
THE OBSESSION FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

GURURAJ: Good. Let us here your earth shattering, philosophical questions. [LAUGHTER]

RANDY: Dearest Guruji, can obsession with spiritual development be self defeating?

GURURAJ: Um hm. Can obsession with spiritual development be self defeating? Yes. For spiritual development knows of no obsession. Firstly, obsession stems from the mind, and if you are obsessed with one idea, it would be very simple to be obsessed with another idea. Spiritual unfoldment is not an idea, while obsession deals only with ideas: such as hatred, jealousy, greed, lust. You can be obsessed with that. And yet, in reality if you examine jealousy or lust or greed, it is but an idea of the mind trying to project itself outwardly and trying to bring reality into it. And yet, the very jealousies that a person entertains, the idea that a person entertains might just be a fantasy of the mind. Therefore, obsessions in the spiritual realm have no validity whatsoever. As far as the spirit is concerned, you just are: I am. There is nothing to acquire from outside, for it is all there all the time.

So, when a person is obsessed with an idea, and this we have found in numerous cases, where the obsession is so great where a person would mortgage his house, sell his furniture and go on so called spiritual courses. This is caused by obsession. There are people that go from course to course to course and they do it because they feel obsessed in doing that. But if you study the underlying factor behind that sort of obsession, you'd find it more escapism. So, escapism is related very closely to obsession. You escape away into a world of your own. And you can escape away into a world of great negativity where you become irresponsible. I know of organizations that hold six month courses, and you'd find quite a number of people going to them for various reasons as an escape. Husband and wife don't get on well together so the wife thinks, "Let me go away for the six months on whatever course it is." And this kind of escape causes a lot of family disruption. So many divorces take place: unfaithfulnesses, infidelities, and all the negative things that do make the world go around. Yet, it causes great harm to the person, and to those that the person is connected with. And this triggers off, because of habit of escaping, this turns itself into a form of obsession. I am obsessed with the idea of finding God. So, what word comes in between "I am obsessed" and "God" is idea. For you are obsessed with something which is abstract, for God has no definition. It is abstract.

As I said this morning or during the week, there is no route map. There is no address that you can reach to find God or spiritual unfoldment. There is no address because the address is in you. It is not an idea. It is a reality. So, what we are trying to do by our spiritual practices is to know that reality. And the more we are obsessed with the idea, the idea

becomes the blockage towards the reality. For once you have an idea you are qualifying that which is unqualifiable. You are defining or limiting that which is indefinable and that which is limitless. So, with obsession of an idea, you automatically are putting a great obstacle in the path of spiritual unfoldment. True spiritual unfoldment occurs only when you get rid of all these ideas. Now, ideas are made up of perceptions and conceptions, which necessarily are limited, because they are patternings of your own mind. While the real spiritual self of man is beyond the mechanisms that put all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together. And even when all the pieces of the mental jigsaw puzzle is put together, still there is a long way to go towards spiritual unfoldment of spiritual discovery which is already there. Now, how are these obsessions created? It could be created by the desire of wanting to escape escape from one's problems, from one's troubles. The the people that really become obsessed with the idea of Divinity are those who are in the most deepest trouble. For as we all know, nobody thinks of Divinity unless they are troubled, and that is the time you do not find Divinity. What you would definitely find is more trouble. Yeah. You see.

So, the approach to unfoldment should be that of total calmness and innocence, and not obsession. Because within obsession there are so many conflicting forces at play. Because the conflicting forces are the very constituents that make up obsession. You are obsessed with the idea of smoking. It has really hooked you, and smoking becomes an obsession. Good. Now, there are so many chemical changes that has taken place in your body with the nicotine for this addiction. And addiction is obsession, too. There are so many mental changes that has taken place within the mind, within the brain cells that causes this. So, all forms of obsession is a aberration of the thinking processes. It is a straightjacket that you are put in. Now, who wears straightjackets, or who are put into straightjackets, are mad people. And mad people can never find Divinity. They cannot find divinity, because with the madness in the confines of the various mechanics of the mind, Divinity is lost. So, obsession becomes the biggest obstacle. Now as we proceed, having this obsession of finding God, we are thwarted on every step of the way. But if this obsession is... the energies of this obsession is converted to yearning, then you are on the path.

You yearn for Divinity. You are not obsessed with the idea, for yearning goes beyond all ideas. Yearning goes beyond all ideas, because yearning is a feeling. You do not yearn with the mind. You yearn with the heart. That is where that feeling rises, not in the mind. The mind might at first formulate certain ideas, but then as the yearning grows stronger and stronger, the ideas fade away, and such a deep feeling is felt for Divinity. Now, in the ordinary sense of the word, in the ordinary sense of the meaning of yearning, on surface value it becomes a need. But to find Divinity there is no need in our sense of the word.

