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Hari Om

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TRIBUTES BY GURUBHAIS AND DEVOTEES OF SIVANANDA ASHRAM, RISHIKESH, TO SWAMI SATYANANDA SARASWATI

Satyam, this spiritual jewel, has his own distinctive lustre of serene piety, a calmness and coolness born of courageous strength of will and mind, an earnestness and zeal for sincere, honest work deeply rooted in his pure love and devotional service for the upliftment of mankind in general; a humility and self-effacedness – an outcome of inner light and grandeur of atmic power, a sweetness and affability of disposition at once alluring and captivating. Such a holy one is undoubtedly a pillar of strength to the worldwide edifice of the Divine Life Society.

—Yogiraj Sri Gauri Prasadji, Retd. Judge

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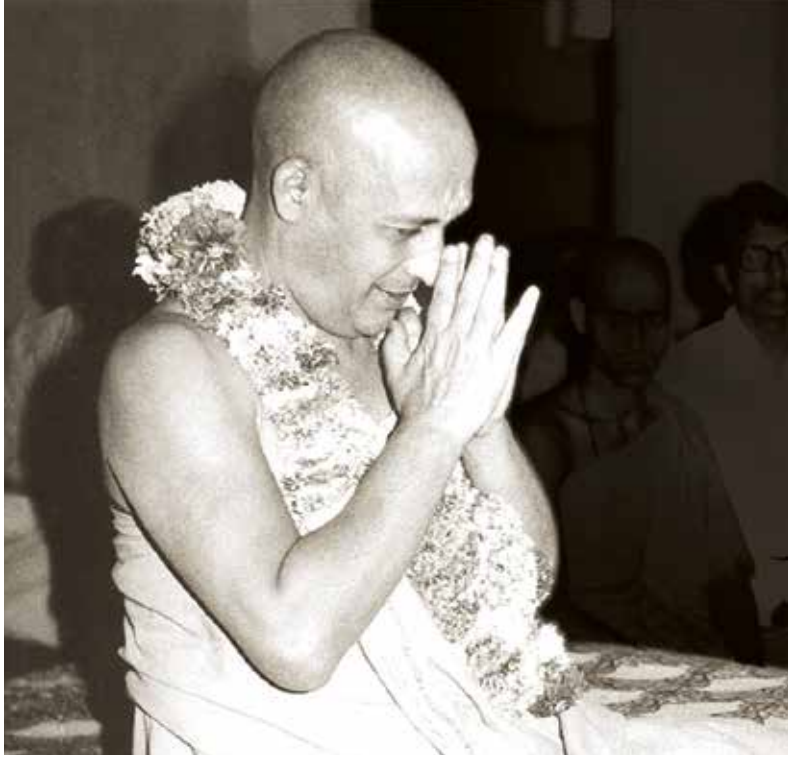
In 2022, YOGA magazine is dedicated to Sri Swami Satyananda's travels through India. This issue presents his talks and satsangs given in the **southern part of India in 1976 and 1982.**

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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

Inauguration of First South India Yoga Convention



This is the first meeting of the First South India Yoga Convention and we are here in order to understand and discover the way to higher experience. Therefore, we will dedicate this conference to the practical aspect of experience or *anubhuti*. In the *Ishavasya Upanishad* it is said in mantra (15):

*Hiranmayena paatrena satyasyaapihitam mukham;
tattvam pooshannapaavrinu satyadharmaya drishtaye.*

A golden disc covers the face of Truth. Oh Sun, remove that lid for the sight of this seeker of Truth.

Even as you close a tin with a lid, in the same way, the inner being or the inner experience is covered by maya. Therefore, we have to rend asunder the veil of maya so that we can see the face of truth as a living reality.

We are used to experience sense objects: *shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa* and *gandham*, sound, touch, form, taste and smell; so for us nothing else has existence. This is the materialistic aspect of philosophy: what we see does exist but what we cannot see does not and cannot exist. I am going to tell you that what you see is non-existent and what you cannot see and do not see is the basis of all experience, is the Self. Therefore, all our sadhana must be directed at having an understanding, an experience, a vision of that truth.

We have to do a lot of work to remove this veil of maya. It is not that easy. Even after the study of the Vedas, Upanishads, shruti, smriti and Puranas, and having the knowledge of the sixty-four vidyas, the disciple comes to his guru, and the guru merely gives him the mantra which he has read thousands of times in his scriptures.

Darshan and its preparation

What you read from the shastras and books is for inspiration; what you hear from your guru in the form of mantra is for enlightenment. Therefore, we have to find out a way for ourselves and the way I told you is to have a vision, which in our system is known as *darshan*. Darshan means 'to see'. I see you, I see everything, I see the sun, the moon, stars, flowers, men and women, so where is the necessity of darshan?

Darshan here means 'inner vision'. When the mind has been withdrawn into *shoonya, nirvichara avastha*, thoughtlessness has dawned, when the senses have been withdrawn, and prana has attained the state of *kevala kumbhaka*, when the pranas have stopped for a moment, then you see yourself in more than one thousand forms. You can realize that in the form of light, *jyoti shyama vidyat*, or you can see it in the form of a deity. That is the ultimate destination of man's existence. It is

for that purpose you have been given this human incarnation, but just by thinking, wishing or wanting we cannot have that experience. There are veils after veils. Some powerful guru may be able to give it to you, he may be able to assist you, but that also depends on the discipleship.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna craved that experience. Krishna first of all discouraged him but Arjuna was insistent. Then Krishna said (11:8):

*Na tu maam shakyase drashtum anenaiva svachakshushaa;
Divyam dadaami te chakshuh pashya me yogamaishvaram.*

But you are not able to behold Me with these, your own eyes; I give you the divine eye; behold My lordly Yoga.

You know what happened? Arjuna had to withdraw his request. He said, 'No I cannot see this!' Therefore, even if a powerful guru can endow you with that vision I think you may not be able to understand it.

It is in this context that the need for yoga comes. For a long time, we were told many things against it. Even now people think that it has something to do with renunciation, with black magic and so on. The practices of yoga, including hatha yoga, will prepare your body and mind, and finally take you to a point where you can have a vision of your atman. This is the topic to which this convention is dedicated and we shall be dealing with many aspects of yoga: hatha yoga, mantra yoga, kriya yoga, laya yoga, raja yoga and bhakti yoga.

We should not misunderstand yoga. In the last few years it has come up as a therapy. I myself use it for therapy, but that is not the purpose of yoga. Yoga therapy is a side effect; it is incidental. Relaxation is a by-product. I am not asking you not to practise yoga for therapy or relaxation. We have to apply the yogic science in every field of life, but in order to bring about a total change all over the world, it will be necessary for us to utilize it for the discovery of the potential or deeper forces within us.

Man's body and mind are not static substances. We are progressing. Mind, body, every element is progressing. In another ten to twenty thousand years, we will have a different vision of life, and if we practise yoga we can accelerate the pace of evolution. What could happen in ten or twenty thousand years can happen in perhaps ten years. The ultimate destiny of man, *jiva*, is to realize his own identity with the *atman* or supreme self. That identity is an experience which can come only when there is a definite awakening in our system. This awakening is known as the awakening of kundalini and that is our inevitable destiny.

Evolution

Even those who do not like this topic, who have been saying that it is risky to awaken kundalini, must remember that it is their ultimate destiny. Man cannot live with this mind forever. We cannot live with this awareness forever. If we were to live with this awareness forever, why talk about evolution? Evolution is going on in every field of our existence and therefore the awakening of kundalini should be sought. In order to awaken kundalini, you must practise yoga and you must teach yoga to your children. Before they are born you must create such a situation in your biological structure that they are born with that spiritual awareness.

Of course we ourselves have missed the bus, but we have the opportunity to produce not merely ordinary children with animal instincts, those who go out to pictures and dance in night-clubs, but children with a greater awareness. It is possible if you can change the molecular structure in your body by the practices of yoga. That is what parents must be taught; and the practices in your religion, in your dharma must be properly organized.

Many things which we have been practising and which we knew in the past, in our dharma parampara, seem to be completely useless because we do not understand them, and our teachers do not tell us what they are for. I will give you a very simple example. At the top of the spinal cord is a gland called

the pineal gland. We call it *rudra granthi*. This gland begins to decay by the time the child attains the age of seven or eight. Then it releases a lock which controls the pituitary body in the frontal brain. This is another name of sahasrara chakra.

When this pineal gland begins to decay and the pituitary gland starts to function, the whole personality of the child undergoes a great change. He develops emotions and passions and loses his contact with the inner world. When the child attains the age of eight or so we give him upanayanam, yajnopavitam, and a mantra with pranayama. The practice of pranayama with mantra and surya upasana helps the child to maintain the health of the pineal gland for a few more years so that the emotional after-effects of the pituitary gland may be delayed for a few more years. This is how we create a balance between experience and emotion.

In religious practices there are many important aspects that relate to the awakening of kundalini and therefore the *saguna upasana*, worship of a form, is very important here. We know that the ultimate form is formless; the reality we are seeking, the experience we want has no form, no name and no categories. We cannot even understand what that is because now we are living in the categories of mind, body and senses. What I understand is totally inadequate and what you understand is also incomplete. After all, you are understanding through your mind whereas that reality is not a subject of the mind.

The *Kenopanishad* says, 'Mind cannot comprehend; the senses do not comprehend'. Do you know the story in the *Kenopanishad*? When the yaksha came, Agni, Vayu, all the elements, wanted to understand what it was. They did not understand and had to come back. Speech and mind are inadequate tools with which to understand, speak, relate, express what that reality is, but we talk about it because we have been told about it by the wise men, the jivanmuktas, the gurus, and sometimes we too have glimpses of it. When we have glimpses of that reality we think that it is there, but the formless reality has no name; it has no form; it has no fixed place.

