

Questioner. Please explain the seeming paradox between devotion and the principle of non-attachment?

Gururaj. Good, lovely question. Explain the seeming paradox between devotion and non-attachment. The words were very well chosen, 'Seeming Paradox'. Many things in life are paradoxes, one could be totally devoted to someone, and yet be totally non-attached. Now there is a difference between detachment and non-attachment, detachment is to exclude oneself from all the activities of life, and just be far away, become reclusive. To be non-attached, is to be able to partake in every activity of the mind and body and spirit, and yet be above it all.

Now, when one goes into detachment, it could be a form of a escape, when one does not face up, when one can not face up to the responsibilities of the world, then some tend to escape away from the world. In India there was a time when there were six million Saddhus, wandering Mendicants and after meeting many, I found that there were very few that were real Renunciates. Most of them just escaped, and lived by begging. In another words, they were beggars in ochre robes and they called themselves Saddhus, in reality escapists. Non-attachment is something totally different. The greatest Scriptures for example, in the East were written by people that were very busy people, that were totally involved in the affairs of the world. Krishna for example he was a King, he was a statesman, he was a strategist, yet he could dictate the Gita. Rama was a King, so was Buddha. King Janaka, one of the greatest philosophers of the East, ruled a vast Kingdom, a very busy man, totally in the world and yet could take himself above it all, and compose some of the Upanishads. Brehuspaty, Viajnavalkia, those are the few names that comes to my mind.

So, one could be totally devoted, to an object or an ideal and yet be non-attached to it. In other words, it implies that one serves, for the sake of service, without wanting or expecting the fruits thereof. It is part of Karma Yoga where you work for the sake of work, and the rewards, come by themselves. And whenever these rewards come, they are accepted for one's needs, for one's necessities of daily life. But when the work is done, the work is done in a sense of offering, that every thing I do is an offering, to divinity. It could be washing pots in the kitchen or sweeping streets or mending shoes or be a Professor at a University, or a Scientist, but every action performed is for the sake of action.

Now, performing any action, there is a certain amount of desire. Desire produces attachment, but there are kinds of desires. The one desire would be for gain, name, fame, power, and therefore one prods oneself to act in a certain manner, to achieve something, to have the ambition for achieving a certain goal. Good. Then the other kind of desire is the desire to serve, which causes non-attachment. Now, we do find people serving. We do find people joining various societies, home for the crippled or for the blind, or what have you. It is not the act that is very important but the motivation

behind the act. I have known of people that want to serve humanity but the motivation is their own personal ego, inflating their personal ego, that 'I am this. People look up to me'. You see? And that is one thing that our teachers also have to be very wary about, that it does not inflate our egos in serving humanity. So this kind of desire which is entirely for service for the benefit of humanity, does not form attachment. And when it does not form attachment, it creates no impression in the mind, or it creates no samskaras, because that desire is without motivation. And all desires for service, if it is minus the ego would not have any motivation whatsoever. So, behind the act it is the motive, or motivation that causes samskaras. So one could be totally devoted to what one is doing and yet be non-attached to the action, for the action is performed for the sake of the action, and not for the sake of its reaction. The cause is activated but that cause becomes a causeless cause, where by it would not have an effect, and the effect that is had, and that is long lasting, is the impression all the samskaras one creates in one's mind or one's subtle body. So, then the samskaras pile up.

In the name of devotion, many people perform acts. Now, devotion should be without need. I am devoted to my wife, because I need my wife for certain purpose, be it physical mental or otherwise. That is not devotion. There is a little story where a man says that, 'I love you so much, but tomorrow, God forbid, even you should have an accident and be shrivelled and burnt, I will love you just as much'. So, that love is not of face value only, for the man's beautiful wife, or handsome husband, it applies both ways; it is for the inner self of the person. In any case when man loves a woman, or woman loves a man, do you know what comes in between? Love comes in between. That personalised form of God is activated so that one feels love underneath, underlying the need to love or be loved. Once the need is removed, the underlying factor of pure love shines through. So there is no, although there is a desire to activate the highest form of love, it becomes non-binding, there is no attachment. But as soon as the need is added, and needs are created by one's ego.

