

Testing, testing, testing. Gururaj. Is it working for you? Can you hear it? Can you hear it? Ah, now I am getting the feel of it as well. Shall we start with a prayer and, after the prayer, a few minutes of meditation? And those of you.....

Questioner. Gururaj, please will you tell us how we may learn to accept and come to terms with pain and suffering?

Gururaj. How do we learn, how do we learn to accept and come to terms with pain and suffering? Now, we would have to define what pain and suffering is and we will also have to define the meaning and mechanics of acceptance.

What is pain? Pain is something which a person feels perhaps organically, but the origin of all pain is in the mind, and of course, that constitutes suffering. So, the problem does not lie with the body. The body only expresses, as any doctor will tell you today that most of the physical pains are of mental origin. And then there are various kinds of pains, a physical pain because of physical infirmities and then you have the emotional pains. You have pains of feelings. All these fall under the same category in varying degrees of grossness or subtleness. In other words, the pain of the body is a grosser pain to the pain one feels within oneself in the mind where something goes wrong and the whole incident becomes painful. For example, a husband is unfaithful, or a wife is unfaithful, and that does inflict a very deep pain upon the mind. Now, what is the mechanism in the mind that could make oneself conducive to that pain? That is the question.

Man's mind is a conditioned mind and through thousands and hundreds of thousands, millions of years, through various experiences in the progress or in the evolutionary process, one has gained so many, many experiences. And it is only association that would bring about pain. A certain incident could bring pleasure to one person, while the same incident could bring pain to another person, the reason being, the reason is, how your mind is patterned. So, for ever the mind is there to compare, to associate. If you recognise or cognise something, there is something within the mind that requires comparison. If you see a dog, immediately it will trigger off a reaction within you that will tell you or associate the picture or the dog with an experience you have had of seeing a dog. Then only will you be able to cognise that there, this is a dog.

So, the same thing happens with pain. Because of his past experiences man has gone through, as I said, through the process of evolution, you have experienced all these pains before, perhaps in a different form, but a mark has been left in impression form in the mind. Now, the mind contains within itself impressions of many, many, many lifetimes and no thought or action performed by anyone is ever destroyed, it is there in what we call a memory box. Now, this mind that man has is not the brain. The brain is only a receptive organ for the mind. So, through the billions of cells in the organ

which we call brain, it is like an aerial that picks up outside impressions and registered them in the mind. In the case of the TV, it picks up the wavelengths and you see the picture on the telly. So, here the mind, in that process, has gained all kinds of experiences. Something which you see to be unpleasant, will not be unpleasant to you if you, if you have no standard of comparison. So, you have found something painful or unpleasant because you might have had a similar experience or the opposite experience. So, if you had an experience of pleasure then something which is not alike or comparable to that pleasure, results in pain.

Now, what is the solution? That is what we are after because firstly, we are born with all those impressions within us. It is part of our mechanism; it is part of our state of evolution. We are in the throes and in this process, although it might be a transitional state, but it is there and nothing can be done about it. But, now to alleviate that pain there is a way and, of course, the way is through meditation and spiritual practices. What happens here is this, that you do not get rid of the impressions but from the conscious level of the mind, through the subconscious and through the superconscious level of the mind, you form a direct line which by-passes all the impressions or samskaras, as we call it, that are stored in the subconscious layers of the mind. So here at the one grosser level we have the conscious mind and, at the subtlest level, we have the superconscious mind. And, in between, we have the subconscious which is the memory box of all previous experiences. So when the conscious mind receives an impression, for example, in sight, when you see something, the eye is but an instrument. The eyes relay the message. The eyes relay what is seen to certain areas of the brain which are of much finer matter. And then that area of the brain transfers that very thing to what we have called the intellect, the part of our brain that does the weighing, that analyses the pros and cons. And then the intellect, after sifting out what it has seen, still passes the impulses further to the subconscious layers of the brain. Now, when I talk of subconscious mind, it is not what the Psychologists talk about. They have only reached just a very little layer which is just under the conscious mind. But there are layers upon layers upon layers which modern psychology, being a new science, has not as yet discovered.

