

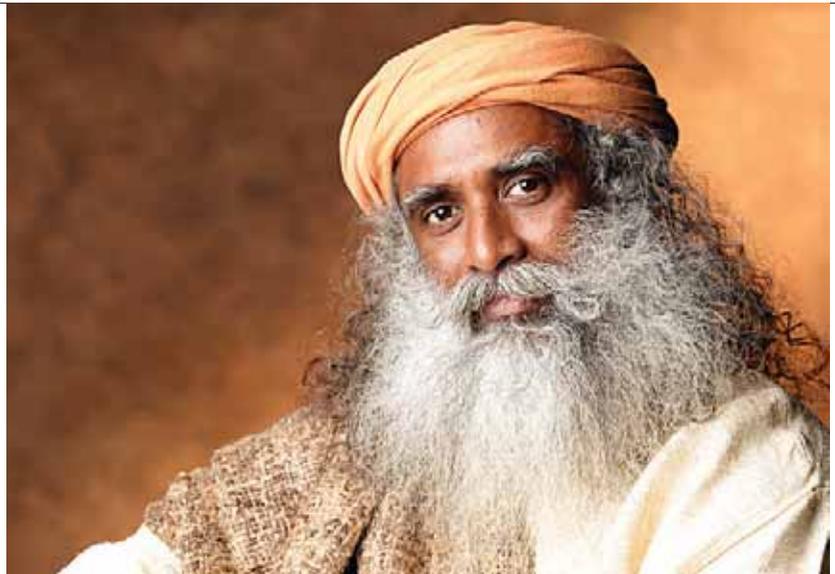
**W**E live in times when the human intellect has been given a role utterly disproportionate to its intended function. This is due to the lopsided development of this aspect of the mind encouraged by modern education.

On the one hand, it must be remembered that the intellect is crucial for human survival on this planet. You are able to discern a person from a tree only because your intellect is functional. You know that you must walk through the door, not through the wall, only because your intellect is functional. On more complex and sophisticated levels, the intellect has contributed immeasurably to human civilisation and culture.

The problem is that it is the essence of the intellect to divide. So humanity has embarked on a journey of wholesale division, discrimination and dissection. People have split everything to a point where they have split even the invisible atom. Once you allow the intellect to dominate your life, it splits everything it encounters; it does not allow you to *be* with anything totally. It is a wonderful instrument for survival. At the same time, it is a terrible barrier that stands between you and your experience of the oneness of life.

However, to counteract this, a whole barrage of dangerously misleading spiritual teachings has come into vogue. A common one is 'Be in the moment'. The assumption is that you could be somewhere else, if you wanted. How is that even possible? The present is the only place that you *can* be. If you live, you live in *this* moment. If you die, you die in *this* moment. How are you going to escape it, even if you try?

It is only your mind that can journey into the past and project into the future. And why is that wrong? If



## Essence of intellect

you are not identified with the mind, you can think a million years ago and a million years ahead. That is the fabulous faculty the mind is.

Right now your problem is you suffer what happened 10 years ago and you suffer what may happen day after tomorrow. Both are not living truths. They are simply a play of your memory and imagination.

This does not mean you must annihilate your mind. It simply means you need to take charge of it. Your mind carries the enormous reserves of memory and the incredible possibilities of the imagination that are the product of an evolutionary process of millions of years. If you can use it when you want and put it aside when you don't, the mind can be a fantastic tool. It is those who have lost control of this wonderful faculty who tell you to shun the past and the future and 'be in the now'. What is an existential reality is being delivered to you as a psychological restriction.

'Do only one thing at a time' is another popular teaching. Why would you do only one thing when the mind is a phenomenal multidimensional

gadget, capable of handling several levels of activity all at once? Instead of harnessing and learning to ride the mind, why would you want to obliterate it? When you can know the heady joy of mental action, why would you opt for brainlessness?

The science of yoga offers us a way to harness the intellect without being enslaved by it. The intellect becomes a barrier only when you keep it constantly dipped in memory. When your mind is enslaved to your past, it means nothing new is ever possible in your life. But there is a deeper dimension of the mind—the awareness or what has traditionally been known as '*chitta*'. If you soak your intellect in this dimension, it can turn into a miraculous tool of liberation. When the intellect becomes unencumbered and razor-sharp, it can effortlessly slice through the true and untrue, the real and illusory, the existential and psychological, and deliver you to a different dimension of life altogether. **g**

*Sadhguru, a yogi, is a visionary, humanitarian and a prominent spiritual leader ([www.ishafoundation.org](http://www.ishafoundation.org))*