

Questioner. Can you explain the mechanics of self-help in terms of practical situations? I suppose basically what I'm looking for, is a plain man's guide to self-help.

Gururaj. Good. Self-help, in practical situations, could be equated as synonymous because in practical situations, you are helping yourself. The question lies, are you helping yourself adversely or in a proper manner. Now to know this, one has to know what self-help really is. Why does man want to help himself? That would be the first question. And the only answer could be that he wants to better his life. There's a difference between self help and helping yourself and people are so used to helping themselves (Gururaj laughs) with various things that are either illegal, fattening or immoral (General laughter).

Now self-help is against these things. Self-help is contrary to helping oneself. Now in practical situations, say, you are confronted with a problem that concerns your family. Now there might be a rift, where two people live in the same house and yet they live as if they are divorced. They might speak to each other whenever necessary but the whole relationship has broken up and because of circumstances they live in the same house. Now here one has to help oneself. Good. In self-help, one has to study the circumstances in detail. Does my wife not love me anymore or do I not love her any more? Question number one. If she loves me and this situation has come about, what is the reason of it, what is wrong with me? Now that very analysis of one's actions and thoughts, is the beginning of self-help in a practical situation.

Now when you analyse yourself and you think of the things that are not conducive to a happy home life, then you alter them. As we have said so many times before that the mind is conditioned, the mind is patterned. So it could be quite difficult in the beginning to unpattern the patterning. But with this analysis, with a bit of thought, one could really see that I have been wrong to create the disruption in the house, in the home which has now become a house. There's a great difference. So what do I do? I take those factors that has caused this disruption and I do my best to alter those things. If I'm in a habit of first popping into the pub before reaching home, I shall cease to do that. You like a little drink, so have it at home. You don't need to go to a pub. So there, you are helping yourself already your wife starts feeling happier. Perhaps you have not been caring enough for her - of course this applies both ways - perhaps you have not been caring enough or thoughtful enough. So there, you analyse again that 'where have I not been caring?' And when you ask that question, I'm sure you'd find so many answers to that question 'Where have I not been caring enough?' And there are various fields in the householder's life, in practical situations where a lot of actions we perform are thoughtless. We don't think. We don't care about the feelings of the spouse. But what we do expect is this that the spouse must be understanding. You see.

So as the analysis progresses, you would find that, I have not been caring, I've been unkind and I tell her in the middle of the night to go and make a cup of tea for me, on a very cold night, and things like that and people do it, you'd be surprised. They do that. And sometimes if you're lucky enough to have a dutiful wife, she will do it as a duty. But these things, although done in duty, build up, build up little by little by little and then she just decides one day 'Oh, let him go to hell. If he wants tea, let him go and make it.' Okay. So we try and discover why we are not caring enough, why we are not kind enough and that is helping oneself, self-help. So the various, self help actually means the removal of the negativities that is within ourselves and replacing those negativities with positivities and that constitutes self help. So here is where some effort is required. It's nice to go home some evening and take a bunch of flowers to the wife. It's nice even if you have to make a detour on your way home. It's a nice gesture. 'Oh, he thought of me.' Although the bunch of flowers might cost fifty cents, that's not important but you have made the effort to make a detour from a straight road home, get off at the station, you walk two more streets to get that bunch of flowers. Now these are just little examples but in these little examples the thing to note is that some effort is required, effort and thoughtfulness. Now by making this effort and by being thoughtful, you are putting into motion the forces that will repattern your mind in a positive way to meet practical situations.

