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Hari Om

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

When she fashioned him, fortune gave him intellect and will, talent and genius, strength and softness, a stomach and a feast, abundance and enjoyment, and above all endowed him lavishly with spiritual understanding and enlightenment. The unusual coalescence and coexistence of all these elements not only differentiate Swami Satyananda from the rest, but distinguish him as being great.

—Swami Omkarananda

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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 ॥

Yoga for the Modern Man



The modern man symbolizes a complex personality existing between conflicts within his own self. One side of his personality is in direct opposition with another side of his personality. The way he lives, he does not agree with; the way he thinks, he does not accept; he builds a society, he does not approve of it; he develops a culture, he criticizes all the time. He lives a certain type of life and he goes on complaining about it. The modern man runs after money, but he will always be criticizing this attitude. Whatever he does now is for sensual pleasure, but listen to him and he will be always criticizing it. This is a very conflicting personality which he has developed.

The cult of this personality came from the west. The whole west is Christian, which has a philosophy, a religion and metaphysics. They are all Christians and have their own faith about wealth, chastity and purity, God and transmigration. They have a set philosophy, but in the last 150 to 200 years, the way they have lived and the way they have loved to live is totally opposite to what their religion stands for. Now you find most of them leading a type of life, and at the back, criticizing it.

You eat non-vegetarian food and you say, 'Oh, it is not good'. You are a chain smoker and you say, 'Smoking is bad and it causes cancer'. You run after sensual pleasures and say it is bad. This is called conflict in man's personality and this is the definition of the modern man.

The ancient man of olden times accepted and respected what he lived. Even if it was bad, it did not matter. The way he lived, he said, 'Theek hai, all right'. So there was no conflict in his personality. The *Mahabharata* and other shastras say:

Manasi anyat, vachasi anyat, karmani anyat.

Something is in your mind, you speak something else and you do something else.

That is the definition of a conflicting personality and that is the modern man. He tries to fight, he makes bombs, war materials, war planes, ballistic missiles, and at the top of his voice he says, 'War is no good'. This is called mass conflict, total conflict.

Manasi ekam, vachasi ekam, karmani ekam.

You speak and do what is in your mind.

This is called an integrated personality. Modern man has not got this integrated personality. As a result of this, he has so many sicknesses.

I will give you an example. When I go to South America and other foreign countries where the people are all Catholic and modern, they want to divorce their husband or wife and

yet they don't want it. They want a divorce and they don't want it; both things are happening in their mind at the same time. If such things happen in your mind, then you will have personality errors. What are those personality errors? Imbalance, indecisiveness, lack of confidence, no willpower, fear and anxiety all the time. They come to me and say, "Swamiji, please bless us so that my husband or my wife may unite with me." I say, "You are perfectly all right, but why has this divorce taken place?" They say because she is bad or because he is bad. I say, "If she is bad or he is bad, why don't you accept it?" They say, "No, no, I don't want it." But after fifteen or twenty minutes he or she is talking in such a violent language as if she wants it. Like this, modern man has been suffering from lack of awareness. I will say not lack of awareness but lack of insight. There is something called insight, when you go into the matter then you know exactly what you are doing.

Another point that we have to understand about the modern man is that materialism is very important for him. If he goes to a church, a temple or a shrine, he does not go for God but for his material motives. If he goes to a swami, a siddha or Satya Sai Baba, he does not go for his sake, he goes there for the sake of material motives. It means, whether it is a God, a mantra, a temple or a mahatma, or even a virtuous life like living *satya* and *ahimsa*, truth and non-violence, modern man says that it is good for his life.

Even spiritual actions are motivated by material desires and ambitions. The ancient man was different. Even when he did worldly things, if you asked him 'What are you doing this for?' he would say, "God has ordained me to do this karma and I am just fulfilling his wishes." Behind his material life, he had spiritual ambitions. Modern man has a religious life for material ambitions. He is sometimes disappointed. He goes to the *tirthas*, shrines, to a mahatma, but nothing happens. His ambitions are not fulfilled. So finally he gets angry and says, "Oh, there is no God!"

Recently I came across a woman who told me, "I had only one son and he died. I have thrown out all my murtis, torn all the pictures and I have given the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Durga Saptashati* to somebody else." I asked, "What for?" She said, "I don't believe in these things." I said, "You don't believe in these things because your son is dead." So you cherish even a religious, spiritual life for the sake of the material ambition. If your material ambitions are not fulfilled then you don't care for God, you do not care for spiritual life, you do not care for higher life.

The boon of yoga

Yoga has come as a boon for the modern man, because in the practice of yoga he sees that his mind changes, his emotions become balanced, he can have insight into things and see the result. I am not giving the example of India because this is not the time to give it; perhaps after fifty years I will give it. I am giving you the example of the west. There people were so neck-deep and headlong into material life, they did not care for their wife, children or family. After they were exposed to yoga, what happened? Indians are dressed nicely, tip-top, even if they are from the lower middle class, they are well dressed. These westerners, when they come to India, they come in rags. Yoga has made this change - they completely got rid of the complex and inhibitions about dress and personal comforts.

Go to Benares, go to Puri, you will find lower middle class Indian people who try to get a better hotel with attached bathroom. These western boys and girls will be sleeping on the railway platform. Why has this change come about? Is it because they have lost some money? Or is it because they have become so poor? No. Or is it because money has given a kick or a blow? No. When they practise yoga, the artificial thinking which was imposed on them by their society, by their local tradition, by their current fashionable tradition completely dropped out of them. There are boys and girls even now, in the last 20 years, who have not smoked. They have not even

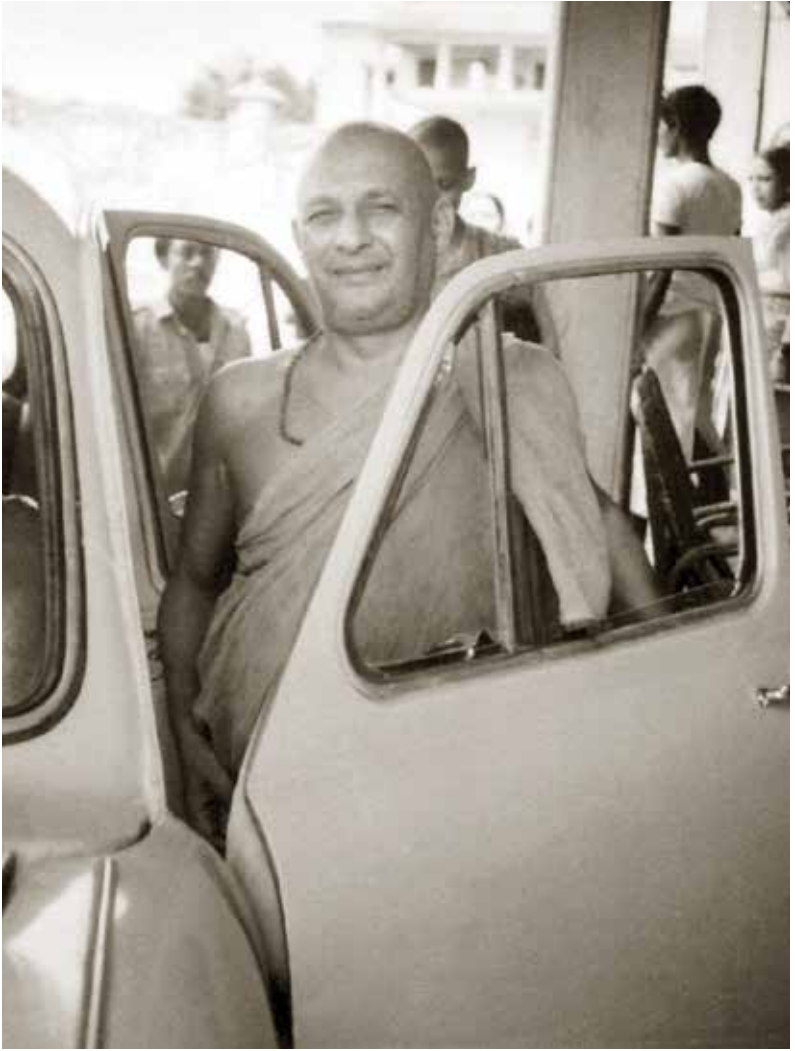
had a drop of alcohol. They have not even taken a bit of non-vegetarian diet, who have not been with a boy or a girl prior to marriage. This is something new in those countries. This new change and many other aspects have been brought about by the practice of yoga.

Just as you take a glass of hot water and put a little soda in it and then put your oily, greasy cloth into it, you will see that the soda in the hot water will take all the grease out of your cloth. In the same manner, when you practise yoga, it takes the grease of artificial ambitions out of your mind and out of your life.

