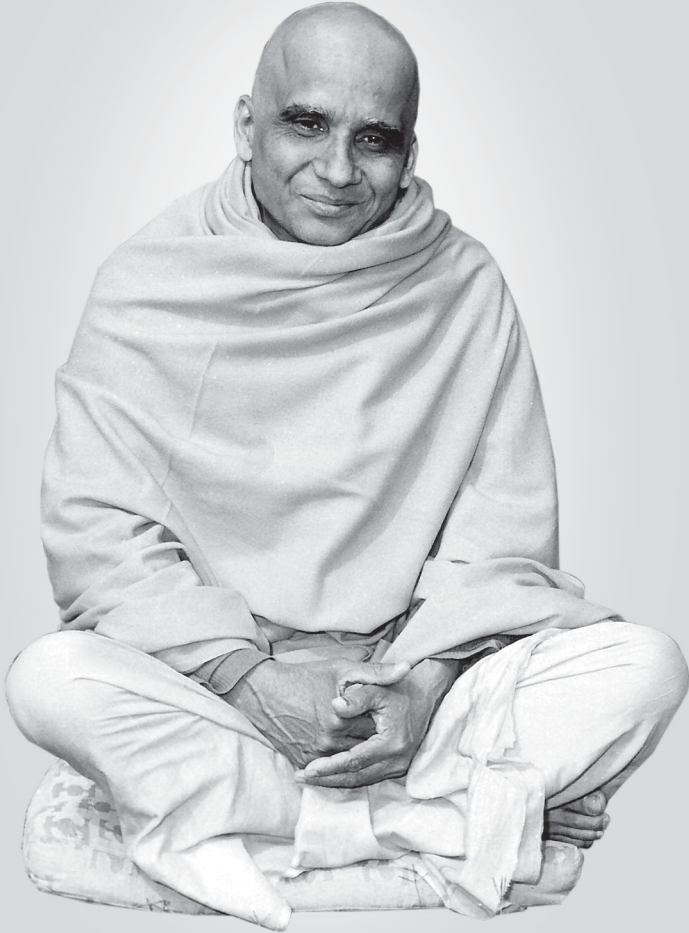




Spiritual Journey in April

(Excerpts from the book "True Spiritual Living, Vol. I"
by H. H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji)



Compiled by :-
Sri U. Narayana Rao



THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O ADORABLE LORD OF MERCY AND LOVE!
SALUTATIONS AND PROSTRATIONS UNTO THEE.
THOU ART OMNIPRESENT, OMNIPOTENT AND OMNISCIENT.
THOU ART SATCHIDANANDA
(EXISTENCE-CONSCIOUSNESS-BLISS ABSOLUTE).
THOU ART THE INDWELLER OF ALL BEINGS.

GRANT US AN UNDERSTANDING HEART,
EQUAL VISION, BALANCED MIND,
FAITH, DEVOTION AND WISDOM.
GRANT US INNER SPIRITUAL STRENGTH
TO RESIST TEMPTATIONS AND TO CONTROL THE MIND.
FREE US FROM EGOISM, LUST, GREED, HATRED,
ANGER AND JEALOUSY.

FILL OUR HEARTS WITH DIVINE VIRTUES.
LET US BEHOLD THEE IN ALL THESE NAMES AND FORMS.
LET US SERVE THEE IN ALL THESE NAMES AND FORMS.
LET US EVER REMEMBER THEE.
LET US EVER SING THY GLORIES.
LET THY NAME BE EVER ON OUR LIPS.
LET US ABIDE IN THEE FOR EVER AND EVER.

--Swami Sivananda



**Spiritual Journey
in April**



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*(Excerpts from the book "True Spiritual Living, Vol. I" by
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Compiled by :-

Sri U. Narayana Rao,

The D.L.S. Branch, RAZOLE - 533 242.

Mob : 93987 23233, 99890 72127



Publishers :

MADHAVA DIVYA DHAM
TAVAREKERE - BENGALURU - 562 130

2018

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First Print : January, 2018

Copies : 1000

For Free Distribution.

Publishers :

MADHAVA DIVYA DHAM
TAVAREKERE - BENGALURU - 562 130

Printed at :

Sri Chakra Off-Set Printers,
T A T I P A K A - 533 249.
Mobile : 98669 52350

Price : Devotion to Gurudev, who is no other than God.

(This book was published with the blessings of
Pujya Sri Swami Hamsanandaji of Shivanandashram H.Q.,
Rishikesh.)

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FOREWORD

James Tela

4-16, Sky Top Gardens,
PARLIN, N.J. 08859 (U.S.A)

This booklet titled “Spiritual Journey in April” is a compilation of excerpts from the book “True Spiritual Living, Volume - 1” by H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. It is through the blessings of Swamiji that this booklet has become available and found its way to you. Swamiji’s blessings are now upon you.

It is advised to read these excerpts slowly and to reflect on their meaning. Swamiji’s writings were perfect in every sense of the word. Deep reflection on these excerpts is required with a modicum of patience. Perseverance is a needed trait when treading the spiritual path. When reading these excerpts, allow time to digest what you have read and revisit them again and again as slowly the meaning becomes revealed by the Grace of Swami Krishnananda.

Swami Krishnananda was an embodiment of pure consciousness. The Divine Love that poured through Swamiji was available to anyone and everyone, as all people regardless of their background were treated the same. Swamiji knew the aspirant’s position on the spiritual path and seamlessly guided with Grace and Love.

Swamiji was merely a witness and knower to the workings of space and time, unlike ordinary mankind which is limited by these conditions. Swamiji was a great saint who helped devotees anywhere, and at any time because the rules and conditions at space and time did not apply to Swamiji.

As you read through this booklet, remember that even though Swamiji left his mortal coil on November, 23rd in 2001, since Swami Krishnananda’s Grace, Love and Blessings are limitless.

May Swami Krishnananda continue to inspire seekers of Truth to tread the spiritual path. Know that Swami Krishnananda’s blessings are always with us all.

Hari Om.

James Tela

(James Tela)

Date : 1.1. 2018

PARLIN, N.J. (U.S.A)



Om Nama Bhagavate Krishnanandaya

PREFACE

His Holiness Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was one of the greatest philosophers and mystics of all time. He has illumined countless seekers all over the world through personal contact, and through his innumerable talks, discourses and lectures, many of which have been published in book form by the Divine Life Society Head Quarters.

“**True Spiritual Living, Volume - I**” is a series of discourses given by Revered Swamiji Maharaj in the Sivananda Ashram during December, 1975 and January, 1976 to provide guidelines for those who wish to tread the spiritual path. The Kathopanishad speaks about the difficulty in treading the spiritual path and also the absolute necessity of wise guidance of a teacher. In these discourses, Sri Swamiji Maharaj in his inimitable way guides the seekers to understand the path and helps them to unfold their potential by giving an in-depth analysis of the process of attaining Self-realisation. The profundity and depth of Swamiji’s thoughts, will be a great delight to spiritual seekers everywhere. This first volume of the book consisting of twelve illuminating discourses was released on April 25th 2015, the sacred occasion of the 93rd birthday of Sri Swamiji Maharaj.