Now by doing little things like this, little things, you would find a great change taking place in you and not only in you but in your wife as well, because here is a practical demonstration of love. You do love your wife. If you did not, you'd have not married her in the first place. There was, even if it was not total love, there was a mutual attraction or else you would have not married her. Now this mutual attraction is the seed from which love can grow, and as I always say, love has to be nurtured so it can grow. Now with this programme of self-help which we do consciously and with little effort, we, to repeat, not only change ourselves but we change the spouse as well and she would feel that 'Look, how caring he is.' Because people - it's no good telling your wife, 'I love you, I love you, I love you', it has to be demonstrated in one way or the other. It has to be demonstrated, for those words 'I love you' to have some force and some power. I have seen in homes, lovely homes, happy homes, where the wife wants to go and make tea and the husband jumps up and he says "You sit down darling, I'll see to it, I'll put on the kettle" - things like that, those little acts of kindnesses which are so, so important. So like that, you engender a great amount of caring in the wife and she will, being human, she will reciprocate in some way or the other. So if I want to change someone, I must change myself. If I want to be loved, I must become loving first and not expect it to come from others. I must do.

Now this same thing, the same principle which are in practical situations, apply to spiritual situations or on the spiritual path where we consciously help ourselves. It applies in work situations where we are prepared to do that little bit extra, instead of watching the clock. What happens, you knock off at five, so here, a quarter to five, you are busy running to the bathroom and dawdling that fifteen minutes away. You are actually robbing the boss of fifteen minutes. Why can't you go to the bathroom and do up your face and hair after five? You see. So these are the little things that are so important in self-help. Now in the beginning there has to be some conscious discipline, for an undisciplined life is an animal life and human beings having the power of thought, can, can definitely bring some discipline into their lives. Most people don't live; they just drift away in life because of lack of discipline. So when we bring the element of discipline into our lives then we start self-help. We start on the basis of walking the straight and narrow instead of the broad path where one could so easily get lost and get caught up in the by-ways of life and which in turn just brings about misery.

There is nothing in the world greater than discipline, for every action can be disciplined and this does not mean that you become a robot. You enjoy life to the fullest and yet in a disciplined manner. Life should be like a poem that finds self-expression and yet disciplined in the metrical system. There's total freedom of expression in a poem and yet it is guided into the framework of meter. That is how life should be and that is what self-help is all about. Now when we do our spiritual practices, that is fine, good its a necessary must, but during the waking state of life if we don't very consciously try and do something about our weaknesses or our faults, then what is it going to help. If a person is an alcoholic and he can meditate twenty four hours of the day but it is not going to help him if he does not push the bottle further and further away from him or find some form of outside help that will help him to push the bottle further away. So that constitutes self-help in every practical situation of life. It also works as far as emotions are concerned. You have hateful thoughts towards another person. You analyse why do I have these hateful thoughts, say, towards your boss. Is it because he has demoted me and I have started hating him? Now ask yourself why has he demoted you? If he found greater worth in you and you were prepared to go that extra mile, he might have promoted you. There must be something wrong, not with the boss. Never blame another person, even if the person is wrong. Always analyse yourself that this demotion may have causes that were produced by me and not by the boss.

Like that in friendships - a friend does not respond as well as he or she used to in the past - and then we ask but why is this person, this friend of mine behaving so strangely now. Is the friend strange or have I become strange? And you will find that there would be a lot of reasons in you, the friend might be wrong to some extent but it takes two hands to clap. There is something wrong in you too. Now if this is analysed and put right, it becomes so easy to go the friend and say, 'Look I am sorry, that I might have very unwittingly or inadvertently done something that might have hurt you but let

us start again. I'm just sorry'. And when you say that, the friend will tell you, 'Oh, I'm more sorry that what you are'. Because that is the reaction you will produce in the friend and there you are back with your friend and the tie with the friend could even become much stronger. Because here in the very act of going to him and apologising or saying sorry, you are displaying one of the greatest virtues in life and that is humility. Now humility has such a force that it could penetrate steel walls, never mind the human mind. It can penetrate steel walls because the basis of humility will always be a deep love and that deep love constitutes nothing else but Divinity.

