



mystic's musings

"A book for the thirsty. It is a glimpse of an oasis for someone willing to rise above the intellect and move towards the fountainhead of knowing through the wisdom of an enlightened master."

- The Times of India

"Meeting Sadhguru has been the defining moment of my life, changing my perspective on how to look at life and its challenges. Mystic's Musings is a beautiful compilation of some of Sadhguru's essential wisdom."

- Ravi Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India

"Mystic's Musings makes fascinating, thought-provoking, inspiring reading and starts a pilgrimage to the very core of one's existence."

- D.R. Kaarthikeyan, Former Director General, Central Bureau of Investigation & National Human Rights Commission.

In this book, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, a mystic of unfathomable proportions, intrigues the reader as he dwells upon life, death, rebirth, suffering, karma and the journey of the Self.

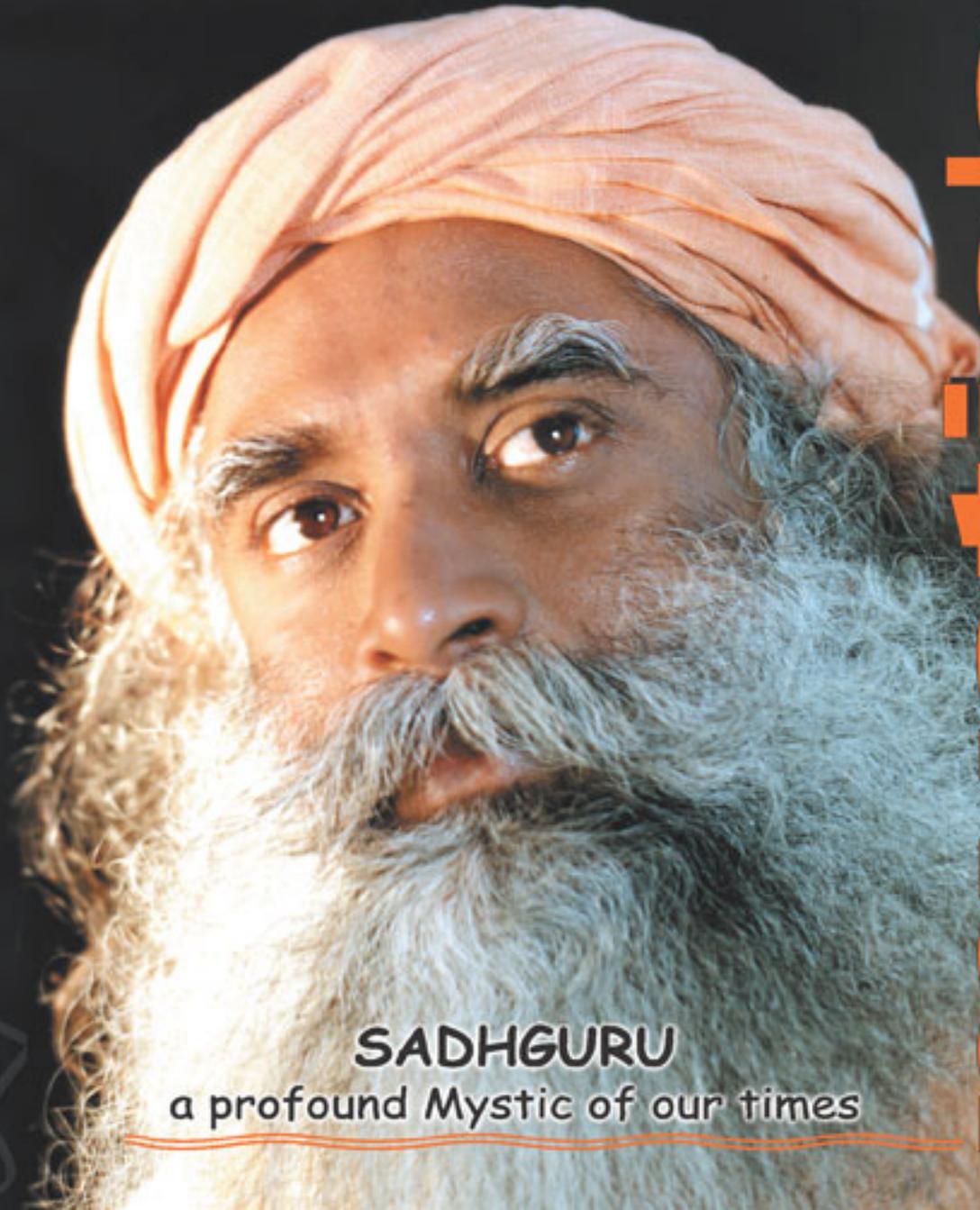
In a manner that is candid, audacious and unpretentious, he shatters conventional definitions of morality, religion and spirituality and provokes the reader to delve into spaces that are not for the faint-hearted.

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SADHGURU
a profound Mystic of our times

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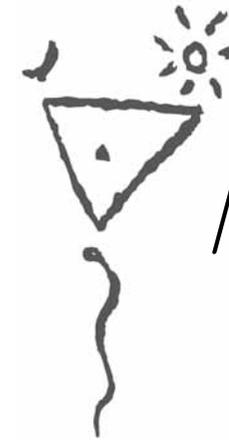
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Introduction

Even at a time when there is great versatility in people's understanding of the word *spiritual*, it is hard to fit Sadhguru into the category of a Spiritual Master in an established sense of the word. If you think he is someone who walks on water, who materializes things out of thin air, reads people's minds, looks into a crystal ball and tells people what they did and what they ought to do, you are in for a surprise. And if you think not, you are in for a bigger surprise!

For those of us who have had the good fortune of being a witness to all the contradictions, paradoxes, compassion and Grace - sparks and thunders apart - from a million other things that he is, attempting to describe him is certainly not an enviable task. Yet, the possibilities and promises for the layman and the world,

in this most blessed phenomenon of our time are so rich and plenty that it would indeed be criminal to not make an attempt, however clumsy.

I first met Sadhguru sixteen years ago, when I had just finished my schooling and was in college. A particular teacher in my school had enthralled us to seek a spiritual master - actually the more sacred version of it - a *Guru* - and be initiated by him, like he himself was. My imagination, fired by books like *The Autobiography of a Yogi* and other similar works led me to yearn for a similar esoteric opportunity. For a couple of years, the picture of a sagely being with a long, flowing, grey beard sitting under a banyan tree and teleporting a handful of disciples into the other worlds was deeply imprinted in me.

So, when I first met this clean-shaven, blue jeans and T-shirt clad man speaking flawless English and riding a motorcycle, as Sadhguru was in those days, I did not in the least think that I had met the Guru. However, the forty minutes that I spent in his introductory talk temporarily distracted me from the sage under the tree and made me look forward to his teachings and practices with the hope that it would help my near-sightedness and my studies - my most pressing problems then.

As years passed, and I got to spend a little more time with this person, unknown to me, bit by bit, little things in me began to align and orient themselves to seek the higher realms of knowing and living and to not settle for the mundane and the mediocre. Ever since then, in scarcely detectable ways, undeterred by my own undoings, Sadhguru's Grace and unseen hands continue to transform my life, taking me beyond my limitations to a destination unknown and undreamt of.

To find a real Guru, a true Guru, or the best Guru, is the most common Quest of the seeker. Especially in this culture, where the spectrum of spirituality spans from the devout to the atheist, from the pious to the *aghoras* - the gory and the unsightly, from the ascetic to the emperor, from the selfless, industrious karma yogis to the academic Vedantins; obviously, getting one's prescription right is of paramount importance.

Sadhguru's response to the predicament has been, "You cannot choose a Guru. Deepen your longing and the Guru will choose you," - a reality from his own life.

Sadhguru's ways are very unorthodox, if not wild, totally devoid of conformity and other tell-tale marks of one who has been through the *garadi*¹ of a Guru. So it was only natural to assume that Sadhguru evolved by himself, an example that one wished to emulate. Sadhguru takes utmost care as to how he deals with each person he encounters. Somewhat like the famous saint who threw a volley of stones at the visitors to his ashram taking care that not one stone ever hit anybody, Sadhguru's abrasive ways have always fostered growth. Yet being with such a person meant there was no knowing what could happen next. This always kept us on tenterhooks.

So one morning, at a satsang in the ashram when Sadhguru spoke for the first time about his Guru who graced him three lifetimes ago and the Dhyanalinga, the reactions were mixed. For many, it was reaffirmation of their secret belief and wish of Sadhguru being connected to a sacred and ancient lineage of Masters, but for clumsy novices like myself who were bumped and bounced often on this roller coaster ride with him, it was like an insurance policy. "Despite his wild ways," I distinctly remember thinking, "this man is actually accountable ..."

Of all the wonderful traits of Sadhguru, the one that endears him to one and all is that of being a friend. As one who abhors the seriousness that people on the spiritual path often get into, Sadhguru often imparts the most profound teaching with utmost nonchalance. His uncanny sense of humor not only delivers the message, but also gives the seeker the much-needed break from the monotony that often sets in.

¹ *garadi*: a traditional school of physical culture. The ever watchful Guru of the *garadi* carefully molds the character of the disciple before imparting the training that will empower him with untold physical powers.

To a disciple who lamented in a poem that he sought to become an eagle in the sky, but only managed to become a hen looking up to the eagle, pat came the reply:

*'The hen that you are, how will you know what deceptive ways Grace will descend.
It is Grace that brought you here and it is Grace that will deliver:*

I prefer the hen that looks up to the sky than an eagle that flies but always looking down.

How high is not the question, but how intense is your longing for the sky.

May you always be in Grace.

- Sadhguru

To print in the form of a book the Master's words about the sacred, spoken to carefully prepared disciples and to make it available to the uninitiated and the indifferent alike is definitely a sacrilege at Isha, where 'live transmission of the experience' is the mantra.

However, this book is not to create another mirage in the harsh deserts of life, but to spread the sacred fragrance of bounty and abundance of the presence of an Oasis of a Living Master and an invitation for one and all to come, drink, dive and dissolve into it. Those of us who have been blessed by being involved in making this book happen bow down in gratitude to Sadhguru for enabling us to make this priceless offering to the world.

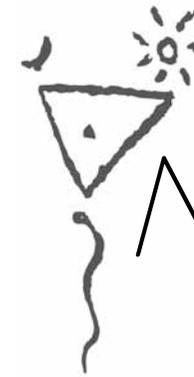
In the history and the lore we have heard of many Blessed beings who strive to enlighten the world in their own ways. Some from the solitude of the mountains, some from their palaces, some from their hermitages, some in the battlefields and some in the marketplace. Sadhguru, whose abode once was the peaks of the Velliangiri Mountains, in a symbolism that is true of His own life and work, now has descended to the foothills to inspire and infuse the seeking into the beings of the plains.

At a time when we are overwhelmed by the innumerable calls all around by leaders of sorts exhorting the masses to follow them, these verses from a poem by Sadhguru summarize what is typical of Him:

*... I was born like you, I eat like you,
sleep like you and I will die like you
but the limited has not limited me
life's bondages have not bound me
as the dance of life progresses
this space, this unboundedness has become
unbearably sweet*

*become love and reach out
become me!*

- Swami Nisarga



Note to the Reader

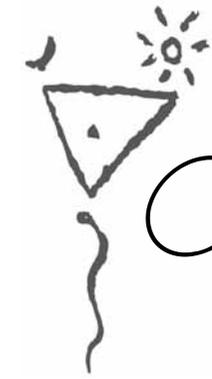
This work is a collection of the words of wisdom of the Master spoken to close disciples over a period of ten years at various occasions and settings. Covering the topics that he seldom addresses otherwise in the public, these words were spoken to foster the growth of those few who had the good fortune of being with him for a long time.

To the casual reader, it can shock, provoke, amuse, intrigue and entertain, but when approached with the openness and innocence of the one who seeks, it can start a powerful process within - a journey and a pilgrimage into the very core of Existence.

In an effort to reproduce the words of the Master in their original form, words and expressions from Sanskrit and other Indian languages used extensively by the Master are retained as such and described in the glossary at the end of the book.

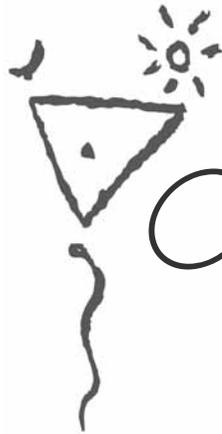
Short poems by Sadhguru adorn each chapter of the book and Swami Nisarga writes the brief introductions that follow, as well as the afterword. In presenting this priceless work we hope you will be able to be one with the Master and His Grace.

Namaste.



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Chapter - 1

Seeker's Predicament

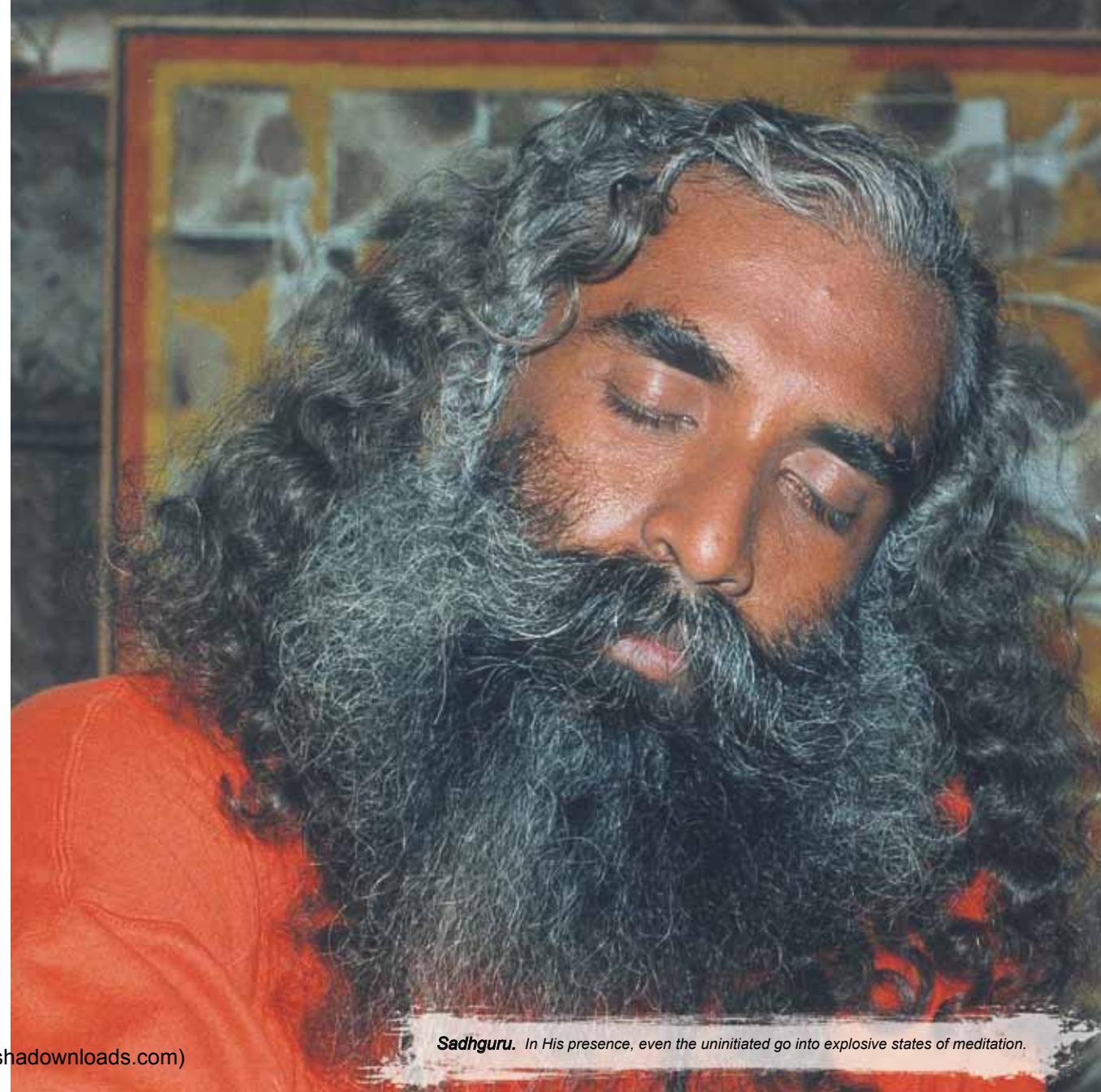


Seeker's Predicament

*From muses and mystics you did hear
Seeming to be the sounds of phantom lands*

*In ignorance's bind, life like phantom seems
Oh, creatures of surface, the depths of life will you ever seek.*

– Sadhguru





The adventurous one. Sadhguru, ever willing for adventure has had a hand in every form of sport that one can think of; from motorcycling to hang gliding, rafting to skydiving.

Knowing not where he comes from, knowing not where he is bound, the seeker's predicament is indeed pathetic. Trapped in layers of ignorance that bind more tightly than any cement or concrete, the seeker's pain is known only to those who have lived it.

Starting his journey from an obscure point in evolution, where life chooses to bestow awareness and conscious seeking in him, the seeker is confronted with a plethora of choices and uncertainties on the path. Without proper guidance and the necessary Grace, like a rudderless boat, the seeker goes in endless circles in a boundless ocean, alternately chasing some glimmer of light on the horizon and plugging those self-destructive leaks his ignorance keeps punching into himself.

Like a solitary shepherd in the mountains, lovingly resting his flock under the moonlit skies between two hard days of a long journey, whose course and outcome are known only to him, these interactions with the Master reflect a rare kind of intimacy, understanding and compassion that spring from the Master's deep urge to share and deliver.

He knows that the kindness, the insights and the wisdom, which he so generously shares, soothe the bruises and the wounds of the day and firm up the resolve of the flock to walk with him one more day. Thus, day after day, the Master charms his flock, infusing an ethereal lightness into those he can, while numbing the pain and biding his time with those he cannot.

Seeker: Sadhguru, as I walk this path, I am becoming aware of the many fears and insecurities I have within me. How do I leave these behind and move ahead?

Sadhguru: You don't have to leave your fears and insecurities because they don't really exist. You keep creating them unconsciously. If you don't create them, they don't really exist. Why you create them and how to stop creating them, that's your question. The fundamental reason why fear has arisen in you is – one way of looking at it is – in this vast existence of which you don't know the beginning or the end, you're just a little human being. Being the small entity that you are right now, naturally fear is there. It's overwhelming; there is fear and insecurity about what will happen to you.

As long as you're identified as a physical body, as long as your experience of life is limited to your physical and mental faculties, fear and insecurity are inevitable. It's just that different people may be at different levels of fear and insecurity. Today, if your life is happening well, you might have forgotten your insecurity. Tomorrow, if your life is turned upside down, you will be reminded because it's always within you. Only when a person begins to experience himself beyond the limitations of his physical body and mind, then this person can become free from insecurity and fear.

Experiencing yourself beyond the physical is what we're referring to as spiritual. When I say spiritual, don't think it is about going to a temple. Don't think it is about praying for this or that. If you look at your prayers, ninety-five percent of the prayers in the world are all about either asking for something, fundamentally asking for protection, or for being taken care of. There's nothing spiritual about it; it is plain basic survival. In most people, the very basis of prayer is fear and insecurity. If prayer exists in your life as an act only, it is obscene, being reverential towards one aspect and not being so to everything else. If you become prayerful, that's wonderful, and if you're using an act of prayer towards becoming

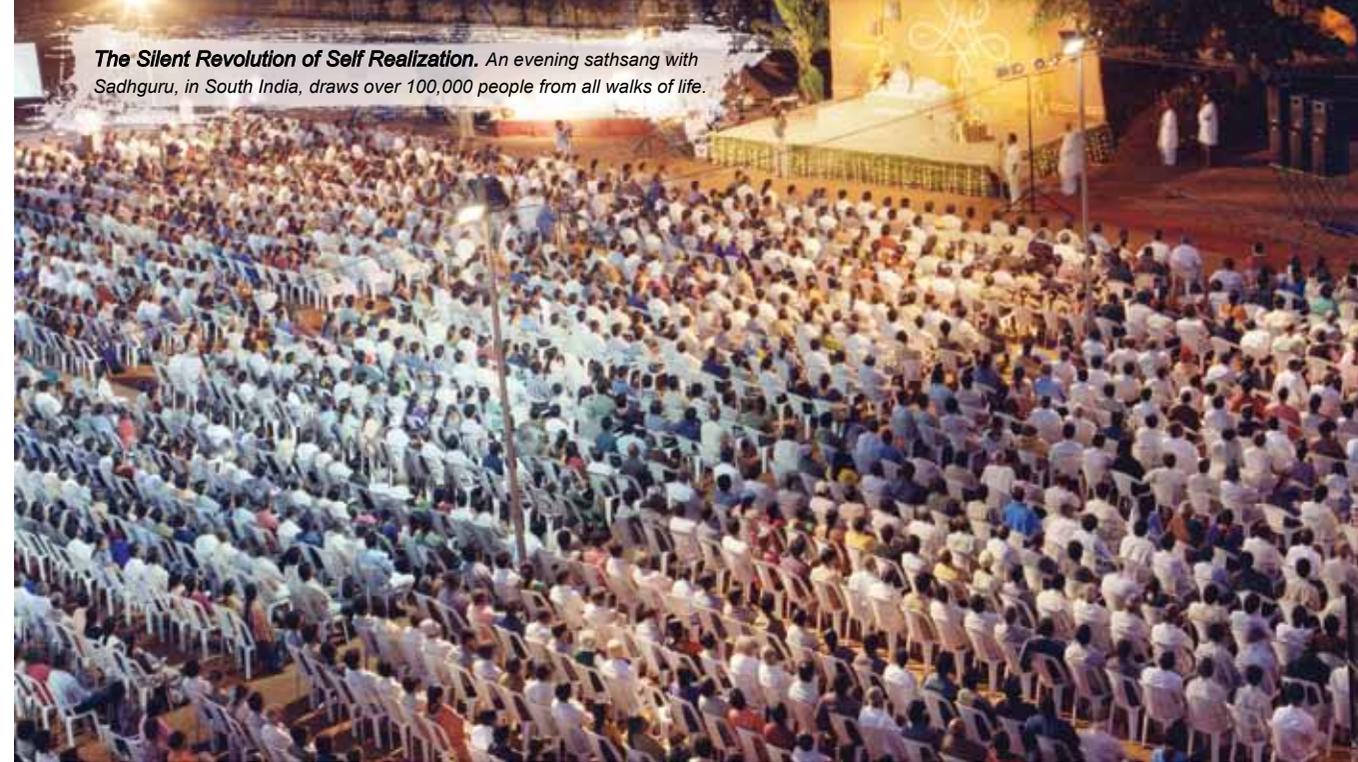
that quality, that's fine. Now if you're routing your survival through the heavens, that's very stupid; even worms and insects take care of their own survival. So when I say spiritual, I am talking about you beginning to experience that which is not physical. Once this spiritual dimension is alive, once you start experiencing yourself beyond the limitations of the physical and the mental, only then there's no such thing as fear. Fear is just the creation of an overactive and out-of-control mind.

Seeker: But Sadhguru, isn't it very natural and human to become anxious when things don't go the way we expect them to?

Sadhguru: Why are you making all your incapacities natural and human? Now if a few things aren't going smoothly in my life and if I don't become anxious about them, if I retain my sense of balance and continue to do what I have to do, would you call me inhuman? Is that what you're saying? When things aren't going the way you want them to go, that's when your capability is most needed. When you become anxious, do you become more capable or less capable? Less capable, isn't it? When you most need your capability, you're forsaking it; would you call that an intelligent way to act? So what you're saying is to live unintelligently is human; that's a very wrong idea. To live intelligently is what being human is all about.

Seeker: Much of the anxiety I experience comes through my relationships. Isn't it reasonable to expect some understanding from other people?

Sadhguru: When you live in this world, there are various types of complex interactions happening. As your field of play increases, the complexity of interaction also goes on increasing. If you're just sitting in a cubicle, working on your computer with only one other person, you need only a little understanding; but if you're managing a thousand people, you need a vast understanding of everybody. Now suppose you're managing a thousand people and you want all these people to understand you, then you're not going to manage anything. You need to understand the limitations and the capabilities of these thousand people and do what you can; only then will you have the power to move the situation the way you want it to go. If you're waiting for these thousand people to understand you and act, it is only a pipe dream; it's never going to happen.



The Silent Revolution of Self Realization. An evening satsang with Sadhguru, in South India, draws over 100,000 people from all walks of life.

Seeker: Suppose somebody is in a close relationship with me and is very important to me. Shouldn't I expect better understanding from them?

Sadhguru: That's the point; the closer the relationship is, the more effort you should make to understand them, but that's not what's happening in your case, Ram. It so happened, once there was a man who had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, with his wife staying at his bedside night and day. When he came to, in those few moments of consciousness, he motioned for her to come closer. As she sat beside him, he said, "I've been thinking...you have been with me through all the bad times in my life. When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business went down the tubes, you were there working overtime and doing night shifts. When I got shot you were by my side. When we lost the house in that legal clash, you were right there beside me. Now my health is failing, and you're still by my side.



Of the Mountains. *With a vision of the mountains in His eyes ever since His childhood, a trek to the mountains is an essential part of His life and sharing.*

Now when I consider all this, I think you only bring me bad luck!" This is exactly what you're doing to yourself and to your relationships. Somebody becomes closer and dearer to you only as you understand them better. If they understand you, they enjoy the closeness of the relationship. If you understand them better, then you enjoy the closeness.

Seeker: This is easier said than done. It is difficult to always be there...

Sadhguru: See, it's not that the other person is totally bereft of understanding. With your understanding you can create situations where the other person would be able to understand you better. If you're expecting the other to understand and comply with you all the time while you don't understand the limitations, the possibilities, the needs and the capabilities of that person, then conflict is all that will happen; it is bound to happen. Unfortunately, the closest relationships in the world have more conflict going on than there is between India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan have fought only three battles.

In your relationships, you have fought many more battles than this and are still fighting; isn't it so? This is because your line of understanding and theirs is different. If you cross this L.O.C., this Line of Control, they will get mad. If they cross it, you will get mad. If you move your understanding beyond theirs, their understanding also becomes a part of your understanding. You will be able to embrace their limitations and capabilities. In everyone, there are some positive things and some negative things. If you embrace all this in your understanding, you can make the relationship the way you want it. If you leave it to their understanding, it will become accidental. If they are very magnanimous, things will happen well for you; if not, the relationship will break up.

All I am asking is: do you want to be the one who decides what happens to your life? Whether they are close relationships, professional, political, global or whatever, don't you want to be the person who decides what happens in your life? If you do, you better include everything and everybody into your understanding. You should enhance your understanding to such a point that you can look beyond people's madness also. There are very wonderful people around you, but once in a while they like to go crazy for a few minutes. If you don't understand that, you will lose them. If you don't understand their madness, you will definitely lose them. If you do, then you know how to handle them. Life is not always a straight line; you have to do many things to keep it going. If you forsake your understanding, your capability will be lost. Whether it's a question of personal relationships or professional management, in both places you need understanding; otherwise, you won't have fruitful relationships.

Seeker: Talking specifically about the work situation, there's a company we have been approaching for business and they're taking their own sweet time in letting us know if we've got the deal. It's extremely frustrating and de-motivating. I'm tempted to just curse the client and move on. Now if our understanding encompasses the client's difficulties, we may be more at peace, but wouldn't that dull the edge we need to pursue and close the deal?

Sadhguru: If you really want the best deals in life, don't try to make deals. You must be in such a way that your client should fall in love with you in every way. This is not a trick. The deal will happen if it's necessary; it won't happen if it's not. The deal is for both people's well-being, so it must be needed by both of you. Once we live in the world, there are transactions. Some are of a personal nature, others are different.

All of them affect your life. Whether you talk to a taxi driver for a minute, or you talk to your boss, or speak to your client, husband, wife or child; every transaction is affecting your life. Now the problem with you is that you hold one transaction above the other. You involve yourself more with one and less with the other. It won't work like that. All these things are needed for you to have a fruitful life. Why don't you just fall in love with the whole situation? As long as you wish to be in that situation, make it happen like a huge love affair. Why not? That's how it should be. Only then work becomes effortless. What is it you're calling a love affair? It's unconditional involvement and doing whatever is needed. If you don't have that sense of involvement, you will always try to get the best deal out of somebody. That means you must meet the dumbest people in the world. Intelligent people will never bite your dumb deals. There once was this almost confirmed bachelor who for months had been pursuing an attractive lady and became her most devoted admirer. At long last he collected sufficient courage to ask her the most momentous of all questions. "There are quite a lot of advantages to being a bachelor," he began, "but there comes a time when one longs for the companionship of another being. A being who will regard one as perfect, as an idol to be worshiped and treated as one's absolute own, who will be kind and faithful when times are tough and hard, who will share one's joys and sorrows." To his delight he saw a sympathetic gleam in her eyes. She nodded in agreement and then said, "I think it's a great idea! Can I help you choose which puppy to buy?"

So do you see that for you to make a deal, you should only meet people who are more stupid than you? If you meet people who are more intelligent than you, there's no way to get the deal to your advantage. If you just give yourself and see how both of you can be benefited from the deal, then whenever it is possible, it will happen. Of course, deals are subject to many other conditions such as market situations, economic conditions or the world situation, but if you establish your inner way of being and are doing the best you can do, then what has to happen, according to your capability, will happen. What you can't do won't happen anyway. Even if you break your head it won't happen, but that's okay. You need not be a super human being capable of doing everything. If you don't do what you're capable of doing, that's when it's not okay, that's when you have failed. So don't worry about always pulling off deals, deals and more deals. Just learn to offer yourself, which is the best possible thing that you can offer to the whole situation. Then naturally people will take it if it's what they need.

God didn't intend this. You have become a disciple of the devil if your whole life is about making deals. The devil is always making a deal with somebody. God never made a deal with anybody. Once it so happened that a priest was walking on the street and he saw a man who had just been stabbed. The man was lying face down on the street, struggling for breath and writhing in pain. The priest had always been taught that compassion was the highest thing, love is the way, and all that stuff. Naturally, he ran to the man. He turned him over and saw that it was the devil himself. He was shocked and horrified and quickly backed away. The devil begged him, "Please take me to the hospital! Do something!" The priest hesitated and thought, "Why should I save you, the devil? You're against God. Why should I save you? You should die. The whole priesthood is about somehow banishing the devil, and it looks like somebody has almost done a good job of it. I'll just let you die." The devil said, "Don't do this. Jesus told you to love thine enemy, and you know I am your enemy. You must love me." Then the priest said, "I know the devil always quotes the scriptures. I'm not going to fall for that." So the devil said, "Don't be a fool. If I die, who will come to church? Who will seek God? Then what will happen to you? Okay, you won't listen to the scriptures, but now I am talking business; you better listen." The priest understood that this was true. With no devil, who would come to church? This made business sense. He immediately put the devil on his shoulders and took him to the hospital.

So don't go about making deals for selfish reasons. Maybe you haven't attained to your full Divine nature, but at least in this case let us imitate God for a while. God doesn't make deals. Deals will be offered to you in so many ways. In a way, everybody is just a businessman. Everybody is trying to pull off some deal: some in the market place, another maybe at home, another maybe in the temple, and a few maybe even with their spiritual process, but everybody is trying to pull off some kind of a deal. When you get a good deal, you are all very civilized and nice but if a deal goes bad, you will yell and scream. All priorities in life will change. Deals may sometimes boomerang in your face. One day Shankaran Pillai's barn burned down. Shankaran Pillai, feeling dejected and deflated, refused his lunch and set off for the bar to drown his misery. His wife, taking things into her own hands, called the insurance company and boomed into the phone, "We had that barn insured for five lakh rupees and I want my money NOW! My husband is so upset he's missed his meals!" The agent replied, "Hey, Mrs. Pillai, hold on a minute. Insurance doesn't work quite like that. We will need to ascertain the value of what was in the barn and

provide you with objects of comparable worth." There was a long pause before Mrs. Pillai very gravely replied, "Then I'd like to cancel my husband's life insurance."

Seeker: Oh my God...

Sadhguru: Who wants something of comparable worth, especially a husband of all things! (Laughs). Wouldn't you agree Joyce? There's something called *vasanas*. Do you know what *vasana* means? They are certain old qualities and flavors within you. However much you may try to pretend that you're a very nice and loving person, when deals are offered, suddenly old *vasanas* will take control of you. There's an urge to bite the deal. That's why on the spiritual path we talk about setting a goal. If you set a goal for yourself, you don't bite any deals on the side and you don't go off the path. The goal itself doesn't take you anywhere. In fact, it's a barrier. It has to be dropped somewhere in the process of growth. The goal is only there to ensure that you don't make any more deals. It's not there to get you bound. It's there to release you from the temptation of deals.

Seeker: Sadhguru, how does yoga help me perform better in this environment?

Sadhguru: When we say 'yoga', probably for many of you it means some physical postures, twisting yourself into some impossible postures. That's not what we're referring to as yoga. Yoga means to be in perfect tune. Your body, mind and spirit and the existence are in absolute harmony. When you fine-tune yourself to such a point where everything functions so beautifully within you, naturally the best of your abilities will just flow out of you. When you're happy, your energies always function better. Do you see that when you're happy you have endless energy? Even if you don't eat, if you don't sleep, it doesn't matter; you can go on and on. Have you noticed this? So just knowing a little happiness is liberating you from your normal limitations of energy and capability.

Now yoga is the science of activating your inner energies in such a way that your body, mind and emotions function at their highest peak. If I don't sleep for two days, you won't notice any difference in me. I can still have a full day of activity. When your body and mind function in a completely different state of relaxation and a certain level of blissfulness, you can be released from so many things that most people

are suffering from. Right now, you come and sit in your office, and you have a nagging headache. Your headache isn't a major disease, but it takes away your whole capability for that day. Just that throbbing takes away everything. With the practice of yoga, your body and mind will be kept at their highest possible peak.

There are also other dimensions to it. When you activate your energies, you can function in a different way. As you're sitting here right now, you consider yourself to be a person. You're identified with many things, but what you call as 'myself' is just a certain amount of energy. Do you know, modern science is telling you that the whole existence is just energy manifesting itself in different ways? If this is so, then you're also just a little bit of energy functioning in a particular way. As far as science is concerned, this same energy which you call as 'myself' can be here as a rock, lie there as mud, stand up as a tree, bark as a dog, or sit here as you. Everything is the same energy, but functioning at different levels of capability.

Similarly among human beings, though we're all made of the same energy, we still don't function at the same level of capability. What you call capability or talent, what you call your ability to do things in the world, your creativity, is just a certain way your energy functions. This energy, in one plant it functions to create rose flowers, in another plant it functions to create jasmine; but it's all the same energy manifesting itself. If you gain a little bit of mastery over your own energies, you will see, things that you never imagined possible, you will do simply and naturally. This is the experience of any number of people who have started doing these practices. It's the inner technology of creating situations the way you want them. With the same mud that we build such huge buildings, initially people were building little huts. They thought that's all they could do with it. With the same earth, haven't we built computers? What you call a computer is dug out of the earth. Do you understand what I am saying? We thought we could only dig mud and make pots or bricks out of it. Now we dig the earth and make computers, cars, and even spacecrafts out of it. It's the same energy; we have just started using it for higher and higher possibilities. Similarly, our inner energies are like that. There is a whole technology as to how to use this energy for higher possibilities. Every human being must explore and know this. Otherwise, life becomes very limited and accidental; you get to do only what you're exposed to. Once you start activating your inner energies, your capabilities happen in a different sphere altogether.

Seeker: Master, there are so many different kinds of yoga. How do I know which type of yoga is best for me?

Sadhguru: Right now, the only things which are in your experience are your body, your mind, and your emotions. You know them to some extent, and you can infer that if these three things have to happen the way they are happening, there must be an energy that makes them happen. Isn't it? Without energy all this can't be happening. Some of you might have experienced it; others can easily infer that for these three things to function, there must be an energy behind them. For example, this microphone is amplifying the sound of my voice. Even if you don't know anything about the microphone, you can infer that there's a source that powers it. So these are the only four realities in your life: body, mind, emotion, and energy. These are the only four realities. So whatever you wish to do with yourself, it must be on these four levels. Whatever you wish to do you can only do it with your body, your mind, your emotions or your energy. If you use your emotions and try to reach the ultimate, we call this *bhakti* yoga; that means the path of devotion. If you use your intelligence and try to reach the ultimate, we call this *gnana* yoga; that means the path of intelligence. If you use your body, or physical action to reach the ultimate, we call this *karma* yoga; that means the path of action. Now if you transform your energies and try to reach the ultimate, we call this *kriya* yoga; that means internal action.

These are the only four ways you can get somewhere: either through karma, gnana, bhakti or kriya – body, mind, emotion, or energy. These are the only four ways you can work with yourself. “No, no, no, I am on the path of faith. I don't need to do anything else.” Is there anybody here who is only head - no heart, hands and energy? Is there anybody here who is only heart - not the other things? You're a combination of these four things, isn't it? It's just that in one person the heart may be dominant, in another person the head may be dominant, in yet another person the hands may be dominant; but everybody is a combination of these four. So you need a combination of these four. It's just that, only if it's mixed in the right way for you, it works best for you. What we give for one person, if it's given to you, may not work well for you because that person is *so much* heart and *this much* head. Only when it's mixed in the right proportion it works for you. That's why on the spiritual path there's so much stress on a live Guru; he mixes the cocktail right for you, otherwise there's no punch.

There is a wonderful story in the yogic lore. One day, one gnana yogi, one bhakti yogi, one karma yogi, and one kriya yogi were walking together. Usually these four people can never be together, because gnana yogi has total disdain for every other yoga; it is the yoga of intelligence. Normally, an intellectual person, a thinking person has complete disdain for everybody else. A bhakti yogi, full of emotion and love, thinks all this gnana, karma and kriya yoga is just a waste of time. Just love God and it will happen. The karma yogi thinks that everybody is lazy and that they have all kinds of fancy philosophies; what needs to be done is work. One must work and work and work. The kriya yogi just laughs at everything. The whole existence is energy. If you don't transform your energy, whether you long for God or you long for anything, nothing is going to happen. So they can't be together, but today they were walking together. Then it started to rain. They were in the forest and it started raining. They started running, looking for shelter, and there they found an ancient temple which just had a roof, no walls on the sides. In the center, there was a Linga. So these people went inside the temple for shelter. The storm became more and more furious and it started blowing in torrents. The fury of the storm was getting into the temple so they went closer and closer and closer to the Linga. There was no other way to be because it was just blasting them from all sides. Then it became very furious. There was no other place; the only way they could get some protection was for all four to hug the Linga. Suddenly they felt something enormous happening. A huge presence, a fifth presence was there. Then all of them said, “Why now? For so many years we have pursued You and nothing happened; why now?” Then Shiva said, “At last the four of you got together. I have been waiting for this to happen for a long time.”

Seeker: How does one always remain young in spirit, Master? Life somehow seems to be catching up with me.

Sadhguru: A seeker is always young. Whatever the physical age of the body, it doesn't matter. You have to be eternally young. The day you become old, it's over. Anyway, how can you become old in spirit? Only by carrying the past, isn't it? If you carry sixty years of burden with you, you're sixty years old. If you don't carry anything, you're like a newborn. The physical body may develop limitations, but the way you are has no limitations. It simply has no limitations. You are this many years old or that many years old simply because you carry that many years of garbage with you; and this whole thing about celebrating

birthdays and remembering that you're that old is making sure that you fix milestones. I used to have a farmhand working for me, a very simple chap. His innocence was most touching. He was nearly fifty years old. If you would ask him his age, he would say, "Maybe I am twenty – twenty five." He had no sense of years. He didn't know. When the rain came, he would plough, then he would throw the seeds. When food came, he would eat. Life went on like this for him and he didn't know his age. Maybe he was unintelligent, but when an intelligent person lives like this, he becomes a sage. He was a saint, not knowing, not carrying the burden of the past. Moment to moment, just see the weight of the load you're carrying. Your face has become squeezed up. The burden is evident. It's there and it shows.

Seeker: Sadhguru, all of human life on this planet is always revolving around good and bad. The very basis of right and wrong is good and bad, but I have heard you say many times that there's no such thing as 'good' and 'bad'. Can you speak more about this, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: People always believe that they are good and somebody else is bad, isn't it? That's the only way they can carry on their missions in the world. Right now, we're on this part of the Himalayan road, from Pipal Koti – actually, from Rudraprayag to Badrinath¹ – they are making it into a two-lane highway. Every year, so many people die here because of landslides and vehicles going off the road. Driving here on these curves, one mistake and you've had it. When you travel here, you give an enormous responsibility to the driver. Just one mistake of his and you're finished. Every year, so many people make those mistakes. If you don't know this, when you see a small heap of scrap metal on the side of the road, it's usually a salvaged vehicle. I can tell you this now since we are at the end of the trip (laughs).

So they are laying a two-lane highway. Is it good or bad? It's good, because people like you can travel in more comfort, with less risk; so that's good. Today, a lot of people may tell you to stop building roads, disfiguring the mountain, and disturbing the creatures on this planet. So for them, this is bad.

¹ Badrinath : a place of pilgrimage in the Himalayas.

Just because those in power, or the majority, think something is good, it won't become good. Maybe it would be better to take a person as an example. Now whatever a terrorist is doing, is it good or bad? You tell me.

Seeker: It's bad.

Sadhguru: Why? What is he doing?

Seeker: He's the source of suffering for many people.

Sadhguru: You can look at it that way. In the same situation, who is good and who is bad all depends on which side of the border you're on. Is India good or is Pakistan good? You're on this side of the border, so obviously Indians are good; Pakistanis are evil. If you were on the other side of the border, you would be arguing for the other side. It all depends on what you're identified with. Accordingly, you have your 'goods' and 'bads'. You can't think beyond that. Your thinking itself is limited to your identifications. Your identifications are always limited, so your thinking is also limited. With this limitedness, why do you get into this nonsense about deciding what's good or bad? The moment you say something is bad, you can't stop disliking it, can you? Can you say, "This is a bad person, but that's okay with me"? On the surface you may say it, but if he gets closer to you, though initially it is just dislike, later it will turn to hate. The moment you identify something as good or bad, you're just dividing the world.

Now somebody comes and says they want to walk the spiritual path. So I tell them, "Okay, stay here for a week. Let us see what we can do." Then he says, "No, no, Saturday is my cousin's birthday; I have to go. I can be here only for three days." So I ask, "All right, but how far would you like to go with this?" He says, "All the way." Then I say, "So in three days, all the way? Anyway, you do these few things when you're here, then let's see what to do next." He will say, "No, I don't like this." Then I tell him, "Okay you give me a list of things that you like. We will do only that." He sits there, thinks seriously for a while and writes down half a dozen things. So I ask, "What? In this vast existence, you like just about half a dozen things, and with that, you want to be spiritual?" Where is the possibility?

The moment you create good and bad, you're dividing the world. Once you divide it, where is the question of inclusion? Where is the question of yoga? Where is the question of becoming one with everything? Where is the question of knowing truth? Your division is because of your stupidity; it has got

nothing to do with reality. Good and bad are always according to your ego requirements. If you go by this, you enslave yourself to the dualities of life; you divide the existence. So the question of turning spiritual never arises.

Seeker: Sadhguru, most of the time, in any given moment, I don't seem to know what's required of me. I am clueless in thought, emotion and action. How does someone truly know what's needed in any given moment?

Sadhguru: If you are sitting here as a bundle of thoughts, opinions, and emotions, you will never know what's needed. Most people are like this. What you call a human being is not really a being; it is just a bundle of thoughts, emotions, and opinions that were gathered from elsewhere. If you're in this condition, you will never know. If you simply sit here as life, you always know. You will always know what's needed. You don't need to think about it. You don't have to educate yourself to know. Any human being who is able to sit here as life will simply know what the other beings around him need; but if he's sitting here as a bundle of thoughts, emotions, and opinions, his whole perception will be distorted and he will never know. He will always come to the wrong conclusions about life. When you don't know what's happening with life, you will only drive your life with your thoughts, opinions and emotions. This can lead to a whole calamity within yourself and, if you're a powerful person, to the whole world. This is happening right now. People are highly opinionated, isn't it?

Seeker: Master, there seems to be a correlation between being open to possibilities and being educated. Being educated seems to impose a kind of logic which prevents openness. There also seems to be an inverse correlation between economic prosperity and being open to spiritual possibilities. Is this so?

Sadhguru: Let me put this question the other way around. The question that's being asked is: "Do uneducated people have better possibilities of spiritual Realization, or do poor people have

more possibilities of being spiritually Realized?" Am I right? Fundamentally, the word 'education' means to cultivate your mind, to constantly imbibe new possibilities; that's what education means. Now can education become a barrier for these new possibilities? Yes, it can. Anything can become a barrier, for that matter. You already mentioned yours, education and wealth. Not just education and wealth - power, fame, position - anything can become a barrier, but anything can also become an access. It's not education or wealth which can open or close you; it's just how you relate to them. If you have seen education itself as a possibility, which it is - in certain dimensions of life education is a possibility which opens up many vistas - it's the same for wealth. If you have money or wealth it can open up many possibilities in the world around you and also within you. Let's say one day you want to stay at home to meditate, so you don't go to work. You can do that. If your condition is such that you have to work for every meal, then that possibility is closed. Even if you wish to meditate, your hunger will take you to work. Now you have money, so if you wish, you can sit; that possibility is open.

So are education and wealth, in some way, working as a barrier for spiritual growth? It could be, and it is so for a lot of people, unfortunately. This is not because there's something wrong with money or with education; it's just the way you relate to them. If you have seen them as a means, then there's no problem; but if your whole sense of who you are has come to you only from your qualifications, or from your bank balance, then yes, education and money are barriers, not only for your spiritual growth, but also for your physical and mental well-being. If you're seeing them only as a means, only as tools for access, then they are in no way barriers. In fact, they can be very useful because they bring you so much understanding and so many possibilities and in many ways your life is more free. So by themselves they aren't barriers, but you can make them into barriers if you wish.

