

Gururaj. Right. Questions?

Questioner. My question is on symbols, Guruji. You talked about symbols last night in with reference to prayer. I wonder if you could elaborate a little on this. How can we use symbols to cultivate qualities that we wish to encourage within ourselves, qualities such as love, will, strength? What are the mechanics involved in the use of symbols? How can we protect ourselves against harmful stimuli from outside, via Magazines, TV News etc that one may regard as symbols of power, violence, aggression and those qualities which are associated with the lower instincts of man? And could you give practical examples or exercises in the use of symbols? And could you also talk about symbols in terms of harnessing and directing psychic energies? (General laughter)

Gururaj. Is that page one? You may carry on with page two. (General laughter) Now of course the whole question revolves round one thing, what is the symbolism of symbols? Good. Now, the human mind, as any psychiatrist will tell you, think in terms of words and symbols. Now when we say words, what we really mean is pictures. Whenever man uses a word, the mind forms a picture of what the word is trying to express. That very picture too can be a symbol. Now symbols have various forms. It could be a very concrete symbol and it could be an abstract symbol. Good. In Yogic sciences, many symbols were used and these symbols normally portrayed a certain truth which could not be articulated. In other words, the purpose of symbols was to give forth a thought force that could not be described by words. Right.

Let us use the example of love. When we use the word love, it is something totally abstract. So, in order to appreciate what love means, we form a picture in our minds of the beloved. And by forming the picture in our minds of our beloved or a symbol which represents the beloved, then we have some idea of what love is. The same thing applies with other emotions, like hate. What is hate? Clinically of course as well as love, one could examine one's blood rate, pulsation. But that could be nothing. The same effects can be produced by Amrit doing his seven-mile run in the morning, racing of the blood, quickening of the pulse, the little tickling of the heart. So, therefore, abstract things have to be brought down to its symbolic value. Now as I said symbols can be concrete. So when you think of love, you will think of the person you love. Now if there is a person who has not an object of love, has not got the beloved in concrete form, what is that person to do to know what love means? He will project his idea of love. He will project his idea of love, or perhaps attraction, or perhaps admiration and that is why film stars are so successful. It is a projection of an idea. So when a person does not have, in concrete form the object of love, then that person indulges in a projection and that projection could be a fantasy. And all fantasies are also symbols. What I'm trying to show you that everything in life can

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be brought down to symbols or symbolic values because most things in life, the majority of things in life are abstract. And the mind being very limited, as we know it, can only conceive of the abstract in symbolic terms.

Now, formation of symbols can either be stereotyped. For example a Hindu person believes in Krishna or a Christian in Christ, then he has a concrete picture or statue, whatever of what Krishna or Christ is. Now, to that person who uses that statue or the picture, for that person it could be a very real symbol. But who has seen Krishna, and who has seen Christ? So, in the idea of the artist in creating the symbol, it was an artist's projection which you are finding to be real. Now, who says Christ was a person with long sad face, you know with tears pouring down his eyes and a heart bleeding all the time with all the suffering of humanity? So the artist gaining certain facts from recorded Scriptures, be they true or not, that is not the question, the artist projected an idea in a form which man regards to be real. By real, I mean the real representation of that personage or that being.

Now, the reality of that projection or of that symbol depends on man himself because man's mind, to repeat again, can never conceive of anything abstract, so he has to have something concrete. Now, in the concreteness of that abstract idea, who makes it real? Man himself. Now, in the mechanics of making that symbol real, man has to channel his energies in a one-pointed, one-directed way. And as he keeps on channelling the energies in that one-pointed way, that symbol becomes real to him. To use an example of a great Sage that lived at the beginning or towards the end of the last century, Ramakrishna, Ramakrishna was a great believer in the Goddess Kali. Now Kali was a statue in that temple, but Ramakrishna with his own thought force and utter, utter devotion put life into that stone, put life into the image, the statue of Kali and he could converse with Kali. He could take a walk with Kali. Kali would get up from her throne, her seat and hold Ramakrishna's head in her lap. So who creates reality in symbols, is man himself. For even as the concrete is real, so is the abstract also real. It is just a marriage or a condensation of the water vapour into a solid block of ice according to the power and the coldness of the fridge of your mind. Hah. You see? Right. You are concretising the abstract idea into a symbol, concrete symbol and the concreteness of the symbol depends upon your own mind and ability. Good. That you can do on your own.

