

10/21/79 satsang

[returning to concern to feed the poor expressed in second question at 10/14/79 satsang] Q: Are there any non-edible substances that could substitute for the seeds and ghee offered at a fire ceremony [yajna] to create the same effect, an atmosphere of peace?

A: If someone dies, why are flowers offered on the grave? Is it not a waste of money? For those who offer, it's not a waste of money. They show their love and respect in this way. Its effect is that love develops in their heart.

Q: Could non-edible substances be used instead of the grains and butter?

A: No. The idea is to feed God in a form of fire. We eat grains and butter, so we have to feed the same thing to God in a symbolic form.

R: There is also the consideration that those who are offering have fasted for a full day, and the food which they otherwise would have eaten is offered with their love and respect to God in the fire.

A: We waste so much money by our careless habits, like leaving the lights on, wasting food on the table, not taking good care of things that we possess. If we are aware of those things, we can feed more poor people without doing anything.

Q: Is it possible to go into samadhi with the eyes open, as while doing tratak?

A: Yes.

Q: Does a guru actually feel love for his disciples?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the function and meaning of a prayer shawl?

A: It is used only as a special covering, which is kept clean. A prayer shawl doesn't bring enlightenment sooner. It only helps in developing faith if we respect it and keep it clean.

Q: In doing sadhana, is it all right to do asanas at the start, before other practices? Does the order make a difference?

A: If one does pranayama, then asanas should be done at the end, because pranayama needs more energy.

Q: Is service the best way to attain purity of heart?

A: Yes.

Q: When doing service, what is the best attitude to hold in the mind?

A: A selfless attitude.

Q: Is it possible to be serving someone and actually be doing them harm?

A: It can happen, if we make someone dependent on us rather than making them independent. A person can earn livelihood, but we feed the person, and the person becomes lazy.

Q: Is the soul another body that grows as the heart opens and love increases?

A: It doesn't grow or reduce. Only the covering is removed and we identify it more.

Q: Is opening the heart the way that covering is removed?

A: Yes. Opening the heart and removing the covering is [are] the same thing.

Q: Are nirvana and the soul the same thing?

A: Nirvana means to dissolve into God.

Q: What is the relationship between being and love?

A: Love is the nature of a being.

Q: I want a way to uncover my soul more quickly. I know that suffering is one way. Should I look for more suffering?

A: To understand suffering is the key, and not the suffering itself. You can create suffering and still you will remain ignorant. Only when the mind clicks, and you see the cause of suffering, is the process reversed.

Q: For children age three to four, if one had to choose between one school that stresses concentration and developing the individual, and another that stresses the imagination and social development, which would you advise?

A: The main thing is to learn the proper use of the senses. Anyone who is trained in this can go to any school. We hypnotize ourselves with wrong suggestions all the time. The result is that we forget the proper use of our senses.

Q: What is a selfless attitude? And what is one thinking in the mind, in order to be selfless?

A: Without thinking of your personal gain or loss. Performing actions without feeling an ego of being a doer.

R: Feeling that only God is working through you.

Q: I've done upside down hanging a couple of times, and both times developed a terrible back ache afterward. Why? And how often should I do it?

A: It's from a weak spine. It stretches too much.

Q: So should I do it gradually?

A: Yes.

Q: If I work up to it, how often should I do it?

A: Gradually increase, and don't hang more than five minutes.

Q: What would be the right use of the senses?

A: All of our senses are working by our attachments, desires, anger, hate, etc. If we can remove all these negative and positive emotions, then only can we use the senses properly. If you love someone, you see the person beautiful. If you start hating the same person, you start seeing the person ugly. The process of seeing in both cases is not real.

Q2: How does one teach a small child to use the senses properly?

A: By teaching them concentration.

Q2: How is that done, say, with a two or three year old child?

R: First is to start getting them to notice things, calling their attention to things, to sounds, to smells, to feelings, to visual stimuli.

Q2: Can concentration be developed by reading or by doing arithmetic?

A: There are several methods.

R: Those to develop concentration with the senses have to relate to the senses directly in some way.

Q: On the topic of trance states with the eyes open, there are a lot of crazy people around Santa Cruz. I've seen individuals talking off into space.

A: They could be actually crazy.

R: In which case trance doesn't enter into the picture.

A: It is called absent-mindedness.

Q: What do you mean by trance state with the eyes open? Do athletes who perform feats which require great concentration go into trance right before the execution of their particular discipline?

A: When the eyes are open and the outer visual world is not there.

R: There's no perception of the outer world.

