



Spiritual Journey in November

(Excerpts from the book "In the Light of Wisdom"
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



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in November***



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FOREWORD

Sri Andreas Binder,

Arsenius-Pfaff-Str. 12,
78315 Radolfzell, Germany.

I had the good luck to have been brought up by a mother who was doing Yoga since my early childhood. So even in the days when Yoga was not yet very popular in the West, I had some connection to it. As a teenager, I had some interest in spiritual texts of different traditions, and I also read Paramahansa Yogananda Autobiography which impressed me very much so that I started practicing some Yoga. But it was not before 1998 that I came to India for the first time on a Yogananda Pilgrimage Tour. I was a little bit afraid that all my dreams and phantasies about India as the land of the holy men, of Yoga and deep spirituality, would not withstand the reality and leave me disappointed, but they proved to be real. After inspiring visits to Jagannath Puri, Kolkata, Kashi and Dwarahat, the last point of our tour was Rishikesh. For me it was the high light of the pilgrimage, which led me from Yogananda to Sivananda. We stayed for a few days in Sivananda Ashram and enjoyed the beauty of Ganga and the Himalaya and the program of the Ashram. It was the first time that I had the opportunity to meet Swami Hamsanandaji. We had the first *chai* with him in post office and he came with us to Vasishtha Guha. All this had immense influence on me. Before this trip, I was quite irregular in my Sadhana, but after having tasted the beauty and reality of spiritual life for myself in an authentic way, I became quite regular and deepened my practice.

Swamiji was so kind to receive letters from me and to answer them, and I began coming regularly once in a year for four weeks to Sivananda Ashram. We were blessed that Swamiji agreed to study some important texts with us like Panchadasi, Atma-Bodha, Atma-Purana, Vivekachoodamani, the Bhagavadgita, Yogasutras, etc. Also I began to study the books of Pujya Swami Krishnananda Maharaj. Those books are highly enlightening and they go into the depths of spirituality. One of these books is sufficient to change one's view on

the spiritual path if you dare to let these thoughts sink deep into your being without shrinking away where they threaten your fostered concepts and beliefs. But these books are not for the fast readers who want to just have a short look into this subject. They address the wholehearted aspirant. Far beyond spiritual fast food, they can nourish you on your path, but you have to study them sincerely, digest them and take them into your system.

The compilation of key sections from the book, *In the Light of Wisdom*, by Sri U. Narayana Rao is useful in a double way: for those who have studied this book, it is a summary of the main points so they can reconnect easily with the whole subject; for those who have not read it yet, it is a comprehensive introduction, covering the main points, so that they can find out and deepen their understanding according to their wishes.

The compilation can become part of your Sadhana. If you read the text of the respective day in the morning before starting your routine, it can accompany you in throughout your day, and you might find yourself contemplating during breaks, on the bus or whenever your mind is free to return to it. If you read the text in the evening, your mind will have these elevating thoughts before going to sleep, so it can work on an unconscious level even while you are asleep. Anyhow, it will build a connection to Swami Krishnanandaji's works and thoughts and to Swami Krishnanandaji himself, since those masters may not be with us in their bodily form, but they are forever with us through their thoughts and words and are able to guide us here.

Rishikesh,

Dated : 8-9-2021

Yours,

In devotion to Gurudev,

Andreas Binder

Om Nama Bhagavate Krishnanandaya

PREFACE

One of the greatest philosophers of the world, H.H. Swami Krishnanandaji blossomed from the Divine Life Society, established by Sadguru Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh. He wrote a good number of books in philosophy, psychology and Vedanta. *In the Light of Wisdom* is one of his books. This book contains thirty-four talks by the saint in the year, 1970 to students participating in a special session of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy. While Yoga is a steady ascent to the Divine, this book serves as a Yoga Manual.

The present book in your hands “*Spiritual Journey in November*” contains thirty single-page excerpts from *In the Light of Wisdom*. My intention in preparing this book is to introduce to the devotees the depth of spiritual wisdom of the great saint and his deep desire to elucidate vedantic truths to common people also. The author himself told that in order to understand fully well his writings, one should read them not for one time, but for two or three times.

I am highly thankful to Swami Hamsanandaji of The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh for giving me the opportunity to read the original book and prepare the present book under his guidance. I also thank Sri Nitta Ramprasad and Smt. Suseela of U.S.A., for providing financial assistance with noble heart for printing this book. In the same way, I thank Smt. Ramani Jayaram of Bangalore for giving me constant encouragement when the book is being prepared. Last but not the least, I thank printers and workers of Sri Chakra Off-set Printers, Tatipaka for getting the book ready in a beautiful manner and in time.

Harih Om Tatsat.

Yours, In the Service of Gurudev,

RAZOLE,

Date : 8-9-2021

U. Narayana Rao

(U. NARAYANA RAO)

1. Nature excuses us with a kick, not with a smile.

*T*here is a mutual concord between the world and the individual, and here commences what we call life. Life is nothing but this relationship between the individual and the world. Our attitude in respect to the world is our life. Life is not only breathing—that is life in the purely biological sense. In the sense of values, life is more than mere breathing. This methodology of our relationship with the world is the practical business of our lives. Each one has one's own methodology, and many of these methodologies do not succeed because they are unconnected with the facts of life. Our living should be connected with the facts of life. When we employ wrong techniques in life—wrong in the sense that there was no proper relation to the facts of life—then we get rebuffed and receive a kick from nature. Nature responds like a policeman who tells a cabdriver, "Go back, this is not the proper road; you do not know the method of proper driving. Turn that way." Just as we get a rebuff from a policeman on the road, nature gives us a kick. The actions that the human being performs have a principle underlying them. We should not just act—there must be a method to our working. We do not go about randomly without an idea in our minds of where we are going. We should go with a definite principle in our minds. Likewise, there is a way in which we ought to conduct ourselves in life. This conduct of life, if it is going to be a success, should be based on a principle connected with the reality of life. If our ways of living are unconnected with the realities of life, one may say that life becomes a failure, and one becomes a grieved person, cursing nature. But nature is not going to listen to our curses. We do not know nature, and therefore we do not understand it. The situation is like an ignorant man's complaining against the laws of his state. He does not know the laws, and he goes on cursing everybody. A person who does not know the laws of the state may suffer due to ignorance, but ignorance of the law is no excuse—we know that very well. We cannot say, "I didn't know." Do not say, "I don't know." All people in the world seem to be in this position of, "I didn't know, I am sorry, please excuse me." We say this to nature also. "Excuse me, I don't understand you properly." But it excuses us with a kick, not with a smile—that is a peculiar law of nature.

2. A politician is one who creates a problem and then tries to solve it.

Scientific analysis—whether in the field of physics, biology or psychology—has been attempting only empirical methods. The system of yoga has adopted different means altogether. One may ask, “What is wrong with empirical methods? Don’t we fly in planes and have we not reached the moon?” Well, all this we have done, but we have not done anything for ourselves. We have done many things, but all these things seem to bear no connection with our personal lives and problems. We are the same persons that we were some centuries back, and our present day’s troubles are the same as they were some centuries back. Two thousand years ago man was suffering from something, and now he is suffering from the same thing. Yes, we have learned to fly like a bird and swim like a fish, but we have not yet learned to walk like a man—this has yet to be learnt. Man needs to be the subject of his own study, because man is the problem. Space and time are not problems, unfortunately. Why should we try to tackle space-time problems? Ultimately, the world has not really been the problem—we have been the problem. I am reminded that a school teacher once asked a student, “Do you know, my dear child, who a politician is?” The student replied, “A politician is one who creates a problem and then tries to solve it.” Likewise, man seems to have created a peculiar problem around himself, and now he finds this problem has to be faced. But he cannot tackle the problem, because it is his dear child. We cannot tackle our children. We can deal with others’ children, but we love our own child so much that we cannot deal with it. We may be a good teacher of others’ children but not a good teacher of our own child—that is the difficulty. So, we may study others’ minds, but not our own minds. There are some doctors who cannot treat themselves. Though they are physicians, they must go to other doctors. It looks very strange—why should they go to other doctors? But a psychological difficulty is there, and they cannot treat themselves. So, man’s problem is man, and not the world. Our problem is ourselves; my problem is myself and not somebody else or something else—not the sun, not the astronomical world, not society and not anybody else. Let us forget all these. Our problems are in us, and we are the problems.

