniting’ of body-mind-spirit.
Yoga Sutras	The book on yoga authored by enlightened master Patanjali.
Yogaha chitta vritti nirodhaha	The second verse of Yoga Sutra: Yoga is stopping of the mind.
Yudhishtira	The eldest of the five princes of the Pandava family in the Indian epic Mahabharata.
Yukti	Clarity to know what needs to change and what needs to be accepted.
Zazen	Sitting meditation in Zen.
Zen	Japanese Buddhist practice. Derived from <i>dhyana</i> , meditation.
Zen koans	Riddles given as techniques in Zen to aid Self Realization.



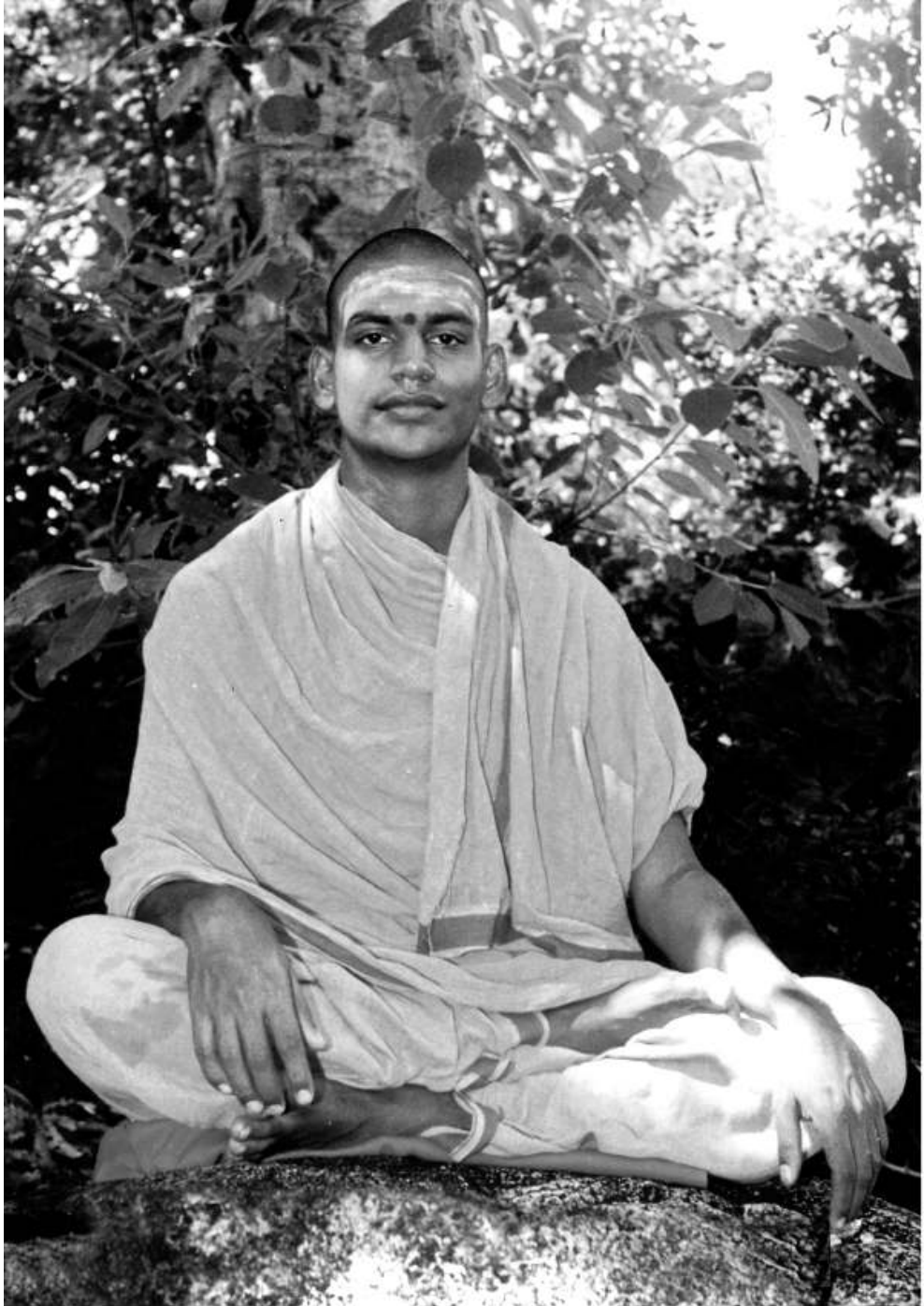
Nithyananda was intense in his spiritual quest right from a very young age. As a young boy, he did various spiritual practices in the energy field of Arunachala.