So, the intellect passes on those impulses to the subconscious layers of the mind, where it gets associated. Now, that pain is stored in the subconscious mind and that very impulse of a like nature - birds of a feather flock together - of a very like nature or its opposite nature, they come into conflict and a comparison takes place. And it stops there when the comparison takes place. And then via the same channels in reverse fashion, from the subconscious, it comes through to the conscious mind. And the conscious mind, being on the surface level, translates it into pain or pleasure which, in turn could be felt organically or physically. That is the process of how it works.

Now, through spiritual practices, one can by-pass that whole middle section of the subconscious mind. By the spiritual practices, directly from the conscious mind, we have a hot line, a direct line to the superconscious layers of the mind. And in the superconscious layer which is closest to the spirit in Man, which is closest to the spirit in Man, it draws from there the light of the spirit. And through this direct channel, where no comparison of previous experiences do take place, through this direct channel, it comes to the conscious layer, so pain is not felt as pain or any form of misery is not felt as misery. Because with this light of the spirit shining through, the clean pane of glass of the superconscious mind, the reflection is so bright that all the darkness contained within the subconscious is by-passed and, not only by-passed, but lightened up. The darkness disappears with the switching off of the light. And then, where is pain? Although pain is real, but in essence it is unreal. Pain is manufactured or it is caused by nothing else but the mind.

Now, if we have to wait to cleanse the entirety of the subconscious mind which is forever in turbulence, like a very rough sea, that will take millions of years to do that. But we want it now in this lifetime where our miseries are lessened. There is one thing that has to be remembered it is this, that pleasure is not the antidote for pain. For, if you seek pleasure, be sure to know that pain is not far behind, for they are polarised, they are two ends of the same stick. So, when you feel pain remember, pain this week, next week you will have some pleasure. That will be followed by pain again and pleasure. So it becomes a vicious circle. You cannot have pleasure with the element of pain in it. You cannot have pain with the element of pleasure in it. As night must follow day, as rain must follow sunshine, so they work hand in hand all the time. There can only be one solution, is to go beyond pleasure and pain and experience joy which does not have its opposite value. Joy does not have its opposite value because it is totally composed of the power of the spirit that is within man, and the very nature of the Kingdom of Heaven within is joyous. And therefore, Jesus always said, 'Be of good cheer'. Now, that does not refer to the 'Cheers!' we say, that refers to the joy which is inherent in man, that is forever there eternal, immortal, infinite.

So, the solution in how to be away from pain, is also to go beyond pleasure, for pain and pleasure, they are both transitory, forever changing. If you go to a cinema and if you are in a good mood, you will enjoy the film, but if you are not in such a good mood, you are not going to enjoy the film or a play or whatever. So the conditioning is of yourself. It has nothing to do with outside circumstances. A person might insult you and you would just not take any notice of it, just ignore it completely. You say that if this person has become angry with me and said such and such a thing, I am not the cause of his anger, I am just the excuse. So, if that perspective, if we can view everything in life with that kind of perspective, then neither pain nor pleasure can affect us.

People are forever seeking for pleasure. And how do they seek for pleasure? They seek for pleasure through outward means. Always for pleasure the search is external, good food, good - lovely home, good this, good that, always external. But joy is found internally, which has lasting value. And that light, that joy is so powerful that it gets rid of all the pleasures and pains and where you can exist in the centre of yourself. Today a man exists on the periphery and not in the centre. And it is only on the periphery that all the friction occurs. It is like a wheel, a cartwheel, a motor car wheel. It is the periphery, the rim that gets all the bumps and knocks on the road but not the axle. The axle is for ever still around which the wheel turns. So, through spiritual practices, through meditation, we reach the centre of ourselves. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven within and all else shall be added unto thee'. And this is repeated over and over again in all the Scriptures of the world.

So, the purpose of our practices is to reach the axle and find that stillness, so undisturbed by the movement of the wheel. For this world will go on and on and on. But the axle will forever remain still. And that is the stillness that we have to find. That is the purpose, the goal of man's life. And when that stillness is found, when that axle is found, when you become the axle, when you become the axle, then you have reached home from whence you have come. For this whole wheel is of no use without that axle. This whole wheel, this wheel, the happenings in this world, the ups and downs are of no use if the axle or the centre, the spirit of man is not there. Ah, the spirit of man is forever awake and alive but so covered up, so covered up by the motion around it.