I have been going to the west these last twenty years or so, to the houses of westerners, Indians, Asians, South-East Asians and Africans. I can see the difference. Whereas the houses of westerners are becoming simpler, the homes of Africans, Indians and Asians are becoming very complicated. You have a fridge, a cupboard, you have another cupboard in which there are a lot of idols and many other funny things. In the bathroom, my God! What do you not have? I cannot even relate the number of cosmetics, soaps, brushes and things you have. There is the nail polish and this polish and that polish.

Sometimes, I think perhaps yoga has cleaned the artificial rubbish of the west and has thrown it into our country. I often say to my swamis, "Look at what type of a house this is." The type of house shows you what type of mind the people have. A clean mind has a clean house, a complicated mind a complicated house, a loaded mind has a loaded house, a poor mind has a poor house. The way you keep your almirah, the way you keep your bed, the way you choose a bedsheet, the way you choose a saree and jewellery – all these show your external life which is an expression of your internal mind.

Another point that has to be noted is this: when you are chasing materialistic life, sometimes you do it out of compulsion and sometimes you do it out of ambitions. To fulfil your ambitions or to make both ends meet, you lead this life. During this period, you develop tension because you cannot



attend to everything. You have to have your child educated, daughter to be married, the poojas and shraaddhas to be performed, court cases to be attended, mother-in-law in this village, father in that village, uncle there; besides this, there is taxation, sales tax, income tax and maybe if you are a big man, then this minister or that officer is coming, guests are coming all of a sudden. All these things you cannot attend to. If at all

in between all of this, your son, your wife or a member of your family happens to fall ill and has to be taken to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, then who knows what exactly you are going to do? Whether you are going to attend to your shop, the factory, that important meeting or going to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

This causes a sort of anxiety, worry and mental tension, resulting in blood pressure, insomnia, impaired digestion and many more illnesses can come up, even a heart attack may happen. If you go to your medical people, they do their best, with whatever knowledge they have got and according to their capacity, they help you. They can help you only if you come within the jurisdiction of their treatment, however, your disease, as far as I can understand, does not come within the jurisdiction of a medical practitioner.

If you are suffering from anxiety, do not sleep for days and develop high blood pressure at the most he can give you tranquillizers. He knows it very well, not that the medical practitioners and scientists do not know. They do know, but what can they do? They can change the chemical processes of your body for a particular period of time by giving you tranquillizers, but they are not able to change the mental or emotional structure. Yoga can and does change the mental, emotional and the philosophical structure, and this is precisely the reason why the modern man has found a great relief in yoga.

Coming to a very important point, which does not relate very much to India or the developing nations, I may even use the word backward nations. The people in the west are very scared of drugs. Drugs means 'medicine'. They are scared of drugs, because day in and day out important magazines in the western countries, eminent doctors and research scholars have been writing article after article telling them how these drugs can, in the course of time, give sickness which cannot be treated. The after-effects of drugs frighten the people so much that they want an alternate way of treatment for their problems.

If they are suffering from insomnia, they do not want to take tranquillizers because they know that in the course of time it will damage the nervous system and affect the coronary behaviour. They want to avoid it, and therefore if you tell them, 'Do a little mantra japa, a little pranayama and yoga nidra, that will help you with the insomnia', they practise it, experience it, and then they say to their fellow man, "Hey, don't take these drugs because you may develop some other problem in your body later. They may give you some sleep temporarily, for a day or two, but in the course of time these drugs will get into the blood vessels and become a part of your body. They can cause disease, tumours, cancer, cardiac trouble and so many other things'. So other people also take to these yogic methods. This is not so in India, because we are still primitive and backward.

Finally, whether you are a modern man or an old type of man, you want to discover meaning and value in your life. What is the meaning of your life? To live like a dog? So far as eating, sleeping, fear and sexual behaviour is concerned, there is no difference between us and animals, we are the same. When the modern man sees that he is exactly following the same tempo of life as animals have been following, he does not see any difference between himself and animals. So he develops guilt within himself. He says, 'What am I doing? What am I doing? What am I doing?' He feels guilty and due to this guilt he has abnormal psychological behaviour and personality problems.

But then yoga comes to him and gives him an approach to life, a meaning, a value, a new dimension, and then he knows, 'Yes, that's right. Now I can get up in the morning, concentrate, and after every 3, 4, or 5 months I can go to ashram of my Gurudev, spend some time there, and once a year I can do some anushtana or pooja'. He slowly learns that there is kundalini shakti, the possibility of samadhi and there is a possibility that he can get some sort of siddhi. This kind of meaning, value and philosophy given by yoga to the modern man has really come as a boon.

If yoga is withdrawn or ignored by people, then you can see the fun of it. I am sure people will kill themselves. You cannot understand this because you are too backward. You see, the moment you realize that life has no purpose, then why to live? Just take a pill and die. What is the use of living for another 30 or 40 years when there is no meaning of life, when there is no purpose, when there is no destination? Every day you are repeating the same program like a dog, a cat, a donkey or a pig.

This is precisely the reason why in Scandinavian countries young girls and boys of 16 and 18 years commit suicide. Their rate is the highest. In Scandinavian countries like Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, the rate of suicide is the highest for no reason at all. They have no problems. They don't have to worry about education, they don't have to worry about employment, they don't have to worry about anything. Everything is there: house, marriage, education, job, everything is there. If you want to give up the job and you want to join the university, everything is possible within five days. Still they commit suicide because they do not have and understand the purpose of life.

Yoga has opened the minds of the people to the possibility of spiritual evolution. What are you living? 'I am practising yoga. I am going to awaken my kundalini'. What will you do? 'Oh, I will become a swami and teach others. I will concentrate and develop my willpower and attain samadhi. The ideals before me are Buddha, Mahavir, Ramakrishna, and many other people'.

Now India is becoming modern, although it is not totally modern. I think about 60% is not modern. At this pace, in another fifty years we will be landing in total modernism. If we are very careful from now onwards, and if we teach our children and our people yoga, then our next generation will not face the same tragedy, the same crisis, the same problems as Europe and America are facing.

– 26 January 1982, Mysore, Tamil Nadu

Satsang



In Kali Yuga it is said that just chanting the name is enough. Is it then not necessary to do yoga?

Many saints over the last five hundred years or so have been saying, "Only the name of Hari must be chanted. In Kali Yuga there is no other way of bypassing the mischief and cruelties of the mind and vasana." They have no doubt about it. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Mirabai have always been speaking about it. But there is one point to notice - we have very little time. We are busy from early morning until sometimes late at night and we cannot sing kirtan. Of course, in India it is easy but in Frankfurt or Geneva, if you sing kirtan the man next door will just inform the police and city corporation. Then they will come and say, "Hey, stop all this commotion, this nonsense!"

In fact, in America, when the Hare Krishna boys were singing in their community, case after case was filed against

them in the Federal Courts. Of course, finally they won the cases because the judges seemed to have a little better common sense than the common public. They got the cases back and everything was all right with them. When they were doing *Rathayatra and Prabhatpheri*, procession of the chariot and early morning walks, on the roads of New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco, there were serious objections by a certain cross-section of people. They wanted laws against this as being a public nuisance. The cases were finally turned down by the central court which said, 'The nuisance is when you break their beautiful idols on the road, but beautiful boys and girls in flowing dress singing a name that does not have any acid connotation, which is full of purity, is that nuisance?'

However, we do very little kirtan, one hour once a week or once a month. If there were chances for kirtan, that would be all right, but there are none. So we have to have some sort of practice by which we can also evolve. That is one point. It is not only the point of self-realization or Bhagavan darshan. There are many other problems with which we are confronted in our day-to-day life, such as problems of health and psychological problems. For these it is important and necessary that yoga should be practised even if you have an inclination to do kirtan.

Can I smoke?

Lord Shiva also smokes, but he smokes ganja. The most important thing you have to remember is that the different addictions, like smoking, alcohol and other vices belong to the rajasic state, rajoguna, and cause a sort of attachment to the body and senses.

Once a devotee approached Paramahansa Ramakrishna wanting to know why a paramahansa smoked a hookah, because Ramakrishna was a yogi of the highest order. He was a great bhakta, so much so that if money was kept under his bed he would get a burn on his skin. He was that sensitive! Once devotees put a few coins under his bed and when he got up he had burns on his body. When Totapuri and Paramahansa

discussed with each other about the superiority of bhakti or Vedanta, that is of saguna or nirguna, and Totapuri was talking about Brahma, the *advaita avastha* or non-dual state, nothing happened to Ramakrishna; but when he started talking about Kali he fell into a trance immediately. That was the superior state at which he had arrived. He was always insisting on *saguna swarupa*, the form of the Lord.