I know a person that come to see me, that was having so many problems at home but he needed his wife. He could not be away from her, and it was a totally physical need. For he could never have any other woman except that wife of his, but a totally physical need. And you find people like that, that have, it's a pathological case, perhaps, we know. But that is also a need. Then you find a person, loving another with an emotional need, an emotional dependency, where the man sees in the wife a mother figure, perhaps or the wife sees a father figure, where there is a need for protection or to protect. Those are needs. Fine, then these needs naturally mean dependencies. One is dependent upon another and all dependencies stem from the ego. And behind those dependencies is attachment. And because there is that attachment, it produces a kind of karma which rebounds on you again. So the process is to proceed from attachment to non-attachment, yet living within the realms of attachment.

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There is nothing wrong in being attached. For example, there is nothing wrong in being angry, but be angry with anger, you see. That is also an attachment, but a sublimated attachment. Good. So I always like to talk, of practical things, because one ounce of practice is worth a million pounds of theories, and any philosophy that can not be brought down to it's simplest level is no philosophy at all, it is mental gymnastics. Good. Fine. To be able to love, to be able to be devoted without attachment is the greatest achievement that man can attain to. We are, say attached to Christ, why? We try to find an attachment to some superior being. Why? What is the motive? Because we want something. We need something. 'Oh God, give me a better job. Oh God, find me a nice girl to love. Oh God, give me this. I have got a two-roomed house, oh God, give me a ten roomed house'. Need, need, need, need, need. 'My Mini is no good I want a Rolls Royce. Need, need, bargaining. And yet we forget all the time that that Divine energy that permeates everything, knows all needs of every creature. It's like a sheet of water being poured across a road full of potholes. Some are smaller holes, some are larger holes, but when the vast sheet of water over floods from the river, you see, a total levelness. But where more water is required, more will go, where less is required, less will go. So who are we, to demand that I need this and I need that. Rather you know my needs and I know you will fulfil my needs. And even if you do not fulfil my needs, you have a reason for it, perhaps you are trying to teach me something. Who am I to teach you, and demand from you that why don't you fulfil my needs? Am I capable of commanding you? You command me rather, not my will, thy will. You see.

So having the understanding one is slowly led to refine one's desires. Now, all desires are all binding, they take you on this wheel of birth and death, all the time, over and over and over again. But when a desire is refined, where the desire becomes desireless, where the desire is not for oneself, but the desire for others, then that desire is sublimated. We want to serve humanity, not for our personal gain. What is there to gain? For all gain for our needs are automatically fulfilled, and by serving humanity, we are flowing with the laws of nature. And when we flow, with the laws of nature then all the needs are automatically, spontaneously, and without us knowing it, they are fulfilled. Many meditators come various kinds of experiences, they write to me, and they say, 'I wanted that, and then I got that, and this came about, and that came about, suddenly a new job just came up'. Things like that. And the explanation for what is an apparent phenomena is this, that by meditating, and doing their spiritual practices, they are flowing with the current of nature. And flowing with the current of that which is natural, all their needs perhaps, subconscious needs, unconscious needs are automatically fulfilled. And knowing this, we are better equipped to serve humanity, not because to inflate our own egos, but because it is a spontaneous flowering. That desire is like the heat from the fire, or the fragrance of the flower. That desire is never binding, because contained within that desire is love and devotion. So here when that kind of desire is produced within us

then it is a desire within the confines of non-attachment. Do you see? So, there are desires and desires and desires. Fine.