Pujyasri Swami Hamsanandaji of Sivananda Ashram H.Q. asked me to prepare a book by name, “**Spiritual Journey in April**” by culling 30 excerpts from one of the books of H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji. I did so using the book “**True Spiritual Living, Volume - I**” by Revered Swamiji. We have to patiently squeeze and taste the sugar-cane like sweetness imbued with wisdom in all these excerpts. Every excerpt, if read with all concentration, elevates us to Higher Spiritual Realms. This book can be used by the Sadhaks for *Swadhyaya* at any time (not only in the month specified) . I profusely thank *Sri James Tela, 4-16, Sky Top Gardens, PARLIN, N.J. 08859 (U.S.A)* for offering valuable **Foreword** for this book. My thanks also to Smt. Ramani Jayaram of Madhava Divya Dham, Bengaluru for comming forward with a noble heart to publish this book. Abundant benedictions would be showered by Revered Swamiji upon all the patient readers with Infinite wisdom and peace for their effort they put in reading this book.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih.

Razole,
Date : 14.1. 2018.

Yours,
In the Service of Gurudev,
U. Narayana Rao
- U. NARAYANA RAO.





1. SPIRITUALITY IS A STATE OF BEING.

Spirituality is not a way of living in the sense of conducting oneself outwardly in relationship to other people, but rather it is a state of being. But a doubt will arise in the mind: Is it not also doing something? Is it only being? We have heard from many people that spirituality also implies intense unselfish activity; the more we become spiritual, the more is our capacity to work and the more we become capable of doing unselfish service, so that spirituality is also doing instead of merely being. Such doubt can come in the minds of people. Hence, how do we say that spirituality is a state of being, rather than doing? This doubt arises because one is not clear as to the real meaning of 'being' or 'doing'. We are brought up from our very childhood in an atmosphere of social relationships, and we cannot get out of this prejudice. 'Prejudice' means an attitude which has entered into our very blood, and which influences our every thought, every feeling, and everything that we do in life. Now, when I say prejudice, I do not mean merely the conditions in which we have been brought up in this particular life, because we had many lives in previous incarnations. We must have taken many births, and all the impressions of our thoughts, feelings and actions of millions and millions of births that we have taken add to the prejudice of our thinking, so that what we are thinking today is a cumulative effect of all that we have thought and felt and done in the many births through which we have passed. This prejudice has become a part of our nature. This peculiar trait of ours has a meaning which is deeper than ordinary human conduct.

2. WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MY BEING AND YOUR BEING?

Our very existence is a prejudice. This peculiar trait of ours has a meaning which is deeper than ordinary human conduct. The basis of this externalised, socialised attitude is the primary prejudice of the mind, which is called the concept of space, time and cause; this is our main prejudice. Prejudices such as, “I am an Indian,” “I am a German,” “I am a man,” “I am a woman” are minor ones. But the major prejudice is: “I am in space and in time, and I am in a system of causal relation.” This is a higher prejudice, and nobody can get out of it. Whatever be the extent of our knowledge, whatever be the depth of our genius, we cannot get out of the idea that we are in space, we are in time, and things are connected in some sort of a causal relation. Not only that—we have the idea that things are outside us. Why has this peculiar notion of there being a distinction between being and doing arisen? It is because you have a distinction between yourself and other people in the world. Inasmuch as my existence—which is called ‘my being’—is different from the being of other people, I have a necessity to develop a relationship with other people. This is called ‘doing’. So, the necessity of doing arises on account of my not being one with others, and others not being one with me. If I am them, and they are me, the question of doing does not arise because there is nothing to be done. But, it is not true. I am not them, and they are not me. We are all different people. You have a being of your own; you exist. And I have a being of my own; I exist. But my being is different from your being, isn’t it? So, what is the connection between my being and your being? That connection is called action. That is why you do something, and I do something. So, we have the original doubt in the mind of there being a fundamental difference between being and doing.

3. WHAT LINK IS THERE BETWEEN YOU AND ME?

As long as we are different from one another, there shall be a difference between being and doing. This is also the reason for the philosophical distinction that people make between knowledge and activity—or in Sanskrit parlance, *jnana* and *karma*. There is a tremendous philosophical fight about whether knowledge is superior or action is superior. All these difficulties have arisen on account of a fundamental error in understanding the human situation itself. The question of whether knowledge is superior or action is superior arises from another question: Am I one with you, or am I different from you? If I am different from you, really speaking, then action cannot be avoided; it is superior in its own way. But if there is some sort of a connection between you and me, what is that connection? Now, you are sitting there, so many yards away from me. Do you see any connection between you and me? I can see no connection. There is no wire connecting you to me—no thread. If that were the case, it would be very difficult to live in this world because, on one side, we have a compulsive feeling that there is some connection between ourselves and others, and on the other side, we cannot see any connection. That is why we are fighting with people. Every day you fight with me, and I fight with you. I disagree with you, and you disagree with me. I do not like you, and you do not like me. Why does this situation arise? It is because you cannot see any connection with me, and I cannot see any connection with you. It cannot be seen. Well, it is a very practical truth. What is the connection? You are sitting there. What link is there between you and me? Absolutely nothing! So, I can do anything to you, and you can do anything to me. This is called war, battle, social tension. And this cannot stop as long as we have a feeling that we are not connected among ourselves.

4. THE DOUBLE ATTITUDE OF OUR NATURE IS THE CAUSE OF OUR SORROW.

On one side we have got a feeling that without some sort of relationship with others, we cannot exist. On the other side we have a feeling: "What connection do you have with me? I am an independent person." Sometimes people speak like that. "What have I to do with you? What do you think I am?" This is the quarrelsome attitude of people. When you are angry, you speak like that, isn't it? This is the outcome of the other side of your nature, which makes you wrongly think that you have no connection with people. If you have a real connection with people, you will not speak like that; but sometimes you have a feeling that there is no connection. On the other side, you feel miserable when you are absolutely alone. If I lock you up in a room for three years where you cannot see any human face, you will feel very unhappy. Why do you feel like that? If you have absolutely no connection with people, you must be happy when you are absolutely alone. But that is not true; you will be miserable. You go to all sorts of people to establish relationships, making it appear that you cannot exist without relationships. So, human life is a tension between two aspects which pull us from two different directions. On one side we feel that we are independent people, and that is the reason why we sometimes become selfish. Selfishness is due to the occasional feeling that we are independent, with no connection to other people, so we can exploit others or even destroy them. But sometimes we feel that it is very wrong, that we should not do that. We have a humanitarian feeling, a feeling of brotherhood and unity with people. This double attitude of our nature is the cause of our sorrow. Why is it that we have a double attitude? Sometimes we feel that we are different, and therefore, we can get angry. Sometimes we feel we are one, and therefore, we feel a sense of affection. The reason is simple. Again I am coming to the original point of the distinction between being and doing, which has arisen out of the central natural prejudice of our being in space and time, and of having a causal relationship of things.