Nithyananda as a young intense seeker







Addressing the Madras Management Association, Chennai, India on 'Enlightened Management - Lord Krishna's way'



Nithyananda personally conducts meditation programs from basic to advanced levels, attended by thousands worldwide



Nithyananda has delivered many breakthrough messages giving solutions for the issues faced by the corporate world. These corporate programs have been conducted in corporate organizations like Microsoft, AT&T, Qualcomm, JP Morgan, Petrobras, Pepsi, Oracle, etc



Nithyananda personally conducting a meditation program. Ordained teachers also conduct yoga and meditation programs. These have touched over 2 million people to date including children, youth, those in rural areas, prison inmates, etc.



Nithyanandam, an advanced meditation program, at the Bidadi ashram in India, in December 2005



Life Bliss Meditation Program Level 2 attended by thousands of students at a college in South India



Kalpataru program in Malaysia, 20 November 2008



Addressing a large satsang in Tiruvannamalai, India, 21 December 2008
Satsangs are blissful gatherings of people to help them grow on the spiritual path.



Nithya Dhyaan, a 3-day meditation program in Bengaluru, India, December 20-22, 2007

Nithya Dhyaan or Life Bliss Meditation is a powerful and universal meditation working on the body-mind-spirit leading one straight to the experience of living enlightenment.



The first Inner Awakening program, a 21-day program giving the keys to live enlightenment, held in Bidadi ashram from December 1-21, 2008



First introductory talk on Nithya Yoga delivered to the yoga community in Los Angeles, USA in September 2006



Nithya Yoga is the original Patanjali Yoga re-presented for the modern man. It is not just yoga for physical exercise, but a deep science of preparing the body-mind to hold the experience of living enlightenment.



Teachers' training program, Buckhorn, USA

Nithyananda personally trains and ordains teachers who conduct meditation and yoga programs worldwide



Nithyananda conducts powerful meditation programs which provide both intellectual as well as experiential understandings of the ultimate Truths.

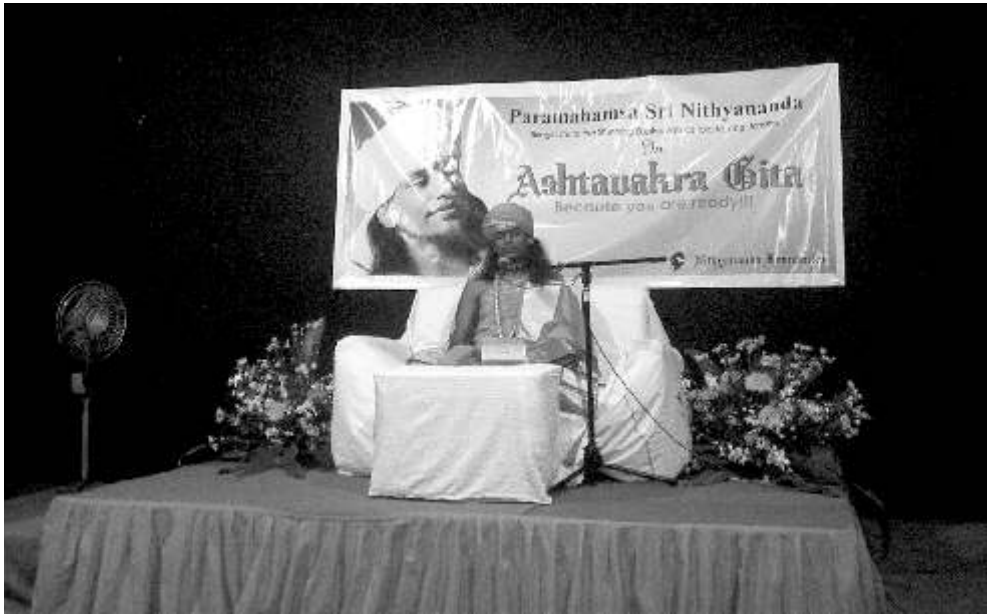


Delivering discourses on the Bhagavad Gita at the Malibu Hindu Temple in Los Angeles, USA, from 4-21 September, 2005