Seeker: It has happened that they have become barriers, if you look around the world. Why have they become barriers? That seems to be a statistical observation today.

Sadhguru: If you go by statistical comparison between cultures, between the East and the West, the distinction isn't just in terms of education and wealth. There are a whole lot of cultural differences. For example, if you take India and the United States, India is considered to have a strong spiritual tradition and the U.S. is seen as an economic culture. Everything is fundamentally economics in that culture.

So the difference is cultural. Individually, if you look at them, there isn't much difference. Here, there's a whole spiritual tradition, so people have taken to that possibility because it has always been available. There, when a young person grows up – let's say when he's twelve or thirteen years old – all that he knows is what's available to him in that culture. So that's how he goes. It takes a little extra intelligence for a person to look beyond what's available in his culture.

In India, whether you like it or not – even if you have an allergy for it – spirituality gets lobbed into you one way or the other. In your families, in the society, wherever you go, some of it will touch you. It didn't happen because you were longing for it. Naturally, it touches you because it was everywhere. So if you look at the statistics, it's not fair to just take economic well-being and educational background as the basis; there's a whole cultural equation. The reason why there's so much spirituality in this land and has always been is because it has always been a very stable culture. It has remained steadily in one place for thousands of years. If any culture remains steadily in one place for many years, then definitely spirituality will become a huge force in that land; but when the cultures are new, naturally economics will be the most important aspect of that culture.

Wherever the culture is very old, the mystical will be very active. Wherever the culture is new, economics and social well-being will be most active because those are the first things that you will attend to in your life. Only when your economic and social needs are well taken care of, then – as an individual or as a culture – you start looking beyond for other dimensions. Until this is taken care of, you will only be thinking of settling these things. You can't talk spirituality to a man who is hungry on the street; it won't mean anything to him. There are many spiritual aspirants, *sadhus* and *sanyasis* who have chosen to be hungry, they're different. But you can't talk mysticism to somebody who is hungry due to life situations. In many ways, a culture which is new is hungry, hungry for life and well-being, because the people still remember the difficulties that their forefathers had gone through to build it.

A culture that has matured for thousands of years has developed an understanding of renunciation, giving up well-being and taken up walking on the street in pursuit of Realization. Nowhere else in the world will you see this, but in India we know it. So many kings and emperors have dropped their kingdoms – their wealth, their comforts, their pleasures – and walked the streets as beggars. Nowhere else in the world has

such a thing happened. It can only happen in a culture that has been steady for a long period of time, where slowly other dimensions of life have become more important than physical survival. So your psyche is going beyond survival instincts. When survival is still important, all you seek is well-being.

Just now, Doug was mentioning this: it seems that in India people aren't bothered by danger. It's not that they aren't bothered about danger. It's definitely true that the longing to survive, the need to survive and the conscious urge to survive are stronger in the West than here. Here, if death comes, people take it so much more easily than people there do. Since Western cultures are young, the survival instinct there is strong. After ten thousand years, they will also be this way, because by then physical well-being and social well-being won't mean as much to them; they will be looking for other dimensions. It's unfortunate that cultures have to take so long to realize this. Generally cultures may take a long time, but individuals need not take that long. Out of your intelligence you can see it right now, and the spiritual process is always individual.

Seeker: Master, will the teachings and practices you've given to me help me break my rigidity and flower?

Sadhguru: I am glad you understand that it is your rigidity which has prevented your flowering. You can become rigid in many dimensions. During the practice of *yoga asanas* you realize how rigid you are physically. It takes a little more awareness for you to know the rigidity in your mind and emotions. Somebody who's very rigid in his thoughts and emotions believes that he's perfect because he doesn't allow room for any other way of looking, thinking, or feeling. When you meet this man, you think he's pig-headed, but he thinks he's perfect. Similarly, there can be rigidity in your energy. For someone whose energy is very fluid, the very first day of the simplest *yoga kriya*, and the energy will start moving and transforming, whereas for another person, even after practicing it for a long time, nothing seems to happen. This simply depends on how malleable the energies are. The rigidity in all these dimensions isn't really separate, they're all interconnected. The rigidity in one dimension manifests itself into the others.

On Patanjali's ¹ path, yoga is a system where it doesn't matter what kind of a fool you are, what level of unawareness you're in, what kind of karmic bondages you have; there's still a way for you. If you're willing to at least bend your body, you have already broken one *karma*². If your forehead touches your knee, then you have broken a physical karma. This is not a joke; it's quite an achievement for a person who has never done it before. This simple limitation would have increased with the passage of time. Even the little flexibility that's there in you today will become less as time goes by. A day will come when you're totally rigid, both physically and mentally. This is happening to everybody. Look at your own life; see how flexible you were at the age of ten or twelve, both physically and mentally. At the age of twenty, the flexibility is considerably less and at the age of thirty, most of it has gone. Not only physically; mental rigidity has also set in very severely as you progress on this path; it's not progression, rather it is regression. Life is just a regression for most people. They are not growing; they are going backwards. Even what little assets they have come with, they don't grow; they just go backwards, unfortunately. Whatever advantage you were born with, you haven't enhanced it; you have only taken it backwards.

Every advantage that comes to most people only ends up as a curse. Money, influence, comfort, intelligence become only curses to most people. They actually come as blessings but you turn them into curses. You're not using your intelligence to reach the peak of your consciousness, to become peaceful and loving. You're using your intelligence to drive yourself crazy. For example, you think it would be very nice to be a peasant. They seem to be very simple. It looks romantic to you, but if suddenly you become a peasant, you would curse the whole world. If you were sent to earn your living for three days, everyday you would curse the whole world. When you have that, you dream of this and when you have this, you dream of that. Maybe you call it romantic, but it's just plain stupidity. It destroys life.

Anybody who goes against life, anybody who goes against that which is the source of life is plain stupid. He's an utter fool, and all I am asking of you is to watch, just watch whether you are for the Creator or against the Creator, every moment in your life. If you see this, everything will be settled. If you can't

1 Patanjali : considered the father of yogic sciences.

2 *karma* : referring to past action, the cause of all bondage.

think of your Creator, just think of me. Every action that you do, just see whether you're for me or against me. If you do this, things will be settled. Your mind will be settled if you just do this *sadhana*.¹ It needs diligence. Otherwise, it's not going to happen. With every moment and with every breath, just see. If you have the diligence to see, this *sadhana* is enough for you. It will clear up your mind totally. Tomorrow you will be ready for *samadhi*.²

Seeker: It sounds so easy, so close, but is it really that simple, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: It is actually very simple, but because of you it has become extremely complicated, because of your personality. The path by itself is not complicated. The complexities that one encounters on the spiritual path aren't because of the path. The complexities are only there because of the mess that is your mind. The path is very simple, but because you're there, it becomes extremely complicated. Nothing moves within you. You become rigid, as if rigor mortis has set in. You need the Master's Grace to quell the madness of your mind. If you allow this, then the path is too simple, as the path is the destination. If you simply sit here now, everything will pulsate with the existence. If you just sit here, your whole being will pulsate with the existence. There's no other way to be, unless you make an effort to be some other way. How can you be away from the existence in which you live? How is it possible? It envelops you in every way, inside and out. Nobody can ever be away from it. It's just that you're doing everything to stay away, maybe unconsciously. Just stop doing that and everything will be okay. Now just to get you to stop doing all that nonsense, we have started you on these kriyas.

In one way if you look at it, all of this isn't necessary. If you ask J.K.³ how long to hold *kumbhaka*⁴ to get *Enlightened*,⁵ he will just throw you out of the place, because it is not so. It is true that this is not so, but unfortunately it's needed right now. You have kept your energies suppressed to such an extent,

1 *sadhana* : a device, a spiritual practice.

2 *samadhi* : of equanimity, a merging of the subject and the object.

3 Jiddu Krishnamurti : twentieth century spiritual master of great repute.

4 *kumbhaka* : breath retention during yogic practice.

5 Enlightened : though used loosely in contemporary jargon, the term enlightenment here and elsewhere in this book refers to an advanced stage of the spiritual evolution of a being usually resulting in a deep experience of oneness with the existence.

the mind has become so oppressive that it suppresses life to the point where nothing moves except what's needed to support the ego. Your energies are moving only to the extent that is convenient for your ego; a little more energy and the ego will burst. The moment energy rises within you, everything is dissolved. The ego knows it very well. That's why it has kept it suppressed. If you don't have any energy, then again the ego will become very weak. When all energy is cut off, the ego will feel very weak and it doesn't like that. So it just allows the amount of energy which supports and feeds it well. If the energy becomes too much, the ego will be shattered. If *Kundalini*¹ begins to rise, everything will be shattered and nothing will be left. You will be just a force merging with everything around you. You won't have a will of your own anymore. Since you're not willing to surrender your will, we're prodding you through this sadhana to provoke your energies.

That's why the path of asana and kriya. Since you're not able to do it by yourself, just activate creation itself in a certain way. If it begins to move, it settles everything. It's like a flood. Have you ever visited a place just after a flood? If you have seen the place before and after, the change is incredible. People think it is sad; people generally think it is a tragedy. Yes, naturally it is a tragedy if you see what it leaves behind or what it takes away – your homes, your crops or your centuries-old world are wiped away in only a few hours of fury. So your sadhana isn't about getting somewhere. It's just a way, a method to unleash a flood so enormous that it wipes away your petty creations and leaves you as the Creator intended you to be.

Seeker: Master, can anybody get Enlightened by practicing simple yogic practices? Are there other means towards Enlightenment? How will I know if I become Enlightened? How does one identify an Enlightened being?

Sadhguru: Senthil, what do you mean, can anybody get Enlightened? The question is whether every human being is capable of Enlightenment. If you're capable of ignorance, you're also capable of Enlightenment, isn't it? An animal isn't capable of ignorance, please see that. An animal is never ignorant,

¹ *Kundalini*: Cosmic energy which is depicted as a snake coiled at the base of the spine.

nor is it Enlightened, but a human being is capable of being ignorant. You are, aren't you? If you're capable of ignorance, you're also capable of Enlightenment. The question is, when will it happen to you?

Now you ask me, "How will I recognize it? If I get Enlightened, how will I recognize it?" When it happens, there will be no question about it, because it will pervade every dimension of who you are in such a glorious way that there will be no question about it. There will never be the question, "Am I really Enlightened or not?" There will be no such thing; it won't give room for any such doubt. It depends on what your idea of Enlightenment is. There are many Enlightened beings, but you will never know who they are or where they are, because they never declare it. They have no need to do that. Only when a person has to do a certain type of work, he goes through the shameful process of declaring his Enlightenment, because people can't see it. He has to declare it and by doing so, many people will question and probe it. Many people will say it is false. It's quite a shameful thing to declare I am Enlightened.

Most Enlightened beings will never declare it, and you will never know. You need not know whether somebody is Enlightened or not. What's your problem? If it happens to you, it's wonderful. Whether somebody is Enlightened or not, what difference does it make to you? So, "If it happens to me, how will I know?" You don't worry about that. If you're capable of missing such an event, Senthil, don't worry, I will tell you.

Seeker: Sadhguru, I can accept you as my Guru, but to become one with all the participants here...

Sadhguru: The ego is always like this; it is not seeing how to be in tune with what's surrounding it. It's always trying to stick out. Among people, you want to stick out like a sore thumb, and a sore thumb always hurts. Maybe it sticks out, but it hurts. Sticking out always hurts. Once, after returning from London, Shankaran Pillai – who was decked out in new tight denim pants, body-hugging satin shirt and was sporting a new hairdo – went to the nearest park to show off his new look. He approached an old man who was sitting on a bench and sat down next to him. The old man stared at Shankaran Pillai, looking him up and down. His stare finally focused in on the six inch multicolored spikes coming out of his head.

The spikes were all flashy colors – orange, purple, green, yellow, blue and pink. Shankaran Pillai looked over at the old man and said sarcastically, “What’s the matter, old timer? Never done anything wild in your life?” Without batting an eye the old man replied, “Well, I got drunk once and had a date with a parrot and I was just wondering if you were my son.” These days, you’re making a whole culture of trying to stick out. The more exclusive you try to be, the more excluded you’re getting from life and existence, hence the hurt.

The more you try to be special, the more you get hurt. Just be, just melt and become part of the wind around you, the earth around you, become a part of everything. You’re here only for a while. At least when you’re in a place like this, where nobody is going to trample on you, let your defenses down. Let it be. Forget your comforts, your sensibilities, your likes and dislikes. Leave all that nonsense and be with me. Live like the snakes. Just crawl around, eat and if you feel like curling up under a tree, do it; at least for a few days, it’s worthwhile. I am telling you, a lot of barriers can be removed by going out and living in nature. That’s the reason why, when one begins a spiritual journey, they go to the Himalayas or to some other mountain. By merging with nature and living there, the ego will be destroyed, just by doing that. That itself is half the sadhana.

I met some *Naga Babas*¹ in a place just above *Kedar*,² in the Himalayas, and stayed with them for two days. They had run out of money; they were hungry and cold. For two days I took care of their food and spent time with them. I only had on a little woolen in-shirt and a T-shirt. Fortunately, somebody had given me a shawl which was a big blessing. If the shawl hadn’t been there, I would have frozen. It was so cold that even my insides were shivering. I could literally feel the stomach bag shiver. These Babas are naked sadhus who aren’t supposed to wear anything that is stitched. They wrapped something like a shawl over themselves, because it was too cold. They weren’t even wearing footwear and they didn’t even have money for tea. They were saving the little they had to go to the *Kumbha Mela*.³

1 *Naga Babas* : people belonging to a certain spiritual sect in North India, who wander naked with vibhuthi smeared on the body even during the coldest winter seasons of the Himalayas.

2 *Kedar* : short for Kedarnath - a spiritually powerful place in the Himalayas.

3 *Kumbha Mela*: a major spiritual and religious festival. A nexus of cosmic energy every twelve years which finds confluence. Every one hundred forty-four years is referred to as Mahakumbha Mela. A gathering of sages and mystics.

That was more important for them than having something to eat. When I asked them what their sadhana was, they said they were doing nothing. They just roam about like the nagas, the snakes. Their Guru had told them to spend twelve years in the Himalayas and then he would initiate them. When one is so uni-directional that he can wait twelve years, being oblivious to harsh weather and difficult living conditions and just wait for his initiation, reaching the highest can’t be denied to him.

There’s not much for the Guru to do; whether he has something to give or not, these guys will get it anyway because of the very way they have made themselves. They don’t need a Guru. If a man has that much patience and stamina that he can stay twelve years, not knowing when or if the next meal is going to come, just waiting in that terrifying cold in a queue to be initiated, he will get it anyway. That itself is a sadhana. The Guru knows that if he initiates someone the same day the person comes to him, it will be wasted on the man. He will waste the whole opportunity. So he sends hundreds of people to the mountains like this every year. Maybe only some of them make it – many run away because it’s a very difficult path. It’s very tough to stay in such conditions. When a person is willing to do this, whether he does it or not, that’s not the point. If he’s willing to go to any length, that man gets it. It is that simple.

When people are calculating how much to give, and how much to hold back – like Jesus said, “You can’t serve me and Mammon at the same time.” When Jesus used the word ‘Mammon’, he used it to be almost synonymous with pleasure. So Jesus said, “You can’t serve me and Mammon at the same time. If you want to be my disciple, you have to leave Mammon.” If you’re seeking comfort – it’s not that you shouldn’t be comfortable; it’s not about having comfort or not, but if you’re seeking comfort, forget it. This path is definitely not yours. What he said is very true.

The very purpose of putting a group of people together like this is to help you understand your likes and dislikes, which are the basis of all the limitations you have set for yourself as a person. Take a careful look at your personality; you will see it is just a bundle of likes and dislikes. These likes and dislikes have risen from your enslavement to the duality of life, which is the bedrock of ignorance. The very word ‘yoga’ means to transcend this duality and know the oneness of existence. Various devices have been used to help people go beyond this enslaving duality. You like or dislike something simply because somewhere

deep down you have identified it as either good or bad. Whatever you identify as good you can't help liking and whatever you identify as bad you can't help disliking.

This is why the Hindus created the personality of Shiva as a complex amalgamation of all that's beautiful, ugly, terrible, pleasant, good and bad. They made him the highest so that in accepting him, you accept everything. You transcend the limitations of your likes and dislikes and in turn, your dualities. Here you see all the varieties of human beings. If you can accept the likes of a few of those who are here, who are going about like self-appointed messengers of the Divine, you have transcended. Do you see the weirdest of the weird? (Laughs, pointing toward a few participants).

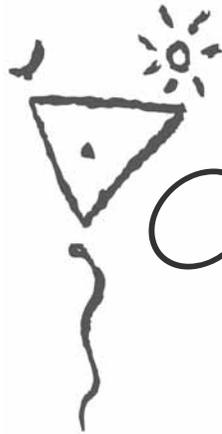
Seeker: If I am on the spiritual path, how do I deal with family members or friends who are making it very difficult? There seems to be a fine line between comforting them and telling them to grow up, or just to open their eyes, or even to just bang them on the head. How can I deal with a situation like this? They're not in total acceptance even though they say they are, and they continue to demand too much out of me.

Sadhguru: Everyone has to handle the reality according to their choices. For whatever you may choose, there is a consequence. Don't be in a fool's paradise and believe that you can get away without paying a price. For everything there's a price. The spiritual path is never in anybody's way. It's just your choices about where you go, what you do, how much time you spend here or there that cause the conflict or the disturbance. This is not new; it has always been so, whether you're going to a party or the cinema. Someone in your family wants to go to the mountain; you want to go to the beach. The same problem will be there. Isn't it? So it's not about your spiritual path, it's just incompatibility with where you want to go, and where you don't want to go. Your spiritual path isn't in conflict with anybody. The conflict is in your choice about doing things in your life. These need to be handled as usual; you see how much of what is most important to you and act accordingly so that life goes on.

If your spiritual longings are taking you completely away from the situations in which you live, then there will be a certain amount of disturbance and conflict. Not really conflict, because conflict happens between two people; there will be some disturbance. It is always bound to be there, unless people around us are so mature that they're willing to accept things they can't understand, which is rare. Now, the question comes from a certain sense of guilt and discomfort. "What am I doing to the other members of the family?" These kinds of thoughts may come, but enshrining one's limitations isn't a great thing to do, either for you or for the other person. It may be painful to break your limitations. However painful it is, it's worth breaking them. How do you do it? If you can administer it gently, it's wonderful. Sometimes it can't be done so. It's not that it can't be done gently, but the other people refuse to make it gentle. They feel that if it happens gently you will escape the guilt of doing it. Somewhere there is an intention that, if you get to do what you want to do in your life, you must suffer. So they will do everything to see that you feel guilty about it. On the day Gautama, the Buddha, who was just seeking – not even knowing what, but just seeking – left his kingdom, his wife and an infant child, and like a thief, walked away in the night, probably his family saw him as the most terrible man, but how glad we are that he did those terrible things, aren't we? If he hadn't done those terrible things, the world would have been poorer, and those people who lived with him wouldn't have been any better. Anyway, maybe they would have found some other misery after some time.

Seeker: So when you're in a relationship, that's a commitment too. The family and children come first. You have spoken about commitment, and how people should be committed. So why doesn't this hold true on the path of spirituality? When it comes to spirituality, doesn't it seem like you're abandoning your family and walking away from social structures just to pursue your spiritual interest?

Sadhguru: For your spiritual path, there is no need to walk out of anything. It's just that, when the family structure is made in such a way that it doesn't allow for any other possibility except for breeding and brooding, then it becomes a breaking point; not otherwise. In what way is spirituality breaking up any family? The family breaks up because of its own intolerance, because of its own immaturity, because of its own limitations that people are trying to set upon each other; not for any other reason, not because of spirituality.



Chapter - 2

With the One Who Knows



With the One Who Knows

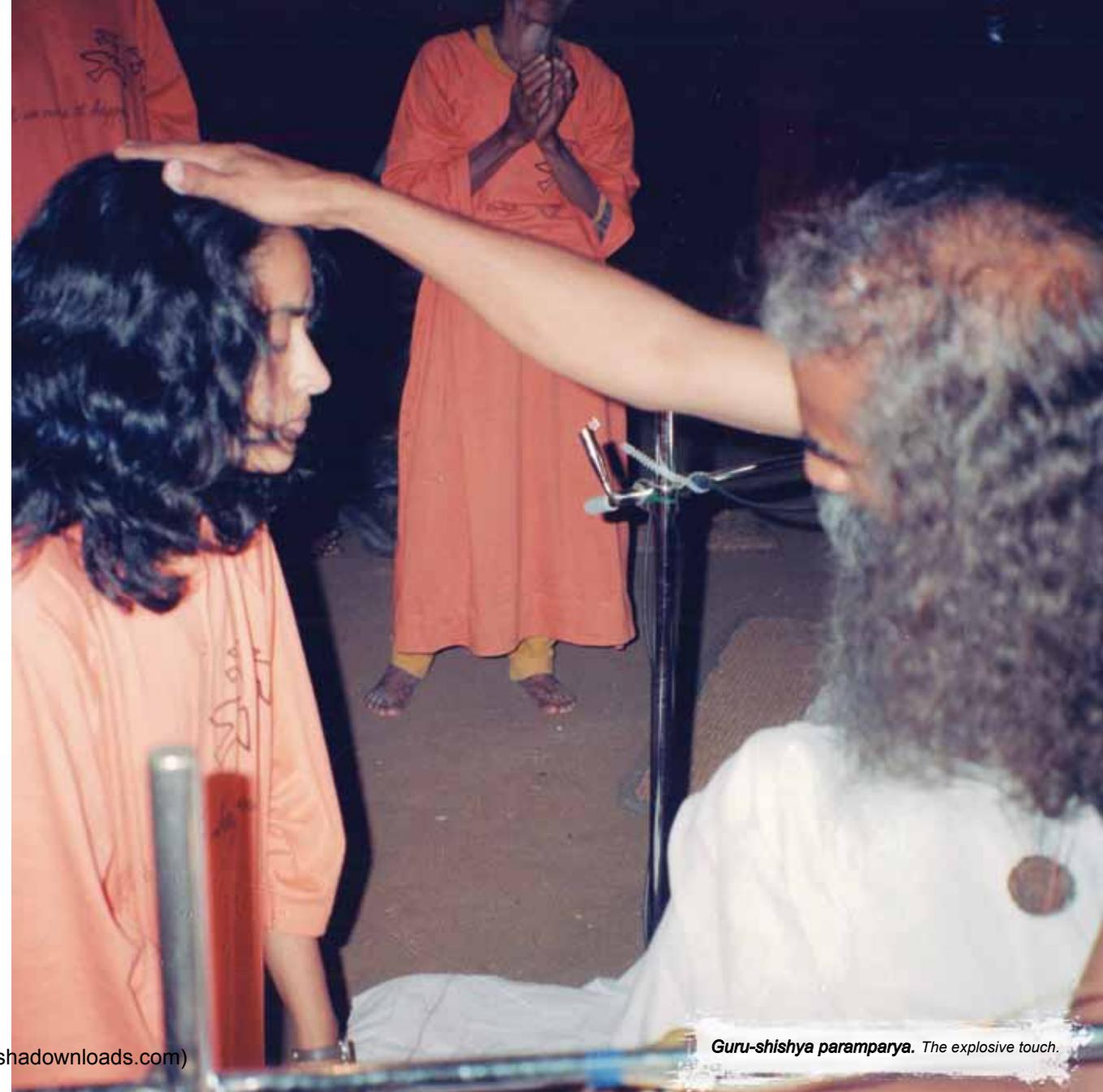
*Life and death live in me at once
Never held one above the other*

*When one stands far, life I offer
In closeness, only death I deal*

*In death of the limited
Will the deathless be*

*How to tell the fools
Of my taintless evil.*

– Sadhguru





Joyful romp. Ever playful, Sadhguru brings out the child in everyone.

After seeking enters a being, sooner or later, one arrives at a point where one desires the guidance and the grace of the One Who Knows, One who has been through this uncharted but inevitable metamorphosis. Blessed are those who seek One, more blessed are those who actually encounter One.

However, relationships repeatedly defiled by imposters and charlatans and one's own inner defilement stand in the way of simply sitting at the Master's feet, just receiving.

Sanctified in the tradition as the *Guru-shishya parampara*, being with the One Who Knows is eternal and the most sacred of all relationships. Having been a forlorn seeker himself in a previous lifetime, refusing to bow down before any human

form, Sadhguru, in his present lifetime plays the role of the One Who Knows.

Dispelling fears and misgivings of bondage and exploitation, Sadhguru answers questions paramount to the seeker – How do I choose my Guru? Is a Guru really necessary? How best do I make use of the Guru? And then, in case I don't make it in this lifetime, will he see me through in another lifetime?

Secure under the wings of the One Who Knows, the seeker has the luxury and space to explore within, and the entire Existence too, with the kind of reckless abandon that the Creator Himself would envy.

Seeker: Like many people around me, I am seeking the ultimate Truth and the right guidance to experience it. Sadhguru, can you tell us how a person finds his Guru?¹

Sadhguru: If you are truly a seeker of Truth, Truth cannot hide from you. It is in the lap of Truth that you have happened. Most people who claim to be seekers are only seeking security, solace, or the fulfillment of their desires. Their life is just an expression of their greed and fear. Do you see, many people in the world shamelessly claim to be God-fearing? They are not God loving, they are God-fearing. Unless you have fallen in love with creation, how can you love the one who created it? Like Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor." Everyone can love God, as He does not demand anything from you, but to love the one next to you right now costs life. It is a challenge. It takes much courage to do this. 'Love thy neighbor' is a very good device for breaking your illusion of loving the one who is in the heavens.

A genuine seeker, a person who develops an urge within, will always find his Guru. He may find it in a man, in a woman, or he may find it even in a rock. He will definitely find it somewhere, there is no doubt about it. When any being calls or really yearns, the existence answers. If the thirst within you is strong enough, God always answers.

Seeker: Sadhguru, is spiritual transformation possible without the help of a Guru?

Sadhguru: The reason why there has always been so much importance and stress in this culture on a Guru is that without a Guru there can be no spiritual process. Without him you cannot transform yourself.

¹ Guru : lit. *dispeller of darkness*. A spiritual Master.

How can you transform yourself into something that you don't know? You can only work towards what you know, isn't it? How to work towards that which you don't know? To do that, you have to be so aware as to be able to see the natural tendencies of every aspect of energy in the existence, which is moving or is tending to move in a certain direction. You need to understand this and start moving that way. Only a person who has that sense of awareness can walk without a Guru. Others, if they walk without a Guru, they will just flounder and flounder and flounder.

Through the Grace of the Guru, in a moment, with just a clap of his hands, things can happen. Sometimes certain situations or certain energies can also do things to people. In these situations, they are acting like a Guru – maybe not in the physical form, but that is what is happening. Transforming yourself into that which you don't know, or that which you have not tasted, is logically impossible. I am not ruling it out totally. It is possible, but only for very few people. For most people, it is remote. It is not impossible, but it is very remote.

Seeker: Is that why so many people seem to love you to the point of madness, since you are the one who can show us the path? But really, Jaggi, personally for me, Realization or no Realization, I just love you very much.

Sadhguru: I didn't know that. That is news to me...I am the most insensitive man in the world, aren't I? (Laughs). Most of the time, people's longing towards the Master is unconscious. Why such crazy longing is unconscious is because when the energy level deepens, it is neither mental nor emotional. It is just like a plant, not longing for water emotionally or mentally – it is a deep energy longing. If there is a drop of water there, the roots will find their way to it. There is no emotion in it. There is no mind in it. It is a different kind of intelligence. It knows where to go. It knows where its life is. Wherever you place it, it will just find its way. Not even by mistake will it go this way or that way. It will not go any other way because it has a deep longing. This longing is not thought, not emotion, it is just life's longing for itself. That is how it is.

Seeker: So, did we have an unconscious longing to find you? I mean, to find a live Guru? You know, unconsciously were we always searching for you and that's why we are here? I'm not sure how to ask this...

Sadhguru: If you have difficulty in forming the question itself, it must be a very difficult question! (Laughs). Yes, naturally, everything moves in that direction.

Seeker: Now that we are accompanying you on this trip to the Himalayas,¹ and some of us even have the privilege of riding on this bus with you, I am wondering, what is it within us that has created the opportunity to have access to you? What is the difference between people who have access to a Guru and people who don't?

Sadhguru: Now John, you would like to believe that you are the chosen few? Do you know chosen people have always been eternally in trouble? I must tell you a joke. Once, the leader of the Jewish community on planet Earth, Joshua Goldberg, had his annual dinner appointment with God. So he went to dinner, and God arrived and sat down at the table with him. A few breadcrumbs were served for dinner. God said Grace and started eating. Joshua just sat there. God looked at him and said, "Joshua, my son, why don't you eat?" Joshua said, "Father, can I ask you a question?" God answered, "Okay, my son." Joshua asked, "Dear Father, are we really the chosen people?" God replied, "Why, my son, why do you doubt? Yes, you are the chosen people." Joshua asked, "Father, are we really, really, the chosen people?" "Yes, Joshua. Why are you beginning to doubt? You are the chosen people." Then Joshua asked, "Dear Father, are we really, really, really the chosen people?" "Yes, yes, yes, you are the chosen people!" Then Joshua got up from the table, straightened his jacket and said, "Why don't you choose somebody else for a while?"

¹ Himalayas : Every alternate year, Sadhguru takes Isha meditators to the Himalayas to allow them to experience the mystical dimensions of these sacred mountains.

So why are we here? Okay, if you're just talking about being on this bus, yes, you are the chosen people (laughs). Why does one person get access to certain possibilities? Let us look at it this way: I want you to look at me not as a person, but as a possibility. Why certain people get access to certain possibilities and others don't, that is the question. Now, this is not really true. It is not that only certain people get access to this possibility. Anybody who is truly longing, always has access to this, to this energy, which you right now refer to as me. Everybody may not have access to the person; that is obvious. It is always so.

Maybe I have to tell you this at this point; I have initiated more people I have not met than people I have met; that is the reality. When someone really longs, I initiate them, wherever they may be, when the longing is deep enough to receive me. When someone's heart cries out to know, I am always there. So as far as the possibility is concerned, this possibility has happened to a lot more people who have never seen my face, but if you're talking about the person, that is not of great significance. Maybe it is a pleasure, or, if you're too close around me, like Doug, it could be a torture putting up with me and my demands – like holding this microphone on this bumpy bus ride, finding my sunglasses or locating my favorite Frisbee (laughs). If you're sitting two seats away from me, it can be a pleasure. If you're right next to me, it can be a torture.

Being with a Master is never comfortable, because He will break all your limitations, all your ideologies. So knowing the person or having access to the person can be on many levels. Having access to the possibility is only because of the longing that one may have. There are many people who have close access to the person, but don't know anything about the possibility yet. Knowing the person is of no great significance. Probably it has been put forth by many people in many different ways. Gautama¹ put this forth very beautifully. When somebody asked about Ananda Tirtha, who was constantly with Gautama throughout his life and remained unenlightened until the end; when people asked, "This man is with you all the time. Why has nothing happened to him?" In answer, Gautama asks, "Can a spoon taste the soup?" So that says it all. You need sensitivity, to be life sensitive, not ego sensitive.

¹ Gautama : referring to the Buddha.

Seeker: Sadhguru, a lot of Enlightened beings have a few people who are close to them. Is it because they are able to relate to these people better, or is it because of some past life connections?

Sadhguru: If a person is Enlightened, he can relate to anybody. There is really no problem about relating with whomever he is with at that moment. He can absolutely relate to any person, be totally with anyone. It is very possible for him. Even if the other person is not willing, he can still relate to him and his limitations as well, and still be okay with him; but he might choose, at certain times, to be with certain people. One reason is, he has a specific objective. He has a plan as to what he wants to do. For that he needs certain people.

For example, Ramakrishna Paramahansa¹ was deeply attached, or at least it looked like he was deeply attached, to Naren, who was later known as Vivekananda. People around Ramakrishna resented this. Many other people who were always around him, hankered to be with him. Vivekananda was a truant disciple to begin with, overly logical and arrogant. The others were so much more dedicated than he was, but still Ramakrishna sought Vivekananda. Every other day Vivekananda would get angry with Ramakrishna and walk off saying, "I will go back to my college, I have got work," and Ramakrishna would go searching for him in the town. This man had never really been in town, but he would go with tears in his eyes, search for him, and then beg him to come back. All the other disciples of Ramakrishna would be deeply offended, "Where is the need for our Guru to run behind some hothead, begging him to come? All of us are here, he can teach us. Why does he go after this fool?" Not only his disciples, but also his wife Sharada was deeply offended. She would ask, "Why Naren all the time? So many people are here, waiting for you. Why do you go after this Naren?" But Ramakrishna knew, without Naren things would not happen. His message would not be taken to the masses. He knew, today these people could be on, tomorrow, they could drop off.

Once this comes up in the society, all sorts of rumors will go on. "Oh, maybe it is like this. Maybe he is his real son, his biological son. Maybe it was hidden from us. Maybe he is homosexual. Maybe he is

¹ Ramakrishna Paramahansa : an ecstatic saint of the mid-nineteenth century.

seeking this young boy in some other way.” These kinds of things happened around Ramakrishna, but the reason why he was seeking Vivekananda like that was, he saw him as the ideal carrier for his message. He knew, if Vivekananda was not sufficiently prepared by the time he leaves, then his whole work, whatever he had to offer to the world, would die with him; he knew that. So he acted almost like Vivekananda's slave. Many people thought it was totally undignified for him to behave like that with Vivekananda, but he went about like this because he had a clear objective, and he had no problem as to how to do it. He just did what worked, that is all.

Another aspect of it is that there could have been energy bonds, not emotional bonds. It is not a question of being able to relate better. There could have been a certain energy bond, which people could not understand. That is, this Enlightened being may not have been able to operate as a physical person without the support of somebody else, maybe one, two, or even ten people. He may have been just using them to keep his physical body going, in many ways. Otherwise, he would have been incapable of sustaining his physical body by himself. There could have been energy bonds. Or it is just that people think that somebody else is closer, simply because for everything that has to happen, this person generally depends on one person, because he sees this person seems to have much more sense and a deeper understanding of everything that is said and done.

This was very beautifully demonstrated by Ashtavakra, an Enlightened being. Ashtavakra was the Master for Janaka Maharaj, who was a king. Janaka was a Realized being himself, who continued to be a king because Ashtavakra told him, “You must continue to be a king because people deserve an Enlightened king.” Whenever Janaka found a break from his administrative and royal duties, he always came to Ashtavakra, who was in a hermitage in the forest, and spent time there, as any other disciple. He sat there with the other disciples. All the other disciples were monks. They were *bhramhacharis*, fully dedicated to Ashtavakra. Their Master's word was everything for them. Their life was for him to do anything he wanted with them. Janaka was a king; he was married with many wives, and as a king he had many social involvements. He had everything, and more, than any normal king.

So there was resentment with the other disciples who were monks. First of all, someone had taken this step of being a monk or a *bhramhachari* out of his own choice, because he sees it as a suitable

path to walk upon. He sees that by going into a family situation, his spirituality or his spiritual urge could completely evaporate. Just to see that his spiritual thirst is not evaporated, he is willing to forgo certain things in his life and pursue his path in totality. He need not have any resentment towards someone who has all this and still pursues spirituality, but unfortunately he does, because somewhere, there is resentment that they are enjoying all the luxuries that life has to offer and spirituality as well. They are having the best of both worlds, so there is resentment.

Ashtavakra treated Janaka with utmost graciousness, so that too was bothering them. Though they have accepted him as their Guru, somewhere, the logical mind asks these questions: “Is it only because he is a rich man, a king, that he is being treated better than us?” This question was always there, and now, there are so many emotions that are involved in this, which is a daily affair for every Guru. This was not just for Janaka, but for Janaka it was dramatic because he was a king. I am sorry to say that this is not so just for Ashtavakra, but for every Guru, this is an issue in his life. For Ashtavakra, it was such a dramatic situation, because he was handling a king and monks together. The difference and the distinction between the two was too vast and too stark.

One day, they were all sitting in a *sathsang*,¹ and one of the disciples asked this question: “Why is it that you're always treating Janaka special and we are not being treated the same way?” Ashtavakra just smiled and said, “I will answer this, but not now.” They felt even more hurt, because they thought he was avoiding this question because Janaka was there. Ashtavakra waited and at a certain time he engineered a situation where somebody came running and said, “The monks' clothes! The monkeys are taking them away!” These clothes were nothing except loincloths and maybe just a piece of cloth to wrap around their shoulders when it got cold. These clothes were hung outside to dry. When Ashtavakra was still speaking in the *sathsang*, the moment they heard the news, all the monks got up and ran to save their clothes. Then they came back and sat down. Ashtavakra just continued to speak and after some time, one of the king's messengers came and blurted out, without even asking the Guru's permission whether he can speak or not, he just blurted out that the king's palace was burning. Janaka just looked at him and asked him to get out of that place. He said, “How dare you enter this place without the Master's permission? Get out!”

¹ *sathsang*: in communion with Truth, a congregation of seekers

Then Ashtavakra waited for a moment and said, "His palace is burning, and he got offended that his man interrupted my speech, but you people, just your stupid clothes, which are not worth anything to anybody, the kind of clothes that would be thrown away – for that, without even looking at me you ran after them. That is the difference! And that is why the difference."

Janaka's way of being was such that, though he was an Enlightened being and a king as well, a rare combination, sitting at his Master's feet was the highest Grace in his life. He was always aspiring for this opportunity and still sat there, which most people would not do. So such a man being treated special was very natural. You don't carry rocks in your hand the way you carry a flower. You carry a flower with a different sense of gentleness and give a different priority to it, isn't it? When you want to offer something to God, you don't offer a rock. I am not saying a rock is any less; it is just that a flower is more evolved. Accordingly it gets treated. This goes for people also. This does not mean you don't care for a rock. You care for it, and you do more work with it because it needs more work. That is different, but definitely the way you handle it is different. If you don't have this distinction, then you will be a fool with life. In the name of equality, you will destroy all the beauty of life.

Seeker: Sadhguru, can a relationship between the Master and disciple in previous births be carried on for lifetimes?

Sadhguru: Yes, definitely. Generally, this is the only relationship which can be carried for lifetimes. The work continues. There have been husbands, wives and lovers who have come together again for lifetimes because their love was so strong, but that is very rare. Generally, it is the Master-disciple relationship which gets carried for lifetimes. All the other relationships come together for convenience. Once it is over, it just breaks apart. To know this, first of all you need to come to an understanding as to what a relationship is, why there are human relationships. Now, you have formed various types of relationships in your life, some for your emotional needs, physical needs, financial needs, social needs, psychological needs, or a few just for comfort; in many ways you have formed relationships. Whatever kind of relationship

you have formed, fundamentally it is concerned and based only with the body. When the relationship is based in the body, once the body drops, the relationship just evaporates. That is the end of it. Only if a relationship transcends physical limitations – when I say physical, I am referring to the mental structure and emotional structure also as physical – only when you in some way transcend the physical limitations, there is a possibility of this relationship extending beyond lifetimes or across lifetimes.

So generally, it is only the Master-disciple relationship which extends this way, though there could be a few examples of other relationships going beyond physical limitations. This is because the Master-disciple relationship continues always. Even if the disciple has no idea of the Master's being, the Master's business is only with the disciple's being. This relationship is always energy-based. It is not emotion-based, it is not mind-based, nor is it body-based. It is only energy-based. An energy-based relationship does not even realize whether the bodies have changed or not over lifetimes. It continues until the energy reaches dissolution. It just continues. For the energy there is no rebirth. It is only the body which is reborn. The energy just continues as one flow and accordingly carries the relationship. So definitely, this is one relationship which is carried on because it is purely an energy-based relationship.

Seeker: Sadhguru, are there people here with you now that were connected to you in your past life?

Sadhguru: Yes. Many people who were connected to me in some way over three hundred and seventy years ago, not only those who supported us, but even those who persecuted us, who tormented us, are somehow mostly in Coimbatore today. All of them are not our meditators, but they are with us. It is like that. That is the way life functions.

Why all these people land up in one place is – why is the breeze blowing in this direction and not the other way? Do you know why? See, the whole momentum of the wind in the world is just this: the sea is a place where the humidity is high, so the pressure and the density are also high. When the land gets heated up, the density is low. Wherever the density is low, there the wind rushes. Then it rains, and then that becomes high density. Then the wind moves backward, as the wind movement is always towards low density. Wherever there is emptiness, everything rushes there. So when the karmic bag is empty here

(pointing to himself), all those other bags of karma¹ which have been one way or the other connected to that for so many lifetimes tend to slowly move towards that direction, knowingly or unknowingly. Mostly unknowingly, they slowly move in that direction, because for all of them there is a possibility now. When one bag empties, everybody has the opportunity to become empty.

Sometimes it also happens that a nearly empty bag comes in search of past karmic connections to empty itself. That could be an opportunity for both beings to dissolve that aspect of the karma, but if one is not alert to their inner situations, these opportunities could be completely missed. Someone here among you knows this firsthand. Let us ask Bharathi how she missed one such situation.

Bharathi: A few years ago, before the Dhyanalinga² consecration, Sadhguru specifically told me that my father of my Raigarh birth, who was in his final stage of spiritual evolution, would come and visit me. He described this person, his attire, and his demeanor, and said such a person would visit me in thirty days. Many times, I had seen such a person in certain states of meditative clarity. Sadhguru went on to say that he was within one hundred to two hundred kilometers away in the southerly direction, that he would find me within thirty days, and when he comes I should ask him in and serve him a meal. By doing this, I would be able to dissolve some of my unfinished karma which had been hanging on for a long time. About two weeks later, towards mid-morning, the security person at the gate sent word that there was a man asking to see me. When I asked what he wanted, I got a message that he just wanted to see me. Engrossed in my routine, I said that I was not willing to meet any strangers. After some time, I came to know that the man was still waiting at the gate, insisting on seeing me. In irritation and curiosity I stepped out of the house and saw this person standing with a certain dignity, obviously not expecting anything from me. He looked at me with an unusual sense of tenderness, which I ignored. I said, "I don't know who you are and I want nothing to do with you," and turned my back on him. Later, suddenly, in a moment of clarity, it dawned on me: this was the man of my vision and also of Sadhguru's description. I immediately contacted Sadhguru who was traveling, and the first thing he said was, "He came and went. He has emptied himself." Then I knew how, in my unawareness, I missed such an opportunity.

¹ Karma : referring to past action, the cause of all bondage.

² Dhyanalinga : a powerful energy form consecrated exclusively for the purpose of meditation, at Isha Yoga Center.

Sadhguru: Whatever the past karma, it is like this: let us say, until the age of thirty you earn ten million rupees. Now you can either squander it or make it grow. In the past, you might have created some riches within you. In this life you may either add to it or squander it, but definitely some quality of that will be there in your life, though in unconsciousness it may go to waste. So because of your spiritual practices, *sadhana*, those riches may manifest now in terms of material comfort, like a good house, the right kind of atmosphere, or maybe good people around you. In spite of all this, you may not make use of it and just become complacent. That is the whole cycle. Why I repeatedly say that the whole game is like the *Snake and Ladder* game is: you climb the ladder and there you're happy. The very comfort that comes out of it, that comes out of good karma, may make you complacent and that is it, down through the snake you go. Then once suffering comes, you start looking and grow. You may squander it and go down again. This is the way of the fool, wasting his energy; but someone who has sufficient intelligence in him should even take each breath as a step towards growth. It is very much possible. Like how she shared, the reminder comes. Even after reminding a person hundreds of times, if he still does not wake up, if he is still lying down in his comforts, what can we do? He will be lost. He has to suffer once again, and then maybe seek growth.

This whole spiritual process is not happening to even one percent of the population. For all others, when things are going well they are laughing, and when things go bad they are crying. There are very few people in the world who, whichever way it is, are okay and balanced. For them nothing is a great benediction, nothing is a problem. Everything is just another life situation through which they can become free. The rest of the people are all the type who will go the way the situation pushes them. They are like cattle. You have evolved into a human body, but otherwise there is no real difference. Between the way animals live and generally the way people live, is there any great difference qualitatively? Maybe quantitatively there is a lot of difference. There is more variety to your activity; you drive a car, you watch television. All that nonsense you do, but qualitatively, where is the difference?

If the difference has to come, it can only come with awareness; there is no other way. This awareness need not be just dry. When it is filled with love, this awareness just multiplies. Generally, mental alertness

is mistaken for awareness, but awareness is a far deeper dimension than just mental alertness. When awareness arises within you, love and compassion will be the natural follow-up. When you're very loving, you are very aware; can you see that? Now, if you're not able to relate to things around you, to people around you, it is not because there is something wrong with you. You're either a little misplaced, or out of your own foolishness you got misplaced in this life.

Once you become aware, you have to make the little arrangements that are needed to put yourself in the right place. If you know you're a coconut, then you should have fallen here at the foothills, not on the mountaintop. It is of no use; you can't grow there. You have to roll down somehow. If you have to roll down, maybe you have to lose something. If the coconut has to reach the foothills, maybe a man has to pick it up and bring it down. Maybe he will peel it and take off the skin. You don't know what you will lose. Something will be lost. The man who carries it is bound to take off something. Life is like that. For whatever you do, you have to pay a price. Let me tell you a joke. A man sat in a train traveling from Bristol to London, with a baby in his arms. Halfway through the trip, another man with two big suitcases got on the train and sat down next to him. The first man said, "Those two suitcases look just like mine; are you a salesman too?" "No," the other man replied, "I'm on the way to the airport. I'm flying to Greece." Then he asked, "So what are you selling, anyway?" "Condoms," the first man replied. Shocked, the other man said, "Condoms? And you're taking your son with you while you sell condoms?" "Oh, this is not my son; it is a complaint from Bristol."