Within and without

I cannot say whether what you experienced was in you or from outside because this 'within' and 'without' is a finite concept; it is not truth. Where is 'out' and where is 'in'? Sometimes we make a mistake and the mistake is, 'Oh the truth is inside'. What do you mean 'inside'? Is this body in the truth or is that truth in this body? Just think for a while. This is a very limited body – flesh, blood, bone and marrow. It is funny to say that the truth and the reality are within this body. We should have said it the other way, that this body exists in that truth. But we cannot see that truth.

Though He is nameless and formless, speech and other categories cannot comprehend Him, still we need an object. The rishis say, 'You are without form, but in meditation we have imagined a form for You. You are not the subject-matter of speech, but by praying and singing we have made You so. You are all-pervasive, but we have installed You in a particular place. We have made these three errors: without form we have given a form; we have prayed and made You the subject-matter of speech; we enshrined You at one place as a devata in a kshetra. But we have done so in order to climb over the difficulties of mind, to transcend the barriers of maya, otherwise we would not know exactly where we stand'.

When the mind becomes shoonya, who experiences whom? There has to be a basis of substantial and tangible awareness for experience. This total awareness is called atma. The form, the deity on which you meditate, is not physical, though as long as you see it with the eyes, it is. When you close your eyes and visualize that deity within your mind, it is mental, and when, by the practices of yoga your mind is purified and becomes subtle, *sukshma*, then that form is also *sukshma*. When your mind has disintegrated, it has withdrawn, and *atma vritti* dawns in you, still that form exists. That is not *sthoola vigraha*, gross form, that is *chinmaya vigraha*, subtle form. Therefore, the form on which you are meditating keeps on changing according to the change in your awareness.



When you go to a temple and see Rama, close your eyes and withdraw the mind and see Rama, forget your body, mind, name, place, forget even that you are seeing him, but still he is there – that is called darshan. In the state of darshan, there is no mind. *Darshan* means ‘living experience’. If you can see me in your house, if you can see me in your shrine exactly as I am – that is darshan. You can do that, but not now.

Towards transcendental knowledge

Through yoga you can prepare yourself. You can materialize your ishta devata because that purusha which you see enshrined in the temple – you are that, and towards that point we have to strive. All the tapasya, the pooja, the dedication, all your pain and pleasure, all your grihastha dharma, whatever you are doing, must be directed towards attaining that end. That is the central point of Sanatana dharma. It is for this that the Vedas were created. Veda means ‘to know’, not ‘to know through the books’.

There are two forms of knowledge, transcendental knowledge and empirical knowledge. Mathematics, physics, chemistry, geology, astronomy, history are empirical sciences. Transcendental vidya is that by which you can have the experience of the imperishable purusha, and it is for this that the Vedas, shruti, smriti and all such literature was created. Therefore, we are talking about yoga in this conference with that point in mind.

In the last twenty years, Munger has taken yoga around the world. We have not contradicted any purpose of yoga; we have not contradicted any yogic philosophy, system or school. We have not spoken against hatha yoga or jnana yoga,

bhakti yoga or karma yoga because we know that they are all stepping-stones.

Unless your mind is pure, unless you have attained *chitta shuddhi* what are you going to see in dhyana? You will see horrible things because your mind is loaded with suppressions, with tamoguna. You are facing mental problems and aberrations and you are forcing yourself to do dhyana yoga! You are going to see what is there, that's all.

Through karma yoga the chitta must be purified. Through bhakti yoga the *vikshepa*, mental distraction, must be removed. Through raja yoga you must train your awareness. Through jnana yoga you must know what reality and truth are, you should be able to analyze the nature of reality, experience and consciousness. Through mantra yoga you should give proper training to your mind so that it is liberated from *vishaya vasana*, desire for objects. By the practice of laya yoga you should be able to dissolve your mind for the time being. You should also know about kundalini yoga.

For the last twenty years we have been trying to tell people about yoga all over the world and they have accepted it. There are hundreds of sects, half-a-dozen religions in the world, but the purpose is completely lost. They exist today as very powerful organizations but even they do not know what they are talking about. There is no guidance. You read the *Bhagavad Gita*, I read the Bible, he reads the Koran, that is all. Where is the experience? How many times have you been able to jump over your mind? How many times have you been able to materialize a thought into an object, a thought into an event, a thought into a force? We have become so weak! We are just depending on the mind and think that if we have no senses we cannot do anything. But the Upanishads say:

You can see without eyes
You can hear without ears.

– 23 January 1982, Bangalore, Karnataka

The Science of Kriya Yoga

Kriya yoga is a science about which we have ample references in the tantra shastras. The practices of kriya yoga are a combination of pranayama, mudra, bandha and dhyana. About seventeen kriya practices are popular. There are many more but they are not that important because you learn many of them in hatha yoga as propounded in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*. Seventeen of them are very important.

These kriyas are intended first to reverse the amrit from the solar point, the sun, back to the lunar point, the moon. The second point is that these practices are intended to awaken the six chakras - mooladhara, swadisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi and ajna. Third point, these kriyas are intended to awaken sushumna, the nadi which flows between ida and pingala. Fourth point, these kriyas are intended to create a situation in the mind and body where you do not have to concentrate, where you do not have to make an effort to withdraw or pull your mind. Finally, these kriyas are intended to awaken the kundalini in phases.

I am using the term 'in phases' because awakening of kundalini abruptly is very difficult. Experiences which you have of an abrupt awakening of kundalini are very hard to face. You cannot understand what is happening to you. You cannot handle the experiences; this is what I mean. Therefore, these kriyas are intended to awaken the chakras, then sushumna and finally to awaken the kundalini in such a way that you do not have to handle the experiences with great difficulty.

It is called kriyas because every movement, every action is taking place within you, not outside you. Originally these kriyas were forming a part of tantra. Sometime in the Middle Ages, when our system underwent great suppression, tantra got a very bad name. Tantra was abused and misused. People did not even want to know it. So the wise people thought it

was much better to take out the useful portion, and so they took out kriya yoga from tantra.

Why do I say this? For every yoga, raja yoga disciplines must be practised like satya, ahimsa, brahmacharya. For a householder it is not possible to practise everything. If he practises these he is not a grihastha. Maybe there are some householders who could, but most cannot. There are certain things in grihastha ashrama which are very necessary to experience life. The relationship between husband and wife is a natural relationship, it is necessary for your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual progress. Therefore, if you force yourself to practise brahmacharya you might even become sick.

The rishis thought, 'What is the way?' They gradually came to the conclusion that tantra is the way. In tantra, the ordinary behaviour of the grihastha ashrama is acceptable. You understand what I mean when I say ordinary behaviour? Like *vishaya bhoga*, sensual gratification, *dukha*, pain, sentiment, love, passion, greed they are called ordinary behaviour. These ordinary behaviours are acceptable in tantra.

Tantra marga says that whatever you are in the grihastha ashrama - whether you are a sattwic, rajasic or a tamasic grihastha - it does not matter. You practise kriya yoga. When you practise kriya yoga for a few years, what will happen? If you are a tamasic grihastha, you will progress and become a rajasic grihastha. If you are a rajasic grihastha you will make improvement and progress, you will become a sattwic grihastha. When you become a sattwic grihastha, the awakening of kundalini will take place.

Therefore, tantra says do not wait until you become sattwic. If you wait for nature to make you sattwic, it will take you births after births. So practise tantra, kriya yoga, and transform yourself from tamas to rajas and from rajas to sattwa.

– 26 January 1982, Mysore, Tamil Nadu

Satsang



Do we have a choice regarding our destiny?

We have a choice, but choice alone is not enough. There is also *prarabdha*, destiny. A mango is to be born as a mango. It will not become anything else. Paddy will not become wheat, but you have the choice to improve the quality of the paddy by studying the secrets of the natural processes. You can have hybrid. You can do some crossing of this quality and another and produce a third one. That is possible. Choice alone is not enough. Along with the choice you must have the power to enforce your choice. In that case destiny is not totally applicable. People who are infirm by will and imprisoned by their own desires and passions have to accept destiny.

The positive role of vasanas

In the last fifty years, I have seen in different cultures that those people who have exhausted or rather over-used their *vasana*, desires, have developed a spiritual awareness and

those who have not had the opportunity to fulfil their vasana are approaching their vasana now. They are very mad after it. I have also come to see that those people who do not suppress their vasana but who fulfil them, in the course of time develop very keen intellect and intuition. In fact, artists, poets and musicians are very talented, gifted people, but if you see their vasana you will be surprised at them – they are just like animals. After a certain level of fulfilment of vasana, you get a very clear intellect and a very clear insight into things.

If there is no vasana, man will not work. He will not become active. Only a sattwic person has attained a mind where there are less or no vasanas. When one is rajasic or tamasic in evolution one must have vasanas. If a man is lazy and if he does not have desire he will become more lazy. If he has desire he is goaded to work. Vasanas compel him to become active. In the tamasic state, vasanas should be stimulated. In the rajasic state they should be balanced. In the sattwic state they should be gradually eliminated. This is my opinion. How are you going to know if you are sattwic, rajasic or tamasic? It is very difficult to know. Everybody thinks they are sattwic.

There are certain indications by which you can judge whether you belong to a certain category. If you have greed you are rajasic; you cannot say you are sattwic. When you are always involved in some sort of activities or when the mind is restless, never at peace, then these are a few indications by which you can know that you are a rajasic type, rajas is your temperament. How to know that you are tamasic, procrastination, saying that you will do it tomorrow or the day after, laziness and sleep indicate that you are tamasic. When you are aware of dhyana and have inner peace, that is an indication of sattwa.

