

Questioner. Gururaj, the essence of life

Gururaj. One moment please. Savita, my dressing table in the room, there are some Vick cough drops, if you could bring them please. I'm ready.

Questioner. Gururaj, the essence of life in the relative world is change, and this appears to be the only permanent thing about it, so why do we often find it so difficult to change, in our attitudes, relationships, or way of living? Is it because of our conditioning, we cling to what is familiar, because it seems to offer some sort of security?

Gururaj. Yes. Beautiful question. The only thing that is sure in the relative life is change, - are you hearing me at the back? - the only thing that is sure in the relative life is change and we cling to the changes, the transitory value of life, because we find security. Now I think I've given you an example before, that in the Himalayas, a person has an accident, and is lying in the snow. Such a warmth envelops him, that he does not want to get up. Now if he would only exert his will to get up, and walk around a bit to circulate his blood, he would be saved, he would live. But in that warmth he has found lying in the snows, he loses his life. Now that is the daily experience of all of us, because we are afraid of the unknown, we stick to that which is familiar. We stick to that which is familiar in spite of it being so unpleasant to us, in spite of it bringing so much suffering to us.

Now common sense would tell us, that we should evaluate relative existence, with all its changes and try and see how beneficial these changes are to us. Now, we can still live in the changes, and change the changes; that is the secret of life. What do we change? We change that which is forever changing into changelessness, wherein stability could be found. Now the fear of facing the future or turning away from that with which we are so familiar, is a sure sign of instability. It is a sure sign of a lack of faith, it is a sure sign in the disbelief of Divinity. Now what prevents us from wanting to change? It's for the person over there, it's not for me. Okay. It tastes nice, it's got honey in it. Yes. Now what prevents us from wanting to change? What prevents us from remaining in the suffering and yet inwardly we would like to get away from the suffering? And yet we are so tied down, bogged down, because of what we have been conditioned by.

Our minds, as we have always discussed is nothing but a product of conditioning. I have known people, going for example into a restaurant and not wanting to try a different kind of food, they are afraid. In business days, this is something I could always remember, I had an office in Rome, one of them, and our man there was Eli Aptekman. Of course he took me for dinner and just the week before that, he had an American visitor, who was also a buyer of films.

And he took him to this restaurant, a beautiful place with all the fine Italian foods, meat foods, vegetarian foods, and all kinds of foods, and you just had to choose. So when Eli asked him what would you like, so he looked around and looked around and he said, 'You know what I would like Bud, a nice hamburger'. Yes. Here there are tables and tables spread with the finest food, but he had always been accustomed to his hamburger and ice-cream and he wanted that. Do you see?

How much joy is missed in life, because we do not want to change. We are afraid, as we've said just now, because of insecurities, instabilities, a lack of trust. The greatest things in life, that could ever be achieved, is not always to mind your step, but to take a leap. All the greatest things created in this world, from the most fantastic bridges to the most tallest sky-scrapers, everything, everything, everything, you name it, is because a person was prepared to leap. Now even in leaping, it should not be blind leaping. Take as a businessman would say, a calculated risk. But are we prepared to risk our little ego, that little ego that wants us to cling, and cling and cling, to life. Now, there's nothing wrong in clinging to life, because everything is life, but what is our understanding of life, that is the question. Does life only mean the conditionings that our minds, of which our minds is a product? Does life only mean the mundane things to which we attach so much importance? Is that really life, and is that really living? Most of us don't live, we just exist. And in this just existing, we drift, like a rudderless boat. So there must come a time when a person must accept a higher value than the ordinary mundane changing values of life.

Now, there a few kinds of people that would be prepared for change. The one kind of person, that would change is when he reaches rock bottom, when whole life has become too much for him. He has reached the ground, and when one falls down to rock bottom, there's only one way he can go, and that's up. Yes, so when people go through the direst misery, remember there is an upward surge coming, always it's an infallible law. So when we go through the worst suffering, do know that there is something better in store, the storm before the calm, that inevitably happens. The other kind of person that wants to change his whole life-style, would be the person that has gained some understanding. It would be the person that has seen the futility of his present lifestyle and very consciously wants to alter that lifestyle. The first person, the former person is forced into altering his lifestyle. The latter person to which many of us belong want to consciously alter that lifestyle. And in wanting to consciously alter that lifestyle, we gain some understanding. At first it is a mental understanding, and that mental understanding, later with conscious effort, and the help of effortless meditation, it becomes a realisation, where every hatred can be turned into love, where every adversity can be turned into opportunity.

