

The Master Reflects
One Thousand and One Answers to the Heart

Edited by Vidya Anderson and Roopa Morosani

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Foreword

When we were old enough to recognize the world around us, we began to ask questions. Simple though the questions were at first, they expressed a profound and complex inner quality. That quality is the need to know and understand ourselves in relation to our environment. "Daddy, why are there clouds? Mommy, how does grass grow? Teacher, what causes the planets to revolve around the sun?"

As experiences accumulated and mental ability expanded, the simple objective questions gave way to more complex, abstract ones, Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? What is that, by knowing which, all else is known? These or similar questions have been part of human life since the dawn of recorded history. We are all, in our own way, seekers after truth, with a built-in need to draw together the seemingly fragmented world into a pure statement of truth that harmonizes all seeming contradictions, a realization that sets the mind and heart at rest. From known historical accounts of humanity, we, as the family of humankind, have not found that pure statement. This collective failure, however, has not dampened the need of the human spirit to question and seek after truth. No matter how difficult the question or how seemingly incomplete the answer, that spirit of the truth seeker in humanity goes ever onward. In the art of questioning and seeking after truth we have, as in all areas of life, those who through rigorous effort, practical application, and patience have removed the dust obscuring the light of inner wisdom and gained access to that realm where the question, the answer, and truth become one. This implies that though collectively we may not be able to scale the pinnacle of truth, individually we may. This book represents the wisdom of one such individual: Gururaj Ananda Yogi. Born in the province of Gujarat, India, as a child he displayed a remarkably advanced spiritual consciousness. Already by the age of four his questions were consistently about the meaning and purpose of life and the possibility of truly knowing or experiencing the Godhead. As he matured, his reading and highly developed intuition made him more and more aware that what he sought actually lay within himself and within all human beings. Once having permanently entered the Self-realized state, Gururaj could perceive with perfect clarity and simplicity a truth which he had often encountered in his philosophical reading. In his own words, "It was very obvious to me that having realized this state, it made very little difference how one arrived there, provided the path a person chose was right for that individual. One could be a Christian or a Jew, a Hindu or a Moslem, a Buddhist or a Taoist, a student of Eastern or Western philosophy."

Gururaj's work is to provide instruction and guidance through meditation and self help programs to many people in the world. He stresses the importance of matching the right meditation techniques to the individual and has evolved a method of selecting meditation practices that would meet the unique mental, emotional and spiritual needs of each person. Over the years he has personally instructed into meditation thousands of individuals from many racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. There is an important point regarding Gururaj and his work which must be made very clear. According to Gururaj, "The purpose of the external guru is to help awaken the internal guru within each person. Therefore, my work is to guide people in learning how to experience their own inner guide, to awaken them to an inner awareness of their own greater Self. When this becomes accomplished, my guidance is no longer required, for each person becomes a guru unto himself."

The essence of thought contained within these pages is universal, without regard to culture, doctrine or dogma. They are not intended to be the expression of any single point of view that must be believed at face value, but fuel that will add to your won fire of further inquiry and knowledge. Take this information and test it in the laboratory of your own life. If it benefits you, hold tightly to it; if not, discard it. These passages reflect a masterful awareness of the universal truths they express. Like Truth itself, they can be so simple as to seem obvious, or so paradoxical as to seem impossible. Apparent contradictions are inevitable when speaking from many levels of understanding, so the paradoxes and contradictions are to be enjoyed for what they are—expressions of the multi-dimensional quality of human existence. More than most of us, Gururaj lives the many levels of which he speaks in these passages. This book is not necessarily intended to be read cover to cover, like a novel. We have noticed, while editing and therefore rereading the various passages many times, that they have taken on different meanings. The passages that took on the greatest importance for us shifted from day to day. Already-familiar passages would come alive with a new depth, mirroring our changing needs or a new area in which our awareness was growing. Long after the mind thinks it knows the contents of this short book, the heart will continue to find fresh life in its passages.

Sujay Anderson

November 1983

Chapter 1

Service

A small task performed in sincerity is worth far more than a great task performed with motivation for oneself.

Life is made to give and not to take, for it is in giving that we really receive. As we receive the true knowledge which is inherent within us, we use that knowledge wisely in service.

Everything serves in life; everything except the cunning mind that devises things for its personal glory. What glory does the flower take upon itself in giving its beauty and fragrance to the world? The wind through the trees whistles its beautiful symphonies. The sun shines, the moon reflects light. Such service! The tides of the ocean keep on flowing to and fro, the rains come, food grows. Look at the service nature provides for us all the time.

When you dedicate your life to a cause that fits in with a plan not created by you yourself, but by a power higher than you, then you could safely say, "I have faith in that power, and the mission I have to accomplish will be accomplished."

As you give service to humanity what is happening is that you serve yourself. This service, or the desire or yearning for service, that is within you, is not being objectified for personal gain or ego building.

All service performed in total humility will rebound back to you tenfold, because there is a sincerity of purpose. Divinity is there as all the scriptures tell you; it is nearer than you think. It's closer than your very own breath. It's there: just open up and let it flow. Teaching and serving are two of the ways which quicken the opening up, and when the blood races and the heart is quickened, love pours in us and through us. When you water a garden remember that even before the garden receives the water, the hose is cleaned first. So when we teach or serve in this purity, that divine energy flows through us first before it goes to the student.

To the true humble person there is no praise nor blame: he keeps on working. For nothing can inflate him or deflate him. He rises above it all and nothing can distract him from the path of service.

What is the motivation? Is it self-aggrandizement, or is it the expression of ego: "I must be held on a pedestal because I am doing this." That kind of service has no value for the person himself. You will always find that people who try to serve others in this manner have many kinds of sufferings and imbalances. The reason is that they are not thinking of others, but of themselves. That kind of service is not humility, it is vanity.

If service is performed as an offering, then praise or blame will not affect you at all. Because once you find that inner joy of serving, you become like the lotus flower growing amidst all the mud and yet untouched, forever

remaining pure. Your very offering is joy, and joy is the essence of purity.

People fail to serve because it is not natural to them. Because of karmic values, wrong thinking, or wrong action they have lost the art of service. Service has not mechanics, it must be allowed to flow. If we apply a mechanism or a pattern, service becomes a drudgery and service ceases to be service, for service is an art. All offering is an art.

The offering of service does not mean martyrdom. Martyrdom is a kind of imbalance. Martyrdom generally originates from a fanaticism, a purpose which is conjured up by the mind. That is not service or offering. The martyrdom of great saints was for an entirely different reason altogether, where through sacrificing a life many thousands of others were benefited. For them, the sacrificing of life, or martyrdom, had an altruistic purpose and therefore was an offering. But in daily life, some people try to become self-suffering martyrs, which is not necessary at all.

Service is an art, and art is freedom. So when we serve in the spirit of an offering, it is a freedom that is expressed from deep within ourselves. Service does not bind, it frees a person. That kind of freedom has its own reward. It requires no payment. It has its own reward in the self-satisfaction that is gained in the whole repatterning, remolding and restyling of our lives. This is the great benefit. This repatterning, remolding, and restyling can only lead to greater happiness.

Service is performed by everything in nature. Observe a flower, how well it serves us in its beauty and its fragrance. Observe the rain, how well it serves us in giving the water for things to grow. Observe the sun, how beautifully it serves us, giving heat and light. So, what constitutes service is to express our real nature. And our real nature is nothing else but an offering. This very offering is the real basis of service.

When we serve for the sake of serving, when it is motiveless and egoless, then service has value and is evolutionary. It is never stagnating—if it stops growing it dies. Genuine service, like the life of the flower, consists of its flowering, for that flowering is life and life is never stagnant. It forever flows all the time, because it is serving without motive.

Self-forgetfulness does not mean to become unaware of oneself, because it is only in developing a greater awareness of oneself that one really forgets oneself. What we mean by self-forgetfulness is forgetting our own personal needs, our own personal wants, and our own personal selfishness. We come to think not of ourselves only, but also of others. It is only when we know ourselves that we can be aware of the needs of others, and in the awareness of the needs of others, a kind of forgetfulness takes place. This is the kind of forgetfulness that brings about the true awareness of ourselves. True awareness of ourselves means that we accept and recognize the real Self within.

The desire which is entirely for serving humanity does not form attachment, and therefore it creates no impressions

or samskaras in the mind, because that desire is without motivation. All desire for service is without ego.

By serving humanity, we are flowing with the laws of nature. When we flow with the laws of nature, all our needs are automatically and spontaneously fulfilled, without our knowing it.

The secret lies in trying to gain integration within oneself, where service to humanity becomes automatic and spontaneous, not schemed.

When one accepts oneself at one's true value, then service is performed for the sake of service; and that service is just another name for devotion.

The service of mankind is the service of God. It is the internal God that is externalized in His varied names and forms.

Non-attachment leads one to perform a greater service because we realize that, "I am not the doer. I am the instrument." It is not the pen that writes—the writer writes with the pen.

If we remember that we are forever bowing to the Divinity in another, then service assumes its truest form. Service is the offering. How beautiful to be able to offer oneself in bowing to and becoming the other.

True service is always offering without motive. One who truly knows how to serve, works for the sake of work without wondering about or anticipating the result thereof. That is the karma yogi.

Service is a spontaneous offering to Divinity. And everything else is taken care of by itself.

The service of Divinity is the service of mankind—in his physical form, in his mental form, in his spiritual form. See that Divinity even in the leper, even in the cripple, even in the blind. It is easier to see it in your beloved. Start there!
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Chapter 2

The Ego

The ego started from that fine current at the superconscious level, and as it became more and more gross it became more and more individualized, and that is what we call the human responsibility—that is what we call the human ego. Man does not possess an ego, he is the ego.

When we get immersed in this ego, we become self-centered and start believing that the whole world revolves around us. We believe that we are the center of the universe and everyone must pay attention to us.

Stop being self-centered, rather be centered in the Self.

When a person says that he needs no outside assistance, it is not the true Self that says it, but the ego-self. The ego self assumes a self-importance that, "I am it all, and nothing is greater than me," and when the ego self thinks that it is self-sufficient, then no progress is ever made.

The truth is this: what we assume to be real is false. Now, with the acceptance of this factor, that "my conditioned mind is small and insignificant," immediately, as that realization dawns, we develop humility, and surrender to a greater power takes place. We stop boasting that "I" can do everything and start questioning, "Who really is the doer?" This is where the inquiry starts, and where the question, "Who am I?" really begins to have some significance.

Ego is a very tricky thing!

A self-centered ego, or the ego that turns inward to itself yet not beyond itself, is caught up in the web of its own undoing. It is like the silkworm, who spins until it gets caught up in its own silk and cannot escape. What is the solution? All the impressions gained, in what is termed the ego, are binding. They are binding one to a certain pattern of action. The mind is ego and ego is patterned. We have to unpattern the mind or unpattern the ego, not destroy it. If the ego is annihilated, then you cannot exist.

What we require is the expansion of the ego. When expanded in the proper way, the ego becomes entirely transparent and the full force of reality, the full force of the light, shines through.

There is a quality within us which is changeless and eternal. In the preservation of our small ego, we are annihilating Divinity. That is what we do! We become oblivious of Divinity; yet without that Divinity, we cannot even lift a finger.

The ego is nothing but a totality of impressions that have come together, not only in this lifetime, but through many lifetimes.

Remember that the ego, in itself, is not bad. The ego is the grosser aspect; yet it also has a finer aspect. So, coming to terms with the ego, by itself, for itself, with itself, means that you use the subtler aspect to overcome the grosser aspects of the ego. Now, the subtler aspect of the ego can be equated with smooth silk, and the grosser aspects with very coarse cloth.

The ego cannot exist by itself. The ego is not self-luminous. The ego borrows light. It lives on borrowed glory, and therefore deludes itself into thinking that it can find permanency in time and space. Now, what do we do about the ego? I am going to put forth to you a totally new proposition. Philosophies tell you, annihilate the ego, and when it is destroyed then your real Self will shine out. Destroy the small "I" and the big "I" is there. That is a fallacy. I say, do not destroy the ego, preserve the ego and yet find that which is ego-less.

We cannot annihilate the ego; it is indestructible. However, we can expand it, like a piece of rubber that can be stretched until it becomes transparent. If it is unstretched it is opaque and light cannot shine through. But when sufficiently stretched, it assumes a clarity whereby the full light of the kingdom of heaven within shines through the individual self. The window is spotless and the light shines through in full force. The light is so powerful that the glass is not even noticed, and yet it still exists. Living as an individual being, one can find within himself the real "I," the real kingdom of heaven, and although having individual limitations, can live in that silence, peace, and joy of the universe.

We are all little egos. We are all bundles of impressions created over so many lifetimes. These impressions are there and they cannot be annihilated. They are eternal, they have to exist. Every thought is eternal, and cannot be destroyed. The vibrations set up by that thought go on and on through eternity. So what one must do is expand the ego.

Our actions are contracting the ego. We are taking all these experiences of millions of years and contracting them, compacting them. By the act of compacting them we are combining one impression with another. A great amount of permutations take place, through which new impressions are created. And that is how the ego assumes greater and greater importance.

It is the preservation of the ego-self that brings about all unhappiness.

The basic element of conscience is goodness; but that goodness has the overriding factor of man's ego. When man's ego steps in, conscience becomes covered with dust. Spiritual practices remove that dust.

Are we prepared to risk our little ego, that wants us to cling to life? There is nothing wrong with clinging to life, because everything is life. But what is our understanding of life? That is the question. Does life mean the conditionings of which our mind is a product? Does life mean the mundane things to which we attach so much importance? Is this really life? Is that really living?

That which binds us is nothing but our own egos. It is the ego that has the perception of time and space. It is the ego that has the perception of all sufferings. All our actions are nothing but feeding the ego for its self-preservation. The ego wants to cling to life because it thinks that this time and space is permanent. There is the illusion: thinking that by preserving the ego one has found the secret of preserving time and space according to one's selfish need.

When one decides to himself, I do not need to preserve the idea of myself, then he finds freedom.

This universe cannot exist without ego, for the universe itself is an ego. As you progress, that ego becomes just an idea, a thought form in its finest state. Then one transcends that thought form and one realizes in the impersonal state that, "Oh, dear me, it was only a thought!" All disappears, for then you, the individual, have merged into the impersonal and there is no ego left. For in the first place, the ego was only a thought, only a dream. But we who are in the relative have a battle with the ego and cannot deny it. Therefore we accept it, and it is the very acceptance of the ego that can lead us further on in the expansion of the ego.

The word idea contains "I," that small, insignificant, dream-like "I" which thinks everything is real. If the human being could only realize that the thoughts of his mind are just conditionings of his mind!

To recognize the ego, one has to go beyond the ego to be able to observe it.

The ego is the sum total of an individual's personality as it is expressed here and now.

In self-forgetfulness, we do not forget the ego. We know that as long as a person is embodied, there will always remain a trace of ego. But we realize that, "Although I have this ego, I am busy refining it."

You do not need to recognize the ego to go beyond it. That would be a mental process, and the mind itself is ego; here is the ego trying to find the ego. It is like saying you will see your own eyes. You cannot. You need a mirror.

Through many ways, depending on our own temperaments, we try to subdue the small "I." With the mind we use devotion and good living, and this will help to a certain extent, but it backed up by spiritual practices and meditation, the thinking will become more powerful and devotion will become more powerful and sincere.

Meditation teaches us to be apart from the ego, and to view the ego objectively. The flux of the world is also something objective. It depends upon us—our perspective and how we view it. When we have the inner strength created by meditational practices, then we see the true value of the ego first. And then we go beyond praise and blame, pleasure and pain.

An individual reflects the entire universe within himself. The individual soul is still part of the universal soul. The individual soul, which is made up of consciousness itself, confuses itself by regarding itself to be the entirety of its own existence. It assumes the "I," and that is what ego is all about. Ego is the misuse of pure consciousness, and a limiting of it to a small, little consciousness. Yet even that small consciousness, like a hologram, can experience the entire picture.

Chapter 3

Friendship

True friendship is to find Divinity in the friend. And as you find Divinity in the friend, you will find a subtle transformation taking place in the friend as well. You will find him being uplifted, and he will not know why. He will only respond by loving you more, and he will not know why he is loving you more. Meanwhile you are creating that love in his heart for you, because you have started loving him. And that is true friendship.

You can only know a person in totality if you know your own totality.

Giving does not only mean a present, or something mundane or monetary. It is giving of oneself: it is giving of one's entirety.

That you are me and I am thee—that is true friendship. That mergence between two people is the same as the mergence of man with God, for this is not of the body or the mind, but of the true spirit which is within. For the heaven within you is the same heaven within me.

In giving service to a friend, a sacrifice is needed. What do you really sacrifice? You sacrifice the feelings that you have in yourself and put them at his feet. In other words, you are sacrificing your personality. All that composes you, you are sacrificing at the friend's feet; and this could be love and anger and every thing that is connected to you, every kind of emotion, positive or negative. You are sacrificing that at your friend's feet.

When we become destructively critical, hatred wells up in our hearts instead of love. That is why in a true friendship, we say, I accept you for what you are, not for what I think you should be.

The cup runneth over . . . why let it go down the drain? And if you are thirsty enough, have the whole cup; why only that which runs over? Have the whole cup, I know I can replenish it—there's plenty more where that comes from. The eternal spring, undying, is forever producing that life force, the water that gives life, the prana that gives life, the breath that gives life. That is friendship.

You share your plate of food with me and this evening I'll be hungry again. You share the fifty dollars you have and by the end of the week I'll be broke again. But if you share your heart with me, that remains eternal; for the human heart is infinity itself. It goes beyond feeling, beyond all emotion. That is the true heart.

The truest deeds done in friendship are never known, or never even thought about, and never whispered even to oneself. Your left hand does not know what your right hand is doing. Because if you seek recognition, or if you

ponder over what you have done for a friend, then you have done nothing at all.

Real friendship lies in giving, and not giving because he or she is a friend, but giving for the sake of giving. When this quality of giving develops in a person, it enhances the friendship without effort.

Real friendship, like love, should have not need. Where there is no need, there is total acceptance of a friend.

Man knows that he cannot exist without friendship, and yet he abuses friendship, because in the friendship, self is involved instead of selflessness.

It is so easy to love a friend; anyone can do that. But love an enemy: Then you're a man. In the words of Shakespeare in Julius Caesar, ". . . the elements were so mix't in him that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, 'This was a man!'" That was Jesus.

True friendship extended to another is a way of leading one to true friendship of God. What better friend do you want?

If you can't be a friend of God, be a friend of man. For if you befriend man in the way that I have told you about, you automatically befriend that which is known as God. You see how simple it is?

Chapter 4

The Here and Now

If every moment is well lived, then the next moment will take care of itself.

To be able to enjoy the moment to its fullest is to enjoy the entirety of creation.

There is no past, there is no future, there is only now. Eternity can only be expressed or experienced in the now-ness of life.

When you live in the moment and not the past or the future, you live in that one moment, the whole of eternity.

When you live in the whole of eternity, the totality of eternity is the moment.

Every moment is beautiful in itself. A moment becomes ugly only by association. You either associate with the past or you project yourself into the future and take that moment out of its context. You either magnify it or make it much smaller than it is. So the moment is lost and then the next moment begins, and the same thing happens all over again, all the time.

We are interested in Now, not what happened millions of years ago at the primal explosion, or what is going to happen at the dissolution of the entire universe, which might be billions and billions of years in the future. We are interested in today, and what we can do in the present to make our own lives happy and those around us happy.

Why waste time on abstract philosophy? Why waste time on the idea of, "After I've opened up all my chakras, then what?" Open them up first. We cross bridges when we come to them. What is the purpose of all this creation? We come from the black hole and re-enter the black hole. Let's wait until we re-enter the black hole; it might not even be black anymore by the time we get there, who knows?

These black holes and white holes will always go on and on. It is the nature of the universe ever to remain in flux. But we who have come from that black hole will enter a black hole again; but not the same black hole. Then, philosophically speaking: Where are you traveling to? Where have you come from? Where goest thou? Nowhere. You progress from here to here.

The only thing that is non-fiction is the here and now of life, and all joy of life depends on the discovery of the here and now.

Thank God that you cannot remember your past lives. If you are not even willing to forgive and forget what Uncle

Bob said three months ago, what would you do if you could remember what happened one or two lifetimes ago?
Your mind would be driven mad.

You have many groups that talk of the hereafter. Why are the here and the after mixed up together? Let the after be after. While we are here, for this short span of life, let this "here" be really lovely, like a flower giving off its fragrance and yet asking no return.

Why should I remember what Doris said to me yesterday? It is because I am accustomed to two things: pain and pleasure. That very habit of being accustomed to the feelings of pain and pleasure is water in the sponge of the mind. Then we complain of being miserable! That water that is in the sponge of the mind can never remain fresh. It stagnates itself, and misery is nothing else than a great big stink.

God's greatest gift to mankind is the ability to forget.

Negatives follow in the footsteps of memories: fear, inadequacy, insecurity.

There is no eternity in time. That is why we say eternity is timeless. And this very split second is a timelessness where you find the oneness with Divinity. That very split second gives you the realization that I and my Father are One. And that very realization in the split second is eternal: that's eternity, that's realization, that's illumination, that's awakening.

There is an existence, inseparable from that which you regard to be the Father. This can be practiced every moment of the day, in dreaming, waking, and sleeping.

Chapter 5

The Seeker and the Path

Man forever wants to know. Even if the mind does not ask it, there is an inward urge which shouts out all the time to ask one question only, and that question is, "Who am I?"

