

## IMPROVING OUR MINDS AND BODIES

GURURAJ: Now, let us hear some of your earth shattering, philosophical questions.

QUESTIONER: Beloved Guruji, since the beginning of our meditational practices, most of us have come around to a feeling that we need to improve our physical body, besides our spiritual and our mental aspects. And there are those around me I see struggling, trying to stop smoking. And there are those struggling to overcome the adverse effects of some foods.... And is our negative reactions to these things simply quote, "On the mind," unquote. Have we created our negative reactions, or are we going through the natural cleansing process caused by meditation? How do we change our minds... and do we simply accept these things as they are?

GURURAJ: Yes! Next question. [Laughter] Next question. [Laughter] The gist of the question really is: do we change our minds? Can you hear me in the back? Good. The gist of the question is, how do we change our minds, and by changing those minds, whatever adverse effects that you have spoken about could be done away with. Now, the answer to that would be, do not change your mind, because you cannot change your mind in spite of how much you try. Because with what are you going to change your mind? What other tool have you got to change your mind but your mind? So here, we would delve in the realm of self analysis, and self analysis if done constructively, is very good, rationalization is very good, but the only tragedy is this, that through rationalizations and self analysis people develop a greater amount of guilt. Through self analysis they start diving deep within their minds not their spirit they start diving deep within their minds and stir up all the dirt that is contained therein. Now, this also serves a useful purpose, by stirring up the dirt in the mind; therefore, all techniques that are based on the mind only, I would not recommend. Because, with the stirring up of the dirt in the clothing thrown in a washing machine, there has to be a solvent; there has to be the soap powder that will absorb the dirt. So, anything stirred up in the mind must first have a background of the spiritual force that we can draw from. So, in the process what should happen is the spiritual force must be awakened through meditation and spiritual practices, and at the same time, analysis could be got into so that whatever dirt the analytical mind draws up to the surface level would spontaneously and automatically be dissolved by the spiritual forces that is generated in you. How these spiritual forces are activated through meditation, diving deep within, and analysis also has to have an active base. When you analyze something and come to a certain conclusion, and if you do nothing about it, then those very thought processes becomes more and more deeply embedded in the mind, causing the samskaras, or the impressions, to become stronger.

So in that way you are not helping the analysis. So, you have to tackle all mental decisions, rationalizations and analysis through two ways: one, is to draw forth the spiritual energies from within one self... and that could be equated with gurushakti or grace. That helps to dissolve.... Now in dissolving the negativities in the minds, it also needs a release (coming back to your washing machine), the soap has taken away all the dirt from the clothing, but still the washing machine needs a pipe to let out the water. So, in our case we do our spiritual practices which dissolves the dirt, and the second step would be action in order to release the energies which have been built up in us. So people who do certain forms of meditation for ten to twelve hours... they do not perform the necessary physical actions; and by physical actions, I mean mental actions as well, because that is also physical action. Mental thought processes are also physical, but at a subtler level. So, two ways to tackle the problem is spiritual practices, and the other is putting into action the analysis or the results of the analysis that we have brought to the fore. So here, we are cleaning and dispensing, and that is how the mind gets clarified.

You must have heard of the word ghee which I talked about on one of the talks. Now ghee is clarified butter. Now there is a very easy way to make ghee. You take butter that you buy at the supermarket, put it in a pot and bring it to a boiling point it has to boil, boil, boil. And, as it boils, all the dirt I don't know if that is the right word but all the substances in the butter that does not make it pure butter comes to the surface and you skim it off. Then, you have pure clarified ghee, pure butter, and that ghee can last for months without it being refrigerated, while butter you can never leave outside the fridge for longer than a few days. I mean the ladies would know better, I only eat it, I don't know that much... hmmm. Right.

So, that is the process of cleansing the mind. Now the boiling process in the mind is very important. Sometimes people go through so many emotional turmoils, indecisions, and they think it is bad. They can make it bad if it is bad. They can make it bad if they want to, but in reality it is something very good... the emotional turmoils you go through is something very good. The emotional turmoils you go through is very good because if you shut up those emotions, repress them, inhibit them, then you are soon on the way to the lunatic asylum. Yes. So, let the emotions come, let them tumble around, let them do what they want to, but having the strength of awakening the spirituality within, we can stand apart from the emotions, we can objectify those emotions so that it does not effect us as it is effecting a person today.