5. THAT WE ARE IN SPACE, TIME AND CAUSE IS AN ERROR OF THOUGHT.

Are we in space? Are we in time? If we are in space, it means that we are disconnected from others, because space is nothing but a way of disconnecting one thing from another thing. It is because of space that you appear to be different from me. Otherwise, what is the distinction? If there is no space between us, we will merge into one, isn't it? But space prevents us from merging. So space is the primary devil, we can say, which has created this distinction of thought, feeling, action, etc. The attempt at being spiritual is the effort of the deepest reality of our nature to come to manifestation, and to overcome this prejudice of our being in space, time, and causal relationship. That we are in space, time and cause is an error of thought. If that had been the ultimate truth of things, all the problems of life would have been finished in a minute—each one would have thought that anything can be done by anyone. There would be no need for rule, law, regulation, government or anything of the kind. Any kind of system, any kind of methodology or organisation is an indication that things are not really disconnected in space and time. Why do we want a government? Why do we want a system of working at all? Why should there be any kind of organisation if everything is disconnected? Organisation is the bringing together of factors which are apparently different. But if they are really different, we cannot bring them together, so all our effort would be a failure. Everything would be meaningless in this life. But that is not what our heart speaks. It says there is some unity among things. We always speak of organisation and methodology, of working, of system, law and order, rule, and so on. Why are we speaking about these things if everything is disconnected?

6. ULTIMATELY, BEING IS THE TRUTH, NOT DOING.

The whole of human life is a drama of two scenes: being and doing. Being is what we are. Doing is what we try to manifest in order that this being may become more and more complete. Why do we do anything? Why do we establish a relationship with anything in the world—people or other things? It is because our being is limited. There is a Prof. Jack ‘being’, and an Elizabeth ‘being’, and so on—small beings—and they feel so finite and miserable. We want to expand our being, which we are trying to do by connecting ourselves with other beings—this being, that being, and hundreds of beings. If many beings join together, it looks as if the being has become very large. That is why we feel happy when we are in the midst of many friends and well-wishers, and we have a feeling that if there is a world government without any national armies, we will be very happy, perhaps. Why should there be many nations and many armies? Let there be only one government for the whole world. Then we feel more secure. We feel that way because we have a sensation of having united many beings into a larger unity, whereas now we feel we are limited beings. Therefore, even our doing or our action is only a need felt for expanding our being. Thus, ultimately, being is the truth, not doing, because our doing is only for the sake of being. Our present being is insufficient. It is limited. It is physical. It is only in one place, cut off from other people, other beings, by space, time, etc. We want to expand that being, but we are doing it in an inadequate manner. Merely because we shake hands with people, merely because we take tea with people at the same table, merely because we speak to people in a conference, it does not mean that our being has become large. However much we may try to sit together with thousands of people and have a friendly attitude towards them, still they are they, and we are we. One day or other, we will fight. Why? This is an artificial method of bringing about the largeness of being, or the unity of people.

7. SPIRITUALITY IS THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF BEING.

Mere sociological, political, economic and external methods of unity have failed, right from historical times. All the great empires have fallen, including the Roman, the Greek, the Assyrian and the Babylonian empires. Everything has gone to dust because these were all erroneous methods attempted by people, with a pious motive no doubt, for bringing about a unity which cannot happen merely by piling up particulars. The joining of people into a social unity is only a grouping of particulars into a heap, and that is not real unity. What we are trying to have is a single being, ultimately. All our beings should join together into a single being, like a single ocean having all the drops within it. We cannot see many drops in the ocean. Though there are many drops, they are all one only. The whole ocean is ultimately only one drop. It is a big drop, but it contains small drops that we cannot separate. But, if we join many stones or sand particles together, we cannot call it a single unity. Each sand particle is different from other sand particles. So, our joining together socially, politically, economically and externally is something like trying to join millions of sand particles together. They will never join. Sand particles are different from one another in spite of their being in one basket. Therefore, spirituality is not mere social relationship, though many people think it is also a part of spirituality. Spirituality can manifest itself as social relationship later on, but it is not identical with it. Spirituality is the consciousness of being. In Sanskrit we call it *sat*; *sat* means Pure Being. It is not limited being, because anything that is limited is unhappy. That is why we want to become more rich and more powerful. We want the whole world, the sky, sun, moon, stars—and even then we are not happy. Why is it that we have such desires? We want to expand our power to unlimitedness; we want to expand our wealth to unlimitedness; we want to expand our being to unlimitedness. Until that is achieved, we will not be happy.

8. THE CONCEPT OF GOD TRANSCENDS THE IDEA OF SPACE, TIME AND CAUSE.

Man is unhappy because of his limited being. Spirituality is the expansion of being. Whatever we do as an action is also a part of being. It is meant for expanding being. That is why they say karma yoga is a yoga by itself for attaining God-realisation. You will be wondering what the connection between karma and God is. The connection is simple. Every kind of relationship with others is an attempt of the soul to come to a unity of being in a largeness which expands to entire infinitude. This Supreme Being is called God. We call God the Supreme Being because there is only one Being. And all beings put together, many people sitting together, are not one being—just as, many sand particles put together do not make one sand particle. We merge in the Being of God as all drops merge in the ocean. Therefore, in our attempt at being a spiritual being, we are not trying to establish an externalised relationship with things, because externality is abolished in the Infinite. In the Infinite, there is no externality. It is universality, so we must make a distinction between universality and externality. All our activities are externalised; therefore, whatever be the apparent success of our externalised actions, ultimately they are a failure unless they are charged with a spiritual consciousness which is the consciousness of the real unity of Being. It is a single Being that is working, ultimately. That is what our religions tell us. It is God working. When we say God works, it does not mean that somebody else is working. We also have a wrong notion of God, that God means somebody else. We make a distinction between God, world and man. That is, again, due to the prejudice of space, time and cause. Why do we think that God is in the heavens and outside us? It is because of space. We bring a spatial distinction even between us and God. The concept of God transcends the idea of space, time and cause. That is the real Being, inseparable from our being, and inseparable from the beings of other people also, so that there can be only one Being.

9. IT IS ONLY CONSCIOUSNESS THAT EXISTS.

The consciousness of the totality of Being—not merely an aggregate of particulars, but the real merger of Being—is the aim of spirituality. This consciousness has to be manifest in our action. Two days back, a visitor came to me and asked, “Swamiji, you are working so much. Are you not disturbed and distracted in your meditations?” I said, “I am not working. If I am working, I will be distracted.” I asked him one question: “Here is a table. What do you see? Is this a desk or is it wood? What is it?” He said, “It is a desk.” I said, “I say it is wood, because ‘desk’ is only a name that you give to a particular position of wood. The position of wood is not a thing by itself, so you cannot say that there is such a thing as a desk. Only wood is there; the wood placed in a particular context is called a desk. Can you call a context or a position as a thing by itself? No. I can place the same wood in another position, and it becomes a cot. In a third position, it becomes a chair, doesn’t it? So there is no such thing as chair, no such thing as table, no such thing as desk; there is only wood. I am also, in my own humble way, trying to see that no such thing as work exists. It is only consciousness that exists, just as only wood exists behind the table.” He said, “It is very difficult to understand these things.” I said, “It is very difficult. What can I do? But once you become habituated to this way of thinking, all your activity becomes a manifestation of your being. You yourself are moving in your actions, like the ocean moving through the waves. So you are not doing something external to you and, therefore, karma cannot bind you. That karma which will not bind you is called karma yoga. When you yourself are the action, how can it bind you? You do not bind your own self. If you have so many confusions in your head—that your action is something outside you, proceeding from you through space and time, in respect of somebody else—then it will react upon you. That is called the nemesis of karma. That is binding karma.”