Many people have come to this Course. Firstly there was a thought in the mind; the mind was desire-producing that I desire to come to Nottingham. Fine. What were the motivations? Every person had a different reason, or there were certain categories or reasons. Number one, long holiday period, 'Let me get away from it all, have a little holiday. Number two, the housewife. Ah no cooking to do for five, seven days, no washing up. Number three, the group practices will be so good. It's a stimulus, helps, it generates a certain energy. For the Scriptures have said, 'Where two people gather within my name, I am there'. That is why you feel uplifted and in the presence of certain kind of people, a certain energy radiated, which is automatically uplifting. So that was one desire to feel uplifted. Another desire. Number four, to meet old friends, to be together with them. Fine. We could list another dozen possible desires or motives, but the best motive would be, 'Let us go and see Gururaj'. (Gururaj laughs) So, every one, comes with a different thought in mind, different purpose, different motivation, some of a lower category, which is valid, valid, totally valid, and some of a different strata, which is also valid.

So, to make the point again, it is not the desire that is important, but the motivation behind the desire. If the motivation is ego-centred or self-centred, it becomes binding, human nature that everyone consciously or unconsciously is trying to find freedom. Now many people mistake freedom for escapism. Escapism is not freedom. If you can't face responsibility in the world, go and break few windows, and get locked up for a month in jail. That's a kind of freedom too. You are free from the problems of the world, for that month, while you are in jail. Or that is the same thing as some of the Saddhus, some of the so-called Yogis do, go sit in caves, and instead of being active in the world and doing something for the world. Do you see? That is their sense of freedom; I am free from all fetters, to get away from it all. But geographical changes does not allow, you to get away at all. You can not get away from yourself, never mind where you go. A person came to me, who was a severe alcoholic. He tried, tried, tried, tried and just couldn't. So he comes to me and he says, 'Gururaj, here is one thought I have in mind what do you think. If I should go away from my present environment, go and live somewhere else find another job, that would perhaps help me'. So I told him, I said, 'Don't do that, because never mind where you go to, the bottle will still follow'. Do you see?

And so it is again the principle of self-acceptance, and when one accepts so oneself at one's true value, then service is performed, for the sake of service, and that service for the sake of service is just but another name for devotion. Now in devotion there are categories again, and all of them are valid. It can be, you can have sham devotion - so you are

so devoted to grandmother, you know she has got only two years to live - there is quite a large estate there. Be devoted, be in her good books. Or it might make quite a difference to the will. Yeh, it's a sham. Right. We show devotion in our jobs, ah, sham, to get promotion. Motivation again. We show devotion to the wife or the husband, that two can be motivated and not just a spontaneous flowering. Like that, like that it goes on and on in a vicious circle. But true devotion contains within itself the element of non-attachment. I am devoted to you for the sake of devotion. I care not two hoots if you follow the practices or not. I do not care if you understand the teachings or not, but I try. And if it sinks, some little word germinates somewhere, it is good. If it does not, seeds fall on barren ground, it will not grow, but because of the devotion I have within me to serve, I keep on serving, without expecting any result or reward. You have teachers promising you instant self-realisation or some teachers tell, you start this practice, and within four lifetimes, you will reach self-realisation. Now who is going to know what is going to happen in four lifetimes? There are schools of thought like that. There are such movements, and very big movements too, oh yes, oh yes, yah. It just shows the weakness and gullibility of people. Good.

Good, now those teachers are expecting results. Why are they expecting results? So that it could be said, that ah, that's a great guru. Yes, he is a good guru. He has done this, and he is done that. Why, why? That is not service. That is self-aggrandisement, ego. 'Yes, that ah, I have been able to do this, I have been able to change the mind and heart of so many thousands of so many million people'. I, I, I, have been able to do this. No. Change the hearts and minds of thousands and millions, of people, yes, but not I, He. Who am I but just a flesh bones and blood, an instrument? Once the life force is out, even this flesh, bones and blood are of no value. As I always say, its chemical value is one shilling and four pence. Yes, you see, motivation. Motivation. Non-attachment. And yet within the framework of non-attachment for the results, one performs the greatest service, because we realise I am not the doer, I am but the instrument. It is not the pen that writes. The writer writes with the pen. Now this is the attitude that has to be created within teachers, then they are real teachers, for teaching is the most noblest profession on earth. If a person is hungry, you give the person food, lunch. Three four hours later, he is hungry again. If you give a person some money, perhaps by the end of the month, he might not have any more. But give the person spiritual wisdom, without any motivation, without any attachment and that wisdom is perpetuated, it will grow. The seed is planted, and it will carry on for lifetimes and lifetimes, and lifetimes.