Nithyananda delivered discourses on Shiva Sutras in various locations worldwide in 2007 and at the Bidadi ashram, India in March 2008

Nithyananda has delivered a wide range of discourses from life solutions to the essence of scriptures. His discourses so far include Bhagavad Gita, Shiva Sutras, Jain Sutras, Ashtavakra Gita as well as the deeper truths in the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata.



Delivering discourses on Ashtavakra Gita in Bengaluru, India in November 2005



Delivering discourses on Jain Sutras at the Jain Temple & Cultural Center in Beuna Park, California, USA, March 6 and 7, 2007

Delivering discourses on Shiva Sutras at the Bidadi ashram, India, March 2008





Dhyana Spurana Program session in progress



Nithyananda conducts various specialized and advanced meditation programs for seekers worldwide. These programs not only offer an intellectual understanding but also an experiential understanding as well.



Participating in a book fair in Chennai, India, January 2008

Nithyananda Publishers have published over 200 books in 30 languages, which carry the timeless truths and universal messages being delivered by Nithyananda.



Nithyananda Galleria is the one stop store (also available online and in mobile vans) providing products of Nithyananda Mission – discourses in the form of books and DVDs (over 4700 hours of discourses transcribed, edited and published in-house and made available in stores), lifestyle products, ayurvedic and herbal products.





Free weekly medical camp, Bidadi, India



Nithyananda Mission conducts various service activities for the welfare of people like meditation programs in schools, villages, prison programs, health and awareness camps, general and specialized medical camps, in-house and mobile dispensaries, food donation camps etc.

Health fair, Ohio, 2007

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This channel contains works of Enlightened Master Paramahansa Nityananda. Life Bliss Foundation spreads the message of peace and bliss through individual transformation.

SWAMI'S DISCOURSES ARE NOW AVAILABLE IN DVD AND CD FORMATS OR FOR IPOD DOWNLOADS AT WWW.LIFEBLISSGALLERY.COM.

For more information about Master and His mission, please visit www.DhyanaPeetam.org and www.Nityananda.org.

Swami's discourses in Tamil are now on You Tube at www.youtube.com/DhyanaPeetam.

SWAMI WILL BE TOURING CANADA AND USA BETWEEN MARCH-MAY 2009. HE WILL DELIVER PATANJALI YOGA SUTRAS DISCOURSES AND CONDUCT INTENSE MEDITATION CAMPS. FOR MORE DETAILS VISIT WWW.YOGAW4YOU.ORG.

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 This video clip contained in this playlist contains breakthrough issues presented by Living Enlightened Master Paramahansa Nityananda. [Play All](#) [Share](#)

Meditation Techniques in Videos
 This playlist contains meditation techniques delivered by Living [Play All](#)

Powerful free discourse clips online for free, watched by 8000 people per day from 120 countries. Over 500,000 views on www.youtube.com/LifeBlissFoundation have resulted in Nityananda becoming #1 watched spiritual leader.

It's not hard to say "Atma anantam" (I Am God), I am here to say "Tatvaseva" (You Are God)!

Nityananda
DhyanaPeetam
www.dhyana.org

Vedic Temple
www.vedic.org
www.vedic.org

Life Bliss Foundation
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Nitya Yoga
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International Hindu University
<http://www.hinduuniv.com/>

Nityananda Sacred Arts
www.sacredarts.com

Sri Arambamvara Temple, Bidadi
<http://www.arambamvara.org>

Nityananda DhyanaPeetam, Hyderabad
www.dhyana.org

Nityananda

Nityananda DhyanaPeetam
 It's a worldwide movement for meditation and healing. The foundation has its spiritual headquarters in Bengaluru (Bangalore) India. The advent of Paramahansa Nityananda on planet earth is to create a new cycle of individual consciousness causing Collective Consciousness to enter into the Super Conscious state. To achieve this Nityananda's vision aims to initiate 100 million people into the unique meditation Nitya Shyona and one hundred thousand people to living enlightenment.