3. We always have with us something that we are not.

Some philosophers say that the world is like a dream. What else can it be when we live in fantasies and imaginations of the future that have not become the present, and which may not be realised at all? We are always brooding and brooding over something—we ourselves know this—and this is not a happy state of affairs. Yoga goes deep into this problem. Man has to be man. We have to be ourselves and not something other than ourselves. There is always an element of ‘other than me’ in ourselves. We always have with us something that we are not, something that does not seem to be our nature, and something that does not seem to be real, and we carry these things with us always. This is the false self that we carry with us. Shall I tell a small humorous story? There were two thieves. They were just moving about on a rainy night, and nearby some black thing was floating on the water. One of the thieves told the other, “My dear friend, it looks like a blanket. Why don’t you go and bring it? This is a cold night, and it will be helpful.” The other thief jumped in the water to catch the blanket, but he was struggling with it. He didn’t come back. Two minutes passed, five minutes, ten minutes. The other thief on the bank said, “If you cannot retrieve it, then leave it.” The thief in the water said, “I am leaving it, but it is not leaving me. It is a crocodile and not a blanket! I was trying to leave the ‘blanket’, but the ‘blanket’ is not leaving me.” It was a crocodile! We begin by thinking that something is pleasurable because it is desirable—like this blanket business—but afterwards it assumes its true nature as a crocodile and catches us by the throat. We want to drop it, but it won’t let itself be dropped. It has become a part of our body, as it were, and it clasps its hands so tightly over our throats. Wrong thinking and unfulfilled desires are all there with us, which we have carried through the different incarnations of the mind. These ‘crocodiles’ are our pet desires, ambitions and cravings, sometimes acquired by heredity and sometimes they are newly created by our own wrong thinking and imaginations of the future. What a mess we have created in our minds. It should be very clear why we are unhappy in this world. The layers of wrong thinking and unfulfilled desires are all there with us, which we have carried through the different incarnations of the mind.

4. People who are well off in society are not always found to be happy.

We have many layers of self—a communal self, a national self and so on. We say, “I am a Belgian, a German, an American.” This is the national self that is hanging on us. Sometimes we belong to a community, and we begin to associate ourselves with it. We talk about it again and again, and we cannot extricate ourselves from the idea that we ourselves are a part of that community. “I am a Hindu, a Maharasthrian; I am this, I am that.” These are the communal selves. Then we have the family selves. We have got family names which are called surnames, and to each person a surname is attached. It is a family heritage. We have so many associations. Then come the personal associations of “I am a judge, a teacher, a businessman, a professor.” These are also selves we have created, but they are false selves. Socially also we have created these false selves. As if the inner problems were not sufficient, we have created additional problems by adding all these from outside. Inwardly there are also many layers. Layers and layers of self are covering the true self. Like layers of clouds can make the sun dark, layers of the false self have made our true selves a mass of darkness, confusion, and therefore unhappiness. Doctors of psychoanalysis feel that there seems to be a conflict between the inner ideal and the outer reality of society, which has become the cause of mental sickness. Health would be assured if this conflict could be resolved by the bringing out of these buried ideals into the daylight of outer life. This is a simple analysis of the science of modern psychology and its therapeutic techniques. But the question is whether this society is a reality by itself. Are we going to be perfectly normal and wholly happy merely because our inner ideals and desires have been set in tune with the outer society, which we have been regarding as reality? For psychologists, reality means the social world—we must be in tune with the world outside. The world of human beings is called the world as far as we are concerned; we are not concerned with the astronomical world, that does not worry us so much. So if the world of human society is to be regarded as the reality, then the attunement of our minds with it should assure us human happiness. But People who are well off in society are not always found to be happy. They have a secret problem which they cannot understand or much less explain.

5. Can there be a worse suffering than this?

Yoga began to contemplate the mysteries behind the phenomenon of unhappiness persisting in spite of one's having everything in life. We may be the king of the whole world, yet it is doubtful if we are going to be happy; we will have many problems. What is above this world? Why not conquer that? Maybe we have ambitions. Desires cannot be overcome even if we were the kings of this world. Death will come to us when it is time to leave this world. These are important difficulties of a person, even if he is the emperor of the whole world. How long are we going to be the emperor? It may be for a few hours. We may be asked to quit this world to a place of which we have absolutely no knowledge. Do we know when we will have to leave this world? Do we know where we go after leaving the world? No! What a pity, we do not know when to leave this place, and we do not know where we are going. Can there be a worse suffering than this? Yet, we seem to be cosily imagining that everything is okay. In a state of intense ignorance, we may be in a state of bliss. This is also a kind of bliss, as not to know anything is also bliss. That seems to be our final resort. "But is this fair?" was the question of the seers who saw into the depths of things. They did not see empirically, but in another way altogether. The empirical method does not succeed, because it is unable to link up one thing with another causally, and it does not see through to the ends of things. The empirical method of observation is an external observation of an outer world which has no end at all. How long can we go on peeping through our telescopes? The world has no limits. There are two difficulties in the empirical approach. One is that there is no end to things; however much we may probe, there is something lying beyond what we can see. That is one problem. The second is that we have not seen the truth of things—we have only seen the shadows of these things, only their outer crust. Just as when we look at a person, we cannot see the true self of the person and see only the outer self. Like that, there is a put-on appearance of things which we see through telescopes, microscopes, etc. Qualitatively as well as quantitatively there is a failure in the methods adopted in empirical psychology. Yoga discovered that this is not the way, and we ought to find another way altogether. There is no use merely trying *to look at* things either through the microscope or the telescope; we have *to see through* them.

6. Ever since creation, this has been the situation.

Adhyatma is that which pertains to the Self; *adhibhuta* is that which pertains to the world of objects. Put in metaphysical language, what is the relation between the subject and the object? While we have concentrated all other questions into this basic question of the relation between the subject and the object, we seem to be confronted by another difficulty, namely, the meaning of 'relation' itself. What do we mean by 'relation', or 'the relation between the subject and the object'? Exclusive relationship is the so-called relationship of most things in this world. That is why, though things seem to be related to one another, sometimes they depart from one another. This relation of one thing with another does not promise actual connection between one object or person and another, because the related terms have not entered into each other. They have been always lying outside each other, and their relationship has been psychological rather than factual. There is a temporary, utilitarian or practical relationship which works through life. We do not have a real knowledge—just a working knowledge which goes with life. We have been getting on with things through various kinds of relationships. The *adhyatma* and the *adhibhuta*, the subject and the object, man and nature, have been in this sort of relationship—not really related, but only apparently connected. So we have not been able to know what to do with this world. Nature has always been lying outside us. It has never become a part of us; it has never become ours. We have never been able to control or master nature fully, because it was always something different from us, and not ours. Ever since creation, this has been the situation. We have never been able to possess a thing properly. If we could possess it really, why should it leave us after some time? The reason is that it is not ours. We have been thinking that it was ours, but it asserts its real nature of not being ours when it leaves us. A time comes when those things assert their independence. Why do we say some objects are ours, some persons are ours? What makes us think like that? The others also may think that we belong to them. Instead of other things belonging to us, we may belong to something else. There is a relativity of belonging and relationship. Sometimes we are told that this is the world of relativity, one thing hanging on another and nothing absolutely independent by itself. This is a simple, crude explanation of the relativity of things.