The idea is not to promise any one self-realisation or God realisation. No, that comes automatically. Illumination comes automatically. You do not need even to have the desire for that goal, but just to perform, as one should perform one's dharma in life and the results are there. I always say when we work for a boss, and we get a salary cheque end of

the month, we are not thinking every moment of the thirty days, salary cheque, salary cheque, salary cheque. No. We keep on working whatever kind of work we are doing. It could be in a shop, it could be in an office, could be anywhere, any kind of work. And if we have completed our month's work, automatically an envelope is placed on your desk. Of course the only time we start thinking of that envelope, is when it comes to the third week of the month and we start getting broke, that why is the month not ending sooner. So even the desire for service has its pitfalls, and the pitfall is this, is that what motivation is there? Good, and when one understands that I am acting, I have the desire to serve without motivation, without self, without the ego self expanding, and making us feel so great. Mind you, one can land in a state of euphoria, 'Ah, such and such came to me for a consultation of for a certain problem and the person left so happy. I did that'. You see. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

Every night before I go to bed, I go over the whole day's activities; it's a habit of mine, of many, many years. When I was in a profession, when I was in business, now, that had always been my habit, that I have done, I have been able to do this today, that, or that, or that, or that. And then before closing my eyes, I say, 'Thank you Lord, or the powers that be, whatever name you want to call it, for giving me the privilege of being able to be your instrument'. And then I sleep so peacefully, that in two hours of sleep, I get ten hours of rest. Then I keep on working again, see it's nice, it's nice. So, that is what we teachers should really bear in mind that we work, for the sake of work, for the sake of service. And if rewards are to come, they will come automatically, they will come automatically. And we, desiring for the reward, will push the reward away. All the service performed will have no value at all, because in serving we are evolving ourselves at the same time. But when we have that ego sense that 'I am doing this', we are stopping and blocking our evolution.

So to be devoted to whatever task, we are engaged in, should be engaged in with a sense of non-attachment, not to the task, but to the result thereof. So, it is really not a paradox. It is seemingly a paradox as the questioner has said. Okay. Fine. Next question, I will do another one. Good idea. Oh, sorry, are you waiting for me? One moment. Thank you. Sorry, are you waiting for me?

Questioner. Halal asked me to ask these questions together as he thinks they are related. Is that alright?

Gururaj. Whatever.

Questioner. (Cont'd). I once had the idea that ego was rather like a sneaky private detective, with a wardrobe full of disguises, something shadowing one's every thought and move, and always popping up, camouflaged as something else.

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Is there a way to become aware of ego, in all its disguises, and by being aware, then to accept it, and then go beyond it? And the second question was

Gururaj. Can we do that one first? And the second one could be an expansion of that. Okay. Right. Because that will take an hour itself.

Now the question basically was, that the ego is there, and within the ego are contained so many skeletons, which pop up now and then, and how to recognise them? And is it by recognising them, that we can go beyond the ego? The answer is this that you do not need to recognise the ego to be able to go beyond it, because that would become a mental process, and the mind itself is ego. So here, the ego is trying to find the ego. It's like saying that you will see your own eyes. You can't. You can't see your own eyes, you need a mirror. Right, so, to be able to recognise the ego, one has to go beyond the ego, to be able to observe the ego. Now, the ego is a bundle of experiences. Fine, now it is not necessary to annihilate the ego, because it is impossible to annihilate the ego. When we talk of ego, in the sense we use it, we talk of ego that is self-centred, so ego has certain qualifications, a self-centred ego. In other words the ego, that turns itself inward, to itself and not beyond itself. It is caught up in the web of its own doing. It is like the silk worm spinning and spinning and spinning and gets caught up in the end, in its own silk and it cannot escape. Right, so what is the solution?

