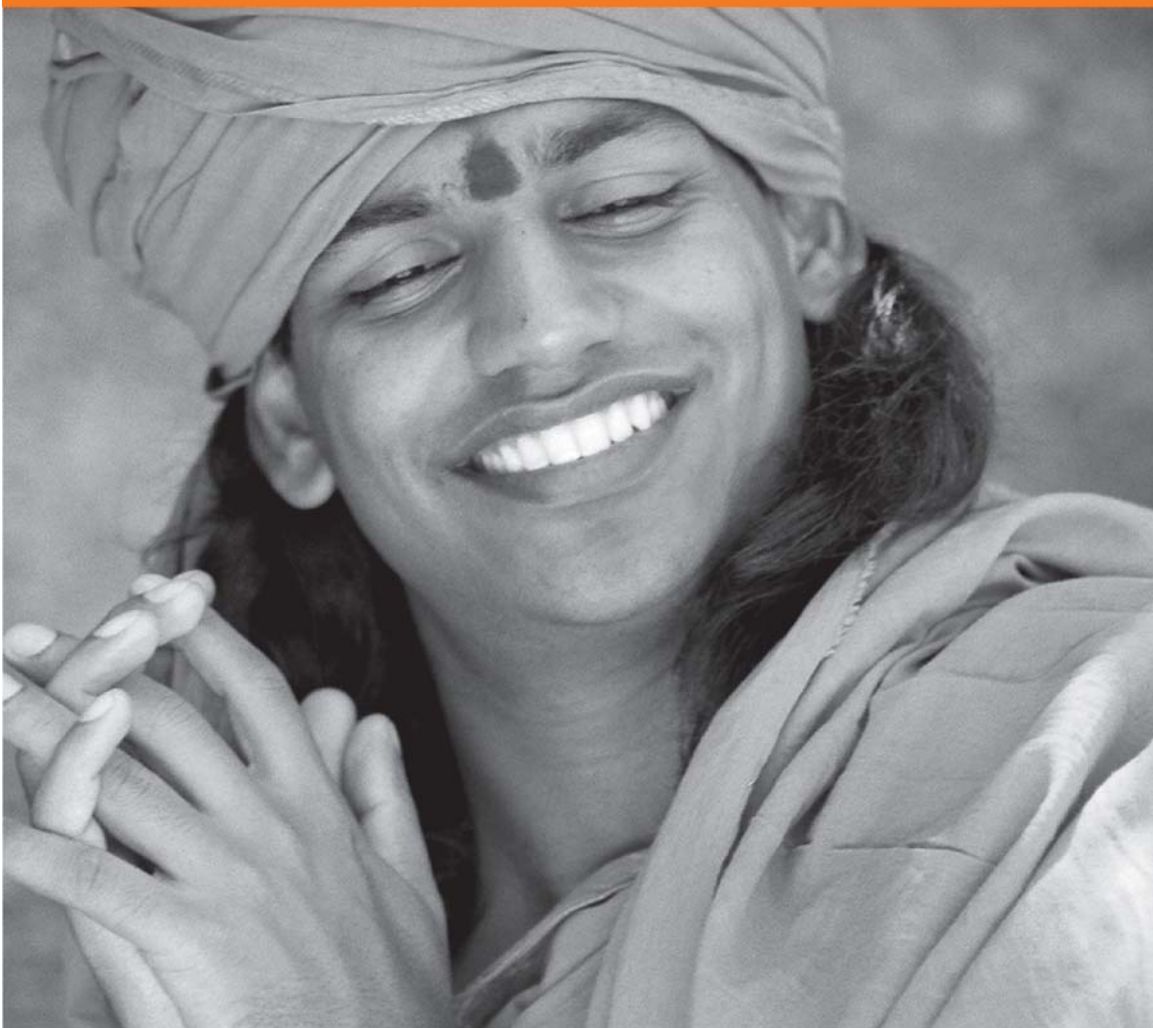


PARAMAHAMSA SRI NITHYANANDA



DHYANAPEETAM



SIX DAYS
TO
TOTAL TRANSFORMATION

Six Days to Total Transformation is based on a six-day guided meditation camp conducted by Swamiji in Bangalore.

The book explores the seven powerful chakras (subtle energy zones) of our body, with meditation techniques to cleanse and energize them.

Woven into the talks is practical wisdom from Swamiji on vital issues like Body Intelligence, the power of the Subconscious mind and the science behind tradition.

SIX DAYS TO TOTAL TRANSFORMATION

*(Based on a six-day guided meditation camp held by Swamiji
in Bangalore, India)*

AN OFFERING FROM

Nithyananda  Publishers

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Who is Swamiji?

Paramahansa Sri Nithyananda (Swamiji) is a truly revolutionary spiritual master of our century.

Swamiji embarked upon his spiritual journey at a very young age. He traversed the length and breadth of India on foot, studying with great masters in India and Nepal and practising intense *tapasya* with extraordinary vigour. He experienced the final flowering of consciousness on **1st January, 2000**, when he entered into the state of ultimate bliss - **Nithya Ananda**.

With a pragmatic yet compassionate approach to life and spirituality, and an enlightened insight into the core of human nature, Swamiji has reached out to touch millions of hearts across the world.

Swamiji's mission is simple - to awaken the divinity that lies latent in man. Dhyanapeetam, the worldwide movement for meditation, was born of this vision on 1st January, 2003. With its spiritual nervecentre in Bidadi (near Bangalore in India) and over 300 centres around the world, Dhyanapeetam works towards the transformation of humanity through the inner transformation of



the individual. Swamiji's divine healing powers and simple, practical meditation techniques help you blossom in every sphere of life - be it physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual.

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Day 1: 14th April

Preparation



Swamiji enters and seats himself. He greets the crowd with a Namskaar.

The crowd returns the greeting and settles down.

Swamiji chants:

Brahmanandam parama sukhadam

Kevalam jnaanamoortim

Dvandvaateetam gagana sadrisham

Tatvamasyaadi lakshyam

Ekam nithyam vimalam achalam

Sarvadee saakshi bhootam

Bhaavaateetam triguna rahitam

Sadgurum tam namaami

[Obeisance to the Sadguru (Master)

He who is Bliss Absolute, Bestower of Supreme Joy

Embodiment of Knowledge

Beyond Duality, Expansive like the Sky

The object of Mahakaavyas like Tat-tvam-asi (Thou art that)

Peerless, Eternal, Pure, Steady

Witness to all Thoughts

Beyond all Modifications of body and mind

And above the three Qualities of Purity, Passion and Passivity!]

My beloved friends,
I welcome you all to this meditation camp.

Each of you has come here looking for something.
Do you know what it is?
You may have come here expecting to gain some insights into meditation, some experience, some knowledge.
But what kind of knowledge will you gain here?

Broadly speaking, knowledge is of three types.
The most basic kind of knowledge is intellectual knowledge. This is the knowledge you get from the outside world. If you just use your head, use your mind, that is enough to pick up this knowledge. Like how you learn in school, in our regular academic system. Just concentrate, and you can do it.
Logic, arithmetic, come under this category.

The next type of knowledge is knowledge from the heart: like art, like music, like poetry. This kind of knowledge cannot be learnt with the head. For this the head is of no use.
If you want to learn poetry, can you do it with your head? In fact, it can't be learnt at all. At the most it can be picked up.

A small story:

Once, there used to be a potter. He used to make pots everyday. Seeing him, his son also picked up the art. Then one day a man came to them. He asked the son, *How did you learn this art? Can you teach me also?*
The son replied, *I didn't learn, I just picked it up! Just by watching, just by absorbing, I came to know how to do it. It cannot be taught!*

Art cannot be taught, only learnt.

That is why, in olden days, music could not be taught by anyone and everyone. It could be taught only in the *gurukul*. All great musicians were those trained in the *gurukul*. They stayed with the master for years, living with him, working with him, absorbing his music.

See, you can learn an art only by soaking in it – and by soaking it in, like a sponge! By watching every day, how the master sings, how his life itself flows, like poetry, the learner becomes still. He listens and picks up.

Art can never be taught like mathematics. If you try to teach poetry like how you teach arithmetic, the person may learn some techniques, maybe the craft of writing poems – but the poet is lost. The man may write poems – but they won't be poetry. There is a great difference between poems and poetry. There is a big difference between intellectual learning and emotional 'picking up'.

The third type of knowledge is spiritual knowledge.
Actually, we can't call it knowledge at all! *Wisdom* might be a

better word...

This knowledge can neither be taught nor picked up. It can only be transmitted from Being to Being.

Listen clearly – it cannot be taught or learnt. We are speaking about something which cannot be spoken about!

So, you are not here to learn anything.

Be very clear, I am not going to give you any philosophy, any system. I am here to give you the Light which is in my heart. That is what is going to happen, all these six days. I am going to give you a glimpse of *satori*, or spiritual experience – whatever you may call it.

In these six days, you will get a glimpse of your Being.

Why are you all sitting like this? Come here. (*beckons*)

Come and sit close to me. Whoever can sit on the floor, come and sit here. Otherwise of course, you can use the chair.

And I don't want these kind of distinctions! I don't want anyone sitting near their relatives. Come on, get mingled – get confused! (*laughs*)

Someone from that side, come here – you go there. Just make sure you're not sitting next to your relatives or friends.

So the seating arrangement is over!

Before we start the class, some instructions. When you leave the room, please enter your name in the register. And one more thing: please be punctual. It is just the respect we pay each other. I think none of us is here without any work..? All

of us are busy. I think all of us have our own work. But we've all gathered here to be helped by each other.

Be sure, it's not just as if I'm helping you! You are also helping me!

How?, you may ask.

See, when a woman has a baby, she becomes a *mother*. Not only does the woman give birth to the child, the child also gives birth to the mother. Until the child is born, where is the mother? There is only a woman. So the child gives birth to the woman - into motherhood! There is a transformation both ways. In the same way as the child helps the mother, you are helping me!! I am helping you become more meditative, to move towards enlightenment. You are helping me to become a real *Guru*! You are teaching me how to teach you. Without disciples, what is the meaning of the word *Guru*? So both of us are helping each other grow.

That is why the Katopanishad starts with a beautiful mantra. A mantra which is incomparable! The Shanti Mantra:

(*Swamiji chants in resonant tones*)

Om sahanaavavatu

Sahanaubhunaktu

Sahaveeryan karavaavahai

Tejasvinaavateetamastu

Maa vid vishaavahai

Om shantih shantih shantih

Here, both guru and disciple pray to Existence – to *Parashakti*, to God, whatever you may call it – they pray to the higher energy, saying, may we both (guru and disciple) help each other, may we both illumine each other's paths. Do you see what a beautiful idea that is? There is no ego at all! There is just a beautiful mutual respect. So what I mean is, even when we come in time – just by being punctual – we are showing our respect to each other. Even a single person missing here would mean something less. Don't think you are only here for yourself – you're helping others also.

And do you realize, when the class starts, there will be a beautiful flow – and suddenly someone comes in late and opens the door. Naturally, everyone's eyes move in that direction - right? And the flow is broken.

It's just like a speedbreaker. The speedbreaker is only one foot high, but to cross it, you have to start slowing down half a kilometer ahead. After that, you pick up speed again only after half a kilometer. That means you can raise your bike up to normal only after one minute. In the same way, when someone comes and opens the door, it takes only a second but the flow is disturbed...

So what else do I need to say to you, before you introduce yourselves to each other?

First of all, don't come here with a serious, loaded mind.

Come with a simple, sincere mind. Don't come here expecting

that in the very first session, you will get to experience God, or something like that! In a light and easy mood, without expectations, you will be able to receive much more from me. If you come with a prejudiced mind, full of expectations, you will be thinking only of your expectations. You are not here to focus on your expectations. You are here to focus simply on what I say.

Second thing, ***when you leave your shoes outside this room, please leave your mind also there.***

(Astonished laughter from audience)

What I mean is – you might have attended so many meditation classes, read so many spiritual books, listened to so many spiritual discourses – I'm sure you must have done all these things! Not that these things haven't helped you, surely they have their benefits – but now, here, the system is going to be totally different. I want you to be prepared to receive it as it is.

Come with a fresh mind.

Listen without comparison.

You will be able to receive my message totally.

Because - for example - when I use the word *atman*, I give it a completely different meaning.

If you have heard it earlier, from another master - he must have interpreted it in a totally different way. If you carry that interpretation with you into this class, how can you listen to me? You will be too busy listening to your own mind!

If you already have some ideas, some understanding (or what you think is understanding!), those ideas are going to be confused with my own. Then how can things be worked out?

I think we are all already quite confused, that's why we are here!

Is there anyone here who feels no confusion?

If you aren't confused, if you are already in clarity – there is no need for this meditation class. If you already know your way, if you've already attained in the spiritual world, you don't need to be here...

I think all of us have come here to pick up something?

The third thing... let me tell you a small story, a beautiful story:

Once there was a great Zen Buddhist monk, an enlightened master. Once the Japanese governor came to visit the monk. When his turn came, the governor sent in his visiting card to the monk. It bore the words, 'Zak-San - Governor of Japan'.

The master took one look at the card and said – (Zen masters can be very harsh sometimes, when they want to break somebody's mind, they use ugly words) – he said, *I have no business with this idiot! Ask him to leave this very minute!*

But the governor was a very intelligent man... not just intellectual, but intelligent!

When the card and message were returned to him, he quietly struck out the words, *Governor of Japan*, and returned the card to the master.

Seeing the card, the master now exclaimed, *What? Zak-San waits outside? Show him in!*

Just see this story. It means, these posts, these designations which we carry on us, are just labels pasted on us by society. They can have nothing to do with the spiritual world.

What the Governor did cannot be called wrong... it was the correct attitude with regard to society, but the wrong way to approach the master.

So I tell you, when you come in, leave your governorship outside. Otherwise you won't be able to learn anything from here... here governors have no duty, only seekers!

Here something between master and seeker is going to transpire.

We are going to share something of the inner world.

Labels of the outer world are completely unnecessary here.

So don't waste your time, and my time, with these labels!

Let us get introduced to one another! After all we are going to live as a family these few days.

Here we are a group of seekers, we are not even individuals!

Forgetting individuality is the path of meditation.

Just be willing to dissolve in the group consciousness, the spiritual consciousness.

So, who is going to start the introduction? That corner,

hmmm... just your name, and where you're from.

(A doctor introduces himself)

Did you hear his name? He adds the name *Doctor* before his

own – to display his achievement.

No, no – nothing wrong! (*laughs*)

You have achieved something in the outer world, just like I have achieved something in the inner world. You could say I have tested some spiritual hypotheses in my life, in my inner laboratory. I am here to share my research report with you all, that's all.

But there is one difference - this is not an intellectual class. You don't have to listen with your head. Just be relaxed – concentration will happen on its own. Because I'm not going to share any *information* with you all. No communication will happen here – only a deep communion between you and me.

Another thing – *don't practise what I preach here.*

Ha, ha – sounds paradoxical?

What I mean is, don't *plan* to practise anything. Don't create a plan of action right away and limit yourself.

Also, don't be silent. I want you to come forward with your opinions and comments. Be like a schoolboy! Full of mischief and curiosity in life.

I am not giving you an ideology. I am giving you a live, practical system that will transform your life.

So be aware.

Be interactive.

Make comments, even mistaken ones are fine.

Leap before you look!

Be open, and even without your knowledge, you will receive what I teach.

(*suddenly*)

See, someone's sleeping!

(*the class becomes suddenly alert*)

Swamiji (*laughing mischievously*) : No no, no one's sleeping yet. I just said that to wake up some people who are almost asleep! See, this is what happens if you just keep hearing me talk, without actually listening, without interacting!

There are two ways in which I *don't* want you to listen to me: One is, *with doubt*.

Doubt is the way of the intellectual mind. Too much logic and reason will come in the way of your receiving me into yourself.

The second is, *with belief*.

If you believe in me, you are lost. Don't believe in anybody, not even me. If you believe, you will not practise. The so-called believers are the weakest people. Because it takes great courage to live without beliefs. Then you don't need a readymade idea to tell you what to think and how to act. Both faith and doubt are two sides of the same coin – your Mind. At a very deep level, your greatest doubt will carry some faith, your greatest faith will have some doubt in it. I assure you!

Then what to do?

A third way exists: *listen with trust*.

Trust is the energy, the ability to translate teachings into practical life.

When I tell you, *The sun rises in the east*, you neither need to believe nor doubt – you know. Or if it is something you haven't noticed, you get up the next morning and check it out – as an experiment! This is the attitude I want from you. So have trust, not faith. Take what I say as a hypothesis, integrate it into your life and see for yourself whether it works or not.

Drop the coin of the Mind!

(introductions are completed)

So we have all introduced ourselves to each other? Or rather, in so many ways, we have tried to introduce ourselves to each other...

Now let us see if we can introduce ourselves to ourselves!

Let us say, you are a doctor.

Society calls you a doctor.

But are you a doctor?

Are you a doctor? *(gestures to a doctor in the audience)*

You are not a doctor, your profession is 'Doctor'.

Suppose your name is Sita. Are you a Sita? No, your name is Sita.

Do you understand?

You are not a Sita. You are not a Rama.

These are just names.

So who are you?

(voice from audience)

I am atma? (soul)

Atma?! How do you know?

If I tell you, you are *atma* – can you even understand what I mean?

Why did you pick up that word?

At least, we understand something of the meaning of 'Doctor', but we don't know anything about *atma*. *(laughs)*

You see, either we get caught up in the outside world, or in the inside world.

Either you want to be identified as a doctor, or as *atma*!

What is the inside world?

Thoughts!

Atma, jivatma, paramatma – all these are words you have picked up from some books – which you should not have read, in the first place! *(laughter from audience)*.

We simply read all these books, get all kinds of ideas into our heads, and then do something foolish.

There are two types of phrases – one is 'I am a Doctor'. The other is 'I am *Atma*'. Which name-tag you use depends on which world you identify with – outer or inner.

Tell me, do we know anything about *atma*?

As ignorant as we are about whether we are doctors – we are equally ignorant about whether we are *atma*.

'*I am Atma*' is not something to be uttered! It is something to be experienced.

I tell you, don't even have that illusion. That is the illusion of

the intellect, of the intellectuals – the knowledgeable idiots! That is the right word for those people who have read too much of spiritual literature and walk around saying, '*I am Atma, I am Atma*' – knowledgeable idiots! Are you finding me too harsh? But there is no other way. You see, I am here just to break heads – there is no other way, if you want real understanding.

To tell you openly – I am not here to teach you what is meditation. I am here to teach you what is *not* meditation. When I teach you what is *not* meditation, you will naturally fall into meditation! To learn something new, you first have to unlearn so many things.

I am not here to answer your questions. I am here to question your answers! These six days, I am just going to break whatever ideas you have in your head.

The worldly man has caught on to the idea that he is a doctor, a husband, a rich person, or whatever. The so-called spiritual man clings to the idea, '*I am atma*'. Both are just ideas – at the most, they are going to be skin-deep. You just hear the words, '*I am atma*' from some book, some discourse, some guru – and start believing it! That is all that has actually happened. I think nothing more has happened? Anyone who can say, 'No, something more than that has happened in me?'
(voice from audience) *Not yet.*

Not yet... not yet. But you have heard about it from books, from the scriptures? You have heard, but you have not experienced.

What does this mean? It means you have eaten, but you have not digested.

When you have eaten, but not digested, what happens? Tell me.

Either indigestion – or vomiting!

At least, with indigestion, only you suffer. If you vomit, others are going to be suffering! (*laughter from audience*)

When we talk, most of us are just vomiting ideas. We simply gather ideas which we can't digest, and vomit them upon others. Especially when the ideas are half-cooked, the more the urge to vomit them! So please don't cling to both these ideas... okay?

Now let's come to the point – of introducing ourselves to ourselves.

So, you say that you are Rama, you are Sita.

Just turn inwards and ask, *Am I Rama?*

No! It is just a label given to you by society.

Do you understand me?

The exact word is 'label'.

As we label things, parcels, houses – in the same way, you have been labeled by society.

You are not this name.

Am I right?

If anybody here can't accept this idea, if you are not able to

agree – you can raise your hand.

(from audience) That is right, Swamiji.

Hmmm...(laughs)

So then, who are you? *(gesturing to the person who has spoken)*

Who are you?

That you have to explain, Swamiji!

(laughter)

Ha ha ha - no, no, no! *I cannot explain!*

Actually it means, we are coming to the conclusion that we don't know who we are!

Once we accept that we don't know who we are, we begin to start knowing.

When we *know* that we *don't know*, we at least know that we don't know. We at least know that much.

But when we *don't know* that we *don't know*, we don't *even* know that we don't know!

Yes?

(from audience) Is it necessary to know?

Yes, a beautiful question.

Actually, if you feel that it is not necessary to know, that is well and good. Just drop everything and be happy. All this confusion ends, and you can simply rest.

(from audience) But is it possible?

See, that is where the problem starts!

She asked the right question, *Is it possible?*

Actually, it is impossible.

You see, if you come and sit here, and I am also sitting here in peace... for three minutes, if we just sit here like this, can your mind keep quiet?

At least you will want to know, *Who is this Swami? What is his name?*

Am I right?

Or if you are alone in the room, if you find an old newspaper lying here, you are going to pick it up and read it again. You have already read it, but you will try to see if there's something new there! You will be wondering if there's something you have missed.

(from audience) They say the mind is like a monkey...

Yes. I didn't use the word 'monkey' directly, but it is the apt word!

We are continuously on the path of knowing.

We can't rest without knowing.

If we are happy, if we ask, *Why should we know?*, that is perfect.

Relax. There is no need to know!

But as she asked, is it possible?

No.

A buffalo doesn't have this problem!

Does any buffalo ever bother? Does any buffalo worry, *'Am I a buffalo or am I Atma?'*

Have you ever seen any buffalo sitting and worrying, *Should I meditate or not? Which path should I choose? Which guru*

should I choose?

No way. All a buffalo knows about is to eat, sleep and wallow in the mud.

Of course, I am not suggesting that this is the path for you...!

As a human being, the quest arises on its own.

It is not as if you are here because of yourself.

You are here *despite* yourself.

Please be very clear about this.

Don't give yourself credit, saying, *I am attending spiritual discourses, I am practising meditation, see how much experience I've gathered!*

It's very pleasant, I know, to go home and brag about this - especially to your mother-in-law or to your daughter-in-law.

But just remember, you are here *despite* yourself.

You are here because you will find no peace unless you know who you are. That question is dragging you here. That is why people do the rounds of temples after temples, *swamis* after *swamis*, books after books, courses after courses.

Can any of you say, *I am happy without knowing about myself?*

You can contradict me. Please be open.

(from audience) Everyone doesn't have to be bothered...

(another person) I agree.

Really? You are not bothered? Then please don't come for the class from tomorrow onwards! *(roar of laughter)*

You can relax. If you aren't concerned, if you are already at ease – it is perfectly OK. There is no compulsion to do the meditation.

(from audience) Suppose a man has knowledge worth 100 marks, but wants to gain 101 or 102 marks... suppose you've reached a certain level, and still you want to know more, so you come?

In the spiritual life, there are only 2 categories – either you know, or you don't know. There is no such thing as 100 marks or 120 marks. In the spiritual world, there is no possibility of knowing 70% and not knowing 30%.

When you know *about* something, when you want to gather knowledge, you can do it in bits and pieces.

But to *know about* is very different from *to know*.

To know is to experience.

Can you say, I know 50% of how this rose smells? Hmmm..?

You either know or you don't know, that's all.

There is no third category.

(from audience) But Swamiji, how many people actually ask this question? One in a million? Two in a million?

Why do you bother about how many others ask this question? All you have to know is, *Am I asking? Is this question there in me?*

That is what I am concerned with. Whether *you* are asking or not - each of you.

I am not concerned with the masses. I am talking to you.

See, there are two types of listening.

When you listen to a medical discourse, you usually end up diagnosing whether you have the symptoms of the disease being discussed. But with a spiritual discourse it is even worse. You are trying to find out whether the person next to you has the symptoms!

If it's a physical disease, if the speaker says, *If you have pain in the knees, it is arthritis* – you are sure to do a quick mental check-up of your legs.

But if the speaker says, *If a man lives in Dharma, he is a Dharmatma* - the temptation is to look at the next person, to find out whether he is qualified to be called a *Dharmatma*! Especially if I am saying something negative, it is very likely that you're thinking – *Swamiji is explaining this not for me, but for the others in the room who are making this mistake*.

This is the way we listen, the way we think.

You think, *I know all about myself. All these talks are for these other people who don't know anything about themselves*.

But whenever I give five minutes' time to someone, they start talking only about their worries!

If you know yourself clearly, will you have worries?

This is the scale which you can use to measure whether you truly know yourself or not.

And as I said, there is nothing like knowing yourself 30% or 50% or any such thing. It's all or nothing.

(from audience) But Swamiji, we are traveling towards knowing ourselves, at this point we may know partly...

Let me tell you one thing. In a deep spiritual experience, there will be no traveling. It is a moment's experience. In imagining that we are *traveling*, getting somewhere spiritually, we are simply cheating ourselves.

We are unable to take a real leap into spirituality, and at the same time we are not ready to confess that we don't know anything about it – what a shame that would be! So to keep our ego happy we create our own philosophies: *short of enlightenment, I know everything about spirituality!* Haven't you cheated yourself enough already? Wake up!

In the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, *Arjuna Vishaada Yoga* (The Yoga of Arjuna's Grief), Arjuna talks throughout and Krishna remains silent. It is only when Arjuna finally surrenders, saying *I know nothing!*, that he is at last ready to receive Krishna's message.

Although Krishna and Arjuna were friends and childhood playmates, though there might have been hundreds of other more relaxed situations, the Gita was not delivered to Arjuna anytime earlier.

Why?

Because until then, Arjuna was not ripe to receive the Gita!

It is only when he utters the words, *I don't know*, that he becomes qualified to know. The basic condition for spiritual progress is this: *to know very clearly that you don't know*. This is the first step towards really knowing.

So today we will end on the right beginning... thank you.

Swamiji, how to start knowing?

Ha, ha! Don't worry about that just now. From tomorrow I'll be guiding you on all these things – how to, when to and all that.

(from audience) But first my ego has to surrender...

There is no need to get tense and have so many questions inside your head!

Just having listened to this is enough. Tomorrow I will be giving you meditation techniques that will take care of all these issues.