Without a price, you get nothing. You better know this. Whether you pay the price here or there, you can't escape it, you will always pay. That's the law of karma. There is a price for everything. What kind of physical situations you land up in have a very strong karmic basis. The very fact that you are here today proves that your physical situation has been conducive enough to allow you to be here. There are many who desire to be here, but for many reasons it has not happened for them. They are yet to earn it.



The Only Bondage

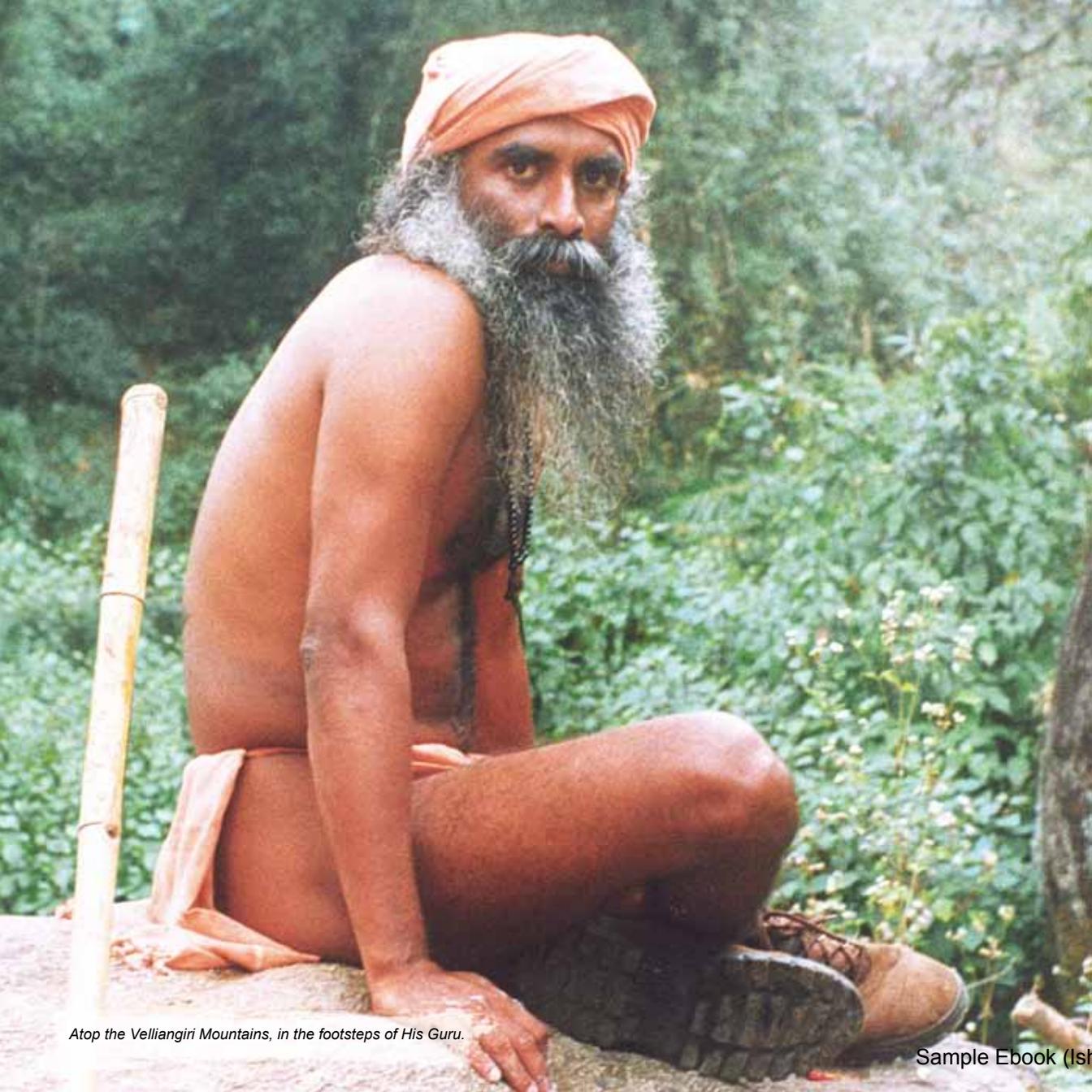
*You did escape the trap
of elemental hive.*

*But it is your own doing
that is the ultimate trap*

*Till you go beyond your own crap
there is no way to break this trap.*

– Sadhguru





Atop the Velliangiri Mountains, in the footsteps of His Guru.

As kings and dynasties were replaced with democracies, and tyrants with popular uprisings, the twentieth century saw the quest for freedom in mankind, as a whole, reach new heights. In spite of human rights being enshrined in constitution after constitution, of nations across the globe, man remains hopelessly enslaved to his *karma* – the only and the ultimate bondage.

Unknown to the deluded being is the wicked reign of karma, seeping into the being – into every cell, predetermining how a cell, an organ or an individual behaves, controlling every breath, thought and emotion. Untold despair befalls the seeker as he realizes one day that his most prized 'freedom' is but a complex function of the karmic influences from the past.

Smitten by ignorance and unawareness, man's entanglement in this unseen web of the all-pervading karma deepens with each futile struggle to break free.

Shattering this illusion of 'freedom', so fanatically pursued in our times, Sadhguru reveals the laws of karma and offers antidotes from his inexhaustible repository of spiritual practices. Shifting the focus from action to volition, from fear and beliefs to awareness, Sadhguru de-mystifies the most widely used term in the Indian spiritual jargon, initiating the liberation of the seeker.

Seeker: Sadhguru, how do I go beyond action or karma yoga? Personally, I have no urge to do anything. I feel like drifting towards a state of non-doing.

Sadhguru: When a person has made ultimate reality the goal in his life, action becomes meaningless. Once action is meaningless, any kind of self-image is of no great significance; but right now, in the state you are in, there is still a need for action. You have not yet reached a point where you have transcended action. You are unable to be without action. So perform the kind of action you think is best right now and do what is needed for the situation. For my people, or my disciples, when I am around, I am not thinking in terms of devising a little better *karma*¹ for them. This idea of better karma is only when the *Guru*² is either a dud or dead. Do you understand? Better karma can only mean your Guru is either a total dud who is useless and a fake, or he's dead and gone.

Seeker: You are the brightest, the most sharp-witted and the most genuine person I have ever met, Sadhguru.

Sadhguru: Brightest and sharpest, yes. About being genuine, how do you know that this one is not a dud? On the plane that you exist, you can never know. Doubts do come sometimes, don't they? Yes, I know they come, unless you have developed such a deep trust that it does not matter whether your Guru is real or a fake – whichever way, your trust in him is such that you will anyway be with him. Until you evolve into such a state, doubts will come. And even if he is a dud, there's no way you can know. All your standards of judgment simply will not hold true. How do you judge whether the person

¹ *karma* : referring to past action, the cause of all bondage.

² *Guru* : lit. *dispeller of darkness*. A spiritual Master.

is a genuine Guru or a fake? Either you jell with him or you don't. That's all there is. You cannot really make a judgment about it. That's why so many of the tribe thrive. I am asking you, how will you know?

Seeker: There are certain qualities in a Guru which pull an individual beyond his logic and that's why I am here with you, Sadhguru.

Sadhguru: What are the qualities that can attract you? What can you look for? See, you are just impressed and maybe even attracted to him as a person. Maybe you like the way he looks or speaks, or even maybe the work that is being done. Your attractions cannot go beyond these things. To recognize a Guru and become his disciple, one needs a different kind of quality. When Adolf Hitler decided to start his own party, he had only a handful of friends with him. He sat in a basement with these people and spoke to them in such forceful ways that fired their imagination to great heights; he made them believe that he was going to take over the world shortly. He was just an unemployed youth, a nobody, but he was such a forceful speaker. To them, he was God who was going to rule. He was the future of this planet. This is how he built his self-image. Hitler's self-image was so powerful, he believed that he would rule the world. His self-image was so powerful that it almost came true. If you create any image without a break in it, if there is a continuous mental focus towards it, it will happen, no matter what.

There is another way to create without asking for anything, without ever thinking about anything, where things just happen. Before we arrive at that, a little bit of fired-up movement is needed. People who have never been on fire will not know the coolness of water. People who have just lived their life in a half-hearted manner, sedately, can never know the other way. Becoming a fanatic at least for a while can be useful for your energies to reach a boiling point and get moving. Then, to transform them into something else is very easy. That's the whole purpose of karma or action. Why a *sadhaka*¹ chooses action is just for this reason. We are going to perform action anyway. Now we have the choice whether we want to perform Hitler's or Mahatma Gandhi's type of action. Whichever way we feel is best right now, we'll do that. That's all there is to it. Anyway we have to perform action, so let us do it whole-heartedly, and let us choose the form of action that we want to do. Do you know the self-image that you want?

¹ *sadhaka* : a spiritual seeker.

Do you want to rule the world or do you want to serve the world? Ultimately, that is the choice. Normally, everybody wants to rule the world. It is just that, because a man is half-hearted, he is only able to rule his wife. He doesn't get to rule the world, so all he's able to do is rule his children, wife or something like that, but what he really wants is to rule the world. The fool doesn't have the capacity or the intensity to do it; otherwise, he would be a potential Hitler. The man who physically abuses his child or wife because they don't conform to his ideas – suppose that tomorrow he is made the king of the world, he will use a sword instead of a stick. That's all. It is just that he's incapable and doesn't have the intensity to rule the world; otherwise, he is already the ruler.

Now the choice is just this – either to rule or to serve. Whichever kind of image you think is most harmonious, the closest to Divinity and closest to Realization, that kind of action you choose. Every moment, do it with tremendous intensity, without giving it a single moment's break. Then a day will come when action is not needed anymore. A man who does not know action – real action, intense action – can never move into inaction. If you try to, inaction will just become lethargy. Only if you have known intense action can you know inaction. People who are always resting in their life must be experts about rest, isn't it? But that is not the truth. Only a man who works intensely can know what rest is. So this non-doing business, if you really want to know it, first you must discover what doing is. You have not done that yet. In every waking moment of my life, unceasingly I pursue this work of offering myself, physically and mentally. Unceasingly I pursue it twenty-four hours of the day, every waking moment and even in my sleep, with tremendous intensity. It is only out of that, that all of this has happened in my life. It has become so powerful simply because it does not mean anything to me, but for twenty-four hours, I am at it. Now this has a different kind of power. That is the whole meaning of sacrifice. It is only out of that, that something else happens – both inside and outside – which can never be put into words.

There have been many sages in the world, Realized beings who, even today, are spreading their energy, but by themselves, they are not able to do anything. Only a few are unceasingly at it, day in and day out and only out of this, something can be created. This is how Vivekanandas are created. They are not born. This is how Mahatma Gandhis are created. This is how every powerful individual in this world is created. This is the science of creating a truly powerful being. This is not power to rule. This is not a

power that can be taken away at any moment. Nobody can take it away, because wherever you are put, that is what you do. If you want to rule, you have to sit on the seat. If somebody pulls you off the seat, you will be miserable. This is not like that. Wherever you are put, you just do your work. It does not matter what the situation is, what the result of your action is, because that's what you do anyway. If they put you in hell, that is what you do. If they put you in heaven, still, that is what you do. This releases you from action. First of all, this releases you from the fruit of action. Once you are released from the fruit of action, the action will happen by itself. You don't have to stop working to be released from action. Simply, it will dissolve, melt and disappear. Once the expectation of the fruit of action is completely removed from your life, the action occurs by itself. You don't have to do anything about it.

In one of the Zen monasteries, there is an old Master who is over eighty years old. Every day, he works his heart out in the gardens. In Zen monasteries, gardening is one of the most important parts of the *sadhana*.¹ Day in and day out, people spend time in the garden. This Master has been doing this for years. Now he is over eighty and has become weak, but he does not stop. The whole day, he works in the garden. Many times his disciples have tried to dissuade him. They say, "You stop working, we are all here, we will do it," but he will not listen. He just goes on doing what he can. His capacity to work physically might have come down, but the intensity has not come down. He works with the same intensity. So one day the disciples took away his tools and hid them somewhere, as he will work only with these tools. That day, he did not eat. The next day, there were no tools, so he did not eat. The third day also, no tools; he did not eat. By then they got scared, "Oh! Because we hid the tools, he is angry. He is not eating." Once again, they replaced the tools where they were usually placed. On the fourth day, he worked and ate. Then in the evening, he gave his teaching: "No work, no food," and he went back and died. That was the last day. The four days of fasting were too much for him; but the last day he worked, he ate, then he left his body, and he just gave this teaching: "No work, no food." For this kind of a man, action is like this. Wherever he is put, that is how he will be. Hell, heaven or earth, you put him in any of these different worlds and he will be the same. Once you are like this, you are released from the external situation. By just closing your eyes, you will not become released. The moment you open them,

¹ *sadhana* : spiritual practices used as a means to realization.

everything will come back and catch up with you. If you run away and sit on the mountain, you will not become free. This is the way to work it out. It has to be worked out.

Seeker: Sadhguru, does this mean that we should perform good actions that will free us from the bad karma we have accumulated?

Sadhguru: Karmas are classified in terms of *gunas*. What is a guna? It is a quality. Quality is not exactly the word. The Hindus generally talk about three types of gunas. The Buddhists classify them into seven types. It is just a classification that we can make. Karma can be classified as good karma and bad karma. What I am saying is, whether it is good karma or bad karma, it is still bondage. For people who are only interested in leading a comfortable life, this classification is important. They are always thinking how to perform good karma so that they will be born with wealth, well-being and comfort in their next life. Only a person who is living with duality, for that person there is good and bad karma.

For a person who is thinking in terms of transcending life and death, good karma is as useless as bad. To him, karma is just karma; any classification does not matter. All karma is bad for a spiritual person. Good or bad, it's bad for him. For a person who wants to transcend duality, become one with existence, for that person there is no good and bad. All karma is a barrier, a burden for him. He wants to drop all burdens. It's not like, "If you give me gold, I'm willing to carry even one hundred kilos, but if you give me one hundred kilos of garbage, I will not carry it." That's not the attitude. For a seeker it is, "I want to drop the load." Whether it's gold or garbage, both are heavy, but the other fools think carrying gold is great. Do you understand the difference, Nicholas? A man, who has become wise enough, sees that whether he carries gold or garbage, it is anyway burdensome. The other man is thinking gold will be better than garbage because right now he's carrying garbage.

Seeker: Master, is karma also affected by thoughts and not just deeds?

Sadhguru: See, the moment you say this is a good thought and that's a bad thought, this is a good deed and that is a bad deed – if somebody is doing the bad deed then he's a bad person, isn't it? "Yeah! I am a good man; you are a bad man." It's obvious! Good and bad were mainly invented by people who

are selling tickets to heaven. Once a preacher of the old school was describing the events of judgment day, and of course, he used biblical phraseology whenever he could, "Oh! My friends," he intoned, "imagine the suffering of the sinners as they find themselves cast in the outer darkness, removed from the presence of the Lord and given to eternal flames. My friends, at such a time they will be weeping, wailing and gnashing their teeth." At this point one of the eldest of the congregation interrupted, "But reverend, what if one of these hopeless sinners has no teeth?" The preacher crashed his fist on the pulpit, "My friends, the Lord is not put out by details, and rest assured, teeth will be provided." These are the kind of people who invented good and bad.

Every action has a consequence. When I say, 'action', it is not just of the body. It does not pertain to body alone. Action can be of thought, emotion or energy. An action which brings a negative consequence into your life, you generally try to term it as a bad action. It is not a question of bad action, it's just that different actions produce different kinds of consequences. As a human being, your business is just this – every one of us has the intelligence to do this – if you are aware enough you can see that for every single action there is a consequence. If you can joyfully accept the consequence, do anything that you wish to do, but if you do something today and when the consequence comes, you cry, then please curtail your actions, thoughts, emotions, or whatever. Do not start something that you cannot handle. This is not about good and bad; this is just about living your life sensibly. Now you don't pick up a rock that you cannot carry – it is as simple as that. You pick up something that you can handle. So every action is just that. If you bring it into your awareness, you don't have to worry about what is good and bad; you will just do what is needed for you – nothing more, nothing less.

Seeker: Sadhguru, if I had accumulated a lot of bad karma in unawareness, in another life, will it make me suffer now, in this life? Should I try to perform good karmas to make up for that?

Sadhguru: Yes, if you are only trying to enhance the quality of your life, good karmas are useful. Good karma does not mean good action, it means action that comes from good volition. That's why

there is so much talk about love everywhere. In love, you will perform good karma. When you perform good karma, the quality of your life will be enhanced, that's all. If your love becomes just intensity, beyond any sense, then it can become a process of liberation. Otherwise, love is just allowing you to do good karma.

You are always judging people as good or bad by looking at their actions. I am telling you, the so-called 'good' people never get into action. They are treacherous; they never act, because they are so cunning. They know that the moment they act, one way or the other, they are going to be found out. These 'good' people are the really treacherous people. Maybe they don't do anything physically, but this does not absolve one from the karmic processes. If you restrain yourself or your actions out of your goodness or sense, that is different, but if your fear of the consequence is all that restrains you, then the karma is very different. The 'good' people are the true criminals in the world. They never do anything, so they never get caught. They are the people who perform the worst kind of karma, maybe not in actions, but in their thoughts. For every small thing, they're willing to kill the whole world within themselves. They are like that. These are people filled with jealousy, with hatred within themselves, but they don't do anything wrong outwardly because the flesh is weak, or they don't have the courage to take action, or they are just plain cunning. That's the only thing that has stopped them.

Now there is a really wonderful person who has got a nice big house, a great wife, a very good life, but something will come up, just to remind him. Life has its ways. Once, a businessman boarded a flight and found himself sitting next to an elegant woman wearing the largest, most stunning diamond ring he had ever seen. Awestruck, he exclaimed, "Wow! That's a beautiful ring you have there!" The woman replied, "Yes, this is the Schroeder diamond. It is beautiful, but it comes with a terrible curse." "What curse?" asked the businessman. "Mr. Schroeder," answered the woman. So something will come up. If everything is right, one thing will crop up and go on bothering you, needling you. It's always like that. Otherwise, you will forget life and try to become God. You forget your limitations, so something will come up. That's your karma. The karma, though a process of bondage, is finding expression for you as a reminder of your emancipation. If you are unaware, you get entangled with it. If you are aware, it becomes the way to your liberation.

For a person who knows his limitations, even if something comes up in life, he's not really affected; it doesn't really touch him. Let us say somebody lost their child. These are simple people. If their child dies, at that moment they feel something; the next moment they leave it. There are other kinds of people whose child died ten years ago and even today, they are in turmoil. Just the thought of it and they find themselves in great turmoil. Yes, that is karma.

It does not matter what happens in life, we can blunt the edge of karma. Maybe you cannot immediately remove everything, unless you walk the spiritual path. Even a person who is not walking the spiritual path, if he's sensible, can blunt the edges of his karma and make it ineffective to a large extent. Only certain things will really take effect; other things can be minimized. Only when a person consciously walks the spiritual path, that person can definitely leave all that. If you have the urge, if you really have the character to do that, by the end of this Isha Yoga program, you can simply leave your 'load of bananas' and go. It is very much possible. The opportunity is here. Whether anybody makes it happen or not, the possibility is always wide open.

Seeker: Sadhguru, at times I am not sure if I am doing the right thing by being here at Isha. There is much disappointment at home. Am I piling up more karma by causing this pain to my family, Master?

Sadhguru: They brought you up with many expectations, which caused disappointment to them. The nature of karma is not in the action that you perform. Karma means action, but this gathering of past karmas is not because of the actions you have performed. It is the volition, the intention, the kind of mind that you carry. That's your karma. What is disappointment? Now Kumar asked this question. Let us take your situation as an example. Your wife has some expectation of you that you should be in a particular way, but you're not like that. Now you are unable to break that expectation, or you have not had the courage to break it, or you still have not had a chance to break it. Maybe there is an urge to break it, but you are keeping quiet because of society's norms. For some reason you have not broken it, but the urge is there within you. It's almost like you *have* broken the karma.

There is a story which the wonderful sage, Ramakrishna, used to tell. There were two friends who used to go visiting a prostitute every Saturday evening. On one such evening, while they were walking towards the prostitute's house, there was someone giving a discourse on the *Gita*.¹ One friend decided not to visit the prostitute, saying he would prefer to hear the lecture on the *Gita*. The other man left him there. Now the man sitting in the lecture hall, his thoughts were full of the other man. He began thinking that the other man was having the time of his life while he was caught in this place. He thought the other man was more intelligent in choosing the prostitute's place rather than a *Gita* discourse. Now the man who had gone to the prostitute's house, his mind was full of the other man. He began to think that his friend had chosen the path to liberation by preferring the *Gita* discourse to the prostitute's place, while he got caught in this. The man who had gone for the *Gita* discourse and was thinking about what was happening in the prostitute's house pays by piling up bad karma. He suffers, not the other man. You don't pay because you have gone to the prostitute; you pay because you are cunning about it. You still want to go there, but you think by going to the discourse you'll be one step closer to heaven. This cunningness will take you to hell. That man with the prostitute knows it's worthless, and seeks something else; his is good karma. So it's not about action.

Right now, why you think in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' is simply because of the social moral code. It's not your innate nature which is telling you that this is right and wrong. It is just that society has fixed some rules and they have always told you, right from your childhood, that if you break them you are a bad boy. So whenever you break these, you feel like a bad boy. If you feel like one, you become one. If you are used to gambling, maybe gambling in front of your mother or your wife, in your home, or even to utter the word is sacrilege, but once you join your gang, there gambling is just fine, isn't it? Among the gamblers, the one who does not gamble is not fit to live. It's like this everywhere. If all of you are thieves, you are all fine, isn't it? Among thieves, do they feel it is bad to rob somebody? When you fail, they think you are a no-good thief. That is a bad karma, isn't it? The question, this karmic thing, is just the way you feel about it. It's not about what you are doing. It is just the way you are holding it in your mind. Why we are talking about acceptance, acceptance, acceptance, is, if you are absolute acceptance, whatever life demands, you do. If you have to fight a battle, you go and fight; there

¹ *Gita* : referring to *Bhagavad Gita*, sacred book of the Hindus.

is no karma. The karma is not made in physical action; it is made only by volition. It's just that some fool has formed some rules and you expect every human being to live by them. It's impossible, but society needs such rules to maintain the social ego.

Seeker: So what is social ego, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: Society has its own ego, isn't it? For every small thing, the whole society gets upset. It need not be wrong. Suppose it's summer in the United States. Everybody is hardly wearing anything or maybe they are in miniskirts. Let's say you're fully clothed. People will get upset: "What is she doing? Why is she all covered up?" Here in India, if you dress like *that*, they'll all get upset. So this is one kind of ego; that is another kind of ego. It's the social ego which is getting upset, and your karma is becoming part of the collective karma. I want you to really understand this with a certain depth. Your idea of good and bad has been taught to you. You have imbibed it from the social atmosphere in which you have lived. See, for example, a bandit tribe, like the Pindaris, who from a young age were trained to rob and kill, they even had gods who taught them skills and brought them success in their banditry. When the British army was let loose on them, they were shot and killed indiscriminately. They were completely bewildered, as in their perception they had not done anything wrong. The Pindari ego was just to be a good bandit. The same happened for the Native American Indians also. Among some Native American tribes, unless you had killed a man in your life, you were not much of a man. They collected the scalp of the man and wore it around their neck. So what is right and wrong, what is good and bad, is all about how the social ego functions.

Seeker: Sadhguru, if a child dies, whose karma is it? They say we should not cry; what about that? Is this a part of the karmic process? Does some past karma dissolve for the parents?

Sadhguru: Definitely you don't have to cry. Whether karma dissolves or not, there is no need to cry. If you cry out of love, if tears flow out of compassion, it's good, but if you are going to cry because the physical body collapses, you need to understand, it has to collapse. Right from day one, you know this

body is not eternal. Nobody is foolish enough to think it is, but people are thinking on those terms. In the West, have you heard that they are preserving bodies for the future? In England, they have started this process, with all this scientific equipment; the dead bodies are being preserved for the future. They are making blood circulate through machines, and the body is kept intact. It doesn't deteriorate. You have to pay a lot of money to keep your body like that. Now the thing is, some day all souls are going to come back, and when you come, you can come back to your own body. This is nonsense. It's really a stupid thing, an immature thing to do, simply because somewhere, Western philosophy misread the whole situation.

Jesus did not even talk about the continuation of life; he probably just wanted people to make use of this life. "You grow now, when I am here," he said. He never talked about the next life. He said, "This is it. Now, this is the chance. You have to do it now. It is now or never." That's how he spoke. Every teaching he gave was a 'now-or-never' teaching. The philosophy just stops there, with this life. So that is why the Western mind has become so tremendously active. The *Pingala*¹ has become so active because life is going to stop here. When you die, it's going to be over. Nobody has talked about what is next. There is a tremendous kind of hurry in the West, in every field, simply because for them, life ends here. A certain kind of thought comes that if you're going to die tomorrow, you want to do everything today; that's the attitude. Here, in India, we know there are many lives. What's the problem? If not this time, there is always the next one.

One day, Shankaran Pillai returned from visiting a doctor about his liver problem brought on by his heavy drinking. He mournfully told his wife that he had only twelve hours to live. After wiping away her tears, he asked her to prepare him a nice dinner. Sometime later in bed, he started to make romantic overtures and his wife, with a heavy heart, dutifully responded. Three hours later, Shankaran Pillai gently woke her up and said, "I only have seven more hours to live. I was thinking that maybe, you know..." She agreed. Still later, Shankaran Pillai, bursting into tears, realized he had only five hours of life left. He nudged his wife and said, "Please, just once more before I die." She agreed and afterward sighed heavily, rolled over and quickly fell fast asleep. Shankaran Pillai continued to hear the clock ticking away in his head until he

¹ *Pingala* : one of the major pranic channels of the body, masculine in nature.

was down to three more hours. Again he nudged his wife to wake her, and sobbing away, turned to her and said, "I only have three more hours left, could we?" His wife sat up abruptly and turned to him and said, "Listen, I have to get up in the morning AND YOU DON'T!"

This question about, "If a child dies, is it dissolution of the parents' karma?" No, the death itself may be your karma, because for you, generally a child is a valuable possession. So losing your child is not a good experience. If your child dies, you are not going to clap, jump around, and say, "That is great; he went back to God or existence!" No, you are going to be all wound up. So it's not dissolution. It may be just that it has to happen like that for you. It's your karma. You cannot say it is dissolution. Nothing is dissolved. You are going to suffer from it. The child is gone but your suffering continues, isn't it? The karma is not in your child. The karma is only in your attitude and in your suffering.

Seeker: Is karma passed on from generation to generation, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: Is your karma handed over to the next generation? What, Balu, are you asking whether your karmas are being handed over to your children? Hereditary karmas? See, wherever you are, or whomever you are with at any moment, whatever that man's karma, it also affects you one way or the other. Let us say, your friend is a thief. You never did anything, but when the police come and catch him, they will catch both of you. Maybe you won't get one-year imprisonment the way he does, but you will at least spend one day behind bars. This is his karma which has rubbed off on you, but it's your karma that you were with him at that moment. Similarly, the parents' karma affects the children. Whatever nonsense you do definitely affects the child. Transferring? No. If you're thinking of handing it over to your son and going, it will not work that way. It is just an influence. It's just like this: if you're next to a flower, you will get the fragrance of it, but you cannot become the flower. If you want to become a flower, you have to become the flower out of your own nature. Even if my daughter has to seek the peak of her consciousness, she has to seek it out of her own nature. Maybe being here, in this energy field, is good karma for her. She has this opportunity, even if she is not meditating, but it's not essential that she has to turn spiritual. We don't know; that is left to her. That, nobody can decide. You don't know who she is anyway, what her attributes are, what her karmic basis is. I don't want to go into that.

Seeker: You don't want to go into that, but now that you have started it...

Sadhguru: I shouldn't have started it. I started simply because you have to know. Don't look at anybody based on what they are right now. There is so much behind every person. It could be good and it could be bad, it could be positive and it could be negative, but there is so much behind every person here. If you are sensitive and subtle enough, just by looking at a person, you will be able to see his whole lifetimes of karmas, here and now. That will be your understanding of people and who they are.

Meditation may be a quick way which takes you to that level of subtleness, but for a lot of people it is not possible, because their karma, their body or their mind, something will not allow them to meditate. One purpose of doing the practices and yoga kriyas is that you become sensitive. If you just touch a person for one moment, you should know his one hundred lifetimes, and what his karma is. You may not know all the details, which city he was born in, where he lived, what he had for dinner today...that is not the point. You know the general trend of his karmas. This is not imagining or hallucinating. It must be crystal clear, just like seeing with your eyes. That is how it should be. Now the way you act, the way in which you handle people, will be with a different kind of maturity. Just by looking at them, not by looking at their present image, you will know exactly what that person needs at this moment. Even he may not know what he needs at this moment, because he only knows what he is at this moment. He does not know what he was in another lifetime, but you know what he was then; so you can handle things with a totally different kind of maturity which will not come through thought. If that sensitivity has to come, one has to work towards it; there is no other way.

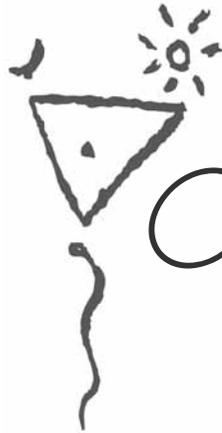
Seeker: Master, you have told us many times that if we have bitter experiences in our life, it is because of our past doings. What type of activities should we do today to avoid future bitterness?

Sadhguru: Subbarao, the bitterness of any experience is not in what has happened. The bitterness of any experience is in terms of how you have received it. What is very bitter for one person could be a

blessing for another person. Once, a grief stricken man threw himself on a grave and cried bitterly, hitting his head against it. "My life! Oh! How senseless it is! How worthless this carcass of mine is because you're gone. If only you had lived! If only fate had not been so cruel as to take you from this world! How different everything would have been!" A clergyman, nearby, overheard him and said, "I assume this person lying beneath this mound of earth was someone of great importance to you." "Importance? Yes, indeed," wept the man, wailing even louder, "It was my wife's first husband!" The bitterness is not in what is happening. It is in how you're allowing yourself to experience it, how you are receiving it. Similarly, whatever the past activity or karma is, is also not in terms of action, but in terms of the volition with which it is done.

What is happening with you all, if you are a little open to me or to the teaching, is just that the volition is taken away, so you just do what is needed. That is what awareness means; there is no volition. Where there is no volition, there is no karma. You are simply doing what is needed; that is what acceptance means. That is what unbounded responsibility means, that you don't have any volition about anything. In every given situation, simply whatever you see as needed, as per your awareness, as per your capability, you just do it. You build karma only with volition; whether it is good or bad, it does not matter. The strength of your volition is what builds karma.

People ask me, again and again, the same question, "What's your mission?" When I tell them, "I have no mission; I'm just fooling around," they think I'm being frivolous. They don't understand this is the deepest statement that I can make about living in the world, because there is no particular volition – just doing what is needed, that's all. In this, there is no karma. Whatever you go through, there is no karma. Whatever you are doing is just happening, as it is needed. So karma is only in terms of your need to do something. When you have no need to do anything, and you simply do what is needed, there is no karmic attachment to it. It is neither good nor bad.



Chapter - 4

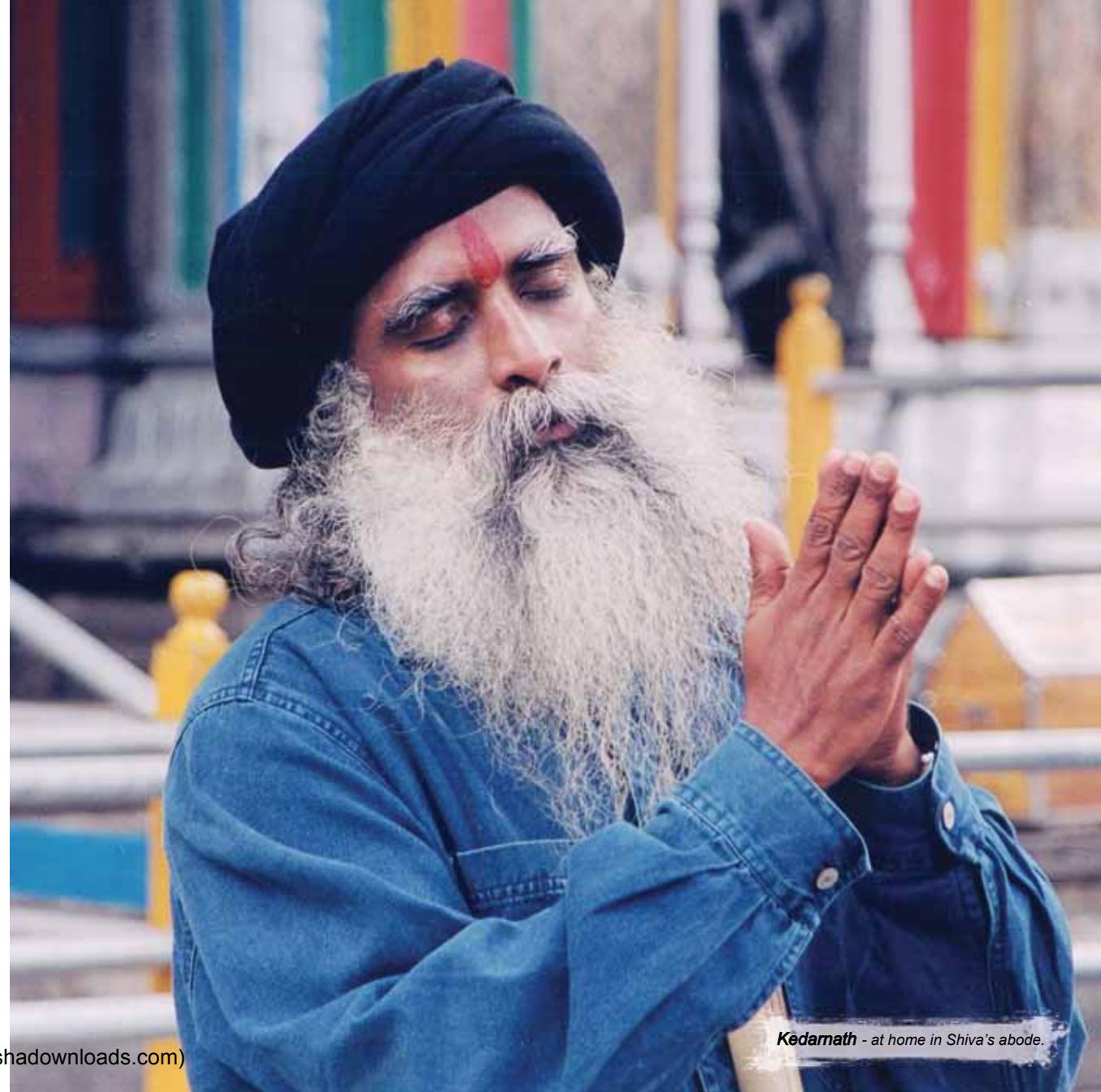
Body's Plight

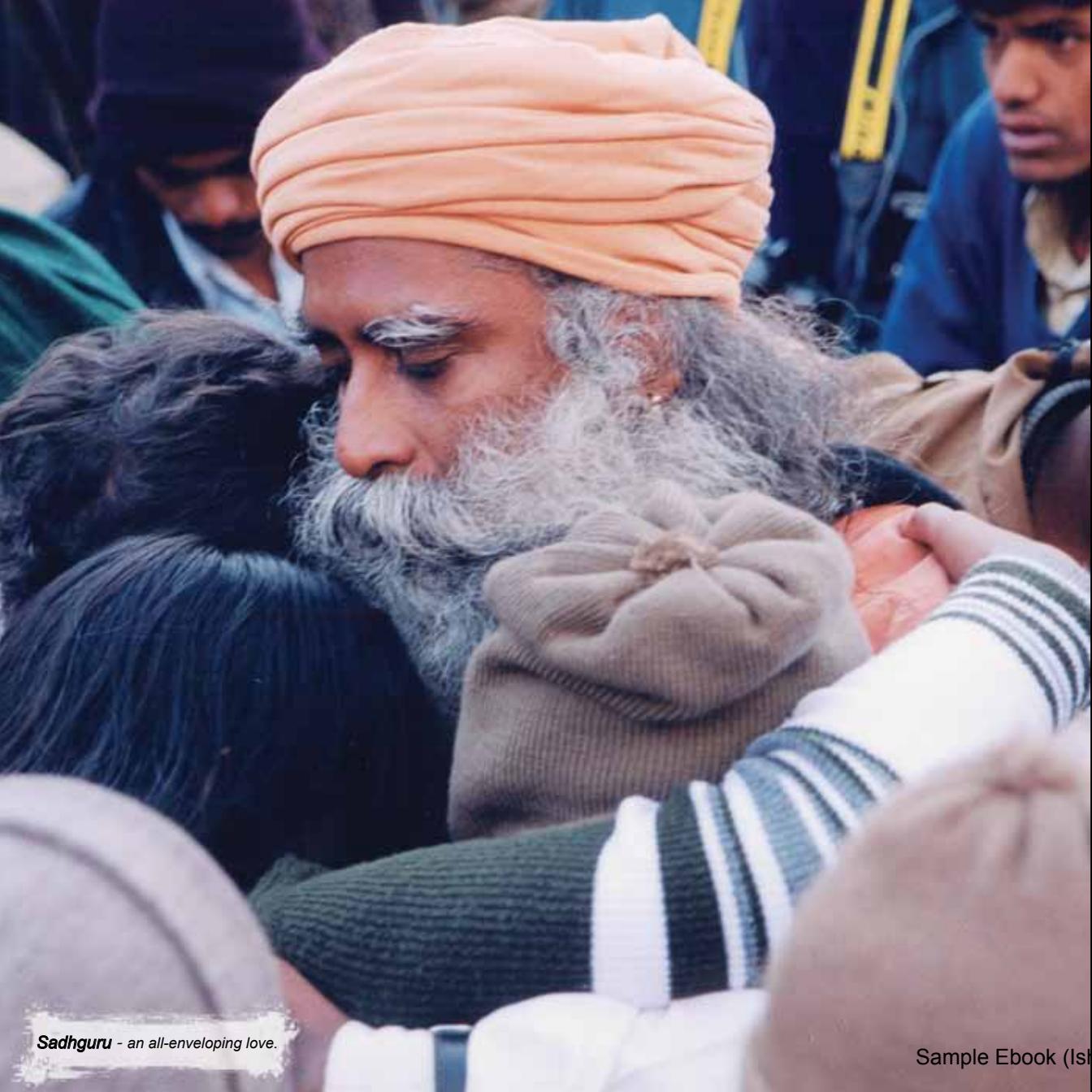


Body's Plight

*This toy of elemental ploy
Deceptive in its ability for joy
The pain and bondage of these miraculous five
If broken, you in liberation will fly.*

– Sadhguru





The human body is the pinnacle of the physical evolution of life on this planet. The intricacy, complexity and the sophistication is unmatched by anything that modern science can hope to comprehend, far less imitate or compete with. To pack each minute cell with such an enormous amount of intelligence and to infuse this mass of billions of cells with *prana* (or the subtle life force) of such prodigious potential, is truly the ultimate miracle.

In the spiritual lore, the human body is considered supremely sacred, as this is the only mechanism that can take a being from the limited identification of the self to the unlimited, from a bounded existence to the realm of the unbounded, to the final plunge into the vastness of the Infinite.

Growing from a meeting of two cells, the body, before it withers away, goes through a series of

experiences of pain and pleasure, of disease and deformity. Helplessly entangled in the tentacles of *maya*, the celestial illusion, the body is also the source of untold fear and suffering. Yet, it is the body that becomes one's deliverance. Thus the seeker's affair with the body runs a full spectrum from trauma to Bliss.

In *Body's Plight*, Sadhguru dwells at length upon the very nuts and bolts of the mechanics of the body – the *karma* that dictates its creation and dissolution, of health and healing, of diseases and miraculous cures, of depression and madness, of psychic surgeries, of death and after-death, of birth and rebirths, the choice and the choicelessness of it all.

Walking the seeker through a maze of beliefs, rituals, superstitions and myths, Sadhguru reveals the play of life culminating in what is known in the tradition as *Mahasamadhi*, *Mahaparinirvana*, *Nirvana*, *Moksha* or the complete liberation of the self, sharing insights on the necessary sadhana to transcend the trap of the body.

Seeker: When somebody is incapacitated, like for example my mother, who has a severe disease, and is dependent on others for even simple bodily functions, she suffers so much because somebody else has to do all this 'dirty work' for her. She also feels indebted to them, and at the same time questions why this should be happening to her. How is her karma being worked out, Sadhguru? Is she adding to it with all these emotions and feelings?

Sadhguru: See, why a certain work has become 'dirty' is not because there is anything wrong or improper. It has become dirty in your understanding because of the embarrassment it causes you, and the sense of helplessness and hopelessness it brings to who you are. There never was any problem about somebody helping you, somebody doing your 'dirty work'. All these years when you were well, you had no problem with somebody doing your dirty work; in fact, it felt good that somebody was doing your dirty work. Only now this feeling and emotion has come because of your helplessness. There are various aspects to this. The helplessness is not just physical; it is much more.

Why the world is going the way it is right now - why people are pursuing life the way they are right now is - the only things that are important to people are wealth, power, and pleasure. These are the things which have become the whole guiding force of life. Somewhere in their foolishness they came to this conclusion that if they have enough money, enough power, life is going to be okay, life is going to be fixed for good. It's because of this that people are putting their whole life energy behind it. Then you see that somehow everything that everybody would wish to have, you have, and still your suffering is simply untold. It is not any different from the man on the street. Actually people who have nothing but their four limbs seem to be better than you. Then, there is shame in you, there is disappointment in you, there is shock in you, there is hurt in you which makes you feel hopeless. Above all, your pride is totally mauled by this.

This is not a problem of somebody doing your 'dirty work'; this is the problem of you being helpless, and your ego hurting so badly. So if somebody is doing all this work, what you should feel for them is extreme love, compassion and affection. What your own children or grandchildren would not even do, somebody else is doing, for whatever reason, and they are doing it pretty well. You should become extremely loving, but you become irritable, you become angry; you become all this simply because the problem is just that you are helpless. So definitely with these emotions you are adding to the karma.

About this particular person – your own mother – though she handled her disease quite gracefully at one point, it is becoming more severe and more demanding. Slowly it is beginning to hurt, emotionally and otherwise. This is not because the disease is hurting more, but because she is not able to maintain her dignity and pride, which she managed even in a wheel chair – to some extent – earlier. That's what is hurting right now. So that definitely adds to the karma.

Seeker: Sadhguru, it's very easy to say what should be welling up in you is love and not irritability. This is more easily said than done. I mean, how can this love happen in the individual unless they have risen to such a state within themselves that they are free from all this?

Sadhguru: This is a mistake that people always make. They think that to handle life properly, intelligently, you should have risen to some height. It is not so. The moment you have come here as a human being means you have risen to a certain level of intelligence. That means you have risen to a certain level of capability to handle. That means you have risen to a certain level of freedom and awareness. The moment you come in human form, it is so. You have just gotten entrenched in your own trap that you built out of your pride, your dignity and your egoistic approach to life. Somebody is doing something, which you consider to be dirty, without even making faces about it. If you look at it with openness, only love and affection will come towards that person, nothing else.

I have known many people who were very debilitated with illness; they really had to be helped with their toileting and whatever else. Suddenly, for them – their child, their wife, their husband – nobody really meant anything. That one person who was taking care of them became their everything, and they loved him or her immensely. There have even been situations where they willed their whole property to them because they felt such immense love for that person, for what they were doing. So if you just look at what somebody is doing for you, that is what will happen to you; but you're not even looking at it. You are only looking at what is happening to you. When you look at what is happening to you, pain and hurt will arise in you. If you look at what somebody else is doing for you, then definitely love and affection would arise in you, but you are not at all looking at the other person. You are only looking at yourself: "What is happening to me? What is happening to me?"

Seeker: Master, isn't it unfortunate that not even one percent of the terminally ill get this kind of realization, and use this as an opportunity to grow? In that context, what about the remaining population? I am probably very fortunate to have come in contact with you, but what about people who go through life so blindly? How is it possible for them also to get this kind of an opportunity?

Sadhguru: Whether you come in contact with a *Guru*¹ or not, whether you come in contact with spirituality or not, it doesn't matter. I'm not even talking about somebody being on a spiritual path. Once you have come with the human form, life has given you a certain sense of intelligence, a certain sense of awareness and freedom to choose what you want to be right now, in this moment. Everybody, literate or illiterate, spiritual or non-spiritual, every human being has this within him.

With the whole process of teaching this yoga, that's all we are doing, so that he gets to stand up and exercise his choice in this moment as to how to be, just reminding him that what he is doing, whether positive or negative, is still by choice. The very process of my whole teaching is just this, to make a person aware enough, to knock him on his head and tell him that whatever he does – whether it is love or hate, anger or peacefulness – whatever he does is still by choice. He is doing it by choice, but he has made his choice so one-directional – he has made himself the centerpiece of everything – that he has just discarded the other choices about life. So when you get diseased, when you get severely ill, though physically you are not wishing it upon yourselves consciously, one way or the other you have created it; knowingly or unknowingly it has happened to you, for so many reasons. Now it has come, and when you see someone doing things for you, that you yourself would not do for anyone, if you see what this person is doing, extreme love and compassion will naturally come forth in you. You do not have to create love.