10. IN THIS MAJESTIC CREATION OF GOD ALSO IS SATAN.

When a human relationship becomes philosophical, it becomes karma yoga. When it becomes unphilosophical, it becomes passion, desire, a source of bondage. The same movement-- the same fire, the same water, the same sword, the same knife—can work both ways. When our relationship with things outside is philosophically motivated and intelligently directed with a conscious purpose present in the mind always, never missed at any moment of time, it becomes yoga. All activity is yoga. All relationship is good relationship. Everything is fine and grand and beautiful in this majestic creation of God. But, in this majestic creation of God also is Satan. There is Mara. This is a peculiar thing that we cannot understand: how error crept into the grand structure of God's creation. What is evil? Though there is ultimately no such thing as evil, a person caught up in a peculiar movement of consciousness cannot realise that there is an erroneous movement of consciousness. We cannot detect mistakes when we get identified with the mistakes. A judge cannot examine a case if he is himself involved in the case. He must be a witness of the case; only then can he pass the correct judgment. If we ourselves are involved in the mistake, we cannot detect the mistake. We cannot know what mistakes we are committing because we have identified our consciousness with the mistake itself. We have become the embodiment of blunder; we are embodiments of mistake. How can we know that we are committing mistakes? Who is to know this when we ourselves are that? Therefore, a Guru is necessary. We cannot know our mistakes. When we do a wrong, who will tell us that we are doing a wrong? We cannot know it, because we have identified ourselves with it. Sometimes the Guru's grace, sometimes God's blessings come and enlighten us, illumine us. Our meritorious deeds done in the previous lives come and awaken us. When everything goes wrong, the intellect can detect that something is wrong; but if the intellect itself goes wrong, then who will detect the mistake? That is our pitiable condition.

11. THE SPIRITUAL PATH IS A RAZOR'S EDGE IN TWO WAYS.

In the Upanishads, the term *kshurasya dhara*, or the razor's edge, is used, which means two things. The spiritual path is a razor's edge in two ways. It is sharp and cutting—as dangerous as the edge of a razor. If we go a little wrong, it will cut our nose. It is like handling thousands of volts of live wire. The spiritual path is like a high-voltage wire. It can spotlight our whole life with a blaze of illumination or it can burn us to ashes. It can do both things. One of the admirers of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa once came to him and said, “You touched Vivekananda; why don't you touch me also? You gave him cosmic consciousness by touch. What mistake have I committed? Why should I not also be touched?” Sri Ramakrishna said nothing. He kept quiet. But this man went on insisting and asking this question again and again: “Why don't you touch me? Why don't you touch me?” One day Sri Ramakrishna said, “You fellow, you want me to touch you? Come here, I will touch you. You will become ashes just now!” “Oh no!” he said, and ran away from there. The idea is that there is no use merely being touched by a high-tension wire unless we are good conductors of that force. If we are good conductors, we will pass that force through us. We will receive it properly. Otherwise, it will be like passing thousands of volts through a small filament of an electric bulb that can bear only 220 volts. It will simply fuse in a second and burst. Our scriptures tell us that nobody should try to practise yoga unless proper preparation has already been made by way of discipline. In the raja yoga of Patanjali, the terms *yama* and *niyama* are used. In Vedantic terminology, *sadhana chatushtaya* and such other terms are used. When our relationship with things gets twisted, it returns to us like a boomerang instead of expanding itself into universality. This wrong twisting of consciousness, making it turn back upon us, is karma; it is not karma yoga. When it has a tendency to expand into universality, it becomes karma yoga. When it turns back upon us to bind us, it becomes karma, action.

12. NEITHER ARE PEOPLE AND THE WORLD OUTSIDE GOD, NOR IS GOD OUTSIDE PEOPLE AND THE WORLD.

In the basic principles of Indian culture especially, the necessity to adjust oneself with a particular level of life is insisted upon. We use the famous complex terms known as *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha*. Material values, economic values, vital values, ethical values and spiritual values are all important. We cannot say, "I am a lover of God and I care a hoot for this world of matter." Such talk and such feelings are misplaced. There are misplaced religionists and enthusiastic seekers who do not understand themselves properly and say, "I care only for God, and not for man and the world." There are other people who say, "I don't care for God. I care only for man and the world." Both these are on the wrong path because the God that we are seeking is not a God outside the world, and the world which we are seeing and the people in whose midst we are staying are not outside God. Neither are people and the world outside God, nor is God outside people and the world. It is easy to make this simple mistake of bifurcating the visible from the invisible and vice versa. Desires, passions, anger, greed, etc., are erroneous movements of the mind. The reason behind them is having a misplaced emphasis on certain aspects of life, while ignoring other aspects that are equally important. We do not know where we stand. We have a wrong assessment of our own knowledge, power, capacity, etc. If, in a war, the general of the army has no proper understanding of the power of his own men and no comparative knowledge of the power of his enemy, there is a great doubt whether he will win victory in the war. It is no use simply going ahead into the battlefield thinking, "I shall win victory in the war." Merely because we are rushing into the battlefield, it does not mean that we will win victory. We must take into consideration many aspects of the battle into which we are entering: firstly, our own powers, our own associates, our equipment, etc., and the corresponding powers of the opposite side.

13. VIVEKA, OR UNDERSTANDING, IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE FIRST PREREQUISITE OF SPIRITUAL PURSUITS.

We are facing the whole world in our spiritual attempts. Whose power is greater, the world's power or our power? If we have even the slightest feeling that the world is more powerful than us, and we cannot face it, then our duty would be to rise to the level of the world and then face it, rather than to go headlong and then get defeated by the world. Many seekers of Truth fail. All sadhakas are basically good, but they are not always very wise. A good person need not be a wise person, and may make mistakes in spite of his goodness. Though the intention is pious and the heart is good and pure, the intelligence is lacking, and so he receives a kick from the world. The result is a frustration of feeling, a reversion to the original mode of living, a sense of hopelessness of all pursuits, and coming to a conclusion that perhaps nothing is worthwhile and no good is going to come out from this attempt. There is nothing wrong with the attempt, but we have wrongly manifested that attempt. Viveka, or understanding, is supposed to be the first prerequisite of spiritual pursuits. Who can have understanding in this world? Who can have such wisdom? We are all muddle-headed people, confused and confounded. We get irritated, upset, and are disturbed by sights, sounds and events taking place around us. If something happens in a distant country, we can be disturbed here though we are not concerned with it, because of a peculiar psychological feeling that arises in us—again, by misplaced values. Understanding of a pure nature, with all the pros and cons duly considered, and the consequences also duly weighed, is very essential. There are some people who think, "I will go to the forest and meditate from tomorrow onwards. I don't want to see anybody's face. I will search for God in the jungle." Very good idea! Nobody can say it is wrong. But what are the consequences? If tomorrow we go and sit in the jungle, will God come tomorrow? Will God come immediately?

