

Gururaj. Yes, nice to see some old friends and new faces? It's all part and parcel of the world family. Isn't it beautiful when you have your counterparts in all these other countries as well. Good. Let's meditate for a minute or two.

Gururaj. Those of you who are attending a Course for the first time might not know that this is our form of greeting, it means that with thought, word and deed, I salute the Divinity within you. For all of you are essentially Divine. Fine. Now when I went to my rooms, I found a baby's cot in my bathroom. Now let me tell you one thing, I know nothing about midwifery. Now, here is something, I got a card and I don't know if it's Chinese, you'll have to tell me. 'Go rabh maith aguth, gra mo croi!' What language is that? It sounds like Irish really. What does it mean? 'Go rabh maith aguth, gra mo croi.' That's got it, Irish, I thought so. What does it mean?

Voice. Thank you, love of my heart. The Irish language is like that.

Gururaj. I return it to you. Fine. What shall we speak about tonight?

Questioner. Gururaj, we are trying to control our egos so that they don't control our lives. But at the same time we are told we should love ourselves unconditionally before we can truly love anyone else. How do we reconcile these two apparently contradictory statements?

Gururaj. Beautiful. Fine. Firstly, we could never control our egos. By controlling the ego, what do we mean? Firstly, what is your ego? Your ego is the sum totality of all the experiences you have gained in life, or even previous lifetimes if you believe in that. And, that constitutes your ego. Now, the ego has no grosser substance except thought and thought too is matter. Now when the ego, or that thought formation finds conflict within itself because all the various experiences that you have gained might never be reconciled completely, so this would create a conflict. Now, it is this very conflict that is within the ego that is troubling you and, therefore you want to control it. So, the ego is not harming you at all but the conflict is creating the turbulence.

Now, whenever there is a conflict you could never control it, because by controlling that conflict, you are taking two opposing forces and by using these two opposing forces against each other, you are creating greater conflict. So, it would snowball. Now what can we do with the ego, seeing that we cannot control the ego and the ego is forever producing conflicts and those conflicts have a habit of multiplying because the conflicts are not resolved? The best way and the only way to deal with the samskaras or impressions of which the ego is made, is to refine the ego, to bring the ego from its

opaqueness through to a transparency, so that when it is transparent, the very spiritual force that is within you could shine through, bringing you joy. Now, conflicts, the nature of conflicts, is Tamas, which is inertia or darkness. There's a heaviness about it. So when one clarifies the ego and thereby allowing that spiritual light within you to shine through, you automatically and spontaneously banish the conflicts. And that it is how you can cleanse the ego.

So, therefore, meditation and spiritual practices are so important, so that from your conscious mind you go right through the subconscious layers of the mind and yet further on, you find the super-conscious mind which is closest to the Absolute. And, the super-conscious mind being clear, the light of the Absolute shines through to banish the darkness in the subconscious mind. Now every action we perform is because of the thinking ability of the conscious mind. Now, thought is the forerunner of your actions. And, when thought is the forerunner of your actions, it has to have something to enforce it. So, what enforces the conscious mind is the subconscious mind, wherein all the conflicts are stored. So, there is no annihilation, to recap, and there is no resolution, but clarity can be brought about in the subconscious layers of the mind so that all those impressions there could be banished. Now, when you banish these impressions, what happens to them. They go back to the original sources. By this we mean that certain kinds of negative thoughts would be attracted in the atmosphere to like-minded, negative people. Positive thoughts would be dispersed and they would go back to like-minded people. For example, if you are of a cheerful nature, you will attract cheerful people to you. If you are of a non-cheerful nature, then those are the kinds of people we attract. So, it is not only the circumstances or the environment that you are put in that mixes up the ego. So it's a combination of the internal-self, the samskaras mixed with the environment which enforces the impressions and it works in a vicious circle, one is strengthening the other.

So therefore, the ego-self is also subjected to the laws of Karma. Karma is that, according to the relative laws of life, whatever you sow, you will reap. But that does not function in the super-conscious level of oneself, it only functions on lower levels such as the subconscious mind which in turn influences the conscious mind. So, Karma or the results of your actions is not your sum totality, for you can disperse or banish Karma. I've said this in many talks perhaps that if you have harmed ten people, it does not mean that you will be harmed ten times in the same way. Just do eleven good deeds and you wipe off the ten non-good deeds. I never use the word bad deeds, there's no such thing. I'll explain why just now. So, that is how through spiritual practices and modulating our behaviour and actions in life with the help of the spiritual practices, we get rid of the Karma that is there.

Now, Karma could have its basis in many past lives perhaps, and which are just manifesting in your present life. Therefore, you can't explain why such and such a thing must happen to you. You look around you and you see some

people who are so happy, are born in favourable circumstances. Then you look around and you find some people in unhappy circumstances. Some people are born sickly while others are born in good health, why? Divinity has nothing to do with it. Divinity is a neutral force. It does not judge. You judge yourself. So, if we are placed in negative circumstances because of Karma, and Karma is part and parcel of the ego-self; so we do not start with Karma, we start with those impressions and instincts that are there. In Sanskrit there is a beautiful word called Sunchittakarma, which means that which is there already requiring expression. And, everything in life you can observe is forever finding expression. Otherwise, without expression, nothing can survive. These flowers will die if it does not give off fragrance or its beauty that is its expression. Likewise, a human being also has to express himself. And, because of the conflicts that are existent in this so-called ego self, you express things in a negative way, or in a positive way. And in a positive way, your life becomes more and more joyful.