Divinity is there. The only qualification needed by a person to find his inner self is sincere seeking.

To get back to our primal innocence is the duty and purpose of life.

Being by nature inquisitive, a person has to inquire and inquire and inquire. He wants to know the cause of things. He wants to know why this flower grows, why the wall stands upright, and a million things of that nature. He thinks that by knowing the causes of exterior things he will be left somehow to find the causes of himself. Again his questing comes down to one question: "Who am I?"

Knowledge, as we know it, is an accumulation of facts with which we burden our little brains. But wisdom is a knowingness, and this knowingness that wells up from within cannot be acquired with a half dozen Ph.D. degrees. If it could, then every university professor of philosophy would be a self-realized man, and he is not. After having studied every possible philosophy, a professor of philosophy is often more confused than before, and less able to answer the crucial question: "Who am I?"

The main question inherent in all human beings is, "Who am I?" This question can go through many superimpositions, and our search begins by inquiring into various facets of life, such as science and the arts. To find the answer to the question, "Who am I?" a person starts searching outside of himself.

Now the modern scientist is no better than the primitive man—the only difference is that now he inquires in a more sophisticated way. Primitive man, searching outside himself, created the river gods, mountain gods, cloud gods, rain gods, and so forth, that could answer questions for him. The primitive man's mind got involved in various superstitions. Modern scientists' minds get involved in various dreams. The difference between superstition and dream is very fine. A superstition is but a projection. A dream is also a projection. The difference is that the superstitious primitive man believed in what he thought, while the dream of the scientist is devoid of belief until he can verify the dream.

The purpose of the acquisition of knowledge is to find oneself; everything else is secondary.

Even on the spiritual path there cannot be self-satisfaction because the forces within us, the very forces that

constitute the ego—the three gunas—are forever in turbulence, and it is this very turbulence that pushes one on and on and on. There is no rest for man until he reaches self-realization.

People today are operating more on the level of the mind and less on the level of the heart. That is where our teaching differs from most of the systems in the world; with our practices there is a simultaneous development of the mind and heart. The heart feels the joy and the mind appreciates the joy. This is the message of today, age-old, but presented in its modern context.

Brahmacharya is the most misinterpreted word that has ever been given out to this world. Many people feel that Brahmacharya means celibacy—complete continence, non-indulgence in sex. Brahmacharya does not mean this. Brahma means Divinity, achar means the way, the path. So, to be a Brahmacharya, means to walk in the path of Divinity. That is the true meaning of Brahmacharya.

As we said before, as above, so below. What is below is above. It is just a different level of existence, and man can live at a higher level of consciousness. People call it an altered state of consciousness. There is no such thing. You cannot alter consciousness, you can only live at a higher level of consciousness. Consciousness remains the same. What alters is you, yourself.

The path of Yoga is not as simple as it seems. The path of Yoga, Vivekananda said, is the path of heroes, the path of the warrior. There has to be determination. Krishna said, "There are a few types of people that want to reach me: the one that wants worldly gain, the one that is in distress, the one that is a seeker, and last, but not least, the one that has real spiritual knowledge and wants to remain forever in touch with his Maker. He wants to be at home all the time, and not stray away." Raja Yoga is the royal path to that union.

We do not preach any particular religion, but we try to delve into the depth of all religion. I have found that, as Ramakrishna would say, though ways may differ, they are like rivers coming from different directions and ultimately becoming one in the same ocean. So the basis of all religions is but one.

If you are a Christian, become a better Christian; if you are a Buddhist, become a better Buddhist; if you are a Hindu, become a better Hindu. For at the basis of all religions lies the same basic principle, and the same basic question—"Who am I?"

The spiritual value in human being might not be able to be proven in a test tube, but it can be experienced!

When it comes to the question of effort, the most important thing is not the physical or mental exertion that is involved, but the attitude that one develops in doing things.

If you have the temperament of love, devotion, right action and doing spiritual practices, then you find the direct route to that inner self where all peace resides.

Sometimes the uneducated are more sincere in their search. They are more honest with themselves and they are more inclined to the heart because the mind does not stand in the way.

It is good to doubt. Doubts spring from your mind—and remember, they have nothing to do with the teacher. If you overcome your doubt, you are overcoming the discrepancies of your mind. So doubt is good, because a doubt is the springboard for further inquiry. As you go on inquiring, inquiring, inquiring, you will find you have to knock for the door to be opened. You have to seek to find.

What necessity is there for great personages like Jesus and Krishna to take birth on this earth, to teach of higher principles? What purpose is there? Why should all this be happening? Why should you be suffering? Why are you not totally integrated? Is there something missing in our lives for which we are searching? Why are we here? We are searching for something, we are searching for a purpose. That purpose might not be a conscious search, for the mind is a funny animal. The mind can delude you to say that all this is purposeless, yet if we ask deep within ourselves, we feel there is something, and we are trying to find what that something is. There again the question arises, "Who am I?"

A real doubter must be an earnest seeker. Doubting should not be engendered by curiosity. Doubting should come from a genuine, sincere search. Why you seek sincerely you will overcome your doubts.

The going cannot be smooth all the time. The rose is beautiful but it comes with thorns. Everything in life is like that—everything.

Even if a person starts with doubt, it is good. At least a start is made and that is important.

On the spiritual path there is no laziness, there is no self-satisfaction. Self-satisfaction is called delusion.

When a person is a true seeker, then the environment that is necessary for his growth comes to him; all circumstances lead him to it.

When you say, "I have come from God and I am going back to God," you are measuring it in terms of your own mind, which can only think in terms of time and space. Beyond time and space, there is no coming or going—you are just there.

What happens in practical life is this: if our attention is only on the material, forgetting the spiritual, then the

material value for everything will forever keep on changing, changing, changing. When anything is changing all the time, we find very quickly that it is impermanent—and there is nothing.

Life is never purposeless. Any person that stifles his purpose of life, or denies that there is any purpose to life, will only flounder like a rudderless boat.

Inquiry into the various aspects and facets of life must not be stopped, because if a person has an intellectual tendency, this can be his starting point. As he goes on analyzing various things he will know for himself that this is not it—there is something more.

In daily living, the qualification of spiritual unfoldment shows in the way we tackle our problems. When we can turn that which was previously unjoyous into joy, that is a sure sign of spiritual unfoldment.

Today, people want to experience first and have faith later. In olden times it was the other way around—through their belief and faith people would experience something. Today, they want to experience.

It is said, in eastern scriptures as well as Tibetan, that if you are a seeker of truth, you do not need to go anywhere.

Do not hanker after enlightenment. The more you hanker after it and try to perform actions towards that end, the further you chase it away.

There are signposts on the spiritual path that will tell you how far you have reached. But is your conscious mind receptive enough to notice these spiritual signposts?

The purpose of life, or the attainment of any higher value of life is attained by one-pointedness.

To know yourself, you are at liberty to use whatever is offered to you in your circumstances and learn from it. This is very important.

Be alert!

It is very seldom that those who are knowledgeable, and proud of it, will reach the kingdom of Heaven.

The signposts are there, but it is not necessary to see them or know them. You are still on the path, a pathless path. It is just the cleaning of all the dirt that has gathered around you; it is taking a bath. And once the dirt is washed off, you are clean, pure, and naked as the innocent child . . . no wiles, no fancies, no whims . . . just love.

Chapter 6

Love

It's not really that love makes the world go around; love is what makes the ride interesting!

What is love? In a nutshell, love is the Divinity within you.

When a person knows himself, when he can really dive within and discover the love within himself, then only can he project that love to someone else.

We go through various facets of love to reach Divine love, which is ours. We are born with it, but because of the limitations of our mind and heart, we cannot yet express it. As the cobwebs of the mind are cleared, as the closed heart is opened more, the divinity of love will begin to shine through, and continue until it can shine through completely.

Love is neither born nor created. It is a world of existence in itself. To know this existence requires total sacrifice and surrender of oneself to the bigger Self that is within us. The beauty lies in that while probing the "innerality," we also appreciate the externality.

To be able to live truly, to be able to love in totality, you have to find completeness within yourself first, because love is an expression of what one is.

What is real love? Can love really be cultivated? No, never—love is a happening. Love is like the fragrance of a flower. The flower does not transmit fragrance consciously. It is the nature of a flower to give fragrance, and that fragrance is love. It is the nature of fire to give off heat, and heat, spontaneously given by fire, is love. We do not cultivate love—we cultivate qualities within us that are conducive to making love come. In other words, everything is a preparation for love to come.

A good person naturally has love, compassion and sympathy in his heart. He has the impetus to want to always be good.

Love can be walled up. Get rid of the walls! Meditation and spiritual practices are the surest means of breaking down these walls and opening the heart so that the heart can flow in its own divine glory. Each one of us can do it!

In studying various religions and extracting their essence, we find people devoted to Krishna, to Christ, to Buddha, or to another master. This devotion is solely for the purpose of the devotee; it is not for the sake of the master. It is through devotion that the devotee becomes one with the ideal of devotion. Then the lover, the beloved, and the love

become one. Then nothing is necessary. You have to walk on the path, but once you have reached the goal, walking is not necessary.

Real, sincere love of an enemy, will change that enemy.

I would prefer someone to love me, rather than to rationalize me. Which is better, which is more joyful?

As we do our best to live a good life, many things develop. Bhakti and love develop as we perform right action. In right action there is so much love that our very action becomes a dedication, and that dedication becomes an offering. That very offering is none else but devotion and love.

There is some truth in the saying that love is blind, because true love knows no analysis.

Love knows neither physical chemistry nor mental chemistry, but is an inner quality that just shines forth.

When someone says, "I don't love such-and-such a person," the fault is not in the object. The fault lies in the subject, because the subject has failed to recognize what love is.

Understanding does not require analysis. Analysis can only bring you acquired knowledge which is far different from inner knowledge. Inner knowledge is wisdom. Love is always expressed in the wisdom that blooms from within, for the sake of itself, to glorify itself. That is love.

The secret of being able to love is to lose oneself totally. We stop thinking, "I am the center of the Universe." Not I, but Thou. That is knowing what love is. When the peace comes that passes all understanding, all analysis, and all rationalization, then you start knowing what love is. So the prerequisite of love is to be able to love yourself.

The secret of happiness is not in belongings, but in belonging.

There are various levels of love, ranging from the very grossest to the highest spiritual level. One can love in a very limited way by physical means only. One can love in a higher form where body and mind are involved. The highest level comes when mind, body and spirit are involved. That forms the totality of love.

The root of worship lies in the subject, not in the object.

The totality of love can only be expressed if we are total. In achieving the totality of love, one has discovered the secret of the universe. One has become one, in at-one-ment with the universe. Therein lies the completeness of love.

The kind of love which is most common with 99.99 percent of people is a kind of business: "I give you this and you give me that in return." Pure love requires no return. When a sage says he loves the world, humanity, and every creature, he does not expect any return for it whatsoever, because he loves for the sake of love. That love within him is so powerful that it just expresses itself. In other words, he can't help loving because he is love.

Remember this, the moment I start analyzing my love, love ceases, because I have taken love to the mental level. The mind cannot love, it can only appreciate the mechanics of love. Love is the welling of the heart. The heart feels the closeness and oneness where your heartbeat spontaneously feels the heartbeat of your beloved. But once the mind enters and analyzes even a heartbeat, the heart stops beating in the flow of love. Love knows no analysis.

It is very easy to say, "Judge not that ye be not judged." So simple to say, but so difficult to do; because you can only stop judging if you can really love. Love never judges, it just loves, it just is.

The mind is limited, while the heart is unlimited. When we combine the greater development of the mind with the opening of the heart, then the few days that we are on this planet will become more joyful and smoother.

When love flowers in our hearts, and as our souls begin to blossom out to the world, we fulfill our destiny as human beings and the purpose for which this life has been given to us. How valuable this life is, and how well it can be used. One day, when we leave this world, we want to be able to say, "Well-lived this life, well-lived."

What do we teach, basically? We teach of the essence of the human being; and that we call love. Divinity is best expressed by that quality.

What happens in the mechanics of love: The mind and the heart hold hands.

When a person can really experience, really appreciate love, then his life becomes worthwhile. The essence of our teaching is the development of this love; how to unfold the inner core of your being so that you will not only express, but live love. Love is to be lived.

Religions differ at lower levels, but the meeting ground of all religions, at their highest level, is that God is love and love is God.

Love is a celebration. Everything is celebrating all the time. The flower is celebrating, the tree is celebrating, the grass is celebrating. Everything is celebrating, celebrating the glory of its own creation, of its own manifestation.

Man is not born to suffer. The human being is born to enjoy. It is our inherent right, for joy is within us. We are children of light. We are the manifestation of that eternal essence which can only be called love.

Know that if you are happy (or unhappy) today, you will be unhappy (or happy) tomorrow, or the next day, or the day after. Love is beyond all happiness and all sorrow, because happiness and sorrow are transitory.

If you want to become lovable, become loving first. For if you are loving, automatically you become lovable. You have a magnetic pull. Your very presence creates an atmosphere of love.

You can discard the entire Bible if you can just remember one thing: Love thy neighbor as thyself. That is the most important teaching. That is the cream, or butter, that is churned up from this vast vessel of milk. But to truly love thy neighbor as thyself you must recognize the oneness between you and me: there is no you and me.

Unfoldment of the spirit is expressed as unfoldment of love.

If I want to make you happy there is only one thing I can do—love you. I could appeal to your logical mind, but that is not what we want. All kinds of things please our minds. Your mind will agree with a certain theory or philosophical proposition, but as time goes on you will find that theory to be of no value to you, and change it. The mind is fickle. Mental contact has very limited value. The greatest contact that can be made is not from mind to mind, but from heart to heart.

As we go deeper through our meditational and spiritual practices, the movements of love become less and less. Then the reality of love is known . . . stillness.

Whatever the case might be, there has to be nonattachment. For example, all of you sitting here, I love you passionately, deeply, profoundly; you can't measure it. And yet, I am nonattached to you; for it is not I that is loving you, as you. It is the Divinity within me which is one with the Divinity within you. That oneness, that fusion, is love.

The perception of a self-realized man is on such a vast scale, that the ordinary mind cannot comprehend him. If you want to see the top of one tree, you must stand on the top of another tree. Standing down here you don't get the proper view. To really understand the total man we have to become total ourselves. The total man always has love and compassion in so much abundance, it extends to the whole earth, it extends to infinity. Nothing can weaken that love or compassion!

Chapter 7

Discrimination

The power of discrimination, (viveka, as they call it in Sanskrit), is for one purpose: to be able to discriminate between the changing and the unchanging, to discriminate between the relative and the Absolute. The Absolute is our real essence, it is changeless. All change is but a manifestation of the changeless. When you combine in your life the values of both changelessness and change, then you live a full life. You do not live a full life now. But those of you who have started on the path of self-integration, employing conscious effort in daily living, will reach that point where all of life is joy. Then even if you feel pain, you will see that you are involved in a universe which is composed of pairs of opposites. Pleasure, pain; heat, cold; sun, snow: we will always have these pairs. But once we realize the value of pain and pleasure, then neither of them will affect us.

True discrimination comes only when one can really be silent within oneself.

It is your free will, your choice, to decide what to accept and what to reject.

Acquire knowledge by all means, but sift it; throw away that which is not necessary. Take the essence.

The more sensitive you become in the perception of good things, the more will you be able to perceive the bad things.

There is no use trying to analyze the mind to find discrimination. Analysis is not the same as discrimination, because all forms of analysis are biased and patterned.

Knowledge is a word that has been so misunderstood! Knowledge is an accumulation of various facts which can be found in any good encyclopedia. We want to go beyond knowledge and into the realm of wisdom—that is something different from knowledge.

The purpose that the intellect must really serve is not to make various deductions, but to make a very simple discrimination between what is right and what is wrong. If you have awakened the superconscious part of yourself, you will find that all the decisions you make will automatically be right.

The human being must experience what life is all about, and what Divinity is all about. Philosophy and discrimination cannot touch this experience: It is like explaining color to a person who is born blind. You cannot explain it. You can try to explain what the beauty and fragrance of a flower are like, but a person has to see and smell the flower to know. You can analyze in a laboratory all the chemical components of sugar, but what do we

know of sugar if we do not taste its sweetness? Sugar is there for its sweetness, not for laboratory examination. Discrimination plays its part in our life, but discrimination, too, must be discarded at the stage where love and devotion grow.

It is not necessary to take everything I say uncritically. By all means be critical!—but be critical with an open mind. You have been brought up in a certain way of life, and some teachings might seem foreign. If something sounds foreign, then become critical about it. But criticism must never be destructive or deriding: that "something" must be accepted with an open mind, and evaluated with constructive criticism as it applies to your individual self. This applies not only to the talks I give you, but to all the books you read. You might not necessarily agree with the author. Often when I read certain passages, for example, I say to myself, "This is not quite it," or "This is not so." But I do respect the understanding that the author has gained; any author will always find someone who disagrees with his thoughts. That is why Christ, so beautifully, said, "There are many sheep, but not all are of my flock."

There was a small village by a river; and on the other side of that river was a city. Every day people had to travel by ferry boats across the river to go to work. On this one ferry there was a peasant and a pundit. Now, a pundit is a man who is learned in scriptures; this one was a vain man. He knew all the scriptures, and this produced vanity in him. He was proud of all the books he had read and all the studies he had made. So on this ferry the pundit asked the peasants, "Have you studied Vedanta?" They answered, "No, reverend sir."

"Have you studied Sankya Yoga?"

"No, sir."

"The Upanishads?"

"No, reverend sir."

And he used to boast, "I'm a learned man." So everyone called him "sir." One day a storm came up and the boat was sinking. The peasants started diving off the boat. As one was diving off he asked the pundit, "Can you swim?" Now, every day, these villages had to cross the river twice, going to and from the city. The peasant was a practical man, and considering the possibility of a storm brewing and the boat capsizing, he had thought, "Let me learn to swim," and had learned to swim. The pundit, knowing all his scriptures and books, nevertheless drowned. That is the value of practicality. So all the scriptures and all the learning and all the gurus can be parcelled up and thrown into the river.

In the progression of the soul we reach the human stage, and to unpattern all the patterings of the mind a human being has to use the power of discrimination. That is why he has been given the gift of reasoning. Because of the patterning of past associations and past experiences our reasoning becomes warped. A person feels insecure and inadequate within himself. So the mind has to be repatterned. Now we all try to unpattern, but what happens is that when we try to unpattern the mind by using the mind, we are repatterning it into a different mold. What we really must do is to get away from patterning altogether. And that is what our spiritual practices do. They bypass the patterning of the soul and go deep within, to the basis of pure innocence. That is the purpose of meditation; that is

the purpose of life.

Mental maturity is achieved when you have developed discrimination, where you can view something as a whole in its total value. The mentally mature person will find some appreciation of the total value of an object. But the self-realized person will not only see the total value of that object, he will become one with the object and experience its totality in that oneness.

The human being has the consciousness to appreciate that he is created in the image of God, because the human being has thinking ability. The previous stages of existence could not discriminate. We, as human beings, can discriminate; and therefore it is our folly that we do not discriminate between that which is forever changing and that which is changeless.

CHAPTER 8

Meditation

Expansion of awareness is gained through meditation. It is through expansion of awareness that we find beauty even in the thorns which contribute to the wholeness of the rose.

Meditation does change the personality. It takes away the hardness that is there and brings that mellowness which love inspires. It teaches how to love, the meaning of love, and even how to become love. That is the basic change required in the human being of today.

If you have a jug of dirty water, put that jug under the tap and open the tap. As the clean water falls into the jug, the dirty water will be slowly cleared away leaving only clean water. By constantly doing our meditations we are doing the same thing—we are adding divine power to the mind and body. The positive energies being more powerful, push out the negative energies.

It is only when we dive within ourselves and find the actuality that is within that the outside universe ceases. It does not cease as far as the material components of it are concerned, but it ceases in our conceptions.

We meditate effortlessly—but our daily living must be filled with effort.

By meditation, or whatever spiritual practice that is allocated to you, you go beyond the realms of the mind, you go beyond the realms of the body, you go beyond the realms of the finest relativity, and you merge away into the Absolute, where experience does not need an external factor, where experience does not need an experiencer, where experience experiences itself. That is bliss. That is the love which Christ talks about—and it is not difficult to reach there.

The value of meditation lies in this, that not only the quality of one's life, but also the quality of the environment is improved.

We are trying to open up consciousness in a more direct, quick way. We want to find the source of all happiness.

Meditation is not, and never could be a form of escape from reality. Drug taking is an escape from reality. Meditation is a way to make you face reality. The efforts of drug taking and meditation are directly opposite. One forms dependence, the other forms independence.

If you are a Christian, become a better Christian. If you are a Buddhist, become a better Buddhist. If you are a Jew,

become a better Jew. Meditational practices have nothing to do with religion.

Our meditational practices are designed to bring about an integration of mind, body, and spirit so we can function as total beings. Then even the sex act can be elevated to such a degree that it becomes a meditation, a complete mergence.

A beautiful, pleasurable experience you have in meditation is only caused by diving to a certain level of the mind where the impressions of pleasurable experiences are stored. That is just being projected to the conscious level and you feel very pleasant.

Meditation and spiritual practices are a prevention, not a cure.

When a person goes into samahdi, if it is real meditation he will not be conscious of his mind or his body. At that moment the spirit exists within itself. The body breathes and the mind becomes a void. Because one has transcended the mind and the body, there is a gap. It is only when you come out of samahdi that you realize, "I have been in samahdi." The experience of that samahdi is a joy, a blissful experience, an alertness of itself without the reflection . . . Pure Light.