Click here for Programs in India
 - Last Updated 03rd February 2009

News/Updates

- Life Solutions
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Light the flame of enlightenment in your being
 71 days only! International Awareness Program

Inner Awakening
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 for people in need

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VOLUNTEER
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The Mission activities can be seen across over 18 websites featuring meditation programs, yoga, education, sacred arts, online shopping and humanitarian services.
 Main website:
www.dhyanaPeetam.org





Encouraging a green Mother Earth



The sacred ancient healing banyan tree in Bidadi, the spiritual headquarters of the Mission, represents the enlightened energy and is a mystical energy hub in the Bidadi ashram.



Accommodation for participants of meditation programs, Bidadi ashram, India

Participants of various residential meditation programs are provided comfortable accommodation in the energy field of the ashram. Dormitory accommodation is also available for program participants and for those who wish to stay in the healing energy field



Vedic temple, Ohio

Over 1200 full-time volunteers run the various ashrams, Vedic temples and mission activities worldwide.



Vedic Temple, Montclair, USA



Hyderabad ashram, India

Nithyananda mission includes numerous ashrams and hundreds of centers worldwide which are 100 percent volunteer based and stand to serve society by providing meditation programs and social services in fields like health and education.



Nithyananda Mission in St. Louis, USA



Nithya Yoga classes are conducted in over 10 countries to date in various places like yoga studios, colleges, bookstores, prisons etc



Free food serving
Nithyananda Food Temples worldwide serve an estimated average of 20,000 meals are served daily.



Common utility items for orphanages

Over 100 service activities have been conducted by the Nithyananda Youth Foundation. These include bread distribution in hospitals, donation of bicycles, school books, bags and footwear as well as scholarships for students, meditation classes, food, rice and clothing distribution, donation of road safety barricades, blood donation camps, donation of artificial limbs, prayer and worship for prosperity, donating household items to orphanages, free counseling, free saplings to encourage the green drive and support to old age homes.



Free bicycles for rural students



Blissful gathering (satsang) of the Nithyananda family in Brazil

An estimated 5000 satsangs have been conducted across 50 countries. The satsangs include free Nithya Spiritual Healing services, discourses, group meditations and counseling.



Blissful meditation group, London



Life Bliss Program Level 3, Guadeloupe led by a senior swami of Nithyananda order

Over 300 ordained meditation and yoga teachers worldwide conduct basic to advanced levels of courses in meditation and yoga.



