



Spiritual Journey in June

(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 June**



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Compiled by :-

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Publishers :

Ramprasad Nitta,
Orlando, USA

2019

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(This book was published with the blessings of
Pujya Sri Swami Hamsanandaji of Shivanandashram H.Q.,
and with the noble heart of Sri Ramprasad Nitta
Orlando, USA.)

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FOREWORD

Miss Medha Sachdev,
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Marris Road,
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Om Sri Paramatmane Namah
Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya

It is a matter of immense pleasure that the booklet comprising of excerpts from H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji's book 'The Spiritual Living' is compiled by Sri U. Narayana Rao, The D.L.S. Branch, Razole an ardent devotee of Swamiji Maharaj. He has compiled innumerable volumes and booklets based on Swamiji Maharaj's lectures delivered in the Ashram from time to time.

Swami Krishnanandaji, a sage residing ever in the Consciousness of the Absolute, has been a great mentor and spiritual guide to aspiring seekers and sadhakas. Swamiji Maharaj's lectures were a torrent of '*Brahma Jnana*' that poured down in order to liberate the seekers of the Soul. Fortunate are they who are able to catch a few water-drops out of his deliverances and thus purify and sanctify their souls.

The noble and humble effort produced by Sri U.Narayana Rao is, undoubtedly going to benefit mankind in the modern era who lack time to sit for hours together studying spiritual literature. Even a single saying by Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is enough to pull him out of the web of metempsychosis. It is sure that the booklet will be a rare treasure and benefit us all.

Hari Om!
Jai Sivananda!



Medha

Medha



Om Namō 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 June**" 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 sugarcane 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 *Swadhyaaya* at any time (not only in the month specified) . I profusely thank **Miss Medha Sachdev, Aligarh** for offering valuable **Foreword** for this book. Abundant benedictions would be showered by Revered Swamiji upon all the readers with Infinite wisdom and peace for their effort they put in reading this book patiently.

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih.

Razole,
Date: 4.3.2019.

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

1. IN THE PRACTICE OF YOGA, THERE IS NO POINT IN BEING IN A HURRY.

When we are walking in a thick jungle, it is possible that our clothes may get caught in a thorny bush, and many thorns may be pulling us from different directions. What do we do then? We stop and very slowly try to remove the thorns, one by one. We do not pull our clothes by force, lest they should tear. Perhaps we will remove the smaller thorns first because their prick is milder; and we will try to remove the bigger thorns that have gone deep later on, gradually, stage by stage. This is exactly what to do in the practice of yoga. Our entanglements are manifold. Our consciousness that has lodged itself in this body is entangled in many types of relationship—some mild, some intense, some proximate, some remote, some visible, some invisible, and so on. The entanglements are umpteen, inconceivable to the ordinary mind of the human being. The disentanglement of personal consciousness from its involvements and multifarious connections with the external atmosphere is done with great caution, not in a hurry. In the practice of yoga, there is no point in being in a hurry. God is not going to run away. He is always there, though we may see Him tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, and not necessarily just now. Hurry is caused by a lack of proper understanding of the prevailing conditions. The correct understanding is the initial prerequisite of the practice of yoga. *Viveka* is proper knowledge of the entire conditions and circumstances of the case. The entanglements of consciousness are such that they cannot easily be made objects of investigation because the involvement is not an object of consciousness; it is a part of consciousness itself. We are ourselves an embodiment of the involvements and, therefore, we cannot investigate into the nature of these involvements. Whatever be the condition we are in, that becomes a part of our nature. That is why the practice of yoga is so difficult.

2. THAT WHICH HAS GIVEN US STATUS IN SOCIAL LIFE IS ANTI-SPIRITUAL.

It is not a diversion or a hobby that we are embarking upon when we take to the life spiritual or the practice of yoga. We cannot expect pleasure, satisfaction, joy or delight at the very outset. What we get in the beginning is a poisonous reaction, a painful repercussion, something very difficult to understand—something that will give us a kick, throw us out and tell us, “Don’t come near me again!” This is yoga. All our learning, all our prejudice, may have to be cast out to the winds when we become students of true spiritual life. All our qualifications become dust or dirt, a meaningless accretion grown on our personality, because our learning becomes a part of our pride, a part of our egoism which has given us social status, which itself is an unwanted growth like a mushroom on our personality. That which has given us status in social life is anti-spiritual because if it has come from our external relationship with human society, it cannot be regarded as important. When we are faced by a ferocious tiger in a jungle, how is our learning going to help us? We may have an Oxford Ph.D, but what is the use when a lion is standing before us with a yawning mouth? We cannot tell the lion, “I have a Ph.D, sir. Don’t come near me!” He will care a hoot for our Ph.D; he will swallow us immediately. In any catastrophic condition, our learning will not help us. The wrath of nature cares not for our education. Even social anger, which sometimes comes to the surface, does not care for our education. Hunger and thirst, sleep, passion and anger—all these care not for our education, whatever be our learning. That which can help us when we are absolutely alone and when we are in utter danger is real learning. We have got small weaknesses which loom large in our life, and which control the entire activity of our social existence. Here we will find that whatever we have learnt is meaningless. What have we learnt? We have only counted the items of the different material presentations in our physical life. We have only acquainted ourselves with the outer connections and relationship of things, which we call scientific knowledge; but that is not the wisdom of life.

3. THE PRACTICE OF YOGA IS AN ENDEAVOUR OF THE SOUL.

In the practice of yoga, the usual learning of the world will be of no use, because whatever we have studied has a utilitarian value in the sense of physical and social relationship, but it has no spiritual significance. That which is spiritually significant is that which is connected with our soul, and not with our body or its social connections. The practice of yoga is an endeavour of the soul, and not merely of the sense organs or even our psychological constitution. It has nothing to do with what we regard as meaningful and valuable in our ordinary walk of life. So when we step into the realm of yoga, we are new persons altogether. We are reborn, as it were, into a new setup of things, and we cast out our old, out-dated, worn-out knowledge and learning, prejudice, ego, importance, status, etc., and become humble in the presence of the master who is going to initiate us into the technique of yoga. The disciple is no more an independent individual. The first condition of discipleship is surrender to the Guru, which means to say he has abolished his individuality, cast out his learning and intellectual curiosity, and become a receptacle for the entry of the wisdom of the Guru. For this purpose, one has to be prepared to undergo the necessary disciplines in the practice of yoga. While the whole of the practice of yoga may be regarded as a discipline by itself, there are certain preliminary disciplines which have to be regarded as equally important, as important as even samadhi, for God-realisation. No step in the practice of yoga can be regarded as unimportant, just as no rung of a ladder can be regarded as unnecessary. The lowest rung in a ladder is as important as the highest, because we have to climb on every rung of the ladder. We cannot say, "It is so low. I am concerned only with the top." That would be a foolish argument. In every step, at every stage, even the most initial and beginning step, we will find that this step or stage is very important.