"When I am in pain how can I create love?" You do not have to create love. If you just see what this person is doing for you, love will arise within you. Nature has not put this burden upon you that you have to create love when you are in pain. If you just see what somebody else is doing for you, love will arise within you, affection will arise within you; but right now your whole mental structure and the way you are looking at life has become so self-oriented, you do not want to look at anything else. You are only seeing what is happening to you; you are not seeing what somebody else is doing.

¹ Guru : lit. *dispeller of darkness*. A spiritual Master.

Seeker: Sadhguru, that is because somewhere it's like, "Okay, they are just doing it for money; that's their job."

Sadhguru: No. The thing is, "Okay, I paid you money, so you clean up my shit", with this attitude you will definitely suffer. If you had seen, "Money or no money, that is not the point; this person is doing this for me. Without him or her, my life would not exist." If you see it this way, definitely love and affection will arise within you and even this diseased state, though physically painful, can become a liberating experience for you in so many ways. It can become a great realization within you, because in your normal state, the body itself is a big barrier; it is constantly distracting you. When you are diseased, suddenly you realize that your body is not permanent, that it is perishable; so all your focus and energy should shift to a higher dimension. It is a great potential. It has a great potential in it.

Now you don't have any exposure to spirituality, that's not an excuse. Everybody has the intelligence, the awareness and the freedom of choice to do this for themselves, but how many people do it is always questionable. Unfortunately, not many people do it. Even for the person who does the dirty work, instead of seeing what she is doing for somebody else, if she sees what she is doing and how, "What I would not do for myself I am doing for somebody", she will become such a wonderful human being, you understand. But if she is thinking, "Oh, I have got to do this because of this person. I have got to do this because of my economic situation", then she will also create karma. Your mother will also create karma endlessly.

Seeker: That is so in ninety-nine percent of the cases, Sadhguru. Even that one percent I am not too sure... That's how the world is right now; that's how it's happening.

Sadhguru: It's not one hundred percent. I think most of them are off and on. Sometimes they are this way, sometimes they are that way. Some moments they are Realized, some moments they are blind; that is how they go on. That is why they have some moments of joy, some moments of pain, because they are always off and on. If they constantly create misery for themselves, then it will lead to something else. They will become ill in a completely different way. An extended negative karma for a certain period of time will create a different kind of suffering for people.

However, most people are on and off in creating suffering, and most people are on and off in creating liberation also. To stay on consistently is the whole thing. If you stay on with suffering for too long, it will take you to Realization in some way, or it will destroy you. If you stay on with liberation, it will definitely liberate you, but people are always on and off, they are fickle. That is why Krishna says in the *Gita*, "The worst crime in the world is indecision." Mainly it is the fickleness, the unsteady attitude. There is no *nischala tathwam*, no 'one direction of energy'. You are going in different directions all the time. So the life energy is confused; it does not know where to go or what to do. Only with human nature has this freedom been given to you, that you can decide the direction of your life energies. For animals it is not so; the direction of their life energies is decided. It just goes that way, whichever way they go; but for human nature, this freedom has been given. It's a benediction, but you're using it as a curse.

Seeker: I have, in my own family, people who were ill and I have handled them. When I'm with them part of me does not react to anything; it does not touch me. It is not that I'm indifferent to their suffering. I can respond to life-suffering around me, but I just do what is best and leave it at that. I wonder at times what people think about me. Can you say something about it, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: (Laughs) What they are thinking about you? I will answer the last question first: heartless. They are not even thinking; they made the conclusion long ago. Now the thing is, what is it that you are responding to? Is it responding to just some life-suffering?

Seeker: No, it could be more because it is someone in my family.

Sadhguru: Oh, "It's my family, it's my thing." That's what is causing the suffering.

Seeker: But Sadhguru, can't they see that I become dispassionate because something in me says that all emotion is only because one gets identified with someone or something as their own?

Sadhguru: Every suffering that you see – whether a worm, insect, bird, animal or human being – if your whole system, your energy or your emotions, everything – responds to it, that is wonderful. Once you

start responding to everything, you will see that your response has to move into deeper dimensions within yourself. It cannot be psychological and emotional anymore, otherwise it will only lead to madness.

Seeker: Yes, exactly.

Sadhguru: See, now this tree branch is broken; my energy responds to it, but my emotions do not. Sometimes I allow myself the luxury of responding emotionally also. It's a luxury for me. Once in a while I allow myself to respond emotionally also to some type of suffering around me; otherwise, I don't emotionally respond to any suffering around me. This is coming because there is enough control over the situation. There was a time when, if I just looked at anybody's face on the streets, just seeing that they are not happy enough would bring tears to my eyes. Once it becomes so deep that you start responding to every life and whatever is happening, then there is no way to exist here. You have to dissolve; that's all there is. So naturally you will come to a deeper understanding within yourself, that psychologically and emotionally you don't respond anymore. On a much deeper level you naturally respond, but it is no more emotional and psychological, and it is good. It's a big step ahead in life, not responding to things emotionally and psychologically, not because you are putting up a barrier between you and their suffering. You're very much open to their suffering, you are very much a part of it, but still, emotionally and psychologically you do not suffer, or you are not disturbed on that level. It's a huge step to take. Now for people, the suffering is not about life going on like this. If that was it, if they had that sense, the world would be a different place altogether; but now the thing is, my father, my mother, my house, my something is suffering; that's the whole problem. So this has nothing to do with them. It's only about you.

When I was just about eleven years, maybe twelve, a certain situation occurred between my mother and me. See, an Indian mother would never come and tell her child, "I love you", or something like that. Maybe today you do it a little bit, but an Indian mother would never – at least my mother would never. Such a necessity was not there at all. Everything she did in her life was for us. We knew that, so she never had to say it. It's almost a sacrilege to say it. That's the kind of situation it was. Now something happened and she expressed herself in a tender way to me – not exactly telling me, "I love you." It's a rare thing to happen. Then I asked her a simple question – you know, my thoughts were in a certain way

by then - "If I was born in the next house, would you still feel this way about me?" She felt so hurt, so offended, and with tears welling up in her eyes, she went away. I didn't think anything about it. I just asked a simple question, which was not an issue for me within myself. I knew very well that if I had been born in the next house she would not be feeling like this about me. I knew that very well; it was very clear to me in my mind. So that was why I just asked her. Then after half an hour, she came to me and not knowing what to say, still in tears, she touched my feet and went away. That also did not mean much to me. I knew she was trying to come to terms with it. She saw the point of what I was saying, but her emotions were struggling to come to terms with it. She knew it was true, but at the same time there was a struggle within, because it would have brought up many things, maybe about all her other children, her husband, her house, her father, her mother, everything. Probably it would have all come up in her mind and the whole struggle and turmoil was because of this.

So this is all about 'mine'. What is mine is just an extended me. Isn't it? The very reason why, on the spiritual path, all possessions are taken away, is so that what is 'me' becomes small inside this flesh. Right now, this big house is me, this car is me, this property is me, you know? These acres of land are me. Everything is me actually. If somebody damages the house it hurts me, as if it is me, isn't it? If somebody damages the car, it hurts me. So you're just extending the ego, extending this 'me', trying to find extensions to what you call as 'myself' outside, which is a falsehood. This is happening with a wrong identification with many things, which is the fundamentals of ignorance, which is the very foundation of all ignorance in the world – your wrong identifications. The whole spiritual process is to remove the identification even with the physical body. So extending your identification to many things outside is absolutely stupid.

Your feeling hurt because, "My mother or my child is ill" is coming from sheer ignorance. Does it mean you do not care? Does it mean you should not take care? Does it mean to say you do not do anything about it? No. You do everything that you can do about it, and there is only so much that you can do about anybody. It does not matter how much you love them, there is only that much you can do; whether they live or die is not decided by you. You will do the best you can do with what means you have. It's not even the best in the world. With the available means, accordingly you will do your best.

So all this is happening. It's just that emotionally you are not greatly hurt. You're still laughing, you're still enjoying your food, you're still going to the cinema, you're still doing everything and you're still meditating peacefully. This offends people who are emotionally attached. They will get so offended, they will think you are heartless. They will think you're a stone or whatever else, but I would say stones are better than stupid human beings, because they do not cause any harm to anybody. They are just there, not doing anything. Maybe they are meditating, because people who want to meditate always go to the mountains to be infected by the rocks. They go to the rocks to learn meditation.

I heard that an actress had said that one place which is truly spiritual for her is some rock in Bombay. She said, "This rock, I sit near this rock and I find so many answers to so many of my questions." Definitely a big rock seems to be wiser and better than any stupid human being.

Seeker: Sadhguru, how would the human race perpetuate itself if total dispassion arises? Isn't that why people fear spirituality also?

Sadhguru: People have understood dispassion as becoming dry and senseless. Dispassion is not dry and senseless; dispassion means that the bondage with life is gone. Freedom has come. Once freedom has come, how you respond to life is in your hands, isn't it? If freedom has come, in terms of your thought and emotion, you can respond. You don't have to become like a stone; you will respond as it is needed. There are situations where even if people are in extreme suffering or pain, I don't even look at them. There are situations where, for the smallest things, I will shed tears with them. So this is by choice; this is what dispassion means.

Whether it is your family or anybody else that you are taking physical responsibility for; or if there is somebody lying ill on the street, in terms of my life response, it's still the same. If my mother is ill or this woman on the street is ill, it is the same response. As far as I'm concerned, as a human being, my response is the same, but in terms of what I can physically do, it may alter depending upon my capabilities. What I could do for my mother, if I had the capability to do it for everybody physically, I would love to do it. I'm sure most human beings, or every human being who is willing to look at himself with a little openness, is the same, is it not so? If you had the means to take care of the whole world the

way you take care of your mother, everybody who has looked at his life with a little sense would naturally do that; but right now it's a question of capability.

That is so even for your mother, isn't it? Even though you feel so much for her, what you can do may be limited. For many people here in India, if somebody is ill with cancer, they may not be able to do much because they cannot take their mother to America or they do not have the economic means even to seek the local treatment. So it doesn't mean that they love them less than somebody else who is capable of providing all those things for their mothers; it's just that they cannot do it. So maybe they will just give them plain water, hold their hands, sit through their pain, do whatever else they can do and allow them to die.

In terms of their karma, in terms of life, it's not any different. They let them die physically, but still everything that can be done for a human being has been done. Your life response need not change. It does not matter who it is or what it is, whether it's an apple, potato, chicken, mother, father or a tree, your response is still the same. But what you do physically is at your discretion, depending upon your capabilities, energies, possibilities, inclinations, time, life – so many aspects are involved.

Seeker: I was thinking more in terms of human perpetuation. Won't the human race come to a halt with dispassion, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: No. Wouldn't it be very, very beautiful if human beings conceived consciously, because it is needed for the human race rather than out of their own physical compulsions? Wouldn't it be so much more beautiful if they created this very consciously – this being is needed for human life to happen and you produce it with that consciousness, rather than out of your compulsions? Is it not in many ways an indignity to the person who is born that he or she is born out of your compulsions, not out of your consciousness?

Seeker: But Sadhguru, it is not that everybody goes for a child with a compulsion. For some it is out of love for a child – maybe because it is their child, a little extension of their womb, something of theirs.

Sadhguru: See, when you say, "love for their child", where did you get love for your unborn child? When you have no love for life around you, it is still a compulsion. When I say 'compulsion',

the compulsion need not necessarily be just physical; the compulsions can be psychological and emotional. There is a need to extend yourself, something that is you. Most people want to have children because they want an extension of themselves. They want something to leave behind when they go. Children are their greatest property.

Seeker: So it is more instinct, isn't it, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: Physically it is an instinct. Emotionally, psychologically, it's not an instinct; it's a trick that you play. Physically it is an instinct, but emotionally and psychologically it is a trick, it's a ploy that you're creating to extend yourself. Do you see, when people who take up some cause in their life, whatever cause – they are fighting for the freedom of their country, they have a political cause or some other cause – when they get too intensely involved in that, they have no need to produce children because they are extending themselves in some other way where their involvement is much more?

Fundamentally, bearing a child has become such a big experience in people's lives because only by bearing a child can most people know a certain sense, or a certain depth of involvement and inclusion with life. With nothing else are they so deeply involved. They are incapable of being deeply involved with this tree. They are incapable of being deeply involved with the air around them. Their only capability is to be involved with a child, because a child does not have so much personality, or does not have personality at all when it comes into your hands. Another thing is because your identification is so much with the physical body, something that comes out of your body is definitely yours. You may say, "My house is mine," but you know you can lose it. You may say, "This property is mine," but you may lose it; but this comes out of your biological body and you cannot deny it. Even if your son denies it, still you know he's anyway yours. So it's a sure-fire extension of yourself.

People are seeking children only because of that; that's the only way they know involvement. Otherwise, they are incapable of being involved. Why, especially for a woman, bearing a child has become such a big experience is just because of her involvement; otherwise, she is never really involved with anybody for that matter. Very few people can involve themselves to that extent in their love affairs also. Even there, the involvement is because bodies touch. Because their identification is

with the physical body, the only way they know to involve themselves is by opening their body. Only when a person rises to another level of experience, their involvement with something else or somebody else goes to great depths without physical involvement, because now identification with the body is receding. Identification with the other dimension of yourself is building momentum.

So a child is a deep involvement. People are hankering for children because they are seeking involvement; otherwise, what is life? If you have never tasted life, by bearing a child you're getting involved with life. With nothing else are you involved; but if you know how to involve yourself with everything around you, you will see a child is not an emotional or psychological compulsion anymore. It would be very wonderful if people chose to have children, rather than bringing them through physical, psychological or emotional compulsions within themselves.

Seeker: Jaggi, when it comes to women and children in India, it is considered very inauspicious for a barren woman to attend some of the social gatherings and celebrations, so isn't it also a social compulsion for a woman to bear children?

Sadhguru: What is auspicious? What is auspicious in the society is decided by certain people and you know how sensibly those people are living their lives, first of all! Those women who have a dozen children, in what way are they more complete than somebody who does not have children and is still happy?

One person does not have children by choice, and maybe someone else is incapable of bearing a child due to some biological reason; then she suffers, since she is incapable of doing something that is a simple biological function of being a woman.

It's like Joe, who was eighty-four years of age; he went to the doctor. The doctor asks, "Joe, what's your problem?" Joe says, "Doctor, I am not able to pee!" The doctor thought for a while and then said, "Joe, you are eighty-four years old; have you not peed enough?" It's just a simple biological function. So if the woman has chosen not to have children, she has no problems with it by herself. It is just that social stigma can come for anything that you do. Even if you sit and meditate you may get a social stigma! (Laughs).

Seeker: Sadhguru, could this stigma also have come due to the social structure? Just like a barren land is no good, in the same way, a barren woman is no good?

Sadhguru: In Indian society, the social structures were mostly agriculture based. This whole society was agriculture based at one time. For a very long time – for thousands of years – India has had an agro-based society, not a hunting-gathering kind. Only small tribal segments have been the hunting-gathering kind. Agriculture is always labor-intensive. Today we hire labor to do things, it's a different situation, but back then everybody was working on their own lands and making their own food from the land. So, how many children you had was a great asset; especially if you had male children, it was a great asset. As you know, women who have only girls are also considered inauspicious. Only when she bears a boy is she auspicious. The king determined this, because without a boy there is nobody to take over his position. He wants only his blood to take over this position, which is just an extension of himself. His son ruling the kingdom is just like him continuing to rule the kingdom after his death. If somebody else takes it, it's not good enough; that's the mentality.

So, children were a very important part of life for survival and for economic and social situations. Also, people did not experience life to any depth with any other aspect except by bearing children. It's as if you have not experienced life. Like our meditators will go and talk to somebody: "Oh, you did not experience *Samyama*? It is no good for you to be living." Just like that, a woman who has borne a child has experienced some intense moments of being involved with another being in some way. When she sees another woman who does not have children, she thinks that the woman has not known this involvement with life at all – it could be true. This involvement matures the person in so many ways, so the other is scoffing at the one who does not have a child, "You have not known involvement; you are barren with life. Not only as a physical body you are barren, you are barren with life! You have not known life." Like people are saying, "If you have not known *Bhava Spandana*¹ you are barren with life," or "If tears of joy and tears of peace and love have not washed your cheeks, you are barren." Just like that they are speaking to the childless woman.

¹ Bhava Spandana : This four day high intensity residential program is offered as a part of Isha Yoga programs.

There are various aspects involved – social, economic, emotional, physical and biological aspects also. Over a period of time, if such a natural function as child bearing does not happen, she is a freak in some way, as far as the society is concerned. So whatever you are incapable of, people have always made fun of. If you cannot hear, they will make fun of it. If you cannot walk, they will make fun of it. It took a lot of time, evolution and culture for people to understand that if someone cannot walk, it is not a laughing matter. He needs love, compassion and support. Similarly, if somebody cannot bear a child, she needs love, compassion and support. It will take a lot of time for people to understand that. I think people are beginning to understand that now, which they did not in the past.

Seeker: Master, I have seen many people who are afflicted with different kinds of diseases come to the ashram. They are put on various practices and regimens alone, without any medication, but their conditions improve dramatically. For example, how was the physician from the US, who had an ischemic heart condition, able to trek in the Himalayas? Doug's knee, which showed torn cartilage on the MRI, is now fine and he is no longer in pain. How does this happen?

Sadhguru: The life energies within you created a whole body, isn't it? Even your brains were created by that. When you were born, your body was so small and today it became all this. Nobody is stretching you from outside, are they? Whatever is creating the body is within you. Your whole body, all the bones, all the blood, all the flesh and everything, including your brain, was created by this energy. So when it can do so much, can it not fix a little cartilage? Of course, it is not true for everybody. See here, Gina, her mother fed her with sheep brains (laughs). So even sheep brains can be a contributor! The only reason why it is not fixing it is that you're not in touch with it. You're creating a distance from it because you have formed such individual nonsense within yourself. You have identified yourself with your clothes, with your house, with cars and people - all kinds of stuff except your life energies. The more you identify with these things, the less and less of energy you become and the more and more inanimate you become.

When certain things happen and that person completely gives himself to me, at that moment, it's very easy to activate his energies in a certain way and whatever is not proper in the body will be corrected; but this energy is capable of doing that all the time. This energy is what is running your life. It is not you running this life; it's being done by this energy. Now you have read a textbook about digestion and assimilation and you think you are doing all that. Where are you doing it? At least Americans think they are, because before each meal they are reading labels about how much magnesium, how much calcium there is in the food – they are not reading the Bible anymore, they are reading labels – because they think they are doing everything. You're not doing it; this life energy has always been doing it. So if you just allow it for a moment, it will do anything.

Seeker: Sadhguru, when you say, "If somebody gives themselves in one moment," what the hell does that mean?

Sadhguru: Drop your hell! That's what it means. Right now, you are identified with everything you are not. You are functioning within the limitations of your likes and your opinions. You're sitting here, listening to me because what I'm saying is still appealing to your logic. Though we are going into the realm of the mystical, which is mumbo-jumbo to you, still it is perfectly logical. If I do not speak logically, you will not sit here. I know that. That means you have not given yourself totally; but there are moments when all your logic falls apart, you stop identifying yourself with things that you are not and you have just given yourself. In one moment, in bowing down to me, they kept their identities aside and that was all.

Seeker: Where are those moments, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: It does not matter; don't look for those moments, because you cannot create them. When you are completely overwhelmed by someone's presence, you do not exist. Otherwise, you have no way to dissolve yourself. It's a waste of time trying to do that.

Seeker: Sadhguru, I am always overwhelmed by your presence.

Sadhguru: Yes, but not enough, not to a point where you do not exist. Not enough yet. You can only be overwhelmed by that which is beyond you. You will not be overwhelmed by that which is you. So this talk is just that, without demanding any kind of faith or belief, we're still trying to overwhelm you. Normally, overwhelming you was done only with faith. The whole world always has been talking about faith, just to overwhelm you. Do you understand? People have been talking about miracles just to overwhelm you. Whether the miracles are true or not, consciously false miracles are also being created just to overwhelm you.

Once, a magician was on a cruise liner and he had a parrot that had seen all the magician's tricks a zillion times. He had figured out long ago how the magician made everything in the act disappear. The parrot grew to be bored, his owner growing stale and not developing any new tricks that the parrot could not figure out. One night, in the middle of the magician's performance, the ship hit an iceberg and sank. Everyone sank except the magician and the parrot. The magician managed to swim to a piece of wreckage and climb onto it. He immediately collapsed from exhaustion. Soon afterwards, the parrot flew there, and perched on the edge of the makeshift raft. It stared at the magician, and stared at the magician and stared at the magician. For a whole day, the magician was unconscious and all this time the parrot did not take his eyes off him. Eventually, the magician started to stir. Looking up, he saw the parrot eyeing him intently. Another hour went by and finally the parrot squawked, "All right, I give up; what did you do with the damn ship?" Here, we are not using those methods. With thinking and investigative minds, it will not work, so we are overwhelming you in a completely different way. Only when you are overwhelmed, you do not exist. When you are totally overwhelmed, when you do not exist, you become available in a completely different way.

Seeker: Sadhguru, if someone is ill and they give themselves to you and you activate energies in a certain way and their condition is corrected, is that true for just some people whose condition you have become aware of or for everyone?

Sadhguru: That's true for everyone. With these people something was noticeably wrong. With so many other people, just like that they're feeling so much younger and better. Is it not so? It's because the same thing has happened, but there is no specific damage that shows, that has been rectified.

Seeker: Sadhguru, is it not only with physical disease but with mental illness as well?

Sadhguru: It is with mental illness also, but mental illness is at a deeper level than physical illness, so it takes much more.

Seeker: Then what does it take, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: You are dropping your identifications only in installments. Jeanne probably had seventy-two pairs of pants. I told her, "You just keep six pairs of pants. The rest, you just give them away." She cried, "How can I give them away? They are good ones; I paid so much money." I said, "You give them away; just keep six pairs of pants. Anyway you can only wear one at a time. Six will do for you; seventy-two are not needed." Why is giving away your pants so difficult? It is because you are identified with them. When she gave them away, the first pair or two hurt, but as she gave away more and more, her identification became less and less. Now with six pairs the identification is not gone, but it is lowered. If you completely drop your identifications, you will become Realized.

Seeker: Sadhguru, I have heard that this doctor with the heart problem has recovered miraculously and trekked in the Himalayas. What was the significance of having her sleep in the Dhyanalinga¹ temple before she left on the Himalayan trek?

Sadhguru: The general and the fundamental dimension of the Dhyanalinga is spiritual, but all the other dimensions are there in it. There are temples and situations which are made for certain specific purposes. Suppose I take certain people to such places; I always make them receptive in a particular way, to that particular energy which is present in that place. Suppose I take somebody to some *Devi* temple, which is a feminine aspect, which is very powerful. If somebody needs to receive that in a particular way, then I do certain things with them so that they can receive that dimension very well.

This doctor's problem was in a specific dimension. So we just made her in such a way that she was more receptive to that dimension alone, when she slept there. You saw, the very first day, or the second day

¹ Dhyanalinga : a powerful energy form consecrated exclusively for the purpose of meditation. At Isha Yoga Center.

probably after she came to India, we took her off the breathing support device she was using. She thought this was impossible because of her tracheal collapse problem. When she would lie down, her trachea would collapse and she'd suffocate. Without the device she slept here at the *ashram*, for about a week. Then she traveled on the train. No chance of having the device there, and in the Himalayas, no possibility at all. She went through the whole trip without it. Now if she starts descending from that which was offered to her, you will find, probably in a few months' time, she will need the device again. If she does not descend, if she has sense and she enhances what has been offered to her, then she will never need it; but if she just drops from that, probably in a few months' time... How long has it been?

Seeker: Three or four months, Sadhguru.

Sadhguru: Any time now, we cannot really gauge it exactly, but I would say anywhere between three to six months she may start needing the breathing aid again if she does not handle that situation sensibly within herself. I hope she does not do that to herself, but it's very much possible.

Seeker: Master, when you say, "handle that situation," what do you mean?

Sadhguru: (Laughs) Handling it improperly or handling it properly, what it means is: in a way, you were made receptive to certain energies. That energy did things that you could never imagine doing. This doctor's case is quite dramatic. With many other people it may not be so dramatically there, but it is there. Every time this happens, the first day they are all grateful, tears flowing. Within three days they just think, "It's me." The moment they get identified with that and think it is all them, then you will see it will recede, because it cannot stay in your identification. Once it recedes, all your problems will be back. The change is still only on the level of her energy. For it to manifest itself physiologically, it will take a while. If that time is not allowed, very easily people can revert themselves back to their old ways. Already, somebody told me Doug's knee is paining again.

Seeker: Sadhguru, when something is offered to any one of us and we are receptive enough to receive it, should we keep it as a gift we can use, as something we don't identify ourselves with?

Sadhguru: It's not like that. It is not like it's there as a gift to be used. Right now, you are breathing. The air that you breathe is not you; it is coming from outside, isn't it? But you never acknowledge it. So many of your diseases are just because of that. The food that you eat, it's not you, isn't it? You never acknowledge that. If you go like this, what is it that is you? There is nothing in you that you can call 'you'. In some way, the food that you eat, the air that you breathe, has gotten integrated and has started functioning as a physical body, and you call that 'me'. Because you call that 'me', it is functioning in a limited way. If you do not call it as 'you', if it's really not in your identification, then it will function in an enormous way.

For example, in Doug's case or anybody's – there are many other people like that – we have made them receptive in a particular way, a receptivity beyond the normal sense of eating food or breathing air and whatever else. It's a little above that. Before this, you were still taking in physical quantities and making them into physical quantities. Now here, you are receiving an energy situation, which changes – it's not that it changes everything, but it just triggers things in a certain way. So your whole system begins to function in a different way because of this influence. The first three days you understood it as, "This is not me; this is Grace;" but within a week's time, it becomes, "Okay, it is me and Sadhguru;" then in a month's time, "It's all me!" This is happening, isn't it? The moment you go this way, Grace recedes, because it cannot be there once you bring in your identification.

Seeker: Today, we are seeing so many people going to psychologists for treatment. It seems every single person has a shrink that he sees at least once a week. Why are we becoming so troubled? Are we all going crazier by the day, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: Today, ninety percent of the people are in different states of mental sickness. It's just that the level of sickness is sometimes manageable, sometimes unmanageable. Let's say you have asthma. Sometimes your asthma is manageable, so you do not consider yourself as sick. You take some syrup or some tablet and you manage. On a particular day, you become really sick and you either totally collapse or are hospitalized.

Only then you consider yourself as sick, isn't it? That does not mean the other days you were not sick; you were sick, but it was manageable.

Similarly with the mental states, almost everybody is sick. It's just that they are in some manageable level of sickness. Once in a while, they flare up for some time and then they settle down again. They are managing, but the madness is very much there. Now all the psychologists and the psychiatrists have only studied sick people. People like Freud never found a meditator or a Buddha to study. He would have studied only those people who are in different states of mental sickness; either manageably mad or unmanageably mad, whichever way. They only studied mad people, and the one who is studying is also mad. He is equally mad. It's not that he has transcended his limitations.

On a certain day, it happened like this. Three psychiatrists were traveling together on a train from Germany to France, to attend the annual all-psychiatrists seminar. Sitting there, they started confiding to each other their greatest secrets. The first one said, "My greatest weakness is compulsive gambling. Every weekend, I take off from the clinic and let myself go full blast. Of course, I put all the money that I earn from my gambling spree into some charity box, and mind you, I don't start stealing from another charity box until I go drinking. Then I get sodden drunk and finish the night in the gutter." The second psychiatrist nodded his head in understanding and said, "Well, my greatest secret is that I am so dependant on taking anti-depressants all the time, and I have to gulp down an extra double dosage before I sit in consultation with my patients." The third one sat there very smug and quiet. So the other two prodded her, "What about you? We've told you our deepest secrets. Now you have to tell us yours." The third psychiatrist said, "Well, I'm a diagnosed gossip, and I can't wait to get off this train!"

Whatever problem you have - anxiety, fear, psychosis or anything – according to that, they put you into the corresponding category and they have a treatment for that; and what kind of treatment it is! Somehow adjusting the whole situation and making you manageably mad, not making you sane. Nobody can make you sane, please know this. From unmanageable madness, they can bring you down to manageable madness. Everybody has learned the trick to manage the madness. Now this process of spirituality is not about moving into manageable madness. It's about going so mad that you become sane.

Okay? You cross the limits of madness, then you become perfectly sane. See, you're born with the madness; the karma itself is madness. The very bondages that you have created for yourself, the limitations that you have created for yourself, are they not madness?

If there is a mad man who thinks he's tied to this column - there is no rope, there is no chain, but he thinks he's tied to the column - he will only go around this, round and round. Whatever you tell him, he will not listen, because he feels he is tied to the column. Isn't this the way everybody is living, tied to some column? So it's the same madness. Being manageably mad or unmanageably mad really makes no difference. At least, if you become unmanageably mad, you can enjoy yourself in the asylum. You don't have to be ashamed of being mad anymore! You can just freak out the way you want to. You don't have to bother about controlling it. It's such a big strain to control that madness. Do you know why a person growing on the spiritual path looks totally crazy? It is because he is pushing himself to the point beyond madness, where it cannot touch him any more.

These meditations at *Isha*¹ are not about you becoming peaceful. They are about blasting yourself into bits until there is no peace and no disturbance within you; only that can be called as peace. If you get disturbed and then make yourself peaceful, that's not peace; it's just a lull. This peace is like the eye of the hurricane where everything is calm. The hurricane is blowing like mad and in between, suddenly there is total calm. Do not be fooled by this calm, it's just a small respite. The next gust will come again and it will be even worse than before. Hurricanes always move like this; because of the centrifugal and centripetal forces and the forward motion, the front end of the hurricane is less forceful than the rear end. So what you see first is nothing compared to what's going to come. That will be much bigger. The same goes with your mind.

Everything in existence is like that. Whatever blows with force is like that. It will blow, then give a little space and then again blow. The mind is also like that; it goes through a phase of disturbance then it comes back to peace. Don't ever think it is peace; it's just a break in the madness. Even mad people are perfectly

¹ Isha : formless Divine energy. Also the name chosen by Sadhguru for the foundation he created to offer a spiritual possibility to all humankind.

sane in some moments in their life. Don't think they are twenty-four hours mad. Sometimes they are very sane and perfectly okay, and sometimes they just go off; they are more spontaneous than you. See, the man who has lost his so-called mental balance is a lot more spontaneous than you, isn't he? But you are also doing what he is doing.

Seeker: Sadhguru, does spirituality have a treatment for our depressions, our neuroses, and our madness?

Sadhguru: The way of treating madness on the spiritual path is very different. Generally, if somebody goes really mad, especially with psychological problems, what they do is take him to the master at a monastery or an ashram. See, if this person remains in the family, they try to attend to him too much, do everything for him. Now if they take him to the hospital or the asylum, there also they will attend to him, guard him, do many things. If they take him to a Buddhist monastery for example, there, they will just leave him, ignore him completely. He shouts, raves, throws stones; whatever he does, nobody reacts. Everybody just goes about doing their own work, not reacting to any madness. Within a few days this person will settle down and become peaceful, because without attention, his madness cannot go on.

Madness is just a trip of the ego. It's like a power trip, or electrical trip; it overflows. Similarly, madness is simply an overflowing of your ego. That's all it is. So just ignore the man. Put him in a corner. Don't bother about him. Don't even call him for food. Just leave him. If the fellow is really hungry he will come and eat; otherwise, he will just work out his madness and become okay. The atmosphere is right, the energy is high. Slowly, that man will settle down and then he will come and say, "Teach me meditation." Ignore the madness and it will die by itself. Your madness also, you attend to it too much. You should not.

Seeker: Master, I hope I never go mad.

Sadhguru: What makes you think that you're not mad right now? The limitations that you have set upon yourselves, are they not madness? Madness does not necessarily mean that you have to take off your clothes, go on the street and run. Mad people are of different varieties. They need not necessarily be

laughing and rolling or ranting and raving. Some mad people are very serious. Others are in some other way. Madness is just the ego. It needs some expression. Now a tremendous amount of time and energy is spent to cover your madness. One way of handling it is to cover it up. Another way is to transcend it. If you cover it up, you will only fool other people who will think that you're a perfectly balanced person; but you suffer for the madness that you cover up and keep within yourself. It will grow and you will pay the price for keeping it within. If you transcend this madness, there is something else which opens up, a new fragrance, a new light.

Everybody has become a great master in cover-up jobs. Do see, you are a fantastic actor all your life. You fool the world, you fool the people close to you and you fool yourself. You tell your friends, "I think I have found inner peace. My therapist told me that a way to achieve inner peace was to finish things I had started. So today, I finished two bags of potato chips, an extra large supreme pizza with all the toppings, a lemon pie, a big box of chocolate candy and drowned it all with half a case of beer. I feel better already." Maybe you can only fool yourself like this and to that extent you can put up an act, isn't it? So much negativity you think you can drown with a beer. You cover it up so beautifully.

It is layers and layers of madness. This is not just something you gathered in a few years. It's an accumulation of many lifetimes. Layers and layers of madness have been accumulated. It has to be worked out. There is no other way. Either you drop the whole thing and walk away or slowly you cleanse the bag. The moment you lose your madness, if you really lose your madness, you are meditative. How else can you be? That's all meditation is. For a while, during meditation, you are bypassing your madness and experiencing a little bit of sanity. The mind settles down and you are just there. Otherwise it is going non-stop. The moment you're out of your madness, you are always meditative; there is no other way to be. Your mind itself is madness. Whichever way it is, it is madness. Transcending that is sanity.

Seeker: Sadhguru, are action and psychology connected? Since I was a kid, I always got into intense activity to such an extent that I would exhaust myself. I would go swimming, biking, trekking, all-night dancing or running intensely if there was nothing else to do. Was I working out my madness, unconsciously?

Sadhguru: They are connected in many ways. So Tina, if you had not been into all this activity, we know where you would have landed up by now! (Laughs).

Seeker: In the loony bin!?

Sadhguru: Yes! During the Isha Yoga programs, when you really let yourself go, you saw that the madness is a part of you and not something being put into you by anyone. Maybe it is hidden, or covered, but it's very much a part of you. All your effort in life, conscious and unconscious, is to cover this madness, this insanity which is there within, to give it a nice outlook, a nice image.

The whole world itself is going through a unique kind of neurosis, which was not there in the past. This is simply because modern man has stopped using his body to a large extent. In the past, when you intensely involved yourself in physical activity, a lot of your neurosis was worked out. Your nervous energy got spent. I know many people, especially young people, who had psychological problems. They just started swimming or playing some sport daily and then everything became okay; because of enough activity, the energy was expended.

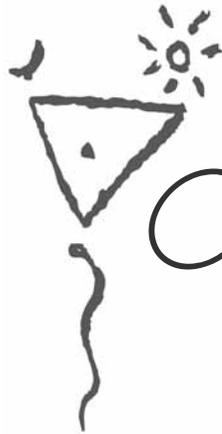
Today, man has become physically inactive like never before – he could not afford to be so physically inactive before, he had to do so many things physically, just to survive. So he has become more neurotic than in the past. As a general phenomenon, there were neurotic people then also, but not in these numbers. Today, it has become a common phenomenon in society that everybody is in some level of neurosis. This is simply because your energy is not worked out; it's trapped. You have not transcended your madness and at the same time you're not working it out. The therapy also is not there. If you went out and chopped wood for the whole day – if you chopped a hundred logs a day – a lot of your energy would be spent, and life would be peaceful; but today it's not like that. You are not using your body the way it used to be used, so you go on generating all kinds of diseases, like never before.

This builds up into your system over a period of time. Then your physical and emotional energy need some outlet. That is how your bars, your clubs and your discotheques have come into place. People have to work out their neurosis somewhere, somehow. These discos look like madness, you can't even

breathe inside. They are full of smoke and sweat but people are just going wild. You can't even dance; everybody is bumping into everybody else, but it doesn't matter. You have to work it out, otherwise you will go crazy. So on Saturday, you go work out your neurosis for the week. Then the piling up starts once more and once again the Saturday night fever comes. There is another way to drop this madness and go ahead, completely leaving it behind and going ahead where you are no more a part of it. This is what meditation is all about. Now, if you dance, you simply dance for the joy of it, and not because there is something to work out. If you're dancing to work out something, maybe it is therapeutic. It is good therapy all right, but there is a certain ugliness about it. It is lusty; you cannot dance out of love. You can only dance out of lust.

Do you know the difference between love and lust? Lust is a strong need. Love is not a need. When you love, you settle down; nothing more is needed. You can just sit here for a lifetime. With lust you can't sit anywhere; you either get into some mad action, or you are bound to go crazy. When there is a certain neurosis, a certain madness within yourself, you can only be in lust. Your lust can be for sex, for food or for some particular activity or some hobby, it doesn't matter what it is, but you develop lust for something. Without that lust you cannot live. Even your work is an effective way of throwing out your lust. It's just that it is the most popular and accepted way in the world. Today people just go on working, working and working. Not because they are creating something fantastic, but simply because they have to work, otherwise they don't know what to do with themselves.

You have to guard that madness cautiously. Nobody ever knows that you have this within yourself and you yourself would like to forget it. You do everything possible to forget it. All the entertainment in the world has come just to hide your madness. If you were perfectly sane, you would not need entertainment. You need entertainment just to cover your madness. If we take away your entertainment, you will go crazy. Do you understand? Man needs entertainment simply to hide his madness. If he was perfectly sane, he would not need entertainment. He could just sit and watch this bamboo grow. He does not really need entertainment.



Chapter - 5

Realm of the Mystic

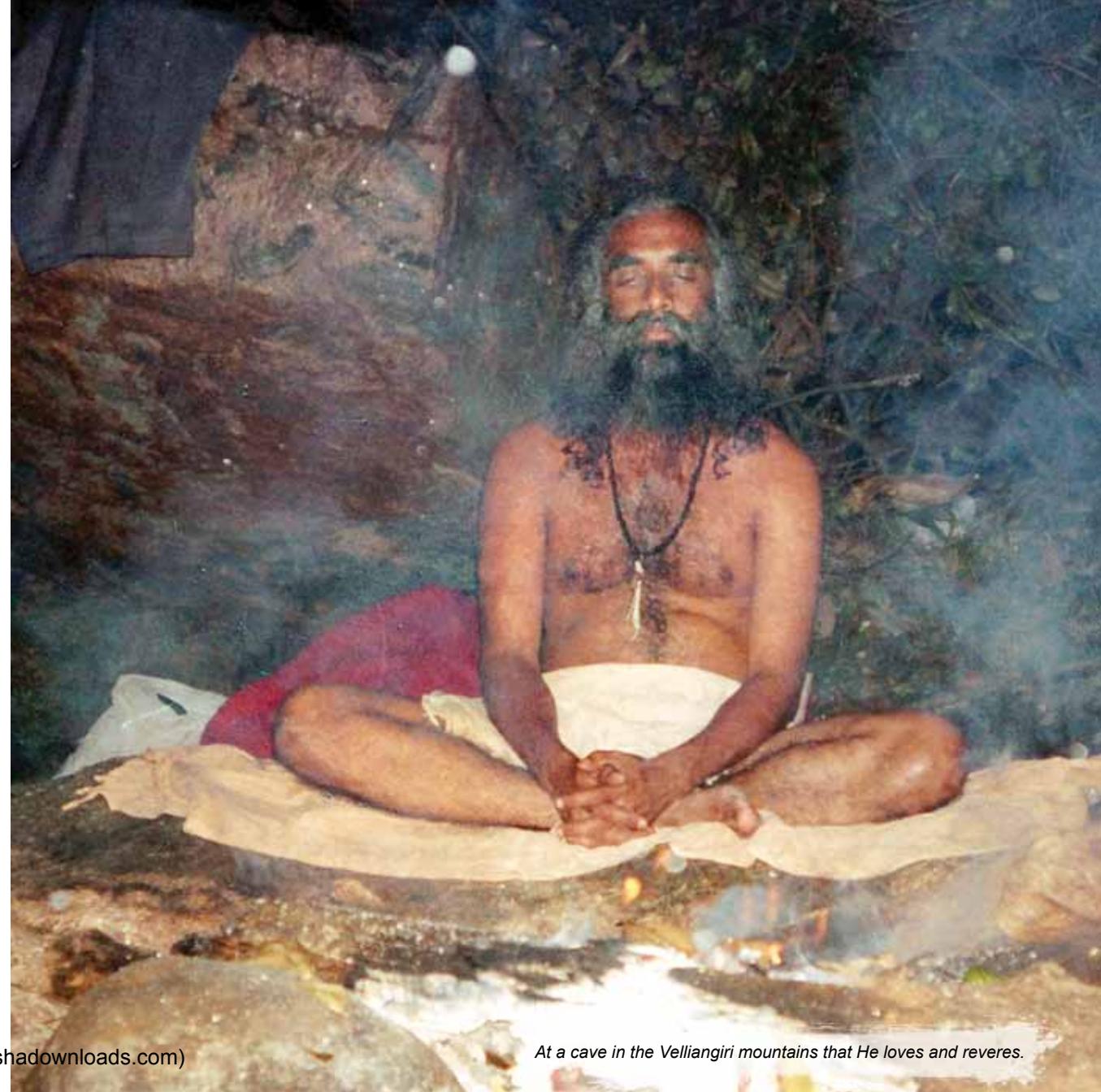


Realm of the Mystic

*Even a blade of grass is pointing towards you
A pine tree of course is reaching out for you
Every pulsating cell of protoplasmic shell
Has to ceaselessly tread your mindless will
My longing and thrashing was a veritable hell
This merging has become blissful and still*

*Now I can say your Will is my Will
And when I Will, you Will.*

– Sadhguru





From the caveman's time when everything, from the sound of thunder and rain, fire and floods, were all too mystical, to the present day where anything that's not within the tenets of rudimentary logic is a matter of scorn and ridicule, man has certainly come a long way. Exploited to the hilt by impostors of all sorts, trivialized to palmreading, crystal gazing and aura cleansing, mysticism today is more a frivolous pastime than a sacred dimension and the key to the elusive mysteries and the purpose of Existence.

Obsessed by the mundane and ensnared by the prowess of the logical, over centuries, man has obliterated the mystical from his life. Yet, whether it is the process of birth or rebirth, or a miracle healing, whether it is stepping-out of one's body or transmigration of the soul, black magic or occult,

Enlightenment or *Mukthi*, it is the Realm of the Mystic that rules the world of the seeker and Existence.

Speaking sometimes cryptically like a Zen master to his adept disciples, sometimes like a master story-teller weaving tales of another time and another world, sometimes like the gray-haired scientist expounding with utmost simplicity the most profound aspects of the cosmos, Sadhguru takes the reader on a startling tour of the mystical, leaving the reader choicelessly humbled about his own importance in the Universe.

Quoting extensively from first hand experiences and separating truth from myth of the tradition, Sadhguru's irrefutably logical narration dares the reader to seek the Realm of the Mystic – the abode of the Enlightened.

Seeker: Sadhguru, can you please speak about the phenomena we refer to as miracles, healings, and things like that, which cannot be explained by medical science?

Sadhguru: Life functions in many ways. Anything that you don't understand, you call it a miracle. Let us say you don't know anything about electricity. You do not know what electricity is. This hall is dark. If I tell you to just press this button and the whole hall will be flooded with light, will you believe me? No. Now I just do it, and light appears. What will you call me? The Messiah, the son of God, or maybe even God Himself – simply because you don't understand how electricity works. Similarly, life happens in many different ways. You have limited yourself to just the physical, the logical – physical in experience, logical in thinking. Anything beyond this, you are calling a miracle. That's why I have been trying to remind you that if there is a miracle, then everything in the existence is a miracle; every atom is a miracle, isn't it? Can you believe that a little atom – these three things rotating around each other – if you break it, it becomes an enormous bomb that can destroy the whole planet? Is it not a miracle? Every atom is a miracle. Otherwise, there are no miracles and everything is just the way it is. It is natural. Whether you call it natural or miracle, it's the same thing; just different words. Anything which is not in your perception or your experience, you tend to call a miracle. There are no miracles in the way that you are thinking. It is just that medical sciences are limited to just knowing the physical body. If anything happens beyond that, you think it's a miracle.

The last time I was in the United States, Doug's knee cartilage was torn. He was in excruciating pain. He had already been in India for a year, training to be a teacher. He went back to the United States and suddenly his knee began to hurt terribly. He wasn't even able to sit in *vajrasana*.¹ At the same time,

¹ *vajrasana* : a simple yogic posture.

something else was happening in his mind. He was doing funny things around me, but I just let him be. In so many ways, he was trying to tell me, not actually in words, but with his actions, comments and gestures, both consciously and unconsciously, that his knee was bad and going back to India would not be possible for him. Then he went to a doctor in Chicago; the doctor said he must have an MRI. They took the MRI scan and they told him, "The cartilage in your knee is torn; you must have surgery immediately." They said, "It's not just torn; the pieces of the cartilage have gotten between the joint. That's why there is so much pain." When he moved, he felt excruciating pain. So he brought the MRI to me and said, "The doctor says I must go through surgery. It costs ten thousand dollars. I'll have to get a job to pay for it. I can't come back to India." I said, "Don't worry about what the doctor says."

Then, there were just about four or five days left before I was to leave the country, and Doug was also supposed to leave. He came to me and asked, "What shall I do? I'm supposed to go through the surgery." I said, "Anyway, you told me you want to meditate." He said he wanted to meditate, and experience deeper and deeper states of meditation. For a meditator, one big problem is the lower part of the leg. Isn't it? Now if your knee and below is taken off, you know, it's so wonderful to sit and meditate...no pain in the leg, nothing. I said, "We'll amputate both your legs, in India. Then you can sit and meditate all the time. You told me you want to become a meditator. You want to go into deep meditation. So what's your problem? We will remove the leg and you will meditate."