Now, one must not expect dramatic changes, because that which starts very dramatically can also end very dramatically, and you're back to square one. Yes, fine, so proper changes in life and changing one's life style must come gradually. And as it comes gradually, the greater force it would have, and the greater impact it would have upon us. Have you ever seen a flower growing immediately after you plant a seed? When a housewife cooks, have you ever seen she putting the pot on the stove, and removing it in two seconds. No, it takes time, it takes time. Therefore one has to cultivate patience. Oh yes, and the very patience that is cultivated, itself is a joy if we understand why we are cultivating the patience. And as days go by, and we develop newer and newer understandings, deeper and deeper understandings, then our attitude towards life changes radically, sometimes imperceptively to us, but so noticeable by others. 'But ah, this is not the same person I knew six months ago'. And as one progresses, it becomes encouraging. And the more encouragement one receives and sees and observes and feels, the quicker the progress on the path. So what we have to do essentially is to wake up, is to wake up from this deep sleep that we are in, that is causing the suffering to us. And in that awaken-ness, that wakefulness, in that awareness we would find that we have stopped existing but now we have started living.

Now, when a person really lives, he inevitably will see life around him. Now, by that we do not mean people walking about, and birds flying and animals moving around. We can only see that movement according to the amount of understanding we have. But when we really live, then we see pulsating life around us, and life, the pulsation of life is the very joy of life. Good. We would see activity in everything around us, for there is nothing in the relative field of life, that ever stands still. Even this human body changes every seventeen days, where old cells are destroyed, and new cells are built up. You're not the same person physiologically today that you were seventeen days ago. So everything is forever ever changing. But by living, by learning to live, we would find the beauty in the relative change. And to find the beauty in the relative change, as we progress on this path, we very spontaneously infuse the changelessness in the change, and thereby enhancing the value of change. But that does not come about sleeping, it comes about by being awake. Theological people would say, 'Be awake to the glory of God'. Yes, so there are many ways to achieve this. The scientist that really wants to find himself can see that life through his microscope, and see things teeming with life. Fine. An artist can see the living life in the colours he blends in his painting. The shoemaker can see the very life in the leather he stitches, and a carpenter in the table he makes, the musician in his music.

Everything has to be appreciated at its fullest value. Our comprehension of things is at a very superficial level. And because it is at a superficial level, we cannot enjoy things very much. And when we cannot enjoy, then we experience the opposite of joy, and that brings misery and suffering to us. So there is only one way out of the mess. The way is to

awaken ourselves, awaken the mind and the heart through our practices, so that it could be attuned with that which is higher than us, which has a permanency. And yet this permanency does not deny the transiency of life. The whole secret, is to which we attach the importance. If we keep on attaching the greatest importance to the transiencies, we will block off the permanency. All transiencies in the relative, or all impermanences, if looked at its finest value, that impermanency is permanent. What we are doing when we look at the ocean, we see only the waves, and we see the waves are changing all the time, changing, changing all the time. But if our awareness is broadened, we will not only see the waves, but we see the whole ocean, and we know the ocean is permanent. The waves are changing. So it means that changing and changelessness, change and changelessness are part and parcel of each other. There can never be the unchanging value of life if there was no change and there could be no changing things in life, if there was not that permanency. Both are two sides of the same coin.

Now, we are not to neglect one for the other. We must appreciate the change and at the same time appreciate that which is changeless. That is the secret of life. I am repeating the secret of life from its various angles, so that is why I say 'That' is the secret of life. Now, if 'That' is the secret of life, what is 'That'? What is 'That'? 'That' is the eternal factor, the infinite factor that governs the entire universe, not only governs the entire universe from standing outside the universe, from standing outside the universe, but by being infused, by being the very essence of the universe. And that we have to discover in our path towards self-realisation. Self-realisation is self-integration, and no person on earth could be totally happy until he is self-integrated. Happiness too has levels. The more the integration, the greater the happiness. And that is the path we are following through all the changing facets of life, to the changeless value of life, and then bringing the changeless value of life into everything that changes. It sounds paradoxical but definitely possible. Yes. So, we start from change, get to the changeless, and from changeless we come back to the change but we do not come back empty handed, we bring back with us changelessness, so that we infuse it in all that is changing around us. And that makes us live and to appreciate the real meaning and value of life. This life is so, so valuable, so, so valuable.