Now, to find the maximum value, - now it is not all that could do that on their own, - to find the maximum value into concretising the abstract, we use the knowledge and the wisdom of the Sages who have, through their higher powers, meaning that they that could delve far deeper to a more and more subtler levels of the mind have come to the truest representation of the abstract. Good. For example, we come back to words. Now in the Sanskrit language, every word is

a direct representation of the vibration set up by the object. This chair was called a chair, because in the deep meditation of the Sage, he heard the vibration of the chair which sounded like chair, chair, chair. So he named it chair. So, like that with everything. Every word in the Sanskrit language is a concretisation of the abstract or very fine vibration which the Sage could conceive of and putting all those words together, the language was formed in very tangible terms. Now if those very words, the audible or speakable words can be taken back to its subtlest value, - the word chair if that word can be taken back to its most subtlest value - then you will really experience what the chair is. You just don't sit in the chair then, you become the chair in which you are sitting. You see how powerful it is. That is the system and here we have Hugh and David that are studying Sanskrit and they will verify what I am trying to tell you.

Now that is what happens, that is what happens in the mantras we practice in our meditations, where the finest essence, the finest vibration of a human being is taken, at its finest level and brought to its grosser level, so that it becomes audible and speakable. And the idea is that as one goes to the deeper and deeper layers of the mind, that same mantra becomes subtler and subtler and subtler, until it reaches the subtlest relative where you experience yourself as the mantra and as the individuated, individualised being. So there too a symbol is used, the symbol of sound, for everything is none else but a symbol. Good. These are the mechanics of what symbols are.

Now, the other part of the question is, that when all these symbols are thrust upon ourselves, how do we guard against it? Good. There is only one way, by strengthening our minds and not being susceptible. The other day we spoke about a woman using Surf. Why does she use Surf? Because that word has been thrown to her mind all the time very tangibly and subliminally. That is why as soon as she goes to the supermarket, out of a whole lot of washing powders, Bingo and Fingo and Jingo and Surf, her hand automatically, very automatically reaches the box called Surf. A conditioned mind, a susceptible mind. That is how, that is how businesses thrive. We talk of the washing powders, we can talk of bleaches. Now I was told that to manufacture a bottle of bleach, the bottle itself costs more than the contents in the bottle. You see? You see? But this bleach is better than that bleach because you were told it to be better. Thereto the mind is conditioned by symbols and not common sense.

Now if the mind is strengthened, if the mind is strengthened and the only way to strengthen the mind is not to deaden the mind but to awaken the mind. Naturally a dead mind will not be affected by any symbol thrown to him. I mean a dead person 'don't feel nothing'. Right. And neither does a dead mind because a dead mind is a dead person. He's a vegetable. Fine. So, what we do is awaken the mind further, not awakening it to its susceptible level, but going beyond the susceptible level into the area of strength where outside influences do not affect it. And the strength of the

mind lies at its subtler levels and that is why to reach the subtler levels, we do our spiritual practices. So even if Surf, Surf, Surf, is thrown to you all the time, you can surface from that 'Surfness'. Yeah. Yeah. In other words it means you do not get influenced by it. Of course there's another way. Switch off the telly. (Gururaj laughs) But that would be escaping.

So, all this goes back to what the Scriptures teach us. All this goes back to what the Scriptures teach us in such beautiful symbolic language, poetic language, filled with similes and metaphors and paradoxes. 'Be in the world and yet not of the world'. Be amidst all this symbolism and all the things thrown at you to influence you, be amidst it all. (Walking heard) Wear rubber shoes! (Gururaj laughs) He's going to buy a pair of rubber shoes, just watch. (General laughter) You see I've thrown out a thought. See?

So, we, not to be influenced by all that around us, does not mean we have to escape from it or switch of the radio, or switch off the telly. That is not necessary. Man has to strengthen his own mind and the only way to strengthen the mind is to reach the deeper levels of the mind through meditational and spiritual practices where you ward off all influences. Now when I say you ward off all influences, it means you ward off grosser influences because grosser influences become totally incompatible with the subtler levels of your mind. So they are automatically warded off. But the subtler levels of your mind can still be influenced by subtler influences which are more powerful, perhaps at its more subtler level, more positive. So the subtler levels of the mind becomes more conducive to that which is positive for itself. And that is protection. That is how we protect ourselves from all the various influences. There would be no criminality in this world. A boy learns bad ways. Why does he learn bad ways? Because he gets into a group of other boys, friends, that influences him into doing certain things. He says 'Oh that's a lovely orchard, let's go and pinch a couple of pears. Its fun'. So the whole idea begins with the idea of fun. Not the pears themselves because at home there are more lovelier pears.