"No, no, no, don't do that!" he said (laughs). I said, "It's up to you then; you do what you want." He struggled and struggled, then he came back to India. At the time, everybody was getting ready to go to the Himalayas. On the Himalayan trek, we trek over eighty kilometers in total, over a period of twelve days. Then it happened that we took a group of people trekking up the big mountain behind the ashram, and he came along. Once there, he came and asked, "Can I come to the Himalayas?" I said, "I thought you were due for amputation. Where is the question of Himalayas for you? We don't want to kill any mules there, but, okay, you come to the Himalayas." Then he remembered: "But my leg..." I said, "Leave your leg and come."

He came to the Himalayas and walked all eighty kilometers, keeping pace with me. Generally, I leave everyone behind me and go. He carried my bag and kept pace with me, wherever I went. So I went about advertising to everybody, this man tried to con me for ten thousand dollars (laughs). He showed

me a fake MRI." He asked, "What happened to my leg? Really, it was hurting so much and now it's not hurting at all." Now you can call it a miracle if you want. I just call it another kind of science, that's all. It is another kind of science. Life functions in so many ways. You have just limited yourself to the physical and the logical. Anything beyond that, you think is a miracle. This life energy in you created your whole body. These bones, this flesh, this heart, this kidney and everything, can't it create a piece of cartilage? If your energies are kept in full flow and proper balance, it is capable of recreating the physical.

Seeker: Is all energy a vibration, just different frequencies of vibration? Is it gross energy versus subtle energy, just a difference in the frequency of vibration?

Sadhguru: Energy, if it vibrates, takes a form. Now you want to put a line between what is physical, and what is beyond the physical. When you are talking about energy as modern science does, you're still talking about physical energy. We refer to this as prana, which is the source of all physical creation. Beyond that also there is energy. That energy is not manifest as physical, but it is still energy. That's what we're calling the etheric body and the bliss body. Or these days we are calling it nothingness.

Nothingness is bliss. It does not make sense logically. You can speak logically only up to *pranamayakosha*.¹ Beyond that, it will not make any logical sense. How can nothingness be blissful? People feel depressed when they feel like nothing. What I'm saying is, when you experience your nothingness, you feel blissful. That's not logical. So that realm of going beyond the *karma*² cannot be approached logically. It's just that you understand that the physical contains something else. It's wrong to call it 'something' because it is no more a thing. We can use the word 'something' and all this '*thing*' business only when it is physical. So when we say 'nothing', probably you would understand it better if we put a hyphen between no and thing, because it is no-thing anymore, but still it is, so that is where logic ends. That's where

¹ *pranamayakosha*: the energy sheath or body. One of the five sheaths of yogic physiology.

² karma: lit. action. Referring to past action, the cause of all bondage.

modern science ends - with the physical. The whole spiritual process is to go beyond the physical, to know something which is not physical. That which is not physical has no dimension. That which has no dimension has no sense of here and there, now and then, nothing like that. Only the physical has here and there. Only the physical has now and then. That which is not physical does not subscribe to all these limitations.

Seeker: I have heard you sing, 'Nadha Bhramha', Sadhguru. What does it mean? And can we use sound to attain to mukthi?

Sadhguru: *Nadha* means sound. *Bhramha* means Divine, the All. Fundamentally, there are three sounds in the existence. Out of these three sounds, any given sound can be created. Do you know something about your color television? In your color television, there are only three color webs. Given these three color webs, any number of colors can be created. Similarly, given these three sounds, any number of sounds can be created. Right now, with an experiment, you can find out. See without the use of the tongue, there are only three sounds you can utter: "aaa", "ouuu", and "mmm". Even if you cut off your tongue, you can still utter these three sounds. For any other sound, you need the use of the tongue. You are using the tongue only to mix the sounds. There are only three sounds, and you are mixing them in many ways and producing all the other sounds. There are so many millions of sounds you can create with your mouth, isn't it? You know a mute person can only say: "aaa", "ouuu", and "mmm". He cannot say anything else because he has not learned how to use his tongue. Now if you utter these three sounds together, what will you get? AUM. AUM is not some religion's trademark, although they may be using it as their trademark. AUM is the fundamental sound in the existence.

It is said that the Great Lord Shiva can create a whole new existence just by uttering three AUMs. Now, this is not a fact, but it is a truth. Do you know the difference between a fact and a truth? Let us say you are sitting here as a woman; does that mean that your father has made no contribution towards you? Does that mean that your father does not exist within you? No. So the fact is, you're either a man or a woman. The truth is you are both. It's not that Shiva is sitting somewhere and uttering AUMs, that's not the point. What is being said is: see, today modern science proves to you beyond any doubt that

the whole existence is just a vibration. Do you know this? There is no matter. After the theory of relativity and the quantum theory have come about, there is no such thing as matter. Everything is just a vibration. Yes, this has been proven beyond any doubt. Wherever there is a vibration, there is bound to be a sound.

Now this steel rod (touching the microphone stand) is not really a steel rod; it's a certain vibration. In other words, this is a certain sound. "If this is a sound, why can't I hear it?" This is the question, naturally. Why you do not hear it is because your ability to hear is limited to just a small band of frequencies. Anything above that you cannot hear; anything below that you cannot hear. The frequencies which are above your hearing level are known as ultrasonic frequencies; those below your hearing level are known as subsonic frequencies. Let's say you bring a transistor radio here and tune it to some frequency. A song is playing. Where is the song coming from? Is the radio singing? Right now, where is the sound? It is everywhere. It's in the air, but you cannot hear it. Right now, there are a lot of noises in the air, but you don't hear them. If you bring a transistor and tune it to a frequency, suddenly you hear. What the transistor is doing is converting a frequency that you cannot hear into a frequency that you can hear. That is all it is doing. So you know there is so much here that you cannot hear and the whole existence is just a sound.

Now, there are many ways to look at this. Have you been to Kedar? Has anybody been to Kedarnath? Having been born in India, if you do not go to the Himalayas, you're missing something very huge in your life. Before you're too old and no good for anything, you must go to the Himalayas once. It is something that everybody must do. Forget about anything spiritual, just the mountains themselves are too much. Everybody must see them once in their life. Being born in India, if you don't see them, you're missing something. Kedar is a very powerful and wonderful place. Above Kedar, there is a place called Kanti Sarovar. Generally people do not go there; it's a tricky climb. I just trekked up to Kanti Sarovar, and sat on one of those rocks there.

It's very difficult to put this into words, but after some time, everything turned into sound in my experience; my body, the mountain, the lake in front of me, everything had become sound. It had taken on the sound form, and was just going on in me in a completely different way. See, I have had, at many stages in my life, deep appreciation for Sanskrit as a language, and I had opportunities to learn it. I chose not to learn

Sanskrit, because the moment you learn Sanskrit, you'll end up reading the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*,¹ and all the scriptures. My own vision has never failed me and I didn't want to clutter myself with all this traditional whatever, so I did not bother to learn Sanskrit. Here I am sitting, my mouth is closed – I am very clear about that – but my own voice is going on loudly, as if it is on a microphone, loudly singing a song, and it's in Sanskrit language. We will sing this together; just sing after me; close your eyes. Feel the sounds and just sing after me. Sing after me; you will know what it is about.

Nadha Bhramha Vishwaswaroopa
 Nadha Hi Sakala Jeevaroopa
 Nadha Hi Karma Nadha Hi Dharma
 Nadha Hi Bandhana Nadha Hi Mukthi
 Nadha Hi Shankara Nadha Hi Shakti
 Nadham Nadham Sarvam Nadham
 Nadham Nadham Nadham Nadham

(Sound is Bhramhan, the manifestation of the universe, sound manifests itself in the form of all life, sound is bondage, sound is the means for liberation, sound is that which binds, sound is that which liberates, sound is the bestower of all, sound is the power behind everything, sound is everything.)

Seeker: Sadhguru, your knowing seems to be inexhaustible. Is all this recorded in you or are you just getting it from somewhere?

Sadhguru: Karma is recorded in many ways: memory-wise, sensation-wise, physiology-wise and energy-wise. Similarly, knowledge too. There are some things which are transmitted to you on the level of your mind, others on the level of your body. Do you see how once you know how to swim, your body knows it? If you fall into the water; you will swim. You don't have to remember how to ride a bicycle; once you

¹ *Vedas*, *Upanishads* : sacred scriptures in the Hindu Culture.

know how, if you sit on the bicycle, it goes, isn't it? Even if you don't ride a bicycle for twenty years and then you get onto one, you might be a bit off balance at first and then you just go, because the memory is in the body. It is no longer in the mind; it's just in the body. Transmission is also on many different levels.

Everything that I know just happens to me in a moment. When I'm walking on the street, I'm not carrying the burden of this knowledge. If you sit with me longer, longer, and a little longer, you will see. You'll be surprised. I do not know anything, but at the same time, I know everything. If you ask me anything concerned with the inner dimensions of a human being, I will come out with the answer, without any hesitation, with absolute clarity. Even if somebody says the *Gita*¹ is saying something else, I will simply say that maybe *Krishna*² does not know; what can I do about it? It is so crystal clear within me that it cannot be any other way. It's not that Krishna does not know. It is just that maybe you are not able to see what he's saying; that's the difference. What I'm saying is that this is not coming from a certain remembrance. It is coming in a completely different way, because it was transmitted in a different way. My association with my *Guru*³ was just for a few moments. Somehow he didn't even want to touch me with his foot; he touched me with his walking stick. (Spreads his arms with a mock sense of pain and laughs). What cannot be learned in ten lifetimes was transmitted in one moment. It was all there. It was not just about knowing myself this way; it was also about various technologies, about how and what to do in every aspect, with absolute clarity. When it is transmitted like this, in the form of energy, not in the form of memory or in the form of knowing things logically, then the burden of knowledge is not on you. This is the difference.

People who have studied knowledge will become heavy with it. They will become serious. Studied people cannot even laugh usually, but somebody who is coming from his Realization – he knows, but the burden of knowledge is not sitting on his head all the time. He carries it very lightly, because this is a different technology altogether. See, what is in a thousand pages, today can be stored in a microchip. Similarly, what cannot be contained in a million books can be stored in a certain arrangement of energy.

¹ *Gita* : the sacred book of the Hindus.

² *Krishna* : Divine incarnation, historically over three thousand five hundred years ago.

³ *Guru* : lit. dispeller of darkness. A spiritual Master.

I do not know if modern science is working in this direction or not, but let me tell you, someday modern science will come up with ways to store information in a certain arrangement of energy. I know this clearly as that is the reality in us. Your energy system, or pranamayakosha, carries stupendous volumes of information, which is so easy to carry, which has no burdensome-ness; it's so simple.

Seeker: Now whatever you are speaking, is it recorded somewhere in your energy system?

Sadhguru: Whatever I say, is it recorded somewhere, is that what you are asking? What is already recorded is what is being spoken and what is being spoken is not something which I am thinking of and speaking. What is being spoken is what life is. It is recorded all the time, everywhere. We don't have to re-record it again; it has always been there. Whether I exist or I do not exist, Truth is; it is always there. We can talk about it if you want to, or we can just see it as it is. Do not worry; it will never be lost (laughs).

Seeker: What is the meaning of 'Sadhguru'?

Sadhguru: Sadhguru means an uneducated Guru. Sadhguru means somebody who has not gone through a so-called formal spiritual education. The only thing that he has is his inner experience; he has no spiritual education as such. He's not coming from the *Vedas*, *Gitas*, *Upanishads*, or any kind of training for that matter. The only thing he has is his inner experience. Do you see, I am quite ignorant about everything else except myself? The only thing that I know is myself, and that's all that is worth knowing in the existence. Really, the only thing that is truly worth knowing in the existence is yourself. If you know it, everything that is worth knowing is there within you. So the word 'Sadhguru' fundamentally means somebody who comes from within, not somebody who has been trained by somebody else. That means that usually a Sadhguru does not come from any particular tradition; he just sprang up like that. Maybe the support of the tradition is there, but he does not belong to a lineage because he does not come from anybody as such – no pedigree (laughs). That's why it takes a long time to find acceptance in the world, because there is no pedigree.

Seeker: Then books are useless on the path?

Sadhguru: See, whatever spirituality I'm talking about has not come to me because I studied with somebody or studied the Vedas or the Upanishads, or something. I might have just done some casual reading; bits and pieces here and there, but I have never even studied the Gita. The moment I hear a word, I know what it means. I like literature, and I like Asterix and Dennis the Menace. That's different. There is a lot of wisdom in that – sense, simple sense about life. When it comes to anything spiritual, I haven't found a book that is truly worthwhile in any way, so I usually don't read them. If I just open one book, and read any page somewhere in the middle, I know exactly what kind of mind is writing this book, and what are the possibilities. There is no point reading all four hundred pages of the book.

Seeker: When an Enlightened person opts for rebirth, is he born Enlightened? How was it in your life?

Sadhguru: I wish to correct the question a little bit. No person is ever Enlightened, because the personality is only your unconscious creation and your person is just a sum of that. Only when he has gone beyond his personality is there a possibility of Enlightenment. So when he's Enlightened, does it mean to say he has no personality? He has one, but it's a conscious personality; something that he has created to carry himself around, otherwise he can't do anything in the world. The question of a person or a being who is Enlightened and then is reborn – before we go into this, one should know that for most people, their moment of Enlightenment and their moment of leaving the body happens at once. When their energies reach a certain pitch, they leave the body. That moment of leaving the body is also Enlightenment. So the question of coming back does not arise, unless they have a certain mastery over the mechanics of the body, and they manage to retain their body because they have some specific work to do. If your objective is just liberation, then Enlightenment and leaving the body will always be together. If you have other objectives of wanting to do something else with what freedom you have found within yourself, with what liberation you have found within yourself, then there is something more to be done. Let us say there is a prisoner in a prison. If you release him from the prison, he is liberated. He goes away. Never again

does he want to go back to the prison. Now, there is somebody who is ambitious enough or stupid enough to become free from the prison, but he wants to run the prison. He wants to become a prison officer. He was a prisoner then, now he wants to become a prison officer. Only when you have this kind of a problem, you retain your body. Otherwise, the normal prisoner's aspiration is somehow to get out. He would go anywhere in the world, but he doesn't want to go to the prison again. So an Enlightened being who is here right now as a person, is a person with this kind of problem. He has some work to do with the prison. He is liberated, but he still has some work to do. Now the prisoner has become the prison officer, managing things in the prison so that he can liberate all the other prisoners. The normal prisoner wants to get out of the prison; he does not care what happens inside the prison. See, when you're imprisoned in some way, what imprisons you doesn't matter. Once you realize that you're imprisoned, the only aspiration in you is to be liberated, to get away from this. Now, a few people want to become free and still want to be there to do something for the whole situation. So that's when this 'taking on a body again' comes up.

The fundamental question that you have asked is, "A person who is Enlightened, will he be born Enlightened? Or if not, does he get a reminder of his Enlightenment only at a certain stage in his life? Why so?" Let us say, for example, there are mango trees here; they have all the qualities of a mango tree. They're capable of bearing mangoes. The problem is, if the moment the sapling springs out the mangoes appear, the tree could die. The little plant would die if a huge mango came out of that little plant. It takes time. Nature is allowing time for this mango sapling to grow to a certain sturdiness, a certain strength, a certain maturity and balance, a certain capability to hold its ground. Only then it flowers and bears fruit. Similarly, an Enlightened being has certain qualities that are enshrined in him, which cannot be taken away. When he is born, he's born like anybody. The qualities are still inherent in him, but they will wait for a certain time and space where they can find expression. Until then they wait; this is nature's intelligence. It knows exactly when it should flower to find maximum fruit. If it flowers too early, it will not find its full potential. So it will wait depending upon what type of work he is intending to take up.

We know bala yogis, many of them, who at the age of six or seven became Enlightened. Most of them never reach the age of twenty-five or thirty. We have known this in India, where people get Enlightened in their childhood and never reach thirty. Before that they will go, because they cannot sustain the body

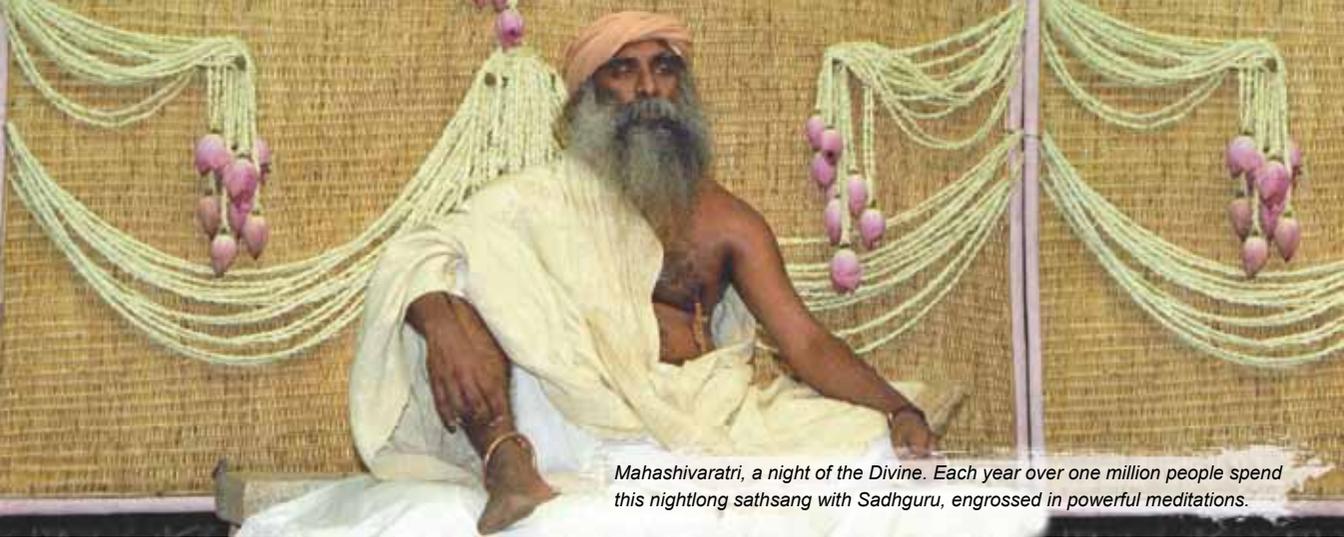


Meditating in the lap of the mystical Himalayas.

at that intensity of existence. Sufficient space has to be given so that the mind, the body and the emotions develop and mature in a certain way before the other dimension becomes alive in that person. Then he can hold it much better. If the reference is to me though, there is an experience of two lifetimes behind me. Living an Enlightened life, why did I have to wait until I was twenty-five? The very reason why, in this lifetime, this body had taken this amount of time is fundamentally for the consecration of the *Dhyanalinga*.¹ To consecrate the Dhyanalinga, Enlightenment is not enough; one needs a perfect body in many ways. When I say perfect, I'm not talking in terms of athletic perfection, but a perfect body in terms of management of energy and what can be done with it.

This is not possible for a child. In those twenty-five years of activity, I was not aware why certain things were coming to me. Now as I look back, it's so simple to see how everything happened in perfect progression. My childhood, my adolescence, my youth and further. Whatever happened with my life happened in such a way that everything that was necessary for the development of this body and this mind, for the stabilization of my emotions, naturally happened as a process of living.

¹ Dhyanalinga : a powerful energy form consecrated exclusively for the purpose of meditation, located at Isha Yoga Center.



Mahashivaratri, a night of the Divine. Each year over one million people spend this nightlong satsang with Sadhguru, engrossed in powerful meditations.

Seeker: Master, how did you become like this? You were born like us, yet you are so exceptional, so much ahead of us. How did it happen for you? What did you do to become like this?

Sadhguru: Even when I was a child this is how things happened to me. I never really was a child in my life. When I look back and see, I can remember clearly all the things that happened around me. I even remember situations that occurred during my infancy. My mother would be stunned when I could describe situations and conversations that I witnessed when I was three to six months of age. Even as a child I was thinking the same way as I do now. Probably this was the reason why no one in the family could hold me and kiss me. Maybe my presence was like that.

When they put me in school, school never meant anything to me. Since my fifth and sixth standards, I always wanted to go trekking. I had my own bicycle to go to school, a *tiffin*¹ box and water bottles and I was equipped for the day. I would just go climb a tree, reach the highest branch and just hang there. I would be there the whole day. I would eat there, drink my water there and wait. Just sitting and swaying there on the branch, after some time, something used to happen to me. I would become very ecstatic and it was blissful. At the time, I didn't realize what it was. Only after tasting meditation I came to know that

¹ *tiffin* : snack, here referring to a lunchbox.

unknowingly, I had been in meditation. It is unexplainable. I liked it so much that every time I could skip school I would be there. The only thing is that they didn't give me a watch until I was in tenth standard, so I would not know the time. When I saw the kids going back from school in the evening, that was when I got down, got on my bicycle and went home. It used to be so beautiful being there. So the first few meditations I started teaching people, I always had them swaying. I would just make people sway and sway and get them into meditation; that's how I initiated people to begin with.

So I was doing everything like everybody. I went to school, and passing examinations was never a problem for me. I just got across, but that education didn't matter to me, whatever they did. Sitting in the classes was impossible for me because, when somebody was talking, I could see that they were talking about something that didn't mean anything in their life. It was just a job they were doing, so I did not want to listen. I knew that whatever they were saying, I could read in a book and get it myself, very easily. This continued until my college days. I was not interested in education, so when I passed my pre-university courses, I declared that I was not going to college. My father was a prominent doctor, so he wanted me to become a doctor. I refused, saying that I would not go to college that year and I would educate myself.

In that one year, everybody became my enemy. I spent most of that year in the library. Every morning, before the library's doors were opened, I would be there. I would pick up any book that I fancied and read. I spent one whole year in the library. During this time, I picked up an interest in English literature. When the next academic year commenced, my mother cajoled me into joining college. My parents wanted me to study engineering or medicine, but I refused. Then they came down to a degree in commerce or management. Again I refused. I was vehement that if at all I went to college it would be for English literature. They asked me what I would do reading poetry, but I never thought I was going to capitalize on my education. I joined B.A. English Literature, and college commenced. Every morning teachers would come to class and start dictating notes. We would do nothing else but write down dictated notes. Then I got up and asked the lecturer to give me her notes so that I could photocopy them and save her time and energy as well as ours. This irked the teacher so much, but she just could not do anything about my questions. So they all got together and decided to give me attendance for the next three years. I didn't have to go for attendance any more, so I landed in the college garden and people started coming

to me to share their problems. It was almost like running a court there. I did not choose this, but it happened like that. My friends and I also formed a club on the university campus which was known as the Banyan Tree Club. It was under this Banyan tree on the campus, where all my friends met and many things were talked about. We used to talk about how fast you can drive a motorcycle and how to make this world a better place to live in. That's the range of subjects we talked about. There was no real organization; anyone who came and sat under this tree would be a member. The basic slogan was: 'We do it for the fun of it!'

I loved to travel, to explore nature. If in the middle of the night I felt like going to *Goa*,¹ I would start in ten minutes. All I would have to do was pack a bag – the motorcycle was always ready – and I would just go. Sometimes some friends would come; we had gone to many places like this. There are some people who go on planning, but something always turns up at the last moment, some excuse, and all their planning is wasted. These people will never go, whether it is going to a place or walking the spiritual path. Those who are talking spiritual, thinking spiritual, never take a single step. College passed away, and the final year came and I wrote about fifteen papers at once. Somehow, they gave me the second highest marks in the University and my father wanted me to immediately start a Master's degree. I told them enough was enough and that I had already read that syllabus. I thought I would make some money and ride all over the world in the two years that it would take me to complete the Master's degree. So I decided to start a poultry farm. I thought I would sell it after some time and go around the world. The poultry business was in a big boom in those days and I made a lot of money and things were going quite well. My father was astounded. He did not want to tell people that his son was rearing chicken. When I was into this poultry farming, everybody – my dad, my friends and ex-teachers – were constantly telling me, "Why are you wasting your life like this? We thought you would do something, but you are wasting your life like this." I never gave in to anybody's opinion and advice in my life. I was not wasting anything. I was very happy because the poultry farm was like this: in the morning, I would take care of the farm for four hours and after that I was completely free. So I meditated, swam in the well, hung on the trees, wrote poems, and read poetry. It was wonderful for me, really blissful; but everybody was telling me I was wasting my life. I had been practicing yoga since I was twelve years of age. I was not the kind of person who

would do something because of discipline. Somehow it just happened; I got up in the morning and yoga happened for me. Every day, all these years, it just happened to me. Wherever I was – I could be trekking in the mountains – yoga would happen. I never did things in a disciplined way. See I was quite wild, but somehow, wherever I was, it happened. I was very successful and everything was going well, the way I wanted. When everything is happening the way you want it, you begin to think the world is revolving around you – not around the sun, you know? So I was like this, super-confident in everything I did.

Do you know Chamundi Hills? Have you been there? It's a little hill, a place where I trekked, as a child. When I was ten or eleven, if I got ten rupees in my hand, I would buy three loaves of bread and about four or five eggs. I would boil them in secrecy and go, leaving a small note. Then I would just disappear into the forest for three or four days. If I asked for permission it would not be given, so I always left a note and returned on the day I had said I would. I wouldn't come home until the bread was finished. I just walked in the forest, slept in the trees and hung around here and there. I was very good at catching snakes. I would have a bag full of snakes caught in three days and I kept them all with me. I loved to do this. In my family, they took a lot of care to see that I did not lay my hands on five or ten rupees, because if I did, I would disappear into the forest! (Laughs)

So this Chamundi Hill is very important to me in many ways. I spent a lot of time there. It was like a racetrack for me and my friends, riding motorcycles up the hill and sitting and meditating there. We would have parties there; I even had business meetings on Chamundi Hill. One afternoon around three o'clock I went there and parked my vehicle. I was just sitting on this particular rock. I had my eyes open, not even closed. I thought it was about ten minutes, but something began to happen to me. All my life I had thought this is me (pointing at himself). Suddenly, I did not know which is me and which is not me. The air that I am breathing, the rock on which I'm sitting, the atmosphere around me, everything had become me. The more I say, the crazier it will sound to you, because what was happening is indescribable. What is me has become so enormous, it is everywhere. I thought this lasted a few minutes, but when I came back to my normal senses, it was about seven thirty in the evening. My eyes were open, the sun had set and it was dark. I was fully aware, but what I had considered as myself until that moment had just disappeared. When I was eight years of age – I remember this incident very well – something

¹ Goa : an Indian state on the western coast known for its pristine beaches.

happened and I cried. That day, I made up my mind that I would never cry again; I should never cry. I held myself like this (showing a closed fist) and whatever situations I came to, I did not shed a single tear, from eight until twenty-five. And here I'm sitting, tears are flowing to the point where my shirt is wet, and I'm ecstatically crazy! I do not know what is happening. When I apply my logical mind, the only thing it can tell me is that I'm losing my balance. That's all my mind can tell me, but it is so beautiful that I don't want to lose it. I'm not somebody who had been brought up in any kind of spiritual tradition. I had been fed with European philosophy – you know, Dostoevsky, Camus, Kafka and the likes. Of course, being the sixties, the era of Beatles and blue jeans, that's how I grew up. Here I am exploding into something; I don't know what it is. The next time it happened – after about six or seven days I was sitting at the dinner table with my family. I thought it was for two minutes, but seven hours had passed. I was sitting right there, fully aware, and this me is not there; *everything* is there.

This started happening more and more often. Every time I sat like this, I neither ate nor slept for many days, sometimes for up to thirteen days. I simply sat down in one place and that was all. I am just blowing my top off, and I do not know what is happening. The only thing I know is that I do not want to lose it. Then people saw me and they said, "Oh, he is in *samadhi*."¹ Somebody wanted to put a garland on me, or touch my feet. It was all crazy; I could not believe that these people wanted to do this to me (laughs). I had no words to describe what was happening to me, but it was going on like this. In about six to eight weeks, it became like a living reality. During this time, everything about me changed dramatically. What happened inside was indescribable, but my physical body – the shape of my eyes, my voice and my body structure itself – started changing. It changed so drastically that people around me could clearly see that something was happening to me.

Then suddenly, I called the people I was working with and told them, "Starting tomorrow, I won't be part of the business; I don't know what I'm doing here. I don't know what I will do next." I just traveled and sat around for one year. I gave up my business, my poultry farm and everything I was doing. I didn't know what I would do next. Then a whole flood of memories, lifetimes of memory, just descended upon me. The skeptic that I was did not want to believe anything. I was not the kind to believe anything.

¹ *samadhi* : state of equanimity, a merging of the subject and the object.

I was not somebody who had ever entered a temple. I was not somebody who believed anything I could not see and understand. So I followed up all these memories. I followed the leads the memories gave; I went to those places, checked, met the people and did so many things. I knew this was true, crystal-clear, but my mind would not accept it. I had to go through the whole process. From that day, the Dhyanalinga became the single-pointed agenda in my life. We started working slowly, creating the necessary goodwill and making it happen. The making of the Dhyanalinga involved so many complicated processes. People who were witness to it know all the things that happened. It is too much of a fairy tale for anybody to believe. I would not believe it if somebody told me; that's all I can say.

Seeker: So what is the mastery an Enlightened being has which allows him to come back and retain a body?

Sadhguru: Once a person reaches the point of Enlightenment – all the years or lifetimes he worked to dissolve his karma – now he is consciously creating karma, because if he does not have enough karma, enough balance on his side, he can't stay in the body. Ninety percent of the time, the moment of Enlightenment and the moment of leaving the body are the same. Only a person who has a certain amount of mastery over the mechanics of the body can hold onto it; others cannot. There are many ways to do this. If you don't have mastery over the system, the other way is to go on creating karma consciously. I don't want to talk about myself at this point, how I go about doing things.

Let's take Ramakrishna Paramahansa, for example. Ramakrishna was a very crystallized consciousness, and a very wonderful human being. Beyond all limitations, in many ways, but he was just mad about food. He would be talking to a group of disciples and he would say, "Wait." Then he would go into the kitchen and ask his wife, Sharada, "What's cooking today?" She would feel so ashamed; this man is godlike, everybody worships him, but he's so crazy about food. All the scriptures tell you that if you're turning spiritual you must lose your interest in food, isn't it? Here is a man who's being worshiped as God, and the man is mad about food. Many times she asked him, but he just avoided answering her. Everyday Sharada would serve him food in a *thali*,¹ and he always sat on the swing and ate. One day, she felt

¹ *thali* : a large dinner plate.

terrible and told him, "I am ashamed of you. Why are you mad about food? The people that come and sit in front of you, they are not thinking about food. They're willing to just sit there without food. You are crazy about food, why?" Then he said, "Sharada, the day you bring the thali to me and I show no interest, please know I only have three more days." Seven years later, when Sharada brought the thali to serve him at his usual place on the swing, Ramakrishna showed no interest in the food; he turned away. Then she knew the time had come, and she broke down. Ramakrishna said, "Now there is no point crying; the time has come." It comes for everybody. This was his way of creating karma; creating a conscious desire for food. Desiring food all the time, consciously and intentionally. Without this desire, he could not hold onto his body. People who are close to me know all the tricks that I play to keep going. If you do not consciously create the karma, you cannot hold on to the body. Without karmic structure, you and your physical body have nothing to do with each other.

Seeker: Sadhguru, I don't really know how to ask this properly, but is it possible that one person's karma can take on two bodies?

Sadhguru: In so many ways, it does. Probably your question is not clear. Are you asking whether one person can take two bodies, or whether the effect of the karma can take two bodies? A single quality can take many bodies. Right now, I'm sitting here and performing some karma. This karma, this quality, can take hundreds of bodies, but this person cannot take two bodies. Still, it can happen. Let us say I die today, but I'm in a hurry to complete some unfinished work. This body has become defunct and I'm unable to sustain it. So I have to leave this body, but I'm not willing to be born through a womb, grow up and maybe get lost, and again have to do *sadhana*.¹ If I have sufficient awareness, I will wait for a suitable adult body which is going to be discarded by somebody, get into that, continue my *sadhana* and finish the karma off. Maybe I need five more years to finish my karma. Somebody who does not want to take that risk of getting lost by being reborn, if he finds a suitable body, just gets into that and continues his life. Now this person who is dead and has taken up another body will be in a lot of confusion. He has to face

¹ *sadhana* : spiritual practices which are used as a means to Realization.

all the social problems, or he has to leave that place and run away all of a sudden. Something has to be done. So things like this have been done.

The karmic material can definitely take on more than one body. It is definitely capable of supporting more than one physical form. When I say a persona or a personality, it means it is just a front that has been taken up in a specific situation in which one lives. The same karmic substance, placed in two different kinds of situations, will take up two different personas, or masks. Such a thing happened with me. When I was here last time, in my previous life, when I was Sadhguru Shri Bhramha and life situations made it impossible to continue, I took on the body of a bala yogi who left early, and made a futile attempt towards the consecration of the Dhyanalinga. The body of Sadhguru Shri Bhramha was alive, but the physical term for that karma was set to be over in a few months. We have known yogis who have maintained two different bodies to fulfill two different types of karma. There have been yogis who lived with one body living as an ascetic, and another as a *grihastha*, a householder. They had taken upon themselves to fulfill different dimensions of activities which could not be carried on with a single body. Similarly, the reverse is also possible. There have been situations where two yogis have shared a single body. When one of their physical bodies ran its full term but could not fulfill the karmic compulsions, he decided to share another yogi's body rather than going through the process of finding a womb.

One classical example is Karthikeya or Subramanya, who is also known as Shanmugha, the six-faced one. As many of you know, Parvathi¹ had six children of six immutable qualities. She thought that if these six immutable qualities could exist in one body, it would be so magnificent. In terms of action, it would be so transforming for the world. She, being an accomplished yogini, merged these six beings into one body. Hence, Karthikeya is known as the six-faced one. There is a place in South India, in the state of Karnataka, where Subramanya – who is known as Kumara in those parts – attained Mahasamadhi. Kumara, after fighting a gory battle to establish order, killing hundreds a day with his sword, came to that place. There, he washed his bloody sword as a symbol of relinquishing violence for good, and then went up to the mountain peak, in the western *ghats*, which today is known as Kumara Parvat,

¹ Parvathi : consort of Shiva.

or son's mountain. He stood on top of this peak for forty-seven days and then shed his body on the forty-eighth day. Generally, when a yogi wants to shed his body by will or consciously, he does it in a sitting posture or sometimes lying down, but Kumara left his body standing. When I went there, close to the peak, after a hard day climbing up the mountain, we were required to camp at the very base of the peak. I just could not sit down the whole night. Even when I sat down, the energies there would push my body into a standing posture. I was supposed to sleep in a tent just over three feet high but my body would just stand up, dismantling the tent. If you go up this peak, you'll see innumerable small pebbles, all six faced, as if they had been neatly cut. These are known as the Shanmugha lingams, the six faced Lingas. These are highly energized stones. They became like that because that was the type of energy this yogi left on that mountain peak.

Seeker: Master, why do we get so drunk on you? What wine, what grapes, what vineyard are you?

Sadhguru: That must be Hoda (laughs). On the last day of class in Paris, we got Hoda so drunk without any spirits. Today also, for the New Year's celebration, we don't have any bottles and spirits, but if you are willing, we can get you totally drunk. So totally drunk, in every possible way, but no hangover. No addiction, no hangover. What grapes, what wine, what vineyard...? How can I say? Keep your hands open, close your eyes and sit.

[A meditation process takes place.]

Now that you understand everything in the form of wine...This is just a drop of wine that was put into me by my Guru. I thought it was just a drop, but it was an ocean. So when you contain an ocean within you, it spills. You cannot hold it. Whatever you do, it spills. If you sit quietly, it spills too much. If you run, it spills. If you walk, it spills, if you love, it spills, if you get angry, it spills. Whatever you do, it spills, when you contain an ocean within yourself. I cannot help it. If you get too intoxicated, you must seek an antidote.

The only reason why one will not get madly intoxicated with this is because you want to deduce life. You don't want to experience life, you want to deduce life. 'A+B=C', this deduction will take the life out of you, and even if you take the life out of yourself, you still won't know what it's all about.

Once, there was a great scientist. He was experimenting, so he found himself a frog and started making deductions and conclusions. He asked the frog to jump. It jumped twenty feet. He cut off a leg and told it to hop. It then hopped fifteen feet. He again cut off another leg and again told it to hop. This time, it hopped ten feet. Then he cut off another leg and told it to hop. It hopped five feet. He then cut off the last leg and told it to hop. "HOP! HOP! HOP!" he said. The frog did not hop. He recorded all of his findings in his log book: four legs, twenty feet; three legs, fifteen feet; two legs, ten feet; one leg, five feet; zero legs, **FROG DEAF**.

This is where deductions will lead you to. If you're trying to deduce anything which is beyond the physical, this is what will happen. Your deductions are fine only with the material aspects of life. If you are seeking anything beyond the physical, your deductions, your calculations, will only get you further and further away from life, never close to it. You don't have to make any attempt to get close to it, because you are in it. It is just that if you put a little bit of this wine into you, it becomes more intensely alive. Just because you're not sensitive enough to see it the way it is, I'm just cranking it up for you so that even you can feel it. We're trying to make a frog without any legs leap.

Seeker: Sadhguru, in many ways you have been the biggest experience in my life, and I have seen you in so many different ways, but whichever way I look at you, I'm not able to grasp what you are. What kind of mystic are you?

Sadhguru: What kind of mystic am I? Probably there has not been one around wearing blue jeans (laughs). I do not think there has been another one like this. What kind am I? I wish I could tell you –not just about the clothes, about everything. All I can say is that there isn't another one like me; that's for sure.

There are a few, but they do not open their mouths. They will not come anywhere near people. Actually there is only just one more who has three Enlightened lifetimes behind him, but you will never get to see him. He has only four more years and then he will leave. You have seen, many times, by the snap of the fingers, I can have hundreds of people roaring with new levels of energy, to be in such deep energy contact with me that you will have to physically carry them out of that space. People have to do many things to get to some state of experience. Simply just entering a space and going like that is unheard of. I'm the only one like this, who is stupid enough to go around and try to do something with people. I am the only one, really. I'm not bragging; this is the reality.

Seeker: Sadhguru, you are able to be so many different things in different situations, like in *Samyama*,¹ you're a perfect Guru, but here in the Himalayas you sit with us as a friend and even play frisbee with us. So you're able to turn yourself up and down?

Sadhguru: Yes, of course. If it is up all the time most people will get burned up. They'll get fused out. They will not be able to take it. Even there, the weak ones can get fused out. If I keep it up for seven days in *Samyama*, many will get fused out. They do not have the physiological and psychological strength to take that kind of energy. Low voltage bulbs: if you put high voltage, "Pchit, pchit, pchit!" they'll go off. It is done carefully, in a graduated way. Sometimes you blow it up and sometimes you bring it down. You cannot let people stay in that kind of energy for too long. Very few people are capable of staying there, others need lots of *sadhana*. That's why *sadhana* is so important; it prepares you.

See, to have one big experience any moment in your life, we can give that to anybody, but to live like that, you need proper energy, an appropriate body and mind and also stable energy; otherwise, you can't live like that. This is the only reason why people are not always living like that. Many moments of really unspeakable ecstasies have happened to people. Moments, but they are not able to stay there simply because they don't have the right kind of vehicle to carry that kind of speed. Somewhere downhill, even your Maruti car will touch two hundred kilometers per hour, but to drive at two hundred kilometers

¹ *Samyama*: an eight day meditation program offered by Sadhguru where one is transported to explosive states of meditateness. Held at Isha Yoga Center.

per hour, you need a Lamborghini. Isn't it? It's the same thing. *Sadhana* is just trying to get yourself into a Lamborghini state. Then it can be high all the time and still be okay; it is like normal.

Seeker: So where is he, the other one like you, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: Here! Here and there is only your problem (laughs).

Seeker: Is he an ascetic?

Sadhguru: Not really ascetic. Maybe for the sake of the world he may put on a certain appearance, but he does not belong to anything. For him, his whole life is open.

Seeker: So in this lifetime, he has not been with people at all? Then why is he here after his Enlightenment? Do people know about him?

Sadhguru: You don't do work just by being with people. You can do enormous things without being with anybody; actually you can do more. You can do much more if you're not with people. People who are aware, they will know of him. In yogic circles, they will know. Nobody can ignore him, but otherwise, by advertisement, you will not know. No one can ignore a being like this on the planet. All those who have eyes will know the sun is up today. Blind ones will know only by information; somebody will announce to them, "The sun has come up." The majority have become blind ones, and that is the norm in the world. Somebody has to tell them, "A yogi has come." Unfortunate, but that's how it is. So once you're going by information, all kinds of fake ones will inform, "I am the yogi." That's how it's happening. The blind ones, in the night also you could tell them, "The sun has come up." They will all say yes, isn't it? Still, other faculties are working so they are able to feel, but suppose along with their blindness they also have no sensation, you have to just announce the arrival of the sun, isn't it? Even now, for the sleeping ones, we have to announce the sun is coming up, isn't it?

Seeker: So why are you wearing blue jeans?

Sadhguru: To cover myself! (Laughs).

Seeker: No, I mean why are you dressed like us, like a regular guy?

Sadhguru: If I did not have the Dhyanalinga work, I wouldn't be like this. It got me involved with people in very deep ways.

Seeker: Is that other yogi doing some kind of work? Some kind of work brought him here?

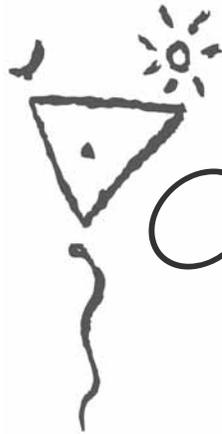
Sadhguru: Is the sun working every day? No. It's just there, and everything happens. Does the sun get burnt out? Does the sun get nourished?

Seeker: You only had to come back to fulfill the Dhyanalinga. So he did not have a purpose, but he came back? Was it out of compassion?

Sadhguru: Not compassion; he just likes to look around the Himalayas.

Seeker: Did you visit him?

Sadhguru: Why would I visit him? I have no intention or need of really visiting anyone, for that matter. As per people's needs, we do something. He has no needs, so why the hell visit him? I'm not longing to be among such people. I can make myself into ten people and enjoy their company if I want, but I'm not longing to be in anybody's company. Oh, this is all too much mystic's musing for one day! Come, let's take a walk.



Chapter - 6

Beings of the Beyond

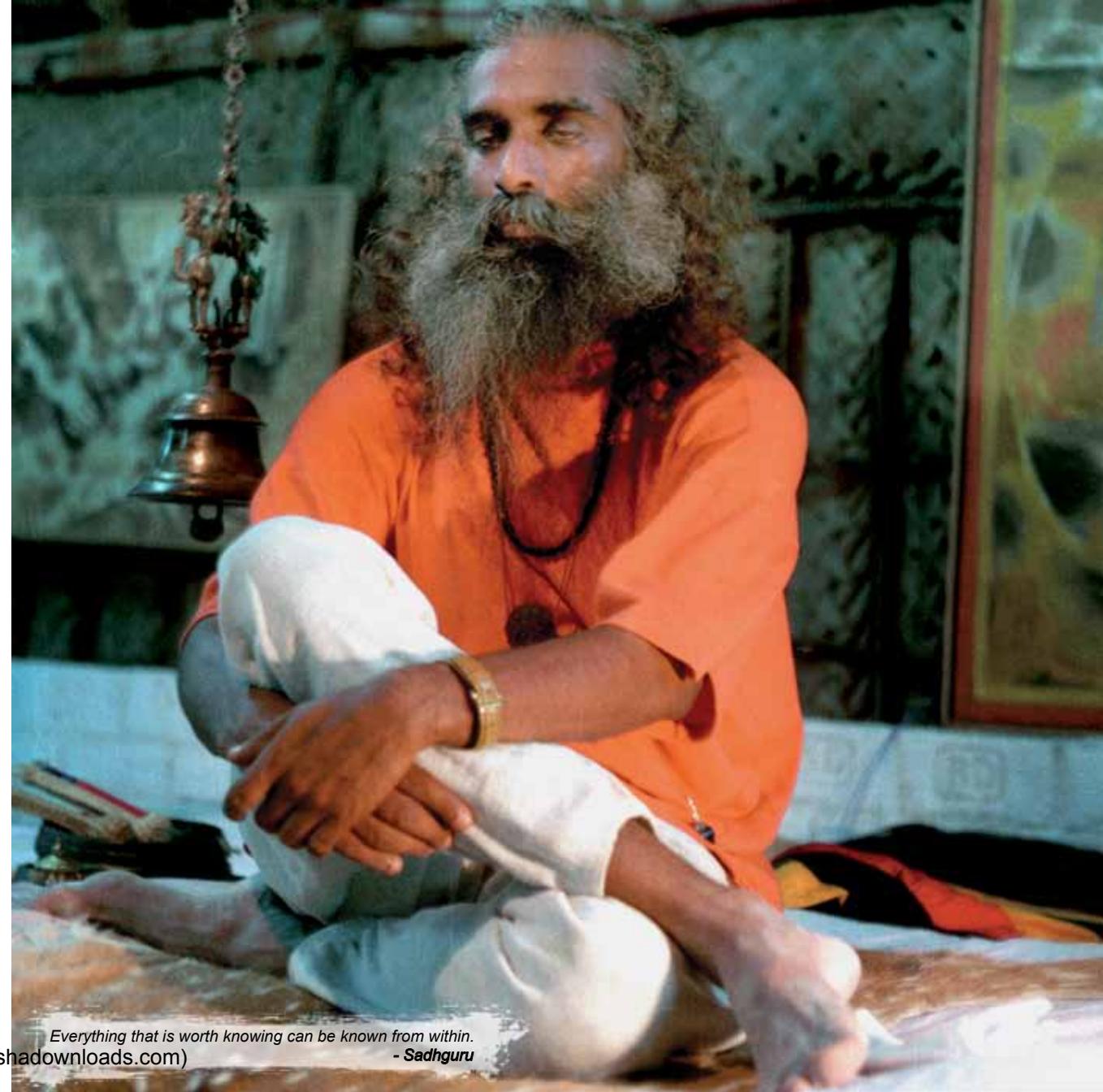


Beings of the Beyond

*The ruthless debtor that she is
claimed back earth that you fancied was you
To leave you so naked and bare as to be bodiless
dead they think you are when you wait for another lease*

*Since earth's debt you repaid
ones who claimed to love you abhor you
With me the wanderer of the twilight world
you can rest upon my breast, to annul your destined course.*

– Sadhguru





At ease with all kinds. With Sadhguru even the venomous turn docile.
At one time, Sadhguru lived with over twenty venomous snakes in his bedroom.