If you believe in evolution, you will realise that from the first primal atom, how that atom has progressed. It has gone through various changes, various forms until it reached the mineral stage, and even in the mineral stage so many changes had taken place. From there to the plant stage, all these various species, all these various experiences, for everything experiences and everything is an experience. And through the species of the animal stage, and then finally to the stage of man, where man can really say that, 'I am created in the image of God'. Man has the consciousness to appreciate that he is created in the image of God, because man has the thinking power. The previous stages of existences in evolution could not discriminate. Man can discriminate. And it is our folly not to be able to discriminate,

between that, which is forever changing and that which is changeless. The power of discrimination, Viveka, as they call in Sanskrit, is there only for this one purpose, to be able to discriminate between the changing and the unchanging, in other words to discriminate between the relative and the absolute. For the absolute is our real essence. Our real essence is changeless, while all the change is the manifestation of the changeless.

So when we combine in our lives, the value of changelessness and change, then we live a full life. We do not live a full life now, but those that have started on the path of self integration, would appreciate, as one goes on with conscious effort in our daily living, - we discussed Yamin, Yaman, the other day, - we would appreciate and we would reach that point where life is all joy. And even if there is pain, seeing that we are involved in the change, we are involved in the Gunas that constitute - we have spoken about the Gunas many times - seeing that we are involved in this universe composed of the Gunas, there would be the pairs of opposites, pleasure, pain, heat, cold, sun, snow. We would have that, but once we have realised the value of pain and pleasure, then neither of them would affect us, for the greater pleasure you experience, remember, you have cultivated in yourself the capacity to experience just as great pain. So, with the increase of that sensitiveness, your pleasures could be very high, and your pains could also be just as high.

So, what do we do? We take the two ends of the stick, the polarity that's involved in the law of opposites, and we gradually through our practices, come to the centre of the stick, where there is a balance. And when one reaches the balance, then no great pleasure or no great praise lifts us up, and no great pain or displeasure throws us down, because we have risen above just mere existence. We have risen above the pairs of opposites. We have risen above the polarity that is the constituent of this earth. And yet these very polarities could be so helpful. In electricity we have the positive current and the negative current. Now do remember, that the positive current and the negative current, they are not opposed to each other, although their values differ. In the two extremities that they represent, they co-operate in such a way, as to produce light.

So all these things constitute life, but it is our understanding of what life is all about. That would take us above all the change that we see around us. And that means to become centred within our selves. The purpose of all our meditations, the purpose of all our practices, is to centre ourselves, because most of the times, we get pulled away, in this direction, or that direction within the framework of the law of opposites. And you can only go beyond the law of opposites if you want to go beyond them, which means centring oneself. That is the secret of life. That is the secret of happiness. That is the secret of developing an understanding, where even the severest quarrel between husband and wife could be brought into such a togetherness of humour, where we can actually look at each other and laugh, and laugh. That is how

we have to live, if we want to find happiness. And if you don't want to find happiness in this life, nobody stops you, there are still hundreds of lives, and you can try again. Okay. Good. Next. Half past eleven, what's the time? Half past twelve.

Questioner. Gururaj, when harmony and balance are basic aims of spiritual progress,

Gururaj. When harmony and balance are?

Questioner. When harmony and balance are basic aims of spiritual progress, why do these not seem to apply to the three Gunas, in that we are taught to subdue Tamas and Rajas in favour of Sattva?

Gururaj. Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful. Good. We must understand that the function of the universe is never for it to remain stagnant. The nature of the universe is a continuing state of flux, good, and the universe, must be remembered, is on the relative plane. Rajas, Tamas, and Sattva, they too are of the relative. Good. Now, by living a life in such a way we subdue Tamas, which is darkness, and inertia. And by subduing darkness, we try to bring in our lives light, which is Sattva. Now the activating force between these two opposite poles, opposite ends of the stick, is Rajas, the activating force. Fine. The only reason, the only reason why we wish or we want to reach the sattvic state of life is so that we could enjoy the light. Rajas, Tamas and Sattva cannot be destroyed. They are there, eternally there to make this universe function, because the universe and all relativity, its very nature is to be in flux, to be in activity. And this very activity is regarded to be the life-force of the universe. Now, life-force can also be enjoyed in darkness, and life-force can also be enjoyed in light. But there's a difference in quality. You can enjoy laziness, inertia, you can enjoy that, and you can also enjoy light, tranquillity.

So, the purpose that we are after, is to go beyond the qualities of inertia, because that is a lower form of enjoyment, and we want to reach a higher form of enjoyment which is light. That is why we do our spiritual practices. But remember, even reaching the finest level of Sattva, we have not escaped the universe. By reaching Sattva, we would enjoy the finest relative, which is more enjoyable than the grossness of Tamas, or darkness.

