



Self Development

Talks with Babaji

What do you mean by self-development?

Self-development means the ego self, which is always seeking the worldly pleasures (name, fame, and getting involved in negative ways of life), is turning to opposite direction. All positive qualities come in our self-development. All positive qualities weaken the ego and increase universal love. So any good quality cannot harm a person's self-development.

It seems that the higher Self doesn't need to be developed because it is already perfect. In developing the lower self, how would that be different from developing the ego self?

Lower self is the ego self - "I am this mind-body complex." When this notion of "I am this mind-body complex" changes to "I am the Self," then the ego self merges in the higher Self.

How is swabhava different from dharma?

Swabhava is one's own nature created by samskara. The dharma of human beings is to experience the world and to achieve liberation. Then according to swabhava, the person will be attracted to positive or negative experiences. We have a superior mind. We know what is good for our self-development and what is not.

If you are performing action with no expectation of return for yourself, but we are still acting with some purpose. How do we know if it is a good purpose?

There is a purpose of self-development. If a person steals and says "I am stealing for God, or for poor people", then it will not work. Because the person is stealing for his or her own desire which is not spiritual.

If one is engaged in spiritual practice out of a sense of duty or a fear of criticism, and doesn't feel the desire to do the practice, should one continue to do the practice or not?

Faith is developed by practice. But doing it by outer pressure and not wanting it from inside is not right. Fear is always a cause of spiritual practice. We know our limitation and we have no cure for our pains, so we are pushed to believe that there is a superpower which can rescue us. Also experience and getting liberation is in human nature. For some reason, if a person is not pursuing his path of self-development now, later he or she will.

How do we develop discrimination in daily life?

You have to see what helps in your self-development and what harms. If anything harms, that you have to reject. That rejection may harm worldly life, but will help spiritual life.

Could you elaborate on the part about not reading inappropriate materials, that we should avoid reading books or having discussions which are contrary to our self-development?

Like violent stories create violent dreams. It proves that such things sink in the mind and fill the mind by its color.

Could you elaborate on the rule about "do not engage in unnecessary talks?"

Unnecessary talks bring nothing positive. It may create some negativity. That negativity goes deep in the mind and creates negative nature. Also when we don't get any positive result then it is a waste of time.

Could you elaborate on "do not let laziness or dullness control your mind?"

When laziness and dullness overpower the mind, we lose our discipline, our aim, and we just live in our own desires.

When the mind gets dull, lethargy sets in, and you don't feel motivated to do sadhana, and you are barely able to gasp out a prayer, what do you recommend?

The only thing that works is "kick yourself." It always works. No one wants to live a miserable life so we have to do something to get out of that mental bog. Even a little prayer will give energy to stand up and do something.

You have said that our parents are the first gurus, and the scriptures tell us to obey our parents. If they tell us to do something that is contrary to our spiritual growth or development, what should be our attitude?

Parents are the first gurus because the baby learns to talk and recognize the world from them. Then a child grows up and develops his or her discrimination and chooses his or her own path, then contradiction arises. If the chosen path is conducive to one's self-development, even if it is not the same path as the parents, then the wise parents simply accept it. If both dwell in their own fanatic beliefs, then no acceptance, no compromise.