So as we go on trying to change our ways, self help, all these positive virtues start developing, love, humility, kindness, charity, compassion, all these things start developing and your life changes. It becomes transformed. You are away from the animal self who just thinks of lust and greed. You move gradually away from what we call me and mine. You, by conscious effort, you sublimate or refine the ego self that is you. So all these things are so, so inter-linked and spirituality is never nebulous. It's not something floating around in the sky. And therefore I always say that any philosophy if it cannot be brought down to its practical day to day value, then that philosophy is of no use. It is just mental gymnastics. So on the programme of self-help, you do not need to go to organisations and get brainwashed. You do not need that. It is just pure common sense that any person is capable of using, his own common sense. And yet we know we call it common sense but it is not so common. So if we are in a dilemma, we go to someone who can advise us how to approach the problem or the practical situation we are faced with.

Say a person hasn't got a job - he is looking for a job, so if he will sit at home and laze around smoking cigarette after cigarette and just to pass his time or whatever else he does, a job is not going to come to him. He has got to enter a programme of self-help. So what will he do? He'll study the newspapers. He'll go to Employment Agencies. He's making effort to find a job and you find many people, tragically enough that has so many responsibilities, yet they do not make any effort. Well one thing in England, you have a very good Social Security System where - what do you call it, the dole or something - but there are other countries that don't have that, or if they have it, its so little that you can't buy a box of matches with it. Yeah. So nevertheless, the whole point here is the effort that is to be made of going round to several Employment Agencies, of studying the newspapers and finding a job to fulfil one's responsibility.

Now everyone always wants a job that he thinks he would be good at. In other words people have the habit of always over-estimating themselves. So when it comes to dire circumstances, where a job is necessary, you take on any job, for anything that provides you with an honest living is noble. It is not ignoble and then from there you can always find the kind of job that you like. Now I've heard many excuses from people, 'Oh, I haven't got a job and I've been interviewed

and I could get this and that, but I don't like this and I don't like that.' It's not a matter of liking. It's not a matter of liking. It's a matter of fulfilling your responsibility. That's important. The liking can come afterwards. In a survey it was found that ninety percent of the world's population are in jobs that they don't like, so you're in good company. I'm talking of those that are unemployed. I'm using all those various examples of practical situations where we can really help ourselves.

So we have to make that effort and that conscious effort is not as difficult as it seems. It just requires pushing yourself that wee little bit and you'd find you will just flow. And the beauty of it is this, that as you start making some effort, you are strengthening the thought of self-help, helping yourself in a certain situation. Now when you strengthen that thought, that thought becomes powerful. That thought becomes powerful and the greater the power the thought gets, the greater amount of attraction would there be of that which you want to attract. It comes to you. Now this applies in economics as well. People, many people suffer of a poverty consciousness. Good. And they will remain poor because every thought they think is just poor, poor, poor and filled with all the various things that constitute poverty. Why not use the opposite thought? Feel yourself, visualise yourself in the position you want to be. Strengthen that thought and by strengthening that thought you develop a burning desire. And by developing that burning desire, you start, it helps you to make effort and with that positive thought of where you want to be, you will reach there. Because of the power of your own thought, you will attract the proper circumstances that are needed for you to reach your goal. Anyone sitting here can become a millionaire in five years, each and every one sitting here, but are we prepared to help ourselves? Are we prepared to create that money consciousness? Look, I don't care for money but I'm giving you examples. Are you prepared to create that money consciousness? What kind of literature are you reading? Are you reading literature that talks of hope and prosperity or are you reading literature that is sad and tragic? Good.

So the mind has to be patterned or re-patterned rather, the mind has to be brought to the level of positive thinking. The mind has to develop that consciousness of that which you desire and that desire must not be a wishful thought. People indulge in wishful thinking - 'Oh I wish I had a million pounds so I could buy a mansion and a car'. Can only take you to day-dreaming. Wishful thoughts end up in day-dreaming, which has no positive value at all. But a real determined thought snowballs into greater and greater determination and there is nothing impossible for man to do. Now, the same principle applies to everything. If you have the burning desire to become one with Divinity, you would achieve that too. There is no half-heartedness. It does not work. And because of half-heartedness in all the things we do, that is why our minds become fragmented. Some of the energies are pulled this way and some that way and some the other way and that is why we do not function in totality. And our meditation and spiritual practices are so designed that it pulls a person

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together. That's what we want and in that pulling together, in that togetherness, one finds one-pointedness. You see how far self-help leads one in every aspect of life.