Totapuri asked him why he smoked a hookah. Ramakrishna replied, "In order to live one needs the link of vasana. To fly a kite, you must have a thread and if the thread is cut the kite goes off, you lose it. However, as long as there is vasana, desire to live, and attachment to your latent samskara of past or present, then you exist. If there is no vasana you will not exist, you will get jivatma; you will fly away from the body. Existence depends upon our vasana with the objects. We have attachments for many things, *lokeshana*, vasana for name, fame and power, *vitteshana*, desire for prosperity, wealth, *putreshana*, desire for progeny, stri and purusha vasana. These are all *vasana*, desires. Vasana causes us to cling to this existence, but once they are removed one by one you cannot exist."

Nature has made certain conditions and that is important for all of you. The vasanas must be maintained in tamasic and rajasic states. In tamasic and rajasic states, if you practise to deplete your vasana, it will hamper your spiritual evolution. For the evolution of the soul from the tamasic and rajasic states to the higher sattwic state, the presence of vasana is necessary. In somebody it may be alcohol, in others it could be desire for wealth, name and fame; in others, a different vasana and in you, it is smoking. So you should not think about whether you should smoke or not smoke.

If you are smoking, go ahead with it and if you don't want to smoke please don't do it. If you are not smoking and you want to smoke, do it. Or if you are smoking and you don't want to smoke, then whatever you spend on smoking give to me! But one thing is important: don't keep on thinking, 'Should I smoke or should I not smoke?' That creates a psychological

problem which will affect your personality, because it is a feeling of making a mistake. You think whether you should do this or not only when you are not sure about it. If you were sure it was not a mistake, why would you think about it? You have a doubt whether it is good or bad, so you think 'may I or may I not?' If you are sure it is good, you will not ask a question. I know many people who drink and they think, 'Should I or should not?' If a cup of *amrit*, nectar, was given to you, would you say, "Should I or should I not?" However, if a cup of poison was given to you then you will think, 'Should I or should I not', because you are not sure about it.

When you are sure about the purity of the chemical reaction you don't have two thoughts about it. When you have two thoughts about some action, it means you are not sure about its purity. The simplest opinion that can be given is, when the body is pure (now I am coming to the hatha yoga point) without toxins, without *vikara*, distortions, and no constipation, assimilation is going on and the mind is able to dispose of tensions, then you do not need these things to help you. Many people are in the habit of drinking and smoking and if that can be replaced by doing japa with a mala then it is a very good addiction and a very good habit.

How should we end our meditation?

When you are meditating on a form, symbol or devata, after your meditation is over, you should keep on sitting for some time, chant a few slokas, prayers, *vakya*, statements from the Upanishads for instance, the Shanti Path. Then you should open your eyes and come out of meditation. Immediately after you come out you should not take to any activity or tense job for about one hour or so, but it also depends on the quality of meditation you have.

I want to tell you about a reference in swara yoga. When ida is functioning you should do mental work, when pingala is functioning you should do physical work and when sushumna is functioning you should do only spiritual work.



In swara yoga there is a lot of caution about sushumna in particular. Sushumna is the divine nadi. When it awakens you can meditate very easily but the awakening of sushumna also has another tendency. It is said in swara yoga that either one attains samadhi or is liable to think of crimes. So when sushumna awakens for a long time, it is better to withdraw from work for some time.

In arohan I go from mooladhara to ajna chakra up the front passage and in awarohan down the spine. Should it not be up through the spinal column to raise up the kundalini?

We talk about the six chakras - mooladhara, swadhisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi and ajna. They are located within the frame of your spine and you cannot handle them directly. There are contact centres which are in the front of the body. Except for mooladhara, bindu and sahasrara, every chakra has a contact centre through which you can connect

with it. Swadhisthana has one in the lower abdominal viscera, manipura in the navel, anahata in the sternum, vishuddhi in the throat and ajna in the eyebrow centre. In order to handle the chakra on the back of the body in the spine, it is necessary to have contact with the centres in the front. When you can awaken or touch them then you can handle the chakra easily through your consciousness. Therefore, in kriya yoga arohan is done in the frontal passage through the contact centres and awarohan is done through the spine and it is perfectly all right.

So far as awakening is concerned, it only takes place if you are able to touch the particular chakra with your concentrated mind. Whether you touch mooladhara first or swadhisthana, manipura or anahata is not important. As each chakra is awakened, the awakening of kundalini begins. Another important factor you have to remember is that it is not always necessarily true that kundalini is in mooladhara itself. In your previous lives you may have practised yoga and you may be a *yogabhrashta*, one who did not complete his yoga practices in the past life, and you may have awakened your consciousness already. Kundalini might already have left mooladhara, it might be somewhere in manipura or at anahata but as you forget everything in the next life, you might even have forgotten that. Or your parents might be yogis, and since you took birth from your mother who herself was a yogi, your kundalini might already be awakened. It might have already left mooladhara and may be further up.

Through the practices of sadhana like hatha yoga, bhakti yoga, satsang, meditation, there comes a time when we are able to locate the present status of kundalini and then arohan hits accurately. We do teach: mooladhara, swadisthana, manipura . . . because you have to practise something, but once you have come to the point of realization and have already revised the present location of kundalini in your life, then you can go ahead from that particular chakra. It may be manipura, ajna, vishuddhi, anahata or any point.

Can one realize by practising pranayama alone?

Pranayama is a means and not an end. It is a step, not a final destination. Although I talk a lot about its glory, please remember that you are not going to realize through pranayama alone. After pranayama there is pratyahara, then dharana, then dhyana and finally samadhi. When you practise pranayama I suggest you start by doing fifteen minutes at any time, no restriction. Just sit down quietly fixing your gaze at nasikagra and witness the flow of your breath. Do not breathe yourself; let the natural flow take place.

It happens the whole day and night. Right from the time of birth, you are always breathing and you don't know it. You should try to see that *sahaja*, spontaneous, prana. Just see, watch, nothing more. When the breath goes in and out, just see how it goes. Sometimes it is very shallow; sometimes it is deep; sometimes it is all right, sometimes it is equal in and out; sometimes inhalation is longer and sometimes exhalation is longer. It does not matter. It need not be the same. That is the first step.

Then after a week or ten days or a month, when you have been able to follow the breath very carefully, try to discover the sound of the breath. What is this sound? Rishis say that when you are breathing out it is *Ham* and when you are breathing in it is *So*. So, it is *So Ham*. You can have any circuit: in *So*; out, *Ham*; *So Ham*, *So Ham*, or out, *Ham*; in *So Ham*, out *Ham So*. There is no difference, only the circuit of awareness is changed; either you start with *So Ham* or *Ham So*. Whether you start by practising *So Ham* or *Ham So*, it will always change. This process is called *ultanaam*, reverse name.

There is a story about Valmiki when he was a rogue. The saptarishis cheated him by giving him *ultanaam*. Some people say it was 'mara, mara, mara' (kill) which, when said quickly, becomes *Rama, Rama, Rama*. It could have been, I don't know. I think it was *So Ham* because you go on hearing *So Ham So Ham*, then after ten minutes it becomes *Ham So, Ham So*. Then you start *Ham So Ham So* and after five or ten minutes suddenly the

whole thing changes and you begin to hear *So Ham, So Ham, So Ham*.

Ultanaam means to reverse the process of awareness and when you have perfected that you will have an experience of light in the spine as if there is some sort of effulgence there. You can also have the experience of *shabda, nada*, sound, practically everywhere in the body, only for a short time, not the whole day otherwise you couldn't work in the office. For a short time during your sadhana, you can feel that somebody is blowing a conch in the body.

After this practice take to nadi shodhana. Nadi shodhana pranayama is where you first inhale through the left nostril, stop the breath for a while, exhale through the right nostril and then inhale through the right only, stop and exhale through the left. You must know how to do this correctly with the help of a teacher. He will teach you the ratio, how long to hold, to breathe out and in. He will also teach you which bandhas you have to practise when you are holding the breath. Pranayama without bandha is like *sabjee* without *namak* and *mirchi*, vegetables without salt and chilli, or rasam without tamarind - it has nothing. Bandhas, mudras and kumbhaka must be practised along with pranayama.

The three bandhas are moola bandha, jalandhara bandha, and uddiyana bandha. Jalandhara has to do with the throat and chin, uddiyana with the abdomen and moola bandha with the shukra nadi. These three bandhas have to be practised when kumbhaka is done, but kumbhaka has to be learned from a teacher.

This pranayama will enable you to withdraw your senses. The senses have to be withdrawn. As it is said in the *Kathopanishad*: the senses, *indriyas*, are like horses. If these horses are not trained, they will have an accident. These senses run after the sense-objects, but after pranayama they will not chase the sense objects during your sadhana. When the senses are withdrawn you should concentrate on anything you like, but you should keep it the same. It can be your ishtha devata,



a star, a flower, the sun, moon, a chakra; it could be thousands of things. You have to decide on one for yourself. That is called dharana and when you practise dharana on that object, dhyana automatically takes place and samadhi automatically follows.

Does energy transfer take place between people and is it always necessary, according to the law of karma, that the healer should get the negative karma of the person healed?