The purpose of meditation is to experience truth. We don't want to know about truth—for that you go to a university. Universities only tell you about a thing, what a thing is. What we learn through meditation is to experience what truth is.

We do not need to analyze the mechanics of darkness, we switch on the light. That we do through meditation, where we reach to the deepest layer, the source of light, and bring forth the light to banish all the darkness that is in our lives.

When properly chosen by a spiritual master, a person's mantra incorporates that moment when the individual soul parted from the universal soul and became individualized. That very action, that very motion, created a sound. So the mantra that is given to a person incorporates the very first impulse of an individual being since he was individuated, his present state of evolution, and the full range of that which he can attain.

Meditation gives the mind the quietude to push aside that whole universe which is the mind, and allow a greater force to come through. For this the heart, the core of one's personality, is the vehicle or the entrance. This process starts at the level of the mind, which consciously makes the initial effort, which requires discipline, until the mind goes to a deeper level. That conscious mind must ignore the repositories of all the samskaras which are in the subconscious, so as to create a direct path to the superconscious, the finest level of relativity, which is the truest reflection of the light. When this level is reached the reflection shines through to the conscious mind, and enlivens

the conscious mind. When the conscious mind is enlivened by such reflection, it gradually draws the true light of the spirit to it. Then the conscious mind too can experience the unfolded spirit, which is forever unfolded at the finest superconscious level.

Things at their subtle levels are more powerful. As we go to the deeper recesses of the mind and gather greater force and power, we use this strength to overcome the conditioning of the mind.

When you stand by the seashore the sea seems so rough, with the waves high and turbulent; but in an airplane a mile or two up . . . the sea seems quiet. Like that, when we begin to expand our awareness through meditation practices our daily problems fall into perspective.

When a person does not have any experiences during meditation he must never feel that no progress is made . . . the progress is there.

Flashy experiences in meditation are not signposts. You are just awakening certain layers of the mind, which produce all the stars and colors. It could very easily be done with a mallet on the head!

Meditation is the easy way of cleaning oneself of samskaras, the impressions that have gathered in the ego itself.

Meditating is like performing an operation, using an anesthetic so that it doesn't hurt to cleanse oneself. But if the operation was performed without using an anesthetic the cut would be very, very painful.

It is good that you experience the full range of thoughts and emotions during meditation. It is good in the sense that without suffering, you are dissolving the impressions instead of having to live out those experiences in practical daily life where they could become so, so painful.

You look at this flower now. After some months of proper meditation, if you see the same flower, it will assume a different quality for you. It will be a means of providing you with far greater joy, appreciation, and beauty than would have been perceived before. Therefore the saying, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." There are many simple sayings and injunctions that we hear, of which we do not understand the true depth or the true worth.

Proper meditation creates that openness of heart through which you dive deep within; and in diving deep within, you develop and express greater and greater waves of love in the environment and in your home. Meditation makes life beautiful.

There are such divine forces at work through these practices that you awaken that which is dormant within you: you awaken the beauty. Most people live a life like a beautiful bud—but that bud has to be nourished and cared for, so

that it will open up and fulfill its dharma.

Mediation awakens virtues and positive qualities in you that you need to come to realization.

The purpose of meditation is to bring about a harmony between mind, body, and spirit. The harmony already exists; all it requires is conscious recognition and experience. What do we mean by experiencing harmony? The answer is simple: to feel peace with yourself, so much so that all problems can come and yet you remain peaceful. It is like Kipling's poem, "If"—everything can go all mad and haywire around you and yet you preserve your peace and tranquility. That is what meditation aims to do by a systematic process of taking your mind to the deeper layers inside. You automatically draw peace from the stillness within. Though this only requires quieting the mind, that is not all that happens: by activating this inner resource in your daily life, you being living in compliance with the harmonious laws of nature. These harmonious laws are the truest reflection of the indescribable God. Because you are bringing this inner resource, the inner energy, into your waking state of life, it then becomes a spontaneous process—You live God!

Whenever a person can exercise his totality in any action, then be sure to know that this is a form of meditation.

Most people don't get answers because they do not still themselves sufficiently for the answer to come. Each of us is responsible for that. If I don't get an answer to a problem, it is I, or something within me which is blocking the answer, and that is why I don't get it.

Every act in life, every thought, every word and deed is nothing but a mantra.

If, through meditation, we have the way of contacting Divinity, then why should we contact disembodied beings? Disembodied beings—"on the other side," as mediums would say—are not realized beings.

Everyone has the opportunity, through spiritual practices, to become the King. That is the true meaning of the daily prayer, "Thy Kingdom come." Where must the Kingdom come to? Forget that which is around us. Let that Kingdom come to us inside here, and all that which is around us will look after itself. Find the Kingdom within, and the external kingdom is automatically found.

During the waking state of life meditation makes us face the mirror squarely and see our faults. It not only makes us see our faults, but meditation also gives us the strength to overcome those faults.

There is a direct line from the small, conscious mind, leading through the various layers of the subconscious and even past the superconscious, into the area where all knowledge exists. Through meditation we gain access to this pathway.

As one gains greater and greater energy from within through meditation, life becomes more joyous and peaceful because the dirt within oneself is being washed away and dissolved.

Through meditation we develop an openness of heart. We also develop an expansion of mind. Thus we become alert to the things that uplift our lives, bringing us Grace and greater happiness.

To find real bliss is not an external search; it is an internal search. That is why we meditate.

Modern psychology tries to probe and find causes, we do not. Why analyze the causes? There is a way whereby those energies can be brought forth to clear away the dirt.

In this room if there is a lot dirt lying around, are you going to analyze the dirt? Or are you going to bring the broom? Which is better? What is the sense of saying this is sawdust and this came from the wind blowing it in, and that the baby made a wee there? Just bring the broom and sweep it out. Take the direct line. You have this ability.

Through spiritual practices we are working with energies. We are activating energies, but activating grosser energies and very systematically leading those grosser energies to reach the subtler and subtler energies which are in the mind. For the mind has various strata—the conscious level, the subconscious level and the superconscious level.

Meditation not only gives you awareness . . . it gives you knowingness.

CHAPTER 9

Suffering

Whatever you emphasize, you are ruled by.

When a certain thing is realized, you automatically gain control over it. Then it does not control you, but you control it. When we find a great measure of self-integration, gradually, we exude a strength to be able to control, and that is the only way to go beyond the sufferings that we suffer.

You cannot escape emotions; but you can go beyond them.

Man is not made to suffer, man is a product of joy and yet he comes into this world crying. From joy we come and to joy we proceed; man is made of light. And in spite of the glass of the lamp being dirtied sometimes, the true light must still shine through. So, there is much hope, there is much love, and there are no problems or suffering really. We think we suffer; we delude ourselves into thinking we suffer. This is a product of thought and when, through meditation, you go beyond the level of thought, you will know that there is no suffering. It is all but joy.

A person creates conflicting ideas within himself, and it is this very conflict that creates illness. As a matter of fact the conflict is an illness itself.

What is the use of analyzing darkness? It does not solve the problem. In analyzing darkness, we only find it to be darkness. The element that is missing is the light of the superconscious. Take the direct line to the superconscious. The human being has this ability.

All suffering can be seen as an offering.

This is the object of life, this is the purpose of life: to find the real Self that resides within you. And when that is found, life's mission is completed. This does not mean that all your troubles are going to cease. There will be troubles while we are living in the relative world which is governed by the various gunas. Those ups and downs will be there. You cannot have an ocean that will be still all the time. Some days the sea is calm, other days the waves are rushing high. But amidst all you are based in the silence, and not in the turbulence. Before, concerned with the surface values, we only noticed the turbulence. We were tossed on those waves—here and there, from pillar to post, in the turbulence. But realizing the fact of the calmness in the depths we get anchored to the silence; then we enjoy the turbulence. It is beautiful. So long as this universe exists, this turbulence will always be there.

Your problem is that the mind is centered on suffering, instead of joy. "If I have to pay for it (karma from previous

actions) then so what!" This should be our attitude.

When we go through suffering and turmoil we are just experiencing change in the shapes or forms. Now that is what we want to get away from, through our meditational practices. Be established within the Self of the spirit while watching the names and the forms continually changing. Then we will not be affected because we will have risen above it. We will have then become the proper observer and the small self will be able to say, "I am not the doer. The doer is the spirit. It is that energy, that force, it is Divinity that manipulates all this, and I am just the instrument."

Dissatisfaction is a necessity in the process of life. When satisfied, an individual stops progressing. That very dissatisfaction is a process to stimulate one towards greater growth.

The human being is the greatest magnet in the world. He attracts what he deserves. A person would say, "Why has this befallen me? Why did I have four tire punctures in one day?" When did you last have your four tires checked? Please remember that we are, and no one else is, responsible for everything that befalls us. When we have problems, we always shift the blame. We shift the blame to our husbands, our wives, our children, our bosses, or to our friends, to the guru, and when we can not succeed in this at last we blame God. But man does not realize that all fortune or misfortune is attracted to himself by himself.

Most trouble is over petty things. Observe them. Do not get stuck in them.

Even for the bread you eat, you need an external force: a knife to cut the slices. Everything requires an external force. Yet the realization that the external force and the internal force are the same, has to come. When that consciousness dawns, all friction will disappear, because the cause of all problems is duality.

When you think you go through a pleasurable moment, be sure to know that you are going to have some pain as well.

We must go beyond the conscious and the subconscious levels of the mind, in which are contained all the karmic combinations of impressions that make a person feel miserable, or superficially joyous.

The sufferings that people have can be overcome. When a certain trend is set in motion it has to reach its culmination. But if we have the attitude of acceptance, reinforced by the subtler layers of the superconscious mind, then nothing hurts and everything is accepted. And even if it does hurt, we know the value of the hurt, for it is also transient . . . "This is not the whole of my little existence." It is a matter of attaching importance to the right things.

All sufferings are borrowed, they are not yours. They are borrowed from circumstances around you because sorrow and suffering is not your true nature. You are not yourself. That is the falsity of life. You do not give full value to

yourself, and why not? Because you do not know yourself.

Do not confuse the sun's rays with moonbeams. Moonbeams are soft and the sun's rays are hard. Deny neither. The lunar aspect is but a reflection of the solar emanation. The moon and the sun combine without causing an eclipse in daily life. All this means but one thing—the key is harmony.

By uttering words of an aggressive nature we can do so much harm to a person's entire life. If we hurt somebody with a stick, that wound will heal in a few weeks or a month. If we leave a scar on a person's mind, that scar can remain for a lifetime.

It is the mind that invents the satans and gods. The entire universe is nothing but mind and all problems in life are created by the mind. Culturing the mind through meditational practices, we learn to overcome the mind and go beyond it. There truth is found.

We will never find a single person on earth who entertains negative thoughts and wrong thinking that is a happy person, because this is in direct opposition to happiness.

The Divine force, the Kingdom of Heaven, is within: that is the only force that can get rid of all our ills.

Chapter 10

Acceptance

There is no adversity in life. There is only opportunity! That which we regard to be adversity might be the very lesson we need to learn.

Every person is a unique entity, a totality unto himself; each must accept responsibility for himself and his weaknesses. From that day of acceptance, progress starts.

People just don't accept themselves for what they are. This is the root of all problems and this is the root of all surface suffering that people go through. Once they learn to accept themselves by reaching the deeper layers of the mind, all the things that happen on the relative conscious level are automatically accepted.

When we accept the principle, "I have conditioned my mind and I have become dependent on that conditioning," then only with that acceptance, will we do something about it. Then we will cease to stagnate. We have to "uncondition" the conditioning.

Human beings must realize that whatever circumstances they are placed in are the result of their own actions.

Progress can start from faith or doubt.

In acceptance of another's actions, you are surrendering your Self to yourself, not to another. Who are we to demand, "I need this," or "I need that"? Rather, "Lord, you know my needs and I know you will fulfill my needs. I trust you have a reason for this. Perhaps you are trying to teach me something; who am I to teach you and demand from you? Am I capable of commanding you? You command me, rather. Not my will . . . Thy will."

When you try and change that which is forever changing, you produce conflicts and those conflicts bind you more and more and more.

The person most qualified to accept what a teacher says is the one with devotion in his heart. When devotion is there, there is acceptance. If one is lacking in devotion, then evaluation will not come from the heart, it will come from the mind. But there is no hope lost because our practices are designed to expand the heart. With the appreciation and expansion of the mind, an expansion of the heart must naturally occur; then we develop the qualities of acceptance, belief, and faith. Now, we do not say have blind faith—that is what some religions teach, blind faith. We are seekers of the truth, seekers of the essence of truth, so we do use our intellectual faculties. We evaluate the truth as much as we can understand it. If a proposition is set forth, many minds may not understand that

proposition because they have not reached that stage of understanding, and there is nothing wrong with that. All must work within their own capacity.

We are responsible for all that has befallen us. That principle must be accepted, not only as a mental concept, but really felt deep within ourselves. "What has befallen me is because of me and not you." Now, having brought it upon myself and accepting that fact, then we ask the second important question: "What am I going to do about it?" And when I ask that question, within the stillness of my mind, the power of Grace becomes activated and the answer comes.

We are allowed to think. We are allowed to accept. We are allowed to reject. And that is what progress is all about. If you reject a certain thought, I will not say, "Do not reject." I say, "Yes, go on rejecting—rejecting until you reach the stage of accepting." It is like two people moving in opposite directions around this globe—sooner or later they will meet face to face at the other side.

There were times in the past, for example, two thousand years ago, when the spiritual Master had to deal with peasant folk. The Sanhedrin, or the learned clergy, would not listen to him. He was forced to speak to the peasants of the land and he could not go into philosophical discussions with those illiterate people who could not understand philosophical truths. So he said, "Believe." "Believe in thy Father in Heaven." Why did he say, "Believe?" Because the people were simple people, illiterate people, who were not able to understand what the sophisticated minds of today can understand. So he taught Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga is to develop faith until that very belief becomes a reality. And this is true—you can try it in your daily life. If you believe something strongly enough, it becomes a reality, always.

Never shatter anyone's faith. If you have faith in a certain ideal and your faith is sincere, I would encourage you in this faith. If you believe in Jesus, I would not tell you, "That is wrong, you must believe in Krishna." That would be a terrible crime perpetrated against humanity. Never shatter anyone's faith, whatever you do. If a person has a particular belief, remember it has come about because that person is capable only of the belief at that moment. When you shatter someone's faith and belief, you are superimposing your little personal beliefs upon that person. By shattering a person's belief, you are putting that person's mind in a particular mold, and that mold is your mold according to your mind and not the Divine mold.

Chapter 11

Attachment

When we can observe any situation without being affected, then that would imply a non-attachment. And that is the true meaning of renunciation. Renunciation does not mean leaving your family and the world and going to some Himalayan cave. That's escaping.

Many things in life are paradoxes. One can be totally devoted to someone and yet be non-attached. Now there is a difference between non-attachment and detachment. Detachment is to exclude oneself from all activities of life and just to be far away, to become reclusive. To be non-attached is to be able to partake of every activity of the mind and body and spirit and yet be above it all. Now, when one goes into detachment, it could be a form of escape, where one does not face up to the responsibilities.

The real Self within us is ever unfolded and encompasses everything existent, tangible and intangible, animate and inanimate. When we speak of spiritual unfoldment we are referring to removing the veils of attachment to transitory values and recognizing them for what they are worth. We are gradually going beyond the shackles that tie us down to relativity. There's nothing wrong with being in relativity; but being tied and weighed down, that is the condition we are trying to get away from.

Attachment is always generated by need.

If we direct our belief and faith to mundane things, we will achieve mundane things. We will achieve transitory things which can never be fulfilling. The need will always be there, and by fulfilling one mundane need, that one mundane need will create two mundane needs and two will create four.

The cause of all unhappiness and misery in this world is our attachment to name and form.

What man has to strive for is that tranquility where all the praise in the world does not elate him, and all the blame in the world does not deflate him. This tranquility brings about a certain kind of nonattachment.

We do not look deep enough. There is nothing in this world that is ugly. Everything is beautiful because it is created and it is a product of Divinity. Once we go beyond the surface value of a thing then we see the beauty within everything.

In performing any action there is a certain amount of desire. Desire produces attachment, but there are different kinds of desires. Desire for gain, name, fame, and power prods one to act in a certain manner to achieve a certain

goal. The other kind of desire is the desire to serve, which causes non-attachment.

All unhappiness is produced by our worthless sense of attachment. We get attached to various aspects and facets of life which are transitory. As man unfolds spiritually, he will not only seek the true value within himself and the environment, but he will find it non-separate from himself. That is a sure sign of spiritual unfoldment.

To be able to love without attachment is the greatest achievement a human being can attain.

Unattachment means that you, very willfully, want to be apart. You become indifferent; like the old saying, you can have a crowd of people around you, yet you are lonely. You withdraw within yourself, not because of strength, but because of imbalance between introversion and extroversion.

Non-attachment is something totally different, where you are part of your entire environment, where you partake of everything in your environment, where you can love, where you can become one with another. Individuality ceases entirely: there is no you and me, there is just us. That is created by non-attachment. As the Bible would say, "To be in the world and yet not of it," is non-attachment.

Non-attachment comes when you find unity in diversity and yet you are conscious of all the diversity around you. In spite of all the diversity which your conscious mind sees, there is that inner self within you that shines out all its glory and encompasses the entire universe in Oneness. Then you say, "Tat tvam asi," which means, "Thou art That." You progress still further to say, "Brahmasmi,"—"I am Brahma. I am the entire universe; nothing separates me from anything else." And that is the state of Christhood. That is the state the man, Jesus reached when he could say, "I and my Father are One," because the Father is omnipresent. The man Jesus reached the stage where he could become One with Omnipresence; that is what is meant by, "I and my Father are One."

In the state of non-attachment we face our problems. We face them squarely and try to find solutions; and if we are sincere enough the solutions are there, because there is no problem that does not have the solution inherent within it.

We seek externally for happiness but the external happiness is temporary. It is only by finding the inner happiness that we could put some permanence into that which is temporary, because we go beyond name and form to see the essence which is eternal.

Could you really ever possess anything? . . . especially a human being, who is an individual, thinking entity.

You are seeking freedom within yourself. That is where freedom lies, nowhere else. We cannot rid anyone else of bondage nor create freedom for another person at any time. Bondage or freedom can only be created by oneself. When you view the world or your beloved through the aspect of bondage, you are not binding them but are binding

yourself in a patterned way of thinking.

See all attachment as freedom for you can find it to be freedom even though you are attached, just by having a special mental attitude, and a spiritual strength and fortitude.

My love for her is important, not her. I am attached in that love for her, but in that attachment of love for her, is freedom. Because the power of Grace has given me the freedom to love.

With acceptance comes surrender. Although we are attached, the emphasis is not to be on the attachment. The emphasis can be on unmotivated surrender . . . unselfish surrender, unselfish giving of oneself as much as possible to the beloved.

"I" the little ego self, is not the doer. The doer is HE. When you have that idea, you become nonattached to your actions and then any action you perform will not add any samskaras to your mind. You will gradually become free of impressions which imprison you. When your actions and your thoughts become non-binding, then you enter the realms of freedom.

Chapter 12

Samskaras

We are today the product, the sum total of every action and every thought of the past. Nothing is ever destroyed, it is there eternally. All your actions and every thought that you have ever thought is there within your memory box, and that is what we call samskaras. We are nothing but a bundle of samskaras which has found its expression in mental and physical form.

Samskaras are a conglomeration of the actions we have done over the ages; they are the various impressions that have been gathered in what we call the mind. The mind is patterned, and it is these very patternings that form the veils that conceal the real "I." The process is to find one's real Self and to find the true Self we have to get rid of the samskaras.

The extent of the mind is as vast as the entire universe. Every experience gained since the primal atom, from the time of the big bang explosion when you were propelled forth as that minuscule atom, and all the experiences gained from that state right through mineral, plant, animal and then man—every experience exists in the mind. All those experiences remain in the mind, and those experiences are not destructible.

We are nothing but a bundle of past actions and thoughts that have been heavily impressed upon our psyche.

If a person now has a horrifying vision or experience in meditation, it doesn't matter. The beautiful experience is just as valid as the ugly experience. What is brought to the fore is just the impression.

Samskaras need not only be bad, they can also be good; it depends on how and where they were formulated and expressed. If they were formulated by a greater amount of tamas, which is inertia or darkness, then more negativity would be apparent. If the samskaras which constitute the individual mind are dominated by sattva, or the forces of light, then naturally life would be more pleasurable. These two gunas, tamas and sattva, have to be activated by interaction between tamas, sattva and rajas.

All samskaras created in the individual minds of man are interconnected. A good person spreads, without any effort, goodness all around himself. It is the nature of the flower to be beautiful, but that is not the only thing it does. It enhances the beauty of the garden. That is why every person is responsible for the other.

Samskaras cannot be destroyed. Those samskaras (thought forms or forces) which we clean away from ourselves will go to where they are most attracted. That is why, if you keep on thinking negative thoughts, then more negative thoughts will be attracted to you. If you think more positive thoughts, then more positive thoughts will be

forthcoming. From where do they come? You draw those which have been discarded by other individual minds; you actually become a magnet of attraction. That is how negativity increases, for everything is forever existent, nothing is ever destroyed, not even a single thought, not even a single samskara.

During meditation, when people have experiences, what does it mean? It is simply that by diving deeper into our subtler levels of our minds, we are bringing to the fore, or to the conscious mind, experiences which already exist.