Now, when a person allows emotions to affect them be they good or bad they also manifest themselves through the physical body, and it could take various forms of organic diseases or psychosomatic diseases. For everything in life, from the minutest atom to the man and even up to the stage of god man, the living God, everything is forever trying to express. And this expression means expansion as the entire universe is forever expanding within itself... forever expanding within itself so that the universe too is going through the same process that you are going through, for you are a universe in

miniature. As the saying goes, if you understand the workings of a grain of sand, you would understand the entire universe. So, the secret here is as the mind becomes more and more clarified by spiritual practices and right thinking and right action, then whatever emotions a person goes through, be it pain or pleasure, because man, being in an embodied state and having a mind, is ruled by the law of opposites. You are bound, that is the bondage that man goes through.

Now lately scientists have discovered that in this polarity... I mean this has been said by ancient Vedic sages thousands and thousands of years ago, but now scientists have also proven this, that you touch one end or create any disturbance good or bad or one end of the stick, the other end of the stick will feel its effect and respond accordingly. So here is a process whereby positiveness on the one side will lead to positiveness on the other side, the other end of polarity. So, that is why you have teachers telling you of positive thinking. Now positive thinking is not drowning or pressing down negative thoughts. You can't do it, it is impossible. The more you fight negative thoughts and try to turn them into positive thoughts, the more stronger the negative thoughts will become, because you are fighting against them. And that is the true meaning when the scriptures say "resist not evil." Those are the meanings behind these various injunctions deep meanings which most people fail to understand. So, there is only one thing that could be done is to use those same negative thoughts and develop a new perspective to it. Using the same negative thoughts and turning it around in such a way that they automatically become positive.

You take a jug of dirty water, now you do not need to throw out the water. The mind cannot expel the negative thoughts. But, put that jug of water under a running tap, and as the clean water goes into that jug, gradually all the dirty water will be out, and you will end up with a jug full of clean water. Now the mind works in a similar way. So as we pour and allow the mind to be permeated by these powerful spiritual energies which are within us and drawn from deep down through our practices, we'll find the dirty water in the jug transforming itself into clean water. We are not fighting with the dirty water but we're pouring in clean water all the time.

Many times people will tell you that if a negative thought of hate comes into your mind, then turn your mind to thoughts of love. If a thought of ugliness comes in your mind forcefully, think of beauty. This is easily said than done. Try it. And you've tried it all so I don't need to tell you. It is not something that you can switch on and off... and this is what psychologists and people like Norman Vincent Peale and all these guys they forget to understand. I'll challenge them on any public platform. They fail to understand this, that you just can't switch off. You just can't switch off a negative thought and get a positive thought. It is a gradual process of using the very same negative thought, and with discrimination and the spiritual force you draw upon, convert the negative thought into positivity.

Now, I have quoted this before, that you take two blocks of wood wedge shaped, put them on top of each other, and they would form an oblong; oblong... that is the word? Good... rectangle. Now at the one thin end it would have two thin ends

at the opposite sides and two thick ends. So where this is the thick end of negativity then positivity would be there as the thin end; and where there is the thick end of positivity, negativity will be at the thin end. Two wedges placed upon each other. Now the mind could never remain a vacuum. But the process of getting rid of negativity, as I said, is not switching on and off, but proceeding from the thick end of negativity towards the thin end, so automatically the rectangle has to be preserved. So, automatically positivity becomes more and more and negativity becomes less and less.