There is a system of photographing the aura of an individual with a special camera indicating the emotions, the energy field. They usually choose the thumb. They take coins, leaves, paper and many things and try to photograph the energy around it, like a mandala. This Kirlian photography is very successful and a lot of work is being done on it. At a big convention, people showed slides. A photograph was taken of the thumb of a man and woman. They were asked to shake hands. Again the photographs of the thumbs were taken. The man's aura had decreased while the woman's had increased. Energy transfer does take place. If healers know their art well, there is no need for them to take the sickness of the patient. If these pranic healers practise a lot of pranayama, then nothing can happen to them. Otherwise many times they lose.

– 30 January 1982, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Meditation



I have in mind to tell you something about that aspect of yoga which is the climax in one's spiritual evolution, more particularly at this place where the settings are conducive to the practice of that aspect of yoga. Of course, the most known aspect of yoga is hatha yoga, the practice of asana and pranayama, which is very important insofar as the achievement of a mind capable of practising meditation is concerned. Now I will confine myself to the topic of dhyana yoga.

I am particularly thinking about this subject because I wish to tell you that the ultimate purpose of practising every type of yoga is to achieve *dhyana* or meditation. One might ask 'What is there in meditation? What is there in dhyana yoga? You close your eyes, lock your body and become still. Don't think anything else. So everybody can do it'. Therefore, people think it is not necessary to know anything about meditation. They are of the opinion that when you want to practise asana and pranayama, you need a teacher, but if you want to meditate

there is nothing to be learned from anybody. It is just closing the eyes and closing the mind. Easily said but difficult to do.

As you practise exercises in order to control your body, similarly in yoga there is a concept of having control over the mind. To control the mind is to control the influxes of energy. In psychology and in yoga, mind is not psychological stuff. Mind is a kind of energy. Just as you say the negative energy and positive energy flow through the cables of the electrical wire, in the same way, mind, *chitta* or *manas*, is not psychological stuff, it is not an emotional system.

Thinking is not the mind, feeling is not the mind, memory is not the mind. They are aspects of the mind, just as the bulb is not electricity, the fan is not electricity, the air-conditioner is not electricity; they are run by electricity. Bulb, fan and air-conditioner, microphone, radios, televisions are run by electrical energy. In the same way, there is an energy within us that is called mind. This energy is manifesting itself through various samskaras, habits or awareness, like feeling, memory, anger. This energy has to be tamed.

Man has not tamed this energy so far. He has been taught about this for over five or seven thousand years in India and almost fifty years in the west. People know it is something very potent and powerful, but they don't know how to tame it. In order to tame this energy, the first thing you have to do is to find out the channel of this energy flowing in the physical body.

According to tantra, yoga and other sciences which have been known to Indians for many thousand years, three nadis flow within the frame of the spine. One of them is responsible for distributing, conducting and carrying this pranic energy, and that is known as pingala nadi. This flows on the right side of the spine and on the left side is ida nadi, the main conductor of the mental energy of the manas, chitta or awareness. In order to tame this, there are two ways to practise.

One is the way of pranayama, the other is the way of dhyana yoga. I am not going to tell you about the system of pranayama in this brief talk, but I will deal a little bit with dhyana yoga

or meditation. It is said when you practise meditation, first of all you fix the position of your body, and for that, quite a few postures are recommended. One is the lotus posture, *padmasana*, second is *siddhasana*, and third is *swastikasana*, fourth one is *sukhasana*, fifth one is *vajrasana*. Out of all these, two are most important – the lotus posture and *siddhasana*.

Out of these two asanas, *siddhasana* is considered to be the best. It is considered best not from the point of view that it is easy to practise, but in this asana two important centres of the body, which are responsible for creating disturbances in the sympathetic nervous system, creating turbulence in the mind and brain are spontaneously put under control.

Those of you who know *siddhasana* can understand what I mean. First of all, you press the perineum with one heel and the other heel presses the *vajra nadi*, the lower part of the abdomen. These two centres are the *vajra nadi* and the *shukra nadi* in yoga. *Shukra nadi* is in the perineum, the coccyx, between the genital and the urinary-excretory organs. This is an important centre in yoga which is known as *mooladhara chakra*, the seat of *kundalini*. There it is situated in the form of a small gland, a *granthi*, and it is also the centre of the great turbulence of the mind.

The mind is never disturbed by external things. Birth, death, friendship or enmity, poverty or prosperity – nothing disturbs the mind. The disturbance of the mind begins at the point of the *shukra nadi* and *vajra nadi*. All the facts are first registered in these centres, not in the brain. You may be listening to a new approach, but it is not a new approach because I know a little bit of science. Whenever you see pleasant things or obnoxious things through the senses, the impressions are first carried to the *shukra nadi* and *vajra nadi*. Only then are they carried to the brain through the nadis and you express them. If the scientists of today have not known this, they are going to know it after some time because this is the fact.

Experience of pleasure, experience of pain, experience of love and hatred, experiences of heat and cold can be had at

two different levels. One is the gross level; one is the subtle level. Yogis can experience that in the subtle level in the brain, but all others experience pain and pleasure at a gross level. You prick me with a thorn. The thorn is pricked here on the fingertip and the pain is taking place in the brain, but it is felt here. With everybody that is so. The perception takes place in the brain but the experience is felt somewhere else. So there are two levels – the gross and the subtle levels.

This gross level is blocked by siddhasana; it is called moola bandha and vajroli. When you block vajra nadi, it is called vajroli. When you block the perineum, it is called moola bandha which is also responsible for controlling blood pressure and the temperature of the body.

Methods and benefits

Many people think meditation is very easy, but I tell you it is not. When you meditate without proper preparation, you cannot control the changes that take place in the body. It has been studied by scientists that when you meditate, within a minute the waves change. From beta to theta to delta to alpha, the wave changes. The voltage in the brain falls down within minutes. You should be able to control the changes in the wave patterns of the brain.

The second point is that when you are sitting for meditation, gradually the inner body temperature falls. You know what is inner body temperature? What we call *jatharagni* in Sanskrit is responsible for metabolism, anabolism and catabolism. If there is no proper temperature in the body, there will be catabolism. If there is proper temperature in the body, there will be proper metabolism and anabolism. In meditation, the temperature falls down.

When you practise meditation, you must remember a few things. First, the body temperature should not fall suddenly. How are you going to do this? Secondly, the waves of the brain should not change very fast. Third, the influxes of the nervous system become slow and as a result of that, there is inertia in the heart. Fourth, the breath stops, and that is very difficult.

The moment the mind becomes quiet, *kumbhaka*, retention of breath, takes place and many people cannot understand what is happening. When the breath stops, you have a lot of visions and sensations. Sometimes people do not understand what is happening to them. So when you meditate, you must have a system, and that system is taught in yoga.

Ajapa Japa

There are many systems in yoga such as ajapa japa, japa, kriya yoga, nada yoga, shabda yoga and antar mouna. It is not necessary for me to tell you all about the systems, you have to study them. I am going to tell you about one system that is called ajapa japa.

Sit in siddhasana, practise your usual pranayama, especially bhastrika. Then sit quietly, concentrate on the tip of the nose, *nasikagra drishti*. Watch the natural breath very carefully. Sometimes it is deep, sometimes it is shallow, sometimes very deep, sometimes deeper than natural. It does not have a uniform rhythm; it is different from time to time. The general rate is 15 times or breaths per minute, 900 times per hour, 10,800 per twelve hours, 21,600 in 24 hours. That happens with us all the time and we are unconscious of this. We have never watched our breath; we have always watched the world outside. We have always watched how our mind is feeling. We have watched everything in life, but we have not watched our breath, and this is very unfortunate because it is through watching the breath that you can get into the mind.

You cannot get into your mind directly; it is not possible even for yogis. You cannot get into your conscious, subconscious or superconscious mind directly. There is no way, even yogis cannot do it, and if by chance they get in, they cannot get out. It is like the *chakravyuha*, the maze you get into and you do not know how to get out. However, the natural breath is with us all the time, yet we have never thought about it.

So you sit in your asana, concentrate on the nose tip, and do nothing. Don't do anything. Just watch the breath. Don't









breathe in, don't breathe out, let things happen. After 10 to 20 minutes, just try to discover what the sound of the breath is like. Every breath has sound, everything has sound. If you watch the sound of the breath closely, you will discover the mantra *So Ham* or *Ham So*. The ingoing breath is *So* and the outgoing breath is *Ham*, or the outgoing breath is *Ham* and the ingoing breath is *So*. You can either think of *So Ham* or *Ham So*, in any order you like.