Behind the act, it is the motive or motivation that causes samskaras. One could be totally devoted to what one is doing and yet be nonattached to the action, for the action is performed for the sake of action and not for the sake of the reaction. The cause is activated, but that cause becomes a causeless cause, so that it could not have an effect.

Matter can not be destroyed. Thought, which formulates the samskaras, is also composed of matter.

Everyone, consciously or unconsciously desires peace. Yet the underlying factor blocking this peace, the obstacle in the way of happiness, is samskaras.

The more you try to get rid of samskaras, the more samskaras you form. Every thought man thinks, good or bad, forms an impression and the impression is a samskara.

You can have good samskaras and you can have bad samskaras. Being of a relative nature they would be within the confines of the law of opposites. We cannot escape or get rid of samskaras, but we can rise above them. Samskaras are like a burden that a man carries on his back. By lessening the burden, he is not destroying the contents of the burden, but he is leaving it on the wayside.

In order to rise above the law of opposites, there is a certain process: the process of refinement. Samskaras cannot be destroyed, but they can be brought to a far subtler, purer level, and this comes through action. All action performed is first governed by thought. If thoughts can be formulated in a manner of goodness then the actions become good also.

Thoughts are very persistent things. They go on and on. The more you fight them and the more you push them away, the more they come and take you deeper into the whirlpool of samskaras.

If it is not possible to discipline the mind then it is very possible to discipline the body. The body is disciplined by proper action. As we discipline the body, the mind too becomes disciplined. The effect of this disciplining is the refining of samskaras, and the mind is led to a far subtler level. And when the mind is led to a more subtle level, then the actions of man become purer.

As man's mind, body, and thinking processes become more refined, he starts to explore the deeper levels of his mind. As the mind goes down to its deeper levels and meets with its subtler self, more light penetrates. As more light penetrates, the grosser samskaras that constitute us become lighter, the burden becomes lighter. As the burden becomes lighter, as the grosser self of man assumes a more subtle quality, then every action he performs does not leave that deep impression, or that deep scar which constitutes samskaras.

As we infuse the inner being, the kingdom of heaven which is within, into our daily lives, then the impressions of the past lose their power.

This life is produced because of the momentum set forth in previous lives. We are today the sum totality of what we have been, and everything that happens to us is created by us. When a person learns to accept this fact: "I am what I am because I made myself what I am," then he becomes a responsible person. And any person that becomes a responsible person can view all happenings of life objectively and then he stops blaming everyone else.

Without destroying our previous samskaras we superimpose upon ourselves a way of living that could lead to the refinement of samskaras. The samskaras are refined and the three gunas within us are brought to a tranquility without destruction. When that tranquility is achieved, then those very samskaras disappear from our lives and they become one with their original elements.

By trying to destroy samskaras, you are adding more samskaras. What we try to do is refine them. And by reaching this ultimate point of refinement, a great tranquility is produced, and the samskaras are shed. They are shed off and become one with their original elements which are indestructible. That is what keeps the universe going on and on. This is why the universe is eternal. All these samskaras, all these tamasic, rajasic, or sattvic values of life have no beginning, and therefore will have no end. When we refine them fully they discard themselves from us, and only the pure light remains.

Man has become weak by his own doing, by his own karma, by his own mind, by his own thought patterns and by the impressions that he has created upon his existence. And yet in reality this weakness is just a reflection, a superimposition of the mind, of thought. Relatively speaking, there are weaknesses, but from absolute values there are no weaknesses at all.

Where does ugliness come from? It does not come from the object. Ugliness comes from your impressions or samskaras that are already in your subconscious mind. That is what we have to get rid of. Through meditation, you can burn the seeds of karma so that they won't grow.

Learning lessons does not mean acquiring. That which we call learning means cleaning up . . . and this is how we attain a state of purity. All the dirt has to be wiped away—the dirt of samskaras, which is the combinations and

permutations of the various impressions.

The superconscious mind is at the finest level of relativity and represents the quality of "light." Our conditioning is dependent entirely on how much of the light from the superconscious mind can filter through. The clearer the passage for that light, the more genuine the experience, because in the power of that light conditionings disappear or are overcome, and the purity of the experience is felt. So to really gain true experience, one has to clarify the mind.

If the mind becomes more clear then experience could be more valid and true. And that is what we want: We want the true experience of ourselves.

If we have stability within ourselves we can take our anger for its own sake, and regard that anger to be an experience in itself without projecting it on that poor fellow in front of us. This knowingness comes about on its own if we allow that inner light to filter through us. Then the anger loses its sting and it leaves no samskara whatsoever. It does not leave a lasting impression that you will have to work out in some other form.

The skeletons that are hanging around in the closet of the mind are released in nightmares. It is an experience that you work out in the sleeping state that would have been much more difficult had the experience occurred in the waking state.

Dream experiences are even more valid than the experiences of the waking state because in the waking state we go through certain prejudices. We condition our experiences by our thought processes. But in the dream state, because we do not have the power to order our thoughts, they come up by their own need to express themselves, and find release.

The only person that does not dream is the man who has achieved perfect balance between the conscious, subconscious, and the superconscious. For him, oneness and total equilibrium exists. Such a man never dreams. He has no samskaras to express or to release.

We are forever creating God. We are forever dragging down that pure energy, that pure experience that experiences itself. We are dragging that pure energy through the various dirty layers of our minds and we try to interpret that purity through our dirt (samskaras). That is why some philosophers say that man creates God according to his own conceptions.

How can the person who is tied down in the bondage of gunas and samskaras ever comprehend one who exists in total freedom of freewill (the self-realized person)?

Thought is normally translated through words or through symbols. The thought, not being conscious, or the thought,

not being brought about by effort, necessarily must be traded off by a samskara which means an impression. The impression is not the actual experience.

A dream is a composite story drawing forth elements from various experiences of this life or of many other lives. Many experiences are brought together and thrown into a pot and the soup that comes out is the dream.

When the dream seems very vivid, it means that certain experiences of the day or for the week have left a deep impression upon your mind. That impression, in turn, has stirred up a samskara which is hidden deeper down.

You are evolving even in your sleep. Without willing anything samskaras are being released and with the release they are being dislodged. It is easier to release a samskara in the dream state than it is in the waking state.

Every dream which you have is totally necessary for your evolution because the inner mind, the deeper layers of the mind, know what has to be released and there is no interference from the conscious mind.

Have more nightmares . . . release those fears! A bad dream is more helpful than a good dream. The bad dream is stirring your innards and throwing off that samskara.

An impression that is very deep does not only remain in the subconscious but it is translated through the conscious mind into daily living.

In deep sleep, man is nearest to Divinity because the conscious mind has been stilled.

The conscious mind could act as a stimulus to bring about certain dreams, and this mechanism releases various impressions in the mind and lightens the burden of the mind. If this did not happen a person could be driven to insanity . . . so this is a release valve which is very necessary.

What keeps the individual apart from the universal are those fine currents of samskaras.

Samskaric elements which are of very fine matter, disintegrate even beyond subatomic particles and merge away in the areas where they are most needed. So, these fine currents now remain for the ultimate mergence between the individual and the universal, between man and God. here a different process takes place. The entire tree exists in the seed, and the seed exists in the tree. These fine currents at their level do not have much as a counterpart to disintegrate to. So these fine currents revert back to the seed state and the individual is finally freed, and you become one with God. That is unity consciousness. That is the unification between man and God.

We are trying to get rid of preconceived ideas, indoctrination, and blind beliefs that we know nothing about, and we

try to aim at the real experiential value of life where the purest of the purest, the spiritual self is experienced in its total innocence.

The individual soul comes from the unpatterned, and because it combines with all the various elements in the universe it becomes patterned. For the soul to find total peace it has to be unpatterned.

Because of past associations and past experiences our reasoning becomes warped.

When we use methods to try to unpattern ourselves, what happens is that in trying to unpattern the mind by the mind, we are repatterning it into a different mold. We are really trying to get away from patterning. The aim is to bypass the patterning of the soul and go deep within, to the basis of pure innocence. That is the purpose of life.

Chapter 13

Karma

The law of cause and effect, or karmic law, is the principle that as you sow, so shall you reap.

Karma forms an integral part of the subtle body and exists in the subtle body in an impression form. So karma, which is action, transforms itself into impressions which we call samskaras. Thus by thought, we produce action, and by action we revert back to thought.

There is no short-cut to get out of karma.

It is only the integrated person that could develop strength. When we have to repay our karma, it becomes much easier when we have this strength.

Karma is controlled by man himself. If your tendencies are to move in a certain direction, you can by your own thinking or by your own right action and devotion, change the tendency.

It is not only bad karma that has brought you into an awkward circumstance, but it could also be good karma that puts you into an awkward circumstance. Why are you in that awkward circumstance? To evolve you more, to bring you to a greater state of happiness in the long run.

Even the most awkward or difficult situations have a message for you. Meditate, and become more integrated so that you can discover and understand this message. If we can just stop being involved in our "little selves" all the time, then a vast panorama will open up.

Many acts can be performed which leave no impression on the mind whatsoever, and when an act leaves no impression on the mind, then that karma is nonbinding. That is what we are after. We want to unbind ourselves from all karmic debts, and it is by unbinding ourselves that we become boundless.

When you reach the stage of mankind (as your first incarnation), you are not karma-free, yet that karma contained within you is non-binding. It is non-binding because you have not yet developed the power of thinking. It is only when the mind starts developing that the activity of karma begins.

All those impressions of millions of years do not need to be re-experienced. And this is the greatest gift that has been given by Divinity to us—the gift of forgetfulness.

We don't choose our children, but our children choose us. We each choose our parents. When we find the right genetic combination, the right level of evolution most compatible to the lessons that we have to learn, those are the parents we choose to be born through. This is why one person is born in happiness and another in unhappiness, or in different circumstances. This is governed by karma.

Karma is a law which operates individually; and as any collective whole is composed of units, there would naturally be collective karma as well.

The way to improve collective karma and to improve society is to improve oneself.

Actions cannot be judged on face value.

Karma Yoga is where you work for the sake of work and the rewards come by themselves. Whenever these rewards come they are accepted for one's needs, for one's necessities of daily life. But when the work is done, it is done in a sense of offering—that everything I do is an offering to Divinity.

There is a very simple way of self-analysis. If a person goes through five seconds of negativity, let the next six seconds be of positivity and you have one second in the credit balance. After that, if ten seconds go in negativity, let eleven seconds go in positivity, the credit balance: two seconds. If we live our lives consciously, with the practice of yama and niyama, then at night we'll have the finest sleep with no insomnia. We will sleep contentedly because in tallying up the day's activities we have so many minutes in the credit balance. Now, if you total it all up, the year has gone well, multiply by another sixty or seventy, or as long as you want to live—then you have evolved. You are then leaving this world a much better place than when you came into it because you are leaving this world a better person. That is the result of self-evaluation and self-study.

Living as householders, we try to do our best. There is nothing wrong in making mistakes. To try and live to the best of our ability is the great thing.

There is no way to short cut or do away with your karma, but meditation helps you to gain the strength to face the fruits of what you have sown, and suffering becomes less.

With the law of karma, we also have the law of Grace operating, but to invoke the law of Grace we have to improve our karma.

If you have done ten wrong deeds, it does not necessarily mean that you will have to pay directly for them, but if you do eleven good deeds you will have one in the credit balance. Karma does not mean that for every action you perform you have to pay. In one sense you have to pay if you do nothing about it, and in another sense, you can

overcome the effects of a particular wrong karma by performing a good karma. As long as you are on the credit side of life, you invoke the law of Grace.

When meditation and proper living are combined, the law of Grace is forever there, and it will come to you through various channels and through various ways, for you will definitely get what you deserve.

In every adversity there is opportunity. Man fails because he only sees the adversity. Because of his fragmented mind he does not recognize the opportunity.

Karma is not only action of the physical body, but also action of the mind, and the mind's action is on a more subtle level, but it is still action. If the mind is regulated and put into a proper channel with the help of meditation, then we automatically draw on Grace. It works in a cycle. The more we draw Grace, the better our actions become, and the more Grace comes. That is how man evolves and finds greater and greater happiness until he achieves totality, self-realization.

When self-realized, a man becomes law unto himself, because he is not touched by any form of karma. When events occur he is unaffected by them because he has developed integration which brings nonattachment. It is attachment that brings suffering. Attachment produces expectations, and when expectations are not fulfilled it produces suffering and that is what we term karma to be.

Karma does not only mean pain, it also means pleasure. Good karma within its range will bring you good results. Bad karma within its same range will bring you bad results. When man has become non-attached, then he has risen above both. He has risen to the level where there is no polarity left and all is oneness, and that is the stage where everything is just accepted. That is the stage when he sees no evil, hears no evil, and speaks no evil, because he is apart from it and yet a part of it. This may sound very paradoxical, but the greatest truths are paradoxical, because a truth is a wholeness.

Truth is that area which lies beyond good and evil. This momentary, transitory, forever-changing way of life loses its importance. It loses its importance, not because it in itself is unimportant, but because of the effect it has on you. That is what is important.

While one is an embodied, unrealized being, karma will always have its ups and down. But we can, with effort, have more ups than downs. When this is true, know that there was a force pushing you and that force is Grace.

If you make up your mind and do not have a selfish motive in any circumstance, the whole circumstance will be altered for you. You are drawing on Grace.

Whenever there is action, be it physical or mental, there would be reaction. That means that where there is a cause, there is an effect. This must be remembered in the context of relative life only. When it comes to the absolute aspect of man, there is no karma. The spirit itself is karma free.

Harmony leads you to nonattachment, where karma becomes non-binding to you. You can be karmaless.

One can free themselves of karmic ties. First use objectification, which leads to nonattachment. Nonattachment leads to happiness, because you are not affected, and when you are not affected, you are not creating a cause. When no cause is created, it could not produce another effect, and, if another effect is not produced, another cause cannot be created again. That is the purpose of life. From stillness we came, and to stillness we return.

We must go beyond the mud of our karmas, for good and bad karmas are both binding.

Use this universal force so that you can go beyond this very small relative law that says whatever you have sown, you shall reap. It is true, but in a very limited form. The human being has the ability to go beyond it, and this is the message for this century and the next centuries to come: Do not feel guilty about the things that you have done, or the things that you have caused to be done, for you can go beyond them all. It can be discarded like a dirty garment.

Chapter 14

Mind

The universe is nothing else but mind. Mind is nothing else but matter, existing in various gradations from the totally subtle to the totally gross.

Our temperaments are such that we are searching and seeking, but oddly enough, we do the seeking and it is Divinity that finds us. This happens because our search is from the mind.

When stillness of the mind is produced then the mind is subjugated. When the ripples of a pond are made still, the reflections of the bottom of the pond become clearer to our view. Stilling the mind is like stilling those ripples to get a proper view of the bottom.

Get to the superconscious level of the mind . . . that is the greatest reflector of being.

The mind is necessary, but it requires refinement to experience the real essence of Divinity.

The mind can only accept a principle when it is in a calm state. It is only when the glass of the mind is clear that the light of Divinity can shine through.

God plus mind makes man. Man minus mind makes God.

The mind has the capacity to reach the entire universe, and the entire universe is contained in our minds. The secret of the whole universe can be found even in an atom. The secret of the whole universe can be found in the universe itself; and its fullest extension is that of the mind.

The more you exercise effort in controlling the mind, or controlling thought, the more will thoughts come. Thoughts are like monkeys in a tree. If you want to quiet the monkeys, it does not help to shake the tree; they will jump even more. If the thoughts are left to themselves, they will settle down by themselves.

Man is a composition of that which is good and that which is not good. But all the time, within the human mind, a sifting takes place, or a churning process, like the spinning of milk to separate the cream. That is how the mind is purified.

The mind is a very cunning instrument. We doubt everything and everyone. The only thing we do not doubt is our mind, and that must be doubted the most, because it is so cunning! It is the mind that leads us astray.

Knowledge can build a steel wall around us so that we think we know, though we don't know. It all remains in the realm of the mind. What the mind thinks that it knows is all within the framework of the mind, and that knowledge can be useless.

Being able to think deeply is a double-edged sword. It can tie us up into more knots or it can cut the knots free.

Many people say, "I think," but they do not think thoughts in their purity. Thoughts are always mixed with some kind of emotion. When emotion is involved in a thought, the quality of the emotion is very important. If our heart does not have the proper amount of purification it will discolor an emotion. When emotion loses its purity it can turn into hate, greed, and covetousness. The only pure emotion is the emotion of love.

A conscience is nothing else but a subtle energy which always wants to be directed for our own good, and for the good of others.

As we unfold, we draw more from the level of the superconscious, pure consciousness, and that force is very powerful. Everything at its subtlest level is infinitely more powerful than anything at a grosser level. If you drop a two-thousand-ton bomb it might create a big hole, perhaps a square mile, but if you split a tiny atom it will destroy a whole country. Anything existing at the subtlest level is infinitely more powerful.

When we draw those energies from the inner Self, the force is so great that the turbulence in the subconscious mind is brought into balance and tranquility, so that the ripples start to subside. What science tries to do is tackle that area of the mind with external means, while we tackle that area of the mind by internal means. When this force starts permeating, awakening the subtler levels of the mind, then all the dross and dirt are dissolved and swept out.

It is the mind that invents the satans and gods. The entire universe is nothing but mind and all problems in life are created by the mind. Tutoring that mind, we learn through meditational practices how we can overcome the mind and go beyond it, and there truth is found.

The mind, being a finite mind, could never know everything. Scientists, for example, have been inquiring into the atom, and as they inquire into the atom they come to various subatomic levels, and even reaching there, they feel that there is still finer matter; and the search will go on and on. The real cause, the essence of matter, will never be found with the mind.

The mind is susceptible to the suggestions put to it, and those suggestions can work in a negative or a positive way. The major part of people's illnesses is imaginary, created by themselves.

The conscious mind is associated invariably with its senses; seeing, touching, smelling, feeling, and hearing. So, when an experience of a subtle nature comes to the conscious level, it is also connected with one of the senses.

People say they think. They only think that they think. They do not really think. The slightest bit of experience in the present triggers off a memory in the past through the law of association.

One of the means the mind uses to project itself into the future is expectation. The expectation of the future is lived now in the present.

Expectation is the root cause of suffering.

The past can be relived in the present, and that is what human beings do. They make themselves miserable by filling their minds with circling thoughts, most of which are of the past.

In the context of the Absolute, the past does not exist and the future does not exist. Only the mind recognizes them.

When you have a headache be thankful, because if it was not manifested outwardly it would still be bottled up inside the mind. The mind, peculiar as it is, can create inner explosions rather than outer explosions—and that is how people end up in asylums.

The fear of facing the future or of turning away from that with which we are so familiar is a sure sign of instability. It is a sure sign of lack of faith and a sure sign of the disbelief in Divinity. What prevents us from wanting to change? What prevents us from moving out of suffering? Inwardly we would like to get away from suffering, but we are tied and bogged down because of how we have been conditioned. Our mind is nothing more than a product of conditioning.

A negative thought is worse than a rabbit—it just breeds and breeds and breeds. It duplicates itself, triplicates itself, quadruplicates itself, and it does it thousands of times throughout the day.

There are religions that teach that we should believe, believe, believe. They are not wrong. It is not wrong for a child in Grade 1 to be given Grade 1 lessons. Although we know the time will come when the Grade 1 child will reach Grade 12, where there are different lessons to be learned, the Grade 1 lessons are a necessary beginning. Belief stems from the mind. That is why scriptures and most religions start us off by saying, "Believe"—believe in something above us which is abstract and cannot be proven by the mind. The creator of belief is the mind.

To reach intuition is to reach a level that is very deep within. At that level, the subtle vibrations existing in all mankind become in tune with all the vibrations around us . . . that tuning-in is intuition.

True intuition is neither intellectual nor emotional, it is beyond both qualities. But the intellect and the emotions play their part—they are the instruments through which intuition is portrayed. We can use the analogy of a flute. The flute with all its holes (for variation) can be regarded as our emotional nature. Intellect is the beautiful breath of air that flows through it.

To fight the mind with the mind will never work because the mind is not perfect. The easiest way is to dive deep within. Through our meditational and spiritual practices we draw on that infinite storehouse of glory and grace and the conflicts in the mind subside, and peace comes about.

With the 10 percent of the mind that we use, we can conceive of only a part of the vast continuum, which extends from the primal atom to the highest development of the intellect, and further, to the total unfoldment of the spiritual value of man. When, with our limited minds, we think of man as a whole, or think of the animal, plant, or mineral kingdoms, we are only getting a glimpse of a very small portion of this vast continuum. Now, as the primal evolutionary force reaches up through the animal kingdom, it being controlled and propelled by itself, there is no impediment put in its path. At the human level, however, is the mind. The greatest impediment towards self-realization is man's mind. But within that very mind are the power of discrimination, and the power which is realized through meditational and spiritual practices. These powers will turn the tables and use that same impediment to realize Divinity.

The subconscious mind is forever turbulent because of the currents created in it by all the impressions it contains. A balancing process must take place. Here the three gunas—tamas, rajas, and sattva—exist in their most powerful form because the subconscious mind is very subtle and has the reach of the entire universe. You have known the entire universe. It is contained in your mind. You have traveled a long way through various forms of existences until you have reached the stage of mankind.

All imbalances are caused by friction and friction is caused by knowledge, not in the true sense, but half-baked, where you know a little of this and a little of that. You put it all together and the mind creates a conflict within itself and deludes itself into thinking that it is not well. Knowledge can be dangerous. When knowledge is improperly digested, it causes indigestion. There is not only physical indigestion, but there is mental indigestion too. That is the cause of all illnesses.