14. WHOLE-HEARTED DEVOTION TO GOD IS UNTHINKABLE.

Whole-hearted devotion to God is unthinkable. Nobody's heart can be wholly turned to God, though we may sometimes think that it is so. Again we are making the mistake of not taking into consideration our subconscious mind. Consciously, we may be thinking of God wholly, perhaps. Just now, who is thinking of anything but God? But yet, it is not true that our entire personality is steeped in God even now, notwithstanding the fact that we are hearing about God and thinking about Him consciously, because our personality is not merely the conscious level. Psychologists tell us that our conscious personality is the smallest part of our personality. The larger parts are buried deep. So, unless and until the larger part, the subconscious or unconscious, is brought to the conscious level and made a part of our conscious activity, it can not be said that our whole personality is involved in any activity. None of our activities are connected with the whole of our being. Always only a partial aspect of our being works in any one of our activities. The whole of us never goes into action. Very rarely do we act wholly. But unless the whole thing comes out, the Whole Thing will not come to us. God is the Whole, and we are asking for the Whole, and so the whole of us must go there. It is the whole asking for the Whole, and not only a fragment of our being. When we mistake a fragment for the whole, passions arise in our minds. In the Eighteenth Chapter of the Bhagavadgita, Bhagavan Sri Krishna says that the lowest kind of knowledge is that which regards a finite as the Infinite; it mistakes one thing for everything. That is called attachment. When we think that one thing is everything, it is called attachment; when that is intensified it becomes passion, when obstructed it becomes anger, and when defeated it becomes frustration. All things follow from this basic mistake of regarding one thing as everything.

15. THE HIGHEST KNOWLEDGE IS THE INDIVISIBILITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

For a miser, money is everything. But money is only one thing. Then how does he regard one thing as everything? Very strange! Fame or power is also one thing, but there are people who regard it as everything. That is a mistake. There are many other objects in the world which can attract our attention wholly, as if they are all things, but they are not all things. So *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*—intense desire or passion, anger, greed, etc.—follow from the basic mistake of regarding one thing as everything. This is mentioned precisely in a very short form in the Eighteenth Chapter of the Bhagavadgita. Sri Krishna says that this is the grossest, lowest and worst form of knowledge where one regards one thing as everything and clings to it. This is called attachment. A higher form of knowledge is where we do not regard one thing as everything, but we regard other things as equally important as this thing; and one thing is also related to every other thing. Everything is equally good. One thing is connected with other things. We become a more expanded social personality. But the highest kind of knowledge is that which does not even relate one thing with another thing, but regards existence as an Indivisible Being. Here, there is no question of relating one thing with another thing because such things do not exist. Thus, the lowest knowledge is finitude of consciousness, clinging to only one thing as if it is all things. The higher knowledge is a relativity of things, where we bring all things into consideration in our thoughts, actions and feelings, but yet multiplicity consciousness persists; we regard one thing as different from another thing. The highest knowledge is the indivisibility of consciousness, where it has no need to move at all for any purpose; everything that it needs is here and now. Rare indeed is the person who can contain this idea in the mind, maintain it for a long time, make it a part of his or her personality, and live according to this idea. Very difficult! That person is a wonder indeed!

16. SPIRITUALITY IS A STATE OF QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY.

¶ A little that is done correctly is far better than much that is done incorrectly. We are often used to thinking in terms of magnitude—of quantity, rather than quality—even in our spiritual practice. We are satisfied with feeling: “I am doing japa for three hours every day.” We are concerned only with the three hours, and not with the quality of the japa. If we say, “I have been living in seclusion for fifteen years,” we are thinking more of the fifteen years than of what we have been doing during those fifteen years. “The whole world knows me as an important yogi.” It is a great satisfaction, no doubt. But this is not a spiritual feeling because spirituality is a state of quality, not quantity. But we live in a world of quantity. Whatever we see in this world is a quantity before us. Our body itself is a quantity, our personality is a quantity, society is a quantity, money is a quantity, and self-respect in regard to this body and personality is a quantity. We do not know what quality is. The quality of spiritual practice enhances and increases in intensity as we gradually free ourselves from the entanglements of consciousness. We were considering the two aspects of a tension that we may be having in our subconscious personalities: the relationship that we have with the external world, and the feelings that we have in our own inner being. Truly speaking, we neither have a clear idea about our relationship with people and things outside, nor do we have any clear idea about the reason why certain feelings arise in our own minds. Everything seems to happen beyond our control. Nothing is in our control—not even our own minds, thoughts and feelings. To be generous towards other people, to be charitable, is a virtue; and to have a desire and passion within is not a virtue. This is what we have been told since our birth. But why is it a virtue to be kind to people, to be charitable, to be philanthropic, and to be considerate? Why is it an evil to have desires and passion inside? We cling to these notions as a dogma mostly, as a hereditary wealth that we have garnered and kept safe to be worshipped for all time, without being clear in our own minds.

17. SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS ARE THE STRESSES FELT IN ONE'S OWN CONSCIOUSNESS.

We cannot justify either the laws of the human world outside or our feelings within. Sometimes we hang on that side, and at other times we hang on this side. We are always in a condition of dubious ambivalence, and most of our time is spent in clearing doubts rather than doing something positive. Sometimes a large part of our life is spent in clearing misconceptions and prejudiced feelings, doubts and difficulties, problems and tensions, etc. It is something like spending all our time in dusting the room, sweeping it, painting it; but when are we going to live in it? All our time has been spent only in building, cleaning, painting; now we have got a few years more left, and those years are not enough for us to enjoy the consequences of all our work. Many of us are self-made spiritual seekers. Self-made Gurus are also there, and this is one of the drawbacks from the point of view of an honest spiritual effort. The great spiritual tradition of the ancient masters cannot be simply brushed aside as meaningless. In India we have a great system, called the *gurukula vasa* system, where students lived for several years with a Guru under his personal guidance. That system is held in esteem even now, though it is not working as it was in earlier days. Spiritual problems are not like the problems of the world. They are very unique in their nature. They are wound up with our very existence and, therefore, they are very serious matters. The problems of the world are not so much wound up with ourselves. They are extraneous to us and, therefore, we can to some extent obviate these external difficulties in life. We have financial difficulties, legal problems, social tensions, troubles from enemies, and so on. But these are minor matters compared to spiritual problems, because spiritual problems are the stresses felt in one's own consciousness. The problems of consciousness cannot be solved, because the one who is to solve the problems is himself involved in the problems.

18. STORY OF INDRA, THE KING OF THE GODS, AND VRITRA, THE CHIEF OF THE DEMONS.

(Abridged)

There is a story in the Mahabharata. Indra, the king of the gods, attacked Vritra, the chief of the demons. This demon was very strong. He could assume any form, and enter into any realm of existence. When Indra hurled his fatal weapon against this demon Vritra, he entered the earth and was invisible. Then Indra hurled the weapon inside the earth, so that the earth itself would break, and with that the demon would also go. But then the demon entered the higher realms, the principle of water, the fire principle, air principle, the ether principle, which are subtler one by one. Wherever he went in all the elemental realms, this weapon pursued him. Where was the place for the demon to stay? He was caught from all sides, so what did the demon do? He entered the mind of Indra. How can we hurl a weapon against our own mind? When Vritra entered the mind of Indra, Indra got confused, confounded, and lost consciousness. Nobody could rescue him. He could not think; the mind stopped thinking. The matter was over. Then his Guru came to his help. Brihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, understood what had happened to the king of the gods: "Oh! He is in a great predicament. He is lying unconscious, as it were, possessed by the evil force." Brihaspati chanted the *Rathantara Saman mantra* from the Veda, which lit up the mind of Indra like a brilliant sun and drove out the evil force. Indra regained consciousness and said, "Oh! I have been possessed by the very enemy whom I was attacking with my weapon." Self-consciousness came to Indra by the power of the mantra chanted by the Guru. This weapon could not be used against the evil force in that condition. Because the force had entered the subjective personality of Indra, objective weapons would not work here. When objective instruments cannot work, what other instruments can we use? All instruments are objective. There is no such thing as a subjective instrument because when it becomes subjective, it ceases to be an instrument. This is the difficulty of the practice of yoga.