7. Nature will not tolerate a person who tries to conquer her.

Nature has to be approached as nature would expect us to approach it. If some person comes to us seeking work, how do we expect him to come? He should come in a manner which is agreeable to our essential nature. If this is the human attitude, then this is nothing but nature's attitude as well. It is nature that speaks through us. When we expect another person or another thing to approach us in consonance with what we really are, and we are made in this way, nature cannot be expected to be made in another way. But our scientists have tried to conquer nature. How would we like a person if he were to come to us to conquer us, or to subjugate us? Would we like it? No. Nature will not tolerate a person who tries to conquer her. The *adhibhuta* is a term to designate nature in its totality. *Adhibhuta* or nature was an astronomical diversity constituted of planets, stars, and so on, including the Earth, and there was apparently no relation between them. We seemed to be suspended in space in a very mysterious manner unknown to the human mind. Advancing knowledge revealed by various methods that the stars and the planets are not hanging or suspended as they appeared to be, but seem to be relatively attracting each other by a force called gravitation. That this relativity of gravitational pull keeps them in the position in which they are was a later discovery of many scientists of both the East and the West. Gravitational pull explained everything. The foremost among those scientists of the West was Newton, and in India we had the astronomers Bhaskara and Varahamihira. It is said that in southern India near Vijayanagar, a great ancient capital of a Hindu kingdom of the past, that there was an image of Lord Krishna suspended in space, just hanging in space. How could this be? Many engineers came and stood looking at! British archaeologists who were interested in the phenomenon later on discovered that there were four pillars on the ground which were made up of magnets. The four magnetic pillars were pulling this iron image on the top with an equally distributed power in different directions, in such a way that the image could not drop. They wanted to improve this and removed one pillar, but afterwards it did not succeed because an electromagnet was put in the pillar. They could not get the image suspended again, and the effect has been lost forever. Those ancient people were apparently wiser and surer than the present-day scientists!

8. “This is a world made of wave-icles”.

Physicists analysed the elements of earth, water, fire and air, although they could not analyse ether because they did not know what ether was. It appeared to be a vacuum, and how could one analyse a vacuum? Hence, the vacuum was left out of the analysis. The analysis was only of the four elements of earth, water, fire and air. They went on dissecting these into particles visible only to a powerful microscope. It was proclaimed as a great discovery that these physical attributes were made up of elements. They said that there are about ninety-two or so elements. This was a great advancement by the scientists, and they were all very happy. “Now we have discovered nature!” We know that a chemical substance differs from another in constitution and function. Ninety-two elements constitute the whole of nature and these big bodies called earth, water, fire and air are nothing but complexes of minute particles, molecules or chemical substances—each different from the other in its constitution. Then the desire arose to dissect even the molecules. They were cut into pieces by electronic processes. Electronic investigation revealed that minor particles or atoms constituted the molecules. Today we are told with tremendous confidence that we are in a world of electrical forces called electrons, protons, neutrons and so on. Everything is reducible to these fundamentals. What they are in essence—whether waves or particles—is not known for sure. Some say they are waves, some say they are constituted of jumping particles. Some gentleman said they are ‘wave-icles’. Waves and particles combined are wave-icles—very humorous and interesting! “This is a world made of wave-icles,” concluded Sir Arthur Eddington. He proclaimed it as a great discovery. But in India this question was taken up by another system of thinking called the Samkhya, a school of philosophy which literally means ‘a system of knowledge’. Instead of saying man and nature, the Samkhya says *purusha* and *prakriti*. These are the Sanskrit words for ‘man in essence’ (*purusha*) and ‘nature in essence’ (*prakriti*). In this philosophy, there are only two things in the whole creation—*purusha* and *prakriti*. What man is and what *prakriti* is was the contribution of the Samkhya philosophy to us. It is on Samkhya that yoga is based, at least in one form. It is very important to remember that Samkhya and a particular system of yoga—Patanjali’s yoga—go together.

9. Philosophy is a work of the mind, while science is a work of physical instruments.

Our modern scientists are committed to the processes of observation and experiment with laboratories, microscopes and telescopes. That is all our scientists can do—they can see and observe. But may I put forward a question: who is it that sees? The eyes? Why should we have so much confidence in these eyes? What makes us think that these eyes tell us the truth? Whatever be the discoveries or the proclamations of our wise physicists, I nevertheless pose the question: who is this physicist who is so confidently proclaiming truths? When you study nature, you should study your lens also. You use something which is itself unstudied and make use of it in studying nature. You are begging the question, sir! In studying nature you are using nature itself as an instrument. How can you understand nature? What are those microscopes and telescopes? Are they not themselves a part of nature? After all, what are your eyes themselves? They are also a part of nature. You use nature as an instrument in understanding nature! Nothing that he can take from nature can be of any help to him in fully knowing nature. What else does he have that does not belong to nature? Is there anything that he can use as an instrument in studying nature that is not itself coming from nature? If he thinks it over, he will find that there is nothing else with him. He is just borrowed stuff. When we use the term ‘nature’ we have used a term signifying everything that is existent—man’s body included. Our bodies are included in nature, and we use them in observation and experiments. How do we observe an experiment? Science fails because of this difficulty. Science is a failure in the discovery of reality, because it begs the question. It borrows nature’s property for understanding nature. Samkhya was awake to this difficulty of employing the method of mere observation and experiment. Science became philosophy. By ‘philosophy’ we mean the employment of the pure mind and reason in the analysis of truth, over and above the instruments which science uses from nature. Philosophy is a work of the mind, while science is a work of physical instruments. The pure mind alone can help us. When the objective analysis fails and the need is felt for a substitute for objective analysis, we turn from astronomy and physics to philosophy. Philosophical analysis reveals great facts. Man can study man, but nobody else can study man.

10. The help came from the phenomenon of deep sleep.

*W*e have no consciousness in sleep. Nobody can know what is happening then, as there is no one to know what is happening. Psychology is only a study of waking phenomena; but human nature is not exhausted by waking experiences. We have many other things within us which are not entirely comprehended in our wakeful life. Neither was the waking world a help, nor was the dream world, because it is also a kind of objective world. The help came from the phenomenon of deep sleep, not from waking and dream. The difficulty was, who is to know sleep when we go to sleep? In the spaceless and timeless phenomenon, everything enters into sleep. The object of our study absorbs the subject of study. When the policeman becomes a friend of the thief, the thief cannot be detected. Likewise the investigators get involved in the very object of investigation, and we come out of it no wiser. We enter into it like wise people, but come out like fools. How do I know that I slept? What makes me feel that I had a sleep when I had no knowledge of sleep, and I was totally unaware? We have only one resort. The resort is memory. I have memory or a recollection. What is the remembrance? When we say, "I remember something," we thereby imply that we have a present consciousness which can be connected with our past consciousness. That is what we mean by remembrance. The past conscious experience has produced an impression in our minds, and when it becomes activated by our present state of consciousness, that impression becomes a memory. Memory is the activation of a mould created in the mind by a past experience. Suppose we have a crucible which has a particular shape. We can cast liquid metal in that crucible any number of times, and we can have the same shape. The sleep experience produced an impression in the mind, and that impression is retained even when we wake up the next morning. Consciousness is like a liquid in that crucible, and consciousness takes the shape of the crucible or the moulded mind, thus becoming a memory or recollection. In yoga psychology, sleep is also a modification of the mind. If the mind does not undergo a modification in sleep, there cannot be memory. The present consciousness is connected with the past conscious experience—only then could one have memory. There cannot be memory when consciousness is not connected.

