

October 14, 1979 Satsaṅga with Baba Hari Dass

Edit notes: The following was typed from notes handwritten at the time of the darśana. Q denotes a question. B indicates what Babaji wrote on his chalkboard, as read by the reader, and then as heard and noted by someone present. R is comments likely of the chalkboard reader. Comments in square brackets are generally those of the typist. Comments in parentheses are likely that of the reader. There was editing for format and IAST transliteration of Sanskrit terms.

- Q: Questioner uses various meditation methods and gets control of his mind only for brief moments, before it races away again.
- B: There are two methods:
- 1) Concentrate by stopping the thought waves and channeling the mind toward the object of concentration.
 - 2) Practice prāṇāyāma, and it will create a situation where the mind will stop by itself.
- Q: I've been trying both of those methods, but after doing a couple of rounds of prāṇāyāma, I lose it because my mind races off and I have to bring it back and start again.
- B: Prāṇāyāma for two minutes [at a time] will not do it.
- Q: I know that.
- B: Increase prāṇāyāma up to forty rounds.
- R: It's like making a chain. If you have a bunch of separate links you have no chain. Prāṇāyāma derives its strength from those links' being joined, no extra breaths between each round.
- B: Then you will see how it works.
- R: If you increase to forty continuous rounds, you have to do that very slowly.
- B: Prāṇāyāma should not be forced.
- R: What method are you doing?
- Q: Kriyā, SRF. [from Self Realization Fellowship]
- B: Kriyā is not one thing. Simply breathing is also a Kriyā. Inhale with a sound, exhale with a sound, is a Kriyā. Prāṇāyāma includes kumbhaka, retention of breath. Like sahita kumbhaka. Ratio of inhalation 4 counts, holding 16 counts, exhalation 8 counts. Ratio of 1:4:2. When it is [has been] increased to forty [rounds], then increase the times. Double. 8:32:16.
- Q: It would seem that the ghee and grains put into the fire at fire ceremonies [yajña] could better be used feeding people. Is there something else that could be offered in place of these?
- B: It's done in that way to develop faith, to get out of greed, to purify the negative energy. To feed the poor is a good thing, but if we don't do fire ceremonies it will not feed them forever. But to create a peaceful energy (such as that created by the fire ceremonies) can help everyone.

- Q: You said once that when the opposites of life, such as pleasure and pain, love and hate, etc., don't affect the mind, then there will be peace. At this point I only feel a sense of peace when I am in between these extremes. How can one attain this?
- R: How to attain the state between pleasure and pain.
- B: It's a state of vairāgya. Rāga means attachment Vai means that which is over.
- R: So vairāgya is a state of one's attachments' being finished.
- B: Rāga can be in pain or pleasure.
- Q: Will you tell the effect of sleeping with the head north, east, south, and west. Which is better?
- B: North and east.
- Q: Music at satsaṅga before meditation is jarring to my nervous system.
- B: It could be from the loud sound, or it could be the music's rhythm, which is different from Western music and the mind isn't able to relate to it.
- Q: A couple of hours ago I started feeling pain in my heart, like a hole in my heart, and when I tried to figure out what it was, what came to my mind that brought tears was remembering losing my son. Ten years ago. I don't know why the pain came today, and I don't know what to do about it. Sometimes I associate it with yearning for God, and sometimes with a loss. It's a recurring kind of pain in my life.
- B: Sometimes vāta, the air energy in the body, rises up and hits the heart. It causes pain, and when it rises up in the mind it causes emotion. That emotion triggered that memory.
- Q: How can I prevent that and stay calm?
- B: You can prevent it by eating light food and by not dwelling on that memory.
- Q: Will that erase the saṁskāra?
- B: It will not erase the saṁskāra, but will make it dormant.
- Q: How can I erase it?
- B: By meditation.
- Q: Baby twenty months old has too much mucus in his nose. It wakes him at night because he can't breathe.
- B: How is his digestion?
- Q: He's still breast feeding, and sometimes he will eat other food. I cut all the mucus out of both our diets.
- B: Fresh mint juice mixed with breast milk once (a day), at night. Half teaspoon of each.
- Q: At sūtra class three days ago, someone mentioned that some saints just throw themselves into the Ganja [sic] River.
- R: It's the Gaṅgā River. Some saints throw themselves in the gaṅjā river also.
- Q: Do they have some sort of permission from God to do that?
- R: Practice of sitting by a river and stopping eating until the body falls off.
- B: The body doesn't mean anything to them.