4. THE CANONS OF YOGA PRESCRIBE RECIPES FOR ATTAINING GRADUAL INDEPENDENCE FROM HUMAN SOCIETY.

That we cannot bear a word of insult shows that we are dependent on human society. If an ass brays before us, we are not bothered. Even if it really calls us an idiot and we know what it is saying, we are not bothered. If we are walking on the street and a stranger calls us an idiot, we would not bother so much. Because he does not know who we are, and we do not know who he is, we would not take it very seriously. But if a known person calls us an idiot in the midst of people who are known to us, that will make a greater difference to us because we are dependent upon the opinion that other people have about us. This is social dependence. Each person has to make a personal investigation into his or her own nature and its relationship with human society. Love and hatred are the essential social features of personal relationship with the outer world. The canons of yoga, known as the principles of *yama—ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha*, prescribe recipes for attaining gradual independence from human society. This has to be done very gradually, and then it is possible for us to sit alone for meditation, do *japa*, do *svadhyaya*, etc., because what we are generally trying to do is to assume this independence that we have already attained over the external world and human society. We close ourselves in a room, sit in a meditation hall, a temple, a church or a cloister, and begin to meditate on the Supreme Being, do *japa*, etc., under the impression that this is the only thing that is left to be done because everything else has already been done. But that is not so. If that were the case, there would be no chance for a fall. The initial stages have not been transcended; they have only been forgotten. They have been kicked out with force, and that is not a proper thing to do.

5. YOGA IS THE VOLUNTARY PRACTICE THAT WE TAKE UPON OURSELVES.

Many a time we are virtuous merely because we cannot help being virtuous. That is not virtue, because it is a condition of being pressurised. We can practise austerity when we cannot get anything because the conditions of enjoyment are not available and, therefore, we are in a state of compulsive austerity or *tapas*. Yoga is the voluntary practice that we take upon ourselves. It is not something that is thrust upon us by anybody else. Many a time, when we live in monasteries we feel as if yoga is thrust upon us. When we are not prepared for a condition of living and it is thrust upon us, it becomes a source of sorrow. Therefore, it is essential to know that our practice is voluntary, and we do it of our own accord. Even the call of God may become a source of pain, and mostly an unprepared individual may take it as the greatest sorrow that can befall him because the call of God is a call of renunciation of all false values, and false values are the only values that we have in the world. So, when these values are to be renounced for the sake of That which we are seeking in the heart of our hearts, it looks as if we are about to die—as if we are in the jaws of death. Hence, there should be no haste in the practice of yoga. There should be a very cautious movement in the proper direction under the guidance of an expert. The involvements have to be gradually undone without forcing ourselves to do anything against our will, because anything that is done against one's will may, one day or the other, become a source of revolt from one's own self. The principles of *yama*—*ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha*—may be regarded as universal prerequisites of yoga, of all religions, of all mystical approaches and of all sincere efforts of anyone towards a godly life, because the canons of the *yamas* are only prescriptions for rectifying the essential weaknesses of human nature.

6. **YOGA IS POSITIVE HEALTH; IT IS NOT MERELY A REMOVAL OF DISEASE.**

Many of our illnesses may be boiled down to a few fundamental illnesses, as homeopathic physicians tell us that all the diseases are born out of a single disease. They try to root out that single disease in order that the manifestations thereof also are automatically removed. Likewise, in the practice of yoga, we will find that when we are able to discover or detect the sources of our trouble, the manifestations thereof also go spontaneously because the cause is removed. Patanjali, in a very wise aphorism, has stated that we have only very few weaknesses, but they are very serious weaknesses; and they are dealt with in a very scientific and effective manner by practice of the *yamas*. Of all these canons, five in number—*ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya*, *aparigraha*—*ahimsa*, *satya* and *brahmacharya* are more important than the others. These are words with which everyone is familiar, and because they are very familiar, we are likely to treat them with contempt. Too much familiarity breeds contempt. Whatever be the importance of a person, that importance goes on diminishing if we see that person daily. We do not care even for the sunrise, because we see it every day. This is what we would like to think of even these essentials like the virtues known as *ahimsa*, *satya*, *brahmacharya*. Many a time we take for granted these simple shibboleths or slogans of yoga, thinking they have little meaning to great seekers that we consider ourselves to be. It is not so. They are not mere slogans or shibboleths. They are scientific recipes for the illness of human nature; and unless this disease is removed, we cannot enter into the healthy path of yoga. Yoga is positive health; it is not merely a removal of disease. The *yamas* first remove the disease. What we can do in a state of perfect health, we cannot do in a condition of disease. So before we try to do what we are supposed to do in a state of health, we try to diagnose our illness and remove it. That is the ethical discipline of the *yamas*, or the moral culture that it involves.

7. AHIMSA AND BRAHMACHARYA MAY BE REGARDED AS THE ROYAL VIRTUES.

The proper disposition on our part in regard to others is called *ahimsa*, and the improper disposition of ours in regard to others is *himsa*. The proper disposition of ours in regard to our own selves is *brahmacharya*, and the improper disposition of ours in regard to our own selves is the lack of it. So, *ahimsa* and *brahmacharya* may be regarded as the royal virtues, the basic fundamentals, the basic foundational values of not only yoga practice but also of all successful life in this world. It is the inability on our part to understand these essentials that makes for failure in life, mostly speaking, and also for failure in the practice of yoga. It is very essential that we should give due regard to other people, because other people are also people. They are not stones, they are not animals, they are not trees, they are not dogs, they are not servants; they are as valuable and important as ourselves. This is the philosophy of *ahimsa*, truly speaking. What is the philosophy of *ahimsa*? It is that others are like me only. Whatever is of meaning to me has to be of meaning to others also; and whatever would be improper for me might be improper for others also. To regard others as dirt is the essence of *himsa*. But others are not dirt.

How is it possible to regard others as subservient to ourselves in any matter whatsoever? It happens because the 'otherness' of people is a peculiar twist of our minds. There is no such thing as otherness, really speaking. If people around us can be regarded by us as 'others' in a contemptuous sense, they can also treat us as an 'other' in a similar manner. *Atmanah pratikulani paresam na samacaret* (Mahabharata 5.15.17) is a very famous sentence of the Mahabharata, which is supposed to be the essence of the canon of *dharma*, or virtue: What is not good for me would also not be good for others because others are like me in every respect; therefore, whatever is not good for me cannot be meted out by me to others.