(to all) From tomorrow, we will have be having daily meditation sessions.

I will be giving you techniques to cleanse and heal your physical, mental and spiritual energies.

Please wear loose white clothes. And no cellphones, please.

Every day you will be given an exercise as homework. So do it properly and bring it back to me!

(laughter from all)

This is not the usual kind of homework. You will be given an idea which you have to work out the whole day, and give me a report the next day. Please do it sincerely. I trust you are all intelligent people? Now it is up to you to prove your intelligence!

Thank you.

Day 2: 15th April

Interaction



You are the chosen few.

You are the few who are courageous enough to attend the second session.

I am very happy to see you all, and I must ask you to excuse me for the way I was yesterday – a little too fiery, hmmm? Please excuse me, there was no other way to filter the crowd. That is why I make the first session so hard for you... it helps to filter the crowd.

These are a few of the techniques used by the master. After a while the ones who are merely curious will naturally drop out.

Now that has happened, we are a seekers' group. Now I can share anything with you all, it will only help you.

Why did I do this? You see, even the right knowledge shared with the wrong person will always produce wrong results. Even knowledge, in the hands of a person who lacks the maturity to handle it, can be a dangerous thing. It is like giving a knife in the hands of a child. *Shakti* (power) cannot be handed over to one who does not possess *Buddhi* (intelligence)!

Today, we have enough nuclear power, enough weaponry to destroy the earth not once, but 700 times over!

What is the reason?

The right knowledge in the hands of the wrong persons.

This is what happens when Shakti works without Buddhi. It is the surest way to destroy humanity.

Today's subject for the day is *Wisdom of the body* – that is, the body's subjective intelligence.

Just watch your body.

How many mysterious, unexplainable things are happening in your body! Just look in and you'll find that a giant factory is running inside. Even the word *factory* is too small! An industry – a whole industrial estate!

If you just think about all the mysteries in your body, you will see the glory of Existence.

In Sanskrit, the body is called the *pindaanda*, and Existence or Parashakti, the cosmic body, is called the *Brahmaanda*. Everything that happens in the universe also happens in your body.

Just look in, and you will be wonderstruck!

The body has a deep, intrinsic intelligence.

Yesterday we all heard and spoke about *Who am I?* - the system which enquires, *Who am I?*

If you have really enquired, if it has become a quest in you, not just a question.... mind you, there is a tremendous difference between a question and a quest.

Yesterday we asked *Who am I?* just as a question. It has not become a quest in us. When that question truly becomes a

quest in you, you will find some deep inner experience.

Anyway, what I want to say is - **only when you start understanding the mysteries of the body, when you start respecting the body, will you find that you are *not* the body.** You start having respect for the body, and you will find out who you are. It is a great way to know who you are! There are two paths: one is just condemning and destroying the body, declaring, *I am not the body, I am not the body*. In this way one can go beyond the body. But this is a tough path, followed by *yogis* and *tapasvis*. It is not for the common people. The other way is to start respecting your body. Just by cultivating a deep love and respect for your body, you can come to the realization that you are not the body.

Normally, we just use our body – like a machine, like an object.

How often we all condemn our bodies, saying that the body is what is disturbing us, pulling us towards this and that. We even condemn our senses! But actually it is we who use and abuse the body just as we please.

Just think what happens even when you do something simple – say, when you eat spicy food, full of chili. Your tongue starts burning, your eyes start watering – your body is giving you desperate signals that it can't handle this. But do we listen to the body's pleas..?

You'll see that whenever you indulge in something excessively, your body ends up suffering for it. When you

watch TV till 12 o'clock, your eyes start aching.

Your body is screaming, *I want to go to sleep! I need rest!*

But do we allow it?

And the next morning we condemn our body because it is not in top form!

Can anyone contradict that?

Generally we all carry this opinion in our minds, that our senses are destroying us, that the body is our enemy.

We are taught from a young age that the body is our enemy.

(from audience) No, Swamiji... I don't think so. Why do you say that?

Just look around you. In society, in many spiritual books, we see it mentioned that the body is to be neglected. The very idea of controlling the body arises from the idea that the body is our enemy. Do you understand? When you start loving the body, you don't have to control it. You will have a deep relationship with the body.

So do you understand the idea?

(from audience) Not the body, but the senses have to be controlled...

Yes, the *panchendriyas* (five senses) have to be controlled.

But can you clearly tell the difference between the *panchendriyas* and the body? In a practical sense, we cannot tell the difference between the two. *Indriya* means that which is working inside your eyes, inside your ears. But can

you control it? You can only try to control your eyes.

That is exactly what you see in the story of the three monkeys. The monkeys cover their eyes, their ears, their mouths, saying *See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil*. The actual lesson is to control the senses. But being monkeys – like all of us! – they cannot tell the difference. So they try to control their bodies instead. The only thing we know is the gross body. So we start controlling it.

(from audience) Can we really control our senses?

Gradually, with a lot of practice, you can succeed in controlling your senses. But what happens? We only become insensitive.

Tell me, when do you feel the need to control someone?

When you don't trust him – isn't it? We control our body because we have lost trust in it!

I don't condemn this path. It is possible to attain to spirituality through this path also. In fact, this is the path of *Yoga*. But this can be a dangerous path, if you don't have the maturity to handle it correctly. You could end up losing all your sensitivity, your joy of life – without attaining anything.

The other path, open to all of us, is to enter into a relationship of deep love, of respect – not only with your body, but with everything. Even by entering deep into the system, with love, with clarity, with compassion, you can get out of it.

Sri Ramakrishna says beautifully:

There are two ways to cross the river of Maya.

One is by summoning all your strength and leaping across the river.

The other way is to stand before it with folded hands and request, *O Maya, please allow me to get across!*

The first path is almost impossible. It might take you *janmas*, many lives to summon sufficient energy to take that leap.

First you have to control your senses, then the mind, then the *chitta*, then the ego – and finally you attain to enlightenment. It is a process that takes many lifetimes.

Very few people have the courage or ability to take this path.

But today is the jet-age. Everyone is looking for instant solutions. Like instant coffee, you are looking for instant meditation! You need techniques that can fetch you immediate results. In the jet-age, only jet-age techniques can work. For our time, the right path is to co-operate with your body, to trust in your body wisdom.

So the first thing – drop all negativity, all hostility, all idea of controlling the body, from your mind. *You are your body.*

(from audience) But how can we drop control, without being sure?

Unless you drop it, how will you know?

Just drop the negativity and see!

A small story:

One *poornima* (full moon) night, an enlightened man - a

sannyasi - was sitting outdoors and enjoying the beautiful scene – the night sky, the stars, the cool breeze. In a nearby hut, he heard a man complaining bitterly about the miseries of life. So he went and called the man, saying, *Come out, and enjoy this starry night, this full moon!*

The man refused to believe that there was anything beautiful in this life.

No, he said, *I don't trust your words. First show me the moon, the stars – prove to me that they are beautiful, then I'll come out!*

The *sannyasi* cried, *Just come out, and you can see for yourself!*

But the man refused. Before even coming out, he wanted a proof!

How can you see unless you come out?

So after a minute, the *sannyasi* suddenly started shouting, *Your hut is on fire! Your hut is on fire!*

Immediately, the man came rushing out of the hut.

Then suddenly, seeing the moonlit night and starry sky, he became lost in the beauty. He totally forgot that his house was supposed to be on fire. He started to tell the *sannyasi*, *Oh, it is so beautiful! When you told me I didn't believe you – but now I understand.*

Then suddenly he remembered, *You told me that my hut was on fire? You lied to me!*

Yes, said the *sannyasi*, *I had to tell that lie to bring you out of your hut.*

In the same way, there is actually something called body intelligence. But you cannot see it till you drop the doubt! You asked me, how to drop the doubt without proof of body intelligence. You must have the courage, the trust to take that step. Now do you understand?

You see, I cannot show you the starry night without bringing you out of your house! So if you trust this idea, try to test it in your life, you will find that there is a tremendous body intelligence available to you, there is no need to control the body at all.

Whatever method is used to control and discipline the body cannot have permanent results. Please be very clear. When you try to forcibly control your smoking, it cannot be a permanent solution. Any day that resolution can break, because it is only skin-deep!

To awaken body intelligence, to respect body intelligence, is the first thing we need to do in our lives. Today I will be giving you a technique to awaken your body intelligence.

(from audience) So like the sannyasi in the story, will you also guide us on how to come out?

I am not guiding you, I am shouting to you – your house is on fire, your house is on fire!

(much laughter)

During the meditation I will be shouting – and watch, you will come out. That is what is going to happen.

(from audience) Can you tell us what is meant by controlling

the body?

There are so many ways we change the natural functioning of the body, especially for social reasons. For example, you may want to sleep till 7.30 a.m., you may enjoy sleeping at that time...

Swamiji, you mean the body wants to sleep, or...?

Yes, I'm coming to that. I'll give you the exact clarification... hmmm?

So, you may want to sleep. But you may have read somewhere that the *brahma muhurta* (4.30 a.m.- 6.30 a.m.) is the right time to meditate. So you imagine that you need to wake up early and meditate – you set the alarm for 4.30 a.m. And when the alarm rings, what do you do? Switch it off and go back to sleep! After a while, you finally get up and try to meditate, but your body refuses to co-operate. Still you force it to function according to *your* idea of what is right for it.

Do you know, research has now proved that of the eight hours that you sleep, only two hours are you actually sleeping! During this period, your body temperature actually goes down by 2 degrees! At all other times, you are simply falling into the dream state, and rising out of it. Now if you can find out which those two hours are for you, and sleep only during that time, you can keep awake the rest of the night. On the other hand, if you happen to be awake during those two hours, even if you get ten hours of sleep later, you will keep feeling drowsy through the day.

These two hours differ from person to person.

In general, there are two kinds of bodies: *sauramana shareera* and *chandramana shareera*. The *sauramana* body needs to sleep early and wake early. It needs sleep compulsorily between 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. The *chandramana* body needs sleep early in the morning. You can clearly see this in your own routines – especially when you are young, when you are studying for exams! Some people are easily able to keep awake late, while others can get up early but cannot stay awake late in the night.

So if you simply read spiritual books which ask you to wake up before sunrise, and try to follow those rules, it may not work for you.

Even if you see the way we eat – long after the stomach is full, we continue to eat. Simply because we enjoy the taste of the food, even if our stomach is telling us it doesn't need any more food! Or even worse, I hear people say, especially at social functions – *see, they have served me too much, but I am eating so as not to waste the food. Otherwise, what will the host think?*

What an atrocity to commit on your body!

Tell me, is it better to waste the food outside, or push it through your body and *then* waste it? Either way it will be a waste, because your body doesn't need that food.

(much laughter)

Why are you laughing? Isn't this the truth? Don't we all do this?

If you waste the food outside, at least you are wasting only the food. When you eat it, you are also wasting the body's resources, making your body work unnecessarily to digest food that it doesn't need.

But Swamiji, at the same time, you ask us not to control the body. Then how can we control our tongue, which is asking us to eat the food because it is tasty?

Yes! Good question. You must not control the tongue. You don't have to control it. All you need to do is awaken the body intelligence. Actually, you can never succeed by trying to *control* the tongue – or any of the senses. Has anyone here succeeded in doing that? When you are fasting, you can be sure that that night you will dream of food. Am I right? If you fast for more than two days, even during the day you will start going crazy thinking about food!

The truth is, whatever is controlled will express itself in some other way. It will refuse to be controlled!

A small story:

Once a young man came to me and asked me to help him stop smoking. I asked him how he picked up the habit in the first place. He said, once he had gone out with a group of friends who were all smokers. For his bad luck, he met his father on the road that day. Seeing him in the group, his father assumed that he too had been smoking. When he returned home, his father yelled at him, refusing to believe that his son had not been smoking. The next day, the boy says, he

smoked a whole pack of cigarettes, just to spite his father! In that way he gradually got addicted.

When he asked me how to drop it, I told him, *Don't drop it. Go ahead and smoke. But don't do it to prove anything to anybody. Don't do it to spite your father. And don't imagine that you have become mature and independent by smoking! Every time you pick up a cigarette, do it silently, be conscious of why you are smoking. You will realize on your own.*

After just a few days, the boy returned to me. He said, *Swamiji, I'm not able to smoke anymore! Doing it consciously, I realized that I was not smoking for the sake of smoking. Smoking is not that important to me.*

Then he added something which made me very happy. He said, *Swamiji, I feel now, why did I abuse my body all these days, pushing smoke into my system!*

When you become conscious of what you are doing, many things drop on their own. This is the only permanent solution.

Of course, it may take a few days to awaken the intelligence. The patience to wait till then is what is called *tapasya*.

In the meantime, don't fall back on second-rate intelligence that you have picked up from society, from moral codes set down by society. Have trust in your body! We always live in deep fear of our bodies. We are afraid of what might happen if we don't control our bodies. We feel as if we are sitting on a volcano! The moment we sense a cold or fever coming up, the day we have the slightest headache, we reach out for a pill. It

has become totally accepted for you to swallow pills for no reason. Most of our common ailments can be easily handled with a little care. But we don't credit our body with the power to heal itself. When our body can digest food, pump blood, mend broken bones and perform a thousand other complicated tasks without help from outside, can't it take care of a fever or a headache?

Allow your body to function according to its own intelligence – you will see for yourself how much wisdom your body has!

Again, a small story from Zen Buddhism... do you know, Zen is the only religion still alive today, with a series of enlightened masters? No other religion has managed to survive so beautifully, and be so alive and relevant to every age! Zen is a great gift from Existence to humanity.

The famous Zen master Nansen, wandering in Japan, arrives in a new town. People come to see him, and say, *Beloved master, we have heard so much about you! We hear that simply by being in your presence, people feel joyful, they get healed of diseases, they feel their wishes are coming true. What is the special meditation you practise to attain these powers?*

The master replies simply, *When I eat, I eat. When I sleep, I sleep. That is the meditation I do.*

Zen masters usually talk like this! Just like you, those people also don't understand the meaning of this statement. So they ask for an explanation.

The master asks them, *When you eat, do you really eat?*

And I ask you:

When we eat, do we really eat?

When we eat, we think about everything except about eating!

All our past worries, and future plans, appear in front of us just when we eat. Am I right?

(two voices from audience)

Yes, we are not conscious of eating...

We don't live in the present.

Yes! Beautiful. These two words are the key to today's message. These two people have expressed it beautifully.

The Upanishad says so meaningfully,

Annam brahmedi navya jaanaat

Annam na nindyaat tatvakam

The commentator says of this *sutra*:

Food is equal to God. When you eat, if you don't eat with deep respect, without care, it is the same as throwing the food in the garbage bin. What happens when you throw the food in the garbage bin? The same thing will happen inside – or something worse! The food only decomposes inside.

Now the next thing: sleeping.

When we sleep, do we really sleep?

No! We are continuously dreaming. When we are awake, we daydream. At night, we dream. That's all.

(from audience) But not everybody, Swamiji!

No, not everybody. In fact, people who have to be alert the whole day, they don't daydream. So they are more successful in whatever they do. Because when you stop living in dreams, you start living in reality. That's why, the possibility of becoming rich is more, when you are always alert. When you are more aware, not only money, but all kinds of success will start flowing towards you.

But without dreaming, Swamiji, we can't work!

See, there are two things: **planning and dreaming**.

Planning is always chronological, down-to-earth, physical, realistic.

Dreaming is always fantasy-based. If your real ability is to earn a hundred rupees, your fantasy will be to earn a thousand rupees. And by the time you earn a thousand, you have already started dreaming about a million rupees!

Only *you* can find out whether your plans are plans or dreams. I can give you the torch, but it is up to you to use it, and find out in your day-to-day life, which are the plans and which are the dreams.

With a plan, if you have done your best, even if it doesn't work out you won't feel that you have failed. With dreams, even if you are successful, you will feel that you have failed! You can never be satisfied – because the next dream is already on its way!

Swamiji, are you saying that if we feel content with our

present life, there will be no need to daydream..?

Exactly. That is the truth. But how do we put it into practice?

Today, it is very difficult to be content - because we are fed on dreams from a very young age.

In ancient times, it was very easy to be moral, because there were so few temptations. Sita remained loyal to Rama all her life, because she was not constantly fed information about any other man right from her childhood. She had not seen Shah Rukh Khan on TV!! Today, any five-year-old will talk to you about their favourite film heroes or heroines.

I am not condemning the character of Sita. But this is true. That's why, what we call a moral life was very easy to lead in those times. I think, if modern civilization has to be psychologically classified, it should be divided into the pre-TV age and the post-TV age!

No, this is true, American researchers have come up with these results.

In Patanjali's time, when people were asked to prepare for meditation by sitting in a straight position, keeping their eyes closed and calming the mind, they were able to do it immediately. Because the mind was completely sensitive. It was not aggravated, complicated like people's minds today. Today, an entirely new layer has been formed in our consciousness. We do everything cerebrally. Which only means, we are *enjoying without enjoying!*
Suppose you want to dance. Will society allow you? No! It

says, *Watch the duets on TV and be satisfied!* That is the reason, everywhere you find the TV constantly on, duets constantly being played everywhere.

So just by watching, we learn to fulfil ourselves. This is called cerebral enjoyment. **With the awakening of cerebral intelligence, our body intelligence has been destroyed,** our minds have become complicated. In ancient times, controlling the body was not such a difficult thing – because this layer was not there.

So people had only two options: either they would enjoy, they would go and dance with whoever they wanted to dance with. Or they wouldn't enjoy, that's all.

Now, there is a third option. You don't enjoy physically, but mentally you enjoy the same thing continuously! At least with physical indulgence, there will be an end to it somewhere. With cerebral enjoyment, the process is continuous. Through the media, advertisements, internet, movies, TV – we can make a whole list.

You have no idea how deep advertisements penetrate into your being! Without your even being conscious of it, hundreds of messages are being recorded in your system every day. It's a subtle kind of mass hypnosis! In just a flash, just when your car passes a hoarding, you absorb a message – without even realizing that you have seen it. But a week later, when you go to the supermarket, you will find yourself

picking up exactly the same product!

Do you know, in marketing terminology, there is a phrase called *creating a need*. Imagine! Their job is to first create a need that you don't feel right now, and then plug in their product to fill that need! This is the cerebral layer at work.

Of course, it is not as if the cerebral layer has not created anything positive. It is entirely responsible for scientific knowledge, for modern technology, for all the comforts we have in our daily lives. These things are useful within limits – as long as you're in control of them, not the other way around! TV is neither good nor bad. *The solution is not breaking the TV. It is simply having the sense to know when to switch it off.*

Not just the external TV, but the internal TV too, the TV that is constantly playing in your mind. When you learn to put off the TV inside, your body intelligence will automatically start functioning.

So when our Zen monk says *When I eat, I eat. When I sleep, I sleep.*, this is what he means. **Whatever you do, do with totality.**

(from audience) You mean, single-mindedness?

Ahh! No, I would say, *no-mindedness*! When your thoughts disappear, your intelligence is awakened.

A beautiful mantra, the Gayathri, says:

(Swamiji chants)

Om bhurbhavasvaah

Tat saviturvarenyam

Bhargo devasya dheemahi

Dhi yoyona prachodayaat

The running translation of this mantra:

May we meditate upon the Consciousness, the Energy which awakens the buddhi, the Intelligence. May that very Energy help us in contemplating upon it!

When your mind is switched off, your Intelligence starts working.

(from audience) You mean, a silence in the mind...

Yes, that's the apt word. It can be described by the Sanskrit word, *mauna*. *Mauna* is not silence as we use it today; it means a positive silence.

When you know how to be silent, there will no longer be any need for me! You will start healing yourself... in fact, you will find that diseases themselves don't appear anymore.

Just observe your body. When any deep desire is awakened in you, you automatically start feeling uneasy with your body. Have you observed this? Whenever you experience *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha* (lust, anger, greed), you start feeling restless. When you're not at ease with yourself, you are dis-eased. Naturally disease descends on you.

No disease is an uninvited guest. You have brought them upon yourself with the greatest care! With immoderate eating and sleeping habits, neglect of physical health, too many expectations, we all practically force diseases to visit our bodies. But when the guest finally arrives, you say, *What have I done to deserve this fate?*

(from audience) But we don't realize that we are doing this..!

Exactly. We don't invite them consciously. But we are so unaware, that we don't even realize that we are doing our best to get these diseases.

A beautiful *stotra* in Tamil sung by Ramana Maharishi:

Aimbula kalvar agattinil poogumbodu

Agattil nee illayo Arunachala?

(When the thieves of the five senses entered my mind

O Arunachala! O Shiva! Were you not within?)

In the same way, when these outer desires enter our *Buddhi*, they can do it only when we are sleeping, when we are unconscious.

But Swamiji, how do very young children also get diseases?

In children, only the conscious mind is not fully functioning. Unconscious instincts are at work from the moment of birth. These unconscious instincts can also invite disease.

What about hereditary diseases? How can we be responsible for that?

If I tell you that you yourself choose your parents when you enter the body, can you believe it? These are all deep truths, 'mystical science', you could call it! The truth is, you choose your parents – and so in a way, you are inviting their diseases upon yourself.

So now let us see, how *not* to invite these diseases.

First, what is this cerebral layer?

(from audience) The subconscious?

Yes, that is right. What is meant by the subconscious?

(from audience) What we are not conscious about!

Meaning...?

(Silence)

Alright, let me explain. You are happily driving your second-hand car on a busy road. At a traffic signal, a brand new car comes and stops next to you. Suddenly, a deep desire arises in your mind to possess that car. Of course, you immediately suppress the desire, because you know you won't be able to afford such a car. But that thought which arises – that is the Unconscious.

But Swamiji, how can I shut out that desire?

You can't shut it out!

That's why I'm going to tell you how to *drop it*, not how to

force it down. As it is, for too long you have been repressing your desires. Neither expression nor suppression works. You can't give expression to the desire - you can't go and grab the car from the owner. Nor should you suppress it. Then what can you do?

Simply drop the desire.

Swamiji, isn't it possible to keep the desire and achieve the goal?

Yes, but is that your final desire? Believe me, the moment you fulfil one desire, your mind will move to the next one.

The moment you sit behind the steering of your Ikon, a desire for a Rolls Royce will arise!

So when the desire arises, expressing it will result in *kopa* (anger) or jealousy. That means, you will turn hostile towards the other person, simply because he possesses an object that you desire. Some people turn the anger inward, towards themselves, resulting in an inferiority complex. This is known as repression.

Subconscious is nothing but the collective term for all the suppressed desires, suppressed emotions.

At the office, suppose your boss gets mad at you. When he yells at you, a wave of anger arises inside you also. You just can't help it. In fact, medical research has proved that when you get angry, chemicals are produced in your body to help you express that anger! So the energy to attack a man is automatically produced by your body the moment you get

angry. But you cannot afford to react, because the other man is your boss!

So what happens to that energy? It gets solidified in your being. When the energy is not allowed to flow, to take its natural course, it stagnates in your system, becomes a swamp of negativity. All these repressions are stored in your subconscious, and ultimately they can destroy the Being.

What do you do when you get back home from the office?

You bang the door! You throw your file on the sofa! You yell at your husband or wife! All these are just your repressions of the day. At this time, if you have a sensitive nose, you can actually smell the repressed anger! It will surround you like a faint bad odour.

You want to express the anger in some way, to pass it on to someone else. Behavioural psychologists have termed this syndrome 'Kicking the dog'. The cycle of 'passing on' is always from the strongest to the weakest.

The boss fires the husband – the husband comes home and yells at his wife – the wife slaps their child – and the child, finding no one else around on whom he can express his anger, kicks his dog.

But mind you, when you take your anger out on someone else, it always results in a chain of karma.

The only safe place to express your repressed emotions is to throw them out into the air, into *akasha*. That way, you are unburdened of these emotions, and no one else is harmed by

your actions.

As we know, whatever you suppress in the waking state, appears strongly in your dream state. If a beautiful woman passes by and you don't look at her out of loyalty to your wife, be sure she will appear in your dreams! Or if there is an unhappy event you don't want to recall, you may succeed in forgetting about it during the day, but it will be there to haunt you at night.

A small story:

Once there was a man who wanted to attain *siddhis*, miraculous powers. So he went to a Himalayan *guru* and asked him to teach him how to achieve these powers. The *guru* tried explaining to him, *Why do you want to attain these siddhis? They won't help you in life. Try meditation instead, it will help you grow spiritually.*

But the man was adamant. So finally the *guru* gave him a bottle of medicine, telling him, *Have this medicine three times a day for a fortnight, and you will attain some rare siddhis. There is only one condition. At the moment when you drink this medicine, be sure not to think of monkeys.*

Immediately the man asked, *What if I remember?*

Imagine! Otherwise who thinks of monkeys? But the moment the master asked him not to, the man became afraid.

If you happen to think of a monkey, you will have to purify yourself by taking a bath, and only then have the medicine, said the *guru*.

As soon as he got home, the man took out the bottle of

medicine. But just as he was going to drink it, the image of a monkey appeared in his mind!

To cleanse himself, the man quickly took a bath and returned to have the medicine. But once again, before he could drink it, he found himself thinking of a monkey.

This time, when he went to take the purifying bath, he could only think of monkeys. The bathroom seemed to be full of monkeys! He could only see monkeys everywhere! He felt he would go crazy.

Finally he ran back to the *guru*.

What happened? Didn't you drink the medicine? The *guru* asked quietly.

Oh, no! Please take back your medicine – I don't want it! cried the man. *I don't want any siddhis either - just free me from these monkeys!*

This is the exact situation which is happening in our lives. We are helpless against the hordes of monkeys chattering in our Subconscious!

So then, what is the Subconscious?

(from audience) Can we say, *unfulfilled desires, Swamiji?*

Yes, that is perfectly right.

(another voice)

But Swamiji, sometimes even after fulfilling the desire, it appears in our dreams.

That just shows that you haven't really fulfilled it! When you

really get fulfilment, you don't store even the seed of desire inside anymore. You have no need of it. But we never get real fulfilment, because we never enter into anything fully. If we get into anything fully, we will be out of it. Going in totally is the only way to come out fully! But we never get involved completely. We always have some reservations.

All our misery in life is nothing but these frozen unfulfilled desires, the Subconscious.

It is this cerebral layer which disturbs our well-being, destroys our physical health, mental health, spiritual health.