Utilizing vasanas

When a person is lazy or procrastinating, he should be injected with vasana. Without vasana he is not going to evolve at all. Evolution is from tamas to rajas, not directly to sattwa. First

a tamasic man must change into a rajasic man. The rajasic man should then be changed into a harmonized sattwic man. After that you become *trigunatita*, beyond the three gunas. You cannot transcend the vasanas all of a sudden. Everybody is a mixture, sometimes predominantly rajasic, sometimes a little tamasic, a little sattwic. Very few people are predominantly sattwic.

According to the predominant quality of a person, we should give him the sadhana and the dharma in such a way that either the vasanas are curtailed or fulfilled or stimulated. Vasanas are not out of place. Desires and passions are necessary for man's evolution. If you have a thorn, you take another thorn to take it out and then throw away both. The latent vasanas in the tamasic state should be extricated by vasana. Too much involvement in vasana develops *vairagya*, distaste; if you suppress the vasanas it maintains the taste for it, you have a liking, *raga*, for it. You may not fulfil it in your daily life but you can dream. You may not even dream, you will fantasize. This is called fulfilment.

That is the Hindu dharma, the Sanatana dharma too is like that. Life should be planned in such a way that there is a time when you should fulfil one type of vasana, another time for another type of vasana and another time for a third type of vasana. Children playing games is vasana. The activities after marital life, family, children, is vasana. People opening an ashram or hospital, going to Gangotri or sitting in meditation is also vasana, latent desire.

From vasana springs *iccha* or desire, *lobha* or greed, *krodha* or anger, *kama* or passion, and *moksha* or liberation, and *mumukshutvam*, the desire for liberation and *jijnasa*, the desire to know, are vasanas, but they are positive sattwic desires and necessary for evolution.

In my opinion vasanas should not be suppressed. Never make that mistake, because sometimes while you are trying to suppress your vasanas, you are almost giving a death blow to your personality. What to do about that is also a problem



because all vasanas cannot be satisfied, they are insatiable. There is no end to the gratification of vasanas. Even if you are given the life span of the whole earth to enjoy vasanas, there is no end to them. After some time, vasanas should be sublimated first those of body, family and career.

There are two ways of sublimating vasanas: to do karma yoga and to attain samadhi. These are two methods for sublimating vasanas: in samadhi, the vasanas are burnt completely, in karma yoga the vasanas become dissipated and weak. Then there is a third way which is very difficult: Leave everything to God and let Him do what He likes.

Can happiness and unhappiness in the family be overcome by good acts?

According to Hindu philosophy, *paap* and *punya*, sin and virtue, are relative not absolute. It is relative to society, families, tribes, countries and traditions. Many people eat meat and others do not. Once upon a time they did not eat and then for some time they did. How can you know whether it is paap or punya? If you ate meat are you going to be born as a goat or will somebody kill you? No. There is only one thing which has been said which is the Hindu doctrine of karma.

It is your vasana or desire which is responsible for your reincarnation and your relationship with people that will bring you to some sort of interaction with them in the next life. Supposing a person loved someone, say a sister, and the attachment is too much. Supposing one of them died, they are going to meet again to fulfil that vasana, but not necessarily as brother and sister, it can be as mother and daughter, husband and wife. It is not a concept of paap and punya, it is the concept of fulfilment of desire.

Suppose a person was my enemy and was giving me maximum problems, I did not like him but I could do nothing to him. In the next life we will meet again, not necessarily as enemy or friend. He may be my son or I may become his son and squander all his money so that he may die from a heart attack. I may be born as his wife or brother. It is a question of desires and fulfilling the actions and reactions, fulfilling relations in one life and the next. Supposing I am a disciple, I have a guru and we love each other. We have devotion for each other. Suppose he died. He liked me too much, maybe in the next life he may become my son or my wife just to express that love which was not fulfilled in this life.

We are born in order to work out karmas. In the course of time, we work out the karma and develop vairagya – then we get out of it. The concept of paap and punya is mostly related to society. There are some people who have to be guided by the concept of paap and punya. What was considered bad fifty years ago is considered good today. One hundred years ago, purdah was considered good, wasn't it? Today that is considered bad. Many things change from time to time. They are social traditions which vary according to culture.

In the *Manusmriti* it is called dharma and adharma. There are ten *lakshanas*, characteristics and indications, of dharma in different scriptures – *dashakam dharma lakshanam* – if you have patience, it shows you are virtuous. If you do not get angry it shows you are calm and quiet, it is an indication of your virtuousness. *Kshama*, forgiveness, *asteyam*, honesty, *shaucham*,

purity, *indriya nigraha*, to control the senses from going wrong, these are indications of being virtuous. Dharma does not mean virtuous as understood in English; it means keeping with nature. You are fulfilling the higher qualities of nature. The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks of *devi sampat asuri sampat*, divine quality and demonical quality. The concept of paap and punya came into Hindu philosophy much later with the advent of the Jain and Buddhist philosophy, and with Islam, it is not part of the original vedic philosophy.

Should we take our medicines for diabetes if we practise asanas?

In the beginning one should take one's medication because the effect of asana will take time. The day you start practising asanas nothing will happen. It will take quite some time until your system is used to yoga. When you take medicine and practise yoga, after 15 to 20 days you will find the sugar level falls a little below normal. That is a clear indication.

Pranayama is very good, but has to be practised very slowly after a certain age. The effect of pranayama is on the nervous system, and diabetes is basically a disease of the nervous system and is aggravated by digestive disorders. If the nervous system becomes better, stronger and functions well, diabetes will be all right because the pancreatic glands responsible for insulin are controlled by the nervous system. If there is any irregularity in the nervous system, the pancreas does not give any insulin. Asana, pranayama, relaxation and meditation help the nervous system. Meditation means one-pointed mind. Try to concentrate on anything - a mantra, form, sound, your own body, for ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes at night. Eat only twice a day, not three times or four times.

Having only one idea in the brain all the time is not good, it causes stress. Supposing you are a householder. You have to get your daughter married. From the time she comes of age you have that idea. The whole day, that idea is stressing and stressing. So you should try to break the idea. The life of

a householder is good because you have to attend to so many things, not just one thing, but sometimes one idea catches hold of you and it is always in the mind and you worry too much about it. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, it is said that when you have to discharge your obligations, discharge them without *asakti*, attachment, which is a type of neurosis. There are three qualities: karma, asakti and anasakti, non-attachment. When you are doing karma you should not be involved in it.

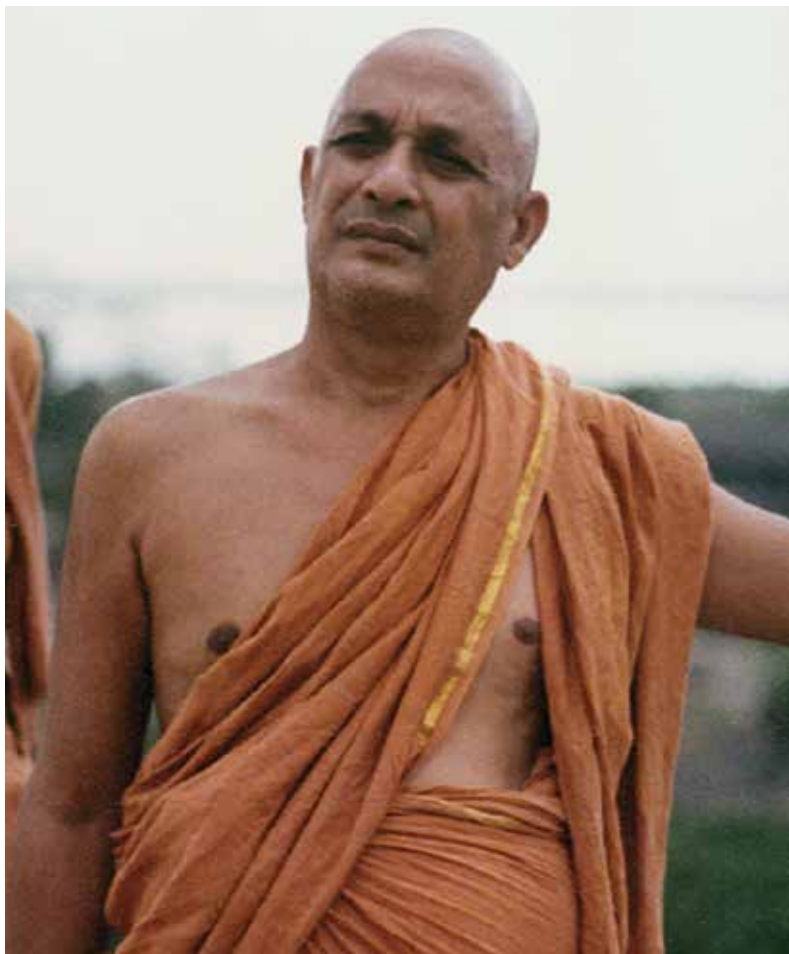
You are in your family or in your profession, you must involve yourself in it. You expect certain results. There should not be asakti with the results or fruits of karma. Karma itself does not cause any problem. You work in a shop or factory. When you involve yourself with the results, they cause worries, anxiety, uncertainty, doubts, fears, and a lot of problems in the nervous system. When you start troubling the nervous system any disease can come. Things start from there.

We have to bring up children and educate them. These are social duties and obligations which are the price we pay for our desires. If we did not have desires, we should not have married. You had a desire and you married; because you married you have children; because you have children you worry. So you have to pay the price for the desires. This is the central teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Karmas themselves do not bind. Karmas do not cause diabetes, blood pressure, heart attack, karmas do not do it. *Karma phalaasha* – expectation of fruit or results does.