Because it is limited, the mind cannot conceive of reality in its truest form. One has to go beyond the limits of relative reality to know and to experience actuality. That is where experience experiences itself, past is no more, present is not there, and there is no future.

It is the nature of the mind not ever to be satisfied because the mind is forever changing, changing, changing.

Wherever there is change, there is motion. Satisfaction, peace, and realization come in stillness, not in motion.

The mind continues from the body. There is no division.

A dream is a reliving or a living on a subtler level.

If I tell you who you are, you will only appreciate it on the mind level. Any appreciation on the intellectual level is necessarily limited, because the finite mind cannot comprehend the infinite. But when the realization dawns within you, and you can answer to yourself, by yourself, and for yourself the question, "Who am I, and why am I here?" then you become realized. The you operate in the field of knowingness.

Our mind is connected to the entire universe. So many wires are leading from our mind to all the various facets and aspects of life. When a belief is strong enough, we are activating a force that will bring to us the idea that is required and that is compatible with our minds. After that, with a bit of hard work and proper planning, that belief becomes a reality.

God exists because you exist, you exist because God exists. Nothing in this universe can ever be destroyed. Even a single thought you have in your mind cannot be destroyed, for thought itself is a form of subtle matter.

The human being as he is today is a fully aware person. He is, today, a fully self-realized person, for he is a divine person, and Divinity has within itself full realization and full awareness.

It is a fact that peace, understanding, and realization can only come from within you. No external force or power can create them for you. The creation of that peace and self-realization and understanding wells up from within and the reason is this: it is inherent within you. It is your birthright and it is there. Every human being is born with that Divinity within himself.

Through meditational and spiritual practices, the mind using itself as an instrument, can allow itself to be led from its grosser level to its finest relative, which is the superconscious level. When one reaches the superconscious mind, one reaches the cognition that all is One. The conscious mind is limited, extending only to the environment of the little speck of dust which we call Earth. But the superconscious mind has within its framework the entire universe, and that is how the mind can cognize the entire universe.

By cleansing, ridding the mind of all those impressions, good or bad, you are refining the individual self, and that is how you reach the Universal Self.

When even one person thinks a thought, a good thought or a bad thought, it must affect his environment. The more

powerful the thinker, the vaster the range of his thought. That is why an enlightened person who is forever dwelling on the sattvic level can think a thought here and affect someone who is 20,000 miles away. This is how healing works and how questions are answered.

Mental maturity is a prime condition toward self-realization. It does not mean having great powers of intellect. It does not mean you have to become an Einstein. This is not necessary because if Divinity is infused within the mind then that limited intellect also becomes limitless. It is not necessary to express it in verbal means, or in analysis, which is what the intellect does all the time. It is an experiential value for the mind which is fully permeated by the spiritual self, by Divinity.

Chapter 15

Divine Will...Individual Will

Free will is a very strange creature. At the same time, it is the greatest gift given to mankind by Divinity for his own progress. Exercising free will may lead you to greater suffering, but that greater suffering could be more evolutionary for you. You might learn more from that suffering because behind your free will there is a Divine will that guides the destiny of the individual.

You have been given the gift of free will, so do not misuse that gift. You have been given the lamp to light the way home, but do not use the lamp to set the forest afire.

Only we are to blame for misusing our free will. We have the mechanism and the power within us to join free will with Divine will and move with the current of nature, not against it.

The misuse of free will produces friction, and friction is suffering. Yet that very suffering can also lead you to understanding. But, if you have the choice, why not choose the easier path? For each and every one, consciously or unconsciously is bound to return home, even as the prodigal son did. Each and every one is headed back to merge away into that light from which he has come.

You do not need to throw away everything and go into a cave in order to live by Divine will. Have material things, but let it not be for greed, or a need which will engender a greater sense of ego, or greater self-aggrandizement. Do what you can, even in material ambitions, so that others might benefit.

Life can become an offering, an offering to Divinity. What are we here for? We are here to glorify the expression of Divinity, and the expression of Divinity is nothing else but glory. We must use that privilege with the free will that has been given to us.

If you have the ability to recognize tendencies, you will know where something will lead you, and you have the ability to exercise your free will. Free will is the greatest gift that God could have given humanity. When one has that gift of exercising free will, there is choice. The word "choice" is synonymous with free will.

Language is so limited that it could never express what true surrender is. In order to surrender our will to the Divine will or Divinity, we have to understand what we mean by our will and Divine will. Without understanding, how can we surrender? We do not teach people to have blind faith. Have a reasoning faith, a reasonable faith; for only with a rational faith, can you be spurred to that surrender.

When you are capable of sacrificing, you are capable of surrender. Spontaneously, the grace of love dawns upon you.

Within the path of Bhakti Yoga, one can surrender oneself consciously. First, through the thought process until all that, too, is discarded — thought, feeling, and emotions. With all that discarded, you yourself become the Divine will. The separation remains if you do not become the Divine will, and there is the conflict of free will and Divine will.

One may have ambition and yet the ambition should be filled with humility. There is nothing wrong with a desire to have billions of dollars, as long as the heart and mind are working with Divine law. The idea to be kept in mind is, that which is gathered is always offered at the feet of the Lord.

The law of nature is always there to help and support us. Nature is never against man. Man is a product of nature. Having that free will, we sometimes go against nature, and that is where the trouble starts.

Once you recognize and acknowledge the weakness which is a stumbling block to your happiness in life, then the cure has begun. Once you admit the weakness, then you accept yourself. When you accept yourself, you rid yourself of guilt. When you rid yourself of guilt, you say, "There is a force within me that is just waiting to burst out. I have been keeping the doors closed." Then when we try to open the doors, we are amazed at how the light rushes out into our lives and brightens everything. In the torrential rush of that flood of light, your free will does not remain free will anymore; it becomes one with Divine will.

Our will is fickle, but if surrendered to Divine will, by the process of meditation, our every action in life is guided automatically into the right path. Automatically, we become happy; we blossom into a fullness. The flower emanates its full fragrance, undiluted by pollution, and it enjoys and enjoys.

Free will was not created, it is an emanation or a projection of the Divine will. Through the process that this emanation or manifestation has gone through, it has gathered dust and dirt around it; whereby the Divine will has been covered. To work according to the Divine will is to live a natural life; but because of free will, we have made a natural life into an unnatural life.

The body, like a beautiful flute, is just a hollow reed, a piece of wood. We need to develop the attitude that Divinity resides in everything, and that it is not my will, but His will that counts. Then the music that flows through the hollow reed becomes enjoyable, not only to yourself, but to those around you. That is the purpose of life.

Surrendering the free will to Divine will is like throwing a pound of salt into the sea, where it is merged and cannot be retrieved. You allow the sea to function, not the salt.

By sacrificing the sense of individuality, individual life merges into Divine life.

It is the nature of the little wills to join themselves to become one with the great will or Divinity. It is inherent in everyone, because we are subject to the force of evolution. The thing that evolution does is to take you from stillness back to stillness. You come from home and you have to go back home; but the night might be dark, and a lantern might be needed to light your path. You see how one's will can become attuned to Divine will? Not by wishful thinking; but by having a one-pointedness towards the goal. That is how the little will gets joined to the Divine will.

When the rivulet reaches the ocean, what great freedom it feels in the ocean! It is away from the confines of the banks, which restrict its scope of expansion. This is what the joining of the free will to the Divine will is like.

I am not the master of my destiny, I am the destiny.

Love is the essence of our being. It does not have to be created, but merely discovered. Our hearts are filled with love, but we have built walls around our hearts. If we can remove those walls . . . and reach the stage of combining all that the heart can express and all that the mind can cognize, then we will truly have merged our free will with the Divine will and flow with nature rather than against it.

Chapter 16

Inner Mysteries

All spiritual practices are meant to awaken that Christ consciousness within you. It is not something gained from the outside. It is there within you all the time.

The eternal spirit within man is beyond all experience of motion, it just is. It is a question of superimposition. The sun is always there, the clouds may cover it, but it is always there. In meditation we are tapping into this eternal stillness and the quiet part of ourselves.

Yearning has to be within ourselves first, and the power of that seeking will automatically open all the doors.

The basic truth taught by the great Incarnations of the world is: Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven within and all else shall be added unto you. All peace will come to the mind: the body will heal itself by the power drawn from the inner Self, the God that is within; and everything else will be added.

Seeking is the process of fulfillment.

The superconscious mind can only function at its fullest and deepest level when the body and the subconscious and the conscious mind are at rest.

If we regard man to be divine, what are the veils that hold back the awareness of Divinity from the mind level? The veils recognized by the mind are recognized by a veil, because the mind too is a veil. From this whirlpool there is no escape. The only way to find the solution to the mysteries of all existence is to go beyond the mind!

There is a difference between pleasure and joy. Pleasure is momentary, joy is lasting.

Through daily application of spiritual practices and meditation we become more integrated and pain becomes less. Pain is not supplanted with pleasure, but with joy. So here we are slowly going beyond the law of opposites.

How many of us bring the attention to the center, to where it is still? That is the secret of life: to go beyond the polarities. Where there is mind, there are polarities. When we go beyond the mind we go beyond polarities, and center ourselves within ourselves. That is the area of joy and bliss; that is what all human beings are striving for.

By meditation and spiritual practices, what we are doing is going deep down to the superconscious level which is closest to the Manifestor. We use those subtler energies to remodify the thought patterns of the conscious mind. For

the conscious mind is a conditioned mind, and we've got to use a subtler force to be able to repattern or overcome its conditionings.

Happiness and joy are always there in the heart of the human being. All the things we do—rituals, religions, contemplation, and mediation— all are but preparations to reach back home to the Father that is within.

Through our practices, we draw out and rely on that which is in us. We allow that inner light to shine in the dark crevices of the mind and lighten it up. That lamp is forever burning bright, forever there, shining in all its glory, love and grace.

The confusion lies in assuming that I am the doer, when in reality I am not the doer, I am the instrument.

Do not be attached to action, it is only experience.

What happens to most people is that they are tossed around in the sea of life by time and space, not realizing this: "My being tossed around is caused by me." So what do I do to my boat? I build a rudder, and that rudder comes about by proper understanding and meditational and spiritual practices: so that now, even in the movement of time and space that used to toss me around helplessly, I am not the servant of it, for I can be still. That is the secret of life.

The purpose of meditation is to find strength. For in the modification that the soul has to go through, one needs strength to bear the consequences of the changes; and it is not always very pleasant. But change has to be there, sooner or later, and if one gains the inner strength through meditation, then the changes which occur in life are easily borne. One has to bear one's own cross, but it has its own rewards. This is a great truth.

When greater integration takes place within a person, he becomes less dependent on an external source. He becomes independent because the force, the power, and the energy that he is utilizing do not come from the outside, but from within himself.

The light is forever shining. What we are learning is to draw back the curtain so that the light can shine into our daily living.

Replacing a bad habit with a good habit has nothing to do with that which you really are, the divine being that you are.

Through meditation one reaches the core of oneself, the heart—we can call it by any name. This essence is the core of the human personality, of the embodied form in which the spirit dwells. The kingdom of heaven lies within, surrounded by our embodied form.

You imagine you are being deluded by an evil power when you have an evil tendency in you, because of which, you can only see the evil in others. You think, "I am being deluded." But if the tendencies in you are good and pure, your heart will say, "Forget the mind."

As we climb to the pinnacle through our meditations and spiritual practices, we reach the point where we find all to be one, for then our individual mind loses itself in the universal mind, yet retains its individuality because of its embodiment.

Through meditation we start to make a 180-degree turn in our interpretation of life. The same things happen every day, but become more enjoyable. Look at the little things about which we complain every day: the sun is shining—"Oh, it's so hot today!", if it's cold—"Oh, it's so cold today!", if it is raining—"Oh, it will spoil my hairdo!" But when we are established in the silence, we will enjoy the rain, we will enjoy the cold, we will enjoy the sunshine. We enjoy them all because we realize that all this is all necessary.

Seeing is focusing on a particular object; and when you focus on a particular object the mind starts analyzing and you are lost. When you look, in totality,—just looking and not allowing the mind to interfere in looking, then you see the truth.

In just looking you bypass the mind, the conscious and the superconscious, and you just look in innocence. When you do not see with innocence, you see with a certain focusing of a patterned mind.

Communication is in the realm of the mind; communion is in the realm of the heart, the inner Self.

Live the life of Divinity which is total sincerity . . . not that which the mind conjures up, making you think that you are you. Because you are not you: You are God incarnate in human flesh and blood.

Chapter 17

Illusion and Maya

Without reality how can there be illusion? Without illusion how can there be reality? Although there are illusionary factors involved, all this is real. The real illusion is our understanding, and that on which we put the greatest emphasis. Are we putting greater emphasis on the real Self within us, or are we putting the emphasis on the ego self? Our emphasis is on the illusion, not on that which exists.

While we are within the bounds of maya we are limited and we have to accept good and bad, happiness and misery. They are there. They are real for us because we are relative. But, through our meditational practices we go beyond relativity and are able to look at relativity in its proper perspective. And that is how maya ceases. That is how attachment, the mother of maya, ceases to exist for us.

The concept of maya has done the world a lot of harm. It has made people very irresponsible in saying: "Ah! This is so temporary and transient, so why attach any importance to it?" And with that sense of irresponsibility negligence has come about. Instead of getting out of maya, people immerse themselves more deeply in maya, and because of their irresponsibility they create misery.

It is true when the wise man says that life is but a game, but the unwise must not say that. He must take it seriously, even if he can not get out of it alive.

Life can only be regarded as a game if you understand what "game" means and if you understand what "life" means.

When one thinks that life is a game and at the same time panders to the ego then it ceases to be a game.

One of my favorite analogies is—that with a lump of clay, you can make a mouse, and with the clay you can make an elephant. The mouse is real, the elephant is real—but what is actual? The clay.

We know that the senses are forever changing. Today you see something in a certain way and tomorrow you will see the same thing in a different way. The food cooked today tastes nice to you. Tomorrow the same food may not taste so nice. Today you hear a beautiful symphony and enjoy it. Tomorrow that same symphony might not be enjoyable if you have had a quarrel with your wife and are upset. So the senses are forever changing. What is happening is that the changing is perceiving the changing. That which changes is now perceiving the object which is also forever changing. There lies maya.

All forms of analysis being done by the mind must be limited because the mind is limited. That is why we teach

meditation, to go beyond the mind. What happens is that the mind, by recognizing itself more and more and by going beyond itself, brings forth into itself that light of which it is a reflection. (You see how deep this is, it requires a lot of understanding.) The mind brings to itself, by itself, that of which it is a reflection. To merge away from this stage of Divinity means that the reflection simply ceases. The reflection, so to say, reflects itself back into the projector; and there is the secret of appearance and reality. That is all that happens. The torch that shines the light on the wall gathers its light back.

Maya is limited to structure born of concepts.

When we have entered the silence which is our true nature, we have gone nowhere. We have been in silence all the time, and it is this very silence that we experience again. Reaching that silence, all the noise and chaos of the universe becomes nonexistent. When we realize that, we say, "This is a purposeless dream." But not until then: because if we regard this existence to be purposeless, only chaos can come about. Another Hitler can come about, another dozen Hitlers can come about. That would destroy the entire structure of not only this world, but this whole solar system.

Putting limitations on the unlimited is maya.

The ocean and the waves cannot be separated. The ocean and the waves are the same. But because we have attachments created by maya, we differentiate between the ocean and the waves. We stand at the seashore and say, "Oh, look at those big waves! How many say, "Look at this big ocean?"

When we reach the Absolute then all becomes an illusion, but when we are not there then maya is real. It has to be real, or otherwise maya could not exist: for maya too is an existence in the form of maya. An illusion exists as an illusion, for an illusion too, is reality. Illusion is reality, for to know what illusion is you have to find its opposite.

The person who can regard this whole universe as an illusion would be the self-realized person who has become one with his essence, with his essential self.

Maya is and is not, because it is forever changing. Work that one out!

Existence is and is not. It is, in the sense of name and form but the name and form that is perceived by the five senses is not its essence. So it is, in the relative sense. Yet in the absolute sense it is not. This would be the contention of the mayaists. But now to be able to understand name and form they would say that all that which ceases is unreal. (This theory was expounded in particular by Shankaracharya who lived about 1300 years ago). But modern science has proven that even matter is indestructible. So the matter that is contained in this table and this chair must be real: because matter too, is eternal, it never ceases.

If you destroy illusion you will destroy reality as well, for illusion is the opposite of reality. Without reality, unreality cannot exist, for in relative terms everything has to be compared to something. You light an oil lamp, and on the side a shadow is created. That shadow is real. You put out the light and the shadow disappears. But remember in destroying the shadow, you have destroyed the light as well.

Illusion cannot be annihilated without annihilating reality. But an expansion can take place because ego or illusion or thought is but a superimposition upon that which is real. The superimposition is not created by an outside agency. The Manifestor himself creates the manifestation. Both co-exist. With the expansion of our little selves to the universal self we get the idea of what life is really all about, and then we start living. Then it is a lively life. The liveliness is that of knowing reality and yet partaking of all the unrealities in the world and enjoying the unrealities. That is the secret. Not annihilation but expansion.

When we are dreaming, that dream is entirely real. It could be a good dream or a bad dream: while we are dreaming the dream is real. It is only when we come out of the dream into the waking state that we say, "Ah, that was only a dream." Like that, a human being's life, too can be equated with a dream. We create little worlds within ourselves and those worlds are nothing but mind. It can be said that the whole manifestation or the whole universe is the creation of the mind.

Chapter 18

Liberation

In essence the spiritual self of everyone is liberated. The spirit is beyond all bondage, and you are spirit itself.

Man only starts to live when he finds the key to life everlasting; and life everlasting is the spirit within man.

Consciousness, being universal, permeates every cell of our bodies. The significant difference here is that although it permeates every cell in every one of us, in the ordinary person it is lying dormant, while in the realized person it is awakened.

The unfolded person would have humility. With humility comes a total sense of surrender and he becomes very ordinary. He becomes more ordinary than ordinary, and that can be regarded as extra-ordinary! It is all so simple. We need to cultivate only these few virtues to find that unfoldment. They are not cultivated in the sense of a façade or as an outward show, but as a real living example of what surrender is, what humility is, what love is.

Cosmic consciousness comes about when the mind, at its first level, recognizes itself to be a mind, yet is separate from the Absolute, having recognition of the source of energy. With recognition of the source of all light and energy, appreciation begins. Appreciation always bring with it love and devotion for the light and the source. Recognition is cosmic consciousness. Appreciation of the light and the source is God consciousness. You are conscious with the entirety of your mind, whose range is as vast as the universe. With the entire universal mind that is within you, you appreciate the Manifestor, of which the universe is the manifestation.

We will only reach our goal when awareness becomes aware of itself.

When you reach the state of enlightenment then you exist alone, but that aloneness, that oneness, encompasses the entire universe. In the scheme of things, in the oneness you experience, in that aloneness, there is no aloofness because you have become part of the entire universe.

Highly realized people are people that are in communion with Divinity. We only have a handful of such people in this world at the present moment. What they have to do is be able to relate their spiritual selves to the world. They have to take on a certain grossness so they can teach.

The unfolded man can stand apart from the world and all the strife and turmoil that he might have to go through.

Consciously or unconsciously, man is seeking freedom. He wants to be free of all suffering and is attempting to do this within time. What a contradiction! It is a contradiction because real freedom can only be found when we realize

the meaning of timelessness. We have to go beyond time.

Getting back to one's essence means unconditioning. When one ceases to be complex and becomes simple, then he enters the kingdom of heaven. The Bible says that, too. "Be like a child and enter the kingdom of heaven." This is what it means.

During the time of Buddha, in spite of all his great teachings, the world was not enlightened. Krishna could not enlighten the world, neither could Christ or any other spiritual teacher. Yet those who are attracted to a particular spiritual teacher, who have the required love and sincerity for their own personal progress, can move forward for their own self-betterment. In this lifetime few will achieve enlightenment. Yet even those that do not receive enlightenment will feel the benefit of progress made on the path.

If your window is clean and the full light is shining through, you will not notice that there is a glass. The glass exists, but it is so infused and empowered with light that the glass becomes as if non-existent and purposeless. That is the mergence we want.

Self-realization is limited to the finest relative in that you are still the individual self, but limited by the boundaries of the finest relative. Knowing the entirety of the small self and its various ramifications, from the grossest to the subtlest, you become free of them. You can stand apart from them because of the state of equilibrium.

Bondage is a superimposition on liberation. The superimposition comes from what we call mind.

Whatever bondage you assume yourself to be in is your creation.

The highest aspiration a person can have is to reach that area of absolute knowledge (which means knowingness of everything), absolute bliss (which means being joyful), and existence (recognizing that I exist, and I am all existence as far as the universe is concerned).

There are two kinds of people that can feel totally self-satisfied: the Self-realized person and the lazy bum. The Self-realized person has nowhere to go because he has reached it all. He has become so one with all existence that he can't go beyond existence itself. He has encompassed and covered the entire existence within himself and there is nowhere else to go. The lazy bum feels self-satisfied because he is lazy.

A Self-realized man is a person who is beyond the attachment of all the qualities of daily living. But the Self-realized man, still being embodied, has to perform his physical and biological functions. He has to eat, he has to have rest, but his performance has a subtle quality to it, and his very breath is meaningful to the atmosphere of the world.

Bliss is self-existent. As a person meditates with regularity, he goes deeper and deeper and reaches areas of greater and greater bliss until he actually becomes bliss himself. The ego-self has now become totally transparent and all the dirt has been washed away through this simple process.