11. What we really are, we know in deep sleep.

Dead matter cannot remember anything. Even the mould of the mind cannot have experience of its own accord unless it is attended with awareness. Memory of sleep is nothing but a peculiar modification of consciousness connected with the phenomenon of sleep. Suffice it to say that we are aware that we slept, and the awareness of having slept is called the memory of sleep. This awareness of having slept is possible, and this memory becomes meaningful only when the present remembering consciousness has a connection with another state of consciousness. Consciousness cannot be connected with dead matter. Birds of a feather flock together, as they say, but incompatibles cannot join together. Consciousness must have had a relation with another state of consciousness in order that the present can know its past. We imply or infer that there must have been some sort of consciousness in deep sleep if memory of it is to be explicable. If consciousness were completely abolished in the state of deep sleep, the memory of it would be unintelligible. This phenomenon of sleep reveals a tremendous fact that we did exist incontrovertibly in a state where we were not related to anything else. Remember this very important truth. While we are not related to anything else in the outside world, we did exist and we can exist in an unrelational condition. It is possible for us to exist without having any kind of social relationships. We will be surprised that we did exist in sleep without relation to human society, to the objects of the world, or to space, time and causal relationship—without relationship even to our own body and the sense organs, or without relationship with anything that we usually take ourselves to be in the waking and dreaming states. These states are but intimations of what we truly are. We can know what we truly are in deep sleep, not otherwise. We are so much entwined with other-consciousness; body-consciousness and the needs of the body and its accompaniments. So much are we engrossed in these vicissitudes of what we call external life that we are completely oblivious to what we truly are. But what we really are, we know in deep sleep.

12. We are living in a false world.

What are we in the state of deep sleep? The first question is: did we exist in sleep? Do we regard ourselves as wholly present in sleep, or partially present in sleep? We cannot say that only a part of ourselves was in sleep. We are sure that the whole of ourselves was present in sleep. The whole of us was present in deep sleep—not a part of us. Then what is it that we call ‘I’ in waking and dreaming states? Do we add to the whole? Nobody can add to the whole—the whole is whole. When we say, “I was wholly present in deep sleep,” we do not add anything to ourselves when we come into the waking condition. What is it that so holds our interest in the waking life, other than the whole that we really are? So many things attract us and confront us, and we are obliged to pay attention to them. What are these things? It is the so-called world outside? Is it a part of ourselves? Is the body a part of ourselves? Are the senses a part of ourselves? We may say yes. Then we must say that in the state of deep sleep we were not wholly present, because a part of us was outside. The body, the senses, our friends and relationships—they were all outside. We cannot say that only a fraction of ourselves was present in sleep—nobody will say that. “I was totally, wholly, completely, perfectly present in the state of deep sleep. I was healthy,” one would say. If we are wholly present in sleep, unrelated to anything else, then the unrelated condition is wholeness—not the related condition. So, relationships are essentially false. This is what is implied in an analysis of deep sleep. All relationships are false. They are not true, because they do not belong to the whole. What does not belong to the whole cannot even exist. What can be outside the whole? This is why some people say that the world does not really exist. “The world is *maya*; it is non-existent; it is a creation of your mind,” some metaphysicians will tell us. We can appreciate this point of view to a small extent when we dispassionately analyse the wholeness of our being present in sleep and the meaninglessness of any kind of relationship with things apparently outside our whole selves. If we are wholly present in sleep, then everything else outside that whole presence must be false. Hence, we are living in a false world. That is why the world does not satisfy us.

13. Our consciousness should be a whole, and that it is Being and Freedom combined.

The whole philosophy is centred on the necessity of knowing the Self, and then one will know everything. We should not try to know the world, because we cannot know it, as it is unrelated to consciousness. Consciousness cannot relate itself to anything that is unconscious. Awareness and matter cannot come together. The Samkhya is in a difficult maze on account of falsely imagining that there can be a counterpart to consciousness and that it can be real. The counterpart of consciousness is unreal. It cannot be real, because consciousness is a whole, and it cannot be divided. Suppose, for the time being, we take it for granted that consciousness can be divided. Who is it that becomes aware of the divided consciousness? Who becomes aware that there are two parts of consciousness? Consciousness is aware that consciousness is divided into two parts. How interesting and humorous! Tell me what it is that is between the two parts of consciousness. We may say it is matter. What is the relationship between the parts of consciousness and so-called matter that we have posited between the two? Is it matter or is it consciousness? We can go on *ad infinitum* piling up matter after matter to explain the relationship between the imagined matter of our mind with a part of consciousness that has been presumed for the time being. The simple psychological truth is that two parts cannot be known unless there is something which transcends the two parts. We cannot know that there are two persons or two things unless the two persons and things are transcended by a connecting consciousness. It is not two that see the two, but one that sees the two. This one that knows should therefore transcend the limitations of the variety of the world. Samkhya says that there are two wholes—consciousness that is a whole, and matter that is a whole. Here is one infinite, there is another infinite; but there cannot be two infinities. There are not two wholes—the whole is only One. If one asserts that there are two wholes, then neither is a whole—both are only parts. It is only theoretical jargon that the Samkhya invents when it says that there are two infinities, *purusha* and *prakriti*. Impossible. By implicated analysis and through a kind of inference, not by perception, we learn that our consciousness should be a whole, and that it is Being and Freedom combined. This is our true nature.

14. Nothing can be a wonder equal to this wonder.

*I*n an anecdote that we are sometimes told, a lion's cub was reared among sheep, imagined that it was also a sheep and bleated like a sheep. But when it came in contact with another lion, the cub was told, "My dear child, you are a lion's cub, why do you bleat like a lamb? Because you have been living with the lambs, you think that you are also a lamb. Come and see your face in the reflection of the water. See, your face is like my face—a large lion. Why do you bleat like a lamb?" Then it taught the cub to roar rather than to bleat. Such would be our own surprise, like the cub realising that it belongs to the lion's group and not the sheep's group. When we are awakened into this light which stimulates our imagination to such an extent that we cannot believe our own thoughts, we seem to be entering in an ocean that we ourselves are. Nothing can be a wonder equal to this wonder. When this wonder catches hold of us, it will not allow us to stand on this earth anymore. We cannot control this experience. We cannot bear this feeling of being able to overstep the limits of space. "Such a being am I!" This stirs up our imagination so deeply and with such intensity that we rise into ecstasy. This is what devotees, *yogins* and masters of wisdom call intuition, or at least the borderland of the higher life. This comes to us only occasionally or rarely, but these rare moments have to be made more frequent. This is the purpose of yoga. Now, this wondrous being that we truly are seems to be psychologically involved in something, but it is not really involved in anything external. It is involved in its own net. Who can bind that which is infinite? What involvement can there be for that which is not in space and time except when it chooses to be? Nobody can live with us unless we want to live with ourselves. Nobody can imprison us unless we choose to imprison ourselves. Nobody can do any harm to us unless we choose to harm ourselves. This seems to be our true status and position.

15. The body is not only a subject—it is also an object.

The three terms, *adhyatma*, *adhibhuta* and *adhidaiva* are mutually related to one another. *Adhyatma* is the within, *adhibhuta* is the without, and *adhidaiva* is the above. We have only these three outlooks in life. We either look above, or outside, or within, and one cannot do anything else. We have been trying to study the nature of the without—the *adhibhuta*—independently, as modern science does and the Samkhya philosophy did. An unbridgeable gulf between the subject and the object was what we confronted in the physicist's analysis and also in the Samkhya analysis. And then we turned to the *adhyatma* method, and to our surprise we realised here that we seem to be something more than what physics reveals or Samkhya revealed. Our conclusion through the *adhyatma* analysis is that we have a basis of infinitude of existence. Taking into consideration our actual waking experience, we seem to be standing opposed to an object in front of us in the form of the world. The *adhyatma* and the *adhibhuta* have many layers of manifestation. The deepest *adhyatma* is that unrelated infinitude of consciousness in us. To know this is true knowledge. It is in this sense that we are told that *adhyatma-vidya*, or the science of the *adhyatma*, is supreme among all branches of learning because when one knows it, one knows everything else. In a physical and physiological analysis, the physical body reveals that it is constituted of the elements of earth, water, fire and air, and there is also a lot of space inside. We are told by biologists that the actual solid content of our physical body, were it to be completely compressed, could be contained within one cubic centimetre of space. Though we look so big, there is so little matter in the body. We are only blown up like a balloon with space, air and water within. That is the material element of our body, and it is made up of the very same matter which constitutes the physical world outside. We are then made up of earth, water, fire, air and space, just as bodies or objects outside are constituted. But how do we know that we have a body? Just as we see objects outside, we see this body also, and therefore this body is one of the objects of the world. Because it is seen as other objects are seen, the body is not only a subject—it is also an object. It has all the qualities of the elements. The perceptual process is the way in which we come to know that we have a body.