- Q: Is this a common occurrence in India?
 B: Only among sādhu who are very high.
 Q: If they're very high, wouldn't they want to stay and help others achieve liberation?
 B: The body is not immortal. They do it when the body can't be used.
- Q: Sometimes I smell roses when there are none, then soon someone comes in with roses. And other times, when I'm about to see someone, I start feeling their emotions and identifying with the part of myself that is similar. Is there a way to control this? It makes me uncomfortable.
 B: Smell of roses comes when the nerves are purified. When you see others' emotions, it's your emotional state also, which identifies with theirs.
 R: A sympathetic resonance.
 Q: When I see the person it's there, and when I'm gone it's gone.
 B: [to reader, not to questioner]: His [the questioner's] emotions are also triggered by their presence.
 B: That's how you feel their emotion.
- Q: Why do saints who leave their bodies by fasting go to all that trouble? Why, if they're that high, don't they just go into mahāsamādhi and leave their body at will?
 B: Some do, and some don't like to do that. Different ways of leaving the body:
 1) By prāṇāyāma. 2) By prāyopaveśanam, fasting to death. 3) By being buried in samādhi. Some go in their natural way of death.
- Q: I have a friend of the opposite sex whom I feel more attached to through the heart than I bargained for, and this seems reciprocal. Does it indicate that we were friends in a past life?
 B: Similar saṁskāra attract, and create attachment. In past lives there must be some closeness.
- Q: Yesterday in mantra yoga class, it was mentioned that one way of disciplining the mind is to read scriptures. What identifies a scripture? Are the writings of saints scriptures?
 B: In Hindu scriptures are the Veda, Purāṇa, Upaniṣad, etc. In other religions, their religious books are scriptures.
 R: Generally, what is regarded as the revealed word of God in that religion is a scripture.
- Q: Why does withdrawing my attention to within my body cause physical pain there? The pain seems to be in the muscles of my torso, back, and neck. It comes and goes quickly.
 B: The body feels relaxed when the mind is let loose. Whenever you free [withdraw] the mind to collect it, it creates tension in the body. You have to learn methods of collecting the mind.
 R: When the mind is collected, withdrawn from the senses, it creates pain in the body sometimes.
- Q: How can one strengthen the nervous system so that loud noises are not so jarring?

B: It could be due to emotions, or physical, or some derangement in the air humor. I can't tell without seeing the person.

[This from another questioner, other than the fifth questioner from start of this satsaṅga who asked about own case]

Q: I have experiences in which there seems to be a sudden physical change of my observation point. I become very unemotional and it is almost as though I am able to see myself at those moments.

B: The mind goes through a dispassionate state sometimes, and at that time the mind can relate to the truth.

Q: Do you have any methods for strengthening the will?

B: Austerity is the main method of strengthening the will. Make a discipline and stick to it. That is austerity.

Q: What is the best way to deepen meditation?

B: Prāṇāyāma is the shortest way to attain a meditative state, but it's the hardest. 1) It's a hard discipline. 2) The mind doesn't like it. 3) It needs physical strength.

Q: What does Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma's younger brother, symbolize in the Rāmāyaṇa?

B: The ego, tamas guṇa.

R: Quality of inertia, rigidity, solidity, unmovability. It was said that Lakṣmaṇa was an incarnation of Ananta, the serpent which upholds the world.

Q: Throughout my life, especially this last week, I've experienced, just before waking up in the early morning, a sensation of swimming in an energy field. It scares me. This week I relaxed more, was less afraid, and the top of my head became very cool. Is it physical, emotional?

B: It's emotional. If you are not afraid of it, then it's good. You can use it for meditation.

R: Make the memory of that feeling the object of your meditation to the exclusion of everything else.

Q: Why would the mind dislike going within, being interiorized, when in past experiences this made it aware of heavenly joy?

B: The mind dislikes any kind of discipline. The mind likes the peaceful state, but it likes more the attachment to the world. That's why it always comes back.

Q: Doesn't the mind have any intelligence at all?

B: The intelligence is in pravṛtti.

R: With thought waves, evolution, expanding the world.

Q: It has nothing to do with the mind?

R: It has nothing to do with peace.

Q: Could you explain that more?

R: The mind's activity is to think, to always be creating.

Q: What does that have to do with pravṛtti?

B: Pravṛtti is the natural function of the mind.

R: With thoughts. Nivṛtti is the yogic state of the mind, without thoughts.

Q: There seems to be a real connection between thoughts and the body's physical condition, the colon, the intestines.

B: By thought process alone you can make your hand warm or cold. Because there's a direct relationship.

R: The mind functions directly through the senses, through the physical body.

B: The mind is in each cell also.

Q: What is the nature of energy in eggs that we eat, and how do they affect our physical body and mind?

B: It's a heating thing, which creates tamas energy, the energy of inertia or dullness. Tamas is not a bad word. We need that energy also. It's bad only when it overpowers sattva.

R: The energy of purity or peace.

Q: Is that why it's not recommended in a yogic diet?

B: For yogic disciplines, a light food is recommended.

Q: Would you define light food?

R: Fruits, nuts, grains, vegetables, dairy products, in moderation.

Q: All those are light foods?

R: It depends on their preparation and the amount that's eaten. Any light food, if eaten in excess, will become a heavy food.

Q: I eat 75% raw foods, and I feel better that way. Is it all right for me, or should I be eating more cooked food?

B: If you can digest it.

Q: Do we create dreams ourselves, or are they going on all the time, and something we just tune into, being only semi-conscious of them?

B: Dreams are created by desires, memory, and imagination. When your external activities are stopped, the mind starts repeating the film of the past, adding its own imagination.

Q: In cold weather, my hands and feet get really cold, and swollen, and I can't do anything about it.

B: Does it itch?

Q: Yes.

B: I'll tell one cure.

[Later Babaji said it is chilblain, this scribe thought.]

Q: What causes the mind to go through periods of dispassion?

B: Anything can trigger that part of the mind: pain, friends, family, sickness, God.

- Q: If it's easier to feel God as joy, should one strive to see God as light? Or should you just enjoy what you've got?
- R: Is feeling joy enough in spiritual practice, or should you try to do such things as seeing light inside?
- B: Real joy comes after attainment. When you are identifying with God only, that creates joy.

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