So the mind is forever searching for fun. And fun in other words searching for happiness, something which is joy producing. That is why we play football and cricket. Imagine twenty-two grown up men kicking one silly little ball around. But it is a search for joy. It's a search for a certain kind of fun which is joy. So, everything in life good or bad starts from this search for joy. The child just for fun climbs over the fence to pinch those apples or pears, influenced by his friends. Fine. Such fun it was. But that goes deeper still and the pears and plums and the apples become other kinds of pears and plums and apples, other kind, leading the child into greater and greater criminality. And that forms a conditioning.

A man in business for example, he has a two-storey building but he wants to increase it to a ten-storey building. Why? Not for the extra income but it is a symbol that 'Ah, Mr. So and So has a ten-storey building or a fifty-storey building. What a rich man'. Two things happen there. The symbol of richness is there and because of the symbol of wealth, he expands or feeds his ego. And then of course common every day things, having a swimming pool, symbol status, status symbol. Beautiful motor car, status symbol. So everything involved with us is nothing but symbol. Now if we can penetrate the meaning of symbol, we will find the secret of life. We will find that certain symbols are useful. The symbol of Christ immediately reminds us, or of Krishna immediately reminds us of the goodness, the wonderful teachings, the Sermon on the Mount. That symbol leads us to a greater refinement of the mind. Grosser symbols leads us to fattening, feeding of the ego which in turn requires further symbols. And it becomes a vicious circle, where one symbol creates another symbol.

So everything is nothing but a symbol. Many people love each other. Do they really love each other or is it the projection of one's own mind that my wife or my husband has to be of a certain shape and size. I know one woman who in her younger days thought that 'The man I am going to marry must be a non-smoker, he must be tall and he must be blond'. That was her idea. Fine. - When she came to an understanding that 'This is just my perception' - 'Oh and of course he must not have false teeth'. I forgot that. When she came to an understanding that, when she came to an understanding through meditation, through meditation, when she came to an understanding that this is but a projection of her own idea, and nothing to do with the man's quality, nothing to do with the communication that could form from heart to heart and she ended up very, very happily today with a man who has false teeth, (General laughter) who smokes, who is dark haired and he's short. (Gururaj laughs) And she loves him very much, as he loves her very much.

So, now we come to the area of preconceived symbols. We have discussed various forms of symbols, preconceived symbols and preconceived symbols is an idea. Now, idea is spelt 'I d e a' and the first letter in idea is I, I, small 'i'. The big 'I' is quite a dear but not the small 'i'. So it is, there too, it is a projection of the small 'i' in the formation of all these various symbols. Now this is not to deny the value of symbols for everything has its good, beneficial counterpart as well as its unbeneficial, retarding counterpart as well. So when we realise that this is a projection only of our own minds, symbolic representation of our own minds, we start examining from deeper finer levels. And when we can do that, we reach to the bottom of the symbol and know and examine its validity. And when we can really examine its validity, then we know if the symbol is to be kept, used or discarded. Therein lies the secret and the projection ceases then. You do not then project outwardly, but you project yourself inwardly and that is the time when all symbols can be thrown away. Symbols are but steps in the path of progress or the steps in climbing up the ladder and once when you've

reached the roof, you do not need the ladder anymore. You have reached the top but do not throw the ladder away. You might have to climb down.

So everything has its uses and it must be recognised as such where the symbol starts off as a projection of unreality and we produce in it a reality which could be useful and then to reduce it back to its original self of unreality, for projection too has its value. So you see the cycle? Unreality is brought to reality and when the reality is fully used, we take that reality and take it back to its essence of unreality. And when that happens, symbols are not necessary anymore. That is the time when the inner guru has awakened itself and man becomes self luminous. For the guru too, remember is a symbol, is a symbol that must be discarded sooner or later. But the bond is so strong that forms, that even in discarding of the symbol, the love remains eternal. For it is your love that is eternal. And it is the guru's love that is eternal. Now remember there could never be two eternities, only one eternity. So, the two loves merge into oneness in that one eternity, timeless, spaceless, immortal. Okay. Namaste. And symbols can be used of course as wonderful therapy as well, oh yes, which psychologists do make use of. But when the patient is cured, the symbols can be thrown away. So, everything is useful. Is that right? Good. Fine. Next question.