Q: Is that pratyahara?

A: It is samadhi.

Q: It could be any level, depending on the depth?

A: It can be anything from savitarka samadhi up.

Q: What is the distinction between savitarka and savicharya?

A: In savitarka samadhi, the object of concentration is gross. In savicharya, the object is subtle.

R: It's the energy level of the object.

Q: And then would that be so in sananda?

R: In sananda, bliss is experienced in the whole body.

Q: Along with the object?

A: No. No object in sananda. The only object of concentration in sananda is bliss that one is feeling as a result of knowledge gained in the previous two samadhis.

Q: Is control of thoughts or absence of thoughts necessary for union with God, or self-knowledge?

A: Yes.

Q: Why?

A: The obstructions to union with God, or self-knowledge, are our thoughts. The thoughts are created by our desires and samskaras. We don't have any control over these, and their natural flow is to go out.

Q: By thoughts, do you mean any kind of awareness that is in the mind?

A: As a process, we first eliminate all thoughts except the thought of one object. In the higher stage, this thought is also eliminated.

Q: Would you explain the characteristics of the highest state of samadhi?

A: The highest state of samadhi is called kaivalya. Where the dualism is completely eliminated. The mind is totally absorbed in God and becomes one with God.

Q: Is it good to try to slow down one's breathing during daily activities?

A: With a method, yes. To do it, we have to increase our life energy by pranayama.

R: Sitting breathing practices

Q: So should you do pranayama before trying to slow your breathing down?

A: If you do pranayama, your breath will slow down by itself in your other activities.

R: Also, there is much more awareness of breathing as a result of that.

A: On the average, we exhale fifteen breaths every minute. One pranayama takes at least one minute, so you save fourteen exhalations, and at the same time the pranic energy is increased ten times.

Q: With reference to the reading: are passions the same as feelings in general, or certain kind of feelings? What should our attitude toward feelings be? Should we strive to get rid of feelings, or just certain feelings?

A: Passion is a part of feeling. You don't need to get rid of feelings, but to replace with positive feeling.

Q: Can't positive feelings like intense joy be passionate also?

A: Intense joy could be from various negative acts. A hunter gets intense joy when he kills a deer, or a killer when he kills a person.

Q: Is the idea of yoga then to start not to feel "negative" emotions such as anger, fear, hatred, etc?

A: You have no choice. You have no control over it. You can only replace negative emotions by positive.

Q: How do you do that?

A: If anger comes, you identify it.

R: You note your anger and don't get lost in it.

A: And you try to think of peace, love, compassion, etc.

R: Consciously bring yourself out of it.

Q: Is it also important, though, not to deny that you have anger?

A: If you deny that you're angry, then you can't replace anger.

Q: Why is pranayama the fastest technique to attain samadhi?

A: The breath and the mind feed each other. The mind is like a lighted

candle, and the breath is like a fan. The breath makes the flame flicker, and the mind creates thoughts. When the breath is controlled, then automatically the thoughts in the mind start reducing. When this flame is not obstructed at all, it is samadhi.

Q: Is there any time when anger could be a useful thing?

A: Sometimes anger can create a positive energy. For example, you see a man attacking a woman to rape her, and you get angry. It builds up an energy and you attack the man and save the woman.

Q: Totapuri got angry at Ramakrishna and stuck a piece of glass in his forehead. And there is the story that Jesus went to the temple and tore the temple apart because the people there weren't there to worship. Are those examples of anger being used?

A: In the first case, it was a tradition in India to hit in teaching.

Q: That doesn't seem to be your technique here.

A: Sometimes.

Q: I'll keep it in mind.

R: There are various ways of hitting, also.

Q: Babaji, in the course of your own sadhana, from the first initiation and as you progressed, did you ever feel that you might not become enlightened, that you would miss it somehow, or you wouldn't be released in this life?

A: I never thought like that. There was only one thought: do sadhana. What will happen, I never thought about that.

Q: In the final moment of realization, did something, however indescribable, happen?

A: Something happens, but who can say, if a tree falls in the jungle, does it make noise or not?

Q: Can I miss it?

R to Babaji: He's thinking that way.

A: We miss so many things. If you are firm in your sadhana, then no, you can't miss it. If you buy a ticket and go the airport late, then naturally you'll miss the airplane. The ticket by itself can't take you.

Q: What is the advantage of doing asanas for someone who already can sit for two hours and twenty minutes?

A: Asanas are done for various reasons: to make your sitting posture firm, to build your body strength, to increase energy to be able to bear heat and cold and all bodily discomforts