16. The sense organs are different from the senses.

We have, in addition to the physical body, certain means of knowledge called the senses. The senses are all external instruments which are made use of by a sensational power within us. The sense of feeling, seeing, hearing, etc. is different from the organ which the power of sensation makes use of. So the organs are different from the senses. The organs are physical, and they belong to the body, but the senses, which carry on the sensations, seem to be certain powers. We have within us certain peculiar capacities called sensory reactions, and by means of these we are able to know things, including our own body. How would we know that we have senses apart from the external organs? We can see that under certain conditions of our personality our attention is withdrawn, and the senses do not function. The attention accompanies the sensations. The state of dream is a great help to us in realising that we have something within us apart from the physical body. There is the eye, the ear, the nose, etc. even when we are in a state of dream, but the physical eyes cannot see in the state of dream. One may not have any kind of sensation when asleep, although all organs are there and all are intact. If 'something' is not connected with the physical ears, there is no sensation. In the same way, an electric wire will not do anything when the current is off. The power that passes through the wire is what gives the energy. So are the organs. They are vehicles to convey the power of sense from within us. This power of sense is realised to be different from the vehicle itself. That the sensations are different from the organs which belong to the physical body is one discovery, but this is not the whole truth of the matter. There seems to be another necessity behind the powers of sense, namely what we call 'mind' or 'thought'. We can open our eyes, be looking at something and be thinking of something else at the same time, and we will not even see if people are passing in front of us. If we are working at a difficult mathematical problem, we will not hear sounds made near us. Sense, though healthily functioning, may not reveal knowledge of the outer world if the mind is not connected with the senses. While the organs are to be related to the senses, the senses are to be related to the mind. This is another very important thing in perception.

17. The life-principle (*prana*) comes from the Self itself.

In deep sleep, we have no idea of our bodies or of the senses and the mind, but something is there which keeps us alive. That is called the *prana*. Life persists even in deep sleep. Another name for that life is what we call the *prana shakti*. We have what is called the *prana* within us, which is externally manifest as breath. When a person was declared dead and it was said that there is no life in the body, people used to verify this by holding a little piece of cotton near the nostrils of the person to see whether breath was there or not, or really the *prana* had departed. Usually when we say, "I have power", it means we have *prana shakti*. This power, strength or *prana* is not only the energy that we gain from eating food. People think that *prana shakti* can be increased by taking more of certain kinds of food. It is not so. There is a slight difference between the caloric intake of the diet, the weight of the body and even the health of the body, from the vitality of the body. A person may be very healthy and yet lack vitality. *Prana* is different from the outer condition of the body—*prana* is nothing but a manifestation of our true nature. What we truly are cannot be increased or decreased. This is also very important to remember. We cannot increase what we are, or decrease what we are—we are what we are. We may increase or decrease our possessions, but we cannot decrease ourselves or increase ourselves. This 'something' which we really are manifests itself outside through the mind, the senses and the body. It is a vibration of our own self. We have a *shakti* or a power within us with which we are born, and though it cannot be really gained or lost, its connection with the body can be diminished by certain errors that we may commit in our daily lives. *Brahmacharya* is the art of the conservation of energy or vitality in us. So, *prana* is the vitality within us, due to which we digest our food, but which is not manufactured by the food that we take. If it were not there, our food could not be consumed. Vitality is something sacred. "*Prana* is God Himself," says one of the Upanishads. In India, *prana* is worshipped as the very embodiment of *Hiranyagarbha*, the cosmic energy. This *shakti* also is within us, and is an intermediary link between the subtle body within and the gross body without. Death means the separation of this *prana* from the body. The mind feels the body through the *prana*. Finally, this life-principle comes from our true nature, the Self itself.

18. There are some Vedantins and philosophers who think that the gods of religion are myths or fables.

Manas is the Sanskrit word for the psychological organ in its capacity of thinking; *buddhi* is the function by which we understand, judge or decide; *ahamkara* is that by which we assert ourselves and affirm or arrogate anything to ourselves, and *chitta* is the function by which we remember the past or retain a memory of a previous experience. These are the four general functions or psychological organs. In the yoga psychology of Patanjali, *chitta* means all these four things. In the psychology of the Vedanta, this fourfold function is called *antahkarana*. *Antahkarana* in Vedanta is the same as *chitta* in Patanjali's yoga. The physical body is what we are aware of in the waking state. Independent of the body and the mind, the *prana* and the senses function in the state of dream. In deep sleep no such function is there—neither are we aware of the body, nor of any psychological function. Though the *prana* is present, we are not aware of it. This is a discovery of the internal layers of our personality. Just as we saw that there are layers of objective reality known in the *adhibhuta* through scientific analysis, astronomy and the Samkhya, so there are degrees of manifestation internally in the *adhyatma*. *Adhidaiva* means that which presides over, that which superintends, that which regulates or controls. *Daiva* means a deity. Here comes the role of religion in addition to philosophy and the practice of yoga. There are some Vedantins and philosophers who think that the gods of religion are myths or fables. That this is not so is what we shall learn by an analysis of the *adhidaiva* principles. Something more is implied in all these tenets of philosophy, religion and yoga than what we can superficially understand. I think Hamlet said, "There are more things in heaven and earth than our philosophy dreams of." We should not think that our philosophy can allow us to understand everything, or make remarks that there is nothing or that there is everything. Buddha said: "Both are extreme statements. Don't say there is everything; don't say there is nothing. Both these are wrong statements. Truth is in the middle." We should be cautious in making statements in this matter. We cannot say what is and what is not until and unless we are confident that we have understood ourselves in the position in which we are placed.

19. The relation between us and the object is spiritual.

Adhidaiva is nothing but a relation between *adhibhuta* and *adhyatma*. We know through a connection that we establish between the *adhyatma* and the *adhibhuta* that there is an objective world. What is the relation between the *adhyatma* and the *adhibhuta*? How do we know that there is a world outside? Who tells us that there is something external to us? We shouldn't accept immediately what the senses tell us. How do the senses jump to the objects? Our eyes are here within our bodies; how do they jump to the mountain to tell us that the mountain is there? Our senses do not move physically from our bodies to the objects outside, and yet they tell us that there is something outside. How do they tell? What is this non-physical relation between the outer world and us? We know the existence of a mountain in front of us, though not through our physical contact. It is due to a separate relationship that we have. This is the mystery of the process of perception. This relationship, which we call perception of the world, reveals many mysteries. That we can know the existence of a distant object without physically coming into contact with it shows that our relationship with objects is not always physical. The connection between the *adhyatma* and the *adhibhuta* need not always be a physical connection. We cannot see anything other than the physical in a physical world, but we seem to imply that something non-physical is persistent and is involved in at least the process of perception of the world. What is the process of perception? We may say, "Mind is involved and the senses are involved." It is not merely the eyes that are necessary in perception—light is necessary, the eyeballs are necessary, the senses are necessary, and the mind also is necessary, may be our answer. But are the senses and the mind conscious? Can we say that the senses are conscious, and the mind is self-conscious? Consciousness seems to animate the mind, the senses and the body in states other than sleep. However, there is a condition where the truth is revealed that the mind, senses and body are not conscious. In deep sleep we become aware of this fact. The mind alone cannot reveal the knowledge of an object outside, because it has no consciousness. The relation between us and the object is spiritual—not even psychological or physical. It is consciousness that reveals the presence of an object outside.