19. THAT IS THE OCCASION WHEN THE GRACE OF GOD HAS TO WORK.

We can do japa, we can go to temples, we can go to Rameswaram, we can take a bath in the ocean. These are all objective instruments that we are using to drive the devil out. But what instrument will we use when he has sat in our own mind? This is the crucial point in the practice of yoga. That is the occasion when the grace of God has to work, the Guru's power has to work, and the force of the good deeds that we did in our previous lives has to work. A time comes in the life of a spiritual aspirant when everything becomes hopelessly difficult. If yoga practice had been so simple and easy, by this time, after so many millions of years of God's creation of this world, the majority of people would have attained God, and there would be nobody in this world. It is such a difficult thing, almost impossible, that towards the end of the Eleventh Chapter of the Bhagavadgita, Bhagavan Sri Krishna in his *Visvarupa* says, "Nothing on earth can enable you to see Me in this form. Not even if you stand on your head for your whole life can you see Me like this." *Na vedayajña...*(Gita 11.48): "Not all the charities that you do, not all the good deeds that you perform, not all the austerities, not all the studies, not anything that you are in a position to do can enable you to see Me in this form." The point is that since God, the Absolute, is a universal subject, objective instruments cannot be applied in realising that Reality, though objective instruments can be used as a preparatory means, as an accessory, as a contributory factor. We can use the religious symbols and practices such as ritual, pilgrimage, study of scripture, personal austerity, chanting of the divine name, and so on, for cleansing the personality and preparing ourselves for the reception of the divine grace, but the last stroke that we have to deal is the most difficult performance on our part. There it is that we come a cropper because it is something like climbing on our own shoulders. We cannot climb on our own shoulders, but that is the feat that we have to perform towards the end of the practice of yoga.

20. EVEN AT THE ENTRANCE TO HEAVEN THERE MAY BE A SMALL PASSAGE LEADING TO HELL.

Gaudapada, a great master, says the yoga is called *asparsa yoga*: the yoga of non-contact. Yoga is generally defined as contact with Reality, coming in union with something, and so on. But this master says it is not a union with something. It is not a contact of something with something else because there are no two things, so what will come in union with what, or with what will we come in contact? These are all tentatively applicable and meaningful definitions, but ultimately they are to be transcended. When we enter the borderland of the universal, the question of contact ceases. And one day or the other we have to come to this borderland. At that time, we will have no help from anybody. Not the whole world can help us, and even the aid of an external Guru becomes inadequate at that point. But before reaching that stage, we have to prepare ourselves properly so that we may not have a setback. It is said by John Bunyan in his *Pilgrim's Progress* that even at the entrance to heaven there may be a small passage leading to hell. We are just at the portals of heaven, but there is a pit into which we can fall, and we can go to hell from there itself. We have crossed the major part of the river, but just when we are about to touch the other shore, we will be inside the water. This is possible. Similarly, great masters and yogis can also sink unless proper precaution is taken. The precaution needed is that we have to be utterly spiritual in our aspirations. We should not be partially spiritual. We should not have a half-hearted devotion to God. But it is impossible to have a whole-hearted devotion to God as long as man is man. We have our own weaknesses and prejudices. We cannot help thinking in terms of other people, other things, the world, and values, etc. They are part of our own blood, veins and bones. How can we get out of these prejudices? Even the best philosophical mind cannot escape this difficulty of having to assert the personality one day or the other, and reaping the consequences thereof.

21. THIS IS CALLED AN ELEPHANT'S BATH.

We are always placed in the midst of a tension. We are between the horns of a dilemma. On the one side, there is the pull of social values, social etiquette, social ethics and social laws; without relating ourselves with these, life itself would become impossible in our physical personalities. On the other side, there is the pull of our desires and passions which we have repressed with great force. Unless a reconciliation is brought about by us, with effort, between these two forces, we would not be in a healthy state of mind. Before we sit for meditation, we have to be mentally healthy because even if we are consciously meditating in the meditation hall, we may not be meditating subconsciously. The elephant takes a nice bath in the Ganga, and then it throws mud on its body. This is called an elephant's bath: take a nice bath, and afterwards throw mud on one's body. So after all our conscious meditations, the subconscious impulses will throw dust and mud on us. We will be highly distressed in spite of all our conscious meditations because the subconscious impulses have not been brought out. The secret desires are still lying like coiled-up snakes, ready to hiss and bite. We look all right to ourselves, and also look all right in the eyes of people, on account of an adjustment that we are shrewdly making on both sides, according to the need of the circumstances. We know from which side the pressure is more. When we take a bath in the ocean and the waves are dashing on us, we sink down into the waves. Similarly, we try to sink down into the pressure and allow the pressure to pass over our heads, and then come up to the surface once again to do whatever we have been doing earlier. Sometimes the pressure from our desires is very intense, and sometimes the pressure from the outside world and society is intense; and merely because we are making an adjustment by dexterously turning ourselves either side, it does not mean that we have conquered these impulses.

22. WE SHOULD NOT BE SLAVES OF EITHER A SOCIAL PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE OR AN URGE OF PASSION FROM WITHIN.

¶ shrewd adjustment does not mean sublimation. It is not mastery over these impulses. We should not be slaves of either a social pressure from outside or an urge of passion from within. These two forces coming from outside as well as from within are one single force. They are not two different things. Because the universe is inside us as well as outside us, the macrocosm and the microcosm both meet in our personalities; and if yoga is the practice of balance, equanimity, it follows that the striking of a balance between the outer needs and the inner pressures also is called for. We go into our rooms or hide ourselves in caves due to fear from society. Why do we fear society so much? Sometimes when the inner forces, urges, passions, desires, are very violent—when they become uncontrollable—we may plunge into the midst of society, not with an intention of conquering these urges, but to forget them. There are people who, when they get very angry, go for a long walk. Well, it is one of the ways of forgetting the trouble that is in our head. But that is not a solution, because we have not found out why we have got angry. The anger is boiling from inside. We have only forgotten the devil that is before us, the tiger that is yawning to eat us up. We cannot face the questions and problems of life reasonably and adequately. This is a truth that we have to accept. It is partly because we have not sufficient understanding in our own selves, maybe due to the egoism of our personalities, the *rajasic* and *tamasic prarabdhakarmas* that are obstructing us; and we are not humble enough to sit before a Guru. Who is our Guru? Nobody. If you have no Guru, at least have some friends of an equal character. It does not mean that one is the Guru of the other; they are friends who have an equal aspiration, and they can discuss matters between themselves and be of mutual help in their spiritual practices, as students do in schools and colleges.