You yearn for a person because you have an idea in your mind of the deep love you have for the person. Now, that is a limited love. Because if you really love the person, you don't yearn for the person. You don't yearn for the person,

because yearning can also take one to a need. You need the person, therefore you yearn for the person, which is of a mental quality. So, here we have seen that yearning has two aspects: a mental aspect and an aspect of the heart, good, where the heart cries out on its own without using the mechanisms of the mind, without using the idea of the object, without using the idea of the idea of the object. And yet when yearning persists, then you find spiritual unfoldment. Now, when the yearning in the heart begins for something far greater than what I am, what my little self is, then that yearning assumes a different form. It becomes such a powerful force that it overrides the idea of I: the little ego self, the conditioned self which we know as the I. I am John. I am Jack. I am Gene. I am Joe. But that idea goes away because that is a mental concept. So, when this power of this Divine yearning comes about it overrides all mental concepts, and yearning remains as yearning without any object in view. Then God is forgotten. God is forgotten, not as we forget God. God is forgotten in that intense yearning of the heart, and only yearning remains. And when only yearning remains, it transforms itself into non yearning, or a total silence. It goes into total silence because now you have gone beyond the chattering of the mind. So, starting at the mind level, with an object in view, we return to the subject the subject of yearning for the sake of yearning without having a goal. And when it comes to the time when you lose the sight of the goal, then the goal is found.

So, what yearns when the mind is put aside, when mental yearning is put aside? What yearns then? The real self yearns for itself. The real self of man yearns for recognition of itself. So, it becomes a goalless yearning, a yearningless yearning. But just a feeling of that spiritual self, which is now activated, pulsating, vibrant with life. You are now in touch with the real spiritual force within you the Kingdom of Heaven within. And there all the action of love takes place. But now this cannot just remain there. Having a body...(thanks. Excuse me.). Having a body and having a mind you cannot discard it, until of course you discard the body and the mind when you expire. So, this force, in turn, has to be translated, has to be transmitted, rather, to the mind. And the mind has a faint glimmer... the mind has a faint glimmer of what the heart has experienced of itself. Now, when we say heart, we do not mean the physical organ as you would know. We mean the core of your personality. And the core of your personality is that eternal spirit, forever there, eternally there. The body passes away and the mind passes away. All the energies of the body and mind become dispersed or dissipated, but that core, the spirit remains. And when the spirit remains, it yearns within itself, until it even goes beyond that yearning, because the spirit is capable. At the very fringe of the superconscious mind, the spirit shining through that clear pane of glass, the light shining through is also subjected to an experience [not of this, but of itself?] but that very fine layer, that gives you individuality; that very fine transparent layer of the ego. And that experiences the yearning until even that yearning is dissipated.

Now, certain philosophies teach you to be desireless. Now yearning is part of desire. You cannot exist in this mortal frame devoid of desire. You'll always have desire. Now, you can desire for an object, or you can have desire for desire itself. You desire desire. What does this mean? What does this mean when you say you desire desire? It means that the very components of that desire has transcended, or gone beyond any form of acquisition. For within ordinary desire acquisition is there. It is not tangible in physical form, but it is totally tangible in the subtle energy form.

When you desire something, you have performed the action already. You desire a beautiful woman. You have not been with the woman, but that very thought or desire has caused impressions in your mind, which we call samskaras. So, you have formed activity in your mind without performing the action. And that, too, leaves a samskara in the mind. But when desire exists within itself, then it becomes nondesire. But having this fine film at the highest level of relative evolution, or the finest level of relativity, the desire has to experience something. And that desire experiences itself as yearning. So, when we shed this mortal frame, then that very fine film of ego dissipates itself and returns to its original element. And then the purity of the spirit is there.

While man is existing in this body he cannot experience the totality of Divinity. But he can experience the totality of Divinity at it's highest level of reflection. So, what does man experience even at the highest stage of evolution is the reflection of Divinity in it's purist form. The mirror is totally clean and the sun is fully reflected in that mirror of that fine, refined ego self. For you cannot experience God. I am putting forward to you a new thought. You cannot experience God, but you can only become God. You can experience God only in manifestation where everything that is manifested you can experience.