20. It is consciousness which supplies the soul the perceptive capability.

There is a need for a conscious connecting link between the seer and the seen, without which we can have no knowledge of the world outside. It is not the light rays, the retina of the eyes, the senses or the mind that are ultimately responsible for the phenomenon of perception. All these may be there, but if something else is not there, we will not know anything. A corpse has all the features of a human being, but one essential thing is not there, and therefore it is unable to perceive anything. It is consciousness which supplies the soul the perceptive capability. Therefore, the link between the seer and the seen should be naturally and obviously a relation of consciousness, without which we cannot account for our knowledge of things. Hence, consciousness seems to be underlying the whole process. The process of knowledge is indwelt by the principle of consciousness. It is very important to remember that the awareness of a procession is not involved in the procession. The awareness of the movement of anything is not a part of the movement itself. Hence, 'process of knowledge' implies something which is different from the process. There should be a being hidden behind the process of change, transformation, succession or becoming. This rule applies to every kind of transition taking place everywhere in the world—whatever be the kind of change or vicissitude. Knowledge of vicissitude implies the existence of something that is not involved in the vicissitude. That we have knowledge of the world as a process of change implies that we have in us something which does not change with the objects that change. When we say that the world is transitory, we mean that there is something within us that is not transitory. The idea of being finite and limited shows that there is something in us which is not limited or finite. It is very clear and simple to understand. The perceptive process therefore implies the existence of a consciousness which is different from the process. It is this that makes us become aware that there is an object outside, though it may be far away in space. Our sense organs need not physically come in contact with objects. The consciousness element in us, together with another psychological event, allows us to know the object outside.

21. What is *vriddi*?

The limitation of perception to a particular object is the work of the mind, but the illumination behind it is the work of consciousness. So, there is a twofold feature of perception—the form and the consciousness of form. Specification and the awareness of the specification is the twofold feature of a perception of any kind. This specification of an object is called a *vriddi*. This is a very famous term occurring in yoga psychology. Mental *vriddi*, *manovriddi* is a term used in Patanjali's yoga system. "The control of the *vriddis* of the mind is yoga," says Patanjali. So, what is *vriddi*? *Vriddi* is nothing but the function of the mind by which it assumes a specific modification in relation to an object. This specific modification is a kind of mould into which the mind casts itself in respect of an object which is in front of it. When there is perception of a mountain, there is a *vriddi* of a mountain, one may say. The mind has a *vriddi* of a mountain, a *vriddi* of a person and a *vriddi* of this or that. A *vriddi* is nothing but a mould into which the mind casts itself with reference to an object in which it has interest and which it cognises. There are so many *vriddis* of the mind, because there can be many cognitions by the mind of objects. It can go on cognising many things, because there are many forms in the world. Therefore there can be many *vriddis*, and these many *vriddis* get piled up in the lower layers of the mind. The mind has many layers. Just as honeybees have two stomachs, one for actual digestion and the other merely to store, the mind seems to have at least three 'stomachs'. One is for receiving, one for storing and another for digesting, one may say. This is what the psychologists call the conscious, subconscious and unconscious levels. The mind rarely digests anything—it only stores. The situation is comparable to a retail shop and a wholesale shop. The subconscious is the retail shop, and the unconscious is the wholesale shop. Many things are there deep in this unconscious, but a little of it is stored for daily purposes in the subconscious, and the things immediately needed are kept just in front. That is the conscious level. The shopkeeper also has many things inside, but one cannot see them. These are the stored-up *vriddis* of the mind. Our personality is made up of *vriddis*—nothing but *vriddis*. The whole of psychology is nothing but the study of the *vriddis* of the mind.

22. Why are there so many gods in religion?

Why are there so many gods in religion? There are some who are loath to the idea of many gods. We should not make hasty statements in regard to things transcending mental perception. We should not say yes or no in regard to these things immediately. We are not in a position to pass judgment on these super-physical matters. We are here to be very humble in such things. There can be many gods from one point of view, though there is only one God ultimately. Hence religious consciousness has a great value and meaning. Who are these many gods? There are stages or degrees of objective reality. This is covered by the Samkhya and corroborated even by our modern scientists. There are degrees of the manifestation of the objective reality, and there are also degrees of our personality. There are layers of our personality—one under the other like the peels of an onion. Likewise, we have peel after peel constituting our vestures which are the layers of our personality. In Sanskrit they are called the *koshas*. *Panchakoshas* translates as the five *koshas*. *Kosha* means vesture—a kind of shirt, you may say. Just as there are degrees of manifestation of objective reality, we noticed that there are also layers of the subjective personality of the *adhyatma*. The vital sheath is constituted of the *pranic* energy. The organs of action, the senses of perception or knowledge, the mind, the ego, the intellect and the other layers of the mind including the subconscious and the unconscious are all further layers. The physical sheath is constituted of the elements—earth, fire, water, air and ether. These layers are animated by the Being-Consciousness simultaneously. Like the rays of the sun which simultaneously travel millions of miles through very many layers of space to reach the Earth, the sun of consciousness inside the deepest recesses of our being lights up all these layers of personality, including the lowliest vesture which is the physical body. We are at once aware that we are a total personality, with body, *prana*, senses, mind, intellect, *ahamkara* (ego) and many other things. We are in a position to know that we are a total complex of personality at one and the same time, on account of this sudden illumination of the entire personality by this consciousness within us. The many gods of religion, whether of the East or the West, are only the names that we give to the consciousness that is necessary for the existence of any degree of reality—objective or subjective. If degrees of reality exist, gods must exist.

23. The thoughts that occur to you in your meditation are your desires.

Yoga is practice—it is not merely listening or appreciating or even understanding. To rest the mind in that understanding is ultimately the purpose of yoga. The multitude in you and the variety of the world have been resolved into the threefold complex of *adhibhuta*, *adhyatma* and *adhidaiva*—beyond which and outside which there can be nothing. If you can concentrate your minds on these resolved fundamentals, you will be able to see what your weaknesses are. You should attempt to sit for a few minutes, close the eyes and contemplate your true position. When you deeply concentrate the mind on this state which you have arrived at now through analysis, you will find a change will supervene in your mind and in your internal structure. If your concentration is good enough, you may experience some motion in the body—a tremor or a jerk that you may feel. The jerk that you feel is due to the intensity of concentration. The *pranas* which have been accustomed to move within the body are now told to work a little further, so they become shaken up. When you come out of this state of concentration, you will come out with a feeling of strength, a feeling of freedom and a joy which will fill you inside and outside. You will feel as if you have drunk tasteful honey which energises the whole system like a tonic that has been injected into your body, and you will not be able to explain what you actually feel. Chant OM ten times, with a deep sonorous tone. Don't think anything. Don't think of the breath. Let the breath take care of itself and try to move the mind through these processes with which you have concluded the interrelatedness of conscious being. Sit silently for fifteen minutes, and when the silent meditation is finished, chant OM for fifteen minutes, and then following that, sit silently for one more minute. The thoughts that occur to you in your meditation are your desires. The desires can feed themselves without any objects outside. Before retiring to bed the last thoughts should be these and no other, and when you get up from the bed, the first few thoughts should be these and no other. These few thoughts will charge your body like a battery. You will have the strength to bear the circumstances of life which confront you. The world outside will not be the same that it was sometime back.