23. IF YOU HAVE ANY ENEMY IN THIS WORLD, IT IS YOUR OWN SELF.

Beware of your own self more than of anybody else. If you have any enemy in this world, it is your own self. You can be misled by your own self. *Atmaiva hyatmano bandhur atmaiva ripur atmanah* (Gita 6.5), says the Bhagavadgita: Your own self is your friend, and your own self is also your enemy. Be humble and simple, and receptive to the teaching. Do not be under the impression that you know everything. You may learn a little truth from even a small child. The babbling of a child may contain an element of truth, and the declaration or proclamation of a genius may contain an element of error. Both things are possible. So, let us try not to have a double personality in ourselves—opposing the external world of human society on one side, and confronting the inner passion from the other side. Let us have a single personality, an open personality, which is a friend of both sides and not something caught up between the two forces, in such a way that we may be the meeting point of these two forces in a friendly manner. We are the friends of the world and of human society outside, and also friends of the aspirations from within. This is a point which leads us into the major question of the relationship between spiritual life and earthly life—a very difficult question, the one question of all religions and all mystical approaches.

24. A GREAT BLUNDER IT IS TO IMAGINE OURSELVES TO BE THIS BODY.

Spiritual life is the intensive and systematic disentanglement of oneself from the clutches of unspiritual forces, all which arise from what we call the consciousness of externality. The consciousness of externality is the consciousness of space, time and objectivity. It is this that is harassing us every day—night and day, from birth to death. This is also called the trouble arising from sense perception, due to which we say the senses have to be controlled, and so on. The senses, their activity, the outward projection of the mind, the consciousness of space, time and objects—all these ultimately mean one and the same thing; and yoga, spiritual life, is only a consistent effort that we put forth to gain independence—freedom from these tangles in which we are caught. We are in the midst of a very powerful net. Like a small fly that is caught in the spider's web unable to free itself, similarly we are caught up in the network of external relations, which also include the relation with this body, because this body is also an external object. Externality does not mean 'outside this body', as we are likely to take it to mean. The body is not so important a substance or a centre as we imagine it to be. It is as important as anything else in this world, but to give it an exclusive importance, to regard this body as of primary importance, greater importance than we attach to other bodies, is called selfishness. That is worse than being caught up in the network of externality. We have gone deep, deeper and deepest—far below a possibility of easy extrication. We have sunk ourselves into the heart of matter and become one with it. Something worse than that has also happened. We have not merely got ourselves absorbed in matter and become the body, due to which we call 'I' this body; but we have done something more serious than this. Serious it is, no doubt, to get identified with this body; a great blunder it is to imagine ourselves to be this body.

25. PERHAPS IT WILL REMAIN A MYSTERY FOREVER.

The coming out of our consciousness from this body in an unnatural way is called sense perception. Sense perception is not natural knowledge. It is unnatural, distorted, erroneous, binding, misleading; that is called *samsara*. Like a light ray passing through a prism and getting split up into different aspects of its constituents, consciousness appears to have passed through the prism of this bodily individuality and got split up into the rays of sensory activity. The indivisibility of consciousness has been split up into the divisibility of sensory activity and perception. The great scriptures tell us that there has been a gradual descent of the supreme state of consciousness. Speaking the language of Indian Vedanta, there has been a concretisation of the Absolute into the will of Ishvara, then to Hiranyagarbha and to Virat, the cosmic animating consciousness of the physical universe. But up to this level, it is only a metaphysical descent. We may even call it a spiritual descent—a drama of the Absolute, a free play of consciousness with full consciousness of its independence and freedom. It is a joy up to this level. But there has been a further descent into bondage. The great drama of the Virat in this form of the vast multiplicity of creation, which it is playing in its own self-immanence and transcendence, in its own majesty and glory and beauty and grandeur—this wonderful drama has become a pitiable plight by a peculiar feature that crept into the consciousness. This is a mystery for all, and perhaps it will remain a mystery forever. The split-up rays of the universal Virat Consciousness asserted themselves as individuals, isolated from other individuals. It is like a ray of the sun isolating itself from other rays of the sun, each ray asserting itself independently, with apparently no connection with the other rays. This is the beginning of what we call earthly bondage, *samsara*, the fall of Satan from the Garden of Eden into the hell of torture. This is the symbol of all religions representing the fall of man from the angelic condition of his proximity to God.

26. THERE WAS A STRUGGLE OF CONSCIOUSNESS TO REGAIN ITS LOST INDEPENDENCE.

There has been a descent into the individual consciousness of this personality. Individuality does not mean merely the individuality of consciousness. Consciousness, which was originally universal, became split up. We may think that even a split-up part of it should be consciousness only, because even a spark of fire is fire. Well, it is naturally so. It had to be like that. But, a peculiar state of affairs compelled consciousness to imagine itself to be matter. It has never become matter, because one thing cannot become another thing. But the intensified affirmation of consciousness as an isolated individual brought about the effect in the form of what we call the body—a concretisation of consciousness. This is very unnatural, untrue to the right state of affairs. There was a struggle of consciousness to regain its lost independence. When something toxic or foreign enters the body, there is a war of the entire body to throw that matter out of the system. There is a struggle of every cell of the body to throw out that toxic matter. If a little particle of sand enters the eye, the entire eyeball starts struggling to throw it out by exuding liquid, etc. The lost independence of consciousness cannot always be in that condition. The isolation of the part from the whole is the greatest agony conceivable. It is like death; it is veritable death, and death caught hold of consciousness. That is the beginning of mortality, and that is the beginning of hunger and thirst, and the writhing of oneself in a sorrow indescribable in any language. The effect cannot explain the cause, and we are trying to understand the nature of the cause from where we have fallen. We can only say, in the language of the Upanishads, that this fall ended in a sort of makeshift between the condition into which the consciousness fell and the longing which it cherished in its own self. It is like the League of Nations. Internally we are at war with one another, but we sit at a single table and talk on world peace.

27. ALL OUR HAPPINESS IN THIS WORLD IS ARTIFICIAL, NOT TRUE.

Consciousness had no other alternative than to reconcile itself with the fall, at the same time not forgetting that it is impossible for it to continue in that fallen condition. We are in a prison, and we cannot escape from it, but yet we cannot be happy in the prison. So the necessity to be inside the prison and the need to get out of the prison is a conflict in the mind. Consciousness asserted itself as this concretised individuality, and started making good use of the situation, making the best out of what had happened. "It is better to rule in hell than serve in heaven," is a saying from Milton's *Paradise Lost*. That is what we are doing. There has been a reconciliation with the fall. How long can we be happy in this untrue state of affairs? How long can we find happiness in crying and weeping and sobbing and beating our breast? The entry of consciousness into this body is the fall. But how can we be happy? Happiness—even a jot, even a modicum of happiness—cannot be had unless the universal is reflected, even in a very, very distorted manner. Even the least form of joy that we have in this world is a consequence of a reflection of the universal in that particular condition, though in a very muddled and distorted manner. So, what does the individual do now, in this state of fall? "I shall create an artificial universality in order that I may get happiness, though it is artificial." All our happiness in this world is artificial, not true. Therefore, even when we are happy, we are subtly sorrowing. We are smiling outside and grieving inside; This is our life in this world. How can we laugh when we are actually weeping? We create this laughing by projecting ourselves sensorily into a condition of counterfeit universality, which is called love of objects and attachment to things. When we are attached to a particular object, we are a little happy. Otherwise, why do we get attached? Why do we love an object, unless it brings us joy? But how does it bring us joy? Why is it that love for an object brings us joy? Do you know the reason? It is because we have artificially expanded our individuality into a little touch of universality.