So, in our progress, in our progress towards the level where we transcend the three Gunas, as the Gita would tell you, that level is the transcendent level. How many people on this earth can live in the transcendent level? Very few. Very few. If out of ten million, one reaches the transcendent level and lives in that state, it would be too much. Perhaps a

hundred million, a thousand million, reach that state. Buddhas and Christs and Krishnas do not come to this earth everyday. They live in that transcendental state, and yet are so mixed up, in all worldly doings. But for the average man that is aspiring to reach that, the only thing he can do, is to remove himself from darkness and approach light, which is Sattva. And when he reaches the finest level of Sattva, which is light, he enjoys the light. But in enjoying the light, he will still feel a duality, he will still feel that a separation exists between the relative and the absolute. So, when he reaches the finest sattvic state, he is pushed by the Divine force, call it grace, to merge away in the transcendent. So the Gunas are necessary. Everything in nature - 'Pakritti' is the Sanskrit word, everything in nature is subject, controlled by the very constituents of itself which are the three Gunas. Okay. Good, fine. Next.

Questioner. Gururaj, my question is about authority. When we find ourselves placed in some position of authority over others, what pit-falls should we watch out for, and how can we ensure that we do not misuse our position?

Gururaj. True. Beautiful. Beautiful. Authority can be used, misused and abused. It can be used, misused and abused. Now if authority is properly used, then there is no question of misuse or abuse. Authority is a position which is invariably a commanding position. You, because of your work, of your doings, of your deeds, of your training, you are placed in an authoritative position. A man starts working in a large firm, he might start off as a sweeper, and then rise to the position of managing director, where he has the authority to control the entire company. Good. Now, having gained this authority, how is he to use it?

Now, because the man has gone through the various stages in rising to that height, in rising to that position, he would know what the sweeper goes through, he would know what the machinist goes through, he would know what the dispatcher goes through, he would know what the salesman goes through. So authority, when gained through practical experience, is very seldom subject to misuse, very seldom subject to misuse because the man the position of authority has gone through all the various stages. But you do find sometimes the position takes over the man's mind, and creates an imbalance. And because of the imbalance, he misuses the authority, but we are speaking of normal people.

So, having reached the height of authority, through these various stages, and having developed an understanding of the various departments in his company, he will view every worker according to the value of his work. And when he views and when he knows what a sweeper goes through, he will look at the sweeper with a more kinder eye, with a greater compassion. And that is brought about because he knows and understands what sweeping is all about. Good. Then you find people, because of inheritance thrown in the position of authority, and not qualified for it. Such a person

does not understand what goes on in his company, and wilfully uses his authority as a despot. Such companies we have a-plenty, yes we have such companies a-plenty, where the workers' needs are never understood. That is why in your country here, you have so many strikes. Demands are made by the employers, and demands are made by employees, and neither of them have a proper understanding of what demands should be all about, and what giving should be all about. So we have these problems as far as authority goes.

Good, now this is authority to deal with very mundane things. Let us think about spiritual authority, let us think of spiritual authority. The person who is really authorised, through developing that spirituality, or the person that has reached a stage where he can be in a position of authority, will never use his authority, will never use his authority. He would develop such a humility, such a kindness, such a compassion, that there remains no question of authority. We have this, in so-called spiritual organisations, some churches for example, where the man on top orders even without understanding.

Now the spiritual person who is an authority understands, or really should understand the needs of people, and whatever he dispenses would be according to the needs of the people because he has the understanding. Sometimes misinterpretations take place because the person in spiritual authority is like a father, and there could be times where he will give the child a sweet, and at other times, he can pick up the strap for the benefit of the child. So it is not misuse. There is no question of use, misuse or abuse, it just is. So the person in spiritual authority would just flow, would flow with nature, and not against nature. So there remains no question of authority. He is just part and parcel of the ship, and his job as the captain is none more important than the job of the first mate, or of the engineer in the engine room.

THE FOUR LINES OF THE NEXT PARAGRAPH ARE NOT ON OUR TAPE

There has to be a captain, who could co-ordinate activities but does that not mean that he is superior. He is not superior. He might have gained more knowledge in how to run the ship, he might have gained more knowledge in how to co-ordinate activities, but that does not mean authority. He has a particular job which he has to do, that is all there is to it. Okay.

Understand these words very deeply and you will know what our organisation is all about. We all one brother sisters, one family. And this theory of the father is being the boss of the house, that is wrong. That's antiquated. He is



part and parcel of the house, not the boss. Because of his age, because of his love, the children listen and the children listen. When we say boss, it means that dictatorial despot, not in our organisation. Good, next.