Life Bliss Program Level 1, New Zealand

Life Bliss Program Level 1,
Dubai



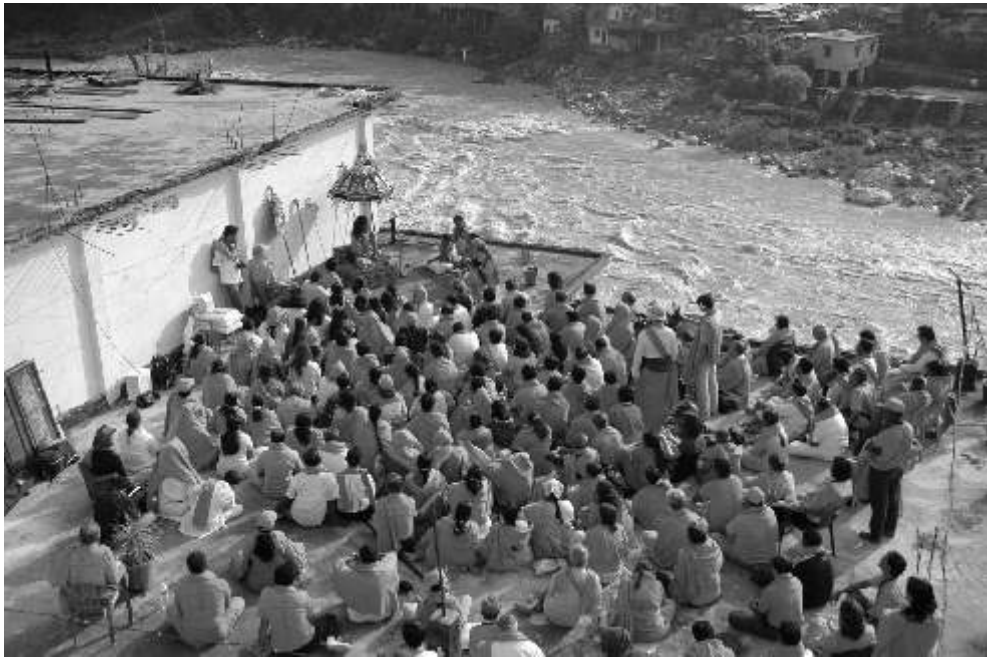


Nithyananda addresses various forums to create awareness of and spread the message of global peace and religious harmony.



Second Kumbh Mela, held in Los Angeles on 9 September, 2007

Nithyananda Mission centers participate in the unique spiritual gathering of Kumbh Mela conducted currently in various locations in India and USA to raise the collective positivity of planet earth.



Yearly Himalayas Yatra

Nithyananda leads people on yatras or spiritual journeys to energy fields like Himalayas, Varanasi, Angkor Wat and so on.



Varanasi yatra, June 2008



Free healing darshan, Bidadi, India, March 1-31, 2008

Nithya Spiritual Healing is a unique science of healing through the cosmic energy. Nithyananda personally heals people and has initiated over 5000 Nithya Spiritual Healers providing free healing service to an estimated 20,000 people worldwide per day.



Addressing a healers' meet at the Bidadi ashram, India
Nithyananda regularly meets various groups of people - volunteers, ordained healers, teachers and devotees at large.



Thousands at the Life Bliss Program Level 2 at an engineering college in India



Mass meditation program, Pondicherry, India

Meditation programs have been conducted in about 30 countries by 300 ordained teachers



Sitting with a group of ashramites in front of the 'Laughing Temple' in Bidadi ashram, India, 2006.

This is the rare gift of upanishad – sitting with the master which can directly lead one to live enlightenment.



Taking classes for the gurukul students

Nithyananda Gurukul revives the unique vedic tradition of gurukul education. It is a modern scientific approach to education combined with the vedic system of learning – protecting and developing the innate intelligence of the child who flowers without repression, fear or peer pressure, into a confident, responsible and fulfilled individual.



Meditation programs in schools and for youth
Thousands of students have benefitted from the specially designed meditation, yoga and memory programs.



Living Enlightenment

(Gospel of Paramahansa Nithyananda)

“
This book contains the essence of all that I have said, am saying, will say, and all that I want to say but may not be able to say...”

‘There is an extraordinary potential hidden inside every human being. If it is awakened it will take you to a much higher plane of consciousness - beyond the limitations of the human body-mind. Experience this superconsciousness, actualize your ultimate potential. This is the only aim of human life – to enjoy the ultimate luxury of living enlightenment.’

- Paramahansa Nithyananda, the living enlightened Master of the 21st century

Topics in this book include:

■ Clear, simple and complete life solutions

- How to overcome guilt?
- What is true love?

■ The Straight Route to Everyday Bliss

- A blissful lifestyle with simple daily meditations and yoga
- Over 100 powerful meditation techniques and everyday awareness practices

■ Rare insights into timeless truths of life

- What is karma?
- What is the purpose of life?

■ Dimensions of the Master

- Who is a Master?
- How can a Master help me realize the Ultimate?

...and more!

About the Author

Paramahansa Nithyananda is a living enlightened Master of the 21st century. His teachings include meditation, yoga and service for the purpose of realizing one's ultimate potential – of transforming from human to divine. Nithyananda Mission stands to spread the message of eternal bliss - *nithya ananda* - throughout the world and thus bring about an enlightened humanity.



Published by Nithyananda Publishers



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