After practising this for 15 or 20 minutes, without losing awareness of the breath, you should continue. Then you sometimes feel *So Ham*, sometimes you feel *Ham So*. Sometimes there is a continuous flow of awareness in the form *So Ham, So Ham, So Ham, So Ham*. You do not know if you are starting with *So* or with *Ham*. You are in a confusion but you are transcending the idea of *So Ham* and *Ham So*, both. At this time, when you are not sure what you are doing, whether it is *So Ham* or *Ham So*, you take your mind to the mid-eyebrow centre called *bhrumadhya*, and here you experience the flow of breath, that's all. It takes about 20 minutes or half an hour, minimum it is 10 minutes, maximum it could be one hour. This is one method of meditation.

There are other methods also which you will have to practise after ascertaining them from your guru. Another method is *japa yoga*, the practice of mantra in which control of the mind is not involved, but where you are trying to awaken the inner awareness through the mantra.

According to *raja yoga*, *dhyana yoga* is the state proceeding *samadhi*. *Samadhi* is that state where the awareness is felt in its totality. It is not unawareness, it is not unconsciousness, it is the total awareness. You feel the awareness but you do not feel 'you'. You do not feel anything else. This is the most important aspect of man's life. Through the practice of *yoga*, we should try to develop this.

Finally, a lot of work is being done on meditation by scientists in different countries. In Melbourne, Australia, a doctor is doing research on the effect of meditation on cancer. He was a very renowned doctor and is now totally dedicated

to cancer therapy. He has evolved three methods: yoga nidra, pranayama and meditation. Thousands of students who are suffering from malignant tumour go to his class. He gives them these three practices. Besides teaching these practices, he is also conducting research on the effect of meditation on the changes taking place in the body.

Just as you try to create a change in your physical body through asana and pranayama, you can bring about a change in your physical body through meditation more quickly and more positively. It has been found that through meditation, the haemoglobin count has been improved. Through meditation, the growth of cancer has been stopped, and some of the psychological, psychosomatic disorders can be arrested. In this way, scientists are working on greater possibilities. It is said that regular practice of meditation can not only make you free from sickness, but it can change the elements of the body. Meditation can change the contents of the body, and that is written in the yoga shastras as well.

In this fine place that you have here, I am giving a very important way for everybody. If you devote half an hour every day for dhyana yoga, you will find that your attending this meeting has been an important landmark of your life.

– 28 January 1982,
Kovalam Beach Yoga Centre, Trivandrum, Kerala



Yoga In Student Life

In the last 30 years, yoga has become a subject of scientific studies in India as well as abroad. First, the scientific studies were carried out on the most known aspects of yoga, the yoga asanas. In many countries, teams of scientists and doctors were studying the possible effects of yoga postures on the body. Of course, everywhere the teams gave a very wonderful report in their research. As a result, yoga postures became a very powerful means of therapy.

In the last three decades or more, many incurable diseases, chronic and constitutional, both, are being successfully tackled in India as well as abroad. This is a very preliminary but an important aspect of yoga. Later, the thinkers began to ponder over the possibility of whether or not yoga could influence the activities of the brain and consciousness. Now research is going on all over the world and the results which we have obtained so far speak very positively about some of the aspects of yoga, not necessarily only asana, that can alter the behaviour, the chemistry and the waves of the brain. I will try to tell you in layman's language so that you can carry the knowledge home.

I am not keen whether you practise or not, that is left to you. For me, it is important to explain how far yoga has been understood by the thinking people of the world today, not only by Hindus or Muslims, but also by agnostics, who don't have any concept of God, reality, atma, or after-life, people who just believe in matter, total matter and nothing beyond matter. They have come to the conclusion that through the practice of yoga, the quality of the contents of the brain can be changed, influenced, transformed or completely metamorphosed.

If that be so, how are we going to apply this science of yoga to our own profession, career and station in life? We are sannyasins, some are businessmen and you are students. Everyone has his own career and profession. Is it possible

therefore to apply this science of yoga in such a way that it will improve the quality of our performance? What yoga should we practise that will enable us to improve the quality of our experience which we have every day with the people we come across, and which we have in interaction with social and national problems? That mental personality should be developed through yoga. We believe it does. But how?

There is a general opinion now prevalent in the western countries and in certain circles in India as well, that through the four practices of pranayama, dhyana yoga, yoga nidra and antar mouna the mind of students can be improved. In Switzerland, educationists have been working on this and they are working on the behaviour of archetypes in the brain. These archetypes in the brain are in billions and trillions. They seem to become a barrier in expressing our mental personality.

Many times you feel that you understand things better and sometimes you don't. At times you experience total clarity when you study geography, mathematics or history. There seems to be total clarity, and at other times it seems everything is clouded and you don't understand. In this connection, you will have to study the behaviour of that mechanism which is the seat of understanding. This is the brain. The archetypes in the brain come in the way of your expression. These archetypes are the substances which lie buried in the depth of the human mind, not the external mind which is connected with the senses - that is the externalized mind. Through the eyes, the ears, through other mediums of perception, this mind obtains knowledge. I am not talking of that mind. That mind is just a reflector. There are other areas of the mind, *chitta*, which you should be able to touch if at all you want to develop to be a genius, a student of outstanding success.

You don't have to do much with this mind, particularly that part of the mind which depends on external sources of the senses, the *indriyas*, not even with that mind which depends on the storehouse or the fund of knowledge which you have gathered and collected. There is an area of the mind which you



do not know, which you have never experienced and that area has to come out. That mind can only come out if you can fix the archetypes.

Yantra and mandala

Scientists in connection with the educational system, particularly in Switzerland, have developed a science using yantra and mandala. The geometrical figure, you see many times are known as Sri yantra, Kali yantra or Tara yantra. We thought for some time, even in our country which is the origin of this culture, that these yantras in geometrical shape were a mystic substance. Many people didn't understand, neither priests, swamis, nobody could explain this.

Mentally retarded children are using yantras. They are told: Concentrate on the yantras with eyes open, then close the eyes and visualize the yantra as long as you can. When you are not able to visualize with the eyes closed, then open the eyes again and gaze at the yantra. Go on practising this system of trataka, dhyana on the yantra, twice a day for 10 to 15 minutes. What will happen and what happens? They say that yantra has the capacity and power to penetrate deep into the depth of the mind, manifest and express that mind. Through this practice

of yantra meditation, mentally retarded children are helped in countries whose cultural tradition is not yoga. In this country where we have this rich tradition, we are not aware and have completely forgotten what these funny geometrical things are.

The second thing the scientists have been talking about is mandala. For us, it is idolatory. For them it is a scientific process of conceptualizing and thereby influencing the subconscious and unconscious areas of the mind. You will be surprised, but they even go to the extent where concentration on those mandalas can finally stabilize the waves in the brain – the alpha, beta, theta and delta waves in the brain, which have got voltage, frequency, ampere and vibration. It is like electricity. If you can reorganize, reset and restructure the brain wave patterns, you can manifest a new quality of brain and understanding.

This is just a glimpse that I have presented before you out of thousands and thousands of researches that have been conducted the world over. Since yoga has been introduced in rehabilitation centres in America, doctors have succeeded very well. I am not talking about drugs, I am talking about the relationship between yoga and the mind. I am talking about the relationship between yoga and consciousness, between yoga and man's *swabhava*, personality, his *prakriti*, nature. It is true that yoga postures do help and you must practise a few of them every day. At least surya namaskara you must practise, but yoga does not end with that. With that, yoga begins.

Pranayama

Not only sannyasins or grown-ups, every student must be exposed to the scientific aspects of yoga unknown to us in this particular generation, but which scientists have come to learn about. Our ancestors did know. Thousands of years ago there was a tradition that a child at the age of 7 or 8 years was ordained the *sutra*, a thread. I am not talking like a Brahmin, I am talking like a doctor. I am talking of science and not trying to establish or try to prove anything religious. At the age of 7 or 8, children were ordained a *sutra*; that was known



as upanayanam. They were also given a mantra, pranayama and surya upasana.

Now scientists are talking about something very important. In every child, at the age of 7 or 8, the pineal gland begins to degenerate. With the degeneration of the pineal gland in the body, the pituitary is unleashed. It is opened completely and with the opening of the pituitary gland, the hormones enter the body in an unchecked manner. Imbalance in the personality grows. A boy or a girl of 15 years can think, experience, desire and have the passions of a man or a woman of 35 years. There is no balance because the pineal gland was not maintained in a healthy state when it began to degenerate at the age of 7 or 8.

In order to maintain the health of the pineal gland so that it may survive for as many years as possible, mantra, pranayama, surya upasana and asanas were introduced. I am not going to talk about mantra and surya upasana. I will speak a few words about pranayama and how it affects the pineal gland, situated at the top of the spinal column in the medulla oblongata. In religious terms, it is known as the third eye of Lord Shiva. We call it ajna chakra, the monitoring centre from where the respiratory, excretory and all other systems in the body are given orders and are being monitored. Even muscular atrophy

and other diseases can be directly controlled by training the pineal gland, ajna chakra, the monitoring centre. Scientifically, we call it the monitoring centre. That training can be done through pranayama.