You cannot experience fire, but you can experience the heat of the fire. For if you jump into the fire you will burn. You'll become ashes. You'll become one with the fire. And that is what happens when you merge into Divinity. When you merge into God, you have jumped into the unknown into the fire, and you are consumed in that fire so that you become one with the fire, you become the fire itself. But until this fine sheath is left, you can only experience the heat of the fire. So, when the Vedantic scriptures say, "Brahmasmi," I am Brahma, or the Christian scriptures say, "I and my Father are one," there is still a distinction between I and the Father. There's a distinction between the Unmanifest and the manifest. For distinctions can only cease when you become the Unmanifest. For when we say, I and my Father are one, who recognizes this? Not the Father. The Father does not recognize this, but you recognize this. And what is your tool or instrument of recognition? It is your mind. At the highest level of your mind you've come to the realization. You come to the experience that, "I and my Father are one," for heat and fire can never be separated. One cannot exist without the other.

So, when man says, "I experience God," what he means is this, that I have reached to the finest level of my mind. From the conscious to the subconscious and then to the superconscious. And at the superconscious level I am getting the fullest reflection of the Manifestor. So, I am experiencing the manifestation. But there, there at the superconscious level where there is total clarity and where the mind is not cluttered with anxieties and obsessions, there it can experience that power. It can experience that force of the spirit, though in a reflected form. But the reflection is so powerful that the transparent bit of the clarified ego seems to experience God. It seems to experience God, because it is getting the full blast of the manifestation at its primal level. And the full blast of the manifestation is the level where that abstract God assumes a form which is called the personal god. I think we spoke about it this week.

Now, the personal god is the highest form man can reach. That is the highest form man can reach. For the abstract Divinity is not an experience. The abstract Divinity is not an experience. It is being that supports itself, while experience needs to be supported. There has to be an experiencer. While at the abstract level, there is no experiencer. For all is gone and into the void of Divinity the voidless void.

Now, I might have told you this story before, where a chela went to the master and asked what God is. So, the master sends this chela to the [amalek?] tree, it's a fruit. And he says, "Bring that fruit. Open that fruit." And it was done. "Take out the seed." That was done. "Now, break the seed." That was done. What was found inside? The master asks, "What have you found?" The chela says, "There was nothing. It was hollow." So, the master says, "It is this very nothingness that created the seed, which in turn created the tree, which in turn created the fruit, and which in turn created the seed again."

So, that nothingness is everythingness. And that is where we have to reach to be immersed in that indefinable energy, from which everything starts up all over again. From the seed to the tree, and the tree reproduces a seed. So, it is a process forever going on, and on, and on. That is why we say we do not want a dead God. We want a living God. For God itself, even at its impersonal level, even at the most abstract impersonal level, is forever in motion regenerating itself. For He cannot stand still. It cannot stand still. It is only when the It personifies through the various forces of manifestation into sound and vibration and further solidification occurs, that the It becomes a He where personality is assumed. And that He is the totality of all the emanations that is produced of all that this whole universe emanates. And that very emanation is a personality so therefore known as a personal god.

So obsession becomes the biggest obstacle, for here you are battling with an idea. Now, when you battle with an idea, you will find that the idea is subject to change. The idea forever changes. You are obsessed with a certain patterned idea now. But the very obsession can bring about changes in the idea. And that idea which is changing all the time contains no reality. For reality itself is changeless. Although, proceeding in a systematic process it ceases to change. The quantity

of energy contained in that reality will never be reduced by a single ounce, and neither would it be increased by a single ounce.

Now, when we say a person is obsessed in attaining God, we might be wrong in our judgment. It could be just a yearning. It could be just a yearning. For obsession is a mental aberration. It is a mental imbalance to be obsessed. How can you be obsessed to attain something which is already there? You have a hi fi set in your home, and you are obsessed to get a hi fi set, not recognizing that it is there. The other day I was looking for my spectacles. Couldn't find them. I had them on. [LAUGHTER]

[TAPE CLICKS OFF AND ON, BUT SIDE ONE CONTINUES]