Look at the wheel of your motor car, the axle is still, the wheel is there and yet we, to show off the wheel, we put on a hub cap and cover up the axle, we cover up the stillness. And what happens to the hub cap? It turns with the wheel, hiding away that axle, which is still and steady. So, because we live a life of this nature, pain and pleasure comes there - we will come to acceptance in a moment. Good. Pain and pleasures will be there and the spirit which is there forever eternal, we cover it up with the hub cap and allow the hub cap to turn with the wheel. So, what do we have to do, is not to develop the spirit - it is forever developed - it is to take off the hub cap, to unfold it, so that those Divine energies could permeate our minds and our bodies and then joy is felt. And that joy is so powerful that we shall not run after transitory, momentary pleasures.

So, the best way to be rid of pain is to stop running after pleasure. Do you see? And when we run after pleasure what is the first thing we have in our minds? Expectancy. And expectancy is the mother of disappointment. It is only when you expect and your expectations do not work out and then you feel the pain. So you do not weed the garden on the surface level. You take out the weeds with the root and all. And the roots are expectancy. You expect your son to

pass his exam, if he doesn't pass, you feel so disappointed and pain results. You expect your business to succeed and expectations are always exaggerated. You do not have a genuine expectation, you always exaggerate it. So on these goods I am selling, I will make two hundred pounds profit but you expect to make four hundred pounds. So you expect in every area of life. But how about just working for the sake of work, without any expectation. For if work is done in its true way, in its true form then the results will be there. They have to be there. I was saying to some people the other day, 'You work for a boss and you get paid a monthly cheque. Now every hour of the day you are not thinking 'Ah, thirtieth, thirtieth, coming, coming, cheque, cheque, cheque, cheque'. You are not thinking of your salary cheque every moment of the day. You only start thinking about it the third week of the month when you start running short. Yes. Yes. So, as we do our daily work, we are working, we are doing the job that we are doing and we are not thinking of the pay cheque. And yet end of the month the pay cheque is there. Likewise, if, and a very big if it is, isn't it, if we could live our lives in that way all the time in every department of our lives to do what we have to do without expecting.

You expect your husband to come home six o'clock from work and he could just be delayed for whatever reason. He might have had some late call at his office unexpectedly, could be one reason. He might have met a friend and gone into the local pub. For whatever reason. But you expected, you are watching the clock, you expected him to be home at six and if he does not come home at six - and if he comes home at half past six, in that half an hour you are going through terrible mental turmoil. For God's sake, why? Pick up a book, put on the Telly, put on the radio, listen to Gurujji's tape, perhaps, if you want to, worthwhile occupation. Yeh. So, we expect. Now, if we have the attitude, 'Oh well, look, he is late today. So what? There must be something, whatever'. But, when he walks in by the door and he is half an hour late, ah, the face is. And then from that, more trouble begins. A vicious circle from just a small little thing. The vicious circle starts. 'Yes, I've been waiting, keeping the food warm. The food is drying out in the oven and' I mean you ladies know more than that - better than me at least. Do you see? Now, this can have been avoided. If you had said, 'Oh, darling luvvie, luv, luv, what was it like today, did you meet a friend?' Or you don't need to even ask him if he met a friend, you can smell his breath. Yes, yes, yes. And say, 'okay, your late but you know I have prepared something special and I wanted to serve it to you hot and not hot and not dried out'. So, next time, you know luv - that's the way, no expectation, no disappointment, no exaggeration of the problem at all because you can't live like a machine. Life is an art. And, being an art, so many rules and things get broken all the time - broken to be rebuilt again. It's beautiful. Things break down to be built up again. Fall down into the gutter and stand up again, you are a man, my son. Someone said that, not me. Like that.

You know there was a priest - I beg your pardon, Doug. He has been here for twenty five years. There was a priest and he wanted to send a Bible to a friend of his. So, he wraps it up very beautifully and takes it to the Post Office. So of course the postal clerk asked, 'Sir, is there anything breakable in here?' So he says, 'Nothing at all except the Ten Commandments'. Yes, yes, yes. That is how life goes on.