8. CHARITABLE DISPOSITION IS THE CAPACITY TO ENTER INTO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS.

There is a very important factor that we miss in our attitude towards other people, and it is that subconsciously, or even unconsciously, we are apt to feel that we are superior to other people. We may not be able to argue this logically and philosophically, because it is an absurd feeling. But not all feelings are logical. Many of them are illogical, and they would not stand reason or ratiocinative investigation. This feeling creeps into us in many ways: "I am, somehow or other, more important than other people." We cannot openly say this or openly declare this, or even openly justify it in any way; nevertheless, we can feel it privately and put on an attitude which is in consonance with this illogical feeling. "I must be comfortable, and I cannot bear any kind of discomfort" is the basic urge of individual nature; and if my altruistic attitude, my very generous disposition towards others is going to cause discomfort, pain or harm to me, then I would be thrice hesitant to be charitable to others. Nobody likes pain because gaining pleasure, comfort and satisfaction is the ultimate aim of all our activities, behaviours and forms of conduct. But this is a great confusion that has entered our mind. It is a mess that we are making in our daily conduct. The height of stupidity would be to regard others as less important than one's own self in any manner whatsoever. Place yourself in the position of that other person, and think through that person's mind. Then you would know the importance of that person. Even a dog does not feel that it is less important than others. Charitable disposition does not mean giving money, food, clothes, etc., to other people. It is the capacity to enter into the feelings of others that is called charity. If this capacity is lacking, we are not charitable persons. Even if a person is in a fit of rage against us, we must be in a position to understand why that person has run into that rage. Even a criticism is a kind of *himsa* because criticism is another form of asserting our superiority over other people. This sense of superiority of oneself can come into play in many ways.

9. WE CANNOT BE ROGUES OUTSIDE AND SAINTS INSIDE.

In the eyes of God, at least, there should be some sense and meaning present in all the things of the world. Perhaps, absolutely meaningless things cannot exist. A whole and entire untruth cannot bear sustenance. There must be an element of truth even in what we call untruth; else, it would not be there at all. Even appearances are impossible unless they are impregnated with reality. There cannot be an illusion unless there is a background of substance behind it. Even an illusion cannot just appear. Total illusions are impossibilities. In the endeavour we call the practice of yoga, we try our best to free ourselves from the wrong movements of our consciousness in the direction of the 'false universal' which is attachment and aversion in respect of objects, and bring ourselves back to the position of a reconciliation with the true universal. The true universal is not disposed favourably or unfavourably in respect of anyone. That is the very meaning of the word 'universal'. It is commonly valid for everyone and everything; that is universality in its essential nature. And so, in our attempt at taking a step in the direction of the true universal, which is the practice of yoga, we have to conduct ourselves in a manner consonant with the step that we are taking. We cannot be rogues outside and saints inside. There should be a harmony of our nature outwardly as well as inwardly. How can we act in a manner which is inconsistent with the nature of the universal and try at the same time to meditate on the universal? To exploit others in any manner whatsoever, to treat others as servants or subsidiaries to one's own self, to look upon others as instruments for one's own satisfaction, in any manner whatsoever, would be an insult to the dignity of others. They have as much dignity as we ourselves have, and that would be an insult to the universal itself because it is present equally in every person and every thing of the world. We will realise, when we actually practise it, that this is the most difficult of all forms of righteousness or virtue.

10. THERE ARE WHAT WE MAY CALL INVISIBLE RADAR SYSTEMS PLACED BY GOD HIMSELF.

Resentment is deep-rooted in us. How can we have cooperation from the world when we resent the world? Our resentment may not be consciously felt outside. Your dislike for me may not be visible outside, but there are subtle systems inside the world which can feel your resentment in respect of me. There are what we may call invisible radar systems placed by God Himself. Even an atom—which is usually regarded as inorganic, lifeless, incapable of thinking—can feel our attitude towards it. Even a plant can feel our attitude towards it. The plant can feel it even before we cut it. Sir J.C. Bose made tremendous researches in this field of biology. Not merely that, even inorganic substances are not really inorganic substances; they only appear to be so. They are masquerading as inorganic, but they are not really so. So, our attitudes will be felt everywhere, dear friends. There is no such thing as a secret feeling of ours. There is no secrecy in this world where everything reverberates with a tremendous noise in the ether of this vast universe. It is futile on our part, therefore, to entertain secret feelings of resentment and hatred towards anything in this world. In Hindi, there is a humorous saying which means: “Take the name of Ram in the mouth, and keep a knife under the armpit.” We have a subtle psychological knife in our armpit, ready for attack when the time for it comes, and we are always a warrior. This warrior-hood will not work in a system where cooperation is necessary. We expect cooperation from others, but would not like to cooperate with others. The universe works on a system of collaboration and cooperation. *Parasparam bhavayantah sreyah param avapsyatha* (Gita 3.11). This is, as the Bhagavadgita puts it, the original ordinance passed by Brahma, the Creator, to all his subjects: “Mutually cooperate among yourselves in your deeds, and attain blessedness.” This is the original constitution of the cosmos, but we want to violate it at every moment of time. The yoga system tells us this is a great blunder.

11. TREAT HUMANITY AS AN END IN ITSELF, AND NOT AS A MEANS TO AN END.

Ahimsa is the most misunderstood of canons and principles of virtue. Volumes and volumes have been written on this subject, and yet the question cannot be said to have been satisfactorily answered. Every situation is a new situation, and every individual case has to be treated in an individual manner. We cannot have a general recipe for the whole of humanity for all times, for every circumstance and condition. Wisdom has to be exercised. But the essence of the matter is, "Treat humanity as an end in itself, and not as a means to an end," as the great philosopher Immanuel Kant said many years back. This is the essence of morality. Mankind is not a means to an end; it is an end in itself. Everything is an end in itself whether it is human or subhuman, or whatever it is. To treat anything in this world as an end in itself is the essence of virtue, and this will also clinch the question of *ahimsa*. Otherwise, what will happen? There will be an equal resentment from those sources in regard to which we have shown resentment. There will be disturbance of our mind caused by the resentment produced as a reaction from those sources in respect of which we have behaved improperly. This is why Patanjali is very cautious about avoiding all these unnecessary disturbances before stepping into the higher realms of yoga. Therefore, he places *ahimsa* as the first of virtues because psychological disturbance is a greater disturbance than any other conceivable disturbance. Subtle disturbances will be there. Animosity will prevail around us, and it can pounce upon us in some form or other and disturb and impede our progress in yoga. So, *ahimsa* is a sort of justifiable and proper attitude that we have to develop in respect of others, and *brahmacharya* is a similar attitude that we have to adopt in respect of our own selves because lack of *brahmacharya* is an insult to one's own self, as *himsa* is an insult to others.