GURURAJ: Yes, so. That is what we do. The fish is thirsty in the water, hm? The fish is thirsty in the water. That is what happens to us. We are in the water, and yet we thirst. So if we can get away and realize that we are in the water. Why is it so necessary to be thirsty when we just have to open our mouths. Sometimes we open it too wide. Good. So therefore to find Divinity, you do not need to search. Here's another proposition I put to you. We call people spiritual seekers, which is wrong. It should not be spiritual seekers. We say, "Oh, that person is a seeker." Of course it can be given poetic license, it can be used for a description. We can say the person wants to re cognize himself. Now is that a search? It is not a search. You are not seekers. You only want to re cognize what you really are. You only search for something that is beyond you, that is outside of you and you go out with a lantern looking for it. But the light burns within you itself. So why these little lanterns when you have the light of lights burning there. So we want to re cognize what we really are. And that is not difficult, that is not difficult. As soon as we get rid of our obsessions in the search for the things we want in life. Obsessions can be used in so many ways. The obsession to become a president. Obsession can be used in so many different ways. The obsession to have millions of dollars becomes an obsession... money becomes the god. The obsession for power, the obsession to become a president. Obsessions. Once we get rid of these obsessions and just be, just to find the answer to that little problem, how to be. That's all. That's all! How to be. For that very be is being, my being. I am that being. Then how do you benefit in daily life by this? Oh, so so greatly. All your fears are gone. All your guilts are gone, because the sense of guilt can also be an obsession. All the guilt is gone, past is past, future's never there. I am now. And at this very moment I am guiltless. What I have done in the past is finished. And that very realization becomes so powerful that all the karmas performed over lifetimes loses its sting. One powerful action can get rid of all that karma. One powerful action of re cognizing yourself.

And that is why theologians say that our sins are taken away, our sins are forgiven. That must be properly understood. You have to pay for your karma. That is true. But do you know how we try to pay for our karmas? We try to knock in a six inch nail with a jeweler's little hammer. And that is why it is prolonged we are not using the right tool. But take a 10 pound hammer and with a few bangs the nail is in. See.

So we are using the wrong tool for the right job. Yes. Now how do we find this 10 pound hammer? There is where all our troubles are. How can we get rid in this instant pudding society how can we get rid of all our karma gathered over millions of years? How can we get rid of it in a flash? That's what we want. Now, if I knew the answer to that, I would be the savior of the world, hm, that everyone's karma is gone. Unfortunately, we have to travel the path. We have to travel the path. If we have come from ten miles away, we get to go back the very same ten miles. But through meditation and spiritual practices, the engine of your car gets souped up, and it zips across the road. That's all. You see. Ya. Now, the process can become very smooth if we just forget the goal. Because to have that goal in mind all the time it could become an obsession. [END SIDE ONE] For your mind then is not on the path, but on the goal. You have a remembrance of the goal, yes, I have to reach Baltimore. But while driving you are not thinking of Baltimore, Baltimore, Baltimore all the time. It could be Baltiless. [LAUGHTER] So whatever, we still have to reach. But if our mind is concentrated more on the path, not with obsession, but with an innocence, that child like innocence, that will help you not to make the journey more arduous. And most people that are so intent on reaching the goal are really acting. It is the act they put on to please their own minds, or perhaps to impress others. But mostly to bluff themselves. They find some kind of solace. They are actors.

One day a lamb and a lion went to a restaurant. So the waitress comes along and asks the lamb, "What would like?" No, sorry, it was a rabbit, it wasn't a lamb. Lambs are such nice things. Rabbits are more cunning. So asks the rabbit, "What would like?" So the rabbit ordered, "Give me a lettuce." Fine. And then the waitress asked, "What about your friend?" So the rabbit says, "Nothing." So the waitress thought, "Why nothing?" So the rabbit said that, "If he were a real lion, I wouldn't be here." It was a lion in disguise. So that's what we do. We march on the road like lions, but cowards inside. We are afraid to walk. We want a goal to be sure of, that there is an end, there is a goal. We want to be sure of that goal. But we are too cowardly to jump into the field of the unknown, and the field for Divinity is the unknown. For if you had known it, there would be no need to travel. You see.

So it is by getting rid of obsession that we get rid of the idea of divinity. Now how can you have an idea of divinity? You cannot. It is totally impossible to have an idea of divinity or its totality. We can only have an idea of its manifestation. And through meditation and spiritual practices, as we are lead to the finer, deeper and finer and finer levels of the mind,

then we have the idea the goal, if you wish to call it of the finest realm of manifestation. And that is all that a human being can reach. And nowhere further on this planet. But in this universe there are other planets where beings exist, more highly evolved beings than us. There are. There are. So some of you that are very highly evolved will not come back to this planet. You'll go to another planet and live in a totally different dimension instead of this three dimensional world. And when some of you go there, I will come and visit. Just keep me some nice tea. [LAUGHTER] You see. So coming back to obsession. Now, if we have an obsession to find Divinity, what do we do to get rid of this obsession? That is the crucial question. The best way to get rid of that obsession and very few have that obsession, it is a rare case where a person is obsessed with God, it is very rare, thank God but what can one do if there is such a case? Good. The obsession can only be gotten rid of by understanding, by understanding that the obsession itself is unreal, and the ideal or the idea that the obsession pursues is also unreal. For reality can never be known by the mind. Reality can never be known by the mind. So you are tackling an unreal idea with an unreal obsession about an unreal entity. You see.