So, of course, to come back to square one. Pain can be avoided if you do not expect pleasure. If there are no expectations, there are no pains. And when you expect something, remember you are not living in the present. You are living in the future, that future which might never even happen. Or either you are living in the past, in your memories, things that are gone and forgotten. The rains came and they are gone and yet the rains are remembered, of how you got wet and caught a cold. What is the sense of remembering that cold? It's gone! But it goes churning and churning and whirling and whirling in the mind and you relive the original pain a hundred times over. That is living in the past. And then people live in the future, this might happen or that might happen. My daughter might elope with a boy that I don't like. Something like that. And that is pain-producing expectation all the time. But to be able to learn to live in the present, moment by moment and let every moment be joyous because every moment is joyous. Every moment is an eternity in itself. Nothing else exists but this very moment. The past has gone, the future might never come but now is now. Now is now.

So, that is the secret. Now, this comes from an understanding, a realisation. Not just mental analysis or a rationalisation. It has - this understanding must permeate every cell in your body. Every drop of blood in your body must be permeated, tinged with this realisation. Now, that is not easy. It takes time for it to soak in. So, there is another way, acceptance, which was incorporated in your question. What do you accept? You do not need to accept the situation. What you need to do is to accept yourself in relation to the situation. You need to accept yourself in its relationship to the situation or to the person or whatever. What does it mean to be able to accept one's self? It means 'I am what I am'. If I am a University Professor, fine, if I am a street-sweeper, fine, I shall not live in daydreams. If I am a carpenter, fine, plumber, okay, I accept myself. I accept all my faults and frailties. And that's how one starts by improving ones self. I have the fault of being irrationally prone to anger, I accept that. And I am a person that is prone to anger. Fine. Step number one. Good. Then, when you have that thought and that recognition that I am prone to anger, and once you start recognising, really feeling that 'Look, I am angry, then I will ask myself 'Why are you angry? Why are you prone to anger?' And when you start asking yourself these questions in all the various aspects and facets of life, why am I angry, why can I not control my temper, then you will find many reasons. You will find true reasons and you will find justifications as well.

So, with the acceptance of what one is, one also starts to learn discrimination and not justification. For everything can be justified. But the process of discrimination is to work out the pros and cons of it and you will ask, 'I am angry. Good. These are my reasons for being angry. Now let me examine the opposite of those reasons, why I should be angry'. Do you see? And the sincere person - remember its only sincerity that can make you accepting, otherwise you are playing the bloody fool. Yeah. It is only the sincere person that could do that. Good. Then for the acceptance, you view the situation with discrimination looking at it from both angles, the angle that justifies and the angle that does not justify the particular action. Right. Now, after that is done repeatedly, repeatedly, then you do things spontaneously. For if life is not spontaneous then it is contrived. And when life is contrived, it is not 'you' that you are looking at. You are looking at a mental projection that you have projected yourself from your mind. You are not looking at the genuine article that you are you. You are looking at a projection. Like looking at a picture on a cinema screen, it is a projection of your own mind and it becomes a facade. You have lost yourself, while your purpose in life is to find yourself. Good.

So we have within the process of acceptance, admittance, discrimination and the courage to look at one squarely in the mirror, squarely in the mirror, with the realisation that these are weaknesses. And, by continued awareness by continued awareness, one really comes to know oneself. People think they know themselves but they only think that they think that they know themselves, which they do not know themselves. So, here the process begins in acceptance where you start knowing yourself. And by continual examination, by continual examination you can stand apart from yourself. In the first, at first you are projecting an image and looking at the image from here to there. But it reverses the process where you, from there, are looking at you. Now, how does one develop this awareness is by meditation and spiritual practices. When the awareness expands, when you start separating your real self from the trouble-maker, the ego-self, your real self knows of no pain or pleasure. It is just that little evanescent ego-self that goes through these processes of pain and pleasure. And then, you start looking from your real self to the little ego-self of yours. And as you start objectifying that ego-self, then the ego-self becomes cleansed. And when it is cleansed, pain and pleasures disappear and the light of your real self, the spiritual self shines through more and more and more. Do you see the process? And then no pain, no pleasure, just joy, permeating Divine joy, being showered in that light. And you do not need to have much learning to become wise. You don't need half a dozen PhD's behind your name to know yourself, for the Scriptures say over and over and over again, 'Man, know thyself'. And this is the process of knowing one's self, through acceptance. In other words, acceptance is a process. And within the process of acceptance, all these things come about, they all fall in line. And life becomes smooth, harmonious with the mind, body and spirit function as a totality in its fullness, in its

wholeness. And then you could repeat the words which Jesus said, 'I and my Father are one'. So that is the aim and goal of life.