Whether it is spirits or ghosts, angels or demons, the devil or gods, man's interest in the Beings of the Beyond has been phenomenal. During childhood, fed with an overdose of mythology, where the sky is not the limit, many of us even believed we were one such being ourselves. Then came the science teachers who instilled '*seeing is believing*', and the rationalists who goaded the masses to seek '*scientifically verifiable proof*' and finally, the Relativity freaks who questioned the reality of not only the unseen, but even that which is *seen* and felt.

Today, we would like to believe these beings do not exist. We hear so many stories but never get the proof. The stories can be dismissed, but the feeling, the certainty that there must be more to what we perceive, lingers in us all our lives.

Driven by an unquenched desire to communicate and relate to these Beings of the Beyond, often in desperate pursuit of solutions to nagging worldly situations, man has ended up more often in the gory and the ghastly than with any real clarity.

Far from frightening little children and speaking to the voices in the dark, this much-misunderstood aspect of life has a rightful place and purpose in Creation. Here, as always, maneuvering deftly between fact and fiction, Sadhguru, elaborates on the spiritual aspects of the Beings of the Beyond. In a series of questions and answers, Sadhguru, perhaps for the first time in print, reveals the cause of their existence, what they can and cannot do, their sadhana and salvation. Thus creating a no-frills understanding, freeing seekers from frivolous desires and unfounded fears, preparing them to receive possible situations of the Beyond with grace and humility.

Seeker: In an article in the *Forest Flower*,¹ I have read that someone who was present at the *Dhyanalinga* consecration experienced the presence of disembodied beings that were present during certain processes of consecration. This is beyond my logical understanding. Can you throw some light on this?

Sadhguru: Now, 'throw some light'...you must understand this. With your eyes, you can only see that which stops and reflects light. Right now, you can see my palm because it stops light. If it just allows all the light to pass through, you will not see my hand, isn't it? So throwing light on disembodied beings is a little difficult (laughs). The only reason you do not see them is because they don't stop light. Whatever I'm going to talk about now, don't believe it. At the same time, don't be a fool and disbelieve it either. Life exists in many dimensions. I want you to keep just this much openness. Now I'm going to speak so blatantly and illogically that you will need to look beyond your normal levels of understanding. Wouldn't you like to explore all dimensions of life, no matter what they are? Once you are here, wouldn't you like to know every aspect of what your life is about? Or would you just explore that which is convenient and comfortable for you?

All beings, embodied or disembodied, are in many ways functioning or playing their lives out as per their *karmic* structures. When you're embodied, there is more possibility of using your will. When you're disembodied, depending on one's level of awareness, depending upon what level of subtleness one has evolved into, accordingly the disembodied beings function just as *karmic* play. As their qualities are, accordingly they are drawn to different areas or different spaces. Whenever we create a certain energy space, a certain powerful situation of energy, a higher possibility of energy, then naturally these

¹ *Forest Flower* : referring to the Isha Foundation's monthly newsletter.

beings are just drawn there. A few are drawn by will, by choice; the rest, they cannot help it. When such energies are created, they are just drawn towards it. It was not just during the Dhyanalinga consecration. I should not be talking about these things, because I know there are people who have wild imaginations.

In many situations in my life, they have been around me, and they still are, especially where I live. They are very, very much there, because the shrine at the house is made in such a way that it just draws these kinds of beings. It's like an everyday thing for me. As there are trees and plants, I have many of them just moving around; they never get in my way, so I don't mind. They don't eat my food, so I don't mind (laughs). Many of them who were in a certain state of evolution, in the last few years I have just completely dissolved them. There are others who are not of that quality; they have to wait, but if I take it upon myself, I can draw many more of them, trap them and dissolve all of them completely. It is possible.

Seeker: Why trap them? What does it mean to trap them, to dissolve them?

Sadhguru: In one dimension of life, dissolution is absolute freedom. In another dimension of life, it is slaughter. Naturally, that dimension will try to struggle and escape. Whatever is being threatened naturally tries to defend itself to escape that situation. Now, there is another dimension which longs to be there. It's like a marriage: those who are in are trying to be out, those who are out are trying to be in. It once happened that an old farmer had a wife who nagged him unmercifully from morning till night and sometimes even later. She was always complaining about something. The only time he got any relief was when he was out plowing with his old mule, and he tried to plow a lot! One day, when he was out plowing, his wife brought his lunch to the field. He drove the old mule into the shade, sat down on a stump and began to eat his lunch. Immediately, his wife began haranguing him again. The nagging just went on and on. All of a sudden, the old mule lashed out with both his hind feet, caught her smack in the back of the head and killed her dead on the spot.

At the funeral, later, the minister noticed something rather odd. When a woman mourner would approach the old farmer, he would listen for a minute and then nod his head in agreement. When a man mourner approached him, he would listen for a minute and then shake his head in disagreement. This was so consistent that the minister decided to ask the old farmer about it. So after the funeral, he came up to him

and asked the farmer why he nodded his head and agreed with the women, but always shook his head and disagreed with the men. The old farmer said, "Well, the women would come up and say something about how nice my wife looked, or how pretty her dress was, so I nodded my head in agreement." "And what about the men?" the minister asked. "They wanted to know if the mule was for sale." So that's the whole struggle all the time, especially for a disembodied being, because he has no conscious will. He is only going about according to his vasana – the karmic tendencies in him. He needs to be trapped; otherwise, you cannot do anything to help him.

Seeker: So how do you trap them?

Sadhguru: Trap does not mean physically trapping something, like trapping an animal. It is just that one dimension in you is longing to become free. Another dimension has known only limitations and it only knows limitations. If one has to transcend the limited into the dimension of the unlimited, it takes a certain amount of coaxing and seducing of that being. So seduction is a trap. It's a trap. Enticement is a trap. Any attraction that you create is a trap. Right now, the very fact that you are listening to this talk is a trap, a logical trap to take you into that which is illogical. We can further say that the only reason why you're here is because right now, I appeal to your logic. What I want to offer you is not logical. So the logical dimension of what I am speaking is like a trap to offer you or to deliver you into that dimension which is beyond logic.

Seeker: So how do you make this trapping business possible?

Sadhguru: We need to create a certain situation to make those things happen. A few of you who were in the ninety-day Wholeness Program witnessed this. When the sadhana was taken to a certain pitch, when the energies became a certain way, certain beings started almost physically appearing around us because that kind of energy just drew them. Those few beings that some of you witnessed came by choice. These were certain yogis who left their bodies unfulfilled, and they were conscious enough not to take on another physical body. They did not want to go through the whole process again so they were just looking for situations through which they could dissolve themselves. Especially those seven or eight who were constantly around throughout the Wholeness Program, over a period of time I took care of all of them,

because they were there consciously. There were a few others who were around us, some of them consciously; some of them were just drawn there.

So what is a disembodied being? See, the physical body that you see right now is something that you picked up from the earth. It is just the food that you have eaten. What you call as 'my body' is just a heap of food. It's a piece of earth, right now standing up and prancing around like this. Again it will fall back and become earth. Even before you picked up this much earth, you were still very much a complete being. Even when your body was very small, you were still a complete being. So the physical body is being constructed with some other substance. That substance is still intact. If you shed the body, it's simply because your time to pay back the loan has come. The physical body is something that you have borrowed from the planet on which you're living. When the time comes, the planet will claim it back, no interest claimed, but you have to pay it back to the atom. It won't let you keep even an atom of it. You have to shed it totally.

Now the other dimensions of you, especially the karmic shell, continue to play, seeking another physical body. If it is completely unaware, it naturally seeks another physical body. If it is aware to some extent, it can hold on for a certain period of time. If it is in a certain level of awareness, the disembodied being is in a certain state of pleasantness. It is this state that is referred to as heaven. These beings are in different levels of pleasantness, or you can even say certain ecstasy within themselves, because they have left their physical body in a certain state of awareness; now they have acquired a certain sweetness about them. They enjoy the sweetness for a certain period of time, a holiday, a vacation, before taking on another physical body. This vacation is what you refer to as heaven. Similarly, if people leave or die in certain states of fear, anxiety, anger or ignorance, their karmic shell will have acquired a certain kind of unpleasantness about it. This unpleasantness is what you refer to as hell. Like this, there are many layers of hell and also many layers of heaven.

One who is on the spiritual path is not aiming to enter into these spaces – pleasantness or unpleasantness. He wants to drop the whole structure. Traditionally, especially in this culture, many methods, hundreds of different ways were taught with which you can acquire certain good karma or certain pleasantness about yourself, and through which you can live in states of heaven, so that when you drop this body,

you don't go through suffering. You don't go through unpleasantness. You go through a certain state of pleasantness or ecstasy within yourself, which will naturally decide what kind of physical situation you will choose, which womb you will choose. As the tendencies are, accordingly you choose. In India, we call these vasanas. Whichever way your vasana is, that's the kind of body, mind and life you choose. This choice is happening unconsciously, but if one is in a certain state of evolution, this choice can also happen consciously.

Once, a bunch of friends were sharing an apartment. One of them was a regular drinker and all he could afford was cheap whisky. Every night, he would drink his fill, get dead drunk, run to the kitchen sink and puke and puke and puke. His roommates quickly grew disgusted by his routine and warned him that if he didn't stop, he would lose his stomach one day. This didn't do much good. So they decided to teach him a lesson. The following night, they disemboweled a chicken and left the bloody guts in the sink. Sure enough, the young man came home drunk as usual, headed straight for the kitchen and immediately began heaving with great vigor. A few minutes later, he appeared in the living room doorway, white as a ghost. He announced, "It happened, it happened! Just as you said it would, I vomited up my insides, but the good news is, by God's Grace and help, I got them all back down. Now grab me a drink, quick!" See, just like you, disembodied beings exist by their tendencies. Only their physical body is gone; everything else is there. They are as much a reality as you. It's just that, because they don't stop light, you're unable to see them. Your vision does not allow you to see them. If you had a little keener sense of vision, if your experience of life was a little more than that which is physical, they would be very much a reality for you.

Now, don't start seeing them in every nook and corner of the ashram (laughs). That's the danger of talking about this. During the Dhyanalanga consecration process, they were here in huge numbers; the room was filled with them. We had to push our way through them; they were all over. They were too excited about a possibility like this. Most of them had not come there by choice; they were just sucked into that vortex as the energy became subtler and subtler. To understand this physically would be like – you know, the winds always move from high pressure to low pressure? Everything moves in the direction of low pressure. Wherever the energy becomes very subtle, we can say it's a kind of low pressure.

So naturally all these beings move in that direction; they're just drawn in that direction. Wherever the energy is gross, it's high pressure; everything tries to move away from it.

These beings are drawn here, especially into my presence, which has a certain significance. At the same time, they will never be drawn into the temple because whenever we consecrate a temple, we also create a certain situation where these kinds of beings are not able to enter the temple space. It happened that a few people came to me who were possessed by some other being that was tormenting them. We just took them to the temple. In ten minutes, they were perfectly okay because that being could not enter the temple. A certain safeguard is always created when we create a temple. Since these beings resent that they cannot enter the temple space, in order to entertain them, traditionally in this country, if we build a major powerful temple, a little away from the temple, another kind of temple will be built which will attract these forces. These are usually used for occult purposes.

Those of you who were walking with me to Kedar in the Himalayas this time, remember that we spent some time at an occult temple on the way. That temple was built so that those beings could come, and also so that those who have certain mastery can use those beings in a certain way. It is also a kind of protection for the main temple, so that it cannot be misused. Before I go, I will set up an occult temple for the Dhyanalinga. This will ensure that future generations cannot misuse the Dhyanalinga in any way. We will establish an occult temple, which is like a guardian for the Dhyanalinga. Not that it needs a guardian, but it will take care of those kinds of beings who want to be there, but cannot. These energies are such that they are drawn to the temple and are being repelled from it at the same time. We don't want to leave them like that, because there is nothing wrong with them; they are just other kinds of beings. Whether they carry a body or not, what's my problem? So we will be creating a small occult temple to entertain all these beings. Then you'll have them in big company (laughs).

Right now, the shrine at the house is in that kind of condition, because it has seen different aspects of consecration. Above all, the shrine has seen the reconstruction of my own body, which needed certain factors. Because of that, it acts like a magnet for those beings, but they don't usually enter the shrine unless I invite them. I have brought some of them in by the hand (laughs). I should not be talking about these things. All these days I have spoken so logically and sensibly; suddenly, you're making me speak like



The lesser known dimensions. Sadhguru rests outside an occult temple on the way to Kedarnath.

this on the last day of the year! Anyway the New Year also comes like those beings, without a sound. Look out!

There have been some beings who came and sat on the rooftop continuously for months. They would not leave; they were just waiting and waiting. After the consecration, my body was unstable, so I didn't bother with them. See, these beings do not have brains, they just have tendencies. So if the body is not stable and you take them on, they can just turn against your own system. After the consecration, I just left them alone; but in the last ten to eleven months, I have taken many of them into the shrine and just dissolved them completely. They make the shrine more and more exuberant in energy. If they had to come back into the body and find Realization, they could get caught up with so many things. Do you see, once you have this intellect, how difficult it is to Enlighten you? (Laughs). If you did not have a body, I could have done anything I wanted with you. If I do something with you now, your body will fall dead right here. We would have to explain so many things, which could be very difficult. If you did not have a body, I could do anything and nobody would know.



but your *prarabdha* is still not complete. This being will have a denser presence, and its tendencies are very strong. They are active in a certain way so you could see them more easily. They don't have to do anything; they just appear.

If you happen to just see them, because of your own inhibitions and limitations, you may get really paranoid. It's a psychological situation; it has nothing to do with the beings. Suppose you see a headless man, what's the problem? Most people don't have a head anyway, or even if they have a head, it's not worth much (laughs). It is just that if you see a headless man, you'll go through all kinds of weird emotions. This is not necessary; it's a psychological situation which has nothing to do with these beings.

Seeker: Sadhguru, these disembodied beings that we're speaking about, these spirits or whatever, where do so-called angels fit into this discussion? Are angels disembodied beings or are they beyond them? Are they evolved to the level of dissolution?

Sadhguru: Don't use the word 'angel'. The word 'angel' has too many hallucinatory meanings, you know?

Seeker: It does, but is 'angel' just a term that a certain sect of humanity decided to call this kind of disembodied being?

Sadhguru: Here, in this culture, we have identified different types of angels. Different levels of bodiless existence are referred to as *yakshas*, *gandharvas*, or *devas*. It's like they are at different evolutionary levels, or we can say they are on different types of vacations. Somebody is in first class, somebody is in second class, somebody is in another class, and somebody else is in hell. There are those beings who are aware, who have refused to enter any of these vacations, and they are looking for ways of dissolution. We call them *celestial beings*. They have not become *yakshas*, *gandharvas*, or *devas*. They are just keeping themselves loose, still looking for liberation. Do you understand?

Seeker: Is that a better position to be in?

Sadhguru: Yes, in many ways, because they're still looking for liberation. These other beings are enjoying their vacation. They are enjoying some type of heaven, some kind of pleasantness and joy in them,

All beings are seeking dissolution, whether they are aware of it or not. Out of their limitations, fears and misunderstandings, they may think they are not seeking it, but every being is seeking dissolution, always. If your body would not fall on our hands, it would be so easy to dissolve you. That's why a Guru always waits until your body becomes ripe enough. When the moment of death comes naturally, he will interfere and do what he has to do. Maybe he will make you leave a few days early.

Seeker: Sadhguru, all these stories we hear about ghosts and spirits, is there anything to them?

Sadhguru: What you are calling *peyi-pishachi*, or ghosts, are those beings who left their body, usually in an unnatural way. Let's say you have strong *prarabdha* karma left unfinished, either because you were killed in an accident, murdered, or even died of a disease – you can cause a disease to yourself by drinking too much, smoking too much or doing something to yourself that breaks the body. Somehow, you broke the body by hanging by the noose, shooting yourself, or drinking alcohol everyday. You somehow damaged the physical body so much that it could not sustain life anymore,

some kind of luxury around them. Luxury does not mean the kind that we know; somehow, they are pleasant, but their vacation will end sometime and they will take on another physical body. Nobody remains a yaksha, gandharva, or deva forever. He enjoys it for a certain time then he again takes on a physical form. There is nothing new about this in India. Ever since ancient times, it has been talked about. I'm not talking about something I have read. I'm talking about something I see. It is all very much a reality.

Seeker: It seems the Indian culture just knows about these things. Whether they have experienced them or not, they know about them; they have been told these things. But most people in the West have not been brought up with this rich a culture.

Sadhguru: They also believe in angels and vampires. I know so many meditators in the United States who initially kept telling me that angels were coming to them. Now, after being with me for some time, they don't dare talk about those things anymore, every day telling me many fanciful things. It's all too hallucinatory. That's the reason I have never talked about these aspects before. The moment I talk, you'll see, the most idiotic ones in the ashram will be the first ones who will see gandharvas. The intelligent ones will not see them. Only the idiotic ones will start seeing celestial beings everywhere, because they have no control over their imagination. It will just fly and they will start doing stupid things and claim that angels guided them. All these UFO cults, the ones that committed mass suicide, they said that aliens came and told them to do it. People can do these kinds of stupid things with this information. That is the reason why we have not talked about it before.

Seeker: We have focused primarily on human disembodied beings, up to this point. What about non-human disembodied beings?

Sadhguru: There is really no such thing as non-human disembodied beings. For example, does a grasshopper go about hopping without a body? Is there such a thing? Not really, because when a grasshopper dies, whatever does not die in it is at a very rudimentary state of evolution. Usually, it just

clings to the earth. In India, we have been told that you should never walk on grass at night. One reason for this is your own safety: to avoid snakes, insects and whatever. Another reason is because all these beings, which are in a very quick transitory state – it's like a transit port – just cling to the earth. Suppose a grasshopper dies; it immediately wants to find the next body, but there may be a little time span in-between.

Most animals and insects die in the night, not in the day, especially the lower level of animals. They may get eaten by a bird or some animal; that's different. If they die by themselves, it's mostly at night, and the being tends to cling to the earth, because they are very much like the earth. They are even capable of merging with it. In this culture, it has been said that once the sun sets, you should not walk on the grass because these beings will get trampled in some way. So for them the transitory state is very short. They are going completely by their tendencies, so the transition happens quickly for them.

A disembodied snake can possess a human being. In this culture it is a common knowledge called *naga dosha*. This can particularly affect certain layers of your skin and create a very strange sense of stillness and movement. A snake has a more substantial presence of being. That's one reason why in this culture, people are told not to kill a snake, because it has a more substantial presence about it. In case you happen to kill a snake, it needs to be cremated or buried as we do for a human body. Similarly for the cow and crow, the being of a cow always tends to linger on around certain types of trees. The *Pungai* tree is one of those which attract the bodiless cows, but their period of transition is very brief. So in India it is understood that if you spend time under this particular tree, you'll be blessed with nourishment, as cow's milk has always been the very symbol of nourishment.

Seeker: So does everybody, when they die, become a disembodied being?

Sadhguru: When you drop your body, you are disembodied.

Seeker: So everybody enters this state?

Sadhguru: Yes, everybody. The span of time varies. If you finish your prarabdha and leave, or if you die with very strong desires, the span of time may be short, the interval is brief. Finding a womb is almost instantaneous.

You may be back within days or weeks. Now what if there is no appropriate womb for that being? That's when it falls back into animal nature, and regresses back to work out all those desires.

Seeker: Regarding these disembodied beings or celestial beings, what is the difference in the process for their next life choice? Is it conscious, partially conscious or totally unconscious?

Sadhguru: We use the words 'celestial beings' to refer only to those beings who still have some choice. The others, we refer to as 'disembodied beings'. We can call them ghosts, *bhootha prethas*, *gandharvas*, *yakshas* or whatever. We are using the words 'celestial beings' only for those who have a certain sense of choice, because they lived and died in a certain sense of awareness. The others, the disembodied beings, are just functioning by compulsion, the same way you are.

Seeker: Do any of these disembodied beings serve us as guides or are they doing their own thing?

Sadhguru: If they knew any better, they would have found liberation. Why are they just wandering around? Because they don't know any better. See, somebody is rich, somebody is poor in the world, but when it comes to basic life, the rich man doesn't know any better than the poor man, isn't it? Similarly, when it comes to Realization and liberation, that disembodied person does not know any better than you. He's also stuck, like you. The only thing is that it's a little more pleasant. If you are rich, you eat well, you dress well, you live in a more comfortable home, but you don't know any better about life. It's all the same.

Seeker: Can these disembodied beings adversely impact a seeker on the path? Conversely, can they assist the seeker on the path?

Sadhguru: For someone who is seeking liberation, I want you to understand, what you are seeking is self-annihilation. For one who is seeking self-annihilation, who can cause any more damage than he can cause to himself? You want to cause the maximum – not harm – you want to annihilate yourself. When that is what you're seeking, if a ghost or a beast comes and helps you, what's your problem? It's okay. For a seeker, nobody can take anything from him if he's a real seeker. If he's a fancy seeker, who is just trying to add spirituality as entertainment in his life, maybe. If he is a genuine seeker, anything that happens to him – even the most disastrous thing – is also a plus, because it only annihilates him a little more.

Traditionally, the first thing a seeker does in India is to go with a begging bowl, even if he's a king. Being a beggar is the worst possible thing that can happen to a human being. So a king chooses to be a beggar, he has already done the worst possible thing to himself. Who or what else can do anything more to him? It can be your choice; otherwise, life will choose for you and make you endure many things.

One Sunday morning, everyone in this bright beautiful tiny town got up really early and went to the local church. Before the service started, the town's people were sitting on church pews, talking about their lives, families, just chatting. Suddenly Satan appeared at the front of the church. Everyone started screaming and running to the front door, trampling each other in a frantic attempt to get away from evil incarnate. Soon the church was empty, except for one elderly gentleman, who just sat there calmly, not moving, seemingly oblivious to the fact that God's ultimate enemy was in his presence. This confused Satan a bit. So he walked up to the man and said, "Don't you know who I am?" The man replied, "Yes, I do." Satan asked, "Well, aren't you afraid of me?" "No, I'm not," said the man. Satan, a little perturbed by this, asked, "Why aren't you afraid of me?" The man calmly replied, "I've been married to your sister for over forty-eight years..." After that no ghost or beast can do anything more to you, isn't it?

Seeker: Can these disembodied beings take over a person? Can they feed off our energies?

Sadhguru: Yes, definitely. They can very easily get into your system. Such a thing is possible, though we never think on those terms. These things are done and beings are used in many ways. If there is a

mantric who has some power over a certain spirit, he will put the spirit into some person out of whom he wants to get something. That person will then do whatever he is asked to do.

Trapping these beings has its limitations. You can't keep the being trapped forever, even if the trap is very strong. It can get released when the person who has imprisoned it dies. The power of most mantrics does not go away upon death; it goes away before that. Somewhere, they lose their hold on it and the beings desert the mantric. Have you read Shakespeare's *The Tempest*? In it, the sorcerer depicted does many things like this. They can extend their hold only on the grosser spirits, the wicked ones. They have no hold on the evolved beings. These beings will not hover around such an atmosphere, because they can feel the energy and what kind of a person is there. An unaware or ignorant spirit may get easily trapped. These evolved beings won't get trapped so easily. Even here, with me, they were very cautious in the beginning.

Now someone who has died without completing his *prarabdha* or the allotted karma is leaving with his karmic structure still intact. The only way you can die when your *prarabdha* is still intact is if your body breaks. This can only happen because of an accident, injury or disease. You might be thinking, "Isn't disease a natural cause of death?" See, disease is also one way of breaking the body. If you die of a heart attack because of excessive stress, it's just like murder, suicide, or an accident. One part of the body broke, and life is not able to sustain itself in a physical body anymore, so it leaves, but the karmic structure is still intact. This being continues to be very much present. When I say very much present, it's more 'experience-able,' because the karmic structure is left intact. If a person runs the full term of his *prarabdha* – the *prarabdha* is gone – then he's too subtle; most people will not be able to feel him. When his *prarabdha* is intact and he dies, many more people can feel him. That's why traditionally in this culture they say that if you die of murder, suicide or in an accident, you become a ghost. Everyone becomes a ghost; this is a more solid ghost, a denser ghost that can be experienced by a few more people. Only people of a certain refinement can experience the more subtle ones.

Beings whose *prarabdha* is still intact continue to have human tendencies. They want to eat, sleep and copulate. They want to do everything, because their karma is still intact. The others don't have this.

Their karmic structure is gone, so such things do not even exist in them. That's the difference. If you work out your karma quickly, you're free from all these compulsions. Even with these disembodied beings, it's the same reality. If karmic compulsions are there, such beings can feed upon you, because they are not able to satisfy their tendencies by themselves. For example, everywhere in the world, there is rape. With rape, no one experiences any pleasure. It is just that there is a compulsion.

He wants to do it, that's all. He's seeking pleasure, but there is really no pleasure in it. It is just a compulsion. At any cost, he wants to do it. There are people who get possessed by gluttonous beings who only want to eat. Such beings, when they possess somebody, that person will start eating five to ten times a normal human's diet and still not be satisfied. Even when this being eats like that, it is not able to experience the food. He cannot experience eating. It's just a kind of compulsion for him. Even if he makes that person eat, he cannot experience it, because the eating process is only for the physical body. It's a compulsion. So the possessed person will become more and more desperate, and demand more and more food. Still, he can't experience the food, nor can he dislodge this being from his body. That's why in India it has been taught that when you eat food, you should not eat gluttonously; you must eat gently. You must put the food in front of you, bow down to it, sit quietly for a minute and then eat. If you're very aware, you just put a little bit of water around the plate, so that this kind of being is not attracted to you. If you eat gluttonously, these kinds of beings will want to get into you, because they have the tendency towards gluttony within them. Now when people on the spiritual path do *sadhana*, their energies become more positive and subtler. Then they may tend to attract different kinds of beings. When energies become subtle, disembodied beings may come.

Seeker: Sadhguru, really, are you saying that because of our *sadhana*, we tend to attract disembodied beings?

Sadhguru: All these beings want to come here because this is a very pleasant energy for them. It's just like when we go and sit under a tree to enjoy the shade of the tree. Now if I allow everybody to come and sit under this tree, they may not just be satisfied with the shade of this tree. One person wants to pluck something from it; another person wants to climb it; somebody else may want to cut down the tree. It's the same thing with these beings; they are all here for different things. So that's the reason why,

once somebody starts sadhana, we encourage them to wear *rudhraksha*,¹ because it creates a cocoon, and they become unavailable to these kinds of things.

Seeker: Then why don't you wear rudhraksha?

Sadhguru: I'm not wearing rudhraksha because I don't want to make spirituality into a bundle of symbols, which can destroy the true value of it. If you go up north, you'll see somebody wearing a huge bunch of malas – no sensible man can wear that many malas – and he thinks he's very spiritual. His hair is long and he's wearing twenty-five malas. I don't wear rudhraksha because I don't want to make people ever think that wearing this or that will make you spiritual. It's not true. I'm not out to protect myself from anything. I don't need the protection. You see, these disembodied beings exist on this plane only for a short time. So these things are very rare. Maybe in today's world, these things happen a little more than before because we are a little more accident-prone than we were before.

Seeker: Are you saying that today, in the twenty-first century, with all our technology, we are more accident-prone?

Sadhguru: Yes, only because of the technology. If there was no technology, at the worst, what could happen? How often do you climb a tree and fall down? Not too often, right? But today, there are any number of situations where accidents can happen. You can wreck your car. You can crash in an airplane. You can get electrocuted. So many things can happen. Never before has the world been as accident-prone as it is today. So there are more beings dying without completing their prarabdha. Also because stress levels are high, which can cause more diseases, more people are dying without completing their prarabdha. So it is possible that there are more accidents today. Now you should not think along those lines, because it just creates a whole lot of fear and it will mess you up psychologically. Worrying about accidents will not solve anything. Keep yourself in such a way that you are not available to these kinds of things.

¹ *rudhraksha* : sacred beads, seeds of a tree found mostly in the Himalayas, also known to have many medicinal and transcendental qualities.

Seeker: Sadhguru, the ashram seems to be a place that attracts many of these disembodied beings... is it a safe place to be?

Sadhguru: The ashram is not the only place where these beings are; they are everywhere. It's just that we are aware of them here. If there is a safe place, this is the safest place. With the energies of the Dhyanalina, there is absolutely no need for concern for one's safety from these kinds of beings here.

Seeker: Once a disembodied being is completely liberated, is it able to remain in non-physical realms? If so, why would he do this?

Sadhguru: It is very rare that this would happen, but there have been some beings who have done that. There are yogis called *nirmanakaya*. *Nirman* means 'to create'; *kaya* means 'a body'. These yogis are of the highest accomplishment and are able to recreate their body at will. They do not need to be reborn. See, when you are born through a womb, you are also creating a body. Your own energy is doing it. You take nutrients from your mother, and you create a body – it is not the mother who is creating it. After you are born, you are still creating this body, isn't it? You are creating it in the same way that you are now – taking nutrients through food, through the air that you breathe, the water that you drink and the sunlight. Before you are born, that mechanism has not come yet, so you are using the mother's mechanisms of eating, drinking and breathing to structure the body, but it is your own energies which are doing it.

One can acquire the capability to create a body without the help of a mother's womb. You are able to create it by yourself. Now you don't have to create this small body. The small body is created because only that can fit into the mother's womb. When you sit and create it, you can create an average sized body or one that is twenty feet tall. So these nirmanakayas are in subtle states and use elaborate processes. They have chosen to be in that state. Some out of their compassion, some because they have

been - what can I say - ordained by their masters, who have told them, "Don't worry about your *mukthi*.¹ Just do this." The span of time in which they do this may be very long in normal human terms. It could be a couple of thousand years to even ten thousand years, but even this has a certain span to it; eventually, they will dissolve. These nirmanakayas have chosen to be in their subtle body. Once in a while, they may create a gross body to come back and do certain things - there are such beings. Without them, I would not be so knowledgeable.

Seeker: Do disembodied beings remain in the sphere of the earth? Are they captive to its pull, or are they free to roam the existence? Are they all around us? When we die, do we just float around this existence?

Sadhguru: There is no such thing as existence (laughs).

Seeker: Is that all you are going to say, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: That's enough, isn't it? Some yogis even create their whole existence while sitting in a cave.

Seeker: If a yogi creates his entire existence, his whole universe, in a cave, what's to say that all of us, sitting here today, right now, even you, are simply not players in the existence of some yogi sitting in a cave somewhere? Do you know? It's like infinite...

Sadhguru: (Laughs) I think you can go and join a UFO cult. You have all the qualifications. Okay, about what you asked just now, all these time and space problems exist only in your conscious mind. It is a trick of the conscious. Once you transcend certain dimensions of the mind, there is no space and time. It is all one. What is here is there; what is there is here. What is now is then; what is then is now. So when you ask, "Can they roam the existence?" Yes, you are also roaming the existence right now, isn't it? As you are living in the realm of the conscious mind, it's like if you are here in India, you cannot be in America. Once you transcend that, there is no America; there is no India. It is all here. So when somebody says

¹ *mukthi*: liberation.

that they have seen me and experienced me in two different places at the same time – it was not that I was in two different places; I was in the same place. They think these are two different places. It is not so. Einstein told you that your existence is relative. Indian philosophy has always been telling you that it is all an illusion. It seems to be there, but it is not there. It is all here. It is all now. The beginning is here. The end is here. Eternity is here. For one who is lost in his mind, there are many places, but for one who is totally here, everything is here and now. Do you understand?

Seeker: But the tendency is, you said, to go to certain places. If there is no here and there...

Sadhguru: For you there is here and there, isn't it? It is a reality.

Seeker: Yes, but then what do you mean?

Sadhguru: Let us say you are in Chennai right now. So all the beings in the existence are in Chennai, and Chennai is everywhere. Now you really understand the realm of the mystic (laughs). I told you, logic is only a trap because that's the only thing you understand. Do you know how it is to spend a whole lifetime, even with the people who are closest to you, without ever getting to talk about what really matters? Do you know how it is? That's how it is to be a Guru.

Seeker: But Gurus are supposed to have lots of patience.

Sadhguru: It takes a lot more than patience, but you don't have the right to test it! (Laughs).

Seeker: Sadhguru, one cannot talk about disembodied beings in a logical manner, but the way you put it together for us, with such confidence and clarity is convincing, whether it is logical or not.

Sadhguru: That's all. That's how it is. It's the clarity and authority with which I can say what I'm saying that is able to convince people, but what is being said is still illogical.

Seeker: It's just like what Ramana used to say when people would ask, "How do I take this back to America with me, what I have here at Ramanashram?" He would say, "Who's going to America,

and who is here?" He's saying the same thing. When this has touched you, it makes no difference where you are or what time you are in, in terms of time and space.

Sadhguru: Yes.

Seeker: Then what is this effort towards liberation? We already are liberated.

Sadhguru: It is not that you are already liberated. You are not bound, but you believe that you are bound. All you are trying to do is to destroy an illusion. That's why it's so hard, because you can't destroy an illusion. You can only wake up. Trying to destroy an illusion is a stupid thing. If you destroy the illusion, and say, "Yes, I have destroyed the illusion", then you're in a deeper illusion.

That's why we're saying don't get into mental games, because you go into deeper and deeper illusions. All you have to do is awaken yourself. To put it logically, between sleep and wakefulness, there is a difference for you. In sleep, you are alive. In wakefulness you're also alive, but wakefulness is a more intense aliveness than sleep. It is a heightened level of energy, a heightened level of awareness. Isn't that so? In sleep also, you are fully alive, but there is no experience of anything. The moment you awaken, suddenly this whole world opens up in front of you. What is it that has happened? All that has happened is that you have moved to a heightened level of energy and awareness. That's all that happens between sleep and wakefulness. Now what we are talking about in terms of Realization is moving into a higher level of energy and a higher level of awareness. Suddenly, you are awake in a different reality altogether, which we are referring to as the Ultimate Reality. That makes it very simple.

Seeker: Can you tell us a specific instance where you have helped a disembodied being?

Sadhguru: Let me tell you about the woman on the roof. We have done many things with such beings, but this particular one hung around for more than a year and a half, maybe two. After the Dhyanalinga consecration, my body was in a certain state of instability, and I did not want to meddle with her because

they have – what can I say – no sense of judgment. They just have a longing. It's like somebody who is in a deep state of desire has no judgment about life. He just has a longing for something. Somebody wants to drink; he wants to drink. Somebody wants to rape; he wants to rape. It's not because they are good or bad that they're doing it. They have no judgment about life; they only have longings. These beings are like that. They have no logical judgment about life. They just have longings and certain vasanas – according to their karma. They simply go by that.

There are other kinds of creatures, which have gone totally out of shape; they have not been able to retain their human form – they have become subtle – but this is a woman who has retained her feminine form well, with a heightened sense of femininity. No woman in the world will be like that. She is extremely beautiful and is in much larger proportion than normal. She also creates an illusion of wearing beautiful dresses and presenting herself well. Her vasana is femininity, which is always in counter to masculinity. So if you try to meddle with her, naturally she will come as a woman. She won't know any other way to approach. This can lead to so many unnecessary situations, but she would not do anything on her own. If I had invited her into the shrine to dissolve her, in a moment it would have been over.

As my body was in a certain state of fragility and instability after the consecration, I did not want to deal with her. In the night, she would be walking in the inner corridor of my house, anklets sounding, *jing, jing, jing, jing, jing*. It was not just me who heard her. Whoever stayed in the house would hear her walking throughout the night. If you opened the door and came into the corridor, she would be up there, sitting on the roof with a forlorn look on her face, all the time. She sat up there for almost two years. She would not enter the shrine. She did not dare to, but she kept walking and waiting. I did not do anything with her. I just left her there. I didn't try to ward her off because she was so forlorn and longing, seeking something. The longing was not just for the masculine, though she had taken on this excessively feminine kind of state. She was just seeking to go somewhere; some awareness had come into her. See, once a being has such tendencies to identify itself with the feminine, naturally the same tendencies will long for the masculine. This is not something that she's choosing – "I want this person or I want that person." It's just a natural tendency. After the celestial snake took away certain disturbances from my damaged energy body, I brought her down and took her into the shrine and the job was done in five minutes. It was over; she was gone, totally dissolved.

Seeker: Sadhguru, when this 'woman on the roof' came with total, utter femininity, somehow she was seeking masculine energy. So how did she know? Did she see you as a man? Was she looking for you?

Sadhguru: Yes, she was. See, me being a man is in a completely different dimension. This woman, the way she retained her form and all that, had a little more awareness in her than just being a disembodied being. This being was definitely a little more aware. She saw me as a certain being; she saw me as a certain light; she saw me as a possibility. That possibility is always identified as man. Whether it's a man or a woman, sexually, it doesn't matter. If you attain to a certain level of sadhana and certain level of liberation within yourself, then for those beings, or for anyone for that matter, you will be seen as a man. It is Purusha. When I say 'man', it's not necessarily in terms of man because of some body parts. The whole Hindu philosophy goes about like this, the first basic form, the formless thing, is mother. Mother goddess is most basic. Prakrithi is feminine, formless, un-manifested. The first manifestation is Purusha. That is considered masculine. Any manifestation is considered as Purusha or masculine. That way, if you attain to a certain level of liberation within yourself, as far as the existence is concerned, you are seen as masculine, not as feminine. Or, you can put it this way: it is no more receptivity. It's more a giving kind of thing, outgoing, so it is seen as masculine. Feminine means it is receptivity.

Seeker: So she left her previous body in a certain state of awareness? That's why she could be like this, waiting on the roof?

Sadhguru: Yes, in a way. We could look back at her karmic structure if we wanted to, whatever she had, where she came from, what she had done, but I already have enough people on my hands (laughs). It's unnecessary.

Seeker: Did she have awareness as you were taking her into the shrine? Did she have awareness of what you were doing?

Sadhguru: Not really. For her, after that long wait, just being asked into the shrine itself was enough. Somewhere, on one level, yes, but what I was going to do with her was not the concern. After all, when she felt my energy, she knew this would only lead to dissolution.

Seeker: Sadhguru, pardon me for asking, but I am just so curious; was she wearing clothes? Are these beings clothed? If beings are disembodied, how do they wear clothing? Can they see our style of clothes? Would she look at our styles as well? Once the body is gone, why clothes?

Sadhguru: These disembodied beings, except for those few celestial beings who have evolved to a certain level of awareness and capability within themselves, operate simply out of their tendencies. Even when they are embodied, most beings are still operating and living their life according to the quality of their tendencies. Very few people living here are functioning out of their awareness and choice. When you're embodied, you have so much more choice or discretion. Why human life is considered as higher than that of the yakshas, gandharvas, and devas, is because there is discretion. That means one can evolve by choice. Disembodied beings evolve mostly by tendencies, not by choice, not by discretion, because there is no intellect. Intellect is the biggest barrier. An intellect is also a tremendous possibility because it gives you discretion; it gives you choice, which other beings do not have. They don't think. They are just energy. They have certain tendencies and they function out of that.

For example, this woman who had been sitting on the roof for a long time, waiting, was clothed very well, sometimes even with lots of jewelry and things like that. Her clothing was vibrantly colored, like that of Rajasthani women, a long skirt and a drape around her upper body; very beautifully clothed. Her clothes ranged in the shades of yellow and orange. She had also made herself a little larger than normal, something like six and a half or seven feet tall. These things happened not by conscious choice; they happened by her tendencies. These things were deep in her karmic structure – wanting to be beautiful, to look and dress in a certain way. This was very deeply ingrained in her and she found expression that way. It's not that she was consciously wearing a yellow or orange dress. What was deeply within her karma as beautiful was finding expression. In reality, there is no beauty, ugliness, or anything. Her karmic tendencies just found expression in a certain way.

Seeker: So her features were not her features? She could just make herself beautiful or ugly?

Sadhguru: They were her features. There are some beings that don't have a proper human form. They do not necessarily have hands and legs. They are more like a human-shaped amoeba, they don't

have proper features, but this particular being had proper features, and a very well formed body and face, because this was very deep in her karma, wanting to be beautiful and wanting to be in a certain way. She had certain desires and longings within her karma, which were deep-rooted, and she was able to find expression like that. There are beings for whom this is not important, so they don't have proper features. There are beings whose tendencies or vasanas make them horribly ugly – not really ugly; they are not in the normal human form. Like what's inside your body, if it hangs outside, you think it's horrible. Suppose your stomach bag or your heart hangs out, you think it's horrible. So there are beings like that who have twisted-out proportions because their minds and their tendencies are like that. Accordingly, they have taken certain forms. These forms are not consciously created. It is not by their choice; it's by their tendencies that they have created it. So you can say in a way it's their creation.

Like how you are right now is your creation, but it is an unconscious creation. The rules are about the same. It's just that when you are embodied, you have more discretion. As you become more aware, you gain more discretion. Once, an explorer in the depth of the Amazon jungle found himself surrounded by a group of bloodthirsty natives. Upon surveying the situation he cursed to himself, "Oh God, I'm cooked!" Suddenly, a ray of light fell from the sky and a voice boomed out, "No, you're not cooked. Pick up that stone at your feet and bash it on the head of the chief standing in front of you." The explorer picked it up and started to bash the life out of the chief. Then he stood above the lifeless body, breathing heavily, surrounded by a hundred natives with looks of disbelief and shock on their faces. The voice boomed out again, "Okay, now you're cooked!" This is how life takes over when your intelligence isn't used. As you become less and less aware, you have less discretion. As a human being, if you don't make use of your awareness and discretion, human life is wasted on you; you're cooked! These disembodied beings are in the level of awareness in which they left. They can't gain or lose awareness. They're in a kind of a limbo; it's a stagnant state. There is nothing they can do about it. It is progressing, but they can't do anything about it – it is only happening as per their tendencies. It is like a light bulb. You keep it on. It has a certain life span, after that it will burn out. The bulb cannot choose how long to burn or when to go out. It burns for so many hours then it goes out. It's just like that. You cannot evolve; you cannot regress. What you have, you just experience, that's all.

Once you are embodied and you're here as a human being, you can either evolve or regress. Both are possible for you. That's the beauty of having an intellect which can discriminate and choose. It can make you progress; it can make you regress. Once you don't have this intellect, you just function by tendencies. Animal nature is functioning by tendencies. Similarly, disembodied beings also function by tendencies. Unless – and that applies to just a small number – they were in a certain degree of evolution before they left the body, then they are there by conscious choice. We refer to these as celestial beings, those who exist by choice, just to create the distinction.

Seeker: Sadhguru, so in the process, because there is no body, could this lady switch to a masculine form?

Sadhguru: There is no body, but she has no choice. Whichever way her karmic structure is, this is just being reflected. For example, another disembodied being, 'the lady with the beard', became very popular with people during the ninety-day Wholeness program. She wanted to be masculine; not being masculine for the sake of sexuality, but masculine as a spiritual possibility, because of social reasons. So somewhere in her mind there was a deep regret that she had not been born as a man. Spiritual possibilities were denied to her just because she was a woman. This huge karma within her caused her to wish that she was a man, but her body did not change. Because she saw yogis with beards, a beard gathered around her face. A full-grown beard, like a man's beard. It's not that she was creating it, but her tendencies and her longings – probably many times, if not consciously, then unconsciously, she had thought, "If I just had a beard and I looked like a man, I could be there." That thought gave her a beard. It's not that she was wearing a beard.

Seeker: Master, you say the karmic structure does not differentiate between the masculine and the feminine. Then what is it that makes a disembodied being come as masculine or feminine?

Sadhguru: It is the tendencies, the vasanas that they carry. Suppose in your previous life you were masculine and now you're feminine. If those masculine karmic tendencies are much more powerful, or of a deeper impression than the present karmic tendencies, then as a disembodied being, you will most

probably go around in a man's form. Whatever is the tendency of the karmic structure, that's the kind of form it tries to find. Or sometimes it may be mixed up. One part of your body may be masculine and another part feminine. It's very much possible. It may also be neither. It may be just a distortion of the two, not knowing what to become. It could be anything. This is the reason why people, because of some confused perception, become distorted beings. As I have said, these beings don't always have perfectly formed bodies. The 'woman on the roof' was deeply into her femininity, so she had a perfectly formed body. This is not always so. It could become anything, as per the dominant tendencies.

Seeker: Let's say you have the masculine form; you have masculine energy. Then why would you choose to come back in the feminine form in another lifetime?

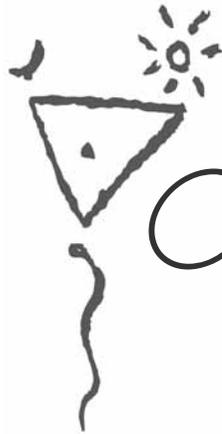
Sadhguru: That's very much possible. Especially if your masculine tendencies are very strong, naturally they will seek to become feminine. This is nature's way. If a feminine tendency is extremely strong, it will tend to take on a masculine body because the formation of the physical body is caused by duality. So if someone's karmic tendency is extremely feminine, they will tend to become masculine in body. If someone's tendency is extremely masculine, they will tend to become feminine in the body because the meeting of the dualities has to happen. If the karmic tendencies are highly masculine, too masculine, and if it happens to find a masculine body, this will be an abnormal person.