Breathe through the left nostril, breathe out through the right nostril. Breathe in through the right, breathe out through the left – a simple thing. We have seen in our scientific studies that when we breathe in and out through the left nostril, the right hemisphere of the brain is seen contracting and expanding, contracting and expanding. The same thing happens when you breathe in and out through the right nostril, the left hemisphere of the brain is acting. This is called *nadi shodhana pranayama*, alternate nostril breathing.

With this pranayama, you are training a very important part of your body, the brain and pineal gland. In those days, pranayama was taught with the view that our children would have the pineal gland maintained for many years so that they would have a balanced personality between emotion, thinking and experience.

I did not talk to you on yoga asanas and exercises because I thought many of you know about it. I wanted to give you this information because I am involved in it. I still believe that just as you can improve the quality of everything, you can improve the quality of the brain also; it is possible. The brain is not a static substance and if you are an idiot, it does not mean you have to remain an idiot. If you have a bad memory, it does not mean that you should always have a bad memory and there is nothing to improve it. In India, the only place that gives you this explanation about yoga is the Bihar School of Yoga.

I come from Bihar, I live in Bihar, but I am not a Bihari. I love the people of Bihar very much and my ashram is situated in the exact spot where the eldest son of Kunti and the eldest brother of the Pandavas ruled Angadesh – Maharatha Karna, Mahadaani Karna and Mahayogi Karna.

– 9 February 1982, Vivekananda College, Madras, Tamil Nadu



In Kali Yuga our minds are very agitated, full of tensions, likes and dislikes, jealousies, anger, greed and our perception is very low. It is important that we understand the relationship between our spiritual evolution and sexual life, which is our need. When you enter grihastha ashrama you must remember that you are doing so not for the purpose of sensual enjoyment, but for the fulfilment of spiritual life.

Concentration



Should we concentrate while repeating our mantra?

If you take a magnifying glass and put it against the sun, then the concentrated sun's rays pointed on an object will burn it. If you remove the magnifying glass, the sun's rays cannot burn the object. The mind is not psychological stuff. A thought or an idea, what you call mind, is energy. Just like you have energy inside this microphone cable, currents flow in our body. The mind is in the form of energy with voltage and frequency. This mind is also measured in the form of alpha, beta, theta and delta waves having their own frequency and voltage. If the voltage of the mind is concentrated, it works better. Therefore, concentration is a very scientific principle.

Different streams of water, when collected together, create a force and move a generator. Whenever you collect the thought process, it becomes powerful and you should not doubt this. It is a universal principle and I don't have to prove it. In Western countries the minds of people are different, especially if they are aged thirty-five or forty. Their minds are full of tensions. Their personality is a split personality and they have a lot of conflicts in their minds. If they try to concentrate on one particular point, they can't. If they try very much to concentrate, there is a sort of split. A part of the mind is trying to concentrate and another part of the mind is opposing it. There is a sort of antagonism which creates a split for the people of that culture and society.

It is perfectly all right; do not try to concentrate. If you do, you will have a lot of headaches and migraines, you will feel giddy and your personality may become schizophrenic. The Indian culture is entirely different. Even if you become modern, there are less conflicts. The personality is less split. Indian society and culture is designed in that way. For Indians, there is no harm if they concentrate.

However, it is not a question of Indians and westerners. It is a question of adults and children. Children have something important - the pineal gland which is situated behind the eyebrow centre at the top of the spine. In grown-ups it is the pituitary gland that functions, but in children it is the pineal gland and it is responsible for psychic awareness. Children have greater psychic power. They can feel things much better than we do. When we concentrate it is the pituitary gland which is brought into action, but when children concentrate it is the pineal gland. The rules should be completely different and the analysis is also different. In my opinion, all children can concentrate, there is no harm. Concentration will definitely improve the quality of their brain.

– 4 February 1982, Vikaasa School, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Satsang

What is the effect of various mudras?

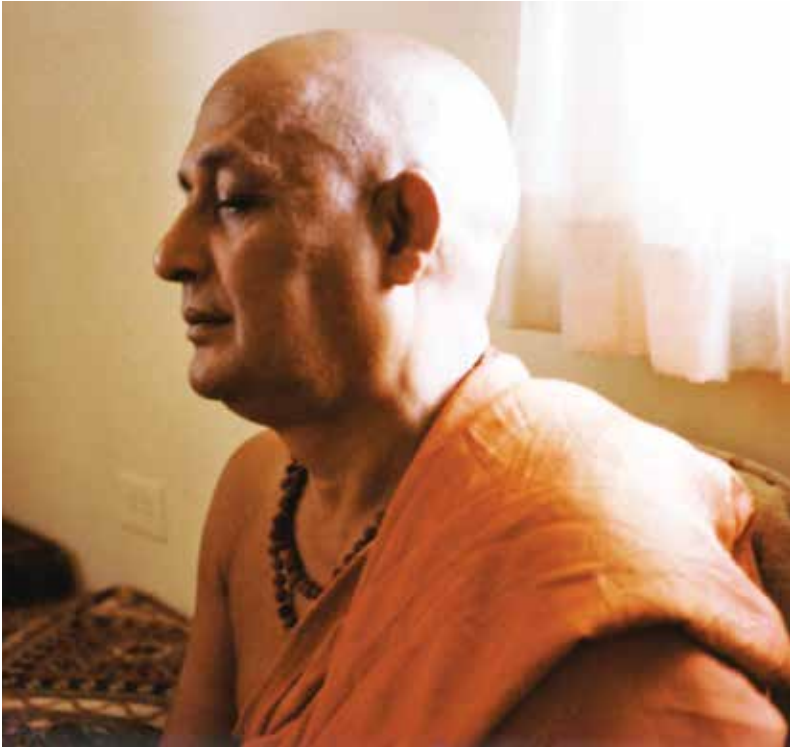
Mudras have an effect on the emotional pattern of the sadhaka. Some mudras help you to regulate the energy flow in the body like chin and jnana mudras. Some mudras can help you to focus the energy on one point like shambhavi mudra. Mudras like vipareeta karani mudra put secretion into the reverse gear. In vipareeta karani mudra, the nectarine flow oozing from bindu chakra is reversed to the higher centres of the body. So vipareeta karani, chin mudra, shambhavi mudra and jnana mudra are connected with your emotional patterns and energy patterns in the body.

Is it possible to experience the sense of smell during the dream state and how can we become conscious of our dreams?

The state of dream is a state of mind. When the mind is functioning totally isolated from sense objects, then it has enough material within itself. The *Mandukya Upanishad* says that in dreams you experience what you have already experienced. So you can experience smell, you can see forms, but sometimes when you develop a special awareness called the *drashta*, witness, you can even witness or understand that you are dreaming that smell.

First practice: To become conscious in a dream, you must develop the practice while you are practising yoga and experiencing some of the visions. When you are awfully tired and want to go to sleep, it is at that time that you must sit in padmasana, concentrate on bhrumadhya or anahata chakra, develop visions and follow them. If you blink, if you miss the awareness of vision, you should open your eyes, and after some time start it over again. This is one practice.

Second practice: In yoga nidra you must pick about one or two dozen symbols for yourself. You must visualize these



symbols in yoga nidra in deep relaxation and you should not blink.

Third practice: When you practise yoga nidra, you must try your level best not to sleep. In fact, in yoga nidra you should not sleep. You must try to remain aware all throughout. In the course of time, yoga nidra will develop the vision.

Fourth practice: Antar mouna can be practised after pranayama. You can practise ujjayi, moorcha, surya bheda, or even bhastrika pranayama. Ten or fifteen minutes of pranayama, either in shavasana, or in sukhasana, padmasana or siddhasana. You release your awareness or your mind. Let it free; let it think what it wants. Do not impose any restriction on the flow of the mind. In the beginning you may have to help your mind a little bit by introducing the items of thinking, but later you will find that you are not the thinker, you are the seer

and the mind is thinking, but not in the form of thought. The mind develops the capacity of vision like a film or pictures you see on the screen. You can see objects, hear sounds, remember things, but then the mind does not do it. When you have developed this quality of awareness, the same will help you to remain aware of the experiences in the dreams.

How to plan for death?