It is the reason for all our irritation and anger which we don't even realize we have. Have you noticed how some mothers keep on shouting at their children for no reason?

They don't even realize that they are doing it!

Or how some people will simply sit and brood – and without even being aware of it, they will keep continuously tearing up papers into bits, or plucking out the petals of flowers?

Such destructive behaviour!

How many of you do this kind of thing?!

(giggling from the audience)

Under the surface calm, anger is simmering, bubbling all the time. When you get back from work, even the slightest noise that anyone makes, even if your wife puts your coffee cup on the table and it makes a small noise – it's enough to burst open the floodgates of anger.

And not just anger. Lust is also bubbling under the surface,

so much so that you are afraid to even look at the picture of a woman! You are afraid it might bring out the desires you have tried so hard to repress.

And the same with greed..!

These are the three major causes of all our misery – Anger, Lust, Greed.

Today, we will enter into a meditation technique to kill *Dukkha* (misery). It is called *Dukkha Harana*.

This meditation technique is designed to throw out the repressions, to subvert the subconscious. I call this only a technique – not a meditation. Because even the word *meditation* makes many people uneasy. If I give them one hundred rituals to perform, they'll do it happily. But to sit for half an hour and meditate – it makes them uneasy. It is easy to do outward things – but to look in? That is the most frightening thing! Because there is a Pandora's Box inside – who dares open that Pandora's Box?

(from audience) But Swamiji , if we don't control ourselves, what will happen?

The question she has asked shows you exactly what I am saying! See, how fear resonates in the very question! We are all living in fear of the Pandora's Box inside us. That is why, the moment we hear the word *meditation*, we try to escape. So some people don't like the word because it makes them afraid, some people think it is too serious a thing, and somewhere along the way it has also got associated with

religion. Actually meditation has nothing to do with religion. It has only to do with spirituality.

Swamiji, why should we do this meditation?

To throw out the subconscious.

What happens if we fall asleep during meditation?

Nothing wrong. Please, don't have any ideas about do's and don'ts! If you feel sleepy, sleep. When you finish sleeping, you can meditate, that's all.

Can we practise it along with any other meditation?

Yes, it can be continued alongside any other meditation. There are no side-effects. Whichever technique you find helps you more, continue with that and drop the other. If both are helping you, continue both. But please don't keep comparing techniques, different techniques are designed for different types of people. So don't condemn any technique, each has its own value. Vivekananda goes so far as to say that even the sacrificial rites practised by tribals have their own value – so never condemn anything.

(elderly lady) But what about young people entering into all this?

Ha ha ha! Do you think meditation is only for people of your age?

We normally have this idea, that spirituality and meditation are only for those who have finished living their life. I say,

meditation is the only way to survive in today's society. Meditate, or go insane! If you don't know how to look inward, the outer world will reduce you to madness, sooner or later. **Meditation is today a *basic need for everybody*!** At one time, meditation was considered a luxury. Now, we are so disturbed, so stressed out, that we need meditation the way we need oxygen.

Actually what does this technique do, Swamiji?

This technique will help you unburden the suppressions.

Awaken your body intelligence.

Bring out the insanity inside.

When the insanity is thrown out, spirituality will bloom naturally.

Swamiji, what do you mean by spirituality?

You can recognise spirituality by its qualities!

The prime quality of spirituality is *nithyananda* – being ever blissful, full of extraordinary energy, intelligence and love... when your whole being becomes an expression of love, when healing energy radiates from you... all this, plus something more, is spirituality. What that something more is, I cannot define. It cannot be defined, it cannot be expressed, only experienced. If you have just one deep experience in meditation, you will find that everything I say is true. Just one deep experience is enough to get you addicted to meditation.

Shall we enter into the meditation?

Instructions for Dukkha Harana Meditation

First, you will listen to music which will help you enter into the meditation.

This is a 30-minute meditation, with 3 parts of 10 minutes each.

For the first 10 minutes, we are going to work with breath. You are going to breathe deeply, chaotically.

During chaotic breathing, when the body intelligence is allowed to take over, the body will take in however much oxygen is needed. There is no need to control your breath - this is not *pranayama*.

Just breathe as deeply as you can – forget everything else, just breathe, breathe deeply - *become the breathing!*

If anyone has a heart problem, do it as much as you can without discomfort. The rest of you, put your whole energy into it!

The heat generated in these 10 minutes will melt all your solidified negative energies. The subconscious will be thrown open.

(from audience) Any particular breathing exercises?

No, nothing. Let your body behave as it wants. You have to be standing, that's all. There are no specific exercises. Just breathe, that's all!

The next 10 minutes is called *catharsis*. Here you will open the seed body which is inside your being. Just make your

body as tense as possible. Throw your limbs around. Clench your teeth. Rotate your head. Whatever the body wants to do, allow it to do. But keep every limb tense, taut. Just throw out all your *dukkha*. If you feel like crying, screaming, laughing – just do it. For these ten minutes, don't control your body. Just go crazy. Because we are all already mad! This technique is not going to make you act crazy – it is only going to bring out all the madness inside.

Do you realise how mad you actually are?

If you keep a record of your random thoughts, you will be shocked! Your thoughts are completely irrelevant, unrelated, sheer madness.

Vivekananda gives a beautiful description of the mind: he says that the mind is like a drunken monkey, stung by a scorpion and possessed by a ghost! Just imagine, what will be the state of that monkey? That is what is our mind!

So, without the madness, act out the madness! That's what we do in ***Dukkha Harana***.

Now there is a therapy in the West called psychodrama – where you can act out all your violent emotions in a controlled environment – like using a punching bag. This helps you throw out all your emotions without harming others, and without internalizing it as disease.

During catharsis, you are free to act out all your anger, all your emotions - without fear, without shame or guilt. Just do it. You see, all the violence exists – but in a repressed form.

You are going to just throw it out. You are all going to be blindfolded, so there is no need to worry about being seen. Don't be afraid of the violence that is coming up from inside you. Once all the violence is spent, a peace will start blooming inside your Being. Without your knowledge, from deep inside your consciousness, you will experience a stillness, a silence arising.

At the end of 10 minutes, you will hear the word, STOP!
At that point, just stop – in whichever position you are. Just become a frozen statue.
When you switch suddenly from frantic action to total silence, your mind is totally stopped, arrested for a moment. In that moment, you may even experience *samadhi*. This is especially possible in the master's presence. The moment your mind stops working, you will feel a tremendous energy rushing into you.

Actually, I make you all listen to me - for no reason! I have nothing to give you in words, nothing to tell you that is of any importance. If you are able to absorb my energy, you'll realize that I can give you much more in silence than I can give you in words. The reason I talk is this – if I don't talk, you will start talking with yourself!
If I ask you all to sit in silence in my presence, what do you think will happen? After a couple of seconds, you are sure to start talking to yourself! So to stop your inner chatter, I am forced to talk.

I talk to shut you up, that's all.

Returning to the meditation - in that tiny gap, when your inner chatter stops for a moment, my energy is able to rush into you.

After a few seconds, you will see that thoughts are again rising in you. Then just sit down, in a pleasant mood, and slowly start witnessing those thoughts. Breathe normally. Don't concentrate on anything. Meditation is not concentration. Meditation is awareness.
So just be aware of your thoughts, witness what happens inside your body *and* outside your body.

If you want to test the efficiency of this technique, go and have your picture taken today.

After 15 days of practising this technique, have another picture taken and compare the two. I assure you, your face will look completely different! Your eyes will have become more pleasing. You will have blossomed.

Let us start.

(the group practises Dukkha Harana meditation)

At the end of half an hour, Swamiji chants slowly, signaling the end of the meditation:

Om shantih shantih shantih!

No more for today.

Carry this silence with you.

Go to rest as early as possible.

You will find that you will sleep beautifully and awaken in a peaceful mood.

***Day 3:** 16th April*

Involvement



T*he crowd gathers and enters into an enthusiastic and informal discussion with Swamiji on general topics.*

(from audience) Swamiji, why is it important to follow vegetarianism?

Which are the most intelligent communities in the world? Come, name a few!

Jains, Brahmins, Parsis, Jews... all these communities are mostly vegetarian.

Vegetarianism and intelligence have a deep connection. So much research has been conducted in this area.

Again, human beings have been physically designed for vegetarianism. Herbivorous animals have only one type of mouth movement – jaw movements are sideways, just as in our case. Our teeth are designed for chewing, not for cutting and tearing. Even the length of our intestine is like that of herbivores, not carnivores. Nature has intended us to be vegetarians.

The third thing – a meditative person simply cannot enjoy non-vegetarian food! When you eat consciously, with awareness, with sensitivity, do you think you can allow non-vegetarian food to enter your system?

In South India, the basis of religion, of spiritual growth, has been emphasized as vegetarianism.

Ramanujam writes that food can be contaminated in three ways. These are called the three *doshas*.

The first is *jaati dosha*, where the food is toxic by its very quality – for example, onions, garlic, etc. These kinds of items are acceptable in very small quantities, as medicines, but should not be consumed as food.

The second *dosha* is the *nimitta dosha*, which means that the food should be prepared hygienically, without hair or dust.

The third *dosha*, the *aashraya dosha*, is the one I want to emphasize. It says that the person who cooks and handles the food leaves the imprint of his thoughts upon it. So if you have had a fight with your wife, don't eat at home that day!

Whether you realize it or not, along with other ingredients, the thoughts of the cook are also being added to the food. So when your angry wife cooks for you, you can be sure to land up with indigestion!

By projecting our thoughts, we can affect not only our own health, but the health of others also! This has been experimentally proved.

In an experiment conducted on plants in an American University, researchers exposed three rose-plants to different human emotions over 15 days and studied the results.

The first plant was bombarded with negativity from the caregiver. Whenever he watered the plant, he would throw out all his negative emotions (anger, frustration, and so on)

on the plant.

The second plant was exposed to 'normal' behaviour, with the caregiver neither cursing the plant nor paying any special attention to it.

The third plant was showered with love and affection, with the caregiver taking care to talk to the plant, stroke it, sing to it and so on.

In the short span of 15 days, the research team observed astounding results. The first plant which had been the target of negativity had wilted and died. The second plant showed normal growth. But the plant exposed to positive emotions had flourished marvelously, and was a healthy, robust plant full of flowers.

Since all other conditions remained controlled, it is obvious that only the human energies had influenced the growth of the plant.

So anything can be contaminated or blessed by thoughts!

That is how the concept of *naivedya* came into custom.

Naivedya is the practice of first offering our food to God before we eat it. In Christianity, there is the practice of praying, of 'saying grace' before each meal. It teaches us to eat our food with reverence, as *prasad*. But the science behind it is this: when we place the food before the idol of the gods, the positive vibrations present in the temple or shrine are absorbed by the food, and ultimately benefits the ones who eat it.

But Swamiji, Zen Buddhists are non-vegetarians...

Yes, but all their enlightened masters are vegetarians. Their monks are vegetarians. Only the lay community indulges in non-vegetarianism.

Swamiji, some doctors recommend non-vegetarian food because it contains more nutrients.

Yes, earlier there used to be a concept that only non-vegetarian food can supply some of the nutrients that you need. Even doctors were under this impression. But now, with greater awareness in medical circles, this opinion has changed. Vegetarian foods like soya, spinach etc. can give you the same nutrition and energy that you get from non-vegetarian food. Today, with stress levels and disease going practically out of control, food habits necessarily have to change. Among both the medical community and the lay community you find a strong shift, a great awareness about the benefits of vegetarianism.

What about milk, Swamiji - is it vegetarian or non-vegetarian?

Ha ha, the big controversy! I say, in biological terms milk may be seen as non-vegetarian, but in terms of energy it is vegetarian.

Then why are eggs considered non-vegetarian, Swamiji? After all, both are animal products...

If you place the egg in a warm place, sooner or later a chick is going to hatch out, hmmm? What I mean is, the egg has the

capacity to turn into an animal.

But will that happen with milk?

(laughter)

Anyway, all these are only logical answers. I can tell you on my own authority, that milk has the same energy as vegetarian food. Of course, even among Eastern mystics there are some sects who don't touch milk. But I assure you that milk is good for health and for meditation. I can tell you out of my own experience in meditation. It is only a matter of time before these things are proved scientifically!

How do we develop a correct eating routine?

When you practise (this) meditation, your body intelligence is naturally awakened. Then you need not follow any system – your body itself will tell you when to eat, what to eat, how much to eat. Just follow your body's advice.

The needs can differ from person to person, from day to day in the same person. All you need to do is eat with full awareness, full consciousness. I want you all to go home and try this – this is today's homework!

Before you start, close your eyes and take the vow that you will not use your mealtime to worry about the past or plan for the future. You won't allow your past or future to invade your meal.

When the food comes before you, look at the food with love, with deep feeling. This is the stuff that is sustaining your life! And when you start eating, do it with care. Taste every mouthful completely. Take time to taste the food. Chew

slowly, enjoy the juice of the food. You will find that you may take more time, but you eat less, and with far greater satisfaction!

And you will discover that all our food is actually *amrita* – life-sustaining elixir that we say is available only to the gods. All we eat is *amrita* – if we know how to eat it. Be very clear, *when we change the quality of eating, the quality of the food also changes*. Don't think that food is a dead thing! It is also a live energy, a live consciousness.

Annam brahma, say the Upanishads.

Food is God.

It has its own intelligence. When you eat with respect, it helps you to grow. If you eat without being totally present, you feel only 'filled' (or full), not fulfilled!

So tonight, go home and try this practice. Write down how you felt, and bring it to class with you tomorrow.

Okay, will someone tell me, why do we eat?

(from audience) To energise the body.

Yes! To energise the body, we say. But after we eat, do we feel energetic?

(A mass NO! from the audience.)

We feel sleepy, Swamiji..!

Yes, you feel sleepy! But to say that you feel sleepy after eating, is like saying that it grows dark when the sun rises. It

is a complete reversal of the natural process! Then why such a contradiction? What is happening?

Here is an experiment.

(Volunteers place three dishes on the table next to Swamiji – one containing fresh fruit, another containing cooked food and a third one containing sliced onions.)

These are the foods with positive energy, nil energy (neutral energy) and negative energy.

See which food is dominant in your diet.

Have you noticed this *mala* that *sannyasis* always wear?
(Swamiji takes off his rudraaksh mala and shows it to audience)

During my *parivarajaka* (wandering days), I had made a vow not to touch money. For almost two-and-a-half years I wandered, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, mostly on foot. During that period, I used to live on alms. But sometimes, people would give stale food as alms, which was not suitable for health.

To check the quality of the food, I would test it with this *mala*!

Just dangle the *mala* above the food. If it starts rotating clockwise, the food contains positive energy. If it rotates anti-clockwise, it contains negative energy. If it moves like a pendulum, it is a nil energy food. Only if the *mala* said OK, would I eat that food!

So this *mala* is a meter that we use to measure the energy level in the food!

(Swamiji demonstrates with his mala over the 3 different kinds of food.)

Why doesn't someone volunteer? Anyone can do this! You can use your own *mala* also – *rudraaksh* or red sandalwood are preferable, but a gold chain is also okay.

(Participants test the food)

By blindfolding yourself and getting someone else to place the food before you, you can be sure that your opinion is not influencing the movement of the *mala*.

But Swamiji, onion is supposed to be good for health?

As a medicinal food, yes - in very small quantities. Not as a regular food.

Can the food be energised and eaten?

Perfectly possible. Of course, poisoned food cannot be eaten, but neutral energy food can be energized through meditation and then eaten.

What is the meaning behind some rituals and mantras that we follow before meals?

All those rituals have a meaning. When you take the water in your hands and rotate it above the food, you increase the positive energy of the food. But now, we do all this totally in unawareness.

The meaning is lost, only the ritual remains!

The mantra we chant, *Brahmaarpanam*, means that the food, the process of eating, and the eater – all three are Brahman, God. Just as we make offerings to the sacrificial fire in a *yaga*, we make this offering of food to our inner fire, the digestive fire, *jataraagni*. Eating is compared to a sacred religious rite.

So what do I mean by all these experiments?

All I mean is, cook your food, eat your food in a meditative mood. Let meditation become a part of your lifestyle – not something you sit and do for half an hour every day. When you go back home, teach these meditation techniques to the person who cooks for your family. When the person who cooks and the persons who eat are in a blissful, meditative mood, the very quality of the food changes.

Swamiji, what about the right hours for sleeping?

Like I said yesterday, though you sleep throughout the night, you *actually* sleep only for two hours every night. Only those two hours you need to sleep. The rest of the time you are simply falling in and out of the dream state.

Can those two hours be during the day also?

Yes, for a few people it may be during the day. Nothing can be done about it.

But doesn't our body need six to eight hours' rest?

No! When the mind relaxes, the body also automatically relaxes. The same two hours will be more than sufficient for the body as well.

What about when we overwork?

The body is designed to work 22 hours a day, *ma!* Tiredness, hunger – all these are psychological concepts. We are used to a certain cycle of eating and sleeping. It is only when you look at the clock that you feel hungry or sleepy. Three full meals and eight hours of sleep are too much for us!

So this is only a psychological cycle?

No.

Our body has its own physiological cycle. We have imposed a routine on our body according to our convenience. When you let the body intelligence function independently, it will fall into its own natural cycle. But we are not aware of this cycle.

Do you know, men also have a monthly cycle like women?

Not physically, of course – but mentally, they undergo the same mood swings, the same depression as women have during their period!

Unfortunately for men, they have no way of being aware that these are the three days. So they unnecessarily get stressed without realizing why.

In fact, very rarely, extremely sensitive men start

demonstrating the physical symptoms also - like you may have heard about Sri Ramakrishna.

Do you know about that?

During the period of *bhaavana* in meditation, Sri Ramakrishna would enter so completely into the role of the feminine devotee, that he would actually start behaving like a woman, and would even experience menstrual periods! Anyway, with continued meditation, it will be possible for you to gradually make out which are those three days for you, and be prepared.

Meditation throws up so many truths, so many new insights about yourself!

Any questions about yesterday's meditation? Any sharing?

(One participant reports having felt feverish and actually developed a temperature.

Another says that he felt like he'd done an hour of rigorous exercise!

A third participant says that she felt a deep vibration shaking her body throughout.

Swamiji assures them that the symptoms they had experienced are all normal and encouraging signs that they had done the meditation well.

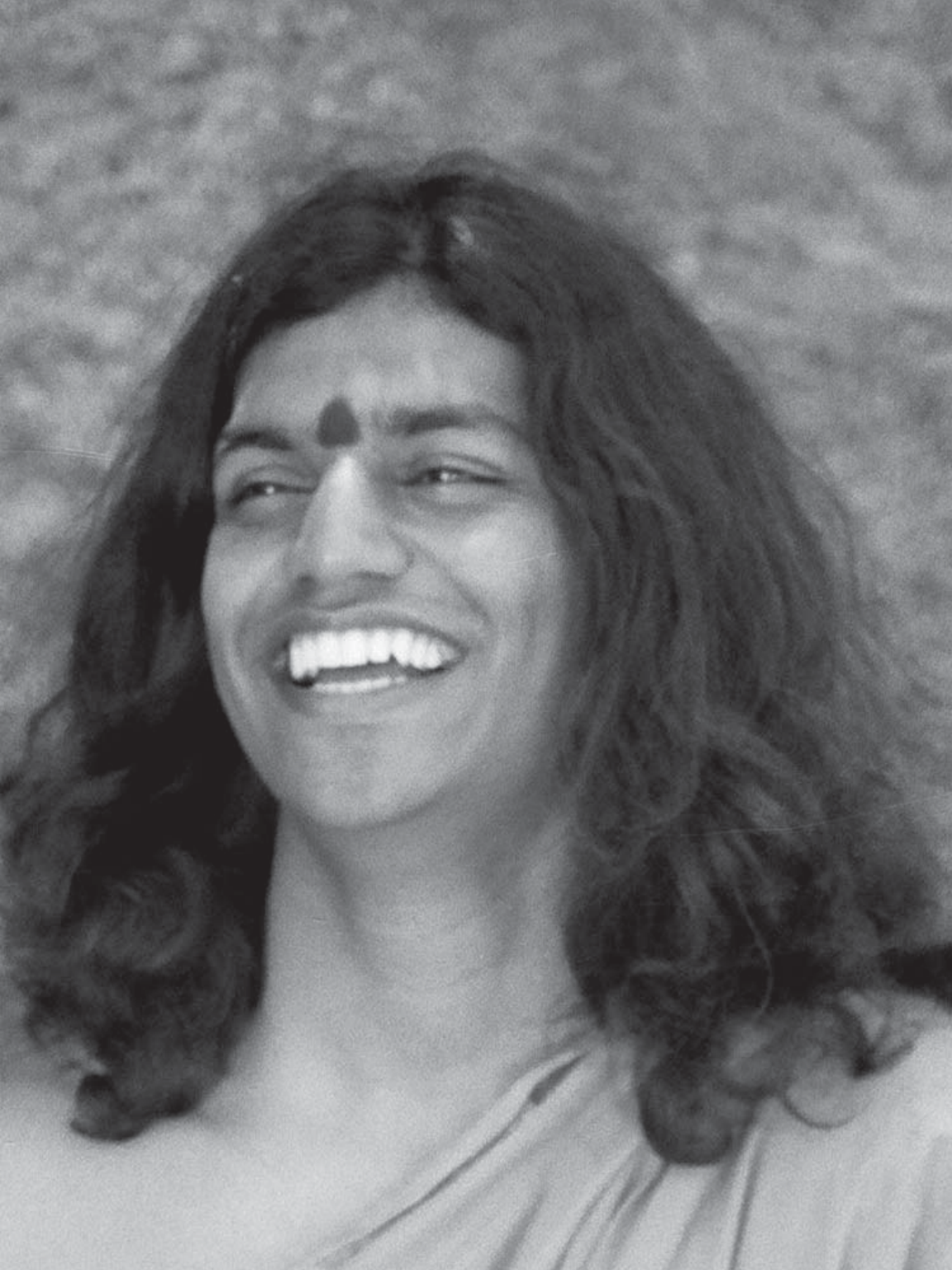
A participant enquires whether the meditation can be done in the outdoors, to which Swamiji replies in the affirmative.)

Today we will repeat the same meditation as we did yesterday. I want you all to enter into the meditation with more involvement, and do it perfectly.

(the group practises Dukkha Harana meditation and later disperses)

Day 4: 17th April

Journeying



Swamiji enters.

He draws a small diagram on the whiteboard, marking the three lower chakras of the human body – Muladhara, Swadishthana, Manipuraka.

What are the *chakras*?

The *chakras* are the subtle energy centers of our body. We don't have only one body, as we think. We have seven bodies! Here we will deal with the first three bodies. The first body – the one in which you have come to this class, in which you are moving, talking, writing – this is called the *jagrat shareera* (the waking body). The next body, the *sukshma shareera* or *swapna shareera* (the dream body) is the body you use in your dream state. It is the body which you employ to travel from place to place in your dreams! The third body is the *kaarana shareera* (causal body), which you use in deep sleep. This body doesn't move, it is made completely of *tamas*.

The other two bodies meet the physical body at seven points along the length of the physical body. These points are what is known as the *chakras*.

These are the three lower *chakras*:

The *Muladhara chakra*, located at the base of the spine.

The *Swadishthana chakra*, located two inches below the navel.

The *Manipuraka chakra*, located in the navel region.

The *chakras* were discovered in ancient times. Today science has proved that there is a gland located near, and corresponding to, each *chakra*. The *chakras* supply energy to the glands. There are 7 major *chakras*. They deeply influence our physical, emotional and mental activities. The *chakras* have great power. Right now, most of us use our bodies as if they were bullock carts! If we know how to utilize the *chakras* properly, we can use our body as aircrafts.

Let me tell you a small story. In fact, you could say this is a modern fable!

After World War I, a biplane was found abandoned near a remote tribal settlement in Asia.

Never having seen an aircraft up close earlier, the tribal folk assumed that it must be some strange sort of bullock cart - which was all they had seen on wheels. News spread in the village about the new bullock cart. The biplane was proudly taken around the settlement yoked to bullocks, and people came to see and admire it.

Some weeks later, one intelligent young tribal boy who had returned from a trip to civilization, inferred that all those buttons and switches on the display panel must have some

purpose. So he fiddled around with them till he got the biplane to taxi around a bit. This amazed the tribals - the bullock cart could move around on its own! The young lad, who had seen tractors at work in the faraway villages, declared that this was no bullock cart, but a tractor! The bewildered tribal folk agreed, and the biplane began to be used as such. (Quite an inconvenient tractor, it must have been!)

But it took a war veteran, stumbling upon the settlement many months later, to rev up the engine, operate the gears and fly the biplane right up into the sky, fulfilling the purpose for which it was made.

This is the story of your life! Most of us treat our life, our potential, like a bullock cart. Some use it like a tractor. But how many of us can transform it into an aircraft? The power to fly is there within you, but can lie latent forever unless you learn how to operate the gears. These 'gears' are the techniques I teach you, to raise your energy from the lowest plane to the highest. The science of flying is nothing but the science of learning how to handle the *chakras*.

There are two ways to activate the *chakras* - through *jnaana* (maturity or wisdom), and through meditation.

What is meant by maturity?

As a child, if someone took a toy away from you, how would you react? By screaming and crying as if your life depended

upon it. And now? Now you would hardly bother, because you are no longer attached to the toy. So when knowledge descends on you, maturity happens naturally. This has nothing to do with physical age. Research has found ways of detecting a man's mental age. They have found that the average man's mental age is not more than 14!

A beautiful story about Swami Brahmananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna: one day Swami Brahmananda was meditating in Brindavana. A devotee came and placed a costly blanket before him as an offering. Swami Brahmananda said nothing, he just silently noticed the act. A couple of hours later, a thief who spotted the blanket came up to him and took away the blanket. Still the Swami watched in the same way, silently, with no reaction! The gaining and losing of the blanket had made no difference whatsoever to him.

In the same way, they say of Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi that one day some thieves entered his ashram. They took whatever little they could find, and before leaving even gave a blow to Ramana. It is said that not only did Bhagwan show no reaction, even the pace of his breathing did not alter during the incident! He was supremely unperturbed by the whole incident. When maturity descends upon us, precisely this will be the reaction in us! This will happen only when we learn how to operate the gears, handle the mechanisms of our 'aircraft'. Can you understand me?