12. THE MORE WE ARE EGOISTIC, THE MORE WE LOOK UGLY.

Our energies are equally distributed in our personality. It is an equidistribution of energy in our body that makes us look beautiful. If it is concentrated in some part, that would be a capitalist attitude of the body which will not be tolerated by the other parts of the body. Small babies look beautiful; but when we grow older and older, we become uglier and uglier in our facial expressions and our entire physical contour. Why is it? The reason is that there is a misdirection of energy, whereas in a baby it is equally distributed throughout the body. When we see a small child, we feel happy to look at it. We keep it on our lap and kiss it. It may be anybody's child; it makes no difference to us. We like children because there is a beauty in their personality, and there is an absence of egoism in their mind. It is these two things that attract us to children: they have no egoism, and their body is beautiful. Perhaps the beauty of their body is a result of the absence of egoism. The more we are egoistic, the more we look ugly—a very important matter to remember. The ego is the principle of centralisation of energy. It does not allow decentralisation of force in the body, and so the parts of the body and the entire personality, from whom the energies or powers have been withdrawn by this centralising principle, lose their feeling of cooperation with the whole personality. They resent this kind of attitude of the ego, and then it is that they look ugly. Why? It is because they have lost the cooperation of the centre and, therefore, they too do not feel like cooperating with the centre. A beautiful person is either a child or a saint, because in a child there is no ego and there is equidistribution of energy throughout the body, and the same is the case with a saint or a great sage. He is also very attractive, very magnetic in his personality, very powerful, and looks beautiful. A great master of yoga, a great sage or a saint is as beautiful as a child, and so we are attracted to him. People run to him even from distant places. Why? It is because there is a tremendous power in him, which is the outcome of his harmony with the real source of power in the universe.

13. ANY KIND OF INSULT TO A CREATION OF GOD IS INTOLERABLE TO GOD.

Children are taken care of by nature itself. Gods themselves protect children, but they do not protect egoists. They run away: “Oh! These are very big people. We do not want them!” I am reminded of a story that I heard from a friend. It is not written in any book. It appears that once upon a time, Lord Sri Krishna was having lunch in Dwaraka, and Rukmini, the queen, was serving food. In the middle of the meal, Krishna got up and took up a stick. Rukmini was surprised. “What has happened to you? In the middle of the meal you get up and hold a stick, as if you want to beat me! Who is your enemy here?” Sri Krishna said nothing, closed his eyes for a few seconds, then put the stick away and sat for his food once again. She asked him, “What is the matter? What is wrong?” Sri Krishna said, “Nothing is wrong. About a hundred miles from this place a pedestrian, a poor man, is carrying a load on his head, and robbers attacked him. I thought I would protect him, so I took up the stick. But before I took up the stick, that pedestrian gave a slap to the robber. So I thought, ‘Let him take care of himself. Why should I go there?’ Then I put my stick back.” It is also said that as long as Draupadi was holding her sari with one hand, no help came. Because she had some strength of her own, why should any help come? When she threw up both her arms and cried before God, help rushed to her as if by magic. Now, all these are stories, no doubt, but they are of great spiritual meaning from the point of view of yoga. We need not fear anyone in this world if God is helping us, but nobody can protect us if God is against us. The forces of nature are nothing but the fingers of God operating. They are not outside God or different from God. Our egoism is a violation of the law of God, which is also a violation of the law of nature. Lack of *brahmacharya* is one such violation, as is *himsa*. Any kind of insult to a creation of God is intolerable to God. And what is insult? It is nothing but a violation of a law that is operating; that is called ‘insult’—a lack of understanding of the operative principles.

14. THIS IS THE POWER THAT *BRAHMACHARYA* BESTOWS UPON US.

As *himsa* is wrong, the lack of *brahmacharya* also is wrong. We have to guard ourselves from outside as well as from inside so that we may be harmonious within and without because this is the call of yoga, the requisite of yoga. We are required to be harmonious with everything—outside as well as inside. So before we try for higher harmonies of a spiritual nature, the yoga system prescribes ethical harmonies, moral equilibriums, by means of the practice of *ahimsa* and *brahmacharya*. These things are very difficult for us to understand thoroughly, because we have very peculiar traditional notions given to us right from our childhood by our parents, by our society, etc. But they are scientific principles, not merely dogmas or stories told to us. These are great imperatives and necessities in life. One who practices *ahimsa* and *brahmacharya* thoroughly will know one's own strength, and it need not be told by others. The strength will be such that our thoughts will materialise immediately. Our words will become true, our wishes will be fulfilled, and nothing will stand before us. We will be undaunted heroes. This is the power that *brahmacharya* bestows upon us, because *brahmacharya* is the art of the equalisation of the force of this psychophysical personality in such a way that our personality stands in unison with the forces of nature outside—as a consequence of which, the forces of nature enter into us. These forces do not enter us now because we repel them by our egocentric individuality. The egocentricity of our personality is a repelling attitude that we are adopting every moment of our life. We become hard like flint and, therefore, the forces of nature do not enter us. The sustaining powers of nature are removed from us, so that we become helpless, weak in every sense—bodily, mentally, morally, even spiritually. We imagine that we are very powerful ourselves. Why do we want help from anybody? The imagination that we are well off and very powerful is due to our ego and, therefore, the world outside will not help us afterwards.

15. THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN THE EATING OF IT.

Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham (Gita 4.11), says the Bhagavadgita: “As is your attitude towards Me, so is My attitude towards you.” If we do not want God, perhaps He may also not want us. If we throw Him out, He may also throw us out. If we are egoistic, He may also assert Himself in His own way and teach us a lesson. We should not become Duryodhanas, Hiranyakashipu or Ravanans with an uncompromising ego, which is an insult to the whole creation of God because creation has no ego, and nature has no ego. It is man that has ego. So, the abolition of the ego is the final intention of the practice of these virtues of *ahimsa*, *brahmacharya*, etc.; and by actual effort put forth in this direction, you can yourself see the result of it. “The proof of the pudding is in the eating of it,” as they say. Do it, and see what result follows—how happy you will be, how fearless you will be, how strong you will be, how capable you will be, and how self-satisfied you will be, needing nothing from outside. Why should you need anything else from outside when the world is behind you to help you? But the world will be at your beck and call only if you are in harmony with it. If you are disharmonious with it, if your connection with the powerhouse is cut off, then you are in a very bad condition, no doubt—no power, no help, no strength whatsoever. *Ahimsa* and *brahmacharya* are the essential ethical foundations of yoga. Practising them not merely because of a social mandate but as a spiritual necessity will make us superhuman beings even in a few days. It may not take many months and years to achieve this result, because a step taken in the direction of Truth should produce immediate results. Truth is immediate; it is not a mediate object. This is the reason behind the great emphasis laid by Sage Patanjali on the practice of these principles, the *yamas*—of which the most important are *ahimsa* and *brahmacharya*.