All the karmas you do bear two types of result: either *ishtam* or according to your desire, or *anishtam*, against your desire. But whenever you are doing a karma, you are always worried about anishtam. Whatever you do as karma – you have a child, you get married, you get him educated, you send him to England, the daughter is to be married – you are always aware of anishtam never of ishtam. That has an indirect effect on the body, brain and nervous system. Most of the diseases that we are suffering from are due to the absence of right philosophy.

– 6 February 1982, Neyvelli House, Tamil Nadu

Mandalas and Yantras



Are mandalas and yantras part of the vedic tradition or are they exclusively from tantra?

The science of tantra is older than the Vedas. It has always been with man. Even primitive man had concepts. In a society where people were totally primitive someone was able to read someone else's thoughts, or someone had certain psychic

experiences, became clairvoyant, telepathic, or someone was able to influence another's mind, or completely transformed their personality for a period of time and became a different person altogether.

From time to time these things happened as a result of natural processes. It can happen to you at any time, and it can happen to me, because our brain can undergo a total change and suddenly we can behave either like a *rakshasa*, demon, or a *deva*, a divine being. One can immediately give manifestation to intuition due to certain changes that may take place in the brain through natural evolution, and that has always happened, even before the time of the Vedas.

However, the people who explained it did so according to their own limitations. They said, 'Oh, this man has been possessed by a *bhoota*, *preta* or *brahma rakshasa*, a ghost or spirit', or 'Somebody has done something to him'. What does modern science say today about these things? Scientists say it is psychic or abnormal behaviour. During the period of the Vedas, the *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*, investigations went on: some said it was spiritual development.

In tantra, which was developed as a separate science, three things were important: mantra, yantra and mandala. *Mantras* served the purpose of awakening the dormant shakti called kundalini. They were also used to awaken the chakras. *Yantra*, as far as I can understand, need not be intellectually analyzed because the impact of yantra on the inner mind, you may call it the unconscious, is spontaneous. It is not at all an intellectual process. The unconscious mind can react immediately to a particular yantra. Yantras are numerous. We know mostly Tara Yantra, Bagalamukhi Yantra, Rama Yantra, Gayatri Yantra and Sri Yantra.

The gods and goddesses like Rama, Krishna, Durga, Devi are *mandalas*. They are pictorial concepts. I don't mean to say that they did not exist, but was Shiva really like that? Could there have been such a man? Did he really exist in some period of history somewhere in the Kailash mountains in Tibet, was

married once or even twice? Rama was a historical figure and so was Krishna, but does Vishnu really exist in that form? Do Sheshnaga or Ananta exist in that form? Or is that form simply a symbol of a great process taking place within you?

These are some of the questions I don't really like to answer. I have my own views on them. I feel that the concept of Trimurti: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the concept of Shakti: Durga, Lakshmi and Kali, and many others, are very important for us to understand. They relate to the great realities, not only within us but in the macrocosms. These are called mandalas and they help us, not only to improve concentration but also to awaken.

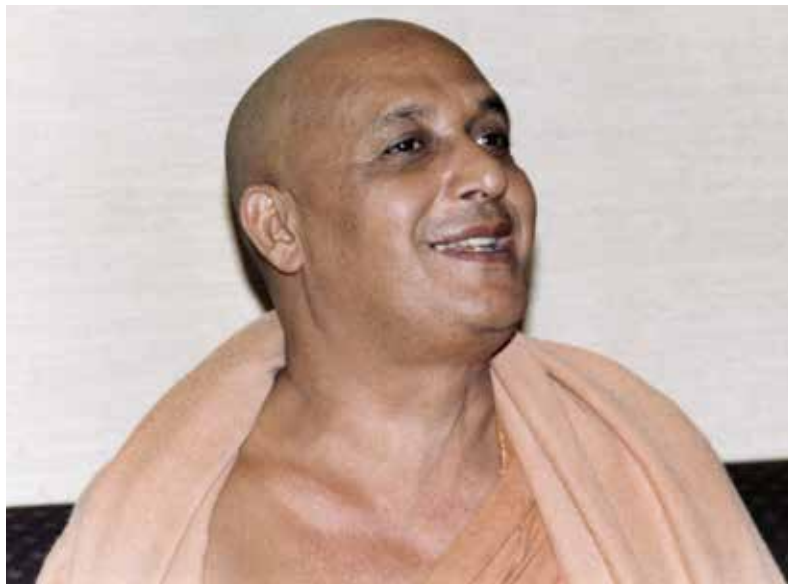
Take this physical body. It is a combination of bones, flesh, marrow, blood, muscles etc. Is this the totality of our existence or do we exist beyond the body also? We do not know because we have no experience of it. At night when we dream we begin to believe, 'Yes, I can exist beyond the body too'. Many times in dreams we think, act and move, but we do not really ask, 'What is this dream indicating?' We must have a clear view about this: whether this existence is final and the only existence, or whether we exist beyond this.

Our minds have evolved to the extent where we are only aware of our physical existence. If you improve your mind and develop your consciousness, and if it changes a little bit, maybe you will become aware of something else. You may call it atma, purusha, or something else. In that case you may even say like the great mahatmas, 'This body is nothing; only the existence of the atma is real'.

So first of all we have to understand that the existence we realize today is just one phase of existence. There are other areas of existence of which we are not aware. We become aware of that phase of existence only if we change our consciousness, our *chetana* – and these mandalas represent the ways to go to these areas or stages of our existence.

– 2 February 1982, Trichy, Tamil Nadu

The Spiritual Aspect of Life



It is neither my intention nor is it possible to appraise you about a great subject which was discovered by your rishis many thousands of years ago and which has recently since three or four decades surprised the man of the technological era. Where the modern medical science has not been able to relieve and the modern science of psychology and psychotherapy has failed, this science has made a way into every land and has completely broken the barriers of cult, creed, religion, nationality including agnosticism. It is a very important subject for all of you to know and to practise.

I have not come here to teach you, not even to inspire you, but to remind you that your country needs citizens first, and everything next. In order to have the quality of citizenship you must have the quality of mind. Man is the mind he has. You project your mind into your daily life and that is what your society is. In order to restructure the mind and personality in

the last few thousand years no other science has been evolved. Western countries have done their level best to develop the personality, but all the sciences have now failed. We have hope in yoga. This will definitely do something good to you and to your community.

It is not merely a set of exercises which you may know as *yogasana* or *hatha yoga*, which is only one branch of yoga not the whole of yoga, and which should be practised. When I talk about yoga, I mean an integral approach, an integral system. All those aspects of yoga which look after the body, mind, emotion and your spiritual life are the practices woven around what you call *dhyana yoga*, meditation. It is the centre, the focus, and it is through meditation that you begin to create a change in the quality of your feelings and reaction.

When we talk about *dhyana yoga* we are definitely talking about the whole yoga. Yoga postures, *asanas*, *mudra*, *bandha*, *pranayama* are all steps to yoga. They should be practised not because they are exercises that give you a lot of dynamism, but because they bring about a change in the order of the hormones and glands in the body. It will be wrong for everybody to understand yoga as a physical training, where you develop biceps and triceps. *Yogasanas* and exercises are two different schools and branches.

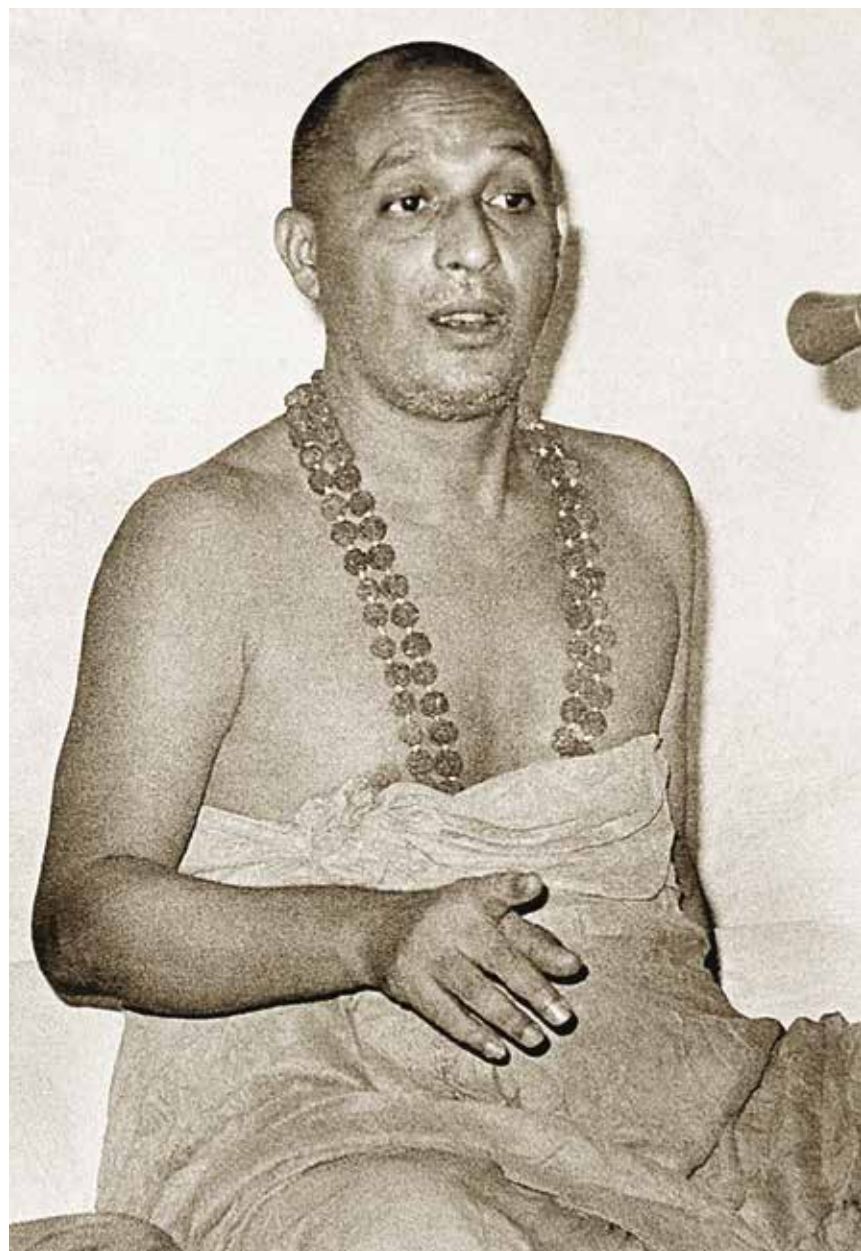
Asanas have immediate effects on the nervous system and endocrine glands, and thereby change the pattern of emotions, fear and anxieties and at times physical sickness also. Those of you who might be having difficulty with your studies, or personal emotional difficulties, or some sort of crisis in your personal character, should remember that there could be a sort of imbalance in the glandular endocrine secretions. Excess of thyroid, adrenaline, or excess of secretions from the posterior pituitary could completely change your personality and make you a criminal or a terrorist. Therefore, your inability to concentrate on studies, or your terrorist nature, timid or cowardly nature could be just an effect of the imbalances in the endocrine system.