A medium is not necessarily a Self-realized person. A Self-realized person would not go into mediumship.

A Self-realized man can choose to sit in the Himalayas in samadhi and bide time, so that the momentum created by his past karmas just wears off gradually—like a top. (When we spin a top, after it is spun, it still has a momentum that it has to run off.) When that momentum runs off, he discards the body. Then there is another kind of Self-realized person who identifies himself with every action in the world and in society. He identifies himself with every human being, with every animal, with every creature, with every plant. The heart beat of the plant is his heart beat, and the heart beat of the human being is also his heart beat. He does this for the purpose of teaching. Before taking birth, he has the choice to merge away into Divinity, but he things, "No, let me not merge away, so that the air in this balloon becomes merged away in the universal air. Let me remain an individual and be born. There is a lot of work to be done."

If you are at the point of realization where you have become one with the Divinity within yourself, then by all means discard all the teachers, all the books, discard all the external circumstances—they are not necessary for you.

Let us use bondage as a lever to find freedom. For the man who discovers freedom in bondage, and bondage in freedom—he is the realized soul.

If we keep on throwing more stones into the pond, then the ripples will be continuous. But if we cease throwing stones in the pond, then the momentum of the first stone thrown will dissipate itself, and the pond becomes clearer. That is the path, that is the way to freedom.

You are enlightened. All the meditational and spiritual practices are just to remove the clouds that obscure the sun of enlightenment.

Who wants enlightenment? Have that attitude. Just let me do what I have to do and enlightenment will come on its own.

When we have this feeling of liberation within ourselves, although we are involved in everything, we find the peace that passes all understanding. Understanding comes from the mind; peace comes from the heart, and the heart is so powerful that it overrides all the ripples of the mind and stills the pond. When the pond of the mind is stilled, the light within shines through in its fullest glory. And that is what life is all about.

Chapter 19

Fear

The way to get rid of fear is to be totally involved in everything that one is doing, because fear is never of the present.

To be fearless is to have faith in oneself; to have faith in oneself means to have faith in Divinity, for the human being is divine.

All fear is based on one basic fear: loss of the self. This is because the human being has assumed the idea that, "I am the body, I am the mind, I do this, and I do that."

Where is the place for fear when you have mastered all vibrations? When you reach the quietude of the inner self you become saturated by that power and it has no place in the light.

Fear only comes from reflection and from memory. Projecting the past, we fear the future. "What is going to happen to me?" The present is totally forgotten. When you are in the present you are totally fearless. Only memories give you fear.

To become fearless is an instantaneous process; it is that process whereby one centers oneself in this very moment.

We have to learn how to live with fear. If you can become an observer of the constituents of fear, observing the process of what is happening in the mind to create fear, then you will learn to live with fear; and fear will vanish automatically.

The real "I" can never be affected at all.

Being in conflict has to produce anxiety, which is the blood brother of fear, insecurity and inadequacy.

How to live with fear? There is only one answer to the question: reach the inner quiet mind. The force of the superconscious level of the mind drowns all the smaller, grosser workings of the mind.

Fear is a superimposition on you.

You are living and operating perfectly. It is your mind that is telling you that you are imperfect.

The higher Self within us is non-dependent.

Facing yourself is not always pleasant because the lower levels of the mind are not very pleasant. This is because they are forever in conflict.

Fear must not be controlled or annihilated because these attempts only result in inhibitions and repressions. The more you try to control anything with the conscious mind, the stronger it becomes.

As long as there is a conflict in the mind you are not totally sane because you have not reached totality.

When you hear those stories of being possessed by vibrations or by other people's thoughts, remember it is not those thoughts or vibrations affecting you, but you, who are making yourself totally open and conducive to receiving those vibrations.

The greatest thing that could ever be achieved in this life is not always to mind your step, but to take a leap. The greatest things created in this world—from the most fantastic bridges to the tallest skyscraper—exist because a person was prepared to take a leap!

Death causes no pain whatsoever. What causes pain is the fear of death. Death is painless; fear is painful.

One of our basic fears, which is behind all fears, is the loss of individuality. But the thing that has to be realized is that by losing that individuality and assuming universality you become the master of the universe. You and the Maker become One.

How much joy is missed in life because we do not want to change.

We must say, "I am not standing alone. Hand in hand, relativity walks with Absolute. I am not alone—who or what can cause harm?" When we realize this, and affirm it to ourselves, when we feel it within every bone and every drop of blood in our bodies, then everything becomes an opportunity. You need not create it; it is there. Opportunity is beauty, and we have been gifted with the greatest opportunity of life: being able to live.

Chapter 20

Relationships

Other people do not have to change for us to experience peace of mind.

If a person says an awkward or bad word to you understand that the person's mind is not on the right level. We need never allow it to affect us. When we can view things objectively, then anger disappears; as our hearts expand, love comes. And then naturally, there is no place for anger, and your reaction will be one of compassion.

Once need is removed from a relationship, the underlying factor of pure love shines through.

Attachment can exist in the form of sincere feeling. In this togetherness we are marching on the path of oneness. How can we be one in two separate bodies? It is only when the heart melts away completely. It is only through spiritual practices where the heart is totally open that you merge. When two totally open hearts merge into each other it assumes a beautiful brightness. When you go to see a stage show you have two spotlights on either side of the stage. These two spotlights are not as bright when they shine alone. When the two come together, the light becomes brighter. That is oneness. Unfortunately humanity as it stands today has a long way to go to find that oneness.

If I think anything of another person then I must surely know that those are my thoughts, and what apparently seems to be misery could be great joy. How can we judge the so called misery a person is going through? Is it not what that person has brought upon himself? It could be beneficial to the person so he could learn the kind of lessons that are needed by him.

When the heart has opened, you will become incapable of projecting negativity. You will project only love.

When we react, we are acting from the periphery. But when we respond, we are responding from the center. There lies the difference, for the mind is peripheral; it acts from the circumference, while response comes from the center, and that is where we want to be, in the center. For you are the center of the universe; there is no limitation to you at all.

I do not advise celibacy for a householder.

Celibacy practiced by a householder in the world as we know it, can become very dangerous. It can become repressive, and those inhibitions and repressions can translate themselves psychosomatically.

When we marry there is at first a mutual attraction. One has to enhance this attraction if love is to become enduring.

The reason for the divorces we see is that people are just romantic. They see a beautiful face and are attracted. They think alike, and have similar tastes—both like playing tennis, golf, or the same kind of music. But tastes keep on differing every day—one year you might like to play tennis very much, and another year you might like something else. These tastes are not from the heart. They are from the mind, and the mind, being so fickle, is subject to change. When the mind changes and develops other tastes, then our spouse becomes incompatible. Yet every mind is an individual mind, and when your tastes change it does not mean that your wife's tastes have changed also. This process can change however, if there is surrender, self-sacrifice, and service.

You surrender, not to your beloved, but you surrender yourself to yourself. Yet your beloved feels that you have surrendered to him or her.

It is the lack of surrender that causes incompatibility.

By finding fault, it is not the fault of the other person, it is you. You are at fault: therefore you see a fault. We project ourselves upon others because we cannot handle ourselves by ourselves.

It would be good to see our faults in others and then improve ourselves, but we do not do it.

Love has its various levels, ranging from utter simplicity to a super level. As householders, it is part of our dharma to elevate the initial physical, mental, mundane attraction and lead it gently to a spiritual attraction.

Love has to be worked at over a period of years so that two people slowly begin to understand each other. They begin to understand the faults and frailties of each other, and in understanding them, they accept them. When one accepts the faults and frailties of the other, a beautiful friendship is born. That friendship, that companionship, is one of the constituents of love.

The major cause of the sociological problem of divorce is that most marriages are contracted or approached from a superficial level. Instead of bringing it to a super level, the two people have remained on the superficial level, and anything that is superficial cannot be lasting.

When you find that oneness with your beloved, you will automatically find oneness with Divinity. For your beloved is none other than Divinity itself. In any form, shape or size, Divinity is but total oneness. But we can only talk oneness when we have reached there.

The sexual urge is one of the strongest urges, and it has to be given vent. The experience gained in total surrender between husband and wife can lead you to total surrender to God. The human being has been given the necessary equipment right from the physical level to the highest level of the soul. At every stage we have been given the tools

to attain higher and higher and higher levels.

Devotion should be without need.

When the wife or the husband becomes demanding in getting the attention to feed his or her ego and self-importance, friction begins. To avoid this friction one has to learn surrender. When one learns to surrender completely to one's beloved, then a love is felt and that love is akin to Divinity.

Love is not a thing that is just thrown in your lap; you have to work at it. And this has been proven over and over again. If my marriage fails, I must admit that fact. If we do something constructive in overcoming those weaknesses, then the marriage will not fail, because even the weaknesses in the husband or wife will be accepted in love, with love, for love. Why? To preserve love.

Be free to accept and therein lies your freedom.

As we progress in the path of married life we have a lot of ups and downs. Although two people are very close to each other, understand each other, and inwardly feel, "This is the right person for me," there are ups and downs. These ups and downs are the sense of ego—"I am better than her, she is better than me, I am better than him." The little ego stands in the way. It blocks the way for the natural flow of love or communication from heart to heart.

When we are unjust to another, we are being violent to that person. Being violent to the person, we are stealing the peace of that person. What greater theft can there be than stealing someone's peace?

To be able to really love, you must start knowing yourself. If you cannot know yourself, how can you expect to know the object of your love?

Loving one's husband or wife is service. When service is there, automatically the beautiful quality of devotion develops, and that devotion can lead to worship. We can worship the abstract through the concrete medium of loving those who are closest to us.

Devotion is the expression of love, selfless love. Devotion is the desire to become one with another.

Chapter 21

Divinity

The Impersonal God does not create. It just manifests, and its first manifestation is the subtlest level of the Universal Mind. This is another name for the personal God.

Creation is something done by will. Manifestation is something automatic and spontaneous. Take for example, fire: its nature is to give heat. Fire in this sense manifests heat. We are the nature of God, as heat is the nature of fire.

When we go beyond the limitations of the mind, we find the infinite which is unexplainable but realizable and experienceable.

Some say life is like a train ride. But I say that in your train journey you go nowhere because there is no train, there is no you, and there is nowhere to go.

Everything is just the reflected glory of God in relative existence.

The vehicle of the Absolute is relativity.

Initially we start off with the dualistic attitude that material is separate from spiritual. We think that the world is here and God is there. When the mind comes to realization, we realize that God is not only transcendental but also immanent, and He is in everything that is material.

All of your ills have come about because you do not recognize your true worth, you do not recognize who you are. Because of the mind, you do not want to accept the fact, "I am divine, I am a manifestation of the Divine." The heat can never be separated from the fire. Divinity cannot be separated from Divinity.

There is a living force . . . pure consciousness . . . ever-existing Divinity . . . and it is up to you to activate it.

You have a choice. Act according to your temperament and with sincerity. Because no matter how much knowledge you acquire, you will have to discard it one day to become as innocent as a child to enter the kingdom of God.

You cannot believe in Divinity because all belief comes from the mind, and the mind is too limited to be able to comprehend that vastness—yet we have to start somewhere.

You cannot be taught . . . the knowledge is there. The important thing is the rediscovery and the reawakening of that force. Divinity is there.

You have to go beyond the personal God and reach into the realms of the Impersonal God. When a person believes that there is a God sitting somewhere in heaven, we give him the right to believe that. Because it is only through a concrete conception that we can go beyond into the realms of the abstract, where we find the Impersonal God.

Many say that the ignorant person, having no knowledge, could never find Divinity. This is not true. You can be totally ignorant, and yet be very close to that which resides in you.

Faith is not a quality imparted. Everything spoken on faith is just about faith. Faith has to be developed in oneself, by oneself.

To achieve faith, one-pointedness is required.

Who can conceive of that which is abstract? It is so much easier to conceive of it through the concrete. It is through the concrete that we become one with the abstract.

True awareness necessarily stems from the truth that is within us, and it is a quality of truth to be absolutely unconditioned.

When the mind quiets down in meditation, expectations vanish. We do the seeking, but Divinity finds us.

When you realize truth and experience truth, you realize yourself. When you realize yourself, you realize Divinity.

What is the motive for attachment to a superior being? It is because we want something. And yet we forget all the time that divine energy permeates everything and knows the needs of every creature.

It is not wrong to carry one's ideal within one's heart, in whatever form. Your ideal could be your wife, your husband, your guru, Christ, Krishna, anyone. The recognition must be there however that, "It is not the outward form I carry in my heart, but it is the inner spirit that must and does permeate me and I must not only recognize mentally, but experience and realize."

"Iswarapranidam" is what all religions are about . . . self-surrender to Divinity. We talk and read about "Thy will be done." It is just lip service. As long as we have this "me and mine," then "Thee and Thine" are always forgotten. Self-surrender implies the principle, "Thy will be done." Now, if you cannot surrender to the Impersonal God, then surrender yourself to the immanent personal God. Who is the personal God? You can see Him everywhere: in your child, your husband, your wife, your friend, your neighbor, for Divinity resides in all of them. That is the abstract becoming concrete. If the mind cannot conceive of the abstraction of the Impersonal God, let us conceive of Him as

a personal God. And that is why we believe and love Jesus, Buddha, and other spiritual preceptors. They were the Incarnations of the abstract made concrete to show us the way, the Way which is life.

A person's mind is incapable of perceiving reality, which is divine. Yet God can be experienced, and the experience is so powerful that it permeates your whole life, and you exist as love.

Why be veiled by sorrows . . . our entire theme of life is made of sorrow. The problem is you are identified with the role you are playing. You are involved in the play, forgetting the main principle of life that "I am Divine." You identify with that which you are doing. You are none of that. Identify with what you really are. There lies the secret of joy and the key to life. Why the identification? It is because you are adding importance to the role you are playing, not what you really are.

Chapter 22

Incarnations and the Avatars

Water cannot run up a mountain, it has to flow down a mountain. There are certain laws of nature that constitute this universe, and the universe functions according to those laws of nature. But when an imbalance occurs so that, through unnatural means, you try to pump water up the hill rather than allow it to flow down the hill, then the Avatar manifests himself in human form. For who could touch the minds and hearts of man, but another man—the Son of Man. That is the Avatar.

When the Incarnation comes to right the balance at various points in the universe, he is not ridding the universe of samskaras. Being of light (or sattvic) nature, he infuses, by his very presence and teachings, the sattvic, subtler, purer values of love into the darkness that exists.

A person says, "My religion says no one can be saved except through Jesus Christ." I say, "Yes, that is true. There is no salvation on earth except through Christ." But what do we mean by Christ? I do not talk of the man called Jesus. I talk of that which is called Christ—Christ consciousness. To say that you can only reach Divinity through Christ is very true. There's a matter of terminology here, for Buddha consciousness, Christ consciousness, and Krishna consciousness mean but the same. Different words are used because of different cultures, but basically we are referring to pure consciousness, which has been embodied to teach the world.

Christ consciousness means that consciousness to which man has to aspire, and that is the true meaning of the words, "No man goes to the Father but through me." It means: Reach the stage of consciousness that I have reached, and you become one with the Father.

All the karmic and dharmic values of this world form a certain demand. The magnetism radiated by this planet automatically pulls down someone who is inclined to help—it brings down that personage to the earth to help. That is what is meant by avatars.

There is no difference between Krishna consciousness and Christ consciousness. It is the same consciousness, and everyone can say, "I have that consciousness." But not everyone can say, "I express that consciousness." That is why it is said that Christ lives eternally, Krishna lives eternally, and Buddha lives eternally—because that Divine Consciousness is eternal. From time to time, when the world needs it, that very Consciousness embodies itself to help the world.

When we say the Eternal Wanderer, it would apparently imply that such a being has no peace because he is wandering around. But within his very wandering there is peace itself—that is why an Incarnation is so difficult for the ordinary mind to understand.

When that totality of emanation (known as the Incarnation) has to go to another planet where beings exist in a different form, then he has to embody himself in that form, because it is only the embodied form that can provide the impulse to another who is also embodied.

The Avatar is in a state of equilibrium and forever will remain in the state of equilibrium. He is the Master who controls the three gunas because he has risen above the gunas.

The Buddha or the Christ or Krishna retains a very fine or slight sense of individuality, and yet knows simultaneously the universality of it all. Those great Masters have the choice of merging away into the void or being born again and again in different forms, shapes, and sizes, in different climes and times. They come to teach, and to bring the message home. The void, the Impersonal, is too neutral. That is why there are personal gods to whom love and devotion may be given. When you give love and devotion to the personal God, you are not doing him a favor; he doesn't need it. You are doing it to develop love and devotion within yourself.

These great Incarnations cannot be judged. When Jesus went to the inns and had a glass of wine, it did not mean he was not that Christ Consciousness.

The important thing about the man called Jesus was the spirit of his, called Christ. What we are interested in is not the man Jesus, but the consciousness within him, that Christ Consciousness. It was Jesus the man that cried out, "Father, why hast thou forsaken me?" But Christ never said that, because Christ was one with the Father all the time.

One thing that hurts me very much is that our beloved Jesus is always portrayed with tears running down his cheeks. One thing I can tell you that he was one of the most cheerful men on earth. He said, "Be of good cheer." And Jesus would not preach anything which he did not practice. Remember that. So let's be of good cheer and let's laugh.

Who enjoys himself most in this universe? The Incarnation. For him, everything is play.

A teacher like Christ serves so many purposes. He brings forth into the world that pure consciousness that brings about a balance. He inspires people towards that pure consciousness, and by the shakti that emanates from him, affects and touches the pure consciousness within people around him. He ignites and sets off the spark. And then you have to fan it, so that it can grow into a raging fire of love.

The Incarnation is none else but a Bringer of Light. He is light, born of light, born of the superconscious state. By his choice he can merge away into the Absolute. Yet he chooses to sit on the fence and help humankind.

Jesus only had about five hundred sincere followers. The rest came afterwards when the great men of the church

started organizing.

Jesus the man and Jesus the Christ are different entities, and yet the Christ is embodied in the body of Jesus.

The Incarnation is the embodiment of all the samskaras of the universe, but at its most pure, subtle, sattvic level. That Incarnation emits great power and force in the form of love and of any of the other great virtues that you can imagine.

Chapter 23

Integration

All unhappiness and strife in this world come because people do not function as total human beings. What is lacking is integration—of body, mind, and spirit.

A balanced life, a total life, will be a life where the physical, mental, and the spiritual aspects live in harmony, and a person lives as one unit, as one totality.

A spiritually unfolded person is a more integrated person, in proportion to the degree of unfoldment that has taken place.

The human being is forever escaping from himself because he cannot face reality. Because of imbalance within himself, or fragmentation that exists between his mind, body, and spirit, he tries to find some form of relief in escapism.

Drug-taking leads to fragmentation; meditation leads to integration.

Spiritual growth depends upon your honesty and sincerity, and on your wanting to find a certain inner freedom and yet be part of society.

The big "I" permeates all thoughts, and all actions of the small "I". The degree of permeation of the big "I" depends entirely upon the openness, development, and unfoldment of the small "I." This is the aim and goal and strife of all human beings.

Physical maturity is not a must towards self-realization. Mental maturity—mental balance—is one of the prerequisite conditions to reach self-realization. When the mind becomes more balanced, it definitely affects the body by bringing greater calmness. The mind then experiences the body in its higher values, due to the infusion of the spiritual Self, the divine Self of the human being. Finally the body, mind, and spirit become one in total integration.

For a radio to be tuned in properly to get the broadcast, the radio has to be in good order. The tubes and the cells in the radio have to be working well and in harmony. Now, that harmony, in our terminology, is called integration. So when our "radio" is totally integrated, or working in harmony, it can attune itself to receive that shakti, that force, that power we call Grace, and pass it on.

What the human mind is trying to do is to harmonize his body, his mind, and his spirit so that they can function in

wholeness. When the conflict between the body, mind, and spirit ceases, life assumes a different quality, and that quality produces happiness. The process and purpose of unifying ourselves is to find happiness and joy. That is the inherent nature of a human being. Conflict is produced by that elusive quality called the mind, which contains its own samskaric and karmic values. So what we are really trying to do is to revert to our real Self, where only harmony can exist.

Why put so much emphasis on ESP and mystical powers? The emphasis should be on integration of the mind, body, and spirit. The emphasis should be on reaching the kingdom of heaven within, on drawing from that infinite source. Then our lives become smoother, more harmonious, and fulfilled; filled with love, kindness, compassion, and all the virtues that go with them. That is the aim of life, that is the goal of life—not acquiring all these so-called supernatural powers.

It works two ways—the mind pushes down, and the heart pushes up—and a meeting takes place. When this meeting takes place between the mind and heart, then the two function as a whole, and that is what we call expansion of the mind and expansion of the heart.

In the whole organic system of the human being, going right back to the primal cell, you will find that there are always balancing factors. There are billions of cells in our body, and billions of cells in our mind. At their cellular level, because of the natural laws, they are forever trying to create a balance; the laws of nature are there just to bring together and preserve this balance. The human being's thinking power tears them asunder and creates a separation; and this very separation is the cause of illness.

We do not want total independence, we do not want total dependence. What we want is interdependence of the relative with the Absolute. Through spiritual practices and meditations we form a union with a higher force, with a higher being.

Truth itself is none else than harmony within yourself and all that surrounds you.

When the stage of pure consciousness is reached by a human being, he feels totally integrated within himself. And when he feels totally integrated within himself, he feels that all this is but one, and no separation exists.