16. THAT WOULD BE LIKE PUTTING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE.

The main *sadhana* to enter the kingdom of God is detachment—freedom from attachment. Freedom from attachment is something unknown to us. The great Patanjali propounds, in his yoga aphorisms, a gradual process of detachment from externals. Attachment is nothing but connection with externals, and we are connected in a thousand ways with externals. We are tethered with a network of multifarious relationships. A few of these are known to us consciously in our mind every day, but many of these are not known to us. One of the essential conditions the seeker of yoga is called upon to bear in mind is *ekantavasa*, or sequestration, solitude. These days, wrong notions are driven into people's minds by inexperienced teachers who say that we can be in the midst of a city and yet practise *sadhana*. Though this goes on very well and sounds fine as a theory and a doctrine, it is a total impossibility when we actually try to practise it. The ancient masters who said that solitude is necessary were not fools. Though in the end, in the consummation, it may be possible for us to find a solitary forest in the thick of New York City, consummation should not be identified with the beginning. That would be like putting the cart before the horse. In this connection, I am reminded of a very homely analogy of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Fire consumes ghee. Yes, this is a great truth. But suppose we pour a mound of ghee over a spark of fire; will it burn the ghee? The fire itself will be extinguished. The fire should first become a huge conflagration. Then we can pour the entire fuel of the world into it, and it shall burn it to ashes. Our fire of aspiration will then be capable—only then, and not before—to burn all the dirt and dust of this world even if it is thrown upon it in huge heaps. But when we are only a struggling spark who has not been able to take even the first step in yoga, if the whole weight of the world is to sit upon us, what will happen? We will be crushed to dust. Hence, we should not, at the very outset, at the beginning itself, make the mistake of thinking that we are masters, that we can face the world.

17. EXTERNALITY IS THE TEXTURE OF OUR LIFE.

The mind is accustomed to enjoyments through the senses. Enjoyment is what we are asking for and seeking every moment of our lives. We want pleasure, satisfaction, and we do not want any kind of pain or opposition. Our senses and our mind are used to an easy-going life, where we always yield to even the least pressure from the lower instincts within us. We take advantage of even the first opportunity that is given to us for enjoyment. If there is an opportunity for indulgence, we shall be the first to take advantage of that situation. We shall not stop to think, "Is it necessary for me? Why should I go to it? Is it necessary, or unnecessary?" We think pleasures are never unnecessary; they are always necessary, and any amount of pleasure would be welcome. We will never say there is a surfeit of pleasure; such a thing can never happen. There has never been a time when we felt that satisfactions have gone beyond their limit, because they can never go beyond their limit. We have been brought up in such an atmosphere. We are born in such a condition, and we live through it. How will it be possible for us to be renunciates, to withdraw ourselves from externals, when externals themselves are a part of our life? We live in a world of externals. We are externalised bodies, busybodies. Externality is the texture of our life. *Parañci khani vyatrnat svayambhuh* (Katha 2.1.1), says the Kathopanishad. The Creator Himself projected the senses outwardly, as it were, so that they can never think anything except in external terms. Our thoughts are externalised, perceptions are externalised, judgments are externalised, enjoyments are externalised. There is nothing else in this world except externality. The whole world of creation is a scene of externalisation, becoming more and more intense, and more and more complicated and involved; this is called *samsara*. But yoga is the reverse process, a movement along the return current. The first thing that we have to do, therefore, is to find time to be alone.

18. THE PATH SPIRITUAL IS THE FLIGHT OF THE ALONE TO THE ALONE.

We were not born into this world with friends, with husbands, wives and children, with bank balances or relations of any kind. We were born naked, without a strip of cloth on our body, and with none to call our own; and this is also the very condition in which we leave the world. It is only in the middle that we make a lot of fuss under the notion that the whole world is ours. As we came, so we go. The truth is revealed when we are born, and also when we go. The untruth is in the middle, when we are completely muddled in our heads. A great thinker and mystic once put it in a beautiful style: The path spiritual is the flight of the alone to the Alone. It is not a multitude going to God. Such a thing is unthinkable. Very important it is to remember that we are alone in this world even now. Even today, even at this very moment, we are alone. We should not be under the impression we have got many friends around us. This is a false notion. The so-called friends and relations that we have around us in the form of human beings and possessions of various kinds are a false environment created around us to delude us and dupe us into the wrong path. These possessions, friends, relations, etc., are not going to help us when we are in a critical moment or in time of danger, because our relationship to people is artificial. Anything that is artificial will not last long. Our connection with other people in this world is not genuine, not natural, not organic; and, therefore, it cannot work when the time for it comes. Why is it so? It is because, to put it in a very philosophical jargon, the connection of a subject with an object is makeshift. It is a contrivance brought about for sensory perception and a false feeling of fulfilment, and for bringing about a sense of satisfaction to the ego-ridden individuality. A subject cannot be connected to an object, because there is no means of connection.

19. TRUTH IS THE MOST BITTER THING IN THE WORLD.

The very fact that we regard other people as ‘others’ shows that they are unrelated to us essentially. Otherwise, why do we regard them as others? Otherness is the feature which disconnects everything from everything else, and yet we are under the impression that we are all one total of friendliness, brotherhood, etc. There are peculiar features in us, in every one of us, which can be manifest at any moment of time, and which can upset and destroy even the best friendship and relationship. I can behave with you, just now, in such an ugly manner that you would not like to see my face from tomorrow onwards. With all the regard that you have for me, I can behave with you in such an unwanted manner that you would not see me again. But, these things are not known to people; and even if they are known, they do not want to reveal them outside, for the purpose of what they call ‘getting on in the world’. There is no such thing as real friendship in this world. It is a misnomer. But we are caught in this net of a wrong notion, a foolish belief that the world will support us, help us, and that we have many things at our beck and call. Yoga wants to put an end to this false belief, and call a spade a spade, as they say. The truth as it is must come out. The disease has to be dug out from its roots, and there is no use saying, “Everything is okay, everything is all right. The patient is improving.” He is not improving. We are making a false statement. He is preparing for his departure, though we say he is improving. This is what we are speaking about in regard to everything in this world, including our own selves. We are bred and brought up under false conditions, and falsity has become a part of our nature. We do not know what truth is, and we do not want truth, because truth is the most bitter thing in the world. Yoga looks like a very bitter, most unwanted, terrifying something when we actually try to understand what it is, because our sweet milk-and-honey relationships seem to vanish into the winds the moment we step into this so-called bitter atmosphere of yoga. But this bitterness is necessary because it is the bitterness of medicine that is going to cure our illness, our disease.