When I was in business, I don't know if I told you this story - many of you are new here - when I was in business and it was a very large business in the film world and there comes a time of the year round about July/August when we signed up contracts with the various cinema owners, various cinema owners for the following year. So we prepared the contracts, July/August and signed them up for the following year. Fine. Now, as in any business, you have some very easy customers and you have difficult customers. Now, the next morning if I should have an appointment at ten, with someone who I know is a difficult customer, so what would I do that evening? I will visualise that person, Mr X and actually see him signing the contract, I would actually see the pen he is using. So he might be sleeping at the time while I'm working on him at two in the morning. Yes. Yes. Yes. I'm demonstrating to you the power of thought but it has to be based on honesty. Because I know my films will do very well in his theatres. In his chain of theatres they would do very well, because the kind of films I import is really for his kind of market. Right, but he is a sticky customer. Good. So here even while the person is sleeping, I'm thinking of him and I would actually picture him, sitting at his desk and giving him the contract and him signing it. Fine. Visualisation.

That's why Tratak is so important. You can do anything you like with it. Only use it rightly. I give you the key, you can open the doors of heaven with it and that key also fits in the door of hell, the choice is yours. Good. So ten o'clock I would be there at Mr. So and So's office and I would take out the contract from my briefcase and we would have a few words. And ten o'clock is a nice time to make appointments because you can have a cup of tea and over tea you can talk. It gives you more time to talk because you can take your time sipping the tea and nobody is going to chuck you out while you're still sipping your tea. You see. You gotta be a bit shrewd and clever. Yeah. Right. And believe you me, that it is exactly the same pen I had visualised that he was using, the same suit that I visualised he had on. And this happened not only in the one instant, it happens all the time. Just a little conversation of the trend of the market the following year and what kind of - films also has a fad like ladies dresses, they change. Now there would be certain kinds of films that would go well next year. There is certain other kinds of films - peoples' tastes change, very fickle, very fickle. So I'd be there and after some explanation, this that and the other, going through some charts and what business he has done in the past year with the contracts I had with his cinemas, and this that and we compare it and I say "Look, I know what you've done with the opposition companies too." He says, "How do you know?" I say "Don't you worry, I know." And there without argument, he would sign the contract and offer another cup of tea and say "Come on, have another cup of tea. Why don't you stay over and have lunch before you go. It was quite a long journey up country for you." Things like that. The power

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of positive thought with the element of honesty that you know will be helpful to that person and with that, you yourself is gaining. So when you help someone else, you're also doing self-help. You see.

So through all these various facets of life, through all the various emotions in life and the various feelings you can classify them, but there is a tendency of even feelings to go through permutations where so many extra feelings are created and we call them mixed feelings. So throughout all this, there is this great life force or Divine force underlying all this. But we only look at the problems. We only look at the practical situations we are faced with, but we never give a thought to what underlies all that. And once we give a thought that there is Divinity underlying all that, then life can become very smooth. Like the saying goes 'If God is with me, who can be against me.' It is so, so simple. The living of life is so, so simple. Its only we that make it so complex and add so many problems to it. And in reality when we reach back to that simplicity, it is nothing but joy, joy, joy. No one can ever hate you. No one can ever do you any harm, never, ever. If you yourself are okay, then all these negativities around us we repel. They can never touch us because we are strong through the process of meditation, self help, which automatically covers us in a haze of grace, of gurushakti, which forever stands with us and is our protective factor. And we know this how the lives of people have been transformed, work situations have improved, home situations have improved, social situations have improved, business situations have improved and it is all through the power of grace or as we call it, gurushakti. But you just don't sit on your backside. You also have to do something. You have to do something. Just don't leave it to Divine forces. They are there but you have to have some effort in the waking state of life to activate those forces in a goodly, Godly manner and become human beings. That's what we want. And that is how self-help applies to practical situations. Okay. Good. We have time for one more question - there's fifteen minutes.