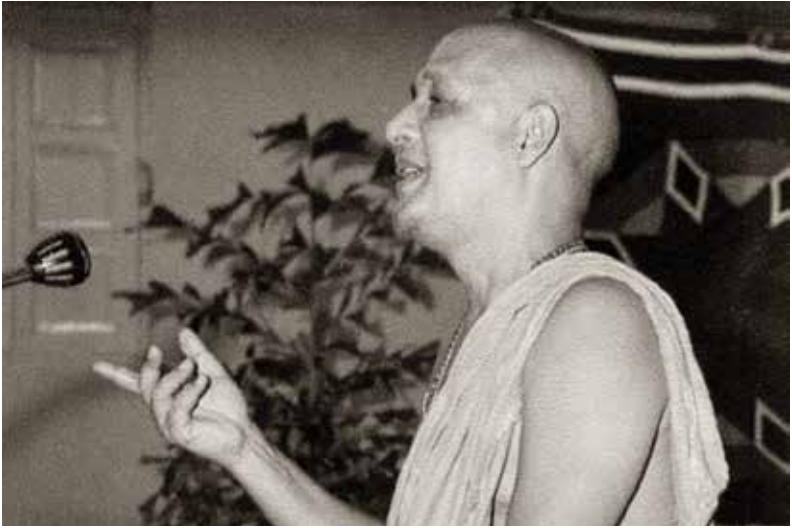
It is a very good question. The best way to prepare for death is to be sick, then there is no problem. First of all, death is the end of a chapter; it is not the end of the book. Death is not the destruction of the continuity of consciousness; it is just a transfer from an old flat to a new flat. Maybe a bigger one, or may be a smaller one, according to your karma, according to the money that you can pay for the flat. The *Bhagavad Gita* says it in a different way (2:22):

*Vaasaasi jeernani yatha vihaya
Navaani grihnaati naroparani;
Tatha shareerani vihaya jeerna-
Nyanyaani sanyaati navaani dehi.*

Just as you throw away old garments and put on new ones; in the same way the soul gets rid of this old garment and puts on a new one.

If all the old people were to survive for five hundred years, they would not enjoy because enjoyment belongs to the young age, not the old age. It is necessary that old people die. When you do not find any pleasure in this life, you must die. There is no fun in living this life without any pleasure. So, you have to plan for death. First of all, you must approach your guru, if you have one; if not, approach any sadhu or swami, tell him to give you sannyasa, and then follow all the rules laid down for a sannyasin.

When Adi Shankara was crossing the river, he was in the grip of a crocodile. His mother cried from the shore. He said only one thing, 'Permit me to take sannyasa and I will get a



new lease on life.’ The mother, of course, would not permit him to take sannyasa in any other circumstance, but this was the time she wanted to have him, even as a sannyasin. She said, ‘All right, take sannyasa. I give you permission.’ He was a brilliant personality, incomparable in the history of the world, a man with erudition, a man with vision, dynamism, purity, a man with so much knowledge.

Therefore, the shashtra says, the moment you take sannyasa, you are dead. Even according to the Hindu legal tradition, sannyasa is considered to be a civil death. Do you know what is civil death? You have no right over the property you inherit. You cannot say, ‘This property is mine.’ You have taken sannyasa, you are dead so don’t talk about it. On the day when sannyasa is taken, there are certain rituals that are performed and those rituals are only performed for a person who is dead and who is burned on the ghat. The whole homa, shraaddha is offered to him; pinda daan is offered to him as an homage as if a man is dead and you are putting him on the *chita*, funeral pyre, and reading the mantra.

Sannyasa has to be a systematic death because the old karmas are burned. Swami Vivekananda said, ‘As the leaves

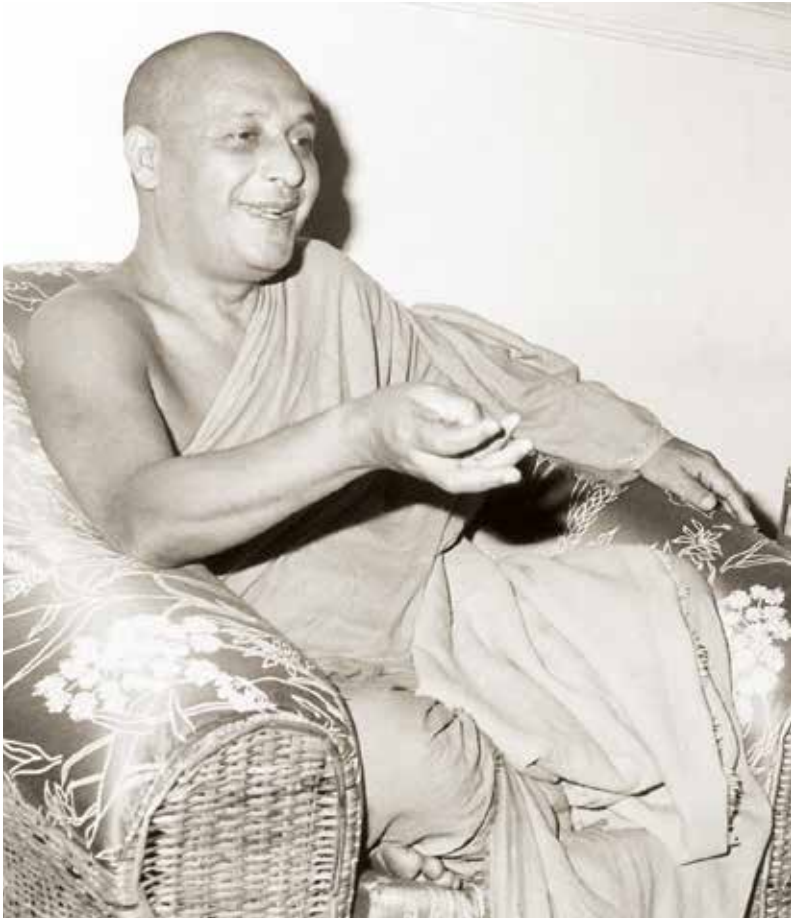
fall from the trees, in the same way the karma must be emancipated and must fall down from the tree. Day by day, the leaves fall and one day the tree becomes free from all leaves.' This should happen to the individual. Systematically there must be erosion of karma, samskara, so that one day you are free from it. He says, 'Sannyasin, chant *Om Tat Sat, Om*. Be bold. Death cannot make any difference in your psychic structure. It is not a challenge which you have to meet. You are a challenge to death.'

The definition of death has to change. It is no loss to anybody. No matter who dies in your family, it is no loss to anybody. It is the karma of nature. Prakriti has a rule and if you think that your near and dear ones should not die or that you should not die, what are you talking about? Just think of a world, a family, where everybody loves each other and nobody dies. You will stop loving each other. How long can you love? Five years, seven years, ten years? I don't think that people who live together love each other. You live together but you don't love each other. How can you love somebody for so many years? It is so difficult. We get fed up with the same rasgulla every day for lunch. I don't want rasgulla every day, some days gulabjamun, some days pedha. We live together and we are attached to each other and therefore we fail to realize the vision of reality.

Death is a must as is birth. If you want to plan for death, my only suggestion would be to prepare yourself for sannyasa. One day you will approach the guru on Sivaratri or Guru Poornima day. He will call a barber to shave your head and *chutia*, sacred tuft of hair, and in that way he will take away Hinduism. He will remove the sacred thread and your name, he will chant the shraaddha mantra or tarpan that is chanted at the burial ground. Then he will give you a new name and a new structure of life. In the same body, a new atman will be transplanted. Death and birth will take place together and you do not have to worry.

– 23 January 1982, Bangalore, Karnataka

Devotion



High quality of pooja and high quality of devotion can come only if you train your body through yoga, train your prana through yoga and train your mind through yoga - chitta shuddhi, prana shuddhi, bhutha or tattwa shuddhi has to be there. If you sit for pooja without bath, without changing your dress, without attending to the daily calls but with a loaded stomach, how would you feel? In the same way, you must

take care of your mind. You take bath, change your dress, you do everything, but you do not understand that if the mind is not properly fixed, all the pooja is fruitless. Whatever pooja you do, it does not bear any fruit because you have attended to non-essentials and you have not attended to the essentials. Mind is the basis. If you do pooja, if the mind is one-pointed, Bhagavan darshan will be there. It is for this that you and your children must practise yoga and learn pranayama.

Prepare for your pooja

I will tell you another secret. Many times people say that it is very difficult to control the mind. Yes, it is difficult to control the mind for one who has no *yukti*, no technique, no trick. You can control an elephant, so you can control the mind also, but there is a *yukti*, a trick – pranayama. Before pooja, if you do pranayama for 15 minutes with pooraka, kumbhaka, rechaka – 15 minutes of pranayama, you can go through the whole pooja with a calm, quiet and steady mind. Pranayama at once controls the mind and therefore you must learn asana and pranayama. What is asana? You have seen Lord Shiva sitting in padmasana? Yogis sit in either padmasana or siddhasana. When you bend your spine, it creates tensions in the brain. It is not good for the spine, for the heart, stomach and brain. Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* (6:13):

*Samam kaayashirogreevam dhaarayannachalam sthirah;
Samprekshya naasikaagram svam dishashchaanavalokayan.*

Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and perfectly still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking around.

The body, the head, the neck must be in one line. Not only your back, your head and your neck should be in one line. Sri Krishna says 'achalam'. *Achalam* means should not shake. You should stay 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours and then you must fix your mind here.