20. GOD IS THE SUPREME ALONENESS, PROPERLY SPEAKING.

Can you sit absolutely alone in your own room for one single day without speaking to anybody, without seeing anyone's face? It is a horror to be like that. The next day you will look half-crazy. This shows what we are made of. We are hollow, with no real substance of our own. If we have a substance of our own, we will be happier the more alone we are. This is the test of progress in spirituality: Do we feel happy when we are alone, or do we feel miserable? Our real nature is Aloneness in a very, very special sense. It is not a physical aloneness that we are speaking of, though that too has some meaning, after all, at a particular stage. It is a kind of aloneness which increases in intensity and expansiveness as we go on proceeding further and further in the practice of yoga. In the beginning, it is a small aloneness, almost identifiable with our physical bodily aloneness; but that is not the real meaning of Aloneness. God is the Supreme Aloneness, properly speaking. He has nothing to call His own. The Supreme Aloneness is God Himself, but His Aloneness is different from the aloneness we can think of in our minds. Because God is everything, we can call that everythingness a kind of Aloneness in a very specialised sense, which is not easy for us to understand. But that universal supremacy of Aloneness is reflected in our daily lives and calls for recognition every day, every moment of our time. Our real nature comes out at that time. If we have lost everything, we do not want to speak to people at that time. Our real nature becomes manifest if we hear that something catastrophic has happened and our relatives have died in an accident, all our property has gone, and whatever we regard as ours has been taken away by powers which are beyond our control. Then we do not want to speak to people. We would like to shut ourselves in a room and cry. That shutting ourselves up in a room and crying is our essential nature, ultimately. That is what is going to happen to us one day. When we were born, we cried; and when we go, we will also cry. In the middle, we smile as if everything is beautiful.

21. YOU ARE SAID TO HAVE ATTAINED WHAT IS CALLED ASANA JAYA.

It is mentioned in the Bhagavadgita *viviktasevi laghvasi yatavakayamanasah* (Gita 18.52): “Resort to secluded places.” This resorting to a secluded place is the first thing in yoga, and everything comes afterwards. Sitting in a posture practising *pranayama* and meditation come later on. First we have to find ourselves in a state of aloneness. Initially this can be done by trying to find time to be alone at least for an hour every day, without speaking to people. Many a time when you do *japa*, you go on seeing how much of the *mala* is completed, because you are fed up with it. You are tired. For one hour in a day, do not open the door; be alone, read the Gita, read the Sermon on the Mount, read the Dhammapada, read the Bhagavata, read the Ramayana, or do whatever you like. You may even sing and dance if you like, but do not open the door. Gradually, you will be accustomed to this kind of living alone for one hour. Then, later on, you can do something positive and substantial during that one hour instead of merely waiting for the one hour to pass. You can chant a *mantra* or a divine name—loudly, not mentally. Sing the divine name for one hour, or loudly recite the verses of the Bhagavadgita. Something noble can be put into practice during this time. Gradually, the time should be increased. Usually, it is accepted that when you can be alone for three hours continuously, you can be said to have mastered this technique of aloneness to an appreciable extent; and when you can sit in one posture for three hours continuously, you are said to have attained what is called *asana jaya*—that is, perfection in *asana*.

If you can sit in one posture for three hours continuously, that is perfection. If you can be alone for three hours continuously, it is a great achievement. All this is nothing but physical isolation. There is very little of the spiritual element in it, because even if you are alone for an hour or two hours or three hours, your mind may be wandering to the shops and thinking of all sorts of things. Even if that is the case, be physically alone for one hour, two hours, three hours.

22. MENTAL SOLITUDE IS ALMOST AN IMPOSSIBILITY FOR MANY PEOPLE.

Psychological aloneness is a more difficult technique than physical aloneness. You can lock yourself in your room, shut your door and be physically alone, but you cannot lock the room of your mind—at least, that is very difficult. Though physical sequestration, isolation, solitude, may be practicable to some extent, mental solitude is almost an impossibility for many people. And it is mental solitude that we are finally seeking through the habituation to physical aloneness or solitude in the beginning. From the state of physical detachment, you come to a state of mental detachment. Yoga is essentially freedom from attachments; and in the beginning, it has to take the form of physical detachment, though that is not the true yoga. Physical detachment is not sufficient because you can be mentally attached, and that is worse. But, how can you come to a state of mental detachment? In the beginning it is necessary to be free from the atmosphere of physical temptations, attractions, attachments, etc. Do not live in places where you will be physically tempted, physically attracted, side-tracked or seduced. Such physical atmospheres should be avoided. This is the least that one can do, because that is absolutely essential before the higher art of freedom from mental attachments can be attempted. Why do you go to ashrams? You go to monasteries, cathedrals, nunneries, and so on. What is the purpose? The purpose is to make yourself physically incapable of getting tempted or side-tracked into unwanted channels, because the atmosphere and conditions of a monastery or a monastic atmosphere are such that you are physically prevented from going the wrong way, though mentally you may be indulging. Nobody can control the mind. Mentally, you may be doing the worst things, but yet, physically you are completely restricted from your movements along the directions of indulgence. But a protracted limitation placed upon moving physically in the wrong direction will be highly contributory to the more important practice that you have to embark upon—namely, the freedom of the mind from thinking of objects and attaching itself to objects.

23. MIND IS MAN, MAN IS MIND.

Physical solitude is to be followed up with psychological non-attachment, which is really the commencement of true yoga. In fact, when we are psychologically detached in an effective manner, physical seclusion may not be necessary. This is a slightly advanced stage where the physical environment does not very much influence the condition of the mind because the mind has studied the world more deeply now and is able to look at it with a proper vision and in a correct perspective. Earlier, the vision was distorted, and there was a series of wrong impressions which the world created in the mind, due to which there was a chance of getting attached to various things, to objects of the world. Inasmuch as the mind is the principle factor determining our life in every way, whatever its condition is, that is our condition also. Mind is man, man is mind. We are asked to live in physical seclusion to enable the mind to train itself properly, because in a confused physical atmosphere or a chaotic environment, it would be difficult for the mind to adjust itself to the required disciplinary procedures as demanded in the practice of yoga. It is necessary that we should, as far as possible, live in conditions which are not too obstructive, hampering, or opposing—or even tempting. *Balavan indriya gramo vidvamsam api karsati* (Bhagavata 9.19.17): Not even the wisest man can say that he has controlled the senses, because the senses have their own tactics, and like a whirlwind they can act when the conditions are favourable. While they appear to be good friends, they can act as the worst enemies under given conditions. We are misconstruing the very relationship we have with the senses by imagining that they are our friends, and that they give us correct reports about things outside us. They give us wrong reports, mislead us, and tell us lies, which we take for the whole truth and get immersed in a mess of error after error, piled one over the other. While we are in seclusion, we also have to get guidance from a spiritual master. It is impossible to get tired of repeating this necessity for a Guru in the practice of yoga.