But now, this takes a long time. It's a gradual process. It's a gradual reconditioning, repatterning of the mind, the mind that has been functioning so groovedly in the grooves it has created itself. Those grooves have to be modified, redirected, re-patterned, re-patterned not on the horizontal level, re-patterned on the vertical level, the vertical bar on which the horizontal bar hangs, the absolute vertical of the cross, on which the relative manifestation of life balances itself. So Man lives together in the absolute and in the relative in oneness. 'In the world but not of the world'. You develop that detachment or non-attachment to all the things that causes you pain or pleasure and then you land up in the land of joy

SIDE 1 ENDS HERE

which has no opposites. It is there. It is there just for the opening. 'Knock and it shall be opened. Seek and thou shalt find'. Could be a bit difficult.

Can man start with acceptance as it is without this process?

SIDE 2 STARTS HERE

That is another aspect of it. Man, not given to analysis, for the mind is very limited. It cannot go very far; it cannot comprehend the finite mind. It can never comprehend that which is infinite. So, mind and heart has to combine. The heart has to feel the power of Divinity and the mind has to translate it in daily living. And then one comes to the realisation, 'Thy Will be done, not mine'. But this is an act of trust and faith. How many of us here or in this world really have that trust and that faith where we could truly say, 'Thy Will be done'. We say that only with the mind when we are in trouble. Then we say that. When we are in trouble, 'Lord, I leave it to you'. But when we are not then I do everything. 'Ah, look at this beautiful house I have built. Look at this beautiful thing I have done'. Idiots! 'I' do nothing. He does. We can't even lift a hand without that energy, without that force.

So why not from the very beginning dedicate it all, as the Gita would say, as an offering to the 'Real Doer', for I am but an instrument? A flute, a piece of wood with half a dozen holes in it, of what worth is it? But when He blows through it what Divine melodies does it not produce? What great Symphonies comes not through that flute. But the flute, as you or

I, are nothing. A piece of dead wood, that's all and it is only the blower that enlivens the dead wood. So let us not be dead wood but be alive, vibrant in his glory for that is the purpose of the wood. And yet, what do we really do? The dead wood, wood, wood, wood, wood, wood, wood, performs so many services. It gives you a seat to sit on. It gives you fire to warm your body. It gives you this roof, this house. Dead wood! Aren't we deader than deadwood and yet possessing the greatest gift for mankind the power to think? For what separates us from animal or plants is the power to think. How we use it, is our will. How He wants us to use it, is His Will, but it is only by acceptance and by the acknowledgement that my will is of no avail it is all His will everything we do, good or bad, for His Will is beyond it all.

And if we flow with nature and the path, with the path of His Will, one is never lost; one never suffers, one is not in misery. But there is joy and hope and, with that joy that shines through us, we become more loving, more kind, charitable, compassionate. Then truly can we put into practice the greatest phrase or line that was ever, ever written, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself. Do unto others as it would be done unto you'. Those two phrases really, they are so interconnected. One could call it one phrase, because 'Thy Will be done'. I accept that. It is because I try and exercise my will, that I can't love my neighbour as myself. It is because I try to exercise my little ego, that I don't do unto others that which I expect to be done unto me. But, if His Will is activated, through meditation and spiritual practices, you dive deep within, you go beyond the little mind, the little ego self and allow that force and power to permeate, where we ourselves become that force and that power, scintillating, shining in all glory. And that is the glory of God, none else. For what is there, is here and what is here, is there. It all is here and now.

That was an hour, is it? Good. Fine. So I believe they have arranged some tea and refreshments. So you will chatter on and I will be with you there and then we will start the second half. Try and think of some nice questions, that's all. I don't prepare talks. I like to talk on what people want to know about.

Aide. We'll break for about half an hour. Tea is around four o'clock.

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