How do you correct it? Investigations made so far prove that through the practice of *yogasana* you can eliminate those imbalances. *Sarvangasana* can awaken the dormancy of the thyroid gland. *Shashankasana* improves the adrenal secretion and thereby complexes such as fear of darkness, or respiratory problems are cured.

What is important in *dhyana yoga*? It is not just sitting down quietly or trying to forget everything around you. When you try to meditate or practise *dhyana*, the awareness of the object, the idea and form must be maintained constantly, and you must see that there is no interruption. When there is one idea it is called *ekagrata*, one-pointedness. When there is more than one idea alternating in the mind from time to time it is called *vikshepa*, distraction. When your mind does not at all stick to one idea, but keeps on jumping from one idea to another idea never comes back to the first idea that is called schizophrenia. That is going to be the disease of your century. In order to heal the sick mind, improve the quality of thinking, feeling, intelligence and memory. You will have to select for yourself one object and with that object, you should practise concentration every day at least for ten minutes.

If you find it difficult to concentrate your mind on one object do not fight with yourself, but practise *pranayama*. Many times it is difficult for us. The mind keeps wandering like a wild dog or monkey, you cannot control it. If you try to control it you get a headache, become depressed or full of tension. At that time, you must try to practise *pranayama*. *Pranayama* is a method in which you create certain influences in the brain with the help of breathing.

Pranayama is a breathing technique which seems to have something to do with the lungs and heart, but more than that it has to do with the brain. The breath which you take with the left nostril and the breath which you take in the right nostril, at the time of breathing in and out, create definite movements and vibrations found in the brain. The practices of breathing are a kind of exercise you are giving to your brain, just as you do









exercise for biceps and triceps. The muscles in the brain have to be given some sort of exercise which is provided through pranayama.

Scientific studies have shown that the breath through the left nostril effects the right hemisphere and the breath through the right nostril effects the left hemisphere of the brain. This is just a glimpse I am giving you as to how pranayama can bring about balance in your brain and through that balance you can meditate every day.

I just came here to give you a short message. I have been touring around the world for the last so many years. I move on every day. This is my life. I feel that the world is incomplete without the science of yoga and particularly the modern world, which has developed the external man, the material aspect of life, but has neglected the spiritual or internal aspect of life. People have lost faith in many good things like morality because they ultimately find that it does not pay at all. At this time, when the whole of society in every country and in every religion is facing a crisis, there is one thing that can bring about revival. That is yoga.

Scientists, doctors, educationists, social reformers everywhere talk about yoga and say that the time has come when yoga has to be introduced in our day-to-day life. As a national education you will have to find the way to learn. It is the duty of the elders and wise men of the country to say openly to the people, "Look here, if you want to survive as a human being, if you want your society or nation to survive, then you will have to practise yoga."

Yoga should not be associated with renunciation. There is no renunciation as such. Swami Vivekananda renounced but he worked much more than any professor, teacher, doctor or leader. The people who seem to have renounced the world have actually renounced their personal, petty life. They rededicated themselves to total work, to karma yoga. Yoga is therefore meant for a social and cultural revival.

I practise TM and recently have undergone their advanced siddhi program. But still I am aware of outside sounds.

When we meditate we are dealing with the relationship between three points in personality: the senses, the mind and the spirit or awareness. First the mind has to be detached and isolated from the sensorial channels which is called *pratyahara*. When *pratyahara* has been established and when *chitta* or *chetana* has been isolated and external factors do not disturb the mind anymore, then it has to be concentrated on a point.

When you concentrate the mind on one point there is triple awareness: you, the act of concentration and the object of concentration. Soon after that, this triple awareness dwindles. From time to time there is an object and awareness of yourself, and that happens to be with you for a very long time. Otherwise the awareness of a single object or singular awareness, *ekagrata*, continues.

This *ekagrata*, the singular awareness, continues up to some time, then the object is also withdrawn. You lose the awareness of the object and begin to be aware of yourself. Not the form, not this person in relation to time and space – you can call it ‘*aham*’. *Aham* means cosmic awareness or *atmanubhuti*, it has many names or no name.

It is better to strive on until the point where the singular awareness comes. When you are concentrating on the light of a candle, only the light of the candle must exist and everything else, even the seer has to disappear. You have to disappear, awareness of the witness. Later the light also disappears and awareness remains. That awareness is called unqualified awareness, *nirguna chaitanya*. What is qualified awareness? When I sit I am aware, but I am aware in relation to my body, to time and space. That is called qualified awareness.

In meditation should one concentrate or allow the thoughts to express themselves?

Western countries do not have a culture or tradition like meditation. Their culture is based on doing what the mind tells you to do. This country has a very old culture from the time

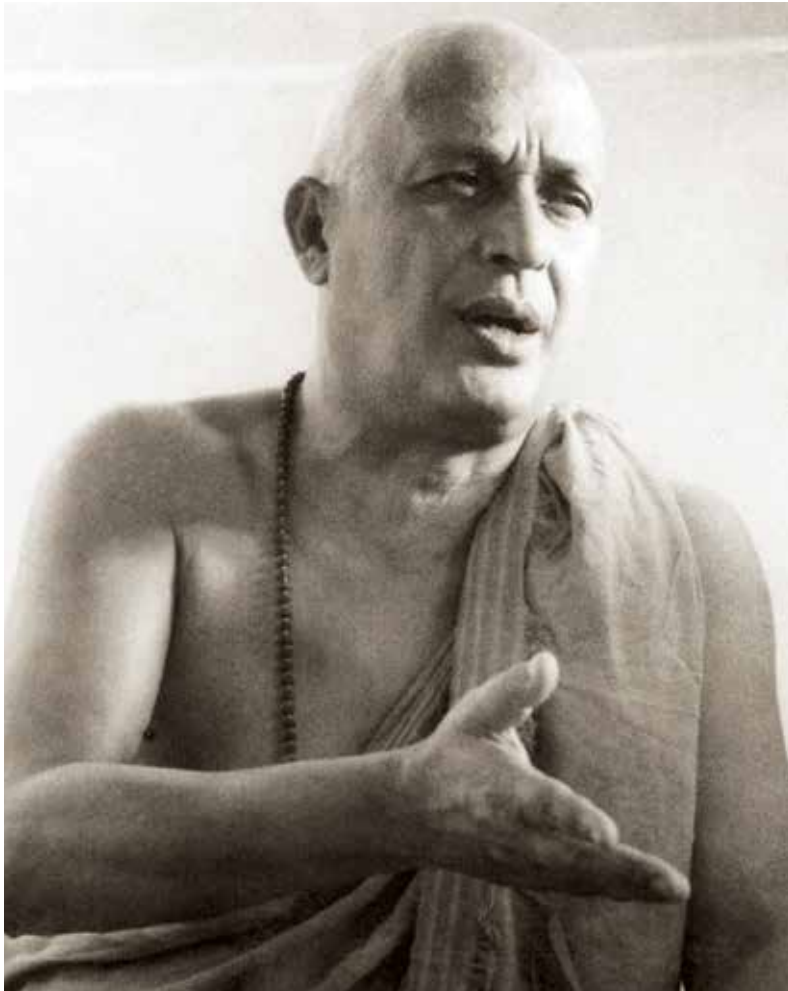
of the Vedas, maybe thirty-five thousand or forty thousand years ago. You are initiated in a culture which is based on self-control at every moment. I am not talking about superiority or inferiority of a culture. It is not a question of superiority; it is a question of dealing with the mind.

Another point that comes to my mind is to be sensible. When you concentrate the sunrays through a magnifying glass it gets the power to burn anything. Not only a magnifying glass there are so many factors nowadays. Laser beams are created and when energy is concentrated it becomes so powerful. Mind is energy. It is not psychological stuff. Like energy, it is positive and negative, has voltage, frequency, amperes and vibrations. This energy can be concentrated. When you take mind as psychological stuff based on the definition of western psychology, then do not suppress it. When the mind is positive energy and negative energy, *shakti*, it has current, can move out of the mind and travel into space. It has an area, a field like an electric magnetic and radioactive field. Mind has a field like a magnet. You can concentrate this mind and make it very powerful. You can make it more powerful as you magnify the sunrays or as you collect water. When you collect water from different channels it may become so powerful that you can have hydroelectric generators.