Now, there are many other methods to achieve a positive way of life. One of the methods is to have a true guru, for example, that could teach of these things. That could teach of positivity that teaches of love and hope and not the dooms day preachers. They're not needed, for they themselves are dooming themselves... right... but teach of love and hope and they are good to listen to, for they give you something to think about. In the absence of that, a teacher which you can't have everyday with you, so you revert to books of such a nature that will fill your minds with good thoughts. So you are helping yourself in that way. And when the mind is filled with good thoughts, you feel that exhilaration and there's no time for all that moping and the emotional crisis one goes through. Many times I have been in people's homes and they show me around and I would see on the bedside table a detective story or a ghost story, you know, all kinds of romantic idealism, things like that. Why not have a book there at your bedside like God Calling or something like that, something good, and before going to bed, if a few passages are read, while you are asleep they do work on the subconscious mind. If you go to bed with good thoughts or a good image in your mind of some one whose teachings you follow perhaps as a symbol... things like that. And these are all little helpful devices that can be used to turn the mind into greater and greater positivity. You see.

So, to repeat again, you just can't switch off. It is impossible! It is very easy to say you have a toothache say oh, stop thinking about a toothache, you know, get your mind busy into something else very easy to say that. It just doesn't happen. Your thoughts revert to the spot of pain always unless you are as innocent as a child. A child has a toothache and you get the child engrossed in some game that the child likes. The child will forget the toothache. But how many of us so called grown up children have that ability? So that would require primal innocence and we have lost that innocence! We have lost that naiveness that we were born with. I tell you, you were better off when you were a child than what you are now. But this is necessary, to answer the other part of your question, these are the growing pains... and people think that the spiritual path is easy. No it is not. As Vivekananda would say, it is the path of heroes where you have determination to reach the goal. As your determination... you don't have happiness in mind that I want to have wealth and health and happiness and all that. No, your mind dwells upon Divinity and all these happiness come on their own. You don't need to seek for it. For the more you seek for happiness the further it runs away from you. I quoted a passage the

other day from Nathaniel Hawthorne, I think it is, where he says that if you chase... if you try to catch the butterfly it will fly away from you; but, just sit still and it might alight on your shoulder. So that is the secret of happiness: not to seek happiness, but to seek Divinity, and in its turn, happiness and ecstasy and joy dawns upon you... where you become established within self. As the Gita would say, first be established in Self and then perform. You all know that injunction. So, our process of meditation and spiritual practices is to find that stability that is within us to uncover, unfold the real I, the Divinity, the Heaven within that is there. And once that is reached, all else is added unto thee. You see. So our search has always to be people especially on the spiritual path has to aim at That. Capital T, Capital H, Capital A, Capital T. THAT! And this I am not pulling out of my hat. Ha! [Laughter] This is what all the sages have said over and over and over again. For that is the royal road. Show me one person that has chased after happiness and found it. Not a single one in this four thousand million people we have on earth. None have found it. So, the only way to find that happiness, which is another word for positivity, is seeking in the other direction. For when we try to seek for happiness what we will find sometimes are little pleasures... not happiness. And when we find these little pleasures, be sure to know that pain will follow. The opposite will always be existent in any situation. In every situation, be it of pleasure or pain. The opposite quality will always be contained therein, for this is the law of nature. This is the law of relative nature, and all nature is relative. So, the idea would be to go beyond that, and then real joy would be found, real joy would be found in that way. You see.

So now when it comes to behavior patterns, which is also part of the question as far as the body is concerned, naturally one must look after the body, look after the body, for the body, as they say, is a temple of God. I say the body is also God, not only his temple, for the temple is God and the essence of God in its finest form resides in this temple which is also God. So you have the God in the grosser form and in the subtler form for they are one. For who could separate the body from the mind, or the mind for the spirit is one continuous whole. So this body too is holy and godly. So here, in order to keep the body well, one has to use the mind. Unfortunately, we people attach too much importance to the body and its needs. This should be a happy balance. There should be a happy balance for people who live as householders. And yet you would find that people that have gone beyond the body, beyond the grosser manifestation of God, they do not care for the body at all. Like Ramana Maharshi had cancer and leukemia. One of the greatest sages, Ramakrishna, had cancer of the throat. Jesus was a very sickly man, and very few of you know that. He had a very very hard life. There were no motor cars at that time, and he had to walk from village to village and town to town, going through deserts and forests and many times without food or water, just to fulfill his mission. Thanks to God that there were about half a dozen women around that loved him so much, that could support him for his meager wants and needs. At least he could have a cloak and something to wear, something to eat. That is how he lived. But he did not care so much for the body or else he

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would have not offered it up to the cross. Because he knew that the spirit within me is immortal; my Father and I are one... eternal, forever infinite. What is this body?