24. IN FACT, EVERY IMPORTANT OR MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE IN LIFE IS A SURPRISE TO US.

Except, perhaps, in the last stage of consummation, we are always in need of a guide because we are treading a very precipitous path, and we are entering into regions of which we have absolutely no foreknowledge. Every stage of life in our ascent is a strange land whose conditions may look frightening and quite unsuited to our temperament and to what we have been accustomed earlier. When experiences come to us, they may come as surprises. In fact, every important or meaningful experience in life is a surprise to us. While there are no surprises in the world where everything is natural and normal, to us all these look as surprises because we have not been accustomed to them. We are used to living in a cocoon of our own personal imagination and prejudiced ideas, and when truth reveals itself gradually, every degree of this revelation of truth comes as a wonder, a miracle, a surprise, etc. We have to be guarded in these conditions. Otherwise, we would not know who is standing before us, and what is happening to us. Sometimes, when we are seated in a railway train, the train will be going backward. We do not know what is happening. We intend that the train go forward. It is going backward for some purpose, though that is a part of its forward movement. Likewise, there can be a retracement of our steps or even an apparent fall, which may look very startling to a sensitive seeker. All these have to be borne with fortitude, understanding, and with guidance from the preceptor that has to come to us from time to time. Either we have to be with our parents or with our Guru. It is no use standing alone on our legs; otherwise, life will be a danger. We have physical sequestration, such as in holy atmospheres like Badrinath, Kedarnath, or in a temple or a monastery, an ashram, etc. In such atmospheres of solitude, we have to ponder over the aim of life, the purpose for which we have taken to such a life and, if necessary, write down in a private diary the various steps that we may have to take and the different troubles that may befall us. It is unwise to think that in seclusion we are always safe.

25. ANY SUCH NEGATIVE CONDITION CANNOT BE A QUALIFICATION FOR THE PRACTICE OF YOGA.

Though seclusion is a necessity and it is supposed to be a protection from our involvement in unwanted environments, these environments can project themselves even in solitude because undesirable environments are not always physical or external. They are only certain situations that are created externally by a susceptibility of our internal character, and as long as this susceptibility is there, the danger can be anywhere—even in the holy of holies of a temple. As medical men tell us, disease is a susceptibility to certain intrusions of external force. These forces are always there; sometimes we are impervious to them, and at other times we are susceptible. When we are susceptible, we get into the clutches of these undesirable forces. There is no use merely living in physical solitude while there are unfulfilled desires. Bereavements, frustrations, demotions in office, etc., cannot be regarded as preconditions for the practice of yoga, and it would be a great blunder to think so. There cannot be a greater positivity of approach than the spiritual life and, therefore, any such negative condition cannot be a qualification for the practice of yoga. The inability to get the requisite type of enjoyment and comfort may drive a person to spiritual life, but these negative conditions are frustrations and would not be a qualification; rather, it would be disqualification. Taking to a path that is spiritual is a positive yearning of the soul for a higher attainment because it is satisfied fully with all the lower types of experience, having understood them thoroughly, threadbare, and not because it could not take advantage of the comforts and facilities that the lower experiences would give us. We must be capable of taking advantage of all the lower facilities of life, and yet renounce them voluntarily. It should not be that circumstances are unfavourable for a comfortable life. Otherwise, there would be a sense of defeatism in the heart, an inferiority complex creeping into us, and a sorrow which may be deep-rooted even without our knowing that it is there.

26. ANYTHING THAT WE WANT, WE MUST GET.

THIS IS A LAW OF NATURE.

We may be looking small in the eyes of people on account of a deficiency in our personality, which may drive us to a path that is Godly or spiritual; but that would have a reaction because of the sense of inadequacy felt in our own self. A smallness or an inferiority that made us feel sorry and unhappy may react upon us by creating conditions favourable for the enjoyment of the very things which we could not get earlier. Anything that we want, we must get. This is a law of nature. And if we deeply want a thing, it must come to us. But wanting a thing and not getting it would not be a spiritual condition because that condition would seek fulfilment one day or the other, and it is these conditions that come as obstacles in the path of yoga. There are stories in the Puranas, the epics, etc., that even great sages had obstacles of a peculiar nature, coming not only from the external world here, but even from celestial realms. All these oppositions that one has to face in spiritual life are nothing but the reactions objectively set up by our susceptibility to pleasure or physical enjoyment, egoistic satisfaction, sensory contact, etc. So, while we are in physical solitude, we are not always free from danger. Sometimes, we may be in a greater danger there than in a public atmosphere. That is why in some of the scriptures dealing with the subject of renunciation, we are told that a person who leads an absolutely isolated life should not live in a village for more than three days or in a town for more than five days. All these precautions are given because there is a possibility of attachment or familiarity with the atmosphere. When we are familiar with conditions outside us, we try to find occasions for taking advantage of that familiarity and utilising it for our personal satisfactions—physical, sensory, egoistic, etc. It is useless, especially for a youngster, a beginner or a novice, to live absolutely alone without proper guidance from a superior; otherwise, he will fall with a thud and break his legs.

27. PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTACT IS WORSE THAN PHYSICAL CONTACT.

In the initial stages of living in physical solitude it is necessary to live in the company of a group of people. If not, we should have a Guru who would be a sort of protection around us. Rather, it would be a mutual protection provided among one another by co-disciples or co-seekers. And in this physical solitude, we have to cultivate the art of psychological non-attachment, because the purpose of physical solitude is to train the mind for the practice of higher yoga. Psychological non-attachment is a difficult thing, because while social pressure and social law and regulations can prevent physical contacts with unwanted centres or objects, nobody can prevent our mind from thinking; and our thoughts are our personality. What constitutes our strength or our weakness is the way in which we think. The physical conditions are not our strengths, and also they are not our weaknesses. What is in our mind, that is what we really are; that is our strength, and that is also our weakness. It is, therefore, very futile on the part of anyone to think that one can lead a life of internal attachment while there can be an outward detachment. Bhagavan Sri Krishna warns us against this in the Third Chapter of the Bhagavadgita. While all our physical organs may be detached from objects of sense, the internal senses may be in contact with objects, setting up a reactionary force with a more violent contact with objects than we would have entered into merely by physical contact. Psychological contact is worse than physical contact because the mind shakes up the entire personality and churns the bloodstream of our body. Bhishma speaks to Yudhishtira in the *Santiparva* of the Mahabharata, wherein he says that the moment the mind thinks of a sensual object, the entire bloodstream is affected—a thing that we are unaware of. It is similar to the way milk curdles by a touch of acid; there is a breaking up of the indivisibility of the milk. The strength of the milk goes, and it is no longer milk at all. It becomes curd, and it cannot be converted back into milk.

28. THE POISON OF SENSE CONTACT OR SENSE THOUGHT CAN DESTROY SEVERAL LIVES.

An intense thought of a sensual object is like acid poured into the bloodstream of our body. It breaks up the indivisibility and the health of the blood, and the energy of the blood is isolated from the blood like butter coming out of milk due to curdling. The vitality of our system is isolated from the bloodstream, and this vitality that is so cut off from the blood is forcefully diverted or directed towards the object which the mind has been craving. We know what happens when vitality is diverted to an object. We become weak mentally and physically; and even as curd cannot be converted back into milk, so also the energy that is lost is lost forever. It is no use, therefore, believing that our thinking of sense objects is harmless. The Upanishads say that poison is not poison; it is the thought of sense objects that is the poison. Why? Snake poison can destroy only one life, but the poison of sense contact or sense thought can destroy several lives. It can cause repeated births through the cycle of metempsychosis. All these have to be brought into the mind in seclusion, and the causes of attachment should be discovered. A thorough diagnosis of the case has to be made. The causes of attachment are misconceptions that we have in regard to things of the world. We have a wrong notion about things, and therefore, we are attached to them. We do not understand things properly; therefore, we are made to cling to objects. There are many things that can attract us—hundreds and thousands of things and conditions—but as far as spiritual practice is concerned, one has to be very cautious about three important prongs of human desire, which are the subjects of study in psychology and psychoanalysis, and are also mentioned in the Upanishads as the *eshanas*. *Vitreshana*, *putreshana* and *lokeshana* are the terms used in the Upanishads. Interestingly enough, these subjects are studied by the Western psychoanalysts Freud, Adler and Jung. These are our weaknesses. These are the weak spots in human nature, and the moment these weak spots are touched, the personality comes out like a hissing snake.