To the spiritually unfolded person there are no stumbling blocks: there are only stepping stones. Those things that were stumbling blocks have been turned into stepping stones. Knowing that every experience in life is but a stepping stone to lead us up and ever onward is one of the marks of the unfolding person.

The person who does not really require more money, but wants to double it and triple it, has created within himself a false need, which is a product of a mental aberration. In other words, that person's mind has not found balance, and

is imbalanced.

The worst adversity in life can be turned into an opportunity. The greatest hatreds can be turned into love. That is how we improve ourselves and the environment; that is how we progress through life; that is how greater harmony descends upon us, and life becomes beautiful, goodly, and godly. Do good, be good—it's so simple!

We do not condemn the sinner, we condemn the sin, and in the condemnation of the sin we try to show which is the right path. The right path will lead towards creating a balance, creating that integration which is self-realization; and self-realization is God-realization.

Love is the outcome . . . joy is the outcome . . . faith is the outcome . . . of diving deep within.

If we regard Divinity to be eternal, then the manifestations of Divinity —rajas, tamas, and sattva—are eternal too, being the manifestations of an eternal manifestor. Rajas, tamas, and sattva are the qualities which govern the working of all natural laws. In a person's progression toward self-realization he does not destroy rajas, or tamas; he subdues them so that they do not gain dominance, and allows sattva to dominate in his life.

Chapter 24

The Teacher and the Taught

If you find a guru, at any time, who tells you, "I will show you God," discard him. A guru can guide you on the path, but you have to do the walking yourself. No one else can do it for you.

When there is a true yearning, a strong desire to find the purpose of life, the very strength of that desire will attract you towards that which will show the way.

All knowledge of the universe is contained in you. That wisdom and knowledge is ever there; it is eternal, beginningless and endless.

When a pupil is ready, the master is there; and the master comes in many forms and shapes. The whole purpose of the external guru is to awaken the internal guru. As a guru, I am only a channel, a means. There will come a time when you do not need the external guru because the internal guru will have been awakened.

The greatest thing a guru can do is to activate the spiritual force that is already within you. On a very subtle level he activates that force, so that you feel something. When you feel that something, you start having faith. Not faith in the man, but faith in the teachings and in what he represents. Faith can move mountains.

There shall be many doubters. Let them doubt, for their doubts too will lead them.

If you go mountaineering, the experienced mountaineer goes ahead of you. When you come to a place that is difficult, he extends his hand and pulls you up. Now, you are not worshiping the mountaineer; but you have some trust: "Over this precipice he is holding my hand and pulling me up, and he's not going to let my hand go, to let me fall into the precipice." So, that little trust is needed, until the trust is confirmed in your heart and mind. Then skepticism vanishes, as darkness will vanish when the light is switched on.

Ancient scriptures always advise that spiritual practices must not be taken from books or from people who are unqualified. They must be given by a guru and accepted by a chela. Only a guru can judge how much sensitivity is there and how the sensitivity is increasing—when to give the car more gasoline and when to put on the brakes. That is the job of the guru. He does that easily all the time.

The presence of the Guru is so important—because he not only brings wisdom with him, but he also brings with him a force, in a very tangible form, that helps us along the path to greater and greater joy.

When you climb the stairs you have the railing to hold on to. You might be strong enough to climb the stairs without

the railing, yet the railing is there as a protection to grip on to if your foot slips.

All true teachers live their teachings first, and then teach. Otherwise, their teachings carry no conviction!

Everything in life is a guru; everything in life teaches something.

Every word I speak to you comes from deep experience. I will not speak about anything that I have not experienced myself. If I should speak about anything that I have not experienced myself, then that would defeat the purpose of putting forth the essence of truth.

The duty of a teacher is to impart whatever he has; and it depends entirely on the recipient of the wisdom to take what he can. The teacher comes and goes, giving his teachings, and the more illumined or enlightened the teacher is, the more profound will be the wisdom. The wind blows fresh air; it is up to us to open the windows.

I do my duty; and my mission in life is to give off what I have gained. If I have gained joy, I impart that joy. If I have gained wisdom through the power of Divinity, it is my dharma to impart that wisdom. If I am filled with love, it is my duty to give of that love. So life itself is nothing more than a sharing.

I tell my teachers here and everywhere that the seeds you are sowing are not for you to enjoy. Enjoying the fruits is not your dharma; that is not your ambition; that is not your purpose in life. Serve humanity, plant the seed of love, open up people's hearts so that their ambitions may also be turned upward.

I am concerned with every hair on every meditator's head. It is my responsibility to see to it that they unfold, that they develop the joy that is inherently theirs, and that they appreciate the Divinity which is within them.

To every word that I say to you I would add this: do not accept what is not appropriate to you. Accept that which is appropriate to you now, at this moment. We only accept things according to our understanding. A few years from now, when you come across the same words again, you will find different meanings in them. When I was twenty and read the Gita I understood so much. When I was twenty-five and read the Gita again I found a deeper meaning in those very same words. When I was thirty there was still far greater meaning. Yet the book had not changed—I had changed. As our understanding widens, our appreciation of the Bible, the Gita, and of all scriptures, expands.

To be uncritical does not involve any worship whatsoever. You don't need to worship gurus—no! That is wrong! Why should you worship gurus? But you can be devoted to a guru if you wish, and that devotion is experienced every day; it's a very natural thing. You're devoted to your children; you're devoted to your mother; you're devoted to your father; and you can be devoted to a friend. After all, who is a guru? He is but a friend, who says, "Look, I've been on this path. Do you want to travel this path? Come, take my hand. I will show you. I know the pitfalls,

because I've been across this road." That's all. It's so simple. And where there is that little bit of devotion involved in your taking the hand, trust increases and faith increases.

You will find that the teaching of a true spiritual teacher will always be universal. Any principle we set forth can be verified by every religion. We do not study dogma, or the narrow philosophy of one particular person, but, in all our talks, in all our teachings, we take the essence of truth which is contained within every religion and in every teaching.

The qualification needed to bring down the highest philosophical truths to their simplest form is that the teacher must know what he is talking about.

A real teacher, in the class of Buddha, Christ, and Krishna, feels the pain of your clinging. That is why the scriptures say, "He died for your sins; he suffered for your sins."

Devotion and love are felt within. The true master immediately feels and sees it, and not even a word needs to be spoken.

The guru is a channel and has the ability to pour through himself all the energies that a person requires. But the recipient, too, must have certain qualifications. We cannot ask a teacher to make a child pass high school, if that child has not even passed sixth grade. The student, or the chela, also requires the qualifications. In our field, the spiritual field, the qualifications are sincerity and honesty.

A human being needs the human touch, the human impulse, to obtain maximum benefit. When you are feeling ill, you call a doctor. Yet there is no doctor that can cure you: your body has all the elements within it to cure itself. The doctor can diagnose the source of the illness; and the medicine which he will prescribe to you will be the factor in balancing the forces within you. It will help you in the process of curing yourself. That is all the guru does.

If a guru gives you a practice which is needed by you, specifically tailor-made for you, practice it with sincerity and truthfulness. And if you practice it with sincerity and it does you no good, change the guru!

The teacher shows you the path, but you have to walk it with your own feet. There is no other way. No one else can evolve you—you have to evolve yourself.

One important principle we always forget: first deserve, and then demand.

Charlatans come along and promise all kinds of things. We do not promise anything. Actions speak louder than words, and a person on the spiritual path must be taught to act.

It does not matter if a person is critical of what the teacher says—everyone to his own level of understanding. But one thing is true: once you have embarked on the search for truth, that search does not stop. Once you have started on the spiritual path, you have started . . . and that is what is important.

Many people have the misconception that the chela, or the pupil, accepts the teacher. It is the other way around. It is the Guru who accepts you or tells you there is another path for you. And he will tell you this with love, always.

The unfoldment of the chela is tackled from three aspects. The mind comes to greater awareness; the heart unfolds into greater expansion; and all this is backed up by the impulse which the guru transfers all the time, to quicken the spirit.

To serve the guru, be worthy of the teachings of that guru. That's the best way, nothing else. Be worthy of the guru's teachings, not by constant theorizing, (although it helps to understand things,) but rather through the practical aspects of life.

The human being, because of problems within himself, and because of the lack of integration of mind, body, and spirit, goes through suffering. Then great teachers come along. It is their duty, their dharma, to show how to restore the balance between mind, body, and spirit. When a person understands that, then does he truly understand the meaning of the words, "I am the Way, I am the Truth, I am the Life." How can you deny such a teacher? Can such a teacher be denied, when he shows you the Way? His own life is modeled in the Way for others to follow.

Give a person spiritual wisdom without any motivation or attachment, and that wisdom is perpetuated. It will grow. The seed is planted, and it will carry on for lifetimes and lifetimes.

We don't speak to show our erudition, knowledge, or wisdom. We speak to convey a message: and the message is only totally conveyed if it can penetrate the mind and the heart. Even if the mind does not appreciate the full implication of the message, the heart just feels, "You know—this is true—I just feel it."

Teachers sometimes develop a spiritual pride, which is not good at all—it is devolutionary instead of evolutionary. The greatest thing to be watched for is pride. A person can reach a very high evolutionary spiritual standard, but if he assumes any form of pride, then he is not a spiritual teacher because he, with his pride, will never be able to impart anything to the chela.

We can go on and on describing the various characteristics of the unfolded man, but the main characteristic is that he loves, and loves, and loves, entirely. With that love there is sacrifice, there is surrender, and there is devotion. A true guru is more devoted to his chela than the chela is devoted to the guru—always. That is the mark of an unfolded

man.

The man of unity, the man of bliss consciousness, the man of God, is with you in your suffering, suffers with you, and yet knows that his is part and parcel of the karmic laws which you yourself have created. So, you reap what you sow. But even in the reaping there is joy; and that is what he teaches.

The mystic is concerned with your spiritual being, for through experience, he has found that, "I can draw from deep within myself to regenerate all my mental attitudes and bring joy into my heart and mind, so that my life functions beautifully and joyfully. Now, if I have done it for myself, why can't I impart the basis of it to others, so that they too can share the joy and the bliss that I experience?"

The message of truth will eternally remain the same. But as times change, the message has to be given out in a different manner, so that people can understand, accept, and practice it. When they practice they benefit. When they benefit by unfolding themselves, all joy of the universe is theirs, and that is, as it has always been, the Way.

Times change. Teachings do not change. Eternal truths remain eternal. But they must be portrayed and taught in a way which is appropriate to the times.

Yes, it is true, so many satans come in the name of the Lord. So many of them do. You are deluded by the satan, but it is not the fault of the satan, it is your fault. Why do you get deluded by the satan?

What a beautiful communication can take place at these satsangs, when heart flows to heart and the energies that emanate from us all become one, become merged, where the guru feels that he is the chela, and the chela feels that he is the guru. There is only one heart.

The heart is the core of the human personality, and it is universal. That is why so many benefits are felt in coming together on (meditation) courses, where energies are radiated and concentrated, where so many individual minds and intellects become attuned to one purpose: to know what is really meant by the injunction, "Man, know thyself."

The teacher leads a person from his sense of duality and separateness to the sense of oneness—that the entire universe is one. When the human being starts recognizing the inner Divine force he will start recognizing the Divinity in others. Then only can he practice "love thy neighbor as thyself"—otherwise it is just mental gymnastics.

The unfolded man has to be a humble man. He must know the true value of humility. He can identify himself with a highly evolved being and at the same time identify himself with the merest worm that crawls on the floor. This identification takes place because he has recognized the Divinity existent everywhere: he has known the immanent God in everything around him.

A true teacher becomes more ordinary than ordinary: that is why Jesus became extra-ordinary.

There is no such thing as following a teaching. The ideal is to live the teaching and become the teaching.

Why was there a Buddha? Why was there a Krishna, a Rama, or a Christ? They were teachers . . . and they came to awaken that which is already within.

There is an analogy that tells the difference between belief, faith and knowingness: If you sit in an air-conditioned room, you can believe that there is a fire burning next door, and that the next room is warm. You believe that. But as you approach the next room and feel the heat coming, you start having faith—the fire is warm. When you get into the room and really experience the fire, then you know what fire is! So it all starts with belief; belief leads to faith, and faith to knowingness. Now there is a forerunner to this: and that is called skepticism. I have found that those who are skeptical become the most ardent followers. Not followers of me—I don't want followers!—but followers of truth.

The truth that is spoken, the essence that is studied, will forever remain, for generations to come. That is the whole principle. No worship. No worship, but friendship.

Many profound teachings have been lost. Religion today has been watered down. It is not only the teachings that have been watered down— it is also traditions. Religion today has become 70 percent tradition and 30 percent religion. We follow things traditionally—when we add 70 percent tradition, then 70 percent religion has to be removed to accommodate tradition.

Losing the sense of individuality does not mean you are losing self-identity. That is what mergence is all about. That is what Christ meant when he said, "I and the Father are one": the individuality has merged away in the universality of the entire existence. For this purpose, as human beings, we need teachers and guides.

You see how it all progresses, how it all adds up to something very beautiful. In the end you will say, "I have never been alone. That universal force has been with me all the time." It was there all the time, but we did not realize it.

The duty, the dharma, of the guru is to awaken the inner guru within you; and when that is awakened you will know the outer guru and the inner guru are but the same.

Chapter 25

Practicality

If we do not pursue the things in life for which we have a real need, then we are wasting a very valuable life.

When you are immersed in worldly ambitions, in the mundane, material things of life, I would never advocate that you throw them away. No—keep them, but let the mental attitude take a 180-degree turn, that all of this is possible because of Divinity.

I do not say, "believe." Believe if you must, if you have a devotional temperament. If you have an intellectual temperament, inquire. And if you do not have either an intellectual temperament or a believing temperament, then just live . . . in the sense of, "Do good, be good."

There is no such thing as a lazy person—only a person who is misplaced.

When a person closes himself to the knowledge or the wisdom of the world, he stagnates—which means no progress.

We cannot exist on beliefs . . . how about becoming more practical?

Nature is perfect, it is only man (who is also perfect), who has drawn imperfection upon himself. He has superimposed upon himself this imperfection—and because it is only a superimposition, it can be easily removed.

Austerity, like brahmacharya, is a word so misinterpreted. Austerity doesn't mean that you deprive yourself. If you have a comfortable bed at home, it is not necessary to sleep on the ground. Enjoy life—but enjoy it in the right way. Enjoying life in the right way is austerity.

To do unto others as you would expect to be done unto you, you have to know yourself first.

We are not only the product of ourselves. We are a product of the universe. We are children of light, produced by that light, and everything around us, even the mundane, contains that light.

The greatest curse on the head of mankind is "me and mine." We say, this is mine . . . this is mine . . . this is mine—as if it really was ours. We are just on loan here. We do not even belong to ourselves, we belong to the Almighty.

Everything is forever in activity, there is no such thing as non-activity. If you could find just one cubic millimeter of

space in this universe that is non-active, the entire universe would collapse at that very moment.

We have been born to spread joy. That should be the ambition of life, and that is the spiritual ambition.

All desires are binding. They take you on the wheel of birth and death all the time, over and over and over again. When a desire is refined and becomes desireless, where the desire is not for one's self, but for others, then that desire is sublimated.

By making yourself a better person, you have made the society you live in a better society, because it is the units that compose a society and not the society that composes the units.

There is no East, no West, no North, no South, there is one world, one humanity. The apparent difference lies in different forms of culture where people have different ways of doing things.

All the philosophies in life are of no value whatsoever if they are not made practical. If philosophy is not made practical, it is nothing more than mental gymnastics.

The world around us is governed by our conceptions and our perceptions. The world around us is created by our hopes and fears.

When you are acting a role, as soon as you leave the stage you should forget it because it was only a role. We are playing in life; we are playing, playing, playing . . . it is just a role we have assumed.

Now there is nothing wrong in inquiring, there is nothing wrong in examining the grossest matter, as well as inquiring into the subtlest atom. But the issue is that of use, abuse and misuse. Man has an inquiring ability, a sophisticated thinking mind which can see deeply into things, and can show their causes. He can be very helpful to the world, if he uses his heart as well as his mind. The modern trend is destructive as seen through many inventions that have been misused. But if the heart is expanded, and love infused into the knowledge that the mind has gained, then all these inquiries and their answers can be used for the benefit of all.

If you want acquired knowledge, by all means acquire it, if you require it. And use it in such a way that it is empowered by that depth that is within you.

True wisdom is gained when you discard acquired knowledge.

A person who has developed sensitivity because of spiritual evolution is extremely sensitive to everything that happens, even to a flicker of the eyelid. Seemingly negative events do not affect him adversely, because in all of

those actions there is the hand of Divinity.

Drugs cannot be used as a launching pad because you are not sure of the experience. Drugs naturally will have a degenerating effect. There are no shortcuts to God.

No form of drug can ever give you a true experience of reality.

Through using drugs no one has ever become enlightened. If people could become enlightened through using drugs, I would go and buy a few pounds now and give them to you all. This chemical has a reaction in the brain, numbing the brain. It can stir many samskaras that are deeply implanted in your minds, from many lifetimes, and can have a very devolutionary effect upon you.

When a person habitually is in touch with the quietude within, every action that he performs is a right action, because that very powerful force pushes him onto the right path.

With expansion of awareness, greater light shines through from the superconscious level. That is happiness.

Devotion, worship, and love are purifying factors.

It is so simple to be happy, but it is so difficult to be simple.

Chapter 26

Energy/Prana

Prana could also be called shakti. Shakti means power, and power means force. At the very beginning of creation this force was manifested because it is the nature of the unmanifest to become manifest.

The activating force behind everything is prana. The relationship between prana and the three gunas is that the three gunas would become inert if prana was not there.

In every breath, what do I breathe but Divinity? The Absolute and the relative are inseparable.

When a person reaches the level of primal manifestation he reaches and becomes one with shakti, which is prana, the living force.

If you think He is far apart from you, then what are You? Do not hold the relative apart from the Absolute. Become conscious of that living force—prana.

Prana is all-permeating, prana is omnipresent. That vital force is forever there, was there, and will always be there because the manifestation of Divinity is through this vital force.

When matter becomes very, very fine it can be observed as a form of energy. Energy is the other side of the coin of matter. Matter and energy are the same thing. This being so, we cannot destroy them.

All the energy in the universe is contained within you.

The subtle energy within us is so potent that if we only give it a chance, through meditation, to unfold itself, it will benefit us in every respect. It benefits us in our environment. If we make ourselves better, we exude a certain vibration in the environment, and the environment becomes better, too. If the flower becomes beautiful, naturally it makes the garden beautiful.

There is no such thing as miracles. They are all natural laws, but because you don't understand them you call them miracles.

The individual soul is like a light that requires power, or electricity. The universal soul is the electricity itself and is not dependent on anything else. It is self-luminous.

What happens in siddhis (supernatural powers) is that you are concentrating a force within you to a certain area, in

order to strengthen that area. But when you concentrate thought forces in a particular area you are using forces from another area. It is like a balloon; you put pressure on one end and the other end will swell up. Meanwhile one end is being deprived. So what you are actually doing by these practices is creating an imbalance within yourself.

In any good deed or bad deed the same energy is used—it is a matter of direction. If a person embarks on a destructive course, we say that Satan has possessed him, and if he goes on a constructive course we say that he is goodly and godly. There's no goodly-and-godliness here: he did a certain thing based on his own tendencies and patternings. That energy is a neutral energy. Divine energy is neutral, and can be used by the human being because he has a free will.

No doctor can cure your ailment. The organism which we call the human system is equipped with various factors that forever tend to balance themselves so that good health can come. What the doctor does is give you medicine to expedite restoring the balance.

Magnetic force is the emanation that is radiated by every person from the body, mind and the subconscious mind. It's a continual emanation, and a person can acquire the ability to transmit his personal magnetic force to another person. The danger in this lies in the fact that the magnetic healer, not being a channel, uses his own energies. Now his own energies might be filled with much dirt and dust; he may have an impure mind and impure thoughts. Even if a person has no impure thoughts, his own physical and mental problems are put together and conveyed as a magnetic force. So one has to be very careful in using the services of a spiritual healer or a magnetic healer because the magnetic healer can remove your headache, but it could result later in a toe-ache.

When there is a greater harmony within us we are bringing the three gunas into a greater state of balance, and this is done by prana. We are regressing back into the primal, fine, subtle state which is within us. As it becomes so refined, the entire ego achieves maximum expansion.

Chapter 27

Existence and Death

To live is to be awakened. To live is to be alive to all the forces of nature around us in alertness. Deep alertness is that vast awareness where the entire universe is comprehended.

When a spark flies out from the fire, the spark thinks, "Oh, look at this long existence of mine!" But in a flicker of an eyelid he turns to ashes and falls back into the fire.

Blake said, "Experience eternity in an hour," but he was slightly mistaken. Experience eternity in a moment, here and now! This is the experience and the goal of life that human beings have to strive for, and eventually every one must reach there.

Something cannot come from nothing. There is not a single ounce of energy that can be added to this universe or taken away from it. It is eternally there—that is the meaning of existence.

Everything from the grossest to the subtlest has to emanate a force, like fire emanating heat or a flower emanating fragrance. All these emanations put together form the emanation of the universal mind. All minds are interconnected.

Even in a stone there is life; it is not dead. There is no death. Everything is vibrating with life.

Until you know what life is you are dead.

If you become familiar, through your spiritual and meditational practices, with the subtler layers of the mind, then when you pass over you will be familiar with those regions because you will have experienced them here and now in the physical. When you pass over you will say, "Did I really pass over?—it is all so familiar," and that takes the sting, which is called pain, out of death.