Questioner. Guruji,

Gururaj. Would you like to speak at the Mike? Is it okay? Oh yes. Keith has really come up with something nice, a directional mike, and which brings about one-pointedness. (General laughter). Thank you. Aqua.

Questioner. Guruji, those of us who were previously associated with what is always called another movement remember we were often told that one should never divide the mind. For if one was engaged in a particular activity, all one's attention should be devoted to that activity because a divided mind was a weakened mind. But reading the Gospel of Ramakrishna and also reading one of Sai Baba's books, both of these teachers frequently told their chelas to repeat always, at all times the name of God. Sometimes they said repeat my name. Well there does seem to be a contradiction here and I would like you to say if this what seems to be gurushakti practice, is something that you approve of. And if so how does one reconcile these two conflicting ideas?

Gururaj. Beautiful. Beautiful. Firstly, no reconciliation is necessary because there is no conflict. Good. Now I will have to explain that of course. Some movements says that you must not have a divided mind. So that means the mind must be one-pointed. All the energies must be centred around or towards a certain object, be whatever it is. It could be a

concept and the concept could also be the object of realisation. It could be an affirmation, in which a person becomes totally involved, where all the energies are put into that affirmation and it produces results. I have mentioned before that some person, Coey, some name like that, Emil Coey that started a clinic and the only method he used was morning and night you repeat to yourself over and over again that 'I am getting better and better. I am getting better and better'. Now this must not be done just as a verbal repetition, but all your energies must be focussed in that affirmation. That means it must be focussed. The affirmation must have the force and the power of a concerted mind. And physical energies can be brought through the channel of the concerted mind.

Now, it has been said that the mind, over a given space of time, say, one hour, one hour's physical work a person might be doing and another person might be doing one hour's mental work. Now it is said that the mind consumes eight times more energy than the body in the same amount of time. This means that the mind is more powerful, more forceful than the body. Good. So with the concerted mind one uses, utilises the energy in that one-pointedness to the object or the conception or the affirmation and it has its desired effect. Now one has to be very careful that it does not lead into a form of self-hypnosis, because in self-hypnosis only the surface roughness is not eradicated but driven deeper. In other words the weed is just snipped off on top of the ground and you think there is no weed. It is not weeded out. That is the problem with hypnosis. Fine.

So, now that is one-pointedness where some of the schools of thought that tell you, you must not have an undivided mind. That is very true. But the fault is this, they do not tell you that you must have an open mind. They tell you one part of the story and not the other part. A one-pointed mind must coexist with an open mind. If you might have been using Palmolive soap for a long time and found it good, okay, you are one-pointed in using Palmolive soap, but one day on your Birthday or Christmas time, someone sends you Badedas, yes, and you might like that more. Yes. Because you have an open mind to try out something else. Good. And you might like that more and then you stop using Palmolive. But then you don't say Palmolive soap is no good. It served you for a while until you found something better, until you found something better. And that comes through open-mindedness. Now, after having discovered a better kind of soap and you still stick to the old kind, then it is not a one-pointed mind, but it is a bigoted mind. You see the difference? It becomes a channelled mind. It becomes a closed mind and that is bigotry. It's a dogmatic mind that only this and nothing else. And then when the ultimate is found then there remains nothing more to find. You see? So the whole idea is to have an open mind. And these quotations that you have mentioned, are very similar to that mentioned in the Scriptures. They are in essence but the same. Okay. Fine. Fine.

So the secret is one-pointedness and with the one-pointedness, the openness of mind must also exist or otherwise you become dogmatic and the mind closes up. It has certain values, but it can never lead you to its maximum value because of the very reason that it is closed up. If the oyster shell remains closed, it will never conceive the pearl, the pearl of great wisdom. A child came to me, he did not like maths. He says 'Studying maths is not going to help me at all in the work that I am going to do'. So, I explained to this youngster, I said 'No, you study maths. Even if the principles of mathematics is not going to help you in your work, there's one thing that is going to help you, that here you would be developing concentration, application, perseverance, analysis of the problem, finding the formula. Look at all these things that are happening in your learning of mathematics. So if you do not need maths in your future life, the qualities that you have gained of concentration etc will be helpful to you in all the other facets of life'. And when I explained this to him and opened his mind to this concept, he very happily applied himself to mathematics. And this I am referring to my own son, right, who gained an average of ninety one percent in maths three, which is good. There goes the bell, the school bell.

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