Now, all these impressions gained in what is termed the ego, are binding, binding one to a certain pattern of action, because the mind is ego and the mind is patterned. We have to unpattern the mind, or un-pattern the ego, and not destroy the ego. If the ego is annihilated as many eastern philosophies propose, annihilate the ego, then you cannot exist. You would not be able to be part and parcel of the evolutionary process. Everything has an ego - everything does not have an ego, rather it is an ego. I am sitting here, you are sitting there. We are nothing else but little egos. 'Egos, I go, - in which dialect do they get rid of the h's? Cockney ah, 'ego, I go, you go' - we are all little egos. Oh, definitely we are all a bundle of impressions, created over so, so, many lifetimes, and now we want to get rid of ourselves. That's what it means; annihilation of the ego is committing suicide. Yes, because once you get rid of all those impressions that you are made of, your entire body will disintegrate, because the body can not exist without the mind, and the mind is a receptacle, the container of the impressions called the ego. So by annihilating the ego, you are annihilating the subtle body, that is within yourself and the physical manifestation, the physical body can not exist without the subtle body.

Now, within this ego self what has to be done, so that it could become conducive to our evolution? That is the question. What can be done? These impressions are there, they can not be annihilated they are eternal, they have to

exist. I have said many times, that every thought that is thought is eternal, it cannot be destroyed. The vibration set up by that thought, goes on and on and on, through eternity. So what one does, is expand the ego. Our actions, are contracting the ego, we are taking all those experiences of millions of years and contracting them compacting them, so that by the very act of compacting them, we are combining one impression with another, and a great amount of permutations take place, where new impressions are created. And that is how the ego assumes greater and greater importance, and we become more and more self-centred with all those skeletons in the cupboard, multiplying like rabbits. So the idea here would be not the annihilation of the ego, but the expansion of the ego, like stretching the rubber, the opaque rubber, so that it becomes transparent. That is the way to deal with the ego. So when the ego is stretched and it becomes transparent, the inner light, the spiritual light shines through.

Now I've used this analogy many times, where, if the window is clean, and a bright light comes through, you do not notice the glass, although the glass still exists. The glass becomes one with the light. The glass, the barrier is not perceived, because who is the perceiver, except the ego itself. The ego perceives, the ego experiences the varied experiences of life. But if that is expanded to such an extent, where the pure light is shining through, all the shades and the shadows on that glass automatically disappear. All the skeletons disappear. So one does not need to work through all those impressions gained through life times. One does not need to shake hands with all those skeletons. No, they are automatically refined. Those very skeletons that have a grosser form, become so subtle, that it becomes totally transparent, and that is the way to handle the ego.

Now it is easy to say, let's make the ego transparent, so the light shines through. What we have to do, to make that possible? We have to do our meditation and spiritual practices, meditation and spiritual practices, and the recognition of our shortcomings, and doing something about it constructively. Here desire is valid, desire for betterment, although it has some binding effect, but that desire is of such a nature, as choosing between the lesser evil or the larger evil. So when we desire to better ourselves, we make, we create the conditions within ourselves to draw upon that which is called grace. And with the help of grace, and meditation, and wanting to better ourselves in positive action, that ego self expands, it stretches. And it stretches to such an extent, that it loses its individuality and assumes universality. So, this means that the extent of the expansion of the ego is as vast as the universe, so that although while maintaining the little ego self, one is also atonement with the universal self. And then when all those impressions are spread across the entire universe, what effect can they have? For having being extended to that vastness, where else could they be placed to put in more impressions, because you have covered the whole field with your little ego. So, the ego in its expansion knows the whole universe. The individual becomes universal. When he becomes universal, that is the recognition of the personal God,



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that we spoke about, for the personal God too is a refined ego. So we must not worry so much about ego. Worry about ego centeredness. Of course worry is the wrong word; we are concerned to a certain extent, and use discernment for its expansion.