At death the physical body is discarded, but the mental or subtle body carries on, empowered or given energy by the spiritual body. After leaving the physical body, what we have left is the combination of the subtle (mental) body and the spiritual body. Here on earth we function in three aspects—mind, body and spirit. On the other plane, we function with two aspects, mind and spirit, minus the body. To refine itself, the mental body has to go through a process. In this school of life, we go through a process towards greater refinement. In the same way, the mental body too, in that dimension goes through a process of refinement. The process of refinement in that state is not evolutionary. It functions on a horizontal plane, not a vertical plane. There, the main function of the subtle body is to

evaluate what it has done while having a physical body. It evaluates, assesses, and prepares itself to be reborn again on this earth or another planet, so that it can find greater refinement until that mental body becomes transparently clear. When the spiritual Self, the true identity of man and his true eternity, can shine in its fullest glory, then the glass (the mental body) will also become unnecessary. The glass too will melt away in that beautiful divine light that is radiated in all its purity.

When you leave this body and your whole life flashes in front of you, then your journey begins. That is great fun! It is lovely. In the subtle state the mental body, being closer to the spiritual body, experiences greater joy because it is closer to the real all-pervading Self. So death is something never to be feared.

After death and after having a glimpse of the life one has lived, one begins evaluating. The evaluation will always be one hundred percent accurate, because one is so close to the spiritual Self. The job of the subtle body is to rid itself of all its dirt. Therefore the purpose of evaluation is to find how to clean off this dirt, asking, "Which is the best possible way to do it? Which is the best possible planet to go to for the particular lesson that I have to learn? Should I come back to this planet or go to another? What sort of form should I take? Which vehicles would be the best and most compatible to take birth through?" All these evaluations are made by you. There is no Father sitting upon a high chair with half a dozen clerks and books.

In the subtle state of death, you remain static. You function within yourself and within evaluation, but there is no evolution or progression. For any entity to progress he needs all three aspects of himself: physical, mental and spiritual. That is why our bodies are necessary. That is why theology can say, "Your body is the temple of God."

When one leaves this body, the mind or mental body becomes at one with the universal mind, and yet retains its individuality. It becomes so pleasurable. The mental body becomes so at one with the universal mind, that it experiences joy, and you feel that there is nothing else on the other side but you. Being attuned to the universal mind, you have a panoramic view of all that there is; so it is nice to die!

In that state (between lives) you also experience the fruit of an action. You experience the totality of a particular pattern created by a certain set of your actions. Now the human mind is nothing but pattern, upon pattern, upon pattern. Living this life and having gained many experiences, one could complete many cycles in different patterns. When a certain pattern (which of course had its impetus in so many lives before) has been experienced fully in this life, you can, in the subtle state, experience the result of the totality of the various ingredients that went into this pattern. And when you experience that, the pattern is completed.

So a person dies: what happens to him? He sheds his physical body. The human system has three parts: the physical, the subtle (which is the mental) body, and the spiritual body, which empowers it all. When this body is cast off like an old garment, the subtle body carries on. The subtle body is the repository of all the experiences you have gained

until the moment of parting. Until the moment of shedding this body, the subtle body has gained and retained within itself all the experiences, not only of this lifetime, but of all the lives that a person might have lived since the primal atom. So the subtle body goes on, carries forth, with these experiences. These experiences remaining in impression form are called samskaras.

The things I teach are not only useful for this life, but will help you when you die, because the experiences that you can have after death can be conditioned now. Heaven and hell can be created in another realm according to your conception and ideas. Keep on believing that you are going to burn in the fires of hell and you are going to burn. Keep on believing that it is going to be joyful on the other side, and the very mental conditioning that you are undergoing will make it joyful.

Chapter 28

Evolution

As the individualized soul progresses, it has one aim. This is not conscious, but because of its propulsion, its aim is to merge again with its source, the universal self.

Man is the only animal that has the power to expedite his evolution. All the other kingdoms, mineral, plant, and animal, have to flow with the propulsion of nature and within the limitations that were created at the start of the creation of this cycle.

From the primal propulsion everything up to the stage of man proceeds within its own framework of energy, with its own inherent power of propulsion. Nothing expedites it and nothing can retard it. That inherent sense of propulsion creates what we call instinct. It is instinct because it is unlearned, it is something within oneself which is forever guided in the direction of further evolution by this all-pervading intelligence.

No lifetime is ever wasted. We always learn something.

The body is a vehicle for the mind and the mind is the troublemaker that forms the barrier between pure consciousness, or Divinity, and the body itself. The process is to clarify the mind; the mind must achieve. The achievement of purity is what we term evolution.

No one else can evolve anyone else, one has to evolve oneself.

We came to Earth like a school. We have come to learn. Why should we learn? . . . because we want to evolve. Why do we want to evolve? . . . because we want to be away from suffering. We want to reach that state of primal peace from which we have come. But to reach that state of peace we have to go to school. This is the school.

At every turn there is an opportunity to learn and evolve. Because it is inherent within us to evolve, we cannot stop evolution. It is a force that carries us on and on. Even all the trials and tribulations of life are nothing but opportunities. When we view adversities in this light the sting of the so-called adversity disappears, because what makes us suffer is our own minds, nothing else.

Man does not want to adapt himself to truth, but he wants to mold the truth to his needs. That can never be evolutionary.

The primal atom, containing within itself the individual soul, came into its individuality through a vast explosion at the start of the present cycle of the universe. Before the explosion occurred things were in a state of equilibrium.

Within this state of equilibrium were fine currents which were carried over from a previous cycle of the universe. It is these currents that enlivened themselves into a state where the explosion became inevitable. When the explosion occurred, all the various atomic and subatomic particles flew forth. That is where the soul gained its individuality. So, from the Universal Self, which composed the entire universe, sprang little particles of individuality.

Because of creation there also has to be dissolution . . . not destruction, but dissolution. Before the creation of this universe there was silence. The whole purpose of expansion is to reach the silence again, and that is what we mean by evolution. When the universe goes into dissolution, it is called in Sanskrit pralay, a period of quietness. For this period of quietness we could use the analogy of a smooth, quiet ocean. That ocean, or the universe, is not entirely quiet but it has reached the subtlest form of the sattvic level. If you observe the ocean when it is very quiet, with no waves or ripples, there is still a current working in the ocean that is not stilled. So when this universe reaches pralay, or stillness, there are still fine currents to bring that stillness back to activity. And that is how the next cycle begins.

The seed exists in the tree and the entirety of the tree exists in the seed. What happens in between, from the seed to the tree, is called evolution. Everything can exist in the evolved state and it can also exist in an involved state.

The true meaning of "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" is that life is eternal, that life goes on perpetuating itself through dissolution and re-creation. The entire universe, which is a manifestation of the manifestor, is eternal. But because the universe can only operate in cycles, its change is seen only within the cycles, and not in its entirety. The entirety of creation, while forever changing, remains eternal.

Within this universe, this planet earth is not unique. There are many earths that are similar to this earth, with the same kind of people. Therefore, we are not to regard ourselves to be the sole possessors of knowledge. Beyond this stage of evolution, there are still further stages of evolution. This will continue on and on until our present cycle ends; but the ending of this cycle will be the beginning of another cycle. That is why we say that the universe is infinite and eternal. Within the framework of the infinity you have more cycles.

As it proceeds in evolution, the atom multiplies itself. Further combinations occur and these in turn form different kinds of matter. The essence of the primal atom is the same, but its expression is different.

In this evolutionary process, we do not travel a distance. The little atomic particles that compose our system are traveling and in a state of flux. The changing self that forever has to keep on changing travels within the framework of the mind in time and space. But that which is changeless travels nowhere. It is forever present. Meditation teaches us to know of that changeless aspect which is ever-present. This little atom swirls around in its evolutionary space, in silence. The ultimate goal is to re-experience the silence, which you can call by any name you like—Divinity, God, Godhead. Then reaching the ultimate goal of silence, you will realize this whole universe is but a dream.

When a human being takes the first incarnation, bringing with him the memory of all previous material existences, certain tendencies are formed. Even animals don't have the same experiences. Take the example of a cat. Two cats don't have the same experiences and neither do two dogs. They go through different kinds of experiences. One cat could be an alley cat (that has to scrounge for a living), while another cat could be worshipped and given the best chair in the house! Animals, too, go through different kinds of experiences. The impressions of those experiences are contained within the mind of a human being when he takes his first incarnation.

The first incarnation is composed mostly of awareness of the physical self. It is aware that it needs food, water, and to perform other biological functions. These needs in turn create further needs, and this is how greater and greater bondage occurs. Today he hunts a deer and he gets a small one, but he will want to have a bigger deer the next day. Since all these impressions start forming and forming, do not think that in the first incarnation you one is karma free.

Even the most primitive man had some bit of thinking ability. Even at the first incarnation into the human species there was the tendency to develop further, and the evolutionary force was pushing to a more expanded consciousness. This force will forever keep pushing until one becomes aware of total consciousness. Many lifetimes will pass, until that pure, total consciousness is attained.

Once having reached humankind it is not possible to be reincarnated below it. This is a fallacious idea that is found in some Eastern philosophies. They say if you live a bad life then you will get reincarnated as a dog or a cat, or a mouse or a cockroach! This is not true; evolution is forever progressive.

A human being can never be reborn into a lower kingdom. Once one has reached the human stage, he will always be human, but in the range of humanity one can fluctuate up and down. This movement is determined by the actions we do and by the thoughts we think. These things influence, guide, and condition us to experience higher and higher levels of humanity.

We can only evolve ourselves. Nobody can do it for us. Other guides can help; they can kindle the spark, and fan it until the flame becomes so strong that it does not need the wind anymore. It finds its own impetus to burn.

"Good" is when your every action is life-supporting and spontaneous, in accordance with nature. Many acts might not seem supportive at their surface value, yet those may be the very actions required to put you further on the path of evolution and bring about greater harmony.

Why do you want to know about your past life? How is it going to help you in this life? Someone might say that, "Oh, by knowing of the mistakes of the past life, I will avoid making them again." That is not the way. Where the spiritual Self is concerned, you do not analyze darkness, you switch on the light. Then mistakes vanish, darkness vanishes, light is there.

If a person reaches the highest limits of his existence on this earth yet has not become self-realized, he will live on another planet which has a population of beings higher than us. But having the discriminative faculty here, we can transcend all those existences and reach the source. We have that ability within us. If we want to progress in the force of evolution that is carrying us along, we can reach other existences on a far finer level, a level where we could sit in silence and my thoughts would be conveyed to you without uttering a word.

When a person reaches the highest level of evolution on this planet, then he has to be reincarnated on another planet. On that planet he would start off as a primitive man in comparison with the others that are more evolved. So the procedure goes on until one reaches the finest level of the mind. By reaching the finest level of the mind the entire mind becomes subdued. What remains? The spirit remains, for the spirit is eternal.

Everyone contains three elements: animal, human and God. By right thinking and right action, we progress towards a higher level of humanhood reaching into Godhood. That is why we have some living gods on earth, man-gods. This level of life is a possibility for everyone.

The basis of man is the spiritual self and that spirit, or Divinity, is forever perfect and pure. That Divine spirit does not require evolution. That divine spirit does not need to be reincarnated.

There will never be an Age of Enlightenment on this planet Earth. There will never ever be a time when every human being living on this planet will be an enlightened being. In this entire evolutionary process we are just a small section in a vast continuum. In this little section that contains four billion people, we will find some transcending the boundaries of the section and some that are entering the field in their first human incarnation. So, evolution-wise, the whole world can never be in an enlightened state. As a certain section becomes enlightened, or reaches a higher state of evolution, there are other kingdoms below ours that are entering, continually feeding into the evolutionary process.

When we talk of an Age of Enlightenment we think in terms of the whole world being enlightened. That could never happen. The greatest masters that came down to Earth as the Incarnation of Divinity itself could not achieve this, though they did help achieve greater happiness for the world.

The mother is the controller of tomorrow's destiny—not only of her child, but of the world. The woman is the controller of the destiny of mankind. As she becomes a better person she produces better children, who produce a better world.

That which seems nothing to you is everything. Because in that nothingness there is that power that has made a seed and this seed has the power to grow into a big tree. That nothingness is propelled by itself to become everything,

because everything was there in nothing all the time.

Chapter 29

Oneness

Because these flowers are tangible we call them material. We call the vase material because it is tangible and perceptible by the five senses. We can see it, touch it, hear it, and smell it. But beyond the value of the five senses that make these objects material, there is a binding force which keeps all those molecular structures together in a wholeness. If that quality of "keeping together," that binding force, was not there, then all this would disintegrate. The binding force, although imperceptible and intangible, is the main factor behind all forms of materiality. When we learn to recognize that behind all forms of materiality there is a binding force of spirituality, then we will know there is no difference between materialism and spirituality. What you call material, I call spiritual.

A man that separates materiality from spirituality can become deluded. Really speaking there is no separateness between materiality and spirituality. There is just the attitude and our understanding of what materiality is.

The purpose of life is to find oneness. In finding oneness the fragmented mind achieves a unity which can only produce happiness. When a person's mind is fragmented, losing all one-pointedness of purpose, then life becomes purposeless. When life is purposeless what do you do? You just float through life. You do not live, you just exist. Everything exists but existence must be enlivened. So we put life into existence, and thereby we are proceeding on the path towards wholeness.

We must go beyond the laws of opposites, or duality . . . pleasure and pain, sweet and bitter. When we start going beyond those laws of opposites we find the aim and need of all existence, the point where everything just becomes one. When that oneness is there who can hate whom? How can I hate you when you are me? This is a brief glimpse of the purpose of life.

That is how it all starts and that is how it all ends . . . from Divine nothingness. But that nothingness is the everything of all existence that is beyond man's mental comprehension. We call it nothing because we do not understand it, yet it is everything. It is the very life force of every single atom. The human being is fortunate to have all of that within himself, to be able to appreciate it to a certain extent with the mind, and to experience it with the heart.

In stillness we do not only find our individual self, but we find our universal self. For the extent of every person is as vast as the extent of the entire universe. The entire universe is within each and every one. It is only when the individuality merges away in universality that we cross the boundary of time and become boundless and timeless.

There is nothing on earth that can give you happiness: it can only give you temporary pleasure.

Anything which is complete can never be dual. Completeness itself is oneness.

All existence is composed of that oneness and that oneness can be called Divinity. It is only one. All the differences we see are just name and form.

There is no adversity in life. There is only opportunity! That which we regard to be adversity might be the very lesson we need to learn.

The act of observation is dependent on the understanding of the observer, for what you see in the object is a creation of your mind. Do I see it as perfect or imperfect? A man limps down the road with one leg and a crutch. Is that man imperfect because he has lost one leg in the war, trying to protect you? We do not say he is imperfect. We forget his body. We regard him as a total human being. Why can't we do this in every aspect of life?

In mundane and materialistic ambitions, we just need to infuse the spiritual quality and a mundane ambition becomes a spiritual ambition. That is how we reach the kingdom of God which is within.

If a person speaks of "me and mine" and "you and yours" it is because he finds a separation between me and you. And that would be on a very relative level. But if we unfold ourselves spiritually then we handle the matter from a deeper, subtler level and in that subtlety "you" and "me" ceases. It is "us."

Your mind, the individual mind, is interconnected with the universal mind, and the universal mind contains the experience of the entire universe.

If Divinity is omnipresent, to where can it project itself? For Divinity to project itself it must have a place—somewhere to project itself to—and that is why we say that the projector and the projection are one. The unmanifest and the manifest are one, and it is all within the realm of pure consciousness—so it is all pure consciousness.

I am the master of my destiny because I can change my destiny, yet the higher realization comes when destiny and "I" find no separation. I am the destiny. I am that I am.

Chapter 30

Grace

Nothing happens without Grace . . . nothing, nothing, nothing. And having the mind, let us use the mind to invoke that Grace, and not reject the Grace by playing around in the whirlpool of the mind.

We all know that Grace is an abstract quality. Grace is synonymous with God. There is no difference between God and Grace.

To describe Grace, we can use various kinds of analogies. We can only talk about Grace . . . we can never explain it.

What is that co-ordinating factor that gives a plant life and sustains that life with all the elements in their proper proportions? That is Grace.

The whole secret is peace that passeth all understanding. The mind tries to understand, but peace is felt—peace is experienced. That is the purpose of the soul becoming relative. In its relativity, it tries to find where it has come from and where it is going. This is a valid search. For the mind, too, being part of the soul, can only know itself very limitedly by itself; it needs that force, the inner strength. It needs the help of Grace.

With effort and discipline, one can open oneself to the power of Grace. And then life becomes better and better.

Divine Grace is closer to us than we think—it is the very life force within us. Through our meditational practices, we feel the presence of that force in the stillness. We must be sincere and truly earnest on our journey, not just curiosity mongers, or wanting to find ready-made solutions overnight. That presence is not to be gotten from elsewhere, it is there already; and the one who feels this is the unfolded man.

When the mind and heart are opened, it cannot remain empty. It becomes filled with Grace.

Gurushakti, or Grace, is a universal force that is existent everywhere and pervades everything in existence. How do we activate that universal force? There are sound waves floating around in every room, from thousands of broadcasting stations. The only reason that we cannot hear the broadcast is that we do not have a radio. When we have the apparatus, the radio, we can tune it into France, Germany, or anywhere that we would like. Now, the purpose of a true guru is this: he is only the radio, the instrument. The transmitting station is something else. The guru acts as a radio and tunes in to the transmitting force so that you can enjoy the music. The guru is simply an instrument.

The guru is the radio, and the force that is being transmitted is the force that helps bring the integrating effect to the

individual meditator, and that is Gurushakti.

When we focus our attention on any of the personages of the great religions—gurus, real masters, or spiritual teachers—we are unplugging our hearts. In the unplugging of the heart, the universal force that is there enters. A picture of the great master is used only as a focal point. This can bring those forces and Gurushakti into that togetherness where there is a direct flow. So, that picture acts as a lever.

Sometimes a problem is too difficult to solve. The problem is like a big boulder that cannot be pushed. Using the law of leverage, even the largest boulder can be pushed away if you have a rod that is long enough. Focusing on the object of your devotion or a chosen ideal acts as the lever, or as the switch on the radio. This is normally started with a mental conception, which lies deep within oneself. It touches the inner core of our being and we feel better immediately. With this conception comes a recognition that, "I am not alone." We realize that we have this body and mind, and are not strong enough to tackle the problem at hand, but "I am not alone, there is someone with me; and because of that double strength, I can tackle the problem." It is the old story of the bundle of sticks—when the stick is alone, you can break it; but if you put a few sticks together and tie them in a bundle, that is hard to break. This is how we prevent ourselves from breaking, with the realization: "I am not alone. There is a greater force, a universal force, that is directed to me through the channel of my guru or chosen ideal, whom I love so much.

To find that subjective love that is swirling within you, you need an object of love. You need to objectify; and through this process of objectifying, you awaken the subjectivity within yourself. By taking your attention to the object, you are automatically awakening the subject. When the subject and the object meet at an advanced level, then the two merge away. That is self-integration . . . self-realization . . . God-realization.

From the very beginning of the Guru-chela relationship, a seed is planted for the tree to grow. The strength of our work lies in Gurushakti, the universal force that flows automatically. The Guru is a channel to those that are initiated.

We come to realize that we are functioning from that source which is forever unfolded. Through our meditational practices and the power of Gurushakti, or Grace, we are pushing forth automatically. This is because we have opened the door—we have knocked and the door has opened. Because of that, Grace is permeating every action of ours, bringing joy to every action. And everything that seemed so full of effort becomes effortless.

The mission that we have on hand is to open people's hearts and minds to divine Grace. By opening up people's hearts and minds to divine Grace, two things happen: (1) When the heart opens, we start loving; (2) when the mind opens up, awareness expands, and then we can look at an object in its completeness.

I try to inspire humanity to realize and to reach within themselves to find the joy that some of us have found. That is

the mission and purpose of life—where life is not lived for oneself only, but to share with the world. One benefits most from sharing. You can only share if you have something—and in that sharing, an expansion takes place. The heart and mind expand in greater awareness, and everything around us assumes a form that we would never have dreamt of before. Everything becomes divine and beautiful. In this beauty, we melt away into another world or dimension. We then bring the power and the force of that dimension back with us into this dimension.

There is no question of any kind of worship. There is only One that you should worship, and that is God. In the guru-chela relationship there is devotion, an expression of love between chela and guru. It's a mutual exchange and interaction. Devotion works both ways. As a matter of fact, I am more devoted to you than you are to me.

What I have been doing up to now is telling you about Gurushakti; but if you ask me what Gurushakti is, I cannot explain it. It is beyond the mind, beyond all words. The only way to know of its existence is to experience it, and that is why we do feel some of its benefits. The only way to feel the benefits is to open ourselves to it. If you want fresh air to get into the room, you have to open a window. If you open it a little, a little air will come in; and if you open the window completely, all the air will come in. Those are the mechanics for receiving the power of Grace. And the power of Grace is always there.

Glossary

Absolute: Divinity having no name or form, attributeless. The oasis of phenomenal existence.

Asana: Posture in the system of Hatha Yoga.

Avatar: Incarnation of God.

Bhagavad-Gita: The well-known book of Hindu scripture (lit., "Song of God") comprising 18 chapters of the Mahabharata.

Bhakti: Love of God; single-minded devotion to one's concept of Divinity.

Bhakti-Yoga: The path of devotion.

Brahma: The creator god, the first person of the Hindu trinity, the other two being Vishnu and Shiva