So, it depends upon you and it does not take very long to change the entire course of your life. Because, firstly, you are self-realised Divine beings, the children of Divinity. You are none else than that. It is just a realisation to be able to assimilate this understanding, helped by our meditations that you could change the entire course of your life within six months. It does not mean if you indulge in wishful thinking and you wish for a million pounds that it's going to fall on your lap. No. But you will have a different attitude to those million pounds. Do I need it or don't I? Right. Do I need it or do I want it? There's a great difference. For you will not get what you want, you will get what you need. And that again is because of the conditioning that you have brought upon yourselves, the patterning. So, what do we do with patterning - we unpattern it. What do we do with conditioning? We uncondition it. So the question of control totally falls away because it's beyond. With what are you going to control it? With your conscious mind, with the thinking level of your mind. And by using the thinking level of the mind, you will only create within yourself inhibitions and repressions. Because everything has to express itself. It's the nature of everything to express itself.

So, we forget the idea of control but we rather think of the idea of clarification, to take away the opaqueness and bring a transparentness, through which Divine light could flow and your life changes. Any person that does his spiritual practices as prescribed to him, with proper sincerity and regularity, in six months time you can change any circumstance you are placed in, for man is definitely a master of his destiny. But which Man? Ah! Now here is where the mistake lies. Man is master of his destiny but not from the thinking level. Man is a master of his destiny if he uses the thinking level of the mind and draws upon that which is higher than himself. Then, life must change. If you put sugar in your tea, naturally the tea will become sweet. So what is that sugar in life? It's that Divinity within you that could so easily be drawn upon. It is easy because that is your true nature and the ego-self falsifies your nature, covers it with veils of nescience, of ignorance,

so your true self is really forgotten. And you say 'I'm a creature of circumstance.' No such thing. You are a Divine creature that is beyond all circumstances for every man can rise above the conflicts of his ego-self, the conflicts of his little, conscious mind. He can rise above it and view it in such a way that he is not affected. Like, you know, my favourite saying 'Two men behind prison bars; one saw mud the other saw stars'. It's a very favourite saying of mine, I think I've repeated it a million times.

Good, so now what happens to man's mind when he draws upon his Divine self? That mind that has been troubling you, the conscious and the subconscious mind, that which has been troubling you up to now would assume the quality of the super-conscious level which is the closest to the Absolute and which is Divine. It's like having a clear crystal, if you put a yellow flower behind it, that crystal would look yellow. If you put a red flower behind it, it will look red. But meanwhile, it is colourless crystal. So, once we remove all those colourings of the ego-self, we start realising that there are no colours at all. We only see colours because it is refracted through a prism. There is only one colour, white. But because it is refracted through the prism, you'd find all those blues and greens and yellows and what have you. Do you see? So, man is systematically led, step by step, from the conscious level of his mind through the various layers of the subconscious and he reaches that layer of his superconscious where there is nothing else but an equilibrium, a silence, a quietness.

And as the Bible would say, 'Be still and know that I am God'. It's only reaching that level that you would recognise your real self. But, because of the conditioning to repeat again, we regard ourselves to be just ordinary human beings with so many faults and frailties, and all kinds of things, don't we. But, by drawing upon this energy, those faults and frailties which creates the conflicts could be used as tools. With a spade you can dig a grave and with the same spade you can dig the foundation of a magnificent cathedral. Same spade. Do you see? But, the art lies in using it. For life is not a mechanical thing, life is an art. Not to live artfully, but to recognise that life is an art. And, if you appreciate that Divinity, every breath you take, every word you say, contains a force and a power, that would alter your circumstances. That is why, for example, we say 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'. And what are you going to gain by it? Your neighbours are going to love you in turn. So, to become loveable you become loving. Everything has to rebound upon yourself, negativity or positivity. So you have the choice. That little conscious mind that plays us so many tricks can be used for choosing that which will bring you peace.

And we have the tools that could lead is to find that peace and joy, and, away from the turbulence of the surface waves to the calm and the depths of the ocean, just below the surface waves. Then, you cannot destroy the surface

waves but you come to the realisation that the surface waves are too made of the same water. So you see how the attitude changes, total change of attitude. And then you accept the surface waves. That power is part and parcel of relative existence, while the Absolute existence of which you are is there and you live in both spheres simultaneously. So here you will start appreciating the ocean waves, they can be high, but ah, those high ocean waves are beautiful, don't they seem to a surfer? Do you see? And what creates those ocean waves? The calmness of the ocean creates those ocean waves and the turbulence of the waves creates the calmness of the ocean.