THE MULADHARA CHAKRA

Muladhara = 'the root and base of Existence' – from *mula* (root) + *adhara* (base)

Location: Base of the spine

Locked by: Imagination & expectation (fantasy)

Unlocked by: Acceptance of the other, acceptance of reality

Meditation technique from: Shiva Tantra

Name of technique: Dukkha Harana (*Destroyer of Misery*)

The *Muladhara chakra* is concerned with *Sex*.

The most talked about, thought about, written about subject is sex.

The most misunderstood, misinterpreted, confusing subject is also sex.

What is sex?

We try to avoid the subject, or we try to indulge in the subject.

Sex is buried in the darkest corner of our unconscious minds!

Right from the start, we find no one to enlighten us on the truth about sex. And sex, more than any other subject, needs to be illumined! It needs to be illumined with the light of consciousness.

Our condition right now is like that of a man walking in a forest on a dark night. Somewhere in that area is a big pit that has been dug to trap elephants.

The man who tries to avoid the subject is in unawareness. He doesn't even know where the pit lies – then how can he avoid it?

The man who indulges in the subject is aware of the pit, but can't see any other way than to jump straight into it.

Can either of these be the solution?

One should know where the pit lies, and then take the right steps to move around it.

What is sex?

Sex is a tremendous creative power! The whole world arises out of sex energy.

Tantra deals beautifully with the whole concept of sex. In the scriptures, the god Shiva speaks to Devi Parvati on this subject. Those insights recorded over 5000 years ago are found to be relevant in modern psychology today!

Our ancient enlightened masters, the *rishis*, have also given us great clarity on this subject. Do you know, Vatsyayana - the man who wrote the Kama Sutra, the science of sex – was a *sannyasi*? He was a celibate!

He was questioned, *What authority do you have to speak about this subject?*

A natural question – I think you might be silently putting this question to me also?!

The answer that Vatsyayana gave, I am just translating into modern language for you, using a modern analogy:

An electrician who visits your home for the first time knows exactly what happens when each electric switch in each room is put on and off. He knows the entire circuitry hidden beneath the wall, he understands the exact function of the instruments, and can gauge the possible problem and its solution. He understands the science of electricity. On the other hand, *you*, who put those switches on and off fifty times a day, have absolutely no idea what is actually going on when you turn on a switch!! Am I right?

(much laughter)

Many of us know nothing more than how to put on and off the switches. That's why we sometimes get an electric shock! So

we may be fathers, mothers, grandparents – but still we may know nothing about sex.

Vatsyayana says, only an enlightened person, a *sannyasi*, has true authority to speak about this subject – for one more reason:

Have you watched two people playing a game – say, chess? Very often, the right move suggests itself to you – but somehow never occurs to the two players!

Have you observed this? Hmm? What do you think could be the reason?

(from audience) Because we have no involvement?

Yes, in a way. Actually, the man who is witnessing is not under pressure to win! Stress makes the mind dull. So, only the man who has come out of the game, who is outside the *samsara chakra*, can give you the right idea about it.

Let us return to the subject, *What is sex?*

Today, biology has proved that no man is 100% man, and no woman is 100% woman!

In fact, each man is just 51% man, and 49% woman. Likewise, a woman is only 51% woman, and 49% man. Just a difference of 1% this way or that way!

Did you know that?

After all, you have taken birth from the *Muladhara* of your father and the *Muladhara* of your mother. How can you be only male or only female? The qualities of both are bound to

be there in you.

This is the reason behind our symbolic representation of Shiva as Ardhanareeshwara (the figure who is half male and half female). To be complete, to be whole, it is essential that we are able to accept and express both the masculine and feminine aspects of our nature.

But does that happen?

Right from the moment of birth, society labels you as either male and female. And of course, it expects you to start behaving accordingly. Society simply does not allow boys to express their feminine side, or girls to express their masculine side.

This is such a damaging thing! Right from a very young age, one half of our being is repressed!

Till the age of seven, till social conditioning has taken deep root inside, the child is not conscious of being male or female. That's why a very young child has a sense of completeness.

He is centered, he is secure. By around seven, the child comes under society's control. He begins to repress that part of himself which is not approved by society. We don't realize it, but this time is traumatic for the child! He suddenly feels uprooted, cut off from one half of his being.

So he begins, unconsciously, the search for the lost half, the suppressed half. He starts looking to the outside world for a substitute for his own lost half. The male child starts searching for a female presence, and the female child for a male presence.

This is where sex starts. This is the root cause of sex.

In the period from 7 to 14 years, the child's closest caregivers are the parents. From them, the child collects images about how the ideal woman (or ideal man) should be. The suppressed half of his own personality is replaced with his mother's image.

Did you understand this concept clearly?

That's why every boy's first heroine is his mother, and every girl's first hero is her father. This is the unwritten law! This deep-rooted search is what lies behind the so-called Oedipus and Ophelia complexes of Freudian psychology.

If a child has the physical nearness of the parents at this stage, he will grow into a confident, secure, complete individual. This is especially noticeable in the behaviour of children from broken homes, where the child has been deprived of the mother's or father's presence due to death or divorce. A majority of these children carry a sense of incompleteness well into their adulthood.

Because the imprint of the parents is the first, and the deepest. Even long after you are an adult, no matter how many differences you have with your mother or father, you can never remove their imprint from your being!

At fourteen, the child attains physical maturity. Naturally, social laws don't allow them to have the same intimacy as earlier with the parent of the opposite sex. So the child is removed from the mother or father. Again, he or she is uprooted!

At 14, the search begins again.

I think these days the age is coming down? Due to the influence of media! These days children are exposed to TV and internet from a very young age, that's why they grow up faster. That's not a healthy sign.

Anyway, at about 14 years, the search begins in the outside world. The child now begins to collect images from outsiders and media. The media is perfectly aware of this. That's why you'll see that all advertisements, especially those aimed at teenagers, always has sexual undertones – an attractive woman or man will be modeling the product – even if the product has nothing to do with them. Almost all motorbike ads show women – and how many women ride motorbikes?! Whatever the product, you'll find a smiling woman recommending it. And when you go to the market, you promptly pick up that product – forgetting that the woman doesn't come with it! This is the media's way of cashing in on your suppressed desires.

The more society tries to suppress your needs, the more they grow. Because society aims at suppressing the symptoms without getting down to the root cause. Just like a tree grows and flourishes when you just chop the branches and leave the root as it is!

During these years we collect ideas from movies, TV, etc. and build up an image of the perfect woman or man. From each person we collect the best nose, the best eyes, the best personality, and create our own 'ideal person'.

This stage lasts around 7 years, till the person is 20 or 21. By then the identification with media wears off – but the ideas are already deep-rooted in our minds. Then a fresh search begins – to find that perfect person in our real life. This is where expectations start.

For the next 7 years, this search continues. Person after person we try out, and get disappointed.

A few intelligent people figure out after a while that dreams cannot become reality. That's why they are called dreams!

But most of the people still keep searching.

A small story:

An old man used to go to the beach everyday. He would sit there the whole evening. He never got into the water, he never took a walk. He just used to sit and look at all the passersby.

Then one day another person who used to come there asked him,

Why do you come here everyday and sit for hours? Are you waiting for someone?

Yes, the old man replied. *I'm waiting for my perfect woman.*

Oh, where is she?

I don't know, I haven't met her yet. I'm still searching for her!

The other man was shocked.

How old are you, sir?, he asked politely.

I'm 75 years old.

Imagine! At 75, his life is practically over – and he's still searching for the perfect woman!

When did you start your search?, asked the other man.

At 25!, replied the old man unhappily.

What! In 50 years, didn't you find a single woman who was perfect?

Yes, I found one woman...

Then what happened? Why didn't you marry her?

Well... she was waiting for her perfect man..!

This is what happens when our expectations are so high!

Sometimes, after a long search, we find a person who *seems* to match our mental image – from a distance.

The picture in our mind is green – and the person, the image that we see also seems to be green – and then, all is greenery!

A match seems to be found!

What happens at this point is what is called falling in love.

This is the science behind falling in love. It is always a falling, not a raising. It is nothing more than the mischief of the hormones, masquerading as love.

Because what actually happens is, because of our own strong needs and expectations, we see things as we want to see them. We project our mental image upon the other.

So anyway, the world becomes filled with greenery and music. Life becomes poetry. At last, our search is over! This is the stage at which we begin to write poetry, make paintings of each other and what not.

As long as this distance is maintained, things are fine. We can continue to project our imagination upon each other. But the person comes closer – and the colours slowly start

changing. Green fades to pale green, and then to yellow. We don't want to accept that our imagination has turned out to be a lie, so we start making excuses for the situation – *This is life! Everything can't be perfect!* – and so on. It requires tremendous courage, tremendous intelligence to live with reality. So we use these excuses instead, as a buffer system, to shield ourselves from reality. Finally, when we get close enough, we find that the yellow has faded to white! Where is the comparison between green and white? The fantasy and the reality are totally different. From close, we realize that no living person can live up to the image we carry in our minds, no image can be translated into reality - because it is an image, a fantasy! Is it possible?

That is why, ALL love, without exception, ends in pain. We end up feeling cheated, exploited by the other. Our basic instinct is to blame the other for what has happened.

But is it the other's fault?

Never. The blame always rests with you – because *you* expected something, and *you* tried to force your imagination upon the other! Who is responsible for the failure?

Do you understand that what I say is the basic reality, what is actually happening in our everyday lives? But we never try to look into it. We never like to deal with truth!

A small story:

A man gave his friend a puppy as a wedding gift.

Three months later, the two met on the street.

How is married life? asked the first man.

Oh, just like it was during the honeymoon – only a few small changes!, said the other.

Changes like - ?, asked the friend.

In the beginning, your puppy used to bark at me, and my wife used to bring me the newspaper. Now, my wife barks at me, and your puppy brings me the newspaper!

This is the state of most marriages, once the honeymoon is over! No wonder it is called the *honeymoon* – the happiness takes only a fortnight to wane!

At least at this point if we accept the reality, there is no problem. But do we keep quiet? No! We take out our brush and paints, and try to paint the white back into green! We try to change the other person to suit our mental image. This is the most damaging thing in any relationship. We try to sculpt each other in the way we have imagined. We try to possess the other, convert them into matter. You degrade energy into matter – how then can the other trust or respect you?

Here starts the problem – the unending war of our lives!

All day, in every home, just listen carefully to husband and wife talking to each other, and you can hear the chiseling going on:

Keep quiet!

Why are you so late from work?

Why isn't dinner ready?

All these are nothing but chiseling sounds! The chisel and

hammer have become the emblem of married life!

Ultimately, the sheer load of expectation leads to disturbances in the *Muladhara chakra*. This is the way this *chakra* is locked.

When you try to fulfil your fantasy through another, try to impose (project) your expectation upon another, this *chakra* is locked.

It has nothing to do with sex as you imagined. It has nothing to do with the outer conditions of life. Nothing to do with so-called celibacy. Who can be called a true celibate? The man who has dropped his inner image, his inner woman. If you drop the image, you can be a celibate even in *grihasta* (married) life.

Yes?

Swamiji, we don't even realise that we are carrying an image inside...

Yes. Because we have never looked in... we go everywhere but in.

Do you know, upto 80% of our energy is locked in this *chakra*! What a waste! This *chakra* doesn't even need to be energized. It simply needs to be opened, to be activated, and the flood of energy flowing from it can transform your life!

How do we open this chakra?

Just drop the expectation, and the *chakra* will open automatically.

A small story:

Once a man came to me and said, *Swamiji, we are just two people in our house, my wife and I. Still there is no peace!*

I told him, *Who says only two people stay in your house?*

Aren't you four people? – you, your inner woman, your wife, and her inner man? No wonder there is no peace!

Just learn to drop your inner man, your inner woman – and see what a change will happen in your house!

Swamiji, we experience disturbances in other relationships also, like between parents and children.

Yes, in any relationship where there are expectations – I don't think we have any relationships without expectations? – this problem is sure to be there. Parents try to chisel children, and children try the same with parents. We carry this chisel around and try to chisel our relatives, friends – even strangers, according to our own imagination. And they in turn are carrying their own chisels, which they are going to try and use on you! What violence!

For homework today, I want you all to note down your ideas on how a perfect husband (or perfect wife), perfect father, perfect mother, perfect child and perfect friend should be. Choose any five relationships relevant to yourself, and note this down. Do it honestly. I'm sure you'll find, deep down in your unconscious, all your ideas are drawn from popular media! Do you know, people even carry the image of the 'ideal guru' in their minds. Usually it's the image of an old man, with grey hair and a flowing beard – what you see in books and TV

serials! And when they come and see me, they are unable to accept that such a young person can be a real Master!

So I too face the same trouble, I too have to free people of their expectations about the guru and get them to accept reality.

Swamiji, sometimes we need to chisel, like when we are handling our employees at work. Is it wrong?

Do your chiseling consciously. Be aware of what you do – then you will not do more than necessary. See if your expectations of your employees is realistic. Check if there is any alternate solution. Only when it is absolutely necessary, should you try to mould the other person.

Whatever power has been given to you, learn to use it with awareness! Even anger and lust are great energies given to you by God. When you have respect for that energy, you will not waste it, misuse it.

Kama (lust) is a great energy! It is *Shakti*, capable of producing another life! But we misuse it, dissipate it – because we have no respect for that energy.

You never misuse money, because you respect it. If a person does a job worth ten rupees, you never pay extra. But with anger, you always ‘overpay’. If a person makes a mistake worth ‘ten rupees’ anger’, you always pay him with fifty rupees’ worth anger! Don’t you? Why?

If you use your anger consciously, you will have no need to feel guilty about it, I assure you!

But Swamiji, suppose I never get angry, people won’t listen to me!

If the situation demands that you show anger, demonstrate it. But do it consciously. Don’t waste your own resources. You shouldn’t get disturbed by your own anger.

Be very clear how much energy you need to handle that particular situation, and expend your anger accordingly. You stay in control, don’t allow the anger to control you.

A small story:

Once a *sadhu* (wandering mendicant) was passing through a village, when he received a complaint from the villagers about a cobra that was playing havoc with their lives. The *sadhu* was known to have the power to communicate with animals, so they begged him to convince the cobra to spare the villagers.

So the *sadhu* spoke to the cobra, and the cobra promised not to bite any of the villagers anymore.

A few months later, the *sadhu* was passing through the same village when he came upon the cobra, badly bruised and almost dead.

What happened to you? Why are you hurt?, asked the *sadhu*.

O sadhu! It is you who made me promise never to bite the villagers! I have kept my promise to this day. But the villagers, who were earlier in fear of me, took my mildness to be my weakness. Seeing that I don’t bite, they started torturing me everyday. See what a state I have been reduced to!, cried the cobra.

My poor foolish friend!, said the sadhu. I only asked you not to bite the people! Did I ask you not to hiss at them?

Anger is a tremendous energy, if we know how to use it rightly.

Knowledge about anger reduces anger.

In the same way, knowledge about lust reduces lust.

Because both are the same energy! When your lust is not accepted by the other, it turns into anger against that person. That's why you read newspaper reports of teenage boys throwing acid on the faces of girls who have rejected them.

Many people come to me and tell me,

Swamiji, I love my wife so much, that's why I want her to change for the better!

I tell them, *You don't love your wife, you love the image that you carry in your mind. That's why you love her only when she acts as you expect.*

Your real love is not for your wife, it's for your mental image. That is the truth.

The way to unlock the *Muladhara chakra* is this: drop the image!

Drop your expectations completely.

Accept reality as it is.

This *chakra* will open on its own.

(from audience) Swamiji, what you are saying is that we

should accept the other person completely, with all his faults. No!

Even the word *accept* carries some undertone of condemnation. Even the words *with all his faults* is like a silent complaint.

I say, *welcome* the other person into your life, just as he or she is. Hmmm? Can you understand the difference between the two attitudes?

Remember, the whole of creation is a gift to you from Existence.

Receive it with grace and humility.

When you do this, the tremendous energies of the *Muladhara chakra* are opened to you.

To awaken this *chakra* is to touch a perennial source of energy.

The tremendous energy that is now locked in imagination and expectation can then be made available for creativity, for business, for life, for reality!

Not only that, you will find your house becoming a *kshetra*, a shrine of peace.

Our houses were meant to be *dharmakshetras* (abodes of righteousness), but they have become *kurukshetras* (battlefields)! Am I right?

Any questions?

Swamiji, how can we protect our children from developing these kinds of problems?

To be frank, you cannot fully control it. You cannot control all the child's interactions with society! But there are some

things you can practise at home.

Till the age of 7 at least, allow your child to use both hands – for eating, for writing and handling things. Children can easily become adept with both hands. If they themselves develop a preference for one hand, let them use it without interference – whether it is the left or the right.

Another thing, allow the child to be free of clothes for some time every day. Maybe at night, or whenever he is alone.

Clothes separate the upper and lower body. This separation separates consciousness itself! That's why we get used to thinking of ourselves as only the upper body. If we are asked to suddenly recall ourselves, our identity, we usually remember only our upper body!

For children, wearing a single dress covering both upper and lower body is also okay.

One important thing: never instill fear in your child! Let him be free, let him climb and fall. If you constantly discourage the child, it can lead to height phobia – which can later translate as the fear of climbing in life, of taking new decisions.

If you have noticed, all children enjoy whirling. Whirling is nature's way of allowing centering to happen. Allow whirling without disturbing the child!

At the age of seven, teach the child to chant the *gayathri mantra* – both boys and girls. There is no problem with girls chanting it. After all, *Gayathri* herself is female! If you notice the pictures or idols of the *Devis* (goddesses), they all wear the *upanayanam* (sacred thread signifying the individual's

initiation into the study of the holy scriptures).

For us, it is good to chant the *gayathri* internally, because there is too much contamination inside. Children can chant it aloud.

If possible, teach them the Mahamantra meditation (which you are going to learn here) after the age of twelve.

Swamiji, I have a question. I don't know if it's relevant to the subject, but...

If it's on your mind, it must be relevant! Go ahead and ask me.

You were talking about how there is no such thing as a perfect partner. Then what is the purpose of matching horoscopes before marriage?

Now if I start speaking on this subject, I will have to pull down the whole structure of *jyotisha* (astrology)!

Not *jyotisha* itself, but the way we follow *jyotisha* today is foolish and nonsensical. Going to someone who knows nothing about you with a piece of paper, and asking him how your life will be! What right do you have to live if you cannot even decide how your life should be lived? What type of life are you living?

It is your life, you are living it, you should know the pros and cons – but *you* don't know anything about your life, and you are going and asking him! Where is your intelligence?

To surrender your life to a stranger, to let him make your life's decisions, just shows that we no longer even know how

to run your life. If you cannot take responsibility for your own life, you have no authority to live!

When people come to me with questions about their future, I tell them - don't approach me to predict what your future is going to be. Approach me if you want my help to design a good future for yourself.

So all these predictions are only for the weak-minded.

Be very clear, the ancient *jyotisha shastra* was a pure science.

There was truth in it.

Do you know how *jyotisha* evolved?

In the past, when a child was sent to the *gurukul*, *jyotisha* was used to diagnose what kind of personality, what kind of attitudes and natural aptitudes he possessed. Accordingly, he would be trained for a *kshatriya* life, for *sannyas* or whatever suited him best.

The caste system was based on a person's natural abilities. Earlier, the caste distinctions were not based on birth – be very clear. They were based on character.

When a boy was admitted into the *gurukul*, they would see what his natural tendencies were.

If he had *Brahman* tendencies, he would be initiated into Veda Vidya (studying of the scriptures). If his personality was that of a Kshatriya, he would be trained in martial arts. If he showed Vaishya tendencies, he would be imparted business skills. If he seemed to possess Shudra qualities,

then he would be initiated into *seva* (service). All four roles had equal value and earned equal respect.

This was the purpose for which *Jyotisha* was used. It was a science used for diagnosis. Look around you today. Almost everyone is in the wrong place! That is why there is a sense of total chaos in society. When a man who is a *vaishya* (businessman) by character enters into spirituality, what happens? Spirituality becomes a business!

So ancient jyotisha is a proved science?

Ha ha, this is what I was afraid of! The moment I say this, I know you will all start running behind *jyotisha*! Tomorrow morning I will see a long queue before me carrying horoscopes, saying *Swamiji, please, just see this and predict my future!*

Don't worry so much about *jyotisha*!

Vivekananda gave a fitting answer to someone who questioned him about *jyotisha*. He told him, *Go, eat well, exercise well, sleep well. You will become strong, physically and mentally. Then you won't worry about all these things!* Only a person who is mentally weak depends so much on *jyotisha*.

Swamiji, does that mean all the people who follow jyotisha are weak-minded?

No, you can't say that. But the majority is weak-minded. Even people who are normally intelligent sometimes behave foolishly in these matters.

They come and ask me, *Swamiji, if I wear such and such a stone (gem), will it be lucky for me?*

How can you depend on a stone! See the *chit*, the live consciousness, the Brahman, the Parashakti! You are nothing but God! I can't imagine – I am teaching you the science by which you can use this whole *prapancha shakti* (cosmic energy), and you ask me about stones!

Have you heard about Swami Yateeshwarananda? A great man, an enlightened person. When he traveled abroad for the first time, he started out during *rahukala* (an 'inauspicious' hour of the day, calculated using the positions of the planets). Someone asked him, *Swamiji, how can you start during rahukala?*

He answered, *You fool! I am the energy that guides the grihas! (planets). How can they control me?*

See the courage of the man!

I am teaching you the science by which you can control the *grihas*! So why do you bother about where the *grihas* are, how they will affect you, and all that?

Pick up the science of meditation, that's enough.

Then nothing can touch you.

But this has become part of our value-system, Swamiji...

Be very clear: all our values are nothing but a substitute for Consciousness.

If you are conscious, aware of what you are doing, you don't

need values to tell you what to do. You don't have to follow any rules; rules will be following you! All the virtues, all the discipline, all the spirituality will happen to you, will naturally flower in you when you act in Consciousness, in a state of spiritual elevation.

Somehow, whenever we hear words like *Consciousness* or *spiritual elevation*, we always think, *No, no - this is not for me!* Without ever trying any meditation technique, any practical way of elevating the consciousness, we come to the conclusion that this is not for us. So we go in for a substitute, for pseudo-consciousness – which is called morality, conscience, values.

Values are fine when you are at the starting point – but not as the ending point!

Vivekananda says beautifully, *It is good to be born in the church, but not to die there.*

We should first drop the idea that to be spiritual is very difficult.

There is a song by Ramana:

Ayyai, ati sulabham, atmavidyai, ayyai, ati sulabham!

(oh, so easy, this spirituality, oh, so easy!)

In a later stanza he says,

If you want money, you need to work hard.

If you're looking for name and fame, you need to work hard.

If you want atma jnaana (self-realization), all you need to do is keep still!

If you can slip into deep laziness, you will fall into divinity.

This laziness is not what we normally know as laziness. It is not physical laziness. It's a kind of – mental laziness! If you can completely –I mean completely – calm yourself, you can verily be spiritual.

To be spiritual is neither easy nor difficult. It's just the idea you have. If you think it's easy, it's easy. If you think it's difficult, it's difficult.

To be as you are, what is needed? Is it difficult or easy?

(from audience) Easy...

You cannot even use the word *easy*! It is as we are! You are *already* that, then how can you say it is easy to *become* that? Just look in.

Turn inward.

A little trust in spirituality, a little meditation, that is enough.

When you drop the fear that to be spiritual is very difficult, you will get the confidence that *Yes, I can be spiritual. I can be Conscious.*

Then the question of *Is it right to drop my values?* will not arise at all.

Right now you are afraid to drop your values because you have nothing else to hold on to! We know, once we drop our values, all the suppressed desires will jump out, the Pandora's Box will open! And we know, if the Pandora's Box opens, what will happen! So we are afraid of our subconscious. The fear of the subconscious is what prompts

this question.

If you continuously practise this meditation, your subconscious will be cleared out. Then you'll see, even if you open the Pandora's Box, there's nothing left to jump out. You will see your face reflected in it; you will see a clear mirror.

(A lady shares her views) Swamiji, you ask us to be as we are. But how can we live in society just as we are? I think we have to change according to the family, the society.

Yes, everybody faces this problem on a practical level. But you say, *I have to act according to the other*. Why not also make sure others act according to you? True, in society, we have to be dependent on each other. There is no other way. But be very clear of your limits.

Be independently dependent!

Be very clear, which is your space and which is the other's. Try your best to enrich your own life, without disturbing one another.

Of course, I can't give you a foolproof solution... if I could give you a *mantra* that would solve all the problems between husband and wife, I would be the most popular man in the world! But I have to accept my failure in this department! *(loud laughter and applause from audience)*

(a middle-aged man, laughing)

Can't the other person's Muladhara chakra be opened, so that he drops his expectations?

Ha ha! How will *you* do that? You can only make sure that

your *own* expectations are dropped – so that from four people sharing one house, you at least come down to three!!

How to change the other person...? These days marriage counselors suggest even hypnotic suggestion! I think it's a gross interference in the other person's freedom. It's completely wrong.

The other day, I read about a case where a woman wanted to bring down her husband's anger levels. You may have read, Chicago University is now performing some research where they implant electrodes in a person's brain and completely control anger!

When they asked for volunteers to participate in this research, it seems hundreds of women forcibly brought their husbands!

(laughter)

After the experiment, 72 women – this is a fact – 72 women came back and told the university, *Please remove these electrodes. I want my old husband back! I want my old **angry** husband back!*

They say, *Life has lost its taste! Unless we fight, there is no interaction. He pays me no attention!*

Because everybody needs attention! Behavioural psychologists say that a normal man can survive without food for up to 90 days, but without attention from others, only for 14 days! He will start going insane.

But nowadays, we have forgotten how to love each other, care for each other. Love is a forgotten language! So the only

interaction we can hope to have is by fighting with each other!

I think even the people sitting here and complaining that their husbands or wives are not spiritual – if they (their spouses) become spiritual, they may come back and complain that they want their old partners back!

(laughter and protests from audience)

Okay, okay! You say you are different! Let us see... hmmm?

So now you have seen how the *Muladhara chakra* can be opened.

The beautiful thing is, technically speaking only one of the seven *chakras* has been opened, but you'll find that 50% of your problems have disappeared! This one *chakra* manages more than 50% of your life. In whatever you do, you will find a trace of this *chakra*! Even in your signature, you'll find a trace of this *chakra*. When the *Muladhara chakra* is activated, even your signature will look different. If you pluck a flower, the way you do it will be different.