Mind should never be considered as thought. Thought, good or bad, is not mind, emotion is not mind, passion is not mind, memory is not mind. They are manifestations of energy. This fan and this microphone is not electricity. Electricity is the current which flows in all this. Mind is the energy, speech, thought, perception, smelling, audition, knowledge and concentration is also the product. Sometimes if there are some difficulties you can give some sort of relaxation to the idea. However, we have got so many other methods like pranayama. If pranayama does not help you, do asanas. If asanas do not help you, do kriya yoga. If kriya yoga does not help do kirtan, chanting or singing.

– 4 February 1982, Sourashtra College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Application of Yoga



Swamiji, what is the fundamental difference between the Bihar School of Yoga and other schools of yoga?

Fundamentally there is no difference. All schools have been working very hard in their own way to preach and propagate the ideals and the practices of yoga for helping people.

Bihar School of Yoga has become a place of confluence of East and West, North and South. If there are one hundred people in BSY, twenty-five are from East, twenty-five are from West, twenty-five are from North and twenty-five are from South. People from every religion including agnostics, every sect, every tradition and every nation come and live there. These people have some sort of intuition in them about yoga and they have been greatly benefited by yoga. They live there and are trying to formulate a system to suit the modern mind and modern necessities.

Most of the people are very young, they come at the age of nineteen to twenty. I joined when I was nineteen. People of twenty have enormous energy. They give their mind, body, soul and everything else, and we live a life there which is almost the life of the poorest Indian - our food habits, the way of living, the facilities. It is our principle to live the life of a very poor man in the ashram. We read a lot of books on modern psychology of East and West, philosophy, religion, sciences, branches of medicine, chemistry, botany, zoology. There are doctors, engineers, psychiatrists, and we also travel. I keep wandering throughout the year. I am here now and in fifteen days I will be in Switzerland, then in Latin America. I meet doctors, talk to them, try to understand them and try to make them understand. Due to our hard work we are able to give some new ideas and attach some new dimensions to yoga.

How is yoga being applied in society?

First of all, experiments were done to treat diseases and now it is being widely used throughout the world. It has brought good results. In diabetes it is considered to be a cure. There are quite a few important diseases where they do not have a cure in medical science, such as asthma, insomnia, blood pressure, in the rehabilitation of coronary patients, migraine, peptic ulcer, arthritis, and many more. People have been working at it in different parts of the world.

In Denmark you have many mental hospitals, and in some of the hospitals there were inmates who lived there for years. They always behaved the same way and they lived with drugs. Once yoga was introduced, they give them shatkarma, hatha yoga practices. The net result according to their statistics is that the number of rehabilitated patients who can now look after their family and business is many times more than it has been in the past.

In Switzerland, there are many types of sanatoriums where alcoholics are sent, especially when their habit becomes dangerous as cirrhosis of liver develops. In the sanatoriums they are given some sort of pills – in some cases, it did work but in some cases it did not. Then doctors came to know about yoga and had a few yoga classes as an experiment, they said, “All right Swami, you stay here for three days and take classes.”

I taught them asana and pranayama, nothing more. They found that it worked. It clicked. Then some people introduced yoga in the sanatorium. The asana classes in the sanatorium were the most frequented classes. People did not really go to other classes because swimming and exercise they could get everywhere. Therefore, we also had very good statistics about the effect of yoga on alcoholics.

America has a very great problem. Just as you have the problem of poverty and unemployment which is our national problem, their national problem is drugs. If you are worried about poverty and other things, there they are worried about drugs. They are tackling it in many ways. They have doctors, psychiatrists, but it is not working. Now in the last ten years they have become serious and yoga teaching has been introduced in drug rehabilitation centres. Our practices are very simple. They are not psychological or philosophical.

Take the person, prepare one litre of salt water, ask him to drink it and then practise kunjla. Then we add breathing with concentration on breath. These fellows who have been using drugs are given exactly the same experiences as when they are using drugs. They say if they can have such experience

without a drug, why have a drug? If you can feel high without a bottle, and if you can have a trip without a drug, then why have it? That is what the boys have been telling us and that is one reason why many thousands of boys in America have completely given up drugs and alcohol. Then they tell others, "Hey, you can have a trip without it, I tell you." That is yoga. It is helping their national problem.

Four years ago we received an invitation from one of the biggest jails in the world, San Quentin. It is in America, it is an island jail. It is considered to be the biggest open air jail. They invited one teacher from Munger and he was sent. When a prisoner is sent to jail for ten years, you can imagine his personal problems. If you are addicted to some items of personal life and if you are sent to jail, my God, I would prefer to commit suicide than to suffer the pang. Particularly *kama vasana*, passion, is one of the most predominant desires, felt by ordinary men, and such a man is sentenced to jail. How are you going to help him?

Our people, leaders, officers, do not think about it. They just think when you are a criminal you must be sent to jail. But how to solve his problems there? You may give beedi and cigarette, but you do not give him a wife. Nevertheless, the moment yoga was introduced, the inmates felt some peace and calm of mind.

One more thing comes to mind. You can teach in a classroom, but the influence of the ashram atmosphere is also important. Here you criticize the fumes in the air and noise pollution. From time to time, once in a year, expose people to a different environment where there is ecology, beauty and calmness, and where you can appreciate the atmosphere, and fully accept it, where there is nothing to criticize. Such ashrams must be developed where people spend ten to fifteen days and undergo a course of yoga practices properly. When they come back they will be the pillars of a new society.

– 8 February 1982, School of Social Work, Madras, Tamil Nadu

Yoga for Health and Personality

Yoga needs teaching. Yoga needs practice and more than that yoga needs a teacher who can understand the need of the student. Yoga is a very age-old science. We have ancient references about it in India, and we have historical evidences about yoga in other countries as well. I visit many countries of the world every year. I have been as far as Latin American countries, and in remote corners of those countries once upon a time, the great civilizations of the Incas, Aztecs and Mayans, the sun worshippers, flourished. Now, they are no more, but in the villages they have left stone carvings. There are historical evidences of a yogic past which the people of that country do not even know of today. I have taken thousands of photographs of those stone monuments which depict asanas, pranayama, shatkarmas, meditation, kundalini, padmasana, yantras, mantras and mandalas. In the YOGA magazine from Munger, those photographs are reproduced on the front page.



Yoga is a very old science, but we forgot it for some reason or the other, maybe due to some political accidents or some natural calamities that must have taken place. We know of a very big tragedy about the Atlantis civilization which completely changed the order of civilization all over the world; however, we really do not know much about it. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, there is a passing reference to it by Krishna when he tells Arjuna: 'That yoga became extinct for some time and I am teaching you the same yoga'.

Yoga has always fascinated mankind. It has been a mystery, a philosophy, it has been used as black magic, as a means to develop extrasensory perceptions, siddhis. It has created sects after sects throughout the world. It created Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Mohammed and Zoroaster. It has created prophets, saints and thinkers, by some practice or other. In the context of our times today, we are just witnessing the revival of yoga.

Need for research

The masses throughout the world are still ignorant. They still have peculiar notions about yoga and yogis. Usually they think that yoga is meant for the people who are pure and who have practised some sort of yama and niyama, are very disciplined and vegetarian, do not smoke and drink and who are brahmachari. This is the belief which still is in the mind of people. Many times you are interested in practising yoga, and the idea does come in your mind, can I practise yoga? Because I am not a good man. First of all, I am old, I have got my own habits of eating and sleeping.

There is a great psychologist, Dr Sigmund Freud, who I respect. He said that with the advancement of the technological culture and the new type of world that is emerging, with growing needs of comfort and luxury, with growing ambitions and desires, mankind is entering into another dimension of sickness, a different quality of sickness and diseases. That is what he has predicted. Now we find that the type of sufferings

and sickness we are undergoing are of a different type. A time might come when medical science may find it quite difficult to handle them.

Of course, ninety per cent of the diseases in the western countries are still difficult to handle by medical science. They are finding it very difficult, and therefore they tried psychology, psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and so on. With due respect to all, it is not my intention to criticize any profession. But they have not worked. So much so now, that doctors and psychiatrists just load their patients with drugs. Psychology is a science of mind. The problem created by the mind, and the problem in the mind, must be corrected through the mind, not by drugs.

In the last seventy or eighty years, doctors of medical sciences tried their level best, but ultimately they have failed. Religion has failed in the West. Finally, yoga came in, and we did not really push yoga, we did not introduce yoga; people came and discovered yoga from India. As they have discovered many things in the past in India, they discovered yoga. When they took yoga from India it was a raw material. Even Indians could not use it. In the West, they found it difficult to teach pranayama, but they tried to find out whether yoga really works. They conducted many researches on the brain, nervous system, acidity, heart, the effects of yoga on each and every organ of the body. The researches have advanced and become so sophisticated, that in bhastrika or any pranayama, the electrical charges in the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system can be recorded.

Formally they did research on asanas like bhujangasana, shalabhasana. These are not exercises; asanas are postures. Scientists did research on asana first. The research was done first in Poland and Czechoslovakia, it was extended further in America and then it went on. Now, there are more than nine hundred research centres which are engaged in this research. Poland and Czechoslovakia have done a lot on the effects of asanas on the physical systems, blood pressure, respiratory

system, alpha, theta, beta, gamma waves and skin resistance, called GSR. When you practise asanas what is the rate of consumption of oxygen in the body? Is it more or less? Do you conserve oxygen or do you waste oxygen? What is the rate of respiration? Does it fall or does it go up? What is the reaction of the coronary system during asana practice? How does the brain behave? This research was done even on sirshasana.