They told me not to talk too long tonight. Let's not stretch our minds too much. I think I've got a couple of jokes. You know, the, the elder doctor, the elder doctor was you know, was so busy that he had to take on a partner. So he took a younger man as his partner. And of course the elder doctor was showing around the junior one, taking him on his rounds and so the first call they made was at Mrs Goodbody's home. Now as doctors would do, our doctor Robin from America would tell us that if they charge a big fee, they've got to do something, they poke you with that stethoscope and put a thermometer in your mouth and all that, although you might not have fever. Fine. So, as they do, this chap put the thermometer in Mrs Goodbody's mouth and then as he was taking it out, it slipped out of his hand and fell under the bed. So he bends down to pick it up, the senior doctor, and he found a lot of chocolate papers there. So he tells Mrs Goodbody 'Your cure can be expedited if you eat less chocolates.' Fine. So then they did the next call. Now it was the turn of the younger doctor and they visited Mrs Lovelybody. She was sitting up in bed with a beautiful - what do you call these things women wear - right, I'm sure it wasn't a negligee, the doctor was coming. Fine. It was the younger doctor's turn to examine her and he too, thermometer, and somehow or the other as he took out the thermometer, it also fell out of his hands and rolled under the bed. So the younger doctor bent down and picked up the thermometer. And then he tells Mrs Lovelybody, he says 'Madam, you should not be too close to the church. You should not be too close to the church'. So after they left, and on the way home the two doctors were discussing, so the older doctor says 'Why did you have to bring the church into it?' So the younger doctor explains, he says 'When I bent down to pick up the thermometer, I saw the vicar.' (General laughter)

You know there was an Irish teacher like our beloved Breda, right, I mean this was in Ireland do you see, so she asked the class, she says, 'Look, today I'm going to give you children a prize but you've got to answer one question correctly'. So one child got up and he said 'Columbus.' Then another child got up and he said 'Washington'. Fine. And then a little Jewish boy got up and he says 'Yes, Miss, Saint Patrick.' And of course Saint Patrick is of Ireland. So the little Jewish boy got the prize. So afterwards she called the Jewish boy aside after the class. She said 'Tell me, you're

Jewish', he says 'Yes'. ' What made you say Saint Patrick was the greatest man'. So the Jewish boy says 'Miss, in my heart I knew it was Moses, but business is business.' (Gururaj laughs)

Voice. The Irish are very clever.

Gururaj. Very clever. You know talking of doctors, and what have you, this one fellow went to the doctor and he says ' Sir, you know I snore, what can I do about it? So the doctor asks him ' Do you, does your snoring, does it disturb your wife?' He says 'No doctor, it does not only disturb my wife but it disturbs the whole congregation.' (Gururaj laughs)

You know this man took his wife to dine out, good, and you know he asked his wife across the table 'Tell me what is that lovely Italian dish I like.' So the wife, without looking up from the menu said 'Gina Lollobrigida'. (Gururaj laughs)

Now here in England at a museum in London, this guide was showing them around, - people that came, you have a guide that takes you around and explains you - and so he says 'You see this tomb, its worth five thousand pounds'. And then there was one man in the crowd, he says 'No' - hey, wait a minute, I've got it wrong - it's five thousand years old, five thousand years old. So this one man there in the crowd says 'No, five thousand and three.' So they proceeded on and came to a nice vase, so the guide says 'This is two thousand five hundred years old.' So the same chap says 'No. Two thousand five hundred and three.' So it went on like that a bit. And after the tour was over, so he calls this chap to one side and he says 'Every time I said the age of a thing, you added on three. Why?' So this man replies that 'Look, three years ago when I came here, you said five thousand, so it must be five thousand and three' (Gururaj laughs) 'and that very vase you said was two thousand five hundred, must be two thousand five hundred and three'

Now let's have a joke on the Scottish. We've done Irish, English, Scottish. Now I believe, I don't know how true it is because I've got some very dear Scottish friends who normally pop into my house for a Scotch, you know, because they get it for nothing. (Gururaj laughs) So they were passing this little town and they were churchly people, so all three of them went to the church. And the Minister was appealing for funds after the sermon. He says 'Please do give generously because the Church requires repairs and things like that' and the plate was going down the aisle. Now these three Scotchmen did not want to contribute. So they thought let's work out a plan. So what they did was this, that one Scotsman fainted and the other two carried him out.

Now let's go to Africa. The cannibals there in central Africa caught a Missionary and they took the Missionary to their Chief. So the Chief says 'Ah, fine, get the big pot ready'. So one sensible person there in the crowd said 'Oh no, we should not, you know, eat him, he's a man of religion. How can we do that?' So the Chief said 'Ah well, that's what we want, at least our people must have a taste of religion'.

There's so much more, let's leave some for tomorrow. They asked me not to keep tonight's talk too long. You're tired from travelling. Many of you have come from far places, America, Ireland and Denmark, of course, and what have you. So do rest well, and tomorrow we are going to really start thinking about very very deep things to change the attitude of life and how to apply it in practical living so that you could experience the joy that you really are, to enjoy the joy, without being hedonistic, of course.

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