Have you heard about the Nayanars – the Tamil saints?

There is a song which says that when they pluck a flower, the tree will not feel the pain! What is meant by that?

You become so sensitive and loving, when this *chakra* is opened. When the energy of this *chakra* is transformed, it will overflow from you as love!

Sex is carbon, love is a diamond. Sex is mud, love is the lotus that blooms in the mud. It's the same substance – the only

thing is, you should know how to process it.
Just drop your expectations, and you will find a tremendous upsurge of energy.

Today I want you all to try this technique when you go home: Sit down and concentrate on your *Muladhara chakra*. If you notice, your *Muladhara chakra* is always tense.

For five minutes, mentally forgive your husband or wife for everything they have done. Really forgive them, go to the root and drop the feeling of resentment. Do it totally. Just accept them as they are. Give them your deep love.

After just five minutes, you will see that the *Muladhara chakra* is totally relaxed.

If just five minutes can give you this result, just imagine what will happen if you change your entire attitude! What a tremendous energy flow you will experience!

The way you are living now, it's as if you've got one lakh rupees, but you've locked away ninety thousand in some place where you can't recover it. You try to manage your whole life with the remaining ten thousand. Then naturally you will feel that you are poor!

In the same way, all our energy has been invested wrongly, it has been locked away in this *chakra*. We don't have enough energy even for our day-to-day living! Once this *chakra* is opened, your life will become rich. You will be able to think better, understand better, plan better. You will feel this energy consciously working in you. It is a new dimension that

you've never experienced. You will actually realize that your husband, your wife, is a celestial being.

Heaven and hell are not geographical places. You can't locate them on a map. But psychologically they definitely exist. It's up to you to transform your life into heaven or hell. When you are full of expectations, you are carrying your own hell inside your head! So wherever you go, you'll find that your personal package of hell travels with you! There is no escape. And when two people meet, there is a great clash of hells! Why do you want to carry this load around with you?

JUST DROP IT!

All it needs is a change in attitude.

Just think of all the energy you waste, trying to chisel the other person to suit your expectations. Isn't it much easier to just drop the chisel? If even 10% of that energy is channeled into meditation, your life can be transformed into true *living*.

Living is life led with awareness, with freedom.

We have a choice!

We have a chance to become conscious.

Now it is up to you to decide.

Shall we move into the meditation to unlock the *Muladhara*?

It is a powerful technique to awaken the *Kundalini shakti*.

You have already practised it, yesterday and the day before also.

It is the Dukkha Harana meditation.

Shall we start?

(The group practises Dukkha Harana meditation and later disperses)

Day 5: 18th April

Looking further



THE SWADISHTHANA CHAKRA

Swadishthana = 'Where your being is established' – from
swa (self) + *adhishthana* (established)

Location: 2 inches below the navel

Locked by: Fear, especially the fear of Death

Unlocked by: Acceptance of Death

Meditation technique from: Vedanta

Name of technique: Nirbhaya Dhyana

Today we will be discussing the next *chakra* – *Swadishthana*.

The *Swadishthana Chakra* is concerned with *Death*.

What is Death?

If I ask you that question, you will tell me that Death is the event that happens at the end of our lives. If Death were nothing more than that, it would be so easy!

But death is that which is happening every moment of our lives. Death changes the very quality of our life. It is not the end, it is the climax of our lives – towards which our whole life is been oriented.

Why do I say that?

Because our whole life is controlled by our concept of death. Even our social structure is guided by our concept of death. The cultures which believe in a single life, with no concept of reincarnation, have poured all their energies into excelling in life. They have achieved the peak in terms of assimilation of information, gaining of knowledge and material comforts.

These cultures have given rise to Science. Science helps us

live life at its optimum. Science helps us get the maximum out of this life.

The cultures which believe in reincarnation have turned the focus of their life inwards. Their search is different. They are not motivated to live life in a hurry, because Eternity is granted to them.

You can see it clearly in the behaviour of the people. In India, if a programme is scheduled to start at 6 o'clock, you can be sure it won't start before 7.30! Because they have eternity before them!

That is why these cultures have developed the inner science. They have the leisure to turn their minds to the inner search, to ponder the meaning of life.

Our whole mental set-up, the course of our lives, our society, our culture, our religion – everything is based on nothing but our idea of death. We try our best not to think about death – but death pervades every moment of our life!

For most people, life never goes beyond the *Swadishthana chakra*.

Between the two *chakras* of *Muladhara* and *Swadishthana*, we are born, we live and we die.

We don't know any other way of life. Or we don't have the courage to take on any other way of life.

How do you overcome the fear of death?

In earlier times, people lived without the life security that

we have today. There was no vaccination available against fatal diseases. There was no satellite-based advance warning of natural calamities. There was no security against famine or floods. So people were always mentally prepared for struggle, even for death. Especially the warrior class had to be ever-ready for death.

The Samurai warriors of ancient Japan knew the way to face death calmly. If they were defeated in battle, they would simply pierce a long needle into the *Swadishthana chakra*. This is a highly professional technique, by which the life energy contained in the *Swadishthana chakra* is released, resulting in instantaneous and painless death. The process was known as *harikiri* (from *harakriya* – *hara* (*Swadishthana*) + *kriya* (action))

Without fear, the word *Death* itself loses the meaning which we have been associating with it.

Have you heard of the *Katopanishad*? It is the Upanishad whose master is Yama Dharmaraja – the god of Death.

In this Upanishad, there is a beautiful story of Nachiketa – a little boy who decides to voluntarily face death. He goes to Yama's abode to meet him. Generally death always has to come to our homes to visit us – as a very unwelcome guest! But this boy himself goes to meet Yama. And what does he find? He finds that Yama is not at home. He finds that Death is not there!

Of course, we can't be sure that it happened historically – but in terms of philosophical truth, it is real. It is the Truth.

Even when Yama returns, all that Nachiketa encounters is a loving guide, a spiritual master. Yama gives the great gift of enlightenment to Nachiketa.

What is the meaning behind this story?

When you lose your fear of death, when you welcome the eventuality of death with courage, death no more has a terrible face. Death becomes a great teacher.

From this story, one thing becomes clear. Be very clear – death is inevitable. It is inevitable. But when you accept that, half the problem disappears on its own.

A small story about Socrates:

You all know Socrates was killed, he was forced to drink the juice of the poisonous herb hemlock.

Just before he drank the poison, one of his disciples asked him, *Master, aren't you afraid of dying?*

Socrates replied calmly,

Why should I be?

I know that only two things can happen after death.

Either I will continue to exist, in some other form or name. So what is there to worry about?

Or, I will cease to exist after death. Then, who will remain to worry?

So either way, there is nothing to fear!

Do you understand?

What is it we fear about death?

If we continue to exist – fine, we continue to exist.

If we cease to exist, no one is left to even notice!

Another story:

Once a Zen monk was ordered by the king to be put to death. He was supposed to be killed the next day. The monk remained calm and silent. One of his disciples, shocked by the monk's calm attitude, asked him, *Do you realize you have only 24 hours to live? Aren't you afraid?*

The monk said calmly, *I have lived, therefore I have no fear of dying.*

Do you understand? He means, *I have lived every moment of my life, moment to moment. Every single moment is so much for me – and you talk about 24 hours!*

In fact, if you look deep inside, you will realize that ***most of us are not afraid of dying. We are afraid that we haven't lived our lives.*** We have not lived as we wanted to live, we don't feel fulfilled – there starts the fear of death!

Continuously compromising for the sake of others, trying to live out a life that is not natural to us, trying to fit into a mould that society has prepared for us – no wonder we feel unfulfilled!

The fear of life is what is reflected in the fear of death.

When you have lived in the deepest possible way, to your full satisfaction, you will not be in fear of death.

Live without fear.

Live with the deepest individuality.

Live to your complete satisfaction.

You will lose your fear of death.

I know of an enlightened Swami who had a number of clocks in his room, each showing a different timing. The clocks spoke volumes about the arbitrariness of time! When questioned about it, he would answer jokingly, *Time is not my master. I am the master! Whatever time I want it to be, I simply choose the time from that particular clock.*

On the night before his death (he had already predicted that he would be leaving his body early the next morning), the Swami asked all his disciples to gather around him and sing *keertans* (hymns). One of the singers was somewhat arrogant about his musical abilities. As was the custom, the Swami wrote something on a piece of paper and passed it on to him. The disciple was flattered, thinking it to be the request for a particular song. But when he opened the note, he saw that the Swami had written, *Please don't sing after my death! Can you imagine? Even on his deathbed he was in a mood to joke and tease people!*

Later that night he instructed his disciples to take good care of the orphans who lived in the ashram. *Especially tomorrow, you will all be busy with preparations for my cremation. But don't forget to arrange for food for those children!*, he ordered. Till the last minute, his concern was for the people he was leaving behind.

The next morning, exactly at the time he had mentioned, he

raised his hands in a *namskaar* to all - and his hands dropped. That's all – like a drama.

What a beautiful, calm, courageous way to face death! That's the way we should all go to death.

Ramana Maharishi has created a meditation technique from his own death experience.

When Ramana was a young boy, one day he was just lying on his bed in his uncle's house in Madurai. Suddenly he got the feeling that he was going to die! He felt that death was coming upon him.

He had two choices – either to resist death, or to accept it. Usually people resist, so they pass into coma and leave the body. 99% of us leave the body in a state of unconsciousness. Though we know from the moment of birth that our life will culminate in death, we never try to visualize it, never try to actualize the possibility. At least once if you go through it with consciousness, you will lose your fear automatically. Ramana was courageous enough to choose the second path. He co-operated with the feeling, he allowed death to happen. He decided to see what would happen.

But what actually happened was something he never expected. He saw clearly the death of his own body. But more than that, he realized that something remained even after death, something which cannot be destroyed. That knowledge never left him.

When you conquer death fear, you conquer death itself. Because death is just one more imagination! Just as in

Muladhara, our *greed* makes us imagine the world to be more beautiful than it actually is, over here our *fear* makes us imagine death as more frightening than it actually is. We wear glasses of greed and fear which don't allow us to see reality.

When you experience death psychologically, you release the energy that has been locked in the *Swadishthana* due to death fear. When the *Swadishthana* opens, the whole quality of life changes. Because of your capacity to accept death, your capacity to enjoy life is transformed. But if I tell you all this now, it will be impossible for you to accept.

A small story:

A man who had been born blind was promised a cure by a doctor.

After this operation, you will be able to see! You won't need your stick anymore!, the doctor assured the man.

Hearing this, the blind man became afraid.

I understand that I will be able to see, Doctor. But how can I possibly walk without my stick?

How can you explain to a blind man that once he gains his vision, he simply won't need the stick? Right now he is too afraid. All you can do is perform the operation, and let him see for himself. Then he will throw away the stick on his own!

The same way, even if I keep telling you that your Self is immortal, it is only your body which perishes, you will still

hold onto your own ideas out of fear. Because you haven't experienced it! So instead, I'm just going to let you see for yourself, experience death and see. Okay?

Now we shall enter into a small but extremely powerful meditation, where you visualize your own death, your own leaving the body.

Before we start, some instructions:

What will be required from your side?

You will need to call up all your powers of visualization. You are going to visualize the whole process of your own death!

From my side, tremendous energy will be given to you to support you through the process.

First, let go of fear. Don't be afraid that you will really die – even if it seems like that for some time during the meditation. You are not going to die. Nothing is going to happen to you. You have my word and my support. Just place your trust in me.

Second, let go of greed. Don't ask yourself – what can imagining all this do for me? Your whole life is an imagination anyway – so you don't lose anything by spending some more time in imagination!

Actually, this meditation is more real than what you imagine to be reality! Most of the things you imagine don't ever happen, but death is certain!

Don't worry about whether you will be able to imagine death accurately. Of course no one can visualize death correctly,

but you can at least try and visualize it according to your understanding.

Make sure there's some space between you and your neighbours – at least one foot on each side. Your etheric body is going to expand, and you'll feel uneasy if you are too close to someone else. But do it calmly – dead people don't fight for space!

So, are you ready to die?

(the group practises Nirbhaya Dhyana and later disperses)*

(* Nirbhaya Dhyana is strictly to be practised only in the master's presence, so you won't find written instructions here for this meditation.)

THE MANIPURAKA CHAKRA

Manipuraka = 'The City of Jewels'

Located: In the navel region

Locked by: Worry

Unlocked by: Positivity

Meditation technique from: Sufism & Christianity

Name of technique: Manipuraka Shakti Kriya

The *Manipuraka chakra* is concerned with *Worry*.

What is worry?

Listen carefully. I'm not asking you, *What do you worry about?*

For that question, I know each of you will be ready with a long list –

Swamiji, I don't have enough money!

Swamiji, I have such-and-such a disease!

I have no peace of mind at home!

I don't have children, that is my problem!

I have children, that is my problem!

(loud laughter from group)

And if you can't find any worries, you start worrying about *not* having any worries! In fact, elderly retired people come and complain to me they have nothing to do and no one to worry about, and so they have no reason to go on living!

We come from all walks of life – different cultures, financial conditions, age groups.

But one thing we have in common – we all worry!

What does that show us?

That worry is not caused by external circumstances, as we think. The cause for worry lies deep within ourselves.

Look deeply into your worry. You will find that worry is caused entirely by *your response* to an event. Whether a situation makes you worry or not depends entirely on how you choose to react to that situation.

Suppose your friend gets a new job. How will you react?

Either you can say, *He's got a new job.*

Or you can start thinking,

Oh, he's got a new job! What about me? What am I going to do?

What will my wife say? Should I start looking for another job?

What if I don't get it? Nothing ever works out for me!

This is worry!

Worry is what happens when you constantly check yourself against external frames of reference.

Am I doing as well as the neighbours?

How can I impress my boss?

What will my children think?

All the time, we need to get approval from others. Our whole life is nothing but a process of collecting certificates from others. If others don't keep giving you certificates - *Good Husband, Good Employee, Good Neighbour* - we worry that our life has become worthless.

We have all stopped trusting ourselves. We form our personality only from others' certificates.

As a child, each of us is strongly centred in our own being.

Have you ever seen any child worrying about what people will think of him?

As we grow up, society plays this idea constantly into our minds. Society teaches us to evaluate ourselves by the ideas and opinions of others - parents, teachers, friends, even strangers. Without external support, without certificates from others, we fear that our ego will collapse in no time.

There is another, deeply hidden reason for worry!

The truth is, when you worry about something, you feel you have a definite point of reference against which you can measure yourself. That's why worrying gives a direction to your life. Without worry you feel as if your Being has no axis about which to move. This is why many of us are secretly in love with our worries.

People come to me and say, *My business is going from bad to worse, Swamiji! Last month I suffered heavy losses, and next month I know it's going to be even worse.*

So I ask them, *If you already know that, why don't you close down your business right away? Why should you suffer?*

But they are shocked .

What are you saying, Swamiji? What will I do then?

Without a reason to worry, your ego loses its reason for existing! That's why you choose to remain in the dimension of *Dukkha* (misery). You can't relate to the opposite dimension, *Ananda* (bliss) – because in that dimension, you are nobody. To enjoy bliss, you need to first drop your ego.

Are you ready to do that?

NO. You are ready to take on all worries, but you can't let go of your ego! So you keep on finding excuses to worry.

Each person worries that only he is unhappy, and everyone else is happy! But the strange thing is, everybody feels that *he* is the most unlucky, unhappy person! Is that possible?

A small story:

In a certain kingdom, it came to the king's notice that everybody was depressed, because each person felt that they had the maximum worries, and no one else had any worries. So the king announced a 'Worry Exchange Offer', where people could bring in their big worries, and exchange it for someone's else's small worries.

A big space was made ready, and in the center of it a huge Worry Pot was placed. Anybody who wanted could come and dump his own worries inside it, and pick up any other worries they wanted. Only thing, they had to pick up *some* worries.

The whole kingdom gathered for the event. Strangers met and starting talking to each other about their worries. After a long time, the event was declared open.

Can you guess what happened?

Not a single person came forward to drop their worries in the pot! After all, who wants to exchange their small, familiar worries, and take on the unknown worries of someone else?!

What happens inside your mind when you are worrying?

Just watch your mind when you are worrying about

something.

What is taking place?

You'll see that a continuous stream of thoughts is pouring through your mind - totally disconnected thoughts - and usually negative thoughts.

Actually, we all use two kinds of speech – *speaking out* and *speaking in*.

Speaking out is speaking to others - what we normally call *speech*.

Speaking in is speaking to ourselves. We are continuously speaking to ourselves!

Worry is nothing but this continuous, uncontrolled inner chatter happening in your mind. This inner chatter is your true master.

At least with outer conversations, there is a break sometimes. But this inner chatter is continuous. It can drive you mad! Actually, many times, speaking to others is just a way of escaping from your own being, from your own inner chatter. That's why so much talking is going on in the world! Yes?

(from audience) Swamiji, I didn't understand what is inner chatter...

You have asked the right question at the right time!

All of you, try this experiment at home today.

Just sit for a minute with your eyes closed. Keep a pen and paper with you. Don't focus your mind on anything. Almost as soon as you close your eyes, you'll see there's a continuous

stream of thoughts flowing through your mind. Write down, honestly, whatever thoughts come into your mind. Do this for five minutes.

Now, sit down and read what's written on that paper.

You will be shocked! On that paper, you can see the record of your inner chatter.

Just see how disconnected, how irrelevant your thoughts are!

You are running a mental asylum inside your head!

This is the true nature of your mind – this uncontrolled flow of thoughts, this expression of insanity.

This is the mind you have entrusted your life to!

This is the mind that has invented all your worries.

This is the mind that is living your life for you.

If you simply understand this much, you have taken a quantum leap towards freedom from worry.

A small story:

One day, there was an accident on the road. People gathered and saw that a new car had banged into a wall. They asked the man inside, *Why are you driving the car if you don't know how to drive properly?*

Of course I know how to drive!, said the man. *The only problem is, I don't know how to stop!*

Just like this, you are also 'driving' a vehicle which you don't know how to stop - your Mind. Just try to stop your inner chatter, even for a few seconds.

Can you?

When you try to control it, the rushing of thoughts becomes even more uncontrollable.

You are not driving your Mind – it is driving you!

To understand Worry, we need to have a deep insight into the nature of our minds.

The way into Worry is through the mind - and the way out can also be only through the mind. But we keep searching for answers in all the wrong places. We think, *If I had more money, all my worries will be over!*

If I was more good-looking... If I had a better job... If... If... If...

The solution cannot be found in external circumstances. It can be found only inside our minds. We don't have the knack of handling worry!

A small story:

Buddha had ten thousand *sannyasins* (disciples) whom he used to address every morning.

One day he brought a tightly knotted rope and placed it before them, asking,

How can this knot be untied?

The *sannyasins* pushed and pulled, but no one had the sense to see how the rope had got knotted, and then reverse the process.

So first of all, you have to figure out how the knot has been created.

Once you do that, untying it will be much easier.

So also with the *chakras*. The problems, diseases, emotions you are struggling with are nothing but knots in the *sthula, sukshma, karana shareeras* (physical, mental and causal bodies). Once you clearly understand what is causing the problem, you can take the right steps to solve it.

As you all know, worry is closely connected to the *Manipuraka chakra*.

Negative thoughts directly attack the *Manipuraka chakra*. Just test this: whenever you feel negative thoughts coming up, look into them and see where they are rising from. You will find that they always rise up from the navel. Whenever you feel worried, whenever a situation arises that you simply can't handle, the first thing to get affected is your stomach.

You can physically feel depression as a weight in your stomach.

Have you all noticed this?

That's why the expression exists in all languages, *I can't stomach it, I can't digest it*.

Constant worrying locks the *Manipuraka*.

So, what is way to unlock this *chakra*?

(from audience) *We should never get worried in any situation.*

Yes, that's exactly the message given to you by all the so-called moral teachers. But how many people practise what

they preach? Are these moral teachers able to bring peace into their own homes? No!

So don't have these kinds of ideas in your mind. Never say, *Stop worrying*, it is utterly impossible.

Only thing, *Stop worrying about worry!*

Just accept the worries. Acceptance is the only way towards transformation.

(to a person in audience)

What you said - *Control the mind, Don't think negatively* – all these solutions are just like this – (*demonstrates by tightening the knot in the rope*) - to try to control the worries will result in this.

Acceptance is the only way.

Be very clear:

There are a few things in every situation that can be altered completely. Alter them.

There are some things which are partially under your control. Change what is possible, and accept the rest.

And then, there are other things which simply cannot be altered. Learn to accept them completely.

The next issue is, *How to change negativity?*

First of all, what is meant by *negativity*?

(from audience) *That which is not positive?*

Ha, ha! This is a very good way of saying nothing in many words! In fact, this is how most of our philosophers talk.

A small story:

Some Christian priests were undergoing training on how to preach in church.

The Father Superior advised them:

When you talk about Heaven, bring a glow onto your face!

Make your eyes sparkle. Wear an expression of ecstasy! Only then will people believe in Heaven. Only then will they long for Heaven!

When you talk about Hell, just be as you are. That will be enough.

(laughter)

Anyway, let's come back to our point – what is negativity?

Suppose a person suffers from a business failure. For his misfortune, at about the same time he has an accident, and his marriage also breaks up.

How is he going to react?

Oh, this is my bad period!

Everything I touch is sure to be a failure!

I am good for nothing!

Why am I always so unlucky?

What am I going to do? ... and so on!

The funny thing is, 99% of our worries never come true! 99% of our worries are totally unreasonable. And the remaining 1% which comes true is always good for us!

(laughter)

Gradually, this negative attitude solidifies in your Being permanently, and becomes a sort of 'negative guidance' in

everything you do. In other words, you develop a permanent attitude of negativity. You become depressed.

The clinical name for this negative attitude is Depression.

So depression or negativity is nothing but a collection of negative thoughts, which you 'speak' to yourself. And once you allow such thoughts an entry into your mind, the same thoughts will keep playing back every time you suffer a small failure. It will keep reinforcing this attitude. After all, worrying is also a habit!

The mind is an excellent recording system. It stores your negative thought patterns, your complexes, your worries.

Whatever you teach the mind, it learns and repeats faithfully.

So be careful what you tell your mind! We always take so much care in how we speak to others, but we never pay enough attention to how we speak to ourselves.

Just as poor eating habits cause cholesterol to accumulate in your arteries - in the same way, constant worrying can cause worries to solidify in your being. Like how cholesterol creates blockages in your arteries, depression creates energy blockages in your Being.

Over a period of time, worrying becomes part of your nature, it becomes an unconscious act. Even if you reason it out, the low mood still remains. Why?

Because all the anger, all the worries you've suppressed over the years are still there as an invisible layer in your Being.

Worry is the wave that rises from time to time, but

depression is the water itself.

The memories of those suppressions go directly to your *Manipuraka*. That's why, when thoughts arise from the *Manipuraka*, they are coated with violence. When the *Manipuraka* is poisoned, you'll see that all your actions have an unconscious violence – like plucking flowers, destroying things, misbehaving with your body, fighting with yourself and with others.

How do we go beyond depression?

Once you understand how the mind works, this becomes simple. Just as a key can be used both to lock and to unlock a door, you can use the same words playing in your mind to go beyond depression into *Ananda*.

The mantra to conquer worry is simple: ***continuous positive thinking***.

Be alert. Whenever you become aware of a negative thought surfacing, begin to feed your mind positive thoughts.

You can verily change your thoughts by sitting down and creating positive, reassuring thoughts to counter the negative thoughts.

Repeat positive words to yourself.

These words are powerful mantras! Don't underestimate their power.

Of course, in the beginning, when you utter positive words, your mind is not going to learn these words easily.

Because it has been trained to respond negatively!

So a small corner of your mind will continue to protest, *Do*

you think I'm a fool to be taken in by a few positive words?

But slowly, you can alter the quality of the mind.

It is perfectly possible to change your mental programming – after all, *you* have programmed it!

You know how to do it.

Now just do it.

When you see how worry can simply be created and destroyed with words, you will realize how unreal it is.

You will have the clarity.

If you go beyond inner chatter even for a few moments, you will become more aware, more alive.

Just understand that worry is unreal, unnecessary.

The treasures of the *Manipuraka chakra* will be unlocked naturally.

Any questions?

Swamiji, are thoughts a part of the Mind, or are they an expression of the mind?

There is no difference between Mind and thoughts.

Mind is Thought!

There is no separate thing called the Mind. How do you define the mind? The Mind is nothing more than the collection of thoughts, the continuous flow of ideas.

And thoughts are no more than the words you speak to yourself.

If you can create negativity inside yourself, you can also create positivity.

When you are suffering from negativity, your own mind splits

into two parts and offers both arguments. Don't allow the negative part to speak at all. Just monopolize the conversation! What you do regularly with others, just do it with your mind!

(laughter)

Why are you laughing? This is what we usually do with others, isn't it?

Everybody wants to talk, but nobody wants to listen!

We are all begging the attention of the other, all the time!

In fact, in the West, people are paying psychiatrists exorbitant amounts of money – just to listen!

It is not a joke, it is a great pity. It hides a deep underlying fear, an insecurity.

There is another way of transcending worry – by NOT resisting it.

Allow yourself to enter deeply into your worries, with acceptance and clarity. *Be prepared to die into your worries!*

Acceptance is not impotence. Acceptance is a great meditation technique. Shiva talks about this in *Vijnana Bhairava Tantra*. Acceptance releases a great energy, gives you great clarity.

When you accept your worries, when you enter deeply into them, you will come to a tremendous understanding that all your worries are just your own creations.

When I tell you, you can understand it only intellectually.

When it becomes your own experience, when you have that clarity, you will go beyond worries.

Then depression cannot touch you.

You will transcend *Dukkha*.

A small story:

When I was staying in Calcutta, taking classes on the Isha Vasya Upanishad, a man came to see me.

He said, *Swamiji, I have a problem. I don't sleep well at night because I live in an area where there are plenty of street dogs. Every night they start barking, and keep barking till sunrise. I am already a very light sleeper, and I simply can't get an hour's rest because of the noise!*

See, the dogs can't all be driven out. The man can't move out of his ancestral house. So what to do?