28. WHILE THERE IS SOME MEANING IN THIS, THERE IS ALSO AN ABSURDITY IN IT.

When we exceed the bodily limitation, even by an inch, we are touching the border of the universal. The universal is very large; we have not gone so far, but at least we have gone one millimetre outside the body. We have exceeded the limitation of our body by loving something outside the body; even if it be by love of something which is there outside—that gives us joy. That is why love of objects gives us happiness. Why does it give us happiness? Because of an apparent reflection of the universal. “Why is it called ‘the universal’?” The universal does not necessarily mean the Supreme or the Absolute Universal. Even a tendency towards it can be regarded as a universal, just as a student studying in the third standard is called a student undergoing education, and an Oxford post-graduate is also undergoing education. We are moving towards the universal even if we have taken only half a step, or even less than that. The consciousness feels joy. “I am moving towards the universal, though I have clung only to one object which I regard as dear and near and lovable.” Now, while there is some meaning in this, there is also an absurdity in it. Because of the meaning in it, we are happy; because of the absurdity in it, we are bound by it. What is the meaning behind it which gives us the joy? The meaning is the movement of consciousness towards the universal, because it is the indication that consciousness is exceeding the limitation of the body. Therefore, we are happy. But what is the absurdity in it? We are not really moving towards the universal. The universality that we are trying to achieve by contact with objects is a movement in the minus direction, not in the plus direction. Therefore, we are entirely wrong, and we are going to be caught and punished for it one day or the other. This universality that we wrongly try to achieve by sensory contact with objects is a blunder—and a very terrible blunder. We are happy somehow or the other, and this is the happiness that we have.

29. YOGA IS THE PROCESS OF AWAKENING CONSCIOUSNESS TO ITS TRUE AIM.

The mistake that consciousness has made—a blunder worse than entering into the body is—by moving out of the body into the objects of sense, establishing relationships with things, and complicating these relationships by scientific logic which is created by the senses themselves for their own satisfaction. Even the devil has a logic of its own. Yoga is the process of awakening consciousness to its true aim, true purpose, and so this sort of universality will not do. This sort of happiness is no happiness. This so-called satisfaction, so-called freedom, this apparent independence that we seem to have in this world is no independence, no joy, no freedom, nothing! It is a terrible deception. Yoga is the very, very difficult art of bringing the consciousness back from this meandering through the objects of sense, bringing it back to the body once again—from where it has gone out through space and time into the objects. Even if it is brought back to the body, it is not a complete achievement, because that is also a fall. Though we have not gained health, at least we are free from disease for the time being. The temperature has come to normal; it is not 105. It is coming to 98.4, but yet we are in bed. We cannot get up, we cannot go out. We are not healthy, not normal really, though clinically it appears that we are normal because the temperature has come to 98.4. This is what we are trying to do by abstraction of the senses from objects by the practice of *yama* and *niyama*, as the great sage Patanjali says. By the practice of *yama* especially, we bring the temperature to normal, 98.4; otherwise, it is 105. It is terrible! Now we have a 105 temperature—we are in fever, completely out of order—because we are thinking everything ‘outside’. All that we think is external. So we are in a state of fever, completely gone out of gear.

30. THIS IS THE DESTINATION OF THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL ON EARTH.

The practice of the *yamas* and *niyamas* brings the mind back to the source from where it has gone out, and after it is brought back to the source of individuality, the system of yoga tells us it has to be roused up to its original condition by *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, etc. So while *yama* and *niyama* are the processes by which we withdraw our externalised movements into the source from where these movements started, by the other practices of *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, etc., we rise up—vertically, as it were—to the Absolute, gradually. It is a very difficult process of yoga: from the bodily encasement, we rise up stage by stage. In the system of Patanjali, especially, all these stages are very beautifully described. Even when we come to the state of perfect concentration of mind on the ideal of the universal which is to be attained, from where we have fallen, the attainment is not complete. Patanjali tells us that even after the *dhyana* state is attained, there are various stages—*savitarka*, *nirvitarka*, *savichara*, *nirvichara*, *sananda*, *sasmita*, and so on. Even in *samadhi* there are so many stages. All this is terrifying even to hear. Thus, the system of yoga is a wonderful art of regaining spiritual health, returning to our Supreme Father, from where we have fallen by a mistake. We abstract ourselves from the externalised consciousness of space, time and objects and our attachment to objects, and come back to our own source, entering into the consciousness of the *Virat*. Then what will happen to us? God only knows; we need not bother about it. Such is the Great Whole before us. This is the destination of the journey of the soul on earth.

KIRTAN

He Prabho Aananda Daataa
Jnaana Hamko Dijjiye,

Shighra Saare Durgunon Ko
Dur Hamse Kijjiye.
HePrabho.....

Lijjiye Hamko Sharan Men
Ham Sadaachaari Banen,
Brahmachari Dharma Rakshaka
Vra Vrata Dhaari Banen.
HePrabho.....

Prem Se Ham Gurujanon Ki
Nitya Hi Sevaa Karen,
Satya Bolen Jhuth Tyaagen
Mel Aapas Men Karen.
HePrabho.....

Nindaa Kisi Ki Ham Kisise
Bhulkaar Bhi Naa Karen,
Divya Jivan H0 Hamaaraa ..
Yash Teraa Gaayaa Karen.
He Prabho.....



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THE MAHA-MRITYUNJAYA MANTRA

“Om Tryambakam Yajamahe
Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam;
Urvarukamiva Bandhanan-
Mrityor-Mukshiya Mamritat”

Meaning :-

Om – “We worship the Three-Eyed one (Lord Siva), who is fragrant (with energy), and who nourishes well all beings. May He liberate us from death for the sake of Immortality even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (to the creeper)”.

This Mantra wards off all kinds of accidents, bestows health and long life and ultimately confers Immortality.

SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj took birth on the 25th April, 1922, in Puttur, Karnataka, as the eldest child in a highly religious and orthodox Brahmin family well versed in Sanskrit, and was named Subbaraya. Reading from the Srimad Bhagavata that Lord Narayana lives in sacred Badrinath Dham, the young boy believed it literally and entertained a secret pious wish to go to the Himalayas, where Badrinath is located, and see the Lord there.

Swami arrived in Rishikesh in the summer of 1944. When he met Swami Sivananda and fell prostrate before him, the saint said: “Stay here till death, I will make kings and ministers fall at your feet.” Swami Sivananda initiated young Subbaraya into the holy Sannyasa on the sacred day of Makar Sankranti, the 14th January, 1946, and he was named Swami Krishnananda.

In 1957 Swamiji became the Secretary especially concerned with the management of finance, which continued until 1961 when Sri Gurudev nominated him as General Secretary of the Divine Life Society, which position he held until 2001.

Swami Krishnananda was a master of practically every system of Indian thought and Western philosophy. “Many Sankaras are rolled into one Krishnananda,” said Sri Gurudev. Swami Krishnananda, the embodiment of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, lived in the state of God-consciousness and guided countless seekers along the path of self-realisation. Swamiji attained Mahasamadhi on the 23rd of November, 2001.





SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN APRIL



***THIS BOOK HAS BEEN OFFERED
AT THE LOTUS FEET OF
H.H. SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDAJI MAHARAJ
ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS AUSPICIOUS 96TH BIRTHDAY
ON 25.4.2018***



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