29. TEACHERS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE TELL US THAT WE SHOULD LIVE UNDER CONDITIONS OF HUMILITY.

We always take great care to keep the weak spots covered; we put on an artificial personality which is itself a kind of disease, on account of which we are never happy at any moment of our life. We have what we call a sense of self-respect, which is inseparable from our individual being. We have a sense of importance. This is *lokeshana*, or love for good name and fame, and it materialises itself into love of power later on when it gets intensified. Even an idiot has a sense of self-respect. This is the precise character of the ego. It is an attachment to the body that we regard as self-respect. What is our importance? If we analyse ourselves carefully and remove the fibres of our being individually, we will find that there is nothing inside us which can be considered of real importance. Whatever is of importance in us has come from somewhere else. The great words of Sri Swami Vivekananda come to my mind. In a lecture he said, "If there is anything worthy in me, it belongs to Sri Ramakrishna. If there is anything wrong, that is mine." Well, this is a tremendous attitude of humility and wisdom, which is unknown to us. Really speaking, an individual personality has no importance of its own. The importance that it assumes, or that it appears to have, comes from the element of universality that is inherent in it. This is not known to anyone. It cannot be known because the ego repels a consciousness of the presence of even that element of the universal in itself. We resent the universal so intensely that we would not even like to think about it, because even to allow a thought of it is to reduce the importance of the ego, which is very painful to us. We are important, and sometimes it looks that our importance is not recognised or known to people. Then we try to publicise it by various means, and the ego knows the ways by which it can announce itself or advertise its importance. To free oneself from this evil of false self-respect, which has really no substance in it, masters of yoga and teachers of spiritual life tell us that we should live under conditions of humility.

30. THE MORE IS OUR *VIDYA*, THE MORE ALSO IS OUR *VINAYA*.

We should live a very simple life so that the ego may not swell up unnecessarily. When sitting in an audience, we should occupy the last seat, not the front seat. We may even sit near the shoes. Even if we are geniuses, it makes no difference. I was reminded of the goodness of the late Dr. K. S. Krishnan, formerly the director of the National Physical Laboratories in New Delhi. He was a very famous man, a great personality in the field of science in India, perhaps even in the international field. He came here once with some other friends, looking very simple, wearing a *dhoti*. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj had asked people to place a chair for him in *satsang*. One of the *brahmachari* was sweeping and putting a *dhari*, and he put a chair there saying, "This is for Dr. Krishnan." Dr. Krishnan happened to come there, and nobody knew who he was. By chance, Dr. Krishnan came and sat on that chair. Immediately the *brahmachari* said, "Hey! This is for Dr. Krishnan. You should not sit here." "Oh, I see. Sorry!" Dr. Krishnan said. He got up and sat down on the floor. Then Swami Sivanadaji Maharaj came, and said, "Hey, you are sitting on the floor! Sit on the chair." "No, it's all right," he said. "No! No!" Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj pulled him up and made him sit on the chair, and then all looked up. This is the same man! The *brahmachari* felt so ashamed. Anyone else would have given a retort or shown a sign of resentment, but Dr. Krishnan did not thought he was an important personality, really speaking. The greatness of a person does not depend upon outward publicity or even on recognition by others. One's greatness is a self-sufficient qualification which is self-existent and can shine by itself, like the sun in the sky. It is absence of real importance that makes us feel that we are small, and we get annoyed when we are not recognised. The more is our *vidya*, the more also is our *vinaya*. The greater is our knowledge and wisdom, the deeper is our sense of humility. The bigger we become inwardly, the smaller we look outside in the eyes of people, so that when we are the largest inside, we may look almost nothing to the public eye.

Shankara Ji Ka Damaru Bole

Shankara Ji Kaa Damaru Bole,
Shriraam Jaya Raam Jaya Jaya Raam,
Shriraam Jaya Raam Jaya Jaya Raam.

Shriraam

Miraa Baai Ki Ikatari Bole,
Raadhe Shyaam Raadhe Shyaam,
Raadhe Shyaam Raadhe Shyaam.

Shriraam

Tukaaraam Ki Vinaa Bole,
Vitthala Vitthala Jaya Hari Naam,
Vitthala Vitthala Jaya Hari Naam.

Shriraam

Suradaasa Ki Ikatari Bole,
Govinda Govinda Raadheshyaam,
Govinda Govinda Raadheshyaam.

Shriraam

Raamadaasa Ki Kubadi Bole,
Raghupati Raaghava Raajaa Raam,
Raghupati Raaghava Raajaa Raam.

Shriraam

Kabiradaas Ki Ikataari Bole,
Soham Soham Jaya Hari Naam,
Soham Soham Jaya Hari Naam.

Shriraam

Ekanaatha Ki Chipali Bole,

Digambaraa Digambaraa,

Shri Paada Vallabha Digambaraa,

Dattaatreyaa Digambaraa .

Shriraam

Hari Om Sadguru Omkaaraa,

Nata Jana Hridaya Kamala Bhramaraa ,

Digambaraa Digambaraa,

Dattaatreyaa Digambaraa.

Shriraam

Gurunaanaka Ki Vaani Bole,

Satyanaam Satyanaam,

Satyanaam Satyanaam.

Shriraam

Aanandaashram Kana Kana Bole,

Shriraam Jaya Raam Jaya Jaya Raam,

Shriraam Jaya Raam Jaya Jaya Raam.

Shriraam

Shivaanand Ki Vaani Bole,

Shyaam Shyaam Raadhe Shyaam.

Shriraam





Swami Krishnanandaji has more divine qualities than are mentioned in the Gita. Who knows how many Sankaracharyas have gone into our young Swamiji? Only if you have performed hard Tapasya in hundreds of previous births, will you be able to sit at the lotus-feet of Jnanis like him and learn the Vedantic truths. Talking with him is like talking with God. He is our Dakshinamurti. The celebration of his Birthday is the worship of Brahman. Such celebrations are very necessary.

- Swami Sivananda

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.



SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN JUNE

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HIS AUSPICIOUS
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