I told him, *Go home and try this tonight. When you hear the barking, just drop the anger, the negative feelings that rise up in you. Just listen to the barking sound without resisting. Tell yourself that the dogs are barking, that's all. Nothing can be done about it. Don't allow yourself to react. The problem is not the barking, but your resistance to it!*

The man tried what I said. After a few days he came back to me and reported,

Swamiji, I tried dropping my resistance as you said.

Instead of thinking,

'How dare those stupid dogs spoil my sleep!'

I tried changing my thoughts gradually:

'The dogs are barking. It is spoiling my sleep....'

'The dogs are barking...'

'Some animals are creating some sounds...'

By the time I came to that sentence, I think I fell asleep. Anyway, I've been having excellent sleep all these days. Thank you!

This can happen with you also. Any situation can be dealt with, if you know how to drop your negativity, drop your reaction.

This is the key to open the *Manipuraka chakra*.

Swamiji, can this actually happen? Is it practical?

Yes, certainly.

But Swamiji, it requires a lot of sadhana (effort).

Hmmm... I don't want to bring the word *sadhana* in. It makes the effort look so serious, you feel that you can't possibly practise it! Actually all I am doing is repeat the same dry *Vedanta* – but in different words, in the modern context, so that you feel comfortable listening to it. So that you feel that it is relevant for you, that you can follow it. And there is another thing: if you read these ideas in a book, they will simply be moving from head to head – from the head of the writer, to your own head. There is no scope for experience.

When you listen to these words from a master, from someone who speaks to you from the experience in his soul– they will enter deep into you, whether you are aware of it or not.

I am not sharing my knowledge with you.

I am sharing my experience, my life with you.

When I speak from my Being, it *has to* touch your Being.

It *will* transform your life.

There is no other way.

In Chicago, when Vivekananda opened his speech with *Dear Brothers and Sisters of America*, a person who attended that meeting writes in his memoirs, *We felt as if a current of Love was passing through us, through our Being..!*

Today, at every street corner, you find politicians yelling, *Blood brothers and sisters! Dearest members of my family..!*

Does anyone get impressed?

The politician speaks from his head.

Vivekananda spoke from his Being.

When the speaker speaks with totality, the listener is bound to listen with totality. His life is bound to be transformed. If your life has not been touched by my words, be clear, I have no authority to speak. You are free to doubt the truth of my experience. If you feel that my words have not been able to transform your life, there is no need to feel guilty. I take full responsibility.

But there is no way you will not be touched by me!

If you listen with your heart, you will see my teachings working out in your life automatically, when the time comes. Only a teacher who is unsure of himself needs to urge his disciples to go back and practise his words. When a true master speaks, simply listening will do.

Shravana is more than enough. *Manana* and *Nidhidhyaasana* will happen automatically.

If the master is an *anubhootivaan* (one who has actually experienced), you just have to listen to him, that will be enough.

The *Chaandoghya Upanishad* describes beautifully:

The master repeats to the disciple nine times: *tat tvam asi* (you are that).

Just by listening, just by listening to the master from his Being, the disciple actually attains the spiritual experience! When both master and disciple act with totality, even that is possible.

Only one thing: *know how to listen*.

Never listen with your head.

Open your Being to me.

Listen with deep trust, with total surrender.

That is more than enough: the alchemy will happen by itself.

Only a master who is unable to fetch results will resort to a philosophy.

Only he will hide behind excuses like *practice*.

When you listen to a true master, you need not even think about practice.

You will practise without even being aware of it; you will be able to do nothing else!

You just cannot remain the same.

Before your eyes, your life will be transformed on its own.

Just allow me inside.

I will practise.

I will be inside you.

These words are not my words, they are my Being.

You will be carrying *me* inside!

Just allow my words to stay with you.

The energy that comes with these words will guide you always.

Now we will enter into the meditation.

Instructions for Manipuraka Shakti Kriya

As I told you, all your worries are nothing but words!

Nothing but the sum total of all the languages you know. All your life, you have put your worries into words, spoken about them in some language which you know.

Now, you are all going to speak in a language which you don't know!

You are holding all your worries, negativity and suppressions like a weight in your navel area. Can you see how heavy that area feels? Now you are going to act out all those suppressions - in noises and actions. Remember, no words!

When you start using words, your inner chatter begins to come up. During this meditation, don't allow your inner chatter. Simply get to the core of your deepest suppressions and pluck them out of your system! Just vomit them out in sounds.

First, for a minute, concentrate on the *Manipuraka* area. All your worries and suppressed negativity will start rising up into your conscious mind.

Now, imagine yourself in some situation of conflict. Imagine that you are fighting hard with someone. Talk to him - in a language that you don't know! Just use nonsense sounds, like how babies talk. Try to convey your problem, your pain, to the other person. But the other person simply doesn't agree with you! How do you feel? Angry? Throw out your anger on him! If tears come, let them! Don't stop yourself. Scream, wail, cry, throw your limbs about. Create as much violence as possible! (Only thing, don't beat up the other participants!) Scream as loudly as you feel like. No one is watching you; all of you are going to be blindfolded. Please do this sincerely - this is your chance to get rid of a lifetime's suppressions! Enter completely into the meditation.

After 20 minutes, you will be asked to stop. For the next 10 minutes, simply sit in silence. Focus on your *Manipuraka chakra*. You will feel a tremendous lightness in that area! It is as if you have taken a mental bath! A great peace blossoms in your being. Enjoy the peace!

(group practises Manipuraka Shakti Kriya and takes a short break)

* * * * *

Group gathers around Swamiji for an informal session.

(a young lady) Swamiji... I went home yesterday... and I couldn't remember even five sentences of what you spoke..!

Ha ha ha!! It shows that you have listened beautifully, *ma!* If you remember all I've said in this class, this class will be of no use to you! Because it will mean that you have listened with your head, not with your Being.

Sometimes I purposely ask participants to go home and write out a summary of the day's class. To those who bring the most well-written summaries, I say, *You have got nothing out of this class. You have not listened!*

When you listen with your head, you remember my words. When you listen with your Being, you absorb me into yourself. You don't remember my words, because you have no use for them.

If you memorize my words, how long will you recall them? Today or tomorrow they will be forgotten. But if you carry me in your Being, my presence will permanently transform your life.

Swamiji, are you saying we will start believing and practising your words automatically?

When you know, you no longer have to believe.

You no longer have to go and practise.

Do you have to practise for ten days to know that fire burns?

Do you say - let me practise for ten days, let me test it, then

I'll come to a final conclusion about whether fire burns or not?

The moment you come to know, *you know*, that's all.

Only what happens is to be allowed, that's all.

Shall we move to the *Anahata chakra*?

THE ANAHATA CHAKRA

Anahata = 'That which is not created' (from the *Anahata dhvani* or 'unheard sound' which you hear when this *chakra* is activated)

Located: In the heart region

Locked by: Asking for attention

Unlocked by: Selfless love

Meditation technique from: Tibetan Tantra

Name of technique: Mahamantra

The *Anahata chakra* is concerned with love, sentiments, emotions.

This *chakra* gets locked by constantly asking for attention from others.

80% of our problems are due to asking for attention.

Whatever we do, whatever we think, we need the approval of the people around us! We have to earn a good name.

I want you all to do this exercise. Just note down, in a day, how many things you do to get a good name, to maintain your reputation in society.

You will find that 24 hours you are involved in a signature campaign!

In a big register you write, *Good Father*.

Then you go to your son, to your daughter, and start begging them, *Please sign this!*

(loud laughter from group)

Then you go to your wife, to your boss, to your friends.

You want them to sign, *Good Husband, Good Employee, Good Friend*.

Of course, all these people also come to you for *your* signature! Each of us is continuously on a signature campaign. We need to collect as many good opinions as possible from society to prove our worth.

Why do we bother so much about others' opinions about us? Because we don't know anything about ourselves!

We need others' opinions to tell us who we are. Without the attention of others, we cannot survive. Because attention is energy! When you depend on others' attention to live, you are depending on their energy. You cannot move without others. What does that mean?

You are *psychologically handicapped!*

Have you noticed children building castles from playing cards? The higher you build, the more chances of the castle falling.

And what happens if you remove one card, even one single card from the bottom row?

The whole castle collapses!

At least, children build their castles with their own cards.

We build our castles with others' cards, others' certificates! No wonder we are always in fear. Because any moment, any person can withdraw his certificate – and our whole Being is going to collapse.

(lady from audience) But we don't always do something to get praise from others!

(Swamiji) Don't you, *ma*? So it doesn't matter to you?

No, I just do it, even if the other person doesn't say anything. So you don't mind whether the other person is pleased or not?

Only sometimes...

But sometimes you're bothered?

Yes, sometimes... definitely...

Ha ha! Do you know what you mean by this *sometimes, definitely..?* You mean that sometimes the feeling comes up into your conscious mind. At other times, it remains hidden, you are not aware of it. Am I right?

No Swamiji, I just do my duty!

Ah, *duty!* The word *duty* is an ugly word! The word *duty* arises from the same feeling – *if I don't do my duty, what will so-and-so say? What will he feel?*

Please don't cheat yourself.

Be very clear. Sit down alone and diagnose yourself deeply. Practically all our actions are prompted by the need for the good opinion of others.

(another voice) Swamiji, what about selfless service, done out of love?

Such a thing does exist, but it is very rare! It happens only when the *Anahata* is totally opened. We'll discuss how that happens.

Swamiji, for a few people, we do out of love... for others, for their good opinion, like you said...

True. And you can easily see the difference. When you do out of love, no matter how hard the work, you don't get tired.

In fact, many Reiki and Pranic healers come to me and say, *Swamiji, even by attending 10-12 patients a day, we feel drained. How do you heal hundreds like this?*

This is the answer.

When you act out of love – when you allow it to happen – the

energy always remains with you. The work itself is its own reward.

When you do it expecting praise, expecting results, you feel tired.

And be sure, when you do something for the results, the result is never up to your expectations! It is bound to end in frustration.

The Gita says beautifully:

Karmanyevaadhikarasye maa phaleshu kadaachanah
(Your *dharma* is only to do the work, not to be concerned about the result.)

Do you think you can satisfy all the people, all the time?
(from audience) Never.

Never.

Because you yourself are not satisfied! Unless you have the deepest satisfaction in yourself, how can you satisfy others? Unless you know about yourself, how will you know about others' needs and satisfy them? It is impossible.

It is good to do something for others, it is good to give attention, give respect – but out of love, not out of fear. Not because we are afraid that they will take away their certificates!

Never invest so much in others' opinions that they become the centre of your life. Don't make others your energy source, the reason for your existence! When you are dependent on others for your happiness, you are giving them the control of your life. It is nothing but psychological slavery.

Be your own inspiration source!

Come to a clear understanding that no joy is possible when you place your own center on someone else.

If you understand this, half the problem is solved.

Because you don't know anything about yourself, you turn to society for an answer. And society happily puts its labels on you: *Doctor. Father. Good-looking. Failure.*

Like a parcel without a proper address is pushed from place to place, we move around in society collecting these stamps. Because we don't know where we are headed, we have to depend on society's stamps to show us the way.

And by and by, we forget that we are the parcel, not the labels! We forget that we are the stuff inside the parcel!

How to unlock the *Anahata*?

The key to unlock the *Anahata* is selfless love.

When you know yourself, when you appreciate yourself, you will have no need to ask for attention from others. When you are fulfilled, you will naturally start showering on others.

A small story will make it clear to you - the difference between asking for attention and offering selfless love.

Have you heard of the *Brahma Sutra* ?

This is greatest book available to humanity. It is the unabridged edition of world philosophy, from which all other philosophies originated; the book of books.

Vajaspati Mishra is the man who wrote a commentary on this book, an excellent commentary.

This is an incident from his life:

When Vajaspati Mishra was in the *gurukul*, his guru advised him to write this commentary. The guru also gave his daughter Bamati in marriage to his disciple. Soon afterwards, the guru died.

Vajaspati Mishra started on his task earnestly. He was continuously engaged in writing – for months, years, decades. He saw nothing else, thought about nothing else during all that time.

Finally, he finished the great work. After penning the last line, Vajaspati Mishra looked up from his work.

In front of him he saw an old lady, lighting the lamp for him. Vajaspati Mishra was surprised. He asked the lady, *Who are you?*

The lady said, *Never mind about me. Have you finished your book?*

When Vajaspati Mishra asked her again, she replied, *I am your wife Bamati. We got married thirty years ago.*

Vajaspati Mishra was shocked.

Thirty years!

He was shocked at what he had done to his wife.

Why didn't you remind me all these years!, he cried.

You were busy with your book, and I didn't want to disturb you, Bamati replied quietly.

Still Vajaspati Mishra continued, *You have sacrificed your life for the sake of humanity! What can I do to make up for it?*

Bamati replied, *It has been a joy to serve you. I feel privileged that I was able to serve you so that you could write this great book!*

It is said that tears rolled down Vajaspati Mishra's cheeks.

Then he paid his wife the greatest tribute of all: he named his life's work after her: *Bamati*.

Even today, the most outstanding commentary on humanity's most precious book carries her name: *Bamati*.

Bamati has become immortal, just because of her selfless devotion and love.

Today, can you read the newspaper for half an hour in peace?

Will your wife let you?

Can she watch TV for half an hour? Will you allow her?

(uproarious laughter from group)

This is the big difference between asking for oneself, and giving of oneself.

For the next few days, I want you all to do this experiment. Choose a partner. It is your responsibility to look after the other person completely, like a child. I want your first concern to be for the other person's comfort. Always, your eye should be on whether he or she is happy and comfortable. Does he need anything? What can you do to help?

Almost all our life, we worry only about ourselves. At the most, we worry about our close family, that too out of a sense of duty!

Now, you will get a chance to see what selfless love is like!

I don't want you to pair up with your friends or relatives!

Choose a stranger – the person standing closest to you.

And be very clear: I don't want you to choose the person whom you want to be friends with later! Just choose at

random.

(participants choose partners)

Remember everything I told you. The other person always comes first! Do you understand? I'll be watching you!

(laughter)

Okay, let's get to the meditation.

This meditation technique which I going to give you is known as Mahamantra.

This is a Tibetan *tantric* technique.

This meditation is that which makes your mind centred, solid: *Manasasya sthiraah iti mantrah*.

Your entire energy becomes centred on yourself.

This technique should ideally be practised in the evenings.

This technique is designed to make your whole body *mantramayaa*. It will elevate you into the state of *ajapa* – where you don't even have to do the *japa* (chanting), the *japa* happens on its own. Your whole Being becomes *japa*. You don't have to repeat the mantra, the mantra will repeat you.

Sit in a relaxed way, cross-legged, with your hands on your knees, palms facing upwards. Please remove your watches and jewellery, all these things block the energy flow.

Keep your spine erect. Your head, neck and back should be in a straight line.

Close your eyes. When I say this, I mean *really* close your eyes. Usually when you close your eyes, it is just like putting off the TV outside and switching on the inner TV. I don't

want you to just close your eyelids – I want you to close your eyes!

For a moment, just imagine that your eyeballs have turned to stone. Immediately, thoughts will also stop, or become slow. Now keep your mouth closed and start humming.

Just create the vibration *Mmmm*. Don't chant any other mantra, don't chant Om.

Chant as lengthily as possible. Allow the body to sway. The sound has to come from your *naabhi kamala* – from your loins.

Imagine your body as an empty vessel. If you put your mouth to it and hum, what sound do you hear? Create that same vibration inside yourself.

Hum as loudly as possible, as deeply as possible, as lengthily as possible. Put your whole effort into it.

They say that Brahma the Creator rose from Vishnu's *naabhi kamala* – the lotus in his loins. Brahma is the embodiment of *veda* (knowledge), of *mantra dhwani*, of the primordial music of creation – which is this very expression.

When you chant this mantra, you become a creator, you create your new self. With this meditation, you will be totally transformed, you will be born again.

Do this for 20 minutes. There will be music accompanying your humming.

Don't attempt any kind of breath control. Your breathing will automatically take care of itself.

This is known as the *mahamantra uchchaadana* – the mantra which is beyond utterance, beyond writing. It is the

Anahata dhwani (the unheard sound). The Mahamantra is the vibration which is resonating in your Being, in all of Existence. When you experience the energy of this meditation, you will feel you are based in this *Anahata dhwani*.

Allow whatever happens to happen. If tears roll, let them roll. Laughter, cough, shivering – let it happen. Let it out. Don't hold back anything.

Whatever thoughts arise, throw them also into the humming. Gradually they will disappear.

At the end of 20 minutes, the music stops and a gong sounds. Instantly stop your humming.

A great silence floods your being. Witness this silence. Experience the tremendous calm.

After a short while, thoughts will slowly start entering into this silence. Don't stop them; don't enter into them. Simply witness these thoughts.

Become a central awareness. Remain in your *Anahata chakra*. You will feel completely centered, calm.

It is best to practise this meditation in the early morning. It generates a tremendous amount of energy in your body. If you practise it at night, it may interfere with your sleep. Shall we start?

(group practises Mahamantra meditation and returns after a short break)

THE VISHUDDHI CHAKRA

(Vishuddhi = beyond purity and impurity)

Located: Throat

Locked by: Comparison and Jealousy

Unlocked by: Realizing your uniqueness

Meditation technique from: Zen Buddhism

Name of technique: Shakti Sagar

Swamiji chants an invocation:

buddham sharanam gachchaami

dhammam sharanam gachchaami

sangham sharanam gachchaami

(I take refuge in the Buddha

I take refuge in the Dharma

I take refuge in the Sangha)

The *Vishuddhi chakra* is concerned with comparison and jealousy.

What is comparison?

Can someone tell me, what are the major areas where you see comparison?

(The group gives a number of reasons. Swamiji sorts the answers under various topics.)

So now these are the major areas where we compare ourselves to others: *money, wisdom, beauty (including health) and power.*

All your problems, all your complexes are nothing but these

four issues.

Now in each of these areas, all of us are somewhere in between the two extremes.

Do you have or don't you have?

On both sides there is a long list.

Can anyone say he is the wisest man in the world? No.

Do you feel that you are the greatest fool? Again, no.

Can you claim you are the richest person? No.

Can you say you are the poorest person? No.

So both cannot be told – but the thought disturbs you all the time! We are haunted by phenomena about which we don't even have a clear understanding.

There are two types of reality: Existential reality and Comparative reality.

Comparative reality is not absolute, but exists only in comparison to something else.

In Sanskrit, we call beauty *Maya*.

We say *ya ma iti Maya (that which doesn't exist is Maya)*.

That which doesn't exist, but which continuously disturbs!

Am I right?

So on both sides there is an endless list. How to judge?

It is up to you which side you want to look – to be in *ananda* or in *dukkha*!

(from audience) Better not to look both sides!

Is that possible?

And anyway, why the fear to look?

If you can look, but not be affected by what you see – that is the beautiful way.

That is the way to unlock this *chakra*.

(from audience) You mean, learn to be content?

Contentment... these are words used and misused too often.

I don't want to use phrases like *Learn to be content!*

What I am saying is, *Happiness is a choice*.

It is up to you which side of life to focus on.

But Swamiji, you said Ananda is the reality? Then how can it be a choice?

Ananda (bliss) is the reality for all of us.

But Ananda is not happiness.

Ananda is that state of tranquility which happens when you have gone beyond both happiness and sorrow, pleasure and pain.

When you see with clarity that both pleasure and pain are unreal, that neither one is the natural state of your Being, you will enter into bliss.

But to get to bliss, you need to first start with happiness!

It is impossible to get to *Ananda* from *Dukkha* – it is too long a way!

Swamiji, they say God is full of mercy, God gives us everything. But in real life, we don't experience it that way.
God - Existence - always gives you enough to fulfil your own desires. It is when you take on another's desires, accumulate

desires from others, that they go unfulfilled.

For example, you may never have felt the need for an air cooler in your house.

But if your neighbour buys an air cooler, the temperature in your house goes up!

You go to the market to buy a TV. But on the way you see people in other shops buying other things, and you also go and buy all that. Or you try to buy, and then complain that you don't have enough money. Why do you try to live others' lives also, others' desires also?

A *sutra* in the Dhammapada says: just like the monkey trainer carries a stick with which to prod the monkey and make it dance to his tunes, in the same way, Maya has the stick of Comparison in her hands to make us dance!

There is no end to comparison, no end to your expectations. You are constantly in the ratrace – how can you afford to relax, even for a moment?

And the sad thing about being in the ratrace is that *even if you win, you're still a rat!*

It may look like you are the winner, but actually the whole course of your life has been shaped by others. At some level you also realize that, so even success doesn't give you a sense of fulfilment. Even success leads to a deep sense of discontent. Because you have lived a life dictated by someone else!

I can tell you from my experience – Existence is always showering upon us. There is such abundance! But we are so well trained in the discipline of discontent ..!

Ramana Maharishi says:

Existence has enough abundance to satisfy the *needs* of the whole of creation, but not to satisfy the *wants* of one man!

See the huge gap between our actual needs and our accumulated desires!

In Jainism, there is a belief that when you are born, the entire quantity of food that you will need during your lifetime is sent along with you. Which is a way of saying that whatever your true requirements in this birth, Existence equips you with the ability to fulfil them.

But our wants are endless! Every time one desire is fulfilled, a hundred more come up. It is our nature to desire without end.

A small story:

Early one morning Mother Earth, Bhooma Devi, was taking a stroll on a riverbank when a man came up to her and prostrated at her feet.

Mother! he cried, *I am a poor man. I have no land of my own to grow crops. You are the Goddess of the whole earth. Please grant me some land, or my family will die of starvation.*

Taking pity on the man, Bhooma Devi said generously, *Alright! It is just sunrise now. I grant you that whatever distance you are able to cover on foot till sunset today will become your land.*

Hearing this, the man set off at a run. He had to cover the maximum possible distance before sunset!

By afternoon, he was tired out. One part of his mind told him, *Enough! You have covered many miles! This land will be enough not only for you, but for three generations of your descendants!*

But greed told him, *In the scriptures it is said that a man has to provide for seven generations. What will happen to them?*

So greed drove him onward.

At four in the evening, his body was screaming with pain.

Stop! You now have enough land for seven generations!

Again, greed raised the question, *What about the eighth?*

Let me cover one more hill, one more field! After that I will rest.

Now it was only a few minutes to sunset.

By now the man was beyond reasoning. He simply continued to run, run like a madman.

In the distance was a huge river.

Let me reach that river. There I shall stop, drink some water and rest, finally rest!, thought the man.

Exactly at the moment of sunset, the man reached the river.

But before he could reach out to drink the water, his body collapsed on the bank.

He never got up again.

This is no different from the way we live! We are so caught up with acquiring, we have no time left for enjoying!

Swamiji, we live in a competitive society. How can we stop comparing?

Good question.

We all function around these three axes: *doing, having* and *being*.

Doing for *having*, without enjoying *being*, is the sole cause of all our misery. *Doing* never catches up with *having*! Every time we work hard and fulfil one desire, there are more desires to make us run.

But don't think, *Let me work now, I can enjoy later*.

Don't think you can come back later and enjoy! I tell you, it will never happen.

Don't postpone living! Celebrate, enjoy life – it's now or never.

Just running without enjoying is sure to lead to frustration. After running behind something your whole life, when you finally get it, you will always feel that it was not worth it!

As they say, *There is more pleasure in the pursuit than in the attainment!* You always notice that as long as you are chasing something, it seems that it is worth the whole world – but after you get it, somehow it not important any longer!

Again, a beautiful saying by Ramana:

Adaivadar mun kadugey aanaalum malayaay kaatti

Adainda pin malayey aanaalum kadugai kaattum maya manam
(Mind is that Illusion which shows a tiny mustard seed to be a huge mountain until it is attained, and a mountain to be as insignificant as a mustard seed once it has been attained!)

Not that it is not important to earn, to have comforts. I am not asking you to renounce all your desires. I am not asking

you not to compare. But be clear as to why you are running.
Bring clarity even into your comparison.

See, there are two kinds of comparison: *constructive* and *destructive*.

Constructive comparison is essential, it is good.

In a practical sense, it gives you a yardstick for measuring yourself.

It provides the stimulus to improve.

Without comparing, how can you have a realistic understanding of yourself?

Destructive comparison is nothing but the inability to accept reality.

In the whole world, someone is sure to be better than you at whatever you do.

99.99% chances are that you're not the world's best engineer, the fastest runner or the most talented painter. Does that mean that you enjoy these things any less?

To focus only on what you're lacking is the sure route to a completely unnecessary inferiority complex!

What is the root cause of comparison?

Comparison happens because we don't know ourselves.

If you are comparing yourself to others, it simply means that you don't appreciate yourself enough!

Only when you don't trust your own Being, do you start comparing with others.

The Buddha says, nothing exists except in relationship.

Suppose you were the only person on a new planet.

Will you call yourself tall or short? Ugly or beautiful? Rich or poor?

You will simply be you! That's all.

That is the only truth.

To compare is pure foolishness, because each individual is unique. How can you compare two things which are unique?

We never compare ourselves to flowers or birds or mountains – only to other people!

We enjoy beauty in nature, but can't tolerate it in our neighbour!

Why?

All this is only social conditioning. Society encourages competitive behaviour. Don't allow another to dictate your ideals.

Wake up!

Swamiji, I feel that my weaknesses are much more...

More than what?

More than my strengths...

Why do you compare?

Now you are comparing inside yourself!

You think one part of you is strong, another is weak. When your own consciousness is fractured, how will you reach out to others?

Accept everything. Accept yourself as you are. Only then can you be whole, be complete.

When you see yourself as unique and complete, the need to compare will drop automatically. Comparison always brings

misery, not peace.

A small story:

A king once went to a wise man to attain some *siddhis* (magical powers) so that he could become more powerful than his neighbouring kings.

The wise man took him out into the garden, where a rose bush and a thorny plant were growing side by side. He told him, *These are your teachers. They can teach you what you need to learn.*

The man was astonished.

What do you mean, Master?, he asked.

The Master said, *For five years, this rose bush and this thorny plant have existed side by side. But not once have I heard the rose bush complaining that it wanted to become a thorny plant, or the thorny plant wanting to become like the rose bush. Each has accepted its own reality without complaint, without comparison. This is the most powerful siddhi you can attain!*

How to unlock the *Vishuddhi chakra*?

When you live your life with complete fulfilment, work out your maximum potential, you won't feel the need to compare. In meditation, the conscious analysis of desires will show you very clearly which are your own desires, and which desires you have acquired from others. Existence has already gifted you the ability to fulfil your own desires.