So people talk of ego, ego, ego, it's nothing to worry about. If we do our actions, as they should be performed, if we perform our dharma, our duties within the confines of the structure of our lives, the structure of our society, within the confines of the duties allotted to us, as children or parents, wives or husbands, that ego automatically starts expanding. When the ego starts expanding, then know sure that awareness expands. So what is awareness? Ego. It is the expansion of the ego, which is the expansion of awareness. It is the expansion of the ego, which is, or takes one to an altered state of consciousness. In other words it means that the ego becomes less self-centred. It puts out its tentacles far and wide. So man can not live without the ego. This universe can not exist without an ego, for this universe it self is an ego. And then the further you go, where that ego becomes just an idea, an idea, a thought form in its finest state. And when one transcends that thought form, one realises in the impersonal state, that 'Oh dear me, it was only a thought' and all disappears. So then for you, the individual, that has merged into the impersonal, there is no ego left, for in the first place, the ego was only a thought. It was only a dream, but we that are in the relative, have to battle with the ego, and we can not deny it, we accept it. And it is the very acceptance of the ego, that could lead us further on, in the expansion of the ego. Expansion of the ego to repeat again, is expansion of awareness, until the awareness expands to the totality of the universe in various dimensions. Now, here, by expansion, we do not take into account space and time only, that is of our third dimension. But there are other dimensions, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh, and there too ego is involved, for if ego did not exist, those dimensions can not exist either. For all dimensions are inter-twined, inter-penetrating all the time, all the time.

So you see, the long journey ahead to proceed from this individualised self-centred little ego, I, me and mine, my chair, my this, my that. It's all Maya. It's all Maya, yes which is all illusion. When we reach the state of the absolute then all becomes an illusion. But until we are not there yet then Maya is real. It has to be real, or otherwise Maya cannot exist, for Maya too is an existence in the form of Maya. And illusion exists as an illusion, for an illusion too is reality. Now, that sounds paradoxical, I know. Illusion too is reality, because to know what illusion is, you've got to find its opposite, for illusion can not be there without it's opposite. Shade can not be there without light. Rain can not be there without sun, sunshine. You see. So therefore it assumes a reality. You light a lamp, an oil lamp and on the side, a shadow is created. That shadow is real. We put out the light, the shadow disappears. But then remember you have destroyed the light as well, to destroy the shadow. So if you destroy illusion, relative illusion, you destroy the reality, with which it is compared

as well. For illusion is the opposite of reality. Unreality is the opposite of reality. Without reality, unreality cannot exist, for in relative terms everything has to be compared with something. Everything has to be compared with something.

My mini motor car goes fifty miles an hour, and I compare it with a jaguar, that goes a hundred and twenty miles an hour. Everything is a comparison, that she is more beautiful than her, that I am more handsome than him. Comparison, comparison, comparison. And it is this very comparison that makes one self-centred, or ego centred. And when one becomes ego centred to a greater degree, then one becomes ego-centric. Ah, a different subject. Good.

So the solution is difficult, and yet so simple. The end is far, and yet so near, but the gist of it is this, that the ego cannot be annihilated, illusion cannot be annihilated without annihilating reality, but an expansion can take place because, ego or illusion, or idea or thought, is but a superimposition upon that which is real. And the superimposition is not created by an outside agency; it is the reality itself that creates unreality. It is the Manifestor Himself that creates manifestation. So both co-exist. And with the expansion of our little selves, to the universal self, we get the idea of what life is really, really all about. And when we have the idea of what life is really all about, then we really start living. Then it is a lively life, liveliness, alertness of knowing reality and yet partaking of all the unrealities in the world and enjoying even the unrealities. See the secret? That's the secret, not annihilation but expansion. Alright for now. Okay. Eleven o'clock. Do you think we've had enough? It is a very interesting subject this, very, very interesting.

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