The next research was on muscular, mental, emotional tension. Mental tension can only be measured through the brain waves. Otherwise you cannot measure the mental tension, because you cannot see mental tension. Muscular tension can be measured by instruments and you will be surprised to hear that in yoga postures tensions come down.

I can give you a very short example of one experiment. An instrument was attached to different muscles of the body and the instrument showed the tension 20, 30, or 40. Then the person was told to practise *bhujangasana*, the serpent pose. Bhujangasana seems to be an asana causing more tension. But the instrument showed that the tension came down. It was surprising! When you are sleeping on the floor your tensions are high, when you are practising a posture like bhujangasana, where there seems to be tension at least in the spinal region, the instrument shows there is no tension.

Then what is the definition of tension? The definition of tension should change completely. When a person is lying down, his tension levels are measured and they are very high. He comes back from his office and his tension is very high and he practises shashankasana. He sits in vajrasana and bends forward and the instrument shows the tension is reducing. Muscular tensions are those tensions which are caused due to lack of certain energy. It is not the exercise, the activities of the muscles or ligaments that are responsible for bringing down the tension. Tension is a condition when the particular part of the body is starving for want of certain energy. That energy in the body is twofold: ida and pingala, or mental and pranic energy.

Prana and chakras

Mind is energy, mind is not thought, it is not psychological stuff. You have energy in an electrical cable and two or three copper wires which carry a certain type of current, positive and negative. In the same way the individual body has two types of currents currents. One is called the mind, *chitta*, the other is called *prana* or life. Prana is not this air or the activity of the heart or lungs. It is not oxygen. Prana is completely different from oxygen. Prana is the energy, vitality, which you inherited when your mother conceived you in the womb. From that time, you have prana and it continues to serve your body as long as you are alive.

In yoga, that prana is called *shakti*, energy. Mind in yoga is conceived as energy not as a psychological stuff. Anger is not mind, passion is not mind, desires are not mind, the thinking process is not mind. They are the manifestations of the mind, not the mind. The fan is not electricity, the mike is not electricity, it is the electric current which flows in both. The same electric current flows in the bulb and in the fan. The manifestations are different – that does not mean that there is different electricity. These fans, mikes, lights cannot be the definitions of electricity. In the same way, anger, passion, desire, and so on are the functions of the mind, not the mind. This mind should be considered as prana, energy, like electricity. It can be measured and it has been measured. Alpha, theta, beta and delta waves have been measured in terms of voltage, amperes, frequency. Do not consider your body merely as bones, flesh and marrow. In yoga, it is more than that.

When you practise asana you are clearing certain energy blocks. These energy blocks are cleared by a process of *shodhana* which means purification, such as in nadi shodhana, chakra shodhana, bhoota shuddhi, prana shuddhi, atma shuddhi. This *shuddhi*, purity, does not mean religious purity. It means much more than that. There is religious purity, physical purity and purity of the nervous system. Purity should never be considered as a religious word, it is a scientific term.

In your physical body there are six main distributing centres for this twofold energy situated in the spinal column. In yoga they are known as *chakras* through which the energy is distributed to every part of the body, both forms of energy, prana and the mind, life and consciousness. Apart from the main six distributing centres, there are 72,000 distributing nadis, according to yoga texts. First there are six distributing centres, then there are ten distributing centres, then there are 72,000 distributing nadis in every part of the body for both mind and prana. Mind is known as the cold nadi, and prana is known as the hot nadi.

An energy block can take place anywhere, due to mental and emotional tension, toxic food and air, and even thinking. There could be more than one thousand reasons. The energy is blocked, like when the fans, lights and the microphone do not work, because of an energy block.

When you practise asanas, this blocked energy is released. At once the tension drops. Therefore, in spite of stretching, pulling, turning, twisting and bending your body you have no tension, and when you are sitting on an easy chair and thinking, you still have tension. Tension has nothing to do with muscles, ligaments, the quality of blood. It is due to the improper distribution of the pranic energy.

There is another channel in the body which is responsible for conducting circulation of mental energy called *manas*, consciousness, through which you think. If there is a block in that system, you have mental tension. Mental tension could be due to too much thinking, or even if you do not think at all, you can still have mental tension. There are many lazy people who sit the whole day, reading novels, magazines and newspapers, they too have a lot of tension. Mental tension is caused on account of improper distribution of mental energy throughout the body.

There are three types of tensions: mental, emotional and muscular. These three things are called *adhyatmic*, *adidaivik* and *adhibhautik*. I read a book which is dedicated to people

suffering from tension and hypertension. The author dedicated the book to those who face epidemics and famine, who face war, disaster, who move from place to place as refugees, who are divorced, who have no work to do, who have no money, as also those who have a lot of work and a lot of money. I mean life is full of tensions, you cannot escape. And the best thing therefore is to find some time to practise just a few asanas and pranayama.

Awakening of kundalini

Apart from research on asanas and pranayama, there is a new idea springing up in recent years – kundalini yoga and the awakening of kundalini. Scientists are coming to the conclusion that religion is not enough to transform the quality of the human mind. Religion is necessary, because everybody must have a religion, but religion will not do everything. We have been telling you to be good, charitable, and kind, but nobody cares.

Scientists say that there is a process called metamorphosis, transformation. The transformation in the quality of consciousness must take place. This means that some centres in the brain must stop, and certain centres in the brain must start to function. One tenth of the brain is functioning and participating, and nine parts of the brain are not functioning and not participating. They say you have to awaken kundalini whereby you supply a new kind of energy to the whole body, awaken the silent areas of the brain and block certain areas of the brain. I think it is possible, because I am one of those examples.

I am not going to say much about myself, but I have lost some areas of my brain. They do not function anymore and therefore I cannot be a victim of the activities, reactions or influences of those centres of the brain. For this purpose, awakening of kundalini must take place.

Awakening of kundalini is the awakening of a higher quantum of prana in the body. Just as you have a generator

and you run your complex, after some time you will find that the generator is not sufficient because you need more energy. What do you do? You switch off the generator and connect to the main hydro-electric power station. In Munger we do not have regular electricity; ten times a day, it goes off and on. So we have installed a generator and run the whole ashram with the help of the generator, because the energy supplied by the state electricity board does not really serve us and we know that sometimes there is no electricity.

In the same way, many times this prana and this mind do not really help us, because its supply is very short. Its supply is so short that if the whole brain was to awaken and participate actively, this energy that is manufactured by your system, would not be sufficient. Therefore, you have to generate an extra quantum of energy – and that is called kundalini.

Kundalini

The seat of kundalini is at the bottom, a small granthi, a small gland, which is awakened by many practices, such as pranayama, but the most important is kriya yoga, and the easiest method is the practice of mantra. Scientists have been working on mantras, because for many years, westerners and modern people, even in India, thought that a mantra is the name of a particular god of a tribe. If you are a Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shakta, you have a tribal god, and you gave a name to it. Or once upon a time, he may have been your hero, and he might have died and you make him your God. That was the concept most people had, and as a result of this, they were very unsure about chanting mantras.

Twenty years ago, if I told anybody whether a Christian, a Mussalman, or even a Hindu, 'Why don't you practise *Om Namō Narayanaya*', they said, 'I don't believe in God, so why should I practise *Om Namō Narayana*?' Now people, even if they do not believe in God, want mantra because they have come to understand that mantra is a sound force; it is not religious. What is that sound force?

I am going to tell you about an experiment I am still involved in and which is not yet complete. In the medical university of Barcelona, with the help of doctors, we are conducting research on the overall effect of three sounds. The three sounds which we have chosen for the time being are: A-U-M, the combination of which is *Om*. It is a simple sound A-U-M. When you chant A, for some time, what happens? What happens to the brain? If anything happens to the brain, what happens to the nervous system? If something happens to the nervous system, what happens to the inner temperature of the body? If anything happens to the inner temperatures of the body, what happens to the general condition of the metabolism? In the last five years, we have made five thousand sheets of data.

The three sounds A-U-M, represent three stages of man's awareness. That is written in the *Mandukya Upanishad*, which deals with A-U-M. The *Mandukya Upanishad* is one of the 108 Upanishads and deals with the nature of these three sounds. Our research is showing the same thing: M represents theta waves; U represents alpha waves; and A represents beta waves. That means when you are chanting your brain begins to develop beta waves. When you chant U it develops alpha waves. When you say M it develops theta waves. If it is true that a sound can change the wave patterns of your brain and nervous system and the general metabolism of the body, it is also possible for the sound to awaken kundalini.

I have a very good friend in Japan, Dr Hiroshimo Motoyama, who is working on kundalini research. He is a very keen student, and he has called many sadhus from India. He has done research and investigated the influence of bhastrika pranayama which is considered to be kundalini pranayama – supposed to affect kundalini. He inserts electrodes and the net result he has found is, that when we practise pranayama, the centres in the spine release special electrical charges which otherwise would not happen. These special electrical charges have also been measured. The electrical impulses have

been registered in mooladhara chakra.

Now, I am coming to the main point. Asanas definitely help you, there is no doubt about it. It is necessary that all of you must try to think about it for your children and yourself. Asanas not only treat your sickness, they even treat you, the patient. They do not only treat a disease but they treat the patient, his psychology, his mind. How long shall we remain bound to this limited



area of consciousness? Why not make a little change? When you change from a small flat to a bigger flat, or from an ordinary job to a higher job, why not change and replace this limited area of consciousness for a higher area of consciousness?