Questioner. Guruji, we evolve from mineral and an animal to human form, since man has been carnivorous and has bred animal for food, the number of animal souls evolving to human form has become greater and greater. Meditators in general tend towards vegetarianism. If this trend was carried out through out the meat-eating world, it would mean a reduction in the number of animal souls awaiting re-incarnation. Is this part of the universal plan to reduce world population? (General laughter)

Gururaj. That water was lovely. Thank you. Shall we measure the entirety of the universe in the term of this tiny speck of an earth that we live on? Good. We are in the midst of a continuum, that has begun this cycle from this end, and proceeding to that end, and we are just a teeny-weeny bit in-between. Souls pass through various kingdoms of life, various stages of life, various conditions of life, and we are caught up in the middle. As souls are evolving from the animal stage into the stage of man, so man too reaches a height where he reaches a higher stage beyond this planet earth. It is, it is like a river, water is coming down from the mountain, our view is just that little section, that little section which our eyes can see. Yet to the right, the river flows from miles away, and to the left the river goes on miles and miles. So, this world, this world will always have a balance. Even if there is a population explosion, it can only reach a certain limit. Many times we wonder why floods take place, why great these calamities take place, where millions, thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions perhaps, of lives are destroyed.

Now all these calamities come about because the world itself creates a magnetic force, whereby all these things are drawn upon to this world. Good. In population explosion, the explosion can only reach a certain limit. The world has a certain amount of energy, and it can not go beyond that energy. So from the one side, as the mineral develops into plant, plant into animal, animal into man, and man into super-man. Yes. Now, when man reaches the highest limits of his existence on this earth, and has yet not become self-realised, he will live on another planet which has a population of beings higher than us. But having the discriminative faculty here, we can transcend all those existences. We can transcend all those existences and reach the source. We have that in-built ability within us. But if we want to progress in the force of evolution that is carrying us along, we would reach other existences on a far finer level, where I would sit here, and you would sit there, and both of us would be sitting in silence, and my thoughts would be conveyed to you without uttering a word. And we see signs of this in this world. We all know the power of mental telepathy. So if this is possible in a small way, it is also possible in a big way.

Now, throughout this universe, do know this, that, this planet earth is not just unique. There are many earths, many, many, many earths that are exactly similar to this earth with the same kind of people. So therefore, we are not to regard ourselves as the sole possessors of knowledge. Fine. Like that, beyond this sphere or the level, or the strata of this stage of evolution, there are still further stages of evolution. And this would continue on, and on until this cycle ends. But the ending of this cycle, would be the beginning of another cycle. And that is why, that is why we say, that the universe is eternal and infinite. But within the framework of the infinity, there are cycles and cycles and cycles. Like in the ocean there are so many waves, waves, waves, but the ocean is vast. And all the cycles are contained within this one infinity.

Good, the reason why a cycle must end is that the very propulsion that has been set off, in this evolutionary process has to die off, the momentum has to wear off, and finding that silence as the Vedas would call it, Pralaya, the night of Brahma, symbolically expressed, from that the current still exists whereby the whole cycle is re-formulated. And so, it goes on and on, and on. That is all there is to it. It so very simple, so very simple. And this mind that we have is capable of encompassing all the cycles.

Now, when we talk of cycles and infinity and space, and time, we would think what a long procession but if you would only know that this one cycle, or so many cycles is nothing but a flicker of an eyelash, flicker of an eyelid. That is exactly how long it lasts. When a spark flies out from the fire, the spark thinks, 'Oh, look at this long existence of mine', but in the flicker of an eyelid, it turns to ashes and falls back into the fire. That's how it works. Okay.

Questioner. Gururaj, those magnetic forces ..... (Inaudible)

Gururaj. Those magnetic forces are there, but they do not hold realisation in check, because self-realisation, self illumination belongs to a different sphere altogether. They hold the natural universal forces in check, and we see it so apparent, where the Planets move in the orbit in such a manner, the seasons come and go according to a law, water flows down a hill and not up the hill. After day comes night, then comes day again, another cycle. Everything is a cycle, but these cycles, these magnetic forces govern nature only, whilst self-realisation, self-integration, God realisation, God consciousness, Unity consciousness is beyond the grip of nature. So nature can never hold you down because you have the ability to transcend nature. Chapter 2, Gita, verse 47. Yes. (Gururaj laughs)

Gururaj. Two minutes to one. What time does the lunch bell ring?

Gururaj. At one. Okay. Shall we - we'll meet again this evening. These were lovely questions this morning. Lovely questions.

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