Seeker: This will be a very powerful being?

Sadhguru: Powerful, yes, but he could be very abnormal and tend to be very violent. It's possible, but not necessarily so. You must understand that the energy has no quality of its own. It is neither positive nor negative, neither good nor bad. It just functions by tendencies. Good and bad qualities arise within you only when discretion arises. Where there is no discretion, there is no positive and negative. For example, let's say there is a nuclear reactor here. It could be lighting up the whole city. Tomorrow morning, if it leaks, it could be killing the whole city. It has no quality of its own. It is neither a good reactor nor a bad reactor. It just has tendencies; that's all. You can channel it this way or that way. This is how the whole existence is. This is the nature of the Creator. That is why, in this culture, we have always described God as Nirguna. That means He is attribute-less. He has no qualities.

He's neither good nor evil. He is simply there. He can become anything. That's why Shiva has been described as the embodiment of all the beautiful and all the ugly, all the horrible and all the fantastic, everything – simply because the Creator has no tendencies. It is just energy. It can manifest itself any way. That level of energy, that manifestation that you call as the Creator, is absolutely attribute-less.

What you call a human being is somebody who, in the process of taking on manifestations, has picked up tendencies. That's what we're calling as the karmic body, the vasanas, or tendencies. It's something that one picks up. It's like the moss that you pick up on the path when you walk. Slowly you pick it up and as it gathers you have more and more established qualities. From an animal to a human being, you have more and more established qualities, because it has run through a longer process of evolution, and picked up more and more tendencies, more and more qualities. That's why a human being seems to have a more evolved, or rather, a more established personality compared to animal nature. Though they also have a personality, it is not as established as a human being, because the human being has run a longer path of evolution, and naturally, has picked-up more karmic substance in the course of this evolution. It's all the same energy, that of animals and human beings. The whole process of dissolution is again going to that point where you drop all tendencies and just become pure energy. So when you just become pure energy without attributes, we say you are God-like. That is absolute dissolution. That is Mukthi. That is Nirvana. That is *Mahasamadhi*. Once you become pure energy, there is no such thing as you and me, this and that. All duality is lost. Duality has come only with tendencies, or tendencies have come because of dualities. Shiva, the attribute-less one, takes on the form of Ardhanarishwara, the half man-half woman state, to function in the world. Without duality there is no function. Now, these disembodied beings are incapable of experiencing anything that is physical. They can't see your physical body, your clothes or anything that is physical about you. They can only see you as an energy being, the way they are now. 'The lady on the roof' was wearing clothes, but she could not experience the clothes, nor could she see them. It was just an expression of her tendencies.



Chapter- 7

The Eternal Form



The Eternal Form

*You are my Guru's will
My only obsession
In my dreams and my wakefulness
My only longing was to fulfill you*

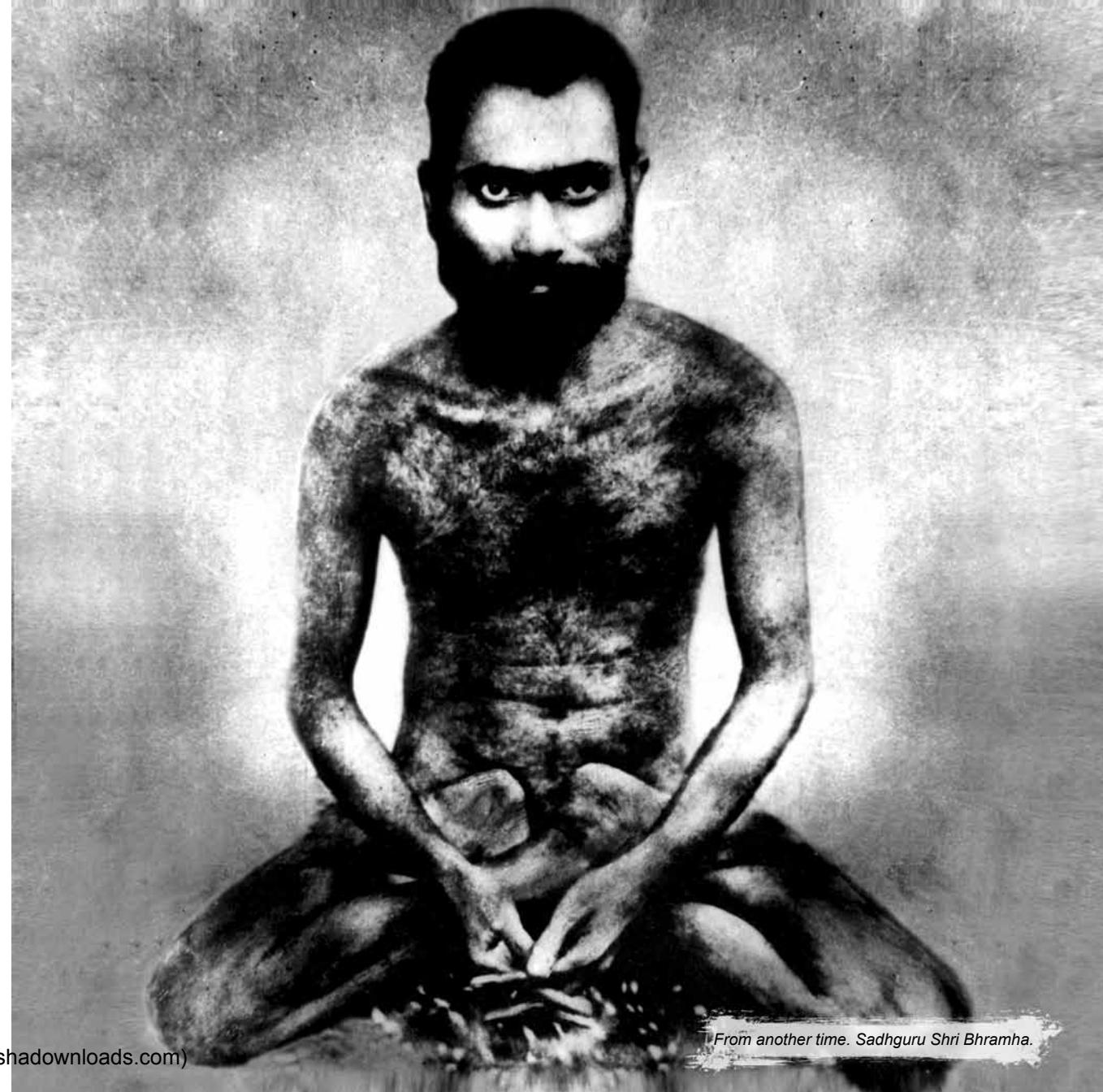
*Willing to do anything
That men should and should not
Willing to offer myself and
Another hundred lives if need be*

*Here now that you have happened
O Glorious One
May your Glory and Grace
Stir the sleeping hordes*

*Into wakefulness and light
Now that you have happened
And the gift of life is still with me
What shall I do with myself*

*Have lived the peaks for too long
Time to graze the valleys of life*

– Sadhguru





Anyone who comes into the sphere of the Dhyanalinga cannot escape the sowing of the spiritual seed of liberation. - Sadhguru

Entrusted to him by his Guru, the consecration of the Dhyanalinga, the dream of many enlightened beings, has been the mission and the consummation of Sadhguru's life. What exactly is the Dhyanalinga? Why is it so special that even enlightened beings wished to bequeath it to the world? Why is it that Sadhguru chose to go through the cycle of birth and death not once or even twice but three times to make it happen? Why is it that Sadhguru considers that any price to consecrate the Dhyanalinga is worthwhile? What are the virtues and the benefits of the Dhyanalinga? These are only some of the myriad of questions about the Dhyanalinga, which one can never really comprehend.

Yet, despite the limitations of the mind and word, Sadhguru dispels misgivings and in an effort

to enhance one's possibility of experiencing the Dhyanalinga, shares insights on the Dhyanalinga with groups of close disciples from various beliefs, faiths, cultures and traditions, from different parts of the globe, from the devout believer to the atheist and the scholar who is clueless about an inner possibility.

Delving deeply into the very core of the spiritual sciences, Sadhguru unravels the mysteries of the little known ancient science of temple building. Answering questions on the purpose of temples, the energies of the deities and their consecration, on rituals and sacrifices, on trials, setbacks and successes, Sadhguru jokes through hair-raising revelations about temples that perhaps until yesterday one went to only ritualistically, or abhorred, but missed completely, either way.

Seeker: Sadhguru, this Dhyanalinga, which you refer to as the Eternal Form, what is it? I am very intrigued.

Sadhguru: *Dhyanalinga*... what it is all about. If you look at life today, modern science tells you beyond any doubt that the whole existence is just energy manifesting itself in so many different ways. The only thing is that it is in different levels of manifestation. If everything is the same energy, can you treat everything the same way?

We just had our dinner. There was so much variety, I was mind boggled. I didn't know what to choose. I asked Momita, "Please choose for me." I did not want to choose from a hundred different varieties for myself. Now this food, when it is on your plate, it's wonderful, tasty and delicious. Tomorrow morning, what happens to the food that you have eaten? It becomes shit. This tasty food and that are the same energy. This food that you have eaten and what has become of it, can you treat both the same way? When it falls into the earth, in a few days again it stands up as food. Again you eat it, again you know what it turns into. It's the same energy taking on different forms. This form and that form, what a world of difference, isn't it? When you make mud into food, you can call it agriculture; food into energy, digestion; stone into God, consecration. Similarly, what you call as creation is the same energy, from the grossest to the subtlest.

Just looking back, after I finished college, I wanted to make some money so I could travel; I started a poultry farm. One day, I decided to paint the wall. I dipped the brush in the paint and put it to the wall. I did not want to paint the whole wall thoroughly, so I just put the paintbrush onto the surface and walked from one side to the other. The paint started out very thick, then became thin, thin, thinner and slowly disappeared. I saw this paint smear, which started out thick, become thinner and thinner and

then just disappear. Seeing this, I exploded; tears were simply rolling out of my eyes. I just looked at this and there was the whole creation right there. That's all the whole creation is: a paint smear. It starts out really thick and gross, becomes thinner and thinner and thinner, and becomes nothing. So from the lowest to the highest, it was all there, the *vishwa rupa darshana*¹ for me, in just this paint smear. I sat there going crazy and ecstatic (laughs). I didn't paint for three days. Then I started again.

What you call as creation is just that. Everything is the same energy. The rock is the same energy. God is also the same energy. This is gross; that is subtle. As you make it more and more subtle, beyond a certain level of subtleness, you call it Divine. Below a certain level of grossness, you call it animal; further below that you call it inanimate. It is all the same energy. So the whole creation is just a paint smear for me, and if you look at it, it's the same for you. What you call as the Dhyanalinga is the result of taking energies to subtler and subtler levels. The whole process of yoga is to become less physical and more fluid, more subtle. For example, *samadhi* is that state where the contact with the body is minimized to a single point, and the rest of the energy is loose, no longer involved with the body. Once energy is like this, much can be done with it. When the energy is stuck, identified with the body, nothing much can be done with it. All you can do is produce thoughts, emotions, and physical actions; but once the energy becomes free from physical identification and becomes fluid, so many unimaginable things can be done with it.

Dhyanalinga is a miracle. When I say miracle, I'm not talking about gross acts of changing one object into another. If you can go through life untouched, if you can play with life whichever way you want and life still cannot do anything to you, life does not leave a scratch on you; that is a miracle that we are working to manifest in everybody's life in so many ways. That is also the miracle of Isha Yoga programs. If a person does not realize the miracle that he is, the miracle that life is, the miracle that holds you on this planet, the miracle that makes you die, the miracle that makes you to be born once again; if a person does not understand this, does not experience this, such a fool will go about seeking these frivolous miracles or the so-called miracles of transforming one thing into another. Fundamentally, these so-called miracles are meddling with the process of life. If you have tasted life, if you have known and experienced some sense of depth to it, you will know that meddling with it is the most foolish thing to do because you can't make

it any more beautiful. The only thing you can do is to allow yourself to experience the beauty of life, allow yourself to experience the grandeur of life. Anything else you do with it is bound to be a stupid act. From your limited sense of understanding, whatever else you do, whatever else you are driven to do with your life is very immature and juvenile. The Dhyanalinga, I call it a miracle because it is a possibility to know life in its utmost depth, to experience life in its totality. The sphere and the energy of the Dhyanalinga will create a possibility for every human being who comes in contact with it – either actually in its vicinity, or just in his consciousness – if he is willing to open himself up. It will be available to him; it will become the highest possibility for him.

You have known the pleasure and the convenience of modern science; so why the Dhyanalinga? It is because I want you to know the power, the liberation of another kind of science, the inner science, the yogic science through which you can become the master of your own destiny. That is why the Dhyanalinga. A science like this gives you absolute mastery over life itself. The whole process of the Dhyanalinga is just to manifest this science in such a way that it cannot ever be taken away, to manifest it also in such a way that it's accessible at any time to everybody who is willing. Not only to create your life the way you want it, but to be able to decide the very process of life, death and rebirth. Even to the extent of deciding the womb in which you are going to be born; ultimately, being able to dissolve at will.

Seeker: Master, you say that the Dhyanalinga offers the possibility for each human being to experience life in its totality. Can you tell us how?

Sadhguru: I think we need to bring some understanding of the science behind the Dhyanalinga. In the yogic tradition, this whole aspect of what we call as Shiva¹ and Shakthi is about the duality of life. When you experience life through your sense perceptions, the experience of it is in a certain duality. It is this duality which is traditionally personified as Shiva and Shakthi, the Ardhanarishwara.² In yoga, we call this the *Ida* and *Pingala*, and in the far eastern culture as *Yin* and *Yang*. You can also call

¹ *vishwa rupa darshana* : an experience of oneness of the existence.

¹ Shiva : lit. *that which is not*. The Great Lord. The destroyer in the trinity.

² Ardhanarishwara : Shiva, in the form of half man and half woman.

it the feminine and masculine or the intuitive and logical aspect of oneself. These are the two dimensions in which you and the world around you exist. It is based on this duality that all religious sciences have grown. Based on this, life is created; without these two dualities, life does not exist as it is right now. In the beginning, everything was primordial; there was no duality, but once creation happened, there was duality. To experience and limit you to this duality is the reason why there are sense organs. You experience everything through your senses: seeing, smelling, tasting, hearing and touching. These sense organs manifest and enhance the sense of duality in the world. The sense of light and dark, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant is what makes everything appear more established. As you get more involved with the sense perception, think, and feel life, the duality only gets deeper.

Now is there something wrong with the duality? That's not the point. Without duality, there is no creation. It's only because of these opposites that creation happened; but to be trapped within the duality is the problem. If one is limited to the duality, one does not know the beyond. It then becomes a great limitation in your life. Duality is the source of all the pleasures in the world. If there were no opposites, there would be no pleasures. At the same time, duality is the source for all suffering in the world. It is only because of these opposites that man suffers. Caught in this 'pleasure and pain' experience of life, people get wounded by life. They don't become wise with life, they become wounded by it. They are not able to handle this duality, nor are they able to transcend it.

When you have limited yourself to your sense perceptions, you're bound by this duality; you can't help it. The sense organs seem to be an access to freedom. Your eyes, for example, your vision, seems to be your freedom. If you have no eyes, you have no experience of the outside, but it is the eye which is limiting you in so many ways. The eye is like a window to your body; it's through this window that you can look out. This window seems to be a great possibility, but the window is also a limitation for you. If you remove this limitation, then you will observe that it's not the eyes that see, it's you who sees. Your eyes are only an opening to the world. So sense perceptions are just a small opening and at the same time a great bondage within yourselves.

The process or science of the Dhyanalinga is an establishment of the exuberance of the duality of life. Through the *nadis*¹ of the Ida and Pingala, through the seven *chakras*² and the wide range of manifestation and experience, life has happened. The many forms of life, the many levels of life, the many ways of experiencing life are there in the world only because of this duality and the seven chakras or the seven dimensions of life. The Dhyanalinga is manifested on all of these levels, but its purpose is to help a person go beyond this duality. We are not against sense perception, but seeing the limitation that it is, one needs to go beyond that. Through this manifestation of Ida and Pingala or Shiva and Shakthi, both dimensions, the logical and the intuitive, can be enjoyed and experienced. Knowing that both the logical and the intuitive are not sufficient, one has to know that which is beyond this, which in yoga we refer to as *pratibha*, where you are neither intuitive nor logical. You have a direct perception of the world the way it is. You experience life simply the way it is, not through the interpretation of the senses.

Seeker: In what way is the Dhyanalinga unique? What's so different about it, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: The uniqueness of the Dhyanalinga is that all the seven chakras are established. *Lingadhanda*, a copper tube with solidified mercury in it, has all the seven chakras established in their full flow, further complemented by copper rings on the outer periphery of the Dhyanalinga. Do you know what chakras are? Within your physical body, there are various centers, there are seven basic centers representing the seven dimensions of life, or seven dimensions of the experience of life. These seven chakras are: the *Muladhara*, which is located at the perineum, between the anal outlet and the genital organs. *Swadhistana* is just above the genital organs; *Manipuraka* is just below the navel; *Anahata* is the soft spot beneath the point where the ribcage meets; *Vishuddhi* is at the pit of the throat; *Ajna* is between the eyebrows and *Sahasrar* is at the top of the head.

1 *nadis* : channels through which the life force, or *prana*, flows through in the energy body.

2 *chakras* : seven main points or junctions of confluence of the pranic nadis or channels in the energy body.

What do these seven dimensions represent? If your energy is dominant in Muladhara, then food and sleep will be the most dominant factors in your life. If it is dominant in Swadhistana, pleasure will be the most dominant in your life. You will seek pleasure and enjoy the physical reality. If your energy is dominant in Manipuraka, you are a doer – you will do many things in the world. If it is dominant in Anahata, you are a very creative person. If your energy is dominant in Vishuddhi, you become a very powerful person. If your energy is dominant in Ajna, you become peaceful. If you attain to Ajna, then you're realized intellectually. You're not realized experientially, but a certain peace and stability arises within you irrespective of what is happening outside of you. If your energy moves into Sahasrar, you will explode into unexplained ecstasy. Whatever experience happens within you, it's just a certain expression of your life energies. Anger, misery, peace, joy, ecstasy... all are different levels of expression for the same energy. These are the seven dimensions through which one can find expression.

In my previous life as Sadhguru Shri Bhramha, I was known as *Chakreshwara*. For those of you from the state of Tamil Nadu, maybe you have heard of this. It means somebody who has complete mastery over all the hundred and fourteen chakras. It is because of that mastery that now we can have people blowing up everywhere like explosions. He was known as Chakreshwara because he exhibited certain qualities of his total mastery over the chakras. A phenomenally rare thing he did was, when he left his body, he left through all the seven chakras. Generally, when yogis leave their body, they leave through one particular chakra – whichever they have particular mastery over, through that they leave. Otherwise, depending upon their tendencies, they leave accordingly, but Sadhguru left his body through all the seven chakras. As a preparation for the consecration of the Dhyanalinga, he left his body through all the seven chakras. So this is from the horse's mouth (laughs).

So the uniqueness of the Dhyanalinga is that it has all the seven chakras energized at their peak. It's the highest possible manifestation, in the sense that if you take energy and push it up to very high levels of intensity, it can hold form only to a certain point. Beyond that, it cannot hold any form; it becomes formless. If it becomes formless, people are incapable of experiencing it. Pushing the energy to the highest point beyond which there will be no form, and crystallizing it at that point, it has been taken and consecrated.

It took three and a half years of a very intense process of consecration. The kinds of situations that people witnessed during the consecration are too unbelievable. Many yogis and *siddhas*¹ have attempted to create a Dhyanalinga, but for various reasons, all the required ingredients never fell together. There were three fully consecrated Lingas in the present state of Bihar, but their physical forms are gone now. They have been totally razed to the ground and homes have been built over their locations, but the energy forms are still there. We know where they are; I have located them. All the other Lingas were never completed. I have found dozens of places where they attempted to create a Dhyanalinga, but for some reason, they were never completed.

Seeker: Sadhguru, in India there are Lingas² everywhere. In what way is the Dhyanalinga different from other Lingas worshipped in the Hindu tradition? Are there other Lingas in the world or is it a science limited to Indian culture? You also say it's not a religious symbol. How so? And what about the science behind the making of the Dhyanalinga?

Sadhguru: The science of Linga making is a huge experiential possibility, and has been there for thousands of years, but in the last eight or nine hundred years, especially when the *bhakti* movement swept the country, the science of building a temple got washed away. For a *bhakti*, for a devotee, nothing is important except his emotion. His path is emotion. It is only from the strength of his emotion that he does everything. So they just kept the science aside and started building temples whichever way they liked. It's a love affair, you know? A bhakti can do whatever he wants. Anything is fair with him. He can do anything he wishes because the only thing he has is the strength of his emotion. That's the way of the bhakti; because of this, the science of making Lingas receded. Otherwise, it was a very deep science. This is a very subjective science and it was never written down, because if you write it down, it will be completely misunderstood. Many Lingas have been created like this, without any knowledge of the science.

1 *siddhas* : one who has attained perfection or mastery over a certain mystical aspect of life.

2 Lingas : an energy form consecrated for worship.

Temples created by bhaktas are places for people to create emotion. Very few people are true bhaktas; the rest are just using devotion as a currency to get what they want. Ninety-eight percent of the world's prayers are about: "Give me this, give me that, or protect me." This is just survival. There is no transcendence in that. There is nothing prayerful about it. This is just seeking survival, shifting your currency from one to the other, that's all. Generally, the only Lingas that have a scientific basis to them are those created by siddhas and yogis looking at liberation as a scientific process. They are eternal vibrations. Usually, they were consecrated with the use of mantras, for specific purposes and specific qualities. If you're not aware of this, in South India, there are five Lingas for the five elements in nature. These five Lingas are created for *sadhana*¹, not for worship; this must be understood. And the most fundamental sadhana in yoga is *bhootha shuddhi*.

The *pancha bhoothas* are the five elements in nature. If you look at yourself, your physical body is made up of five elements. These are earth, fire, wind, water, and space. They come together in a certain way to become the body. So the whole spiritual process is about going beyond the physical, beyond the five elements. These elements have a huge grip on everything that you experience. To transcend them, the fundamental practice of yoga involves what's called bhootha shuddhi. For every element that is involved, there's a certain practice you can do to become free from it. That is why, to practice the bhootha shuddhi, they created five different Lingas: one for earth, one for fire, one for wind, one for water, and one for space. Huge magnificent temples were built where you can go and do sadhana. If you want to do sadhana for the element of water, you go to Thiruvanaikaval. For space, you go to Chidambaram. To do different sadhana, different types of temples were built. This is how a temple is supposed to be, a place where energy is created in a particular way for the specific purpose of sadhana. They created these temples as places for sadhana, not for worship. Indian temples have never been places of prayer; nobody ever leads prayers there. Nobody tells you that you must go there, give five rupees and appeal to God to do this or that. The tradition always told you that if you go to the temple, you must sit there for a while, because these temples are energy centers. It's like a public charging place. Everyday in the morning, before you go out into the world, you have a bath, go sit in the temple and imbibe this, energize yourself. Then go out into the world with the right kind of vibe.

¹ *sadhana*: spiritual practices which are used as a means to realization.

The incredible thing is that there are Lingas all around the world. In Africa there are terra cotta Lingas used for occult purposes. In Greece there's a temple with a Linga below the ground known as the 'Navel of the Earth'. This is purely Manipuraka. Somebody showed me the picture and I immediately knew what type of people consecrated this Linga. It was definitely done by Indian yogis. Somebody went there five thousand years ago and consecrated the Linga for Manipuraka, probably because the local king or chieftain wanted victory, prosperity and well-being. So they created an instrument towards that purpose. As most temples were funded by kings, they mostly were Manipuraka in nature, but a few kings who looked beyond those things wanted Anahata Lingas – also called Atma Lingas. Usually these Atma Lingas are for love and devotion, for ultimate dissolution. Anahata is a very malleable kind of state, accessible to most people. There are occult Lingas which are Muladhara Lingas, very base, gross, and powerful, used for occult purposes. Those types of Lingas you can find in certain parts of Assam and Karnataka. There are secret temples, usually very small and powerful in their occult capabilities, but generally most Lingas are Manipuraka.

Right now, most of the Lingas in the country represent one or two chakras at the most. Generally only one, because the Linga is made powerful and intense with one chakra for a particular purpose and is consecrated by mantras. The Dhyanalinga, which is empowered with all the seven chakras, was consecrated by *prana prathishta*.¹ Holding all the seven chakras together was the greatest challenge. If I had wanted to create seven separate Lingas for seven chakras, that would have been so much easier, but the impact would not have been the same. The Dhyanalinga is like having the energy body of the most evolved being sitting there, or you could say, the highest being, referred to as Shiva, his energy body.

Another thing is, probably for the first time anywhere in the world, the Dhyanalinga is cared for by both men and women. Nobody has allowed women to do this kind of work before, but today, fourteen days in a lunar month – towards the full moon – women take care of the Dhyanalinga. The next fourteen

¹ *prana prathishta*: process of consecration or energizing an object with Divine energies through a direct process involving the consecrator's own life energies.

days – towards the new moon – men take care of it. I think that's a big gift for the society to be able to go beyond these traditions. *Bhramhacharinis*¹ are there in the temple, doing everything that needs to be done.

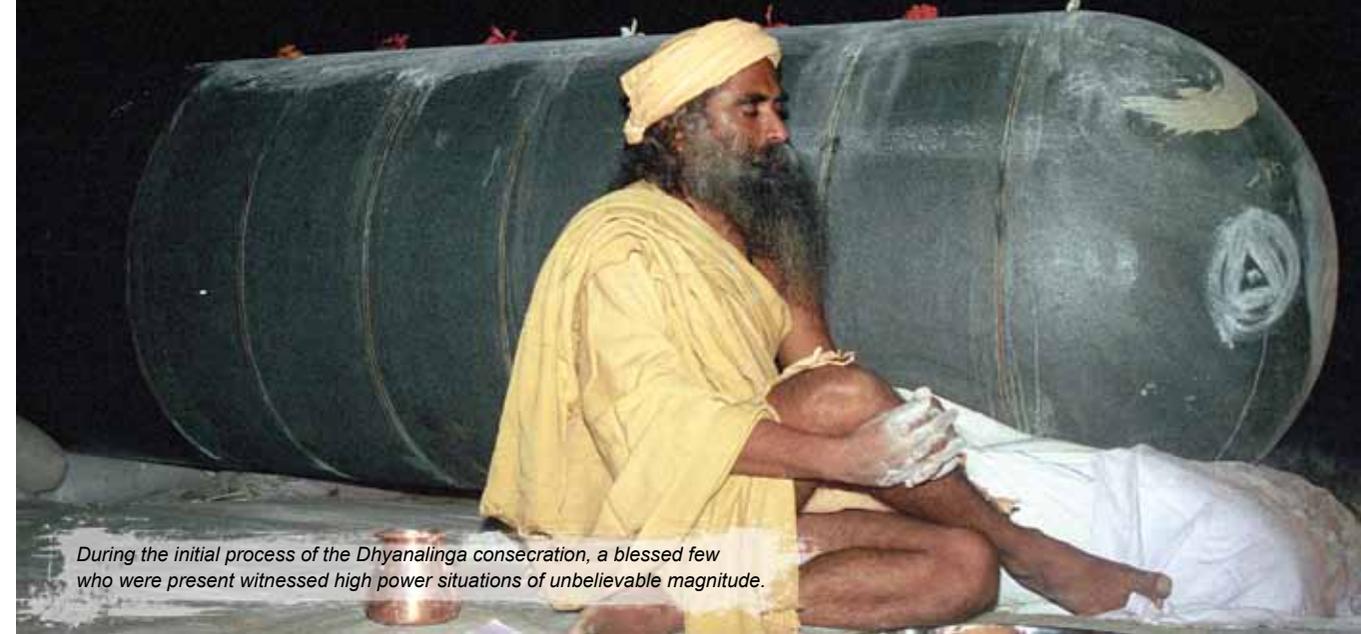
If one wants to do spiritual sadhana, he can have the intimacy of sitting with a *Guru*, a live Master. That is the purpose with which the Dhyanalinga has been created. So people come, sit for a moment and go, that's fine, but those who want to do sadhana can have that kind of intimacy with that energy which is not normally available for people. It's very rare for people to have such an opportunity.

Seeker: What's the origin of this Linga form? Is there any scientific explanation to it, Sadhguru?

Sadhguru: When un-manifest energy begins to manifest itself, the first form is always the Linga. The word *Linga* means *the form*. Why we are referring to it as *the form* is: the first form in the existence is always a Linga. Linga means a perfect ellipsoid. The first form of creation is an ellipsoid. Today modern cosmologists are saying that the core of every galaxy is in the form of an ellipsoid. There are many pictures that show just this. Yoga has always been saying, the first and final form is a Linga. If you become meditative, your energies will naturally take the form of a Linga. From our experience, we clearly know this.

Something beautiful like this happened with one of our meditators. A few years ago, when I was conducting a program in the United States, there was a participant who was an intuitive artist. During the program she just kept gazing at me, scribbling and scribbling, without looking at the paper she was drawing on and never lifting the pen off the paper, just scribbling. After three days of scribbling, she had a drawing of a form. When she finally looked at it, she could not make anything out of it. She did not know anything about the Dhyanalinga and she thought the drawing looked like a doorway. She came to me and said,

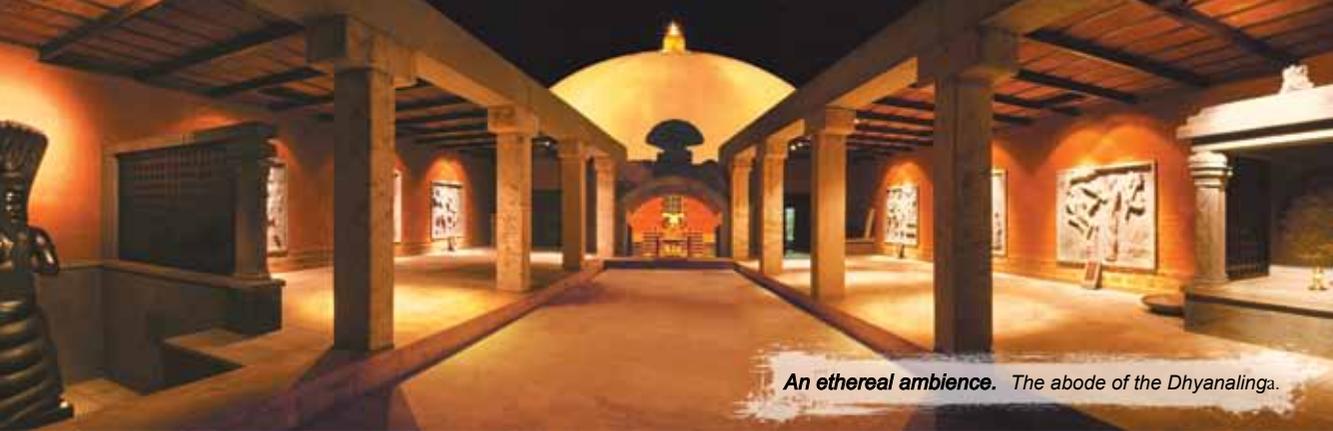
¹ *Bhramhacharini* : a woman who is on the path of the Divine, usually refers to one who has formally been initiated into monkhood through a certain energy process.



During the initial process of the Dhyanalinga consecration, a blessed few who were present witnessed high power situations of unbelievable magnitude.

“I want to show you this. My intuition drove me to draw this. I was just looking at you and this is what came out. It looks like a doorway. Maybe you're my doorway.” I looked at it. It was the shape of a perfect Linga. She got the essence of my energy just like that and drew a perfect Linga.

The first form is a Linga. The final form before dissolution is also a Linga. So a Linga is held as a doorway to the beyond, whether you go this way or that way. Both ways, before dissolving into nothingness, the final form is always a perfect ellipsoid. The science of Linga-making is based on this. If you give me any object, this paper for example, I can make it highly energetic and give it to you. In a few seconds I can make it highly energetic. If you hold it before and after I touch it, you will feel the difference, but the paper won't be able to retain this energy; it will hold it for some time, and again it will become just a piece of paper. It cannot sustain it; but if you create a perfect Linga form, it becomes a perennial storehouse of energy. Once you charge it, it will always stay that way.



An ethereal ambience. The abode of the Dhyanalinga.

Seeker: Your teaching is so powerful, Sadhguru, so why the need for Dhyanalinga?

Sadhguru: We can teach or impart things to you in many different ways. You know, people come to me in different ways. Some people come here as investigators, some people as students, some as disciples and some as devotees. Investigators want to find out what's wrong. That is, I mean there is nothing wrong, but they want to find out what's wrong; they are not interested in learning, do you understand? Many investigators came and quite a few of them have slowly evolved into devotees today.

Students come because they want to learn; they want to pick up something. I call the investigators shit-pickers. They always come to pick the dirtiest out of any situation; what's the dirtiest part of what's happening here. They want to pick out what's wrong. Students are also pickers; they want to pick out what's good. This is an old habit from the hunting and gathering days. Man has been gathering, gathering, and gathering, either things, people or knowledge, he wants to gather. The need for gathering has come because there is a sense of inadequacy and incompleteness. You want to gather something all the time, maybe money, maybe wealth, maybe relationships, maybe knowledge. It's just a question of taste, that's all. People who are gathering knowledge always think they are better than people who are gathering money or things, but it is not so. It is just a question of taste; somebody likes toast for breakfast, somebody likes *masala dosa*, somebody likes a whole meal in the morning. It's a question of taste. Everybody is gathering whatever is dominant in them. Socially, one thing is held superior to the other, but actually, gathering knowledge is so much more entangling than gathering money, wealth, people or anything.

Knowledge is the most entangling thing, because the way you think and feel, your ways of thinking and feeling are the deepest attachment within you. People have always thought renunciation means leave your wife, leave your husband. That's easy, you know? If your wife or husband has become inconvenient, leaving them is quite easy. Now, the problem is that the deepest attachment is to your own ways of thinking and feeling. If somebody threatens your way of thinking and feeling, you're willing to leave your child, husband, wife, father, mother, anybody, yes or no? Your own ways of thinking and feeling, that's where the trap is. So gathering knowledge is not any better, but students want to gather knowledge, that's their way. The third is the disciple. The disciple has come to transform himself, he wants to become something other than what he is right now; a pretty good beginning, but a devotee is not interested in all this. He just wants to dissolve. He doesn't want to exist as himself anymore, he wants to become one with everything. These are the four ways that you can come here.

Now depending upon who you are, and depending upon what your requirements are, we start imparting things in so many different ways. We can transform your body, you know, every day in the morning bending you and twisting you? If you do *yoga asanas* for six months, you will see, suddenly you're so much more peaceful, healthier, better, everything. You will see an enormous change in your body and your mind, simply because you're doing simple physical asanas. Let us say you practice for six months or one year, and give it up for another six months, then you're back to square one. If we transform your mind...with all these classes we are transforming your mind. If you live in awareness for the next six months, there's a huge change in you, but if in the next two years you live in unawareness, you will be back to square one. The next thing is we're trying to transform your *prana* or vital energies with *yoga kriyas*. You practice for six months and you give them up for the next five years, you will be once again back to square one. This period may vary from person to person, depending upon their lifestyles and other situations – karmic situations and other aspects.

If you can impress or imprint something into the etheric body, or spiritual body, a substance which is beyond the pranic or the physical energies, you can never destroy it. It's not in your hands anymore. That is what an initiation means. An initiation is not just a set of instructions. Why so much elaborate care is taken, I want to tell you very plainly: all this body bending, holding your breath and grinding from

morning to night, everything is just to give you a fifteen-minute *Shoonya*¹ meditation. All this drama of eight days is just to initiate you into fifteen minutes of meditation; just hoping that you will be in the right level of receptivity and receive this. The seed of it, once it falls into you, you cannot destroy. It doesn't matter what you do, even if you live the worst possible life, you cannot destroy the seed. If you create a conducive atmosphere, it grows and flowers. If you don't, it will wait.

Have you seen how in summer everything seems to be dry? When you look at the land, it looks so hopeless. Probably a long summer looks like the end of life. A few drops of rain come and do you see how it all springs up? They are all waiting; they are just waiting. One drop and immediately they are up. This is a seed. Once it is implanted into your etheric body, you cannot destroy it. That's what an initiation means. That's why so much care is taken about it. The whole Isha Yoga program is just about initiating you into Shoonya. I want you to understand that. Now if I have to initiate people like this – eight days of grinding, and you know all the logistics involved in it – I can initiate only a small group of people into Shoonya meditation at the same time. Ten thousand people a day is not possible. So we created a device...I would call it a tool. Dhyanalinga is a tool. Sitting in the space of the Dhyanalinga for a while, you start as a devotee, which has a tremendous advantage over Isha Yoga programs. It starts from the other end, which cannot be influenced by the outer situation. If you transform your spiritual body, you will see that this transformation is permanent. Once you are in the sphere of the Dhyanalinga, the seed of spiritual liberation is sown into you. Whether you are willing or not, a believer or non-believer, whether you have come to investigate or surrender, it doesn't matter. When people sit in the temple, this impression will definitely happen, knowingly or unknowingly.

This seed will wait. If the person creates a conducive atmosphere, it will flower very quickly; if he doesn't, it will wait. It will wait ten lifetimes or hundreds of lifetimes, but you cannot destroy it. This is why we have put so much effort into creating the Dhyanalinga. This transformation works within you on a different level altogether – one which cannot be destroyed, cannot be undone. After we are gone, what Isha Yoga will become, we don't know. We're taking a lot of care to see that distortions do not happen. We are demanding tremendous discipline and dedication from the teachers. We're putting very

¹ *Shoonya*: emptiness, a powerful meditation offered in the basic Isha Yoga program.

hard conditions on them so that distortions are not made. If whatever Gautama Buddha said, Krishna said or Jesus said can be distorted in a thousand years, what I have said will also definitely be distorted. So the Dhyanalinga is the *shakthi moola*¹ for that; it cannot be distorted. If the whole of Isha Yoga is distorted, it doesn't matter. If you just go and sit at the Dhyanalinga, everything that needs to happen will happen experientially, without saying a word; that's the nature of the Dhyanalinga. Even if a person who doesn't know anything about meditation comes and sits there, he will become meditative by his own nature. That is the quality of the Dhyanalinga. That's the kind of tool it is. It has taken an enormous effort to create it. It took three lifetimes for me. It's very hard for you to believe this. It will sound too unbelievable if I tell you the whole saga of what it took to make it happen. People who have been around me have seen all that has happened. That is the nature of this tool. If we go on teaching in the current way, with the kind of safeguards we're creating, we can never reach enough people. So the Dhyanalinga is to just hasten this process. That's why in our eagerness to share, we have created this.

Seeker: Master, you say it took you three lifetimes to create the Dhyanalinga. How did it all begin?

Sadhguru: This did not happen accidentally. It is a continuation of the past. Three hundred and seventy years ago there was a man in a small village in the present state of Madhya Pradesh. His name was Bilva. He lived a totally different kind of life. He was too wild and intense. He didn't really fit into the norms of society. There's a certain tradition in India, where people called the *budubuduku* just walk through the streets, usually very early in the morning, when it's still pitch dark. They wake you up with their drumbeats. Intuitively, if they see something, they will tell you; otherwise, they will sing songs in praise of the Lord and walk away. This is a certain tradition within the *Shaiva* culture, where this particular tribe of people is also involved in snake charming; snakes and Shiva are deeply connected. In the evolutionary process, the snake is at an important stage of development, because it is close to that of a human being.

¹ *shakthi moola*: energy source.

Bilva was the snake charmer of his tribe and he was deeply in love with what he was doing. These were people who lived totally, loving life for what it is. They weren't the kind to accumulate anything. They had no sense of money, property or possessions. They simply lived, and Shiva was very important in their lives. Bilva loved snakes. Mind you, snakes, poisonous creatures! If you love poisonous creatures, you have to be a different kind of person. To kiss a snake, you must be very courageous. For a person for whom love means everything, everything else is secondary; being alive itself is secondary. That's the kind of person he was. He was someone who could not fit into the social structure and was looked upon as a rebel. For one of the many rebellious acts he did, not respecting the prevalent caste distinction, at a very young age he was put to death by a snake's bite, while he was tied to a tree.

He was a great bhaktha of Shiva. Our mantra, "Shambho",¹ comes from that era. At that time, you couldn't really call him a spiritual person; he was a bhaktha, but not really a spiritual person. Those last few moments of his life, he watched his breath. See, the cobra's venom acts on the cardiovascular system. The blood thickens and makes cardiac and respiratory action difficult and ultimately it stops. Poison was all through his body and death a few minutes away. There was nothing else he could do and breath watching just happened. It was more of an accident than a conscious awareness. It was more a Grace than a sadhana. From that breath watching, which happened for just a few minutes, a new spiritual process began which changed that person's future in so many ways. That's why, in Samyama,² breath watching has a feel of venom to it. It has a different quality. Isha breath watching is very different from anywhere else. Though it is the most common meditation, if you go anywhere else and see people breath watching, it won't be the same. Here, it was realized when death was close and certain. This breath watching had a different kind of intensity; it was not done in comfort. He was lying face down, almost dead, and managed to be aware of those last few minutes of life. So this breath watching has a kind of overpowering effect on people. This path is very quick, and it is because of the quality of this breath watching that we dare to think of imparting Samyama in seven days.

1 Shambho: another name for Shiva, which denotes his loving nature.

2 Samyama: an eight day meditation program offered by Sadhguru where one is transported to explosive states of meditateness, held at Isha Yoga Center.

In his next life, he was a very intense seeker of the Ultimate Nature. Shiva was his way. He went through heartbreaking sadhana, but still final Realization had not happened. He was known as Shivayogi. Until now, I have never spoken about my Guru. I think it's time I said something about him. Shri Palani Swami was a Realized Master. This was not his name, but he was called so because he attained to a certain samadhi state, near the town of Palani in Tamil Nadu. He remained in this state for about two and a half years. After that, he wandered all over the country enlightening many people. He came to Shivayogi and bestowed his Grace upon him, a forlorn sadhaka. When this yogi saw him, he recognized that this was the Guru. Until then, he would not accept any human being as his Guru. For him, Shiva was the only Guru. He wanted Shiva to come and initiate him, but when he saw Palani Swami, he recognized that this being was at the very peak of consciousness and he offered himself. But somewhere there was still a little resistance because he could not offer himself to another man. He would only offer himself totally to Shiva. So the Guru, out of his compassion, appeared in the form of Shiva himself. Shivayogi surrendered. Palani Swami didn't even touch him with his hand or foot; he just took his staff and put it on his Ajna. At that moment, Shivayogi attained to his Ultimate Nature.

This contact with the Guru lasted only a few hours. After that they never met again, but they were constantly in touch. Palani Swami attained Mahasamadhi¹ in the Velliangiri hills.² Somehow he identified Shivayogi as a person suitable for establishing the Dhyanalina and entrusted this work to him; not in speech, not in words, but he communicated the immense technology needed to consecrate the Dhyanalina. So Shivayogi began working towards establishing the Dhyanalina, but was not able to fulfill his Guru's vision because of limited resources and lack of support.

To continue the work of creating the Dhyanalina, he came back as Sadhguru Shri Bhramha. He started the work towards this in Coimbatore,³ but faced a lot of social resistance from people. As Dhyanalina is the highest manifestation of the Divine, it includes all aspects and manifestations of life, so it involved men and women in very intense processes. If a man and woman sit together, people can only think of one thing.

1 Mahasamadhi: complete dissolution of the Self also known as Nirvana, or Mahaparinibbana in other spiritual traditions.

2 Velliangiri hills: referring to the mountain range surrounding the Isha Yoga Center where the Dhyanalina is located.

3 Coimbatore: closest major city to Isha Yoga Center, in Tamil Nadu, a South Indian state.

A lot of resistance came up, and he was literally hounded out of the place. He became very angry that he could not fulfill his Guru's will and left Coimbatore in great fury, as if on fire. In that anger, he started to walk in no particular direction. Seeing his fierceness, nobody was able to go near him, except for one disciple by the name of Vibhuthi who followed him. Sadhguru Shri Bhramha walked without eating, sleeping or even sitting for three or four days. The disciple would follow him, see in which direction the Master was going, cook food and run to reach his Master and place the food in front of him, step aside and wait for him to eat. He finally reached a temple in Cuddapah, in the state of Andhra Pradesh. It was not pre-planned that he should go there, but he was drawn in that direction because his Guru's blessings and energies were there.

After reaching this place, his anger had still not subsided. Even after four or five months, he was still angry. Nobody could come near Sadhguru Shri Bhramha and his disciple. It's not that they did anything or harmed anybody, but they were so fierce – fiercer than wild animals – even if they were only sitting, nobody wanted to come near them. Within a few days, all the priests in the temple left, as they couldn't stay there because of the intensity of that being. Sadhguru Shri Bhramha knew that he didn't have much time. He knew that because of certain karmic limitations, he would have to leave his body within the next two years. So he sat with his disciple and plotted how to make the Dhyanalinga happen in the next life. Many things were decided there – who should be involved in the consecration process, where they should be born, in which womb, how and at what time. They plotted everything. Sadhguru Shri Bhramha even decided what kind of a person he should be born as, how his physical body and state of mind should be. Everything was created right there. The fundamental blueprint for the Dhyanalinga was made in that Cuddapah temple. Now, you shouldn't believe all these things, but disbelieving them would also be stupid.