So the idea is to go beyond all preconceived ideas, the idea is to go beyond all preconceived ideas. So here we are tackling a preconceived idea with another idea, a higher idea. Then the process goes on. Then when we substitute another idea with the preconceived idea, then the substituted idea also becomes a preconceived idea. Then we got to tackle that idea again. Unfortunately, that is the process of understanding until we reach the finest value of the idea where the idea itself fades away and only you remain. That means the mind loses all its force. The mind is now brought to a state of equilibrium. The turbulence of ideas is gone; and when the mind is brought to that state of equilibrium, then the personalized god, or the personal god, at it's highest level of manifestation, permeates the mind because the mind is now in a state of equilibrium. All the turbulence is gone. Then only can that enter, then only can that pervade.

But if obsessions and all these things are there, then that finest level could never permeate or pervade the mind. And then the mind starts experiencing. Experiencing the manifested joy and bliss of the unmanifest. And when reaching that level, when reaching that level, the individual mind has already merged into the universal mind. So you experience the entirety of existence; you experience the entirety of bliss; and you experience the entirety of knowledge. And that is all the mind is capable of. And yet, a step further would be to go beyond joy and existence and knowledge and back into that neutral force, that neutral power, that impersonal, abstract God. That is where everything ends until the new cycle begins. Now, we want to reach that tranquility of mind, that equilibrium of mind, for one purpose only: and that purpose is to rid ourselves of all the miseries we suffer. And no one can tell me that the are devoid of miseries. For if you did not have

any miseries or unhappiness, you would have not taken birth on this planet. Hm? If you did not have to learn, you would have not come to this school of like. Good.

So the aim is to get rid of memory, memory of all the past experiences that man has gone through for which he must pay. And these memories reside in the mind. And that mind has to be clarified. Now, the memory of all those experiences reside in the subconscious layer of the mind. And as circumstances permit, with the association of ideas and other circumstances created by ourselves, we allow that store of memory to filter through to the conscious level of the mind. And the conscious level of the mind puts these samskaras or impressions into actions. Yes. And that pattern of behavior that we have in its various forms is influenced by those samskaras. And it means that the subconscious level of the mind manifests itself in the conscious level of the mind where it becomes a tangible reality. Good.

Now, if we have to experience all these samskaras gathered over lifetimes, millions of them, perhaps, then there would be no end. But we want to end it all. How do we do that? Is by going beyond, through spiritual practices, going beyond the conscious level of the mind. And when you go beyond the conscious level of the mind, you go beyond the five senses which organs with their subtler counterparts, contribute and are the main constituents of the experiences we have, the surface experiences.

So with spiritual practices, we go through the layers of the conscious mind, we go through the layers of the subconscious mind, and we go into the realm of the superconscious mind where we find that tranquility and peace, the peace that passeth all understanding. For understanding is limited to the conscious, analytical mind only. But the peace is beyond that. It is also in the mind, but at it's finest superconscious level. And that is what can be achieved through meditation and spiritual practices and nothing more.

If various movements throughout this world promise you that do this form of meditation or get your ears plugged with electronic devices, or this, that or the other, or cross your toes and tie it in a know with brass wire, or whatever [LAUGHTER] that is not going to take you to God. No, no, no.

So what man basically is searching for is to get rid of all kinds of obsessions he is obsessed with. And obsession has a very possessive characteristic. It possesses you. Obsession is born of an intense desire where you stop desiring, where you do not own the desire or the master of the desire, but the desire, turned into obsession, possesses you. You no longer exist, only the obsession exists, and that obscures the true reality within yourself. You see.

So when we go beyond all these various obsessions, then we reach that level of peace. And that is all we want. Forget God, if there is one or not. Who cares? Hm? We want to find that peace. And when you find that peace you will know that ahh, this is God. That peace itself is God. With it's attributes of bliss, knowledge, and existence in it's totality of manifestation, in it's totality of the personalized god. And that is all man can do, and nothing more. And that is why, that

is why we worship Jesus, we worship Buddha, we worship Krishna, because in them we symbolize the totality of manifestation of the Unmanifest. That is why Jesus said, "No one reaches God except through me." So you first have to reach the personalized form of god, the manifested form, before you can merge into the Unmanifest that is beyond all experience. Being Unmanifest, there is no experience at all. You can only experience manifestation at it's highest level, which in our terms we can call peace, undisturbed tranquil peace. Peace, shanti, shanti, shanti. Ha! Namaste.

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