Nasikaagram svam, fix your mind on the nose tip. *Dishashchaanavalokayan*, do not look here and there like a monkey. Do not look to the right, to the left, do not look up. This is the position. This you cannot do because your body is not trained. In order to train the body and muscles you will have to do surya namaskara, pawanmuktasana and a few asanas which you can learn. Practise asana for six months, one year, then sit in padmasana for one hour. You can read the *Gita*, you can do pooja, dhyanam and arati. You will see that in three to four months' time, your *anubhuti*, experiences, will change.

This is the first benefit of yoga which comes to our daily religious practice through asana and pranayama. Dhyana means thinking of your ishta devata *only* – not also, only. Dhyana means attention, one-pointed awareness. If your ishta devata is Sri Rama, he should be there. His photo, his murti, his *vigraha*, his image, must be seen by you as it is outside. The difference between external and internal must be finished. The mandir should be in your heart. If the *vigraha* of the ishta devata is in the mandir, it should also be in the heart. If you can see it outside, why can you not see it inside? You cannot see it because you have only outer eyes, not inner eyes. You can see the inner Rama, the inner Krishna and Vishnu only with inner eyes, and those you do not have. In order to develop the inner eye, you should concentrate on *trikuti* or *bhrumadhya*, the point between the two eyebrows, the seat of the third eye of Shiva. In the *Bhagavad Gita* Sri Krishna said (8:10):

*Bhruvormadhye praanamaaveshya samyak
Sa tam param purusham upaiti divyam.*

You must fix your mind on *bhrumadhya*; then you will see the light.

Do asana, pranayama and dhyana to improve your religious practices. Many people do pooja even without bhakti. They do it because they have to do. If they do not do, Bhagavan

will get angry. They want to do it just like they want to go to office on time. That is called *dharmic vyatha*, religious fear. Do not be afraid of God. He is your *atma*, your soul. He is your everything. What is the use of fearing him? You can fear everybody else. You can fear your husband, wife, or children. Do not fear God. Even if you do not do pooja, he would not get angry because he knows this fellow is getting lazy. Now this is the first important point.

Help yourself

The second important point that apart from your pooja and religious life, you have so many sicknesses in the family. And what do you do? In olden days, grandmothers knew some sort of home-made remedies and they used to give it. Now that is not done anymore. So, now there is the doctor. Doctors give you some medicines. You get better for a few days, and again you get sick. Then you go to another doctor. You get a little better and again you get sick. Now this *chakkar* goes on throughout your life. If you have ten members in the family, you have to make a compulsory visit to the doctor or hospital every now and then.

Yoga has a science called yoga therapy and many people who have been practising have found that for most diseases one suffers from, yoga can help immediately, completely and totally. This migraine, pain in the waist, sciatica, peptic ulcer and retroverted uterus, prolapsed uterus – they are nothing. They can be cured, just like asthma and colds. From this viewpoint too, the practices of yoga are so helpful for the householders. You should not say that yoga is only for sadhus, for brahmacharis, vaishnavas, or for those who do not eat meat. Yoga is for sick people. Yoga is for unsound people. It is for restless people. It is not for healthy people.

You can make use of this science of yoga therapy and some of you must get proper training of asana, pranayama and shatkarma so you can help your neighbours. This is the greatest help you can give in this colony where there are one

hundred thousand people. I am telling you that most of the people will be sick. They never keep healthy. If you can teach yoga to them and help them, they will be all right.

For example, neti kriya: take some tepid water, put it into a lota, pour the water into your nose and let the water come out. It is a cure for almost one hundred sicknesses, more than one hundred. Another example: take some tepid water, 3 to 4 litres and first thing early in the morning, drink it and vomit it out. Your migraine, acidity, gases, cough will be gone. What more do you need? You have not spent one more naya paisa and more than that, it cleans your stomach.

Diseases like asthma, bronchitis, migraine can be cured instantaneously by the practice of surya namaskara. You know surya namaskara is a combination of twelve exercises which girls and little boys should do. What a fine memory, what a fine brain they will have. They will not take much time to study their books. In short, I give you a glimpse of how yoga can help you in perfecting your religious practices and how it can help you in curing and treating yourself and your family.

Don't forget

This human life has been given to us with a special purpose. You have not been born as human beings to just eat, sleep and produce children. That is your side activity. The main purpose for which you are born is to awaken the shakti in you known as kundalini shakti. The purpose of human birth is that and there is no other purpose. After getting this birth and so much of knowledge, awareness, satsang and so many scriptures and sages like Ramana Maharshi, Sri Aurobindo, Satya Sai Baba, you still somehow miss the real point along with the obligations of your grihastha dharma. Along with your grihastha dharma, while fulfilling the obligations of your own desires, you must practise some sadhana for your awakening, and that sadhana you must take from a Guru, not make it on your own. Have satsang, then go and approach a Guru and tell him, 'I want to practise yoga for higher things'. If he is capable, he will give

you the way. If he is not capable he will say, 'Look here, I do not know that much. Please go to somebody else.'

In Bihar, in every village, even illiterate women know nada yoga. The farmer woman who collects cow dung, who sells milk and curd, practises nada yoga. You know what nada yoga is? Close your ears and hear the inner sound, close your ears and go into dhyana and then you will hear birds, murali, mridangam. So many things you will hear called anahat nada. You can hear music and that is called nada yoga. The women practise kundalini yoga. They know all about chakras, where kundalini is and how she wakes up and what happens. They know where ajna chakra is because for them the purpose of human life is certain.

All of you who are born in India have the rishis, munis and mahatmas as your ancestors. You belong to some ancestry, either Parashara gotra, Yagnavalkya gotra or Bharadwaja gotra. You do not belong to Mohamed Rafi gotra or the Lata Mangeshkar gotra. You belong to Parashara Gotra. You are the children of rishis and munis, not ordinary householders. You have such a clear-cut and most illumined background, that knowledge flows through your veins. Why have you forgotten it? What has this modern culture to give to us? It has given everything to westerners. We have to purify it. It has given enough to the westerners who have nice houses, centrally heated rooms, motor cars, security yet you see them sleeping on Benares or Agra station waiting rooms. What happened to them? They have everything, then why do they like this life? Because modern life has given them a kick. Adhunik jeevan, modern life, has given them such a kick that they do not want it anymore even if they have to sleep on the platforms of Benares railway station. Even if they have to use the most dirty latrines of third-class waiting rooms, they do not mind, but they do not want the kicks of modern life.

You want kicks now. Before you get kicks and this disillusionment, it will be much better that you set your mind right and revive your senses and your sankalpa.

Adi Shankara says that three things are very difficult to obtain which are the means to the attainment of the grace of God. If you want to obtain the *anugraha*, the grace of God, you must obtain these three difficult things:

1. *Manushyatwam* or the human birth, a human body, human intelligence;
2. *Mumukshutwam* or the desire to become liberated;
3. *Mahapurusha samshrayaha* or association with an enlightened person.

If you have got these three things which are so difficult to obtain, you are definitely qualified to receive the grace of God, but for that, do not squander this property.

Once a housewife sent her servant to the market with ten rupees. She said, 'Go buy lady fingers, potato, eggplant and onion.' The servant went to the market and forgot what he had come for. He went to the theatre and the circus. After the circus, he went to some club. The lady wondered, 'I sent the servant at 10 o'clock and he has not returned. It is 5 o'clock now.' She thought perhaps he had gone away with the money. She thought, 'The children are going to come back and I must cook for them.' So she took some money and went herself to purchase the vegetables. While she was in the vegetable market, she found the servant wandering around. She asked him, 'Hey, what happened to you?' He said, 'Nothing.' She said, 'But I sent you to buy vegetables.' He said, 'Oh, I had forgotten completely.' The lady asked, 'What were you doing the whole day?' 'Well, I went to the circus and the theatre.' 'And where is the money?' 'I have spent everything.'

So all of you here are the servant. The housewife is still waiting and I have come on her behalf to tell you, 'Why have you not come back after purchasing the vegetables and where is the money?'

– 7 February 1982,
Neyveli House, Lignite Corporation, Tamil Nadu



Sometimes so many thoughts come during antar mouna that you cannot handle them properly. In that case, you must do some ordinary practice like japa yoga with your mantra and a mala. When you are practising mantra with a mala, the mind starts puking; it starts thinking very much. Don't control the mind at that time; let it go; let it move.



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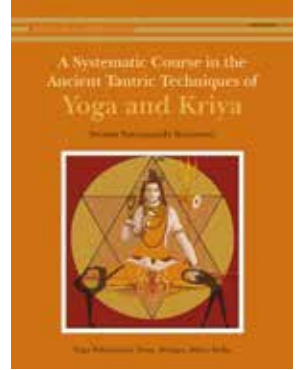
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Om Tat Sat
The Editor