So all these great sages, and I am more versed in the Eastern philosophies than the Western philosophies, although I have made a fairly comprehensive study of these things. And then of course I don't depend on what I've read in books, it is a long time already that I've burned up the books. Speaking figuratively, you don't need books. Because the books only prevail on the mind level, not on the heart level, the level from which I personally do function, from the heart level. Good. But books are necessary for people to learn from. Let the mind be clarified, good reading is necessary, and for me reading is also necessary to see how others have presented the same truths that I present. So therefore, it is necessary for me too.

Good. Now, when it comes to the body it is only those enlightened souls that could neglect their bodies totally and not worry about the body. But for us around here, the body has to be taken care of. What is the body? What composes the body? Food. So you are nothing else as you are sitting there but food. Yes. You are food that's all. That's all that you are. Because what makes your bones, what makes your blood, what makes your muscles? Nothing but food. The shell is nothing but food. And you are putting life or replenishing the life in you with food, because that very food and water and the air you breathe contains the vital force called prana. That keeps you alive. So, the quality of food that one consumes determines the body you have.

Now there's one question always asked of me, that must I eat meat or give up meat? I says, look don't let that bother you. Eat meat if you want to. Eat fish if you want to. It's okay. When your body reaches the state of perhaps greater refinement... that is not the right word though, language is so limiting for me, I could never really express through language what I would really like to say. But nevertheless, through spiritual practices, as the body becomes more and more refined, the need for grosser foods become less and less... because the body just does not want to take it. But don't force yourself, and cut yourself off the normal habits you have, because it will have a very disturbing effect upon your nervous system if you just cut it off. But one thing is sure, if you'd like to do something really practical about it, is if you eat meat foods three times a day and I know people who do bacon and eggs in the morning, hamburger for lunch, right... then in the evening stew or a roast... meat, meat, meat, meat. Some people eat meat seven times a week. So I would suggest this is entirely up to you, and I'll explain to you in a moment why this is entirely up to you to cut it down slowly if you wish. If you eat meat seven times a week, cut it down to six. Do meditational practices, then cut it down to five after a while, then to four, then to three. The time will come where you won't require grosser foods any more. And there could come a time where you won't require food any more. But that is if you live in the Himalayas. You can't do it here, in this worldly life in this rat race and cat race that we are involved in. You know, the body needs that sustenance. But you

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would have some yogis there are not many of them left today that could live in the Himalayas and refuel themselves by just drawing in prana, that life force, and keep their bodies going. This is possible. Now, the other great effect that food has upon a person is this, that the mind, as I said before, is closely connected with the body. You cannot separate the mind from the body. [END SIDE ONE]

VOICE: Carry on.

GURURAJ: You cannot separate the mind from the body, one exists in a grosser form and one exists in a finer form. Now, when food is imbibed into the system, or put into the system, the very essence of the food has a greater effect upon the mind than the body. Now here, too, the trinity comes in; and everything has a trinity involved, everything. So here too in the mind we have the gunas that we speak about: tamas, rajas, and sattva. So if you eat predominantly tamasic food, which would include flesh food and things, then your thinking does become tamasic. If you eat rajasic food, then your thinking also assumes a rajasic quality. If you eat sattvic food, then our mind also assumes a sattvic quality, a purer quality which also helps as one of the areas in getting rid of negativity. You see, the thoughts become subtle and more refined.

There are movements in this world, and I think it is prevalent here to some measure in America, where they have four main principles before they initiate you: one is that you must become a total vegetarian; two, you must abstain from sex; three, you must abstain from alcohol; and fourth one I don't know, it's something.... Right. Ya. And they make it a must.

VOICE: Poverty.