Questioner. Gururaj, you have said that the Avatar is a sum total of the emanation of this particular universe. Is there a being who is the sum total of the emanations of the universe as a whole, the infinite universe, or is he the formless one that which we call God?

Gururaj. Yes. You're right. You have answered it. (General laughter). You've answered it. Right. Right. Next question. Yes, the Avatar is the totality of this infinite universe. He is the totality of the emanations and therefore he has characteristics, but being at the most finest relative level, at the right hand of God, in other words to use theological terms, being at the most finest relative level, he draws to himself all the Sattvic qualities of this infinite universe, all the good qualities of this universe and that is why he has attributes, attributes of love and compassion and all these various virtues that we talk about. And that is why we pray to that God, that Personal God, for forgiveness. That is why we pray for the

various things that could make our lives smoother. But that is still a manifestation. That Personal God, the Avatar, is still a manifestation at its finest level but beyond the manifestation, you could call it the Father if you wish or Divine energy or whatever name, lies the unmanifest or the Manifestor who is, which is rather, attributeless, a neutral force and from this neutrality came this manifestation. The primal manifestation and the work of the primal manifestation was expression. And that primal manifestation in turn expressed itself in all these various names and forms which constitute the universe. In reality there is only the Manifestor and the apparent manifestation that we see, is an illusion in the highest metaphysical sense. But from the relative viewpoint, there is reality in the manifestation.

So, what process takes place is this, that one learns to realise that the Manifestor and the manifestation is but one. The Atman and Brahman is one. Those are Sanskrit terms while in our terminology we would say the Father and Son are one. Do you see? So the Father remains neutral without attributes. That energy is forever neutral but out of its neutrality - the flower is neutral yet it cannot help exuding fragrance from itself and that fragrance is manifestation or some people might call it creation. And as that fragrance solidifies itself as it goes through various processes, it assumes all kinds of forms, which constitute this universe. And yet the basic forms that it goes on creating and re-creating is but gaseous, liquid, solids, earth and of course liquid includes water and aether. Those are the basic elements that constitutes everything. So in meditation what happens is this, that those basic elements that are within us - we go to the finest level of those basic elements and by reaching the finest levels of the basic elements, we reach the finest level of relativity.

So that is the Avatar, the manifestation and the Manifestor, has nothing to do with the working of this universe. For the universe is within itself self-perpetuating, creating changes and changes, all the time. But from the absolute point of view, the changes are not noticed. We stand on the seashore and we find the sea very turbulent, big, big waves, very turbulent, but you go up in an aeroplane and from there the sea would seem so calm, you do not see the big waves. Like that, like that when we reach the finest subtlest level and really understand the meaning of the Scriptural injunction that 'No one goes to the Father but through me'. That means that we have reached the finest level of relativity or the purest level of manifested consciousness. And that is why we have the Avatars who is the totality of the emanation of this universe. And all religions say this, all of them. Krishna says the same thing in the Gita "Come unto me" and he repeats it many times. Yeah. And Krishna even says in the Gita that, 'You will have those that will deride me; for such little understanding they have'. And that was the experience of Jesus as well. That was the experience of Buddha as well. But they, being beyond the level of our kind of experience, enjoyed the experience. To them that too, is a joy. They are all waves in the same old ocean and the ocean is neither getting bigger nor smaller. It's just these waves jumping up and



down. Today, they are subsided. Tomorrow, they erupt again. But it's the same ocean, nothing extra is added and nothing is subtracted in this manifested universe.

That brings us to one. Good.

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