24. The world needs understanding and not correction.

The reality is not visible, and the visible is not the whole reality. We arrived at this conclusion by a very careful analysis of the nature of the perception of the object, through which we discovered that there is a connecting conscious link between the seer and the seen which is superior to both—transcending them and yet immanent in them. The *adhidaiva* is transcendent to the *adhibhuta* and the *adhyatma* and yet immanent in both. This is why we are often told that God is both transcendent and immanent. He is ‘above’ and also ‘in’. The conflict between the two, seer and seen, is resolved only by the third element. People in the world are not aware that there is a third element involved in experience, because the third element is not seen. We believe only what we can see. This is most unfortunate, because our troubles can be attributed only to this ignorance, which is an ignorance of the fact of a superior element involved in experience. What do we then do in our ignorance? We try to resolve this conflict in our own way, without reference to this third invisible element. There is for us no question of the third element, because we do not know that it exists at all. The world is painful, it is annoying, and it is difficult to get on with things because of an irreconcilable dualism between ourselves and the world outside. We do not know what to do with this world in front of us. It sometimes looks so rigid, so annoying and so unreasonable. The world needs understanding and not correction. The world needs understanding minds, not minds that try to conquer the world or rectify it. “What is wrong with me,” the world will retort. “Why do you want to correct me?” The world has less egoism than the human mind, and it is only where the ego is present that rectification may be called for. Do we see ego in the wind? Do we see ego in the rivers that flow, ego in the sun that shines, or ego in the seasons? We don’t see egoism in nature. Egoism is only present in mankind, who is forever complaining. We have to correct it through a higher power. That which transcends us and the world can alone correct the world. The *adhyatma* cannot rectify the *adhibhuta* in its physical and psychological sense. Man cannot do anything to the world, because the world keeps him in its grips. Man is in the grip of the material laws; hence it is that man has failed in understanding the world and in controlling nature.

25. *Bhoga* is enjoyment and yoga is realisation.

That which understands nature is also that which has power over nature. We have tried to contact nature for the sake of utilising it, but our contacts have been futile, so we have not been able to harness it properly. How then do we contact nature: through the eyes, the ears, through the sense organs, through the hands, through the feet and through these external avenues of sensation. Yoga, on the other hand, has a quite different method of contact. Yoga is knowing things as the *adhidaiva* would know things. The *adhidaiva* has a consciousness of the *adhibhuta* and the *adhyatma* which is quite different in nature and structure from the knowledge that the *adhyatma* had, independently of the *adhibhuta*. Yoga is the diving into that consciousness which acts as the connecting link between the *adhibhuta* and the *adhyatma*. *Bhoga* is enjoyment and yoga is realisation. We try to enjoy nature rather than to understand or realise it. The enjoyment is known to lead to complications and sufferings later on because of a wrong approach to things. We cannot approach nature by any intelligent method. Nature has refused to be possessed by means of the powers of sense. We cannot possess anything permanently, and things that appear to be ours today belong to someone else tomorrow. Why should it be like this? It is because it is impossible for nature to be possessed through the sense organs. We try to have physical contact with things, and this we regard as 'possession'. Physical proximity of things is not possession, and things can exclude each other even if they are physically proximate. Nature craves to be understood, and if we refuse to understand it, then it appears to be unkind. Nature is a set of laws, and to be or not be a friend of nature depends to what extent we have understood nature and its laws. Grasping, which is our idea of possessing, is a physical contact but is not a real relationship with things. So enjoyments, which are nothing but the placement of one object in physical proximity with another object, are not real enjoyments. We cannot really enjoy anything in this world. Enjoyment has been merely a kind of titillation of the nerves and the sense organs—"a scratching of what itches us", as it is sometimes said. When the nerves are tickled, it looks as if we are enjoying something, but it is not enjoyment. We are mistaken thoroughly, because after the tickling of the nerves, there is a fall of the strength of the nerves and we feel worse than we were before.

26. The simple way of the child's approach to the mother is itself yoga.

*T*o understand the world and live in the world is to utilise the higher means rather than our own hands and feet. We know the epic example of Draupadi's asking for succor from Sri Krishna when she was in dire distress. This example is a symbol of man's seeking a higher power for success in life. We can apply these techniques every day in our lives—not tomorrow, but today itself. We can apply this technique even in the smallest of things and not only in the big thing that we call contact with God. We can attain real sympathy from the world outside even in our smallest contacts. Have we understood this technique? It is this technique that we can employ uniformly in every situation. We can be like the cat in the story that knew only one way of escape. The story goes that there was a conversation between a jackal and a cat in the jungle. The jackal asked the cat, "If a hunter attacks us just now, what will you do?" The cat said, "I will jump to the top of a tree." The jackal replied, "Do you know only one trick? What a fool. I know a hundred tricks to escape. Nobody can catch me. I know a hundred tricks when you only know one trick." While this conversation was taking place, they heard the barking of hounds attacking them from all sides. The cat immediately jumped to the top of a tree, but the jackal was thinking, "What trick should I use now?" The jackal spent a long time revolving these ideas around in its mind, but before it could act the hounds attacked it. In the final analysis, it was certainly not wiser than the cat. When we are honest with nature, it also reacts very sympathetically, like a mother's reaction to a child. We see that a mother's reaction towards her child is not complicated. It is very simple, as we know, and immediately there is a happiness between them. The simple way of the child's approach to the mother is itself yoga. It is not a very difficult technique; we should not be afraid of it. Yoga requires a very, very honest approach and an opening of our hearts to the 'motherliness' of nature. If we cry before nature, "Mother, I am yours," it will open its resources to us immediately. "Yes my child, please come to me." But to be simple is the most difficult of things in this world. We can very easily make things complex, but we cannot be simple. Truth is simple, and that is why simplicity is difficult. Yoga is this supreme simplicity of approach, where we become so humble and so uncomplicated—almost a nothing.

27. *Avarana* is the cause, and *vikshepa* is the effect.

The mind not only prevents the awareness of our own self but also drags the consciousness out to the objects to which it is attracted. In Sanskrit these two processes are called *avarana* and *vikshepa*. *Avarana* means a covering or a veil over consciousness such that we cannot know that the consciousness is there. Due to this veil, we become incapable of knowing our true nature. This is the screening of the consciousness by the potentialities of the *vrittis* of the mind. These potentialities become thick and dark, and they are often referred to as the unconscious level of our personality. This unconscious mind is nothing but the unmanifested *vrittis* which weigh heavily upon us like dark clouds covering the sun. The darkness created by the thickness of the layer of the *vrittis* prevents our being conscious of our true nature. People who are silently sitting for months and months need not necessarily be good people; this may be a preparation for a storm. When the weather is gloomy, dusty, cloudy, and when no breeze blows, we may be sure that a tempest or a storm is going to break out. The torpidity of the mind is a preparation for violence of the mind. *Avarana* becomes *vikshepa*. *Avarana* is covering and *vikshepa* is distraction of the mind towards an object. Perception is one kind of *vikshepa*. The very fact that the mind is eager to see things outside or hear sounds is indicative of its *vikshepa* or distractedness. *Avarana* is the cause, and *vikshepa* is the effect. We forget ourselves first, and then we become aware of others. We cannot be aware of others unless we first forget ourselves. These two cause and effect processes take place almost simultaneously in us. We do not know when it is that we forget ourselves. We do not know when it is that we become aware of other things. To forget the Self and to become aware of the world is one and the same thing—it is a simultaneous act. *Avarana* and *vikshepa* take place then almost at the same time. Yoga is nothing but awareness of the true nature of the Self. Worldly existence or *samsara*, the cycle of transmigratory life, is another name for this identification of consciousness with the functions of the *vrittis* in relation to objects. The nearer we are psychologically to our own true nature, the stronger we are and also the happier we are. This is the secret of yoga.