GURURAJ: Poverty, is it? Nevertheless, could be, you could be referring to some other movement, I don't know. But it's a movement that comes from the East, from India, and these things must be practiced for at least six months before you can be initiated into this movement. Now I know some of these people from where I came from in Cape Town who belong to this movement. They are such nervous wrecks. Yes. They're such total wrecks: total celibacy, total vegetarianism, total this, total that. Now we are householders; we need these things. And anything in moderation is fine. What's wrong with it? So you go out to dinner you don't drink, you go out to dinner and over dinner with your hosts you have a little glass of wine, nothing wrong with it, because the toxins contained in the chemicals in that glass of wine can be got rid of in one sneeze. So life must be lived in a balanced way. People must not become faddists and fanatics. But, we can consciously decrease the intake of things we feel that we are partaking too much of. You see how practical it is. And, if

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as I've been saying all the time, that the profoundest philosophies are of no use if they remain on the mind level. This must be brought down to practical day to day living. And that is how we experience the living God. Because there's nothing alive but God. We are all dead until we come to the realization that this body, this mind, and the spirit too is God. Until then, we're dead. Oh yes, we are just functional beings, little pawns on the chess board moved around by the master, the mastermind which is He. He knows his plan. He knows his creation. He knows his manifestation. And he knows the place of each and every atom in this universe. And no one can move one atom from here to there without that force, without that power, without that grace. Good.

So, our food definitely has an affect on the mind. A person that is I mean, this I've made a deep study of people. I've always been interested in psychology, psychiatry, and the subjects. There is quite a vast amount of study behind me. They find that people that adhere to foods fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and nuts and things like that are of quieter mind. I have found this by experiment and testing of many people. And these tests have not only been done by me, but collaborated by scientists and others. It has been so, they have a more quieter mind, a cleaner mind; and if one does that backed up with spiritual practices, the progress on the path of evolution becomes faster.

Now, I have one principle: I would never force anyone into anything against their will. Man must progress by himself. He has to walk with his own two feet. He has to the guru can only show the way, perhaps. As I said the other day, the guru does not shine the torch upon you, he shines the torch upon the path. So you could fall in the potholes or you could skirt them. So here again, to repeat, that one has to look after the body with proper exercise to keep the body well, because if you don't keep your body well you can't perform or do your work well. Then of course those spiritual beings who do not care for the body, they're a species of their own, a different class. But normally, householders and people of the world that have so many things to do, regular exercise is good, keeps the body supple, and not only keeps the body supple but it also awakens the mind because there is a direct link between body and mind. So, many kinds of exercises are recommended. Yoga, for example, is very good. Not yoga alone, it can be combined with gymnastics and jogging, running, and all kinds of things. Yoga messages will give exercises more to the internal organs than to the external muscles. So, people practicing yoga is good, but with also a bit of running and jogging and tennis playing and cricket and football for the muscles... fine, fine. Nothing wrong. Keep the body fit. But more important is the mind to keep it alert and well tuned. For tamasic food has the affect of dulling the mind, while sattvic food makes the mind more alert, more aware. So it depends upon the person entirely, depends upon one's temperament. And as one goes deeper and deeper into spiritual practices and meditation, and which has an effect of developing awareness of the mind, and of course the most important part is the unfolding of the heart, the spirit. But it also gives one greater and greater awareness. And to have



greater and greater awareness, meditation gives the mind greater and greater refinement, to conceive, perceive the vastness, greater and greater vastness, which means expansion of awareness. See how simple it is.