Even if you do not practise the actual kriyas for kundalini awakening, at least you should be able to practise pranayama and mantra. If, in the course of a few years, the transformation begins to take place, your attitude to tension and the general trends of life will change. In this way, yoga can at once fulfil your worldly and materialistic needs and give you an idea of spiritual life too.

We ask you to practise meditation and live a spiritual life in order to become aware of a greater personality that you have. We are only aware of our limited personality and that is the problem. If our vision changes through sadhana and dhyana yoga, and if we can realize within us the greater personality, which has more confidence, courage and control, then we will be able to live a happier life. Your personality does not mean the physical appearance; it means the total behaviour.

– 3 February 1982, BHEL Township, Trichy, Tamil Nadu

Interview



There are many aspects of yoga, including hatha yoga, raja yoga, jnana yoga, karma yoga, bhakti yoga. Also there are aspects of spiritual life involving hundreds of practices: meditation, japa, mantra, yoga nidra, asana, pranayama, mudras, bandhas and the practices of kriya yoga.

In our modern society people want to know much more about hatha yoga, especially the managers and executives of big industry, who are beginning to utilize the depth of yoga in their day-to-day administration and production. They know it can increase the capacity and efficiency of work. Yoga is recognized all over the world as a science by which one can

become more capable and improve the powers of concentration and resistance. It is becoming gradually more popular with many sannyasin and householder teachers all over the world.

There are many mental and physical diseases, especially in the modern communities of today, which are imported diseases. They have come with industrialization. A few hundred years ago, your great-grandfathers were working either in a very small, simple shop selling flour, rice and grains, or ploughing the fields. Now our children are going to work in factories and have to deal with the government, taxation department, banks, consumers and the highly competitive business world. The whole night they are tense, whether awake or asleep. They cannot sleep because their minds are so active with the many problems they are facing everyday. This did not happen before.

The speed of the mind is greater than it was two or three generations ago, your diseases also will be different from those of your grandfathers. These new diseases are arising due to a restless and anxious mind, which cannot be tackled by medicine or drugs. Even if you adopt a new social system, which would take many years to complete, the diseases would still continue. The only way is through the practices of yoga. This is the reason why the West has taken to yoga so quickly, not because it was something new. After all they have their own religion and culture, but they realized that yoga had the answer to their problems of mental and physical health.

The very same problems are growing in India day by day. For those people who are suffering mentally, emotionally and physically, and who are beyond the range of medical treatment, yoga definitely has something to offer. In yoga there are physical and mental practices by which you can control the malfunctioning of the body and mind. At the same time, those who are dedicated to a spiritual life can gain deep and powerful insights into their inner nature.

– 12 August 1976, Madras, Tamil Nadu

Sleeping Kundalini



Why is it said that kundalini is sleeping?

The word 'sleeping' is only an expression. Our awareness has been evolving for many millions of years. There are three levels of awareness, the animal or instinct level, the human level and the divine level. This awareness is known as kundalini and it has been evolving right from the beginning of creation. There are also chakras below mooladhara which are not functioning in us because our consciousness has travelled far beyond them. In animals also there are chakras or levels of awareness. Sometimes it happens that there is retardation of awareness down to the lower chakras but mostly not. Mooladhara chakra is the highest chakra of animal evolution and the lowest chakra of human evolution. Sahasrara is the highest chakra of human evolution and the beginning of divine evolution. So there are chakras below and above corresponding to the three lokas: bhu loka, bhuvah loka and suvah loka.

Sleeping means non-active. Little children cannot think; you can say that their consciousness is sleeping and is in a

state of dormant potential, just as oil is in the mustard seed, butter in milk, or energy in matter – sleeping or dormant. Sushumna is sleeping. This means it is not active. Even science says that nine parts of the brain are not yet active. Only one tenth of the brain is participating in daily life while nine parts are still lying unused. In a few people, like scientists, poets, artists, discoverers or musicians some part of these nine parts participates but not the whole brain. They say the total brain cannot participate in life because man could not handle it. However, when this part of the brain, which we use now, becomes exhausted, then the other part of the brain will come into operation.

Sushumna nadi, which is connected to the higher centres of the brain and to mooladhara, has practically nothing to do. It is connected, not to sahasrara but ajna. Yamuna is ida, Ganga is pingala nadi, and Saraswati is sushumna. It joins ida and pingala in ajna chakra, and when they join, then a *jyoti* , the light of the self or enlightenment is created. A higher awareness is created and with that higher awareness you connect with the higher centre called sahasrara. Sushumna in my opinion, and according to the shastras, is the conductor of spiritual awareness. Ida is the conductor of mental awareness and pingala of pranic awareness. The three are mind, prana and atma. When you go deep into dhyana and begin to see your ishta devata, your symbol or *vighraha* , or you have some sort of experience, sushumna is awake.

Sushumna can become active when you have spiritual experiences or when sushumna is active you can have spiritual experiences. It can work both ways. If you practise pranayama with kumbhaka and bandhas, the moment sushumna becomes active you should meditate. Then you can have spiritual experiences. If you do not meditate when sushumna is active but involve yourself in the world, you are going to be a sort of 'criminal'. When sushumna is in operation, avoid all worldly activities because the impact of sushumna is either the spiritual experience or the criminal mentality.

There is another important point which is very difficult to explain. It is not necessarily true that everybody's kundalini is in mooladhara. We say it is in mooladhara in order to explain it to everybody. Due to the sadhana you may have done, or your mother or father may have done in different lives, you may be born with your kundalini in manipura. It means the ascension must take place from manipura and not from mooladhara. Or, due to your practices of yoga in your previous life you may have been a *yoga brashtha*, one who dies before completing the process of yoga. Thus you may be reborn with your consciousness in anahata and you will have to start the whole practice from there.

You forget your previous life and the state of kundalini, that is why the guru teaches that it is sleeping in mooladhara. It may be in anahata but I will always tell you it is in mooladhara and make you do the practices from mooladhara. You might not have any experience. You may get to swadhisthana and not have any experience and to manipura - but the moment you go to anahata, suddenly you will start having experiences.

It is also said that kundalini is mostly in manipura. In sadhakas who are exposed to spiritual life, who do the practices of yoga and have a keen desire to have a guru and follow the pursuits of spiritual life side by side with the little work they have been doing. It means that kundalini is not in mooladhara but somewhere beyond manipura.

When we talk about the chakras we are talking about levels of awareness. We must have some reference point, some mark somewhere, just as an indication, but we do not know what the distance between one chakra and another is. It cannot be measured in terms of meters and inches. It has to be measured in terms of lifetimes. You may evolve from one chakra to another in a second or you may take many lifetimes to do so. Parikshit took seven days, Dhruva took six months and they say Madhusudan Saraswati practised Gayatri anushthana of 504 lakhs. He did that much!

– 27 January 1982, Trivandrum, Kerala

The End of the World

Is there an end to this world, and if so, when will it be?

About the world, the ancient shastras, the *Srimad Bhagavat*, *Mahabharata* and the scientists today share almost the same opinion. The scientists may not say Satya Yuga, Dwarpa, Treta, Kali Yuga but more or less they say the same thing which our shashtras have already said. What is that? We are entering into the first phase of Kali Yuga. We have not entered yet. We are entering. The *yuga mana*, measure, is four lakh, 32,000 years. That doubled becomes Treta and that doubled again becomes Dwarpa and that doubled again becomes Kali Yuga. So you can understand we have plenty of time to live.



Even if we believe that the world is going to end after about 100 years, you do not have to worry. I think before this earth will become a difficult place for man and life to survive, I think many hundred thousand generations will have gone by. Let us not think about the death of the world, you must think about when maya shall die.

In yoga and Vedanta, world means *prapancha*, meaning 'made out of five'. Akasha, vayu, agni, apas, prithvi are the pancha tattwas and from the pancha tattwa the world is made.

This is called prapancha. *Prapancha* also means *maya*, which means not an absolute reality. This world is not the visible world; we do not merely say the geological world. When you use the word 'world' you must also talk about the philosophical and spiritual world. This world, this *samsara*, this *maya* is not an absolute reality. This time to which the world is subjected to is also not an absolute reality.

Time, space and object which relate to this world are not absolute. Those of you who understand science, and who have also made studies about the theory of relativity and the absoluteness of time and space, will know very well that this world exists in your mind. The *dukkha* and *sukha*, the pain and pleasure, live in your mind. Death is not painful if it is the death of your enemy. Death is painful if it is the death of your friend. Anything in life is relative, depending on the conditions. Your question should be transformed into, "When will the death of the world take place?" I have replied the first phase. The second phase is, "When will *maya* cease to exist?" *Maya* will cease to exist no sooner than light has dawned in your mind. The rishis say:

Dehabhimana vidyate
Paramatmani yatra yatra manoyati
Tatre tatre samadhyam

When the ego related to the body and the mind dissolves and you become aware of the paramatman in you, wherever your mind goes, wherever your mind stands, there it dissolves, it is finished.

The existence of mind depends on the illusion of body consciousness, *dehabhimanam*. When there is no *dehabhimanam*, there is no mind, when there is no mind, there is no *samsara*. When there is no *samsara* it does not matter if an earthquake takes place today or ten thousand years hence.

– 26 January 1982, Mysore, Tamil Nadu



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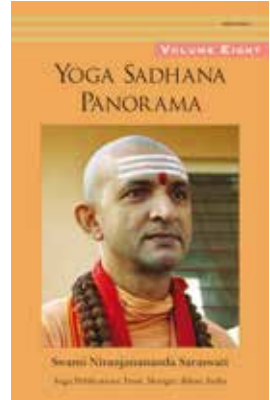
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