Then Sadhguru Shri Bhramha came back to Coimbatore for the last time, where many people gathered at the foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains. He declared, "I will be back." He ascended the mountain for the last time and left his body through all seven chakras. He was one of the very few Masters who had mastery over all the seven chakras and was referred to as Chakreshwara. He was only forty-two years old at the time. Today, the place where he attained samadhi and shed his body still exists; it is very vibrant, it pulsates with energy. People who go there can feel it and experience it. The quality of this place, at the

top of the seventh hill, just at the edge of the mountain where wild winds blow constantly, says everything about this man. That is where he felt most comfortable. It is a very powerful spot. Most of you have been there with me just a couple of days ago. Would any of you like to share your experience?

Srinivas: I was walking directly towards the place without knowing where it was and something was just pulling me in a particular direction. When I reached there, I sat and meditated for sometime and went into *shavasana*.¹ I was aware of everything that was going on around me. I could hear people chanting "Shambho," but I could not open my mouth. I was there for about fifteen minutes and in my experience I wasn't even breathing. Even when I inhaled, the exhalation came out immediately in one abrupt gasp. I felt very loose in my body, as if it was becoming separate from me. Sadhguru said that if I had been left alone, I would have left my body.

Sadhguru: Before Sadhguru Shri Bhramha shed the body, he made one futile attempt to achieve the work he had started. A certain yogi in Vajreshwari left his body at the age of twenty-six. He was a *bala yogi*² named Sadhananda who attained Realization at the age of eleven. Sadhananda spent about three and a half years in samadhi. When he came out, he was eager to share his experience, and only found five or six disciples to impart it to, but they weren't sincere enough. So he got angry and he left his body. Sadhguru Shri Bhramha immediately took hold of this *bala yogi*'s body and tried to fulfill his purpose through it. He did this because he had no patience to be born again and go through the process of life all over again. For a few months, Sadhguru Shri Bhramha was in two different physical bodies at the same time. In this attempt to create the Dhyanalinga, he gathered a few disciples around him and tried working with them with tremendous intensity, because the time span available was very limited. When people didn't meet his expectations, he got angry, and in anger he shed that body, too.

Today, after a saga of three lifetimes, the Dhyanalinga stands in full glory. I don't really know what to say – whether I am happy, ecstatic or what – to present this, to offer this to the world. Whatever words I use would be improper, but in a way I am relieved (laughs) that it is done. This is not my will; this is my Guru's

¹ *shavasana* : lit. corpse posture. Practiced intermittently between other asanas, it is known for the rejuvenation of the system.

² *bala yogi* : child yogi. Refers to someone who gets enlightened as a child.

will that this must happen. These three lifetimes have been spent towards fulfilling this, with the Grace of the Guru and with so many people's love, support and understanding – knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously – in making this happen. I wish to bow down to all of them; this is the greatest gift that could be offered to future generations. Today, I just feel empty. I can't say I'm happy, I can't say I'm fulfilled, I can't say anything. All I know is that today, I am absolutely empty; it has been so since the consecration day because suddenly, there seems to be no purpose for living.

This reminds me of a very ancient story that has been repeatedly told in yogic lore. It so happened, one day, there were two men. One was blind and the other crippled. They were in a forest and suddenly, there was a fire. One could see where to go but couldn't walk, the other couldn't see but could walk. So the two of them struggled by themselves for a while and nothing happened. They would be burnt anyway, because fire doesn't distinguish; it burns everything in its way. So between the two of them, they came to an agreement. The blind person, who was physically fit, carried the crippled person, who could see, on his shoulders to direct the way. They both got out of the forest fire. This story beautifully depicts the need for both the logical and the intuitive aspects of life to be met. The earlier attempts at creating the Dhyanalunga were purely intuitive. We knew how to do it from within, but we didn't successfully create a social situation that would accept it. This time, the blind and the crippled have come together successfully. We have sufficiently worked on the social situation to complete the process with people's support. Even this time, serious attempts were made to stop the process by certain groups of people. The society was treating us like the enemy, but we got through this because the blind and the crippled came together successfully. The actual consecration process took almost three and a half years. There were two ways to make it happen. One was to playfully dance through it. The other was to give up this body and merge with the Dhyanalunga. Doing that would have been the easier way, but we avoided this. I had the apprehension that this process would put so much fear into people that it might take one or two generations for them to accept the Dhyanalunga itself. So to do it like a play, to make it like a dance, it took so many things...the true significance of the Dhyanalunga will be known only after a couple of generations. Right now, it will be a point of controversy, a point of debate. It will take some time for people to know what it really means.

Seeker: Sadhguru Shri Bhramha was considered to be a very intense, wild man. How much of this streak is retained in you, Master?

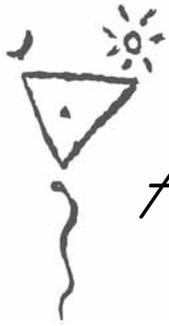
Sadhguru: All of it! But I have made great efforts to dampen that wild streak to a large extent. I have brought it down. Otherwise, the wild streak, though powerful, was very troublesome. He lived his life like that and he was constantly in trouble with the people around him. His inner understanding was crystal clear, but he didn't care about the outside. He just did what he wanted. For him, others were stupid and he didn't respect their stupidity. He just trampled on them, and for that they wouldn't leave him alone. They may have been stupid, but they were strong in their own way. Stupid people can destroy the world and they're doing it, isn't it? There were only two ways you could be with him. If you have to be with a king, you have to be of his kind, or you must be his humblest servant. It's the same with Shiva: either you have to be of his kind or his humblest servant. These are the two paths of *gnana*¹ and *bhakti*. Today, both are possible with me.

Seeker: So Master, it seems that you're saying Sadhguru Shri Bhramha was very arrogant with people around him.

Sadhguru: (Laughs) Arrogance! Not simple arrogance, it was absolute arrogance! He was simply arrogant for no reason. Not because of his ego; it was just that his energy was so fierce and people could not perceive him any other way. You ask people who knew him who are still around, they'll tell you how arrogant he was. Even if he has to call Shiva he would only say, "Hey." That's how he was. That was the only way he addressed people, but still people around him loved him very much. He wasn't at all nice to people the way they normally understand, but people close around him experienced him as the very embodiment of love and compassion. They built seventy institutions for him around the State of Tamil Nadu. When those people who knew him at that time heard that I was here, they just rushed here to be with me.

¹ *gnana*: knowing or perception.

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Afterword

When we embarked on the mission of compiling these monumental pages of intense interaction with Sadhguru, it was not without an element of mischief. Over the years, we had seen many people approach Sadhguru with questions. Questions of any and every kind: some casual and curious, some intense, profound, and burning; some cynical and skeptic, some mischievous and malicious. Yet, each received fittingly...

What inspired us most was the oft-repeated scene where multitudes came with their lives and inner energies knotted up and left with their faces and lives lit-up by just one sathsang. Then there were those who were stunned and stupefied, and kept coming back again and again, until a point arrived where they had no need to ask to know. All in all, it was always an intense process that witnessed the flowering of many, even those unwary questioners.

Sadhguru has often said he never answers the question, but always the questioner. His answers are never meant to edify the asker, but to unblock his inner energies so as to dissolve the question. With these pages we hoped to let loose a whirlwind upon the world that would suck, twist and turn people in large numbers in a tempestuous process of the Self.

To our surprise, at a Book reading Sathsang at the Yoga Center, shortly after the release of the first edition of this book, Sadhguru, who had concluded the earlier book *Encounter the Enlightened* by saying "The gloriousness of the written word is but the excreta of the deluded mind...", revealed that the mystical aspects of the current book were not just in the contents alone but in the form as well, making it a potent and formidable concoction. The written word herein was hence carefully crafted to function as a yantra, offering the reader keys to deeper dimensions of life.

In Sadhguru's own words:

When you labor through 500 pages of word, we want to provide you certain keys- keys to the Existence, opening a certain dimension of life which is not in normal access to people. If you are open to it, it will do things. But if we talk about it, then people try to use it in certain ways and it won't work.

The only book where every part of it is a key is the Yoga Sutras. Every part of it – that's dangerous. That's very dangerous. That's why Pathanajali took enormous care in using the language in a particular way. His mastery of language is not just scholarly; his mastery of the language is something that is not normally considered human. Because of that kind of mastery over language, he dared to write the sutras in such a way that every part of it is like a yantra.

Logically, they don't mean much, but experientially if you imbibe it, if you receive it, then it's an explosive possibility. There is a yantra involved in it. If you allow it, it is another big dimension opening up within you.

You don't have to read it; you don't have to know the language. You can do Braille on Yoga Sutras. Even if you don't know Sanskrit language, you just touch it with your fingers; it will still do things to you. Some parts of Mystic's Musings – I won't tell you which ones – are made like that, just to intrigue.

Those parts, which need not necessarily emotionally and intellectually mean something to you, but when you read them, set forth a certain experience in you.

Probably a spoken book like this, a book that was spoken and not written – like Mystic's Musings – that too in English language, has never happened before. The language has never been used in this context. I don't think so. I have not seen any.

Hence, it our sincere hope that these musings from an unfathomable mystic transport you, in many ways, into the overwhelming sacred space of a Guru.



Isha Foundation

Isha Foundation is a non-religious, not-for-profit, public service organization, founded by Sadhguru which addresses all aspects of human well-being. From its powerful yoga programs for inner transformation to its inspiring projects for society and environment, Isha activities are designed to create an inclusive culture that is the basis for global harmony and progress. This approach has gained worldwide recognition and reflects in Isha Foundation's Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

Supported by hundreds and thousands of active and dedicated volunteers in over 150 centers worldwide, the Foundation's activities serve as a thriving model for human empowerment and community revitalization throughout the world.

Isha Yoga Center

Isha Yoga Center, founded under the aegis of Isha Foundation, is located on 150 acres of lush land at the foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains that are part of a reserve forest with abundant wildlife. Created as a powerful *sthana* (a center for inner growth), this popular destination attracts people from all parts of the world. It is unique in its offering of all aspects of yoga - *gnana* (knowledge), *karma* (action), *kriya* (energy), and *bhakthi* (devotion) and revives the *Guru-shishya* paramapara (the traditional method of knowledge transfer from Master to disciple).

The Center houses the architecturally distinctive Spanda Hall and Garden, a 64,000 sq ft meditation hall and program facility that is the venue of many residential programs. Also located at the Center are the Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple, Theerthakund, Isha Rejuvenation Center, Isha Home School and Vanaprastha for families. Isha Yoga Center provides a supportive environment for people to shift to healthier lifestyles, improve their relationships, seek a higher level of self-fulfillment, and realize their full potential.

Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple

The Dhyanalinga is a powerful and unique energy form created by Sadhguru from the essence of yogic sciences. It is the first of its kind to be completed in over 2,000 years. The Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple is a meditative space that does not ascribe to any particular faith or belief system nor does it require any ritual, prayer, or worship.

Within this architectural marvel, a pillarless dome structure, the vibrational energies of the Dhyanalinga allow even those unaware of meditation to experience a deep state of meditateness, revealing the essential nature of life.

Every week, thousands of people converge at this unique meditation center to seek out inner peace and silence. Focal point of Isha Yoga Center, the Dhyanalinga is rapidly gaining in its global reputation as being one of the most sought out places for meditation.

Isha Yoga Programs

Isha Yoga programs allow individuals to take tangible steps towards their inner growth. These programs are designed by Sadhguru as a rare opportunity for self-discovery under the guidance of a Realized Master.

An array of programs are conducted regularly by the Foundation worldwide. These programs establish optimal health and vitality, enhanced mental calm and clarity, and instill a deep sense of joy. They can be easily integrated into one's everyday life and embrace the human effort to reach inner awareness.

Action for Rural Rejuvenation

A long-time vision of Sadhguru, Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) is a pioneering social outreach program. ARR aims at providing comprehensive and ongoing rural rehabilitation services, such as free medical relief, yoga programs, nature awareness programs, and community games to the heart of the rural communities of India, creating an opportunity for villagers, including women and children, to take responsibility for their own lives, and restore and reach their ultimate well-being. So far ARR has helped over 1.7 million people in more than 3,500 villages of South India (as at 07/2007).

Isha Vidhya

Isha Vidhya, an Isha Education Initiative, is committed to raise the level of education and literacy in rural India and help disadvantaged children realize their full potential. The project seeks to ensure quality education for children in rural areas in order to create equal opportunities for all to participate in and benefit from India's economic growth.

With English computer-based education, complemented by innovative methods for overall development and blossoming of each individual, Isha Vidhya Schools empower rural children to meet future challenges. Sadhguru's intention and goal is to start 206 English "Computer Friendly" Matriculation Schools within the next five to seven years, at least one in each taluk of Tamil Nadu. The schools are expected to benefit over 500,000 students when fully functional.

Project GreenHands

An inspiring ecological initiative of Isha Foundation, Project GreenHands seeks to prevent and reverse environmental degradation and enable sustainable living. The project aims to create 10% additional green cover in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India. Drawing extensively on people's participation, 114 million trees will be planted state-wide by the year 2010.

As a first step, a mass tree planting marathon was held on 17 October 2006. It resulted in 852,587 saplings being planted in 6284 locations across 27 districts in the state, by over 256,289 volunteers in just one day, setting a Guinness World Record.

Isha Rejuvenation

Surrounded by thick forests, at the tranquil foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains, Isha Rejuvenation helps individuals to experience inner peace and the joy of a healthy body. It offers a unique and powerful combination of programs, scientifically designed by Sadhguru, to bring vibrancy and proper balance to one's life energies. The programs contain a synthesis of allopathic, ayurvedic and siddha treatments, and complementary therapies, along with the sublime wisdom of ancient Indian sciences and spirituality.

All the proceeds of Isha Rejuvenation contribute towards providing free health care to rural villagers, under the Action for Rural Rejuvenation initiative.

Isha Home School

Isha Home School aims at providing quality education in a challenging and stimulating home-like environment, designed specifically for the inner blossoming and the well-rounded development of the child.

With its prominent international faculty and Sadhguru's personal involvement in the curriculum, Isha Home School kindles the innate urge within a child to learn and know. Focus is given to inculcating

life values and living skills whilst maintaining the rigor of academic excellence as per national and international standards. It does not propagate any particular religion, philosophy or ideology, but rather encourages the child to seek a deeper experience and inner understanding of the fundamentals of life.

Isha Business

Isha Business is a venture that aims to bring a touch of Isha into the homes and environment of the community, and ultimately enrich people's lives. This opportunity is made available through its numerous products and services, from architectural designs, construction, interior design, furniture design and manufacturing, landscape design, handicrafts and soft furnishings, to designer outfits from Isha Raiment.

All profits from this venture are used to serve the rural people of India, through Isha Foundation's Action for Rural Rejuvenation initiative.

How To Get To Isha Yoga Center

Isha Yoga Center is located 30 km west of Coimbatore, at the foothills of Velliangiri Mountains which are part of the Nilgiris Biosphere. Coimbatore, a major industrial city in South India, is well connected by air, rail and road. All major national airlines operate regular flights into Coimbatore from Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore. Train services are available from all the major cities in India. Regular bus and taxi services are also available from Coimbatore to Isha Yoga Center.

Visitors should contact Isha Yoga Center for availability and reservation of accommodation well in advance of arrival to the center, as they are generally fully booked.

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Other Isha Publications

❖ Dhyanalinga - The Silent Revolution

This richly illustrated book presents a deeper definition of yoga and its metaphysical essence. It culminates in the presentation of the Dhyanalinga, the pinnacle of a yogi's journey.

❖ Encounter the Enlightened - Conversations with the Master

This book captures interactive moments with the Master. An invitation to the reader to go beyond words and experience the wisdom of the boundless. Also available in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and French.

❖ Dhyanalinga Temple - The distilled essence of yogic science

An overall view about the Dhyanalinga Yogic Temple. This book provides a look at the science of its making and the tremendous possibility it presents to all spiritual seekers. Also available in Tamil.

❖ Eternal Echoes - The Sacred sounds through the mystic

A compelling and provocative collection of poetry by mystic, master, and yogi, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. The Master's mystical experiences form the bedrock from which spring forth these divine verse of bliss, playfulness and the boundless possibility of inner experience. As is his life, these poems are an offering in an attempt to help us find our way.

❖ Uyirrenum Poo Malarum

This book is a biographical account of Sadhguru's life and works. Available only in Tamil.

❖ Forest Flower

A bilingual (English-Tamil) monthly newsletter featuring the Master's discourses and contributions from meditators worldwide.

Glossary

abhisheka	Sprinkling or pouring of water, milk etc. Often used in religious, yogic or ceremonial contexts, particularly in tantric rituals. A ritual of empowerment also used to denote initiation in general.
adi	The first or fetal; primordial or embryonic, the beginning.
agnihotri yagna	Vedic ritual using the element of fire.
ajna chakra	Lit. command wheel. The sixth of seven major energy centers of the human body. Physically, located between the eyebrows, it is also known as the 'third eye'. Derives its name from the fact that it is an able receiver of the Guru. Hence, it is also called 'Guru-chakra'.
akka	Lit. sister – a respectful way of addressing a woman, in the Tamil language. Here, it refers to a saint popularly known as Akka Mahadevi – a 12th century queen in Karnataka, who renounced everything to go in search of Shiva, her celestial husband. Akka is known for her spiritual couplets, which are revered even today as classic poetry.
amavasya	The new moon – the darkest night of the month. The planetary positions of the earth and moon have long been made use of by spiritual seekers in India to enhance their spiritual practices.
amma	Mother – a reverential way of addressing a woman.
amman temple	Refers to temples which have feminine deities, a place of worship of Kali or Shakthi. Often used in occult practices.
Anahatha chakra	The fourth chakra, known as the 'lotus of the heart' or the 'heart chakra', it has been recognized as a special locus of the sacred within the human body. Celebrated as the seat of the Divine, the center is related to emotion and love.
ananda	Bliss, unconditional joy.
Ananda Tirtha	Gautama's elder cousin, who eventually became a disciple
anandamaya kosha	The innermost body or the bliss body.
anatma	Lit. the soul-less one.
anga	A limb, or aspect of yoga.

anga mardhana	Mardhana' means to kill – 'anga mardhana' means killing of the limbs of the body – the means to experience bodiless-ness.
annamaya kosha	Food-formed sheath or the gross body (sthula sharira), made up of the five gross elements or <i>bhoothas</i> – earth, wind, water, fire, ether – which are resolved again into their initial states after death.
aradhana	Lit. adoration.
Ardhanarishwara	Another manifestation of Shiva, beyond duality, in the form of half man and half woman.
Arjuna	Hero of the great epic Mahabharatha, to whom Krishna imparted the Divine message of the Bhagavad Gita.
asana	Lit. seat. Generally referring to yogic postures, or postures that lead one's energies to liberation. One of the eight limbs of yoga.
ashram	Sacred dwelling of spiritual seekers under the guidance of a Guru, or spiritual Master.
Ashtanga Yoga	The eight limbs, or disciplines, of yoga: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi, as described by sage Patanjali.
Ashtavakra Assam	One with eight deformities. An ancient spiritual master par excellence.
Atharva Veda	Indian state in the northeast region of the country.
Atma	Last of the four Vedas, that expounds the technology of using physical energy to one's advantage. Individual spirit, the supreme soul or Brahman.
baba	Lit. father. Common term used to address any elder, especially in the religious communities.
Badrinath	A holy place in the Himalayas – the holiest of shrines for the Vaishnavites (followers of Lord Vishnu). This temple was established by Adi Shankara, one of the foremost scholars of South India, around the ninth century A.D.
Bala Krishna	Lord Krishna, as a child.
bala yogi	Child yogi. Refers to someone who attains Enlightenment at an early age and usually does not retain the body for long thereafter.
Bhagirathi	River Ganga at its origin, where it melts its way out of the 'ice cave' called Gomukh.
Bhairava	A fierce form of Shiva.

bhaktha	A devotee.
bhakthi	Devotion. Refers to the spiritual path of Self-Realization through love and devotion. Intense desire and will for union with one's chosen deity.
Bhava Spandana program	"Bhava" means sensation or feeling. "Spandana" means to resonate, or emphatic vibration. This four day high intensity residential program is offered as a part of Isha Yoga programs, to experience levels of consciousness that take one to an experience beyond the limitations of body and mind.
Bhojpur	A town in Madhya Pradesh, Central India.
bhootha	Ghoul or a ghost. Also refers to the five primary elements of nature - earth, wind, fire, water, and ether.
Bhoothnath	Master of the five elements – another form of Shiva.
Bhramha	The Creator in the classic trinity of Hinduism, the other two gods being Vishnu and Shiva.
bhramhachari	'Bhraman' means divine and 'charya' means path. One who is on the path of the Divine. Usually refers to one who has formally been initiated into monkhood through a certain energy process.
bhramhacharini	A female bhramhachari.
bhramhacharya	The path of the divine. A life of celibacy and studentship on the path of spirituality moving towards the highest modifications of the senses. The first of four stages of life as per the <i>Varnashrama Dharma</i> .
Bhramhin	Member of the priestly Hindu caste, which is the highest in the Indian caste system.
bodhi tree	The sacred tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.
Buddha	One who is above buddhi (intellect). Generally used to refer to Gautama the Buddha.
buddhi	Faculty of discrimination, analysis, logical and rational thought; the intellect.
budubuduku	A traditional gypsy soothsayer in Karnataka.
Chakra	Lit. wheel. Here, it refers to the seven junctions of nadis in the pranic body. Though seven major chakras are associated with the human body, there are a total of 114 chakras, of which two are outside the body. Each chakra has a distinct color, form, sound and quality associated with it.
Chakreshwara	One who has attained mastery over all the chakras.
Chamundi Hills	A famous pilgrimage center on the outskirts of Mysore, India, which was patronized by the Maharajas of Mysore. Also the place where Sadhguru had a deep experience of the Self at the age of twenty-five.

Coimbatore	A major industrial city in Tamil Nadu, a South Indian state.
Cudappah	A small town in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India.
deva	A generic term used to describe a class of celestial beings. Also referred to as God in Hindu mythology.
devi	Goddess, the feminine aspect of the Divine.
dhamma	Spiritual path set forth by Gautama, the Buddha.
dharana	Maintaining mental focus. One of the eight limbs of yoga.
dharma vada	Theological debate.
Dronacharya	The royal tutor of the Pandavas and Kauravas, princes of the Indian epic Mahabharatha.
dhyana	Meditative state. One of the eight limbs of yoga.
Dhyanalinga	A powerful energy form consecrated by Sadhguru exclusively for the purpose of meditation, at Isha Yoga Center.
dosha	Defect or blemish. Specifically refers to defects in the physical, mental or energy bodies.
Dostoevsky	A well known Russian author and philosopher who lived in the nineteenth century.
Dussehra	A traditional Indian festival of color, dance and music that lasts nine days, culminating in the celebration of the victory of good over evil. The celebration of this festival in Mysore attracts thousands of people from all over the country.
Essenes	Ancient Jewish sect of ascetics and mystics which existed from the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. A secret school of mysticism which is known to have aided Jesus during his life.
Forest Flower	Quarterly newsletter published by Isha Foundation.
gandharva	A class of celestial beings who are usually gifted with extraordinary talents such as music and dance.
Gandhi	Refers to Mahatma (great soul) Gandhi, an Indian nationalist leader, considered the father of the freedom movement. His peaceful, non-violent methods of protest were revolutionary, and brought an element of spirituality into public life.
Ganga	A major Indian River. Originating in the Himalayan glaciers, it is held extremely sacred. The legend says that it is a heavenly downpour routed through the locks of Shiva. Water from this river is carried to all parts of the country for religious rituals, including those of birth and death. It is also customary to cremate the dead on the banks of the river Ganga or immerse the bodies in the river itself.

Gangotri	Place of origin of the river Ganga in the Himalayas.
Gita	Lit. song. Refers to the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> , one of the most sacred teachings of the Hindus. This central episode of the epic <i>Mahabharatha</i> is a dialogue between Lord Krishna and his chief disciple Arjuna, on the battlefields of the Kurukshetra. Krishna imparts to the warrior-prince Arjuna his knowledge on yoga, asceticism, dharma and the manifold spiritual path.
gnana	Knowledge, perception, discrimination. One of the four kinds of yogas.
Goa	An Indian state on the western coast known for its pristine beaches.
Gomukh	Lit. cow-face. A place in the upper Himalayas, the location where the glacier forms the river Ganga. The glaciatic form has melted in such a way that it resembles the face of a cow.
Goraknath	A great spiritual master who was one of the disciples of Matsyendranath. He is believed to have lived sometime between 900 and 1225 A.D.
gowripeeta	The base or the feminine portion of a linga.
grihastha	A householder, the second of the four stages of life as per the <i>Varnashrama</i> classification of the stages of life.
guna	Lit. quality or attribute. Refers to the three qualities of mind: <i>tamas</i> (inertia), <i>rajas</i> (activity) and <i>sattwa</i> (purity).
guru	Lit. dispeller of darkness. A spiritual Master; a Realized being who guides spiritual seekers towards liberation.
Guru pooja	Invoking the Grace of the Guru.
Hatha Yoga	Physical form of yoga involving different bodily postures and practices. Used as both a purificatory and preparatory step for meditation and higher dimensions of spiritual experience.
Himachal Pradesh	A North Indian State in the Himalayan region.
Himalayas	Lit. the abode of ice and snow. Range of mountains in the north of India which plays an important part in Indian history, mythology, art and spirituality.
Ida	One of the major pranic channels in the body. Located on the left side of the body, is feminine (intuitive) in nature.
Indra	The chief or the king of the Gods in Indian mythology.
Isha	Formless Divine energy. Also the name chosen by Sadhguru for the Foundation created to offer the ultimate spiritual possibility to all mankind.

Isha Yoga program	Refers to the foundation level program offered all over the world by Isha Yoga Center, wherein Yoga is experienced as a living science. Sadhguru's provocative questions compel one to look deeper within oneself and bring the necessary awareness to find experiential answers about life itself.
Ishwara	The supreme Lord. Another name of Shiva.
jala	Water, one of the five elements of nature.
Janaka	An ancient Indian King and an enlightened disciple of Sage Ashtavakra, Janaka was known for his extraordinary wisdom.
Jyotir Linga	Lingas of special importance to the Shaivaites. There are twelve Jyotir Lingas in India which are a part of the mandatory pilgrimage of any Shiva devotee.
Kaivalya	Aloneness, oneness or absolute. A state of ultimate oneness. Patanjali used the name Kaivalya to describe the goal and fulfillment of Yoga, the state of complete detachment from transmigration. Virtually synonymous with mukthi, Kaivalya is the highest condition, resulting in liberation.
Kaivalya padha	The fourth and final part of Patanjali's <i>Yoga Sutra</i> , dealing with absolution.
kaka pranayama	Kriya involving a sound like a bird call, which makes one less available to gravity. Taught in Isha Yoga programs.
Kali	A powerful goddess; a form of Shakthi in a fierce aspect. She signifies annihilation through which the seed of life emerges. She inspires terror and love at the same time.
Kanti Sarovar	A serene lake in the Himalayas, considered to be the abode of Shiva.
kapala-bhati	Lit. skull-brightening. A certain powerful yoga kriya which is taught in Isha Yoga basic programs.
karma	Refers to the volition with which one performs action. Karma is the mechanism by which relative existence maintains itself. Referring to past action, the cause of all bondage. That which binds one to the body and creates tendencies that rule one's life. Law of cause and effect.
karma kanda	The region of karma.
karma yoga	The path of selfless service.
Karthikeya	Another name for the second, six-faced son of Shiva. He has six faces.
kaya	Body or sheath.
kechari mudra	Mudra consisting of turning the tongue backwards so that the 'nectar' flowing down from the Sahasrar, after the rise of Kundalini, is arrested.

Kedar	Short for Kedarnath - a pilgrimage place in the Himalayas.
khanda	Region.
Kaanphat	Lit. torn ear. A spiritual sect in Northern India, who are so called because of their tradition of piercing their ears.
kosha	Lit. sheath, vessel, layer.
Krishna	Divine incarnation of Lord Vishnu, historically over 3500 years ago, Krishna is one of the most popular gods of the Hindu pantheon. A Yadava prince and the central character of the epic <i>Mahabharatha</i> , His discourse to his chief disciple Arjuna in the form of the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> is the most sacred of Hindu scriptures.
Krishnamurti, Jiddu	Twentieth century spiritual Master of great repute.
kriya	Lit. act, rite. Refers to a certain class of yogic practices. Inward action as opposed to karma, or external action.
krodha	Anger, aversion.
Kukkarahalli	A beautiful lake at the Mysore university that has been an inspiration for many poets and writers.
Kumara Parvat	A mountain peak in the Western Ghats - a powerful spiritual destination. Samadhi of Subramanya the six faced yogi, son of Shiva.
kumbha	An earthen pot. Storage or fullness.
Kumbha Mela	A major spiritual and religious festival on the banks of river Ganga. During this time millions of spiritual aspirants converge on the banks of the river Ganga and take a ceremonial dip. A nexus of cosmic energy every twelve years, celebrated at Allahabad and other places in India by a gathering of sages and mystics.
kumbhaka	Breath retention during yogic practice, especially in the practice of pranayama.
kumkum	Vermilion or red powder made of turmeric and lime worn by the Hindus at the point of the third eye on the forehead.
Kundalini	Lit. serpent power. Cosmic energy which is depicted as a snake coiled at the base of the spine (Muladhara chakra) and that eventually, through the practice of yoga, rises up the Sushumna nadi. As it rises, the Kundalini awakens each successive chakra, until it reaches the Sahasrar. The manifested Kundalini becomes Kula, the all-transcending light of consciousness.
laddu	A popular Indian sweet, in the form of lemon-sized balls.

lakh	One hundred thousand in the Indian number system.
Linga	Lit. the first form; the primordial form. An energy form consecrated for worship, generally associated with Lord Shiva.
maha	An adjective or prefix meaning great, mighty, powerful, lofty, noble.
Mahabharatha	One of India's great national epics, which revolves around the conflict between two royal families, the Pandavas and Kauravas, in the great battle of Kurukshetra, approximately 1424 B.C. The plot illustrates simple truths and ethical principles.
Mahadeva	Great God, a common epithet for Shiva.
Mahanadi	Great goddess, a common epithet for Parvathi, the consort of Shiva.
Mahadevi	A major Indian river flowing through central India, known for its devastating floods.
Mahaparinibbana	Buddhist term for Mahasamadhi, or Nirvana, the complete dissolution of the Self, the ultimate goal of spiritual seekers.
Maharaj	Lit. great king, a respectful form of address for an Indian monarch or spiritual leader.
Maharishi	Great seer, a title of respect for an adept yogi.
Mahasamadhi	Complete dissolution of the Self also known as Nirvana, and Mahaparinibbana in other spiritual traditions. The dropping of the physical body in full awareness.
Mahashivarathri	An important festival in India, celebrated on the night before the new moon in the month of Magha, or February-March, each year. On this night spiritual seekers observe an all-night vigil filled with chanting and meditation, keeping their spines upright to support the upsurge of spiritual energy. At Isha, this night is colorfully celebrated in the presence of Sadhguru, drawing thousands of meditators from all over the world.
mahatma	Lit. great soul. Title of respect given to people held in high esteem, especially saints.
Maheshwara	The Great Lord, another name of Shiva, the destroyer in the classic triad of Hinduism, the other two gods being Bhramha and Vishnu.
Mahishasura Mardhana	The killing of a certain asura or demon in Indian mythology.
mala	Garland or necklace.
mandala	Refers to a region, an area within the body or the cosmos. Also represents consecrated space and is thought to be the body of one's chosen deity. The mandala is used to worship that deity and, through

	complex visualization practices, to become one with it. Also refers to the physiognomic cycle, a time period of forty days, the natural period of many physiological processes in the body.
Manipuraka chakra	The third chakra, located a little below the navel. It provides the whole body with the vital energy needed for survival.
mantra	A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power. Mantras are most effective on the path of liberation when given by the preceptor through initiation.
mantric	Of mantra; one who is an adept in the use of mantras.
Matsyendranath	Lit. Lord of the Fish. A yogi of celestial proportions who lived around the tenth century A.D. The Guru of Goraknath, he is believed to have been an incarnation of Shiva himself.
maya	Delusion, the veil of illusion which conceals one's true nature, or conceals reality. It is used in contrast with the absolute reality.
mela	A large, colorful festival.
Mirabai	A Rajput princess of the medieval period who, intoxicated by her devotion for Lord Krishna, spent most of her life as a wandering saint, singing praises of the Lord. A poetess and mystic, her life story and bhajans are extremely popular even today.
Mizoram	An Indian state in the north-eastern region.
mukthi	Release, liberation, final absolution of the Self from the chain of death and rebirth. The highest goal of all spiritual seekers.
muladhara chakra	The first chakra, the psychoenergetic chakra located at the perineum. Source of the central channel (Sushumna-nadi) of the life force.
nadha	Sound, tone, vibration, music.
nadi	Channel through which the life force, or prana, flows in the energy body. There are 72,000 nadis interconnecting the chakras. The three main nadis are named Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna.
naga	Lit. serpent. Symbol of the Kundalini coiled at the base of the spine; one of the secondary types of life forces (prana).
Naga Babas	People belonging to a certain spiritual sect in North India, who are known to wander naked in the Himalayas with just vibhuthi smeared on the body, even during the coldest winter seasons.
naga dosha	Condition in which a diembodied snake possesses a human being.

Namaskar	Traditional salutation which acknowledges the divinity within a person.
naraka	Equivalent to the Western term Hell. Nether world.
Naren	Childhood name of Swami Vivekananda.
Nari	Woman.
neem	A common deciduous evergreen tree (Azadirachta indica) which grows in India, known for its extremely bitter leaves, fruits and flowers. Used extensively for its innumerable medicinal qualities, neem is sometimes called 'the village pharmacy'. Over 100 pharmacologically active substances have been identified in this plant.
nethi	Lit. 'not this'. A way of cleansing oneself of illusions or wrong identities.
Nilgiri	Lit. blue peaks. Refers to a certain hilly district located north of Coimbatore, known for its rich wildlife.
Nirguna	Devoid of any quality, untainted and beyond duality.
Nirmanakaya	A created body. Adept yogis are known to have created and possessed physical bodies for themselves to fulfill certain special purposes.
Nischala	Unshakeable, unwavering.
Nishkarma	Karmically unaffected by one's actions.
Nityananda, Swami	A reclusive South Indian yogi and an extraordinary mystic who lived in the twentieth century and spent the later part of his life near Mumbai in Maharashtra. The Guru of many disciples, including Swami Muktananda.
ojas	Subtle energy.
Orissa	An Indian state on the East coast.
Palani	A South Indian town that is famous for its Murugan (son of Shiva) temple.
pancha bhootha	The five primary elements of nature - earth, wind, fire, water, and ether.
Paramahansa	Lit. supreme swan. An honorific term applied to an adept who enjoys liberation or Enlightenment.
parikrama	Outer periphery of a temple.
Parvathi	One of the many names for the Universal Mother, and consort of Shiva.
Patanjali	Lit. one who fell (pat) into the palm (anjali). Refers to an ancient spiritual Master of extraordinary understanding, considered the father of yogic sciences. Believed to be an incarnation of Ananta, or She-

sha, the thousand-headed ruler of the serpent race, Patanjali is best known for his work Yoga Sutras. The Yoga Sutras have been disclosed in a manner that cannot be understood by a superficial perusal of the text. Rather, it has been attributed the quality of being an encrypted code intended for the spiritual Masters who have the necessary understanding to properly impart the veiled practices.

peyi-pishachi	A phrase used to denote ghosts and spirits.
Pindari	A community of bandits.
Pingala	One of the major pranic channels of the body. Located on the right side of the body, it is masculine in nature
Pongal	A South Indian delicacy made of boiled rice, gram and pepper corns. Also, a very popular Tamil festival. It marks the change in the tilt in the Earth's axis of rotation.
Pooja	Worship, a Vedic ritual for the invocation of Divine energy and Grace.
Prakrithi	The feminine aspect of life. Refers to Nature or Creation.
prana	Fundamental life force; vital energy.
pranamayakosha	The energy sheath or body.
pranayama	A powerful yogic practice that uses certain breathing techniques to generate and direct the flow of prana in the human body.
pranic	Of prana.
prarabdha	The karma allotted for this lifetime.
prasada	Blessed food.
Prathishta	Process of consecration or energizing an object with Divine energies. These processes are mainly of two kinds - <i>mantra prathishta</i> , through chanting of appropriate mantras and performing of rituals and <i>prana prathishta</i> , through a direct process involving the consecrator's own prana shakthi - life energies.
pratibha	Lit. luster. One who has the needed qualities for initiation or Enlightenment.
pretha	A kind of ghost or spirit.
pungai tree	Pongamia pinnata. A tropical medicinal tree native to India, known for its shade giving and oxygen generating capabilities. The oil of the pongam seeds is traditionally used in oil lamps.
purana	Mythological texts.

purusha	The masculine aspect of life. Also refers to man.
Raigarh	A town in the Central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.
Rajasthan	Indian State in the western region, known for its desert terrain.
Rama	The hero of the epic Ramayana, believed to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.
Ramakrishna Paramahansa	A mid-nineteenth century spiritual Master who lived mostly in Calcutta. A devotee of Goddess Kali, he frequently went into ecstatic states of samadhi. One of his best-known disciples is Swami Vivekananda, who established and propagated the Ramakrishna Order, which has a world wide following today.
Ramana Maharshi	Early twentieth century spiritual Master who lived in the hills of Tiruvanamalai near Chennai, in South India. His teachings revolve around self-inquiry. He is believed to have enlightened not only humans, but also a cow and a crow.
Ramanashram	An ashram located in Tiruvanamalai, established by Ramana Maharshi.
Rameshwaram	A sacred coastal town in South India, the closest point in India to the neighboring country, Sri Lanka. Figures in the epic Ramayana, where Rama built a bridge from India to Sri Lanka to enable his army to cross the ocean.
rasa	Lit. juice, the essence.
rudhraksha	Sacred beads. Seeds of a tree (<i>glaeocarpus ganitrus</i> Roxb) found mostly in the Himalayan region. According to the legend, a tear from Lord Shiva fell to Earth and from it grew the Rudhraksha tree. Known to have many medicinal and transcendental qualities, a rudhraksha mala is one of the few possessions of an Indian spiritual seeker.
sadhaka	A spiritual seeker who has undertaken spiritual disciplines, usually under the guidance of a master.
sadhana	Spiritual practices which are used as a means to realization.
Sadhananda	Lit. the one forever in bliss. One of the names of Shiva.
sadhguru	A spiritual teacher who is Enlightened, or has Realized the Self, whose knowledge or realization comes from within rather than from any teachings learned outside.
sadhu	An accomplished spiritual seeker. Sadhus usually have no fixed abode and travel from one place to another, most often living on alms. There are countless sadhus on the roads, byways, mountains, riverbanks and caves of India who, by their very existence, have a profound effect on the consciousness of the world.

Sahasrar chakra	Lit. thousand-spoked wheel. The seventh and highest chakra of the human system corresponding to the crown of the head.
sakshi	Lit. witness, a common way of describing the Self. Witness consciousness.
samadhi	Deep state of equanimity; one of the eight limbs of yoga. Greatly celebrated in the lore, experience of samadhi is immensely therapeutic and deeply transformative in nature.
Sambalpur	A small town in the state of Orissa, India.
samsara	The world, the existence, the domain of karma, protracted delusion of the mind. The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.
samskara	Ritual, in the general sense. Denotes rites such as the birth ceremony, tonsure, marriage, cremation, etc. In yoga, it stands for the indelible imprints in the subconscious left behind by our daily experiences.
Samyama	A confluence of the states of dharana, dhyana and samadhi. Here, it refers to the eight-day meditation program conducted by Sadhguru, where one is transported into explosive states of meditateness. This program is an opportunity to shed lifetimes of karma and experience deep states of meditateness and samadhi.
sanchita karma	The total accumulated karma of a person.
Sangamitra	The daughter of the great king Ashoka and a disciple of Buddha.
sankalpa	Resolve.
Sanskrit	An ancient Indian language specially designed to suit expressions and transmission of the spiritual experience.
sanyas	On the path of spirituality, the fourth of the four stages of life as per the <i>Varnashrama Dharma</i> . The spontaneous withdrawal from the world in search of Self Realization.
sanyasi	An ascetic, a renunciate. One who has irrevocably renounced worldly possessions and relationships to seek Divine awakening, Self Realization.
sathsang	Lit. in the company of Truth; a congregation of seekers.
shaiva	Lit. of Shiva; worshipper of Shiva.
Shakthi	Lit. power. Divine consort of Shiva. The Creation is envisioned as a play of Shiva and Shakthi which symbolizes the duality of existence, or the Yin and Yang.
shakti moola	Energy source.

Shambho	Another name for Shiva, which denotes his loving nature.
Shankara	Lit. the benevolent; one of the many names of Shiva. Also refers to Adi Shankaracharya, the celebrated ninth century teacher of Advaita Vedanta and the founder of neo-monastic orders. In his life of thirty-two years, he traveled several times throughout India and was responsible for the renaissance of the Hindu tradition.
Shankaran Pillai	Refers to the hero in many of Sadhguru's jokes and anecdotes. He is usually a frail man whose idiocies are typical of the common man.
Shanmugha	Lit. six faced; one of the sons of Shiva.
Sharada Devi	Wife of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.
shavasana	Lit. corpse posture. One of the over six hundred asanas in the classical yogic tradition. Practiced intermittently between other asanas, it is known for its rejuvenating effect on the system.
shishya	Lit. pupil or disciple. One who has submitted himself to a teacher or a Guru.
Shiva	Lit. that which is not. The Great Lord; the Destroyer in the trinity.
Shiva linga	Symbol of Shiva traditionally used in worship.
Shivayogi	A name borne by Sadhguru in one of his previous lifetimes.
Shoonya	Lit. emptiness. An effortless process of conscious non-doing, Shoonya meditation is an extremely powerful and unique form of meditation taught by Sadhguru in a live form in the Isha Yoga programs.
Shrimath	Short for Shrimath, a respectful title for a man.
shuddhi	Lit. purification. A basic component of spiritual life.
shudra	Member of the fourth and lowest Hindu caste, that of menial laborers.
siddha	One who has attained perfection or mastery over a certain mystical aspect of life.
siddhi	Power; paranormal or supernormal accomplishment.
smaran	Remembrance, usually, of the Divine. One of the aspects of bhakthi yoga.
spandana	To resonate; empathic vibration.
Subramanya	Son of Shiva. Also refers to Kukke Subramanya, a town at the Foothills of Kumara Parvat, in the coastal region of Karnataka state.
Suka	A well known sage of the yogic lore.

sukha pranayama	A yogic practice of balancing the prana in the Ida and the Pingala nadis.
Surya	The sun.
Sushumna	The central channel in the energy body which conducts the Kundalini, or spiritual force.
Swadisthana chakra	Lit. abode of the self, the second of the seven chakras of the human body. Situated just above the genitalia.
swami	He who knows or is master of himself. A respectful title for a Hindu monk, usually a sanyasi, an initiate dedicated wholly to spiritual life.
tantra	The science of using mantra, the sound, and yantra, the form. Refers to an esoteric Indian spiritual tradition.
tantric	Of Tantra; a practitioner of Tantra.
Tapovan	A place above Gomukh, on the banks of Gangotri, the glaciatic origin of the river Ganga.
tathwa	Element, as in the five elements; principle or philosophy.
Thai Poosam	An important festival held on the day of pushya nakshatra of the Tamil month of Thai (near the full moon day of January-February). Celebrated with great intensity and fervor, it is a day on which many South Indian sages have chosen to leave their body.
thali	A large dinner plate.
Thiruvanaikaval	A town near Trichy in South India.
turya	Beyond the three states of waking, dreaming, and sleeping. A transcendental state of awareness and bliss.
Ujjain	The capital of the ancient kingdom of Magadh and one of the seven sacred Hindu cities. Also a great center of learning and scholarly pursuits. Located in present day Madhya Pradesh.
Upanishads	Sacred texts in the Hindu culture.
vada	A popular south Indian savory made of ground lentils and deep fried.
vaidhya	Traditional doctor; also refers to traditional system of medicine.
vajrasana	Lit. diamond posture. One of the dynamic yogic postures, through which the practitioner imbibes the hardness and the brilliance of a diamond.
Vajreshwari	A place in the state of Maharashtra.

Vanashree	Lit. the deity of the Forest. Name of the feminine deity in the form of a tree at the Dhyanalanga temple.
vasana	Tendencies or desire; subliminal trait left behind in the mind by action and desire.
Veda	Refers to the oldest portion of the Hindu scriptures.
Vedanta	Lit. end of perceivable knowledge; the philosophy or teachings of the Vedas.
vibhuthi	Sacred, consecrated ash. Applied to different parts of the body, makes one more sensitive to subtle life forces. Application to the upper chakras activates the chakras and makes them more receptive. Some sects of Shaivites also smear vibhuthi all over the body to sensitize the system and ward off cold.
Vishuddhi	One of the seven chakras, is the center of power and vision. Located at the pit of the throat.
vishwa rupa darshana	An experience of the vastness of the existence. Also, a rare Cosmic Vision of the Master granted by the Master to the deserving disciple.
Vivekananda	The best known of the disciples of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda is often considered as a role model for Indian youth.
Vyasa	An ancient sage with legendary powers of vision, one who documented the epic <i>Mahabharatha</i> .
yagna	Sacrifice, one of the main pillars of the Vedic ritual system.
yaksha	Celestial disembodied beings who are believed to inhabit secluded places.
Yama	The Lord of Death, the ruler of the nether world. Riding a buffalo, his vehicle, a visit from Yama means the time of death for a person has come. Also refers to the first limb of Yoga, used along with the second limb, niyama, to codify the 'do's and don'ts' of Yoga.
yatra	Travel, journey, pilgrimage.
yogini	A female practitioner of Yoga.
yoni	Lit. the source, origin. Refers to the female genitalia.

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