So with these practices, our needs for grosser things becomes less and less and less. It is a gradual process. As a matter of fact, if you study animals, the more highly developed animals are vegetarians. They are, you know. Fine. So that is how the body interacts. That is how the body has to be kept fit: through exercise and good food, wholesome food. If I give talks like these around at McDonalds, they'd lose all their business. Here you are. So it is all in our hands. Man has the free will to do the things that he wants to do. And if a person is a very heavy meat eater, I would recommend that he change over which is not difficult changes over to lighter meats. Instead of pork and beef, rather lighter meats like lamb and chicken which are lighter meats, until he does not need that anymore too. Fish is not so bad at all. For example, in India at all the Ramakrishna ashrams, fish is allowed. It is not a heavy food. It is easily digestible, although I don't eat fish, not because I don't want to, but I just can't. It doesn't agree with my system. I just don't. Any of these foods just don't agree. And as far as I'm concerned, if food is cooked for me, I'm so sensitive... that is, if food is cooked for me without love, then it upsets my whole system. I get gaseous and bilious and things like that. You see, so how much the vibrations of the person touching the food effects the food. You see. So for example, if a wife cooks dinner for her husband with all that love that I'm cooking this for my beloved ah, that food is definitely, definitely nice. So therefore, I have a habit, I mean when I'm on trips and tours, you've got to eat and sustain yourself, so, this, that, and the other. But at home base, there are only two or three people or friends who's home I would eat at. And I get tons of invitations all the time. There's not a single worthy function to which I'm not invited I don't go. So, well I am very sensitive. So if food is cooked for me as a chore or some kind of labor, then it upsets my system. Therefore, I have to ask Doug to buy me some fruit salts cleanser. So even in the food you eat, the food must be cooked and filled and permeated with love. Because it is an offering. If I cook for you, for example, not that I can... can hardly boil water without burning it. [Laughter] But, if I have to cook food for you, there would be more love in it than food. You see. Because vibrations definitely have an effect. And the vibrations of love are always most powerful. They can be felt. When food is cooked with love, you don't have the heaviness in the stomach, you feel light, you feel nice because you now have not only eaten food, but eaten love. You see how beautiful it is.

DOUG: So, may I ask, it's better to have my meat with love than if I were to eat a vegetarian dish that's cooked without love?

GURURAJ: Yes, it has different effects there. [Laughter] Lovely. Look I am not against I mean seeing that the subject has come up I'm not against meat eating. No. The only thing is that the progress would be slower than for those that

are. [Laughter]. Nothing wrong with it. And if a person does meditation regularly, it sheds off the toxins and things. You know, I was told this by a lady who lives in Durbin, which is about thirteen hundred miles from Cape Town. And she tells me she's the head of the vegetarian society there she tells me, she says, "Guruji, have you ever been to an abattoir?" I say, "Thank God, no! I don't think I would be able to stand it."

VOICE: What's that, Guruji?

GURURAJ: Abattoir is where they slaughter... slaughter cattle and sheep and all that. What do you call it here? [Audience responds: slaughterhouse]. There we call it an abattoir, we're English, right Charles? [Laughter] Right. A slaughterhouse. And she was describing this to me so graphically. She says the cattle are herded in, or the sheep are herded in, and they are so sensitive that they could sense that they are on the verge of being killed. They could sense that, animals are very sensitive. They could sense that and then of course when they approach the guillotine she says, if you watch their faces, such a fear comes upon their face. And that very fear sets off so much adrenaline into the system, which poisons the meat to a certain extent. You know, makes the meat more toxic and that has an effect on the human system that imbibes the meat. Well, these are things told to me. Look, let me tell you that only ten percent of India is vegetarian. Ninety percent is meatarian.

So, carry on, lessen a little bit, slowly, gradually if you want to, until you reach the stage where the body can do what it wants to do and you're apart, unaffected, because the meat a person eats does not affect the spirit, and neither the vegetables. Because the spirit stands on its own, pure, and as the Gita would say, water cannot wet it, fire cannot burn it... indestructible, unstained, untainted. And that is the region where we want to dwell. Not for the half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening only, but drawing from that reservoir of energy and allowing it to permeate the other twenty three hours of the day. And then life becomes smoother and happier, without even seeking for happiness. It just becomes happier, smoother, harmonious. And then people like us gather together in that one pointedness to follow the path of unfoldment. And I can see on people's faces the love, the oneness, that togetherness, that family feeling that is there that generates a beautiful force. One stick can easily be broken as that little story goes but a bundle of sticks is hard to break. And that is how people develop. For is it not said that if two are gathered in my name I am there. These scriptural injunctions are very true but so little understood. Now how does this work: when two are gathered in my name I am there. How does it work? Because two people are combining their spiritual selves. When they think of Divinity, they allow the flow that is within themselves to mingle with the flow with the other person who they have regarded to be separate, and they find this oneness. And oneness is Divinity, without a second.

It's ten past twelve. What time do we have to go for lunch? One o'clock?

VOICE: Twelve thirty.

GURURAJ: Good. Fine, I've spoken for more than an hour.

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