28. No one can tell us that there is waking as long as we are in dream.

We cannot be aware of our true being as long as the *vrittis* function objectively or externally. When we are absorbed in a thought of another, how can we be aware of ourselves? To come to the dream analogy, we are so much absorbed in a wrong perception of a so-called object in dream that we cannot know that there is such a thing called waking. As long as we are in the dream, which is the absorption of the mind in an imaginary set of objects, we cannot even be told that there is such a thing as the waking state. Such is the identification of the mind with imaginary objects. Whatever be the worth or intensity of the teachings of yoga, the mind is unable to understand or grasp it because it is so much involved with the objects. No one can tell us that there is waking as long as we are in dream. So also it is that nobody can tell us that there is such a thing called the Absolute or the Universal Self, or the possibility of waking from this world, because we are so involved in the world—as we are involved in dream perceptions. The intensity of the aberration of the mind from itself in dream is such that thoughts appear as objects in a dream. We can see a mountain, and we can see a stone or an object against which we can hit our heads. Scriptures tell us that God became the world in this manner, and consciousness assumed the form of variety in this way. To return from the variety to the unity is yoga. This can be done only by a careful study of the processes of the mind by which it has assumed the variety, and then by finding ways and means of turning the mind back to the unity. In the beginning therefore the purpose of a student of yoga would be to kill the passions of the mind, and then to investigate its ordinary weaknesses in the form of the general *vrittis* of perception. There is no use thinking of concentration of the mind or doing yoga when any kind of passion, whatever it be, takes possession of us. There is a particular as well as a general modification of the mind. The particular is the impetuous modification which I called a passion, and the general is the ordinary perception of things, which is what we call consciousness of an object. Both these are obstacles and both must be overcome on the path of yoga. The overcoming or the subduing of the passions of the mind is the moral preparation that we are called upon to make in the practice of yoga, and the control of the general *vrittis* of the mind is the actual meditation itself.

29. The truth is that we are alone.

*T*he practice of yoga is more than a mere understanding of its principles, because there are many who may be able to understand it but cannot practise it. A kind of unique strength is necessary in the practice of yoga. It is not anyone and everyone who can take to it with ease. Many start with enthusiasm but do not conclude it, because of certain unforeseen difficulties that sometimes confront them in the middle, and often in the very beginning itself. A student of yoga should have a power of judgement, and he should not be merely a puppet in the hands of the views and judgements of other people. We cannot afford always to live in borrowed wisdom or information and strength gathered from others. A time will come when the student of yoga will realise that he is alone in this world, and his aloneness is the peculiarity of the wisdom that becomes opened before the inner eye. The truth is that we are alone. That we are apparently in the midst of friends and associates is a kind of illusion that has been cast over us, and this illusion will be dispersed like a cloud when the time for it comes. We will stand alone, and then we must have the strength to confront the realities of life. Before nature teaches this lesson with the rod, it will be proper for us to learn it of our own accord with a maintenance of our dignity. Instead of being pushed down to a place, it is better to honourably go ourselves. Even when we are not prepared to learn, we will nevertheless be taught the lesson. This is nature's method. It is very difficult to bear the way in which nature teaches lessons to us, so it is more proper and fitting that we do it ourselves rather than do it later under compulsion. No one can escape this law of nature, and truth shall triumph. The truth is that we are alone in our essentiality, and the final reaches in the passage of evolution will be a single person's walk. "Strait is the gate," we must have heard it said in the Bible. Narrow is this gate that releases us into the beyond, and two people cannot walk together in this narrow passage. Broad is the way of destruction, but strait is the gate to heaven. So narrow is this gate that we cannot take an assistant, a servant or a friend with us—we have to go alone. This is the fact and the ultimate reality of things. The evolutionary process of nature tells us that this is the truth when it comes to us as a kind of pain, a shock and an unexpected and unforeseen truth—but everyone must undergo this.

30. All successful people in the world are people who practise self-discipline.

Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has prescribed three methods of self-discipline. The first is the spiritual diary, the second is the resolve form and the third is the daily routine. Sometimes people used to call this the “*trisol*” of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. *Trisol* is a trident with three prongs, and Lord Siva is supposed to be holding this Siva’s *trisol*. The spiritual diary is a series of guidelines. One should consult these guidelines and question oneself as to how able one has been in following them. Through the maintenance of this diary, we will be able to check our progress every day and also know where we have gone wrong or failed. A good stocktaking of our conduct, our strengths and weaknesses, etc. is the regimen of the spiritual diary. The other part of the spiritual trident is the resolve form. There is a form available of the resolves that we ought to make: “I shall do that this year, and I shall definitely do it. I shall not do these things this year, and under no circumstance shall I do them. There are small weaknesses which should be avoided this year. I am not going to do these things.” It is a vow similar to those that we might take on New Year’s Day or some other auspicious occasion. In order that we do not forget our own vows and break them in the middle, and also to instil some fear in our hearts, we can take these vows in the presence of Mother Ganga or before the rising sun or in a temple. This is the way of ensuring that the vows are adhered to. The observance of these resolves is implied in filling in the resolve form. Then we have the daily routine which is the third item. One should not just be hazardous in one’s practice on different days. Every day we should have these routines at a fixed time. The time for our prayers, for our *asanas* and *pranayama*, the time for study, the time for meditation, the time for going to or returning from our jobs, the time for our other kinds of work—whatever be the system that we have been following in our day should be connected with certain specific hours of function. The daily routine has to be chalked out first: what is going to be our daily routine, and then when are the items to be fulfilled? These are two aspects of the daily routine. All successful people in the world are people who practise self-discipline. What we are is more important than what we say and sometimes what we do.

SONG OF GOVINDA

Rama Krishna Govinda
 Radha Krishna Govinda
 Gopala Krishna Govinda
 Krishna Krishna Govinda
 Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda ॥

God is Truth Govinda
 God is Bliss Govinda
 God is Peace Govinda
 God is Knowledge Govinda
 God is Love Govinda
 God is Light Govinda ॥

Control the mind Govinda
 Control the senses Govinda
 Realise the self Govinda
 This is the teaching Govinda
 Of all the Vedas Govinda
 Of all the scriptures Govinda ॥

Goal of life Govinda
 Is God-Realisation Govinda
 Never forget this Govinda
 Attain this Govinda
 Through faith devotion Govinda
 Through meditation Govinda
 Through Sravan Manan Govinda
 Through Tapas Yoga Govinda
 Through Mantra writing Govinda
 Through Likhit Japa Govinda
 Through Selfless service Govinda
 Through Vivek Vichar Govinda ॥
 Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda ॥

- Swami Sivananda





WISDOM WORDS OF SWAMI KRISHNANANDAJI

The eleventh chapter of the *Gita* is precisely the situation of the initial step in yoga. Everything will be hard in the beginning. We won't know what this is or what that is, which is exactly the situation in which Arjuna found himself in the eleventh chapter. In the beginning we will have adverse reactions, which come because of an interference with the system of living to which the mind has long been accustomed. There seems to be a sudden upset of forces from all sides which may terrify us, because the mind is now being introduced to a new method of thinking to which it has not yet been initiated. The mind will not agree, and it can easily turn away from the path. The mind sets up reactions, and when the mind sets up reactions, it looks as if the world also is up against us. When we take the initial step in yoga, there will be a feeling of being lost. All this will happen to us only if we practise—not merely when we read or talk about it. When we really start contemplating, meditating and seriously taking to yoga, then it is that these experiences come to us. One need not be afraid of these things. While these poisonous vapours may try to suffocate the efforts in yoga, later we will have a flood of nectar flowing towards us. The path of yoga is both difficult and also wonderful. It is the path to God. While God is most compassionate and loving, He is also a hard taskmaster. God is both of these. He is a loving mother and also a very critical father. He can punish us and also save us. The path of yoga, being the path to God, is of a similar character. These are the watchwords that I have offered as a kind of guidance in our day-to-day lives, which again I want to emphasise, should become a part of our nature and a part of our being. Yoga should be our own selves. *We* are yoga, ultimately. We are not to practise it as something outside us. To live yoga is to live a godly life, and it is to bring God into our own lives. Yoga means to be happy even in adverse situations. It is difficult indeed, but success will come, and it has to come, if we have honestly heeded the call.

**May God bless you all.
Hari Om Tat Sat.**

ॐ

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 MRITYUNJAYA MAHA 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 NOVEMBER

**This book has been offered
at the lotus feet of
H.H. Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj
on the occasion of
his auspicious 20th
Punya Thithi Aradhana
on .10.2021 (Gopashtami)**



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