You simply have to identify, with clarity, which are your own.

The *Vishuddhi chakra* is the seat of higher creativity. When the energy of this *chakra* is unlocked, you will see that a tremendous flow of creativity becomes available to you.

When you change the quality of your *being*, naturally the quality of your *doing* also changes. Whatever you do, you do with greater efficiency, greater creativity.

As a result, the quality of your *having* also changes. You will see that material wealth and success flow towards you naturally.

So drop comparison.

Return to your Being.

Remember, you are truly unique – just like everyone else!

Shall we enter into the meditation?

Instructions for Shakti Sagar Meditation

All your life, you have been running a race against others.

Now, you will run against yourself!

You will compete with, and win against, the negative aspects of your own self.

This is a 30-minute meditation, with two parts of 20 minutes and 10 minutes.

First, stand in silence with your eyes closed. Concentrate your entire awareness upon the *Vishuddhi chakra*.

Now, standing in one place, slowly begin to jog. Start very slowly, then increase your pace. Increase it gradually - because once you start jogging fast you won't be allowed to

slow down! So keep going faster, faster. Your mind may tell you that it is too tiring - don't listen! Push your limits. Your body has tremendous potential that you have never used.

Actually, we have three layers of energy - the normal layer, the emergency layer, and Intelligence. We normally use only the first layer. We are happy with just that much energy! Very rarely, when we have to push ourselves, the second layer of energy opens up. But the third layer, we have never used. We are not even aware of it. Intelligence is nothing but functioning at the highest level of energy available to us. So don't tell yourself, *I can't do it*.

When you enter totally into this meditation, you will find that the higher level of energy opens up. So keep jogging. Let the energy rise!

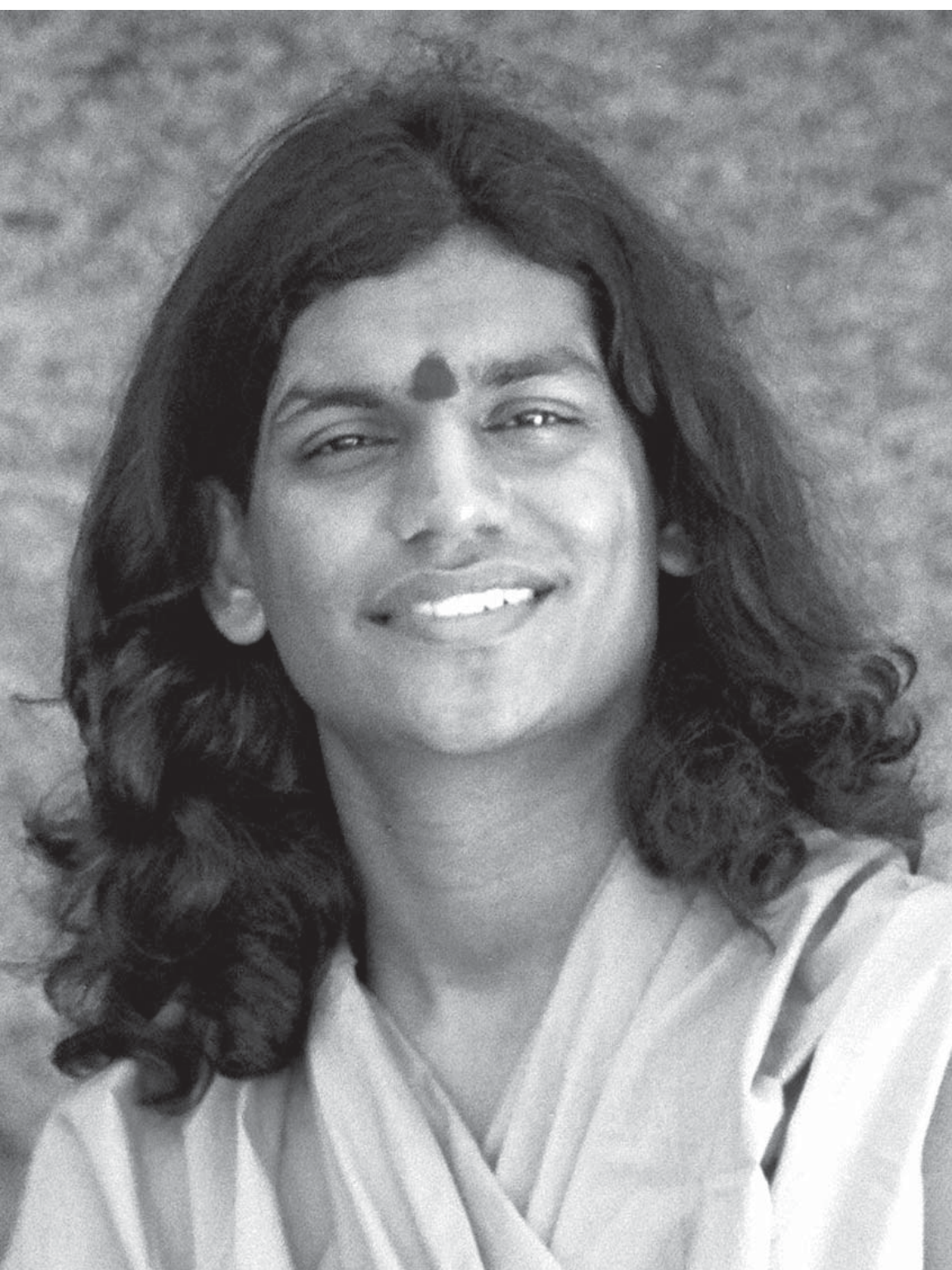
After 20 minutes, you will be asked to stop. For the next 10 minutes, just sit down quietly wherever you are. Keep your eyes closed. Focus all your attention on the *Vishuddhi chakra*. In this phase, you will absorb the energy you have released during the jogging.

Materials like silk, gold and diamonds are excellent storehouses for energy. During the meditation, if you wear these around your neck, they will absorb and retain the released energy for a longer time.

(group practises Shakti Sagar meditation and later disperses)

Day 6: 19th April

Culmination



THE AJNA CHAKRA

(Ajna = 'will' or 'order'. The Ajna is known as the Master Chakra)

Located: Between the eyebrows

Locked by: Seriousness

Unlocked by: Innocence and simplicity

Meditation technique from: Christianity

Name of technique: Divya Netra

The *Ajna chakra* is known as the *Chakra Raj* – the Master *chakra*.

This is such a significant *chakra* that there is no religion that hasn't worked on activating it.

When the *Ajna* opens, the whole Being enters into a different realm.

A whole layer of faculties opens up. That's why all the oriental gods are represented with a third eye in their forehead. The third eye is only a symbol for the awakened *Ajna*.

There is an old saying that if you die in Varanasi (a sacred city of India), you will automatically get *mukti* (salvation).

Varanasi is not just the city as we know it. It is also the region where the *vaarana* (eyebrows) meets the *naasi* (nose). That is the exact location of the *Ajna chakra*.

If you die into the *Ajna*, if you leave your consciousness in the *Ajna*, you will attain salvation.

Of course, the city Varanasi is so sacred that it may be true, as Sri Ramakrishna says. But I think this is a much more developed interpretation.

The *Ajna chakra* is concerned with *Seriousness*.

What is seriousness?

Seriousness is nothing but paying undue importance to something, at the cost of everything else.

It stems from the inability to see that all of life is just a joke!

Seriousness is the result of over-expectation from life.

Serious people are always afraid to make mistakes. Like life, they take themselves also too seriously. They have too much ego to accept making a mistake.

So, by trying not to make small mistakes, they end up making big blunders instead!

A small story from Zen:

Two boys were building sandcastles on the beach when they had a quarrel. One of the boys got angry and kicked the sandcastle to pieces. The other boy went and complained to the king about his 'serious' problem.

The king began to laugh at them for making so much of sandcastles.

But the king's advisor, a Zen monk, started laughing at the king, asking,

When you can fight battles and lose your sleep over stone castles, why do you laugh at these boys fighting over sandcastles?

All our seriousness is just about sandcastles!

Seriousness closes your mind to the possibilities of life. Too much attachment to routine keeps you on a narrow path, it makes you blind to all the other options open to you.

Allow nature to have its own way!

In a Zen monastery, there was a competition among disciples about who could have the best garden. One disciple was a very serious sort. He took the competition also too seriously. His garden was always neat and clean, and well-swept. All the grass was of the same height. All the bushes were neatly trimmed. He was sure that he would get the first prize.

On the day of the competition, the master went around all the gardens.

Then he came back and ranked the gardens. But he gave this disciple's garden the lowest ranking!

Everyone was shocked.

The disciple himself went and questioned the master about it.

Master, what is wrong with my garden that you ranked me the lowest?

The master asked him with a smile, *Where are all the dead leaves?*

A garden maintained in such an unnatural way is no longer alive!

Seriousness kills spontaneity.

Seriousness destroys creativity.

Science has proved that when you perform a task in a relaxed manner, your thinking and decision-making capacity is automatically enhanced.

All our seriousness is sickness!

When I say all, I mean all!

And all our sicknesses originate in seriousness.

Seriousness begets sickness. Sickness begets seriousness.

One night, a man called me on the phone and started crying. He said, *I fall at your feet, Swamiji! Please help me. I'm so depressed! I am going to end my life!..* and so on.

I tried to calm him down, and finally said,

Why don't you come to the ashram tomorrow morning and spend a few days with me? Let's see what can be done.

He replied, *Tomorrow, Swamiji? Ohh... tomorrow I have to go to office... shall I come next weekend?*

Most of us are like this, getting unnecessarily tense about our small problems! When we wake up to reality, we see how insignificant our problems really are.

When you do something too seriously, when you are too concerned about the result, you are actually not allowing yourself to perform at optimum levels!

Like I mentioned about the chess game earlier, if the player is too serious he will most probably miss making the right moves!

This doesn't mean that you should take everything lightly – that won't help.

Of course, you need to make plans, you need to think ahead.

But do it with sincerity, not seriousness.

Seriousness is not the same as sincerity.

Sincerity is focusing on the task with enthusiasm and youthfulness.

Sincerity is giving the task your best without worrying excessively about the result.

There are two kinds of planning – chronological planning and

psychological planning.

Chronological planning is planning on a timescale. It is a practical way to organize tasks in a way that can give the best results. This kind of planning with sincere action leads you from *ananda* to *ananda* to *ananda*!

Psychological planning is planning in your head. It means postponing happiness, postponing life, waiting till some particular thing happens to start enjoying life.

If I get married, life will be more interesting!

After I retire, I'll have enough time to cultivate my hobbies!

It's the attitude, *Now I'll be serious, later I'll be happy!*

It can only lead from *dukkha* to *dukkha* to *dukkha*.

One more thing: when your consciousness is alert, you can directly solve problems without complicated planning.

You will acquire a clarity of vision, a clarity of purpose, efficiency in action.

You will no longer be bound by the narrow confines of your mind, your opinions and prejudices.

How to unlock the *Ajna chakra*?

Live with simplicity, with spontaneity, with innocence.

Be down-to-earth. Have the courage to make mistakes. After all, what have you got to lose? Only your useless ego!

Take on life with joy, love and care.

Be natural.

Be original.

Above all, take it easy. Nothing is so important that you can't

laugh!

I would say, *Laughter is the key to unlock this chakra!*

When you live in a laughing, light mood, you will become Shiva! (god)

So how to become Shiva?

Just laugh!

Can you find a simpler meditation technique than that?

In fact, in Zen monasteries, it is a rule for all monks to laugh at least three hours every day.

Laughter is a great technique!

Nowadays we have forgotten how to laugh – our laughter is only an extended smile. Most of us are afraid to laugh - because laughter exposes you. Laughter exposes the innocent, vulnerable You hidden inside you.

A small story:

Once there was a conference of Buddhist monks on the meaning of true spirituality. Each monk went up onto the stage and made long speeches, practically putting all the others to sleep. Finally, it was the turn of a Zen monk to speak.

What do you think he did?

He simply started laughing! Laughing, laughing with his Being.

The laughter just rose up from his belly. He started shaking uncontrollably with laughter.

And his laughter was so infectious, soon all the others in the

room started laughing, without even knowing why. Without their even being aware of it, the common laughter of all the monks produced a huge wave of positive energy in the room. The monks reached a state of tremendous elevation. In the course of the laughter, they experienced a moment of no-mind.

The Zen monk declared, *This is true spirituality.*

Laughter is the highest spiritual quality. It can lead you to enlightenment! In fact, laughter is the royal route to enlightenment.

Laughing is a great healing power. If you laugh at your sickness, you will become healthy. Because laughter is a beautiful way of connecting with the *prapancha shakti*, the energy of Existence.

Shall we try some laughing meditation?

Someone who can *really* laugh can start!

(prolonged laughter follows)

Before we enter into the *Ajna* meditation (the laughing meditation was just a practice session!) – any questions?

(from audience) Swamiji, I have read that when the Ajna is activated you develop the sixth sense. What do you feel about sixth sense?

Sixth sense? I say nonsense!

(tremendous laughter from crowd)

First of all, let us learn to handle our five senses properly.

Then we can worry about sixth sense!

Let us move to the meditation.

This is an extremely powerful technique!

Here you will come in direct contact with the master's energy.

During the discourse you were given knowledge, intelligence.

Now you will be given the tremendous energy needed to apply that intelligence, to work it out in your daily life.

There is a verse in the *Dakshinamurty Stotram* (Obeisance to Dakshinamurthy - the youthful *avatar* of Shiva who is also known as the first ever *guru*):

Chitram vadataror mooley

Vridhdah shishyaa gurur yuvah

Gurostu maunam vyaakhyaanam

Shishyaastu chinnah samshayah

(Beneath the banyan tree they sit,
the disciples old men, the guru a mere youth!

The guru speaks through Silence alone

But lo! The disciples' questions dissolve on their own!)

Today you will experience this energy in silence, in communion with the master.

Whatever I have spoken in the discourses all these days is nothing new – you may have heard it before. You may have read about it before.

With intellectual understanding, you get 50% of the result.

With experience, you get 100%.

What I am really giving you is through my energy.

My light becomes your light.

Like lighting a candle from another candle, you light your candle with my light, with the light of my enlightenment.

But once lit, the light is yours. Use it to find your way, use it to grow.

Do as you please with it.

Take care that it is never blown out, that's all!

(applause)

Have trust in yourself. Your problems will not be solved – they will be dissolved.

Let us enter into the meditation.

Instructions for Divya Netra Meditation

This meditation involves two separate techniques: one for *cleansing* the *Ajna*, and the other for *energizing* it.

Our lower *chakras* need only cleansing and channeling. The higher *chakras* need energizing also – pumping up the energy to the *chakra*.

In the two phases, you will be asked to alternately close and open your eyes.

When your eyes are closed, I want you to focus on your third eye - on the area of your *Ajna chakra*.

When I ask you to open your eyes, open your eyes - but don't see! Don't look through your two eyes as you normally do.

Instead, try seeing with your third eye. With your third eye, look intensely at my third eye.

Try not to blink. Some of you may have some discomfort. You may experience a burning sensation in the eyes, or tears may come. Let it happen. These problems will soon disappear.

Be prepared to have unusual experiences during this meditation. Your *Ajna* has never been activated before.

Opening the *Ajna* will open you to a whole new realm of experience. You will discover abilities that you didn't know you had.

Don't be frightened! In the presence of the master, only what is good for you will happen to you.

You are not being hypnotized! In fact, only now are you finally being dehypnotized. Only now is your superconscious awakened.

That's why the third eye is known as *Maya Harana* – destroyer of illusion.

And most of our *maya* is nothing but sex! So the *Ajna* is also known as *Kama Harana* (destroyer of lust).

Above all, don't doubt the truth of your experiences.

Doubt destroys. Faith can convert even a stone to god!

During the meditation, some of you may experience seeing 'nothing', where my body is now seated. You may experience being able to see through my body.

Don't be alarmed, it only shows you that you have done the meditation with deep sincerity.

Because that is my reality! It is because you perceive your own body as solid, that you perceive my body as solid.

Just at this moment, if you can perceive yourself as empty, you will see that I am empty.

The rest - whatever you see right now, is nothing but the master's drama - the master's *leela*!

(the group practises *Divya Netra* meditation and takes a short break)

* * * * *

Swamiji enters and settles down.

The crowd begins to shower Swamiji with questions of all sorts.

Swamiji, what is your message to us?

When people ask me my message, I tell them in two words:

Be Blissful.

If you can live in *Ananda*, that is more than enough.

A small story:

When Alexander the Great invaded India, he collected a lot of gold and treasures to take back with him. Then he thought it will be a good idea to carry back the spiritual heritage of India also. Instead of carrying so many books and such things, he thought, *Why not take back a few yogis (holy men)? After all, they will be carrying all the scriptures inside their heads, and they can explain them also!*

Of course, this is just a legend, we don't know if it actually happened!

One day he saw a yogi meditating by a river bank. He went to the yogi and ordered him to return with him.

The yogi refused.

Alexander was furious. No one had ever gone against his orders before!

In his anger, he drew his sword and held it to the yogi's throat.

Come with me, or I'll kill you!, he roared.

To his surprise, the yogi started laughing.

You are a liar, you can't kill me!, he told Alexander.

Why not?, demanded Alexander.

In reply, the yogi quoted the *shloka* (verse) from the holy

Bhagavad Gita about the imperishability of the soul:

*"That which fire cannot burn, which an arrow cannot pierce,
which a sword cannot cut... that Being is within us."*

See, it is very easy to talk about the immortal soul when you are sitting in the safety of your house. But this man was able to do it with the sword of a king held to his throat! He knew fully well that hurting a king's ego is a sure way to invite death. If the king killed him, who was there to question him? The king himself was the law!

Alexander himself was amazed at the yogi's composure, his integrity. Realizing his mistake, he put down his sword and apologized for his mistake. He asked the yogi,

*A man with so much courage should be on the battlefield,
conquering nations and winning fame! Why are you wasting
your time sitting in this lonely place?*

Then the yogi asked him, *What have you come here for?*

Alexander described all his conquests. He had practically conquered the whole of India.

Where will you go now?, asked the yogi.

Oh, I am going to conquer other lands, to the east and to the west!

And then?

Then still others, to the north and to the south.

And then?

Then the whole world will be my kingdom!

And then?

Then I will return to my country, and build large palaces and forts.

And then?

Then I will live happily for the rest of my life!

That, said the yogi quietly, *is what I am doing NOW.*

So all our trials, our efforts, our struggles, even our wars are nothing but the pursuit of *ananda* (bliss)! If you see, even our meditations are a battle for happiness, between our self and our Self! The truly wise are the ones who have known where to find this *Ananda*.

How to be blissful?

This is the question asked more often than any other – either directly or indirectly – by each of us, every day.

The *Sanatana Dharma* addresses man as *Amritasya putra!* (O Child of Immortality!)

Ananda is our kingdom! It is our own! We are already in it.

So the issue of how to enter it does not make sense.

The question is not, *How to create happiness?* Because whenever something is created through external factors, how long will it last?

A few hours? A few years?

When a sense of happiness is created through external reasons, with external causes, it is sure to give way to *dukkha* (misery) when it ceases. So to search for *Ananda* outside is the surest way to *dukkha*.

Ananda is our nature. So the question can only be, *How to rediscover the Ananda that we have forgotten is there in us?*

That too can be answered in one phrase:

Drop your guilt.

Whatever I have spoken these past days, the essence of my message is this: *Be Blissful*.

Be in Ananda. And the key to unlock the *Ananda* inside you is this: *Drop your guilt*.

Our mind is so attuned to the idea of guilt, that whatever we do, whatever happens in our life, whether good or bad, we find a way to feel guilty about it. All our *dukkha* arises out of nothing but this feeling of guilt.

When you get angry, for instance, you punish *yourself* far more deeply than you punish the person whom you are angry with! Because you end up feeling guilty about your anger. But does that mean you stop getting angry? NO! We keep on repeating the same actions, and keep feeling guilty about it. The deeper your guilt, the harder you try to punish yourself, and the more the chance of your repeating the same action. Like the crank shaft and the piston in an engine, the deed and the guilt are both equally responsible for making the wheel of *Samsara* go around.

Swamiji, you ask us to drop our guilt. But what if we have

really committed some sin?

What is *sin*? The whole idea of sin itself is nonsense. To do or not do something, simply out of fear, is a sign of utter ignorance. These concepts of sin and punishment are just created by society to keep you in fear.

I say, don't trust your fear. Trust your intelligence.

Awaken your consciousness.

Use your intelligence to discriminate between right and wrong.

Use your inner guidance.

Even without fear or guilt, you will automatically stay on the correct path.

A small story:

A holy man, a *sannyasi*, lived in a hut on the outskirts of a town. One rainy night, someone knocked on his door. The *sannyasi* opened the door and saw a man soaked in the rain waiting outside.

Please, can I spend the night in your hut?, asked the man.

The *sannyasi* welcomed him in and shared his meal with him. The man slept there and left the next morning after thanking the *sannyasi*.

During the day, the *sannyasi* heard that a thief had entered the town the previous day, stolen many valuables and disappeared. From the people's description, the *sannyasi* found out that it was the same man to whom he had given shelter the previous night.

The *sannyasi* was overcome with guilt and sorrow.

Oh, God! What have I done! Please forgive this sinner for his act!, he wailed loudly.

Suddenly an even louder wail rose from the sky!

The *sannyasi* was shocked.

What are you weeping for, God?, he asked in surprise.

Said the voice from the sky: *When you, who fed a thief just one meal, who gave him shelter for just one night, feel so guilty – what will be my position, who has taken care of him every single day of his life!*

Be very clear: your guilt is nothing but your ego, working in a subtle, cunning form.

When *Parashakti*, when Existence accepts us all unconditionally, who are you to impose your two-bit morality upon yourself and others?

Who is society to implant these morals in you? All these social laws are created only for the smooth functioning of society. But we tend to confuse these social laws with our spiritual laws!

Then enters our great enemy – Guilt.

In guilt lies the seed of all *dukkha*.

Actually, Anger has no positive existence – it is like darkness. But when you keep recalling your anger with guilt, you bring it into your awareness. You give it your energy.

Against your will, you give it life.

In the epic *Ramayana*, there is a character called Vali. It is

said that the moment any person stood before Vali, half of that person's energy would instantly go to Vali.

Like Vali, these emotions – anger, lust, greed – have a great power to draw all your energy to themselves. But to do that, they need your help – they need your guilt.

Just examine yourself. How many people are sitting inside your head, giving you instructions on how to live?!

Your parents. Your children. Your spouse. Your friends.

Strangers. Society. Law. All the writers of all the moral

books you have read, all the speakers of all the discourses

you have listened to! Either exploiting your greed, or

exploiting your fear. Your greed for reward, or your fear of

punishment. Greed for heaven, or fear of Hell. Our whole life is controlled by these two ropes – *greed and fear*.

Do you know, a survey was recently conducted on the internet on the most deadly disease of our century. Do you know what that disease is? Can someone tell me?

It is not AIDS. Not cancer. Not TB.

It is Depression!

It is depression.

And the root cause of depression is guilt.

Sometimes people come and tell me, *I feel depressed for no reason!*

The reason is, initially you feel guilty for a certain reason. If you continuously admit guilt inside, it becomes a quality of

your Being. Then the guilt arises on its own, even without any external reason – because you don't know any other way of being. And when you feel guilty without being able to find a reason, you classify that feeling as depression.

So how do you drop your guilt?

First of all, throw out all the voices of society that are alive inside you, scolding you, praising you, guiding you.

A small story:

A man approached Buddha seeking *sannyas*.

Buddha told him, *First go and kill your father and mother, and then come back to me.*

The man was astonished. What did Buddha mean?

Can anyone tell me what he meant?

Was Buddha asking the man to go and physically kill his parents?

NO! What he meant was, *Go and kill the voices of your parents which are inside you, continuously instructing and disturbing you. Kill them psychologically, not actually.*

Remove their influence from your Being.

Another story:

A journalist died and went to Heaven. At the gates of Heaven, St. Peter informed him:

We already have a surplus of journalists here. There isn't enough work for them, and they won't want another one coming in. Because in heaven there's really no news. Everybody eats, sleeps, prays, and sits around being good. All the action

happens in Hell! Why don't you go there instead?

The journalist was disappointed – he wanted very badly to be in Heaven. But he was a crafty man. He told St. Peter, *Alright, I will do as you say. But give me twenty-four hours' time to spend in Heaven. During that period, if I'm able to convince any of the journalists here to move to Hell, you must allow me to take his place.*

This seemed like a reasonable idea to St. Peter, and he agreed.

The journalist entered Heaven, and quietly started a rumour that a new magazine was being launched in Hell, and they were on the lookout for journalists there. The work was exciting, and on top of that they would be highly paid! Twenty-four hours later, St. Peter was shocked to find the journalist rushing out of the pearly gates.

Hey, you!, he cried. Where are you going? Thanks to your stupid rumour, all the other journalists have left Heaven already. Now you're the only journalist we have here. I can't let you go!

I have to go, said the journalist. Haven't you heard about the new magazine in Hell?

You idiot, you are the one who started that story!, cried St. Peter. The journalist replied: Yes, I know. But now that so many people believe in it, I feel there must be some truth in the story. I have to go there and verify!

This is the way we all operate! When we have no confidence in our own ideas, we look for external support for them. In

our customs, in our social life, in every step we take, we always look around for approval from others.

When thousands of people follow something, it is automatically taken to be the correct thing. Hitler says beautifully in his autobiography: *A lie repeated a hundred times becomes the truth.*

So every time you follow something, first measure it with your inner scale, with your Intelligence.

Are you doing it because one thousand other people are doing it?

Are you believing in something because it is the socially approved idea?

Test every philosophy with which you are presented.

Test everything.

And when I say *everything*, I include myself.

Use this scale and test whether I am also in the process of creating ten thousand followers! Don't believe blindly.

When you sharpen your knife on a piece of wood, you can test its sharpness on the same wood. In the same way, use this scale I give you to test me also.

If I can live up to your test, well and good. But if you find that I am not able to live up to your scale - *drop me, not your scale.*

Be very clear.

Place your trust in principles, not in personalities.

That is why the Sanatana Dharma, the Vedas are *apourushya*.

They don't depend on the words or ideas of any single

person. Today, if historians were to prove that no such person as Krishna ever existed, it will make no difference to the relevance of the Bhagavad Gita. Because the Gita lives on the strength of its own principles, not on the personal appeal of the person who uttered the words.

Shall we move to the last *chakra*?

THE SAHASRARA CHAKRA

(*Sahasrara* = ‘thousand petalled’ - from the mystical experience of a thousand-petalled lotus blooming on the crown when this *chakra* is activated)

Located: On the crown of the head

Locked by: Discontentment, taking life for granted

Unlocked by: Gratitude and bliss

Meditation technique from: Sufism (Islam)

Name of technique: Sahasrara Dhyana

All our life, we pray to God. But our relationship with God is only a business, a bargain.

A man prays to God every day: *O God, I don't have enough money! Please help me win a big lottery worth ten million rupees! If I win, I promise you I'll offer 20% of my winnings at your shrine!... and if you don't believe me, why don't you deduct 2 million yourself, and give me only the remaining 8 million?!*

(uproarious laughter from audience)

All our dealings with God are exactly like this!

One day a *fakir* (poor mendicant) went to Emperor Akbar's palace. He wanted to request Akbar to give him some land to build a shrine. Akbar was famous for not turning away anyone who asked for help. When the man reached the palace, Akbar was offering his prayers to god. So the man waited outside the prayer hall with the others.

When the king came out, everybody made their requests and received help from Akbar. Only the *fakir* turned away to

return without asking for anything. But Akbar spotted him and called him back.

Why did you not ask for anything?, he asked the fakir.

The fakir replied frankly,

Your Majesty, when I was waiting outside, I heard you praying to god. You had such a long list of requests! I felt as if you were even poorer than me! I thought that if I anyway have to beg, why beg from another beggar? Why not directly approach god, who provides for you and me and all humanity?

There are only two kinds of religion in the world: religions based on prayer, and religions based on gratitude.

The religion of prayer can be followed by the masses.

The religion of gratitude can be followed only by a select few.

That's why the world's major religions are all based on prayer and bargaining.

Only the few meditative religions, like Buddhism or Sufism, are based on gratitude. These religions have very few followers, but the quality of the followers is high.

There is nothing wrong with prayer, but it should be used as a jumping board to enter into meditation.

The Sufi master Junnaid used to pay his gratitude to god

five times every day. At one time, he and his followers were wandering through some villages where Sufism was not accepted.

In the first village, people refused to give them alms, so they were forced to go without food that day. The next day, the same thing happened. On the third day, the village they passed through was so hostile that they were driven out with sticks and stones.

But that night as usual, Junnaid knelt down and offered his thanks to god. Seeing this, some of his disciples were furious. *For three days we have gone without food, Master! Today we were driven out of that village like dogs! Is this what you are offering your gratitude for?,* they questioned him.

You fools!, replied Junnaid. *You talk about three days of hunger! Have you thanked god for the food you have received for thirty years?*

Life has been given to you as a gift, that's why you don't realize its value!

Can any of us say that we've worked very hard to earn this life? We take everything for granted – our bodies, our daily food, the beauty of nature – everything. Every day we ask god for diamond rings – but do we think him for giving us fingers? Man's greed is such that if he is made king of the earth, he will think – *the seas don't obey me, the sun and stars don't obey my commands.*

In the *Shiva Purana*, there is the story of Shiva and the *Brahma Kapala*. The *Brahma Kapala* was a skull that Shiva was forced to use as a begging bowl, when he was wandering in the guise of a mendicant.

The strange thing about the *Brahma Kapala* was, whatever alms people put into it would promptly be swallowed by the bowl itself!

No matter how hard Shiva tried to fill it, the bowl always remained empty.

This *Brahma Kapala* is inside all of us. It is nothing but our own ego. The ego is such that it swallows everything!

Whether you want to base your life on asking, or on gratitude, is entirely up to you.

Gratitude is not some kind of morality which is imposed on you.

It is a basic principle for your own happiness!

Once a man went to Ramana Maharishi and said, *Bhagwan, I want peace!*

Ramana replied, *From your own statement, just remove the word 'I', remove the word 'want' – and what remains is Peace!*

The only way to have a live connection with reality, with Existence, is through gratitude.

When you are loving, flowing, filled with gratitude, you will always feel the tremendous energy of Existence flow through you.

We have not tasted the sweetness of gratitude, the

tremendous sense of fulfilment that you feel when you pay your gratitude to Existence.

Shall we try an experiment?

For the next two hours, keep aside your worries, and focus on all that Existence has already given you.

I know you must be thinking, *If I don't worry about my needs, how can I fulfil them? What will happen to my family? What will happen to my business?*

Agreed, you have to think about all these things. But just for the next two hours, take all these loads off your head.

In any case, do you think your family or your business is running because of you?

Let me tell you, things are running smoothly not *because of* us, but *despite* us!

If Existence had to depend on our intelligence to sustain our families or our wealth, we would all be destitute by now!

Shall we spend a while paying our gratitude to Existence?

Instructions for Sahasrara Dhyana

Listen to this music.

Think of whoever you want, your favourite deity. The form is not important. But pay your gratitude to Existence for this gift of Life.

Life itself is a great gift from Existence.

Have we worked very hard to deserve life? No!
 So living itself is enough reason to be grateful.
 When you give your thanks to Existence, remember all the
 people who have made your life what it is today.
 Start with your parents - the people who gave you life. Pay
 your deepest gratitude to them.
 Forgive them for any way in which they may have hurt you.
 Ask their forgiveness for all the wrong that you have
 done them.
 Forgive completely, feel only gratitude!

Now remember each person who has helped you in life - the
 doctors in the hospital where you were born, your teachers in
 school and college, your friends and relatives. Pay your
 gratitude to them all.

Think of the strangers who have helped you - the farmers
 who grow your food, the weavers who weave your clothes.
 Thank them all.

Even your enemies have played a role in your life, they have
 taught you something.
 Drop the anger. Drop the hatred. Forgive them and ask
 forgiveness. Do it with all your sincerity!

Have you thanked Existence for the beauties of nature?
 Have you thanked the sun for warming you every morning?
 Have you paid thanks for the water you drink?

How many things we have forgotten to pay our gratitude for!
 Now you can do it.
 Give each and every one your thanks.

When you pay your thanks to all of Existence, also remember
 the enlightened masters who made us aware of the joy of
 gratitude.
 So the best way to thank them is – simply to be blissful!
 Pay your gratitude to the *Sadguru*, the master.

Listen to the music.
 Allow this music to flow through you, to enrich you.
 If you feel like standing, swaying to the music, dancing – do
 it. If you prefer to sit still, do that. But let the music become
 part of you. Experience it as if it arises from your own Being.
 When the music stops, remain in silence for a while.
 After this meditation, we will have *ananda bhava darshan*,
 or *Energy Darshan*.
 Let me explain this right away, because I don't want words to
 interrupt your flow after the Sahasrara Dhyana.

What is the purpose of Energy Darshan?
 Energy Darshan is the moment of *diksha*.

All these days you have heard so much about so many things
 – about life, about spirituality. You have been given so many
 meditation techniques.
 Now you will be given the power to work these things out in
 your life.

More than what I can give you intellectually, this is the true gift that only an enlightened master can give.

Technically, what happens is that I awaken the energy of your Being with a touch on your *Ajna chakra*. It is as simple as that - but it can transform your life.

For Energy Darshan, I want you all to come in fresh white clothes. Take a bath before you come, wash your hair if possible.

When you wear white, the energy flow is beautiful. The colour white has the power to make you more tranquil and receptive.

Swamiji, I have already taken diksha from my guru...

That is no problem. I place no conditions on you. You can follow whomsoever you like, even after accepting Energy Darshan.

This is not the traditional kind of *diksha*. It is purely the transfer of spiritual energy from me to you, what we call *shaktipat*. This energy will encourage you on the path of meditation, support you in your inner search.

And if you still don't feel comfortable with the idea, you are free not to accept Energy Darshan. Simply relax and keep alive the blissful mood, that will be enough.

Swamiji, you will be giving us your aashirwaad (blessings)?

I don't want to use that word – because I don't know if I am qualified.

All I can say is, I will pray to *Parashakti* (Existence) who has blessed me with this spiritual life, I will pray to *Parashakti* to bless you all.

Let that *shakti*, the great energy of Existence, guide you all in this spiritual life. I can only allow myself to become hollow as a bamboo, allow that energy to flow through me, to inspire you all.

During Energy Darshan, some of you may have some spiritual experiences, some inner awakening. According to the aspirations and the qualifications, *Parashakti* will bestow upon each.

Allow whatever happens to happen. If nothing happens, allow that also!

Just be open, go with the flow.

Enter into a deep communion with Parashakti through the energy of the Sadguru.

Surrender your whole Being to Parashakti.

Offer yourself to Existence.

(the group enters into Sahasrara Dhyana as music plays)

At the end of half an hour, Swamiji chants softly:

*jagrat swapna sushupti
manasa vacha karmana
sarvam brahmaarpanam bhavatu
swaaha*

(My waking, dreaming and sleeping
My thoughts, words and actions
All these I surrender
to Existence)

*(Group receives Energy Darshan individually from Swamiji.
Music and dancing follow.)*



The Mind of a Mystic

Does all life spring from one cosmic source?

*Are we all connected in ways too deep
for the mind to grasp?*

*Is there really such a thing
as no-mind state?*



*Swamiji with the team of scientists who conducted the experiments
on his science-defying neurological system*

For centuries, science and spirituality have been battling it out on these issues of perennial importance for humanity.

Although spiritual leaders have always maintained that the no-mind state is a 'real' phenomenon, and a perfectly realizable goal for all of us, the scientific community has naturally been unwilling to accept this without solid proof.

For the first time in our century, science has hopefully found a key to supernormal and paranormal phenomena, with solid medical evidence that explains why the spiritually super-evolved are blessed with 'powers' that the rest of us can only daydream about.

In March 2004, hoping to find answers to these vital questions, a team of top neurologists from Oklahoma (USA) performed pioneering and extensive scientific research on Swamiji's science-defying neurological system.

The team's preliminary research report, presented in the following pages, has profound relevance not only for the global medical fraternity, but for every one of us who has been silently asking these same questions - who believe and yet don't believe, who know and yet don't know - for all of humanity, fellow adventurers on this pathless path that is Life!



A Mind Matters Column™

The Mind of a Mystic

By R. Murali Krishna, M.D.

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Spirit

Paramahansa Sri Nithyananda Swami is a trim, healthy-looking young man with dark, shoulder-length hair. Handsome and polite, possessing an open manner and a wealth of curiosity, he could be any ordinary American college student.

The difference is that ordinary American college students do not wear saffron robes and turbans, have not experienced spiritual enlightenment and are not regarded as a teacher, healer and mystic by millions of people in all corners of the world.

A mystic? The term is not a bad fit for ‘Swami’, as he is known. Mystics, popular culture tells us, have direct communion with God. Through means not understood or measurable, mystics are thought to have access to ultimate realities or truths. Picture a mystic and you’ll probably picture someone full of bliss, someone gifted with lofty thoughts and insights that the rest of us do not possess. The very presence of a mystic is thought to bring peace and healing to others.

That’s an apt description of Swami, a 27-year-old from South India. He is approached by thousands of people every year

seeking relief from diseases and ailments that conventional medical approaches have not cured. Swami’s background lends him the air of a mystic, too. He left his home as a teen, visited ashrams across India, immersed himself in philosophy, read extensively and mastered the art of meditation.

When Swami passed through Oklahoma City recently as one stop in his world travels, I asked him if he would let me use some of modern medicine’s newest technology to peer into his brain while he meditated. My goal: to understand, measure and demystify what happens during the mystic phenomena. Swami, who believes that meditation has a scientific basis, happily agreed.

The procedures Swami went through were administered by some of Oklahoma City’s finest and most experienced physicians, neuropsychologists and researchers: Drs. Fordyce, Ruwe and Higgins of the Jim Thorpe Rehabilitation Center Neuropsychology Department and Dr. Chacko of the PET Center of Oklahoma. These doctors were using technology they use with patients on a routine basis. When they look at images obtained by their technology, they know what’s normal and what’s not.

The results from testing Swami? Decidedly not normal!

Imaging Brain Activity

Our first look into Swami’s brain was achieved with the help of a Positron Emission Tomography (PET) device. Unlike traditional diagnostic techniques that produce images of the body’s structure or anatomy, such as X-rays, CT scans or

MRI, PET produces images of the function of the brain through the metabolic activity of cells. An analog of glucose is attached to a radioactive PET tracer. The PET scanner then images the metabolically active brain areas at any given time.

In the case of Swami, the drug was intended to identify highly active areas of the brain in an alert and conscious state, in the early stages of meditation and during deep meditation.

The results of the PET scan tests were stunning. To begin with, the activity in the frontal lobes of Swami's brain were significantly heightened, even in early meditation stages. The level of activity was several times higher than would be seen in the average human brain under any conditions. The frontal lobes are associated with the functions of intelligence, attention, wisdom and judgment.

When we then asked Swami to go into the deepest meditation state, there were two more remarkable findings.

First, the dominant hemisphere of Swami's brain was more than 90 percent shut down. It was as if Swami's brain had packed up and gone on vacation. It was quiet and still, completely at peace ... and Swami had made it so at will.

A second amazing aspect of Swami's deep meditation was that the lower portion of his mesial frontal areas lighted up in a very significant way. This area roughly corresponds to the reputed location of the mystical 'Third Eye'.

When we later asked Swami what he was doing when the

mesial frontal areas lighted up, he said he was opening his Third Eye.

Associated with both cosmic and inner knowledge, and thought to be a place of clarity and peace, the Third Eye is considered by many to be the seat of the soul. Were we seeing an indication that deep meditation can open an area of the brain responsible for communicating with the divine, looking deep into the mysteries of Self or creation? I believe the PET scan revealed what I call the brain's 'D-spot'. Whether you consider the 'D' in D-spot to stand for Delight, the Divine or even Dopamine (the chemical through which our bodies experience pleasure), initial indications are that meditation can stimulate it.

Measuring Brainwaves

The second procedure we used to look into Swami's brain is known as Quantitative Electroencephalography, or QEEG. QEEG measures electrical patterns in the brain, patterns commonly referred to as brainwaves.

There are four bandwidths of brainwaves, each different in speed, and each associated with a different state of mind. For instance, beta brainwaves are small and fast and linked with an awake, alert state of mind. Alpha brainwaves are slower and larger and are connected to feelings of well-being. Theta waves represent a state of consciousness that is close to sleep, a stage in which there is a sense of calmness and serenity without active thought.

In a day's time, most people will experience all four types of

brainwaves. The progression from one bandwidth to another, though, is not so easily in their control.

From Swami's QEEG, though, we can see that he has complete control over his brainwaves. When in deep meditation, his brain smoothly shifted from one state to another, like a talented pianist playing the scales. There was no hesitation and no retreating, just continuous, fluid shifts from one type of brainwave to the next. Because the QEEG represents the five brainwave bandwidths as colors, it was as if we were watching Swami float from color to color within a rainbow!

Conclusions

The brain is the body's most complex organ, containing more than 100 billion neurons, each of them in chemical and electrical conversation with upto 10,000 other neurons. Its sheer capacity to process information is astonishing.

Remarkably, that complexity presents little difficulty for Swami in managing his brain activity. Swami's mind – his thoughts, emotions and intellect – control his brain. He can, in a very fluid, easy way, shift his brain function and alter his brainwaves.

More than answering questions, the voyage we took into the mind of a mystic brings intriguing questions for study.

Are there techniques we can learn and teach that will bring balance and peace into people's lives?

Can we invoke a healing response or accelerate healing

through specific training? Can we learn techniques that will allow us to control pain or alter the course of a disease?

Can we learn to activate what I call our D-spot, thus putting us in instant connection to delight or the divine?

The results from our study of Swami are new pages in our world's growing book of research on the brain. There continue to be indications that the human mind may be able to choose to heal the body. We're now looking at the possibility of people learning and acquiring these healing capabilities, an event of immense benefit for humankind. The potential for altering the rates and progression of many diseases – heart disease, cancer, arthritis, alcoholism and many others – is beginning to look achievable.

Swami is a bridge between the invisible, ancient world of mysticism and the modern, visible world of science and discovery. As brain research continues on a widespread basis, and as we appropriately bring the phenomena of mysticism into the realm of science for further study, we are taking strides on a path of hope and health.

SPACE OF BLISS

The Bidadi ashram

The hub of all Dhyanaapeetam activities is the Bidadi ashram, located 35 km south-east of Bangalore city, which is the software capital of India, and among Asia's fastest growing cities.

First impressions

On the busy Bangalore-Mysore highway, about 2 km past the town of Bidadi, a Dhyanaapeetam signboard on the left points out the leafy path that winds its way to the ashram.

Nestling among low hills, spread over 16 acres, the ashram brings to life Swamiji's vision of traditional simplicity with modern amenities. A number of unassuming, functional structures dot the landscape. It is difficult to imagine that this serene commune is the headquarters from which Dhyanaapeetam conducts its international operations that span three continents.

From the fork in the road (with one path leading to the administrative and living quarters, and the other to the sacred banyan tree), the visitor can spy the rustic outline of the famous Laughing Temple, where Swamiji holds intimate interviews and takes classes for the ashramites. This area includes accommodation for ashramites and patients, a kitchen-

cum-dining-hall, outdoor dining spaces, the ashram office, and Ananda Gandha, Swamiji's simple kuteer (dwelling).



The sacred banyan and Dakshinamurthy shrine

A short walk down the path, past a bamboo grove and green fields, takes the visitor to the 300-year-old sacred banyan tree. The sacred banyan spreads its vast canopy over the small shrine dedicated to Lord Dakshinamurthy, who is known as the Adi Guru (the first-ever Guru). Revealed to Swamiji in a vision, and worshipped as the guiding spirit of the ashram, the sacred banyan encloses a space resonant with healing energy. Simply spending a few minutes under this tree can instantly soothe the nerves and revive the spirits.

En route to the sacred banyan is Ananda Sabha, the meditation hall used for public gatherings. Healers' meets and advanced-level meditation courses are held here, to let participants get a feel of ashram life. Close by is the Ananda Galleria, where ashram literature, books, audio & video and meditation accessories are available.

A day in ashram life

As on date, over fifty ashramites aged between eight and eighty live and learn in Swamiji's presence at the ashram.

For the ashramites, the day starts before sunrise, with Guru Pooja (obeisance to the Guru) performed to Lord Dakshinamurthy under the sacred banyan.

This is followed by a meditation session, after which ashramites turn to their daily administrative tasks.



*Daily healing at
Ananda Sabha*

When Swamiji is at the ashram, he is available for healing and darshan for two hours every morning. Else, healing is offered by those ashramites who are initiated Ananda healers. The ailing and the needy from the villages and towns all around flock to the ashram daily for aid and comfort.

Simple sattvic meals (a vegetarian diet that supports the body in spiritual practices) are served thrice a day in the friendly ashram dining hall, where Swamiji's talks and bhajans (devotional music) play all day.

At dusk, a simple but enchanting aarati is performed to Lord Nataraja (The Dancing Shiva) at Ananda Sabha. This is followed by Swamiji's taped discourse, a meditation session and the singing of keertans (hymns). Sometimes, the day culminates in an hour's dancing to Swamiji's favourite bhajans.

Dhyanapeetam: Today and Tomorrow

Dhyanapeetam's activities in India include daily healing at the ashram, free healing camps, ASPs (weekend workshops on chakra healing through meditation), Dhyana Satsangs (mass-meditation programs for urban and rural communities), Gnana Daana (meditation camps for the youth, held in schools and colleges) and productivity & de-stress programs for corporates.



*An ASP participant
receives Ananda
Darshan*

Dhyanapeetam's overseas centres are rapidly spreading the message of meditation and blissful living, with regular Life Bliss courses (a variant of ASP) conducted by acharyas (teachers) personally trained by Swamiji.

Many exciting projects are on the anvil, including a new-age gurukul (learning space) for youngsters, a new meditation hall overlooking the natural lotus pond, mobile medical assistance for the surrounding villages, and a full-fledged multi-specialty charitable hospital at Bidadi.



*A mass meditation
program in progress*



DHYANAPEETAM MILESTONES

In less than two years since its inception, Dhyanapeetam has grown to be an international organization with operations spanning three continents. While making a significant positive contribution to the community today, Dhyanapeetam also cherishes the vision of awakening humanity to a vibrant and joyful tomorrow.

A quick look at some of our more important milestones:

- ◆ *Over 110 Ananda Spurana Programs or ASPs (workshops on meditation and chakra healing) have been personally conducted by Swamiji at 30 different global locations.*
- ◆ *Hundreds have participated in the advanced-level Nithyananda Spurana Program (NSP), and have been initiated with new names that indicate their spiritual path.*
- ◆ *50 ashramites live and learn at Bidadi ashram. Of these, seven men and four women have been initiated into sannyas.*
- ◆ *Ananda Healing has cured thousands of ailments from migraine to cancer. To date, more than 75,000 people have received this healing touch directly from Swamiji.*
- ◆ *There are over 300 healing & meditation centres worldwide, and over 700 practising Ananda healers.*
- ◆ *The Gnana Daana Project for bringing meditation to the youth has already touched over 82,000 students and young adults.*

- ◆ *Over 70 Dhyana Satsangs (mass-meditation programs) and 100 free discourses have been personally conducted by Swamiji, with lakhs participating.*
- ◆ *Over 1000 homes and workplaces have been visited, energized and blessed by Swamijito date.*
- ◆ *Over 30 books have been released in four languages. Over 100 audio tapes, audio & video CDs have been released to date.*
- ◆ *Hundreds of Ananda sevaks (volunteers) work hand-in-hand with ashramites to organize courses and satsangs in their areas, run healing & meditation centres, and conduct free healing camps.*



OUR PUBLICATIONS

TITLES IN ENGLISH

The Formless in Form

A pictorial biography of Swamiji

The Gossip Of Nithyananda

A collection of Swamiji's most memorable quotes

A Small Story...

Swamiji's best-loved parables

From Pain to Bliss

Insights from Swamiji

From Worrying to Wondering

Insights from Swamiji

Question + Swamiji = Answer!

Your questions answered

The Simple Truth, Straightaway!

A public address by Swamiji

Is Spirituality relevant in our time?

A frank talk with the press

Om Mani Padme Hum

27 ways to approach the Master

Discovering Love

Insights from Swamiji

Ananda Healing : Your shortcut to God!

An introduction to healing initiation

A Garland of Memories

Devotees' reminiscences of time spent with Swamiji

Open the door... let the breeze in!

Tools for joyful living

Uncommon Answers to Common Questions

A compilation of talks given by Swamiji

Meditation is for you!

An introduction to the science and art of meditation

Swamiji as we know him

Unforgettable moments in the Master's presence

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Talks in the USA on life, meditation & bliss

Instant Inspiration

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From Peak to Peak

An enchanting journey with Swamiji through the Himalayas

TITLES IN TAMIL

Nithyananda : Oru Arimugam

An introduction to Swamiji

Kathavai Thira... Kaatru Varattum!

Tools for joyful living

Arivu, Anubhavam, Anubhooti*Making the transition from knowledge to experience***Yein Pada Poojai?***Experience the Divine in your home***Pada Poojayin Mahatvam***Transform your home into an energy-field!***Manam kadanda nilai***Research report of American doctors on Swamiji's science-defying neurological system***Yantra Dhyanam****Paramahamsarin Gnana Mozhikal****Kaatrin Suvadukkal****Gnanattin Thiravukol****Manadai Thira... Magalchi Pongattum!****Udirum Siragugal****Gnanattin Kural****Saagum Kalai****Guruve Sharanam****Udal - Gnanattin Theyir****Padippu - Thdaikarkale Padikarkal Aakkungal****Dhyaanam****Ilanjarkale****Anudinavum Paramahamsarudan****Vaazhvin Rahasyangal****Swargam Unakkullei****TITLES IN KANNADA****Jeevana Ganga***An introduction to Swamiji***Ondu sanna kathe...***Swamiji's best-loved parables***Dukkhadinda... anandakke***Moving from pain to bliss***Chinteyinda... aaraamakke***Remove the word 'worry' from your life!*

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM DHYANAPEETAM

Audio Cassettes, Audio & Video CDs

- Swamiji's talks
- Meditation techniques
- Mantras (Healing Chants)
- Music

Energized products & accessories for meditation & daily use

- Red sandalwood *malas* (rosaries)
- Swamiji pendants
- *Rudraaksh* (holy bead) pendants
- Bracelets
- Rings
- Watches
- *Vibhooti* (sacred ash)
- *Kumkum* (vermilion)
- T-shirts & *sarees*
- Photographs
- Table clocks
- Keychains
- *Yantras* (Energy maps)
- Meditation Mats
- Chanting boxes
- Calendars

To order, or to find out more, visit www.dhyanaapeetam.org

HEALING & MEDITATION COURSES

Ananda Spurana Program (ASP)

A 2-day healing and meditation workshop that focuses on the seven major *chakras* (energy zones) of our body, with powerful meditation techniques to cleanse and energize each.

Ananda Yoga

An introduction to a more fulfilling, stress-free and blissful way of life. *Acharyas* personally trained by Swamiji guide participants through practical meditation techniques that help them easily integrate spirituality into their normal lifestyle.

Shakti Spurana Program (SSP)

A one-day entry-level meditation camp that introduces participants to the three bodies (physical, subtle and causal), and helps them harness the energies of each for optimal daily living.

Nithyananda Spurana Program (NSP)

A four-day advanced-level course conducted personally by Swamiji, and open only to those who have already completed the ASP. Participants work on all their seven bodies, with intensive guided meditation sessions and workouts.

Healers' Initiation

Selected sincere seekers who have completed at least two ASPs (or 1 NSP) are personally initiated by Swamiji into Ananda Healing. Healers become direct channels for Swamiji's powerful healing energy, which has cured diseases from migraine to cancer.

OUR CENTRES WORLDWIDE

Visit your nearest Dhyanaapeetam Centre for:

** FREE Ananda Healing services (for physical and mental ailments) * Books and literature * Swamiji's talks, meditation, healing chants and music on Audio tapes, Audio & Video CDs * Energized products & accessories for meditation & daily use * Information about Swamiji's schedule and upcoming courses & activities * Fortnightly satsangs (prayer meetings) * Details of Life Bliss programs being conducted worldwide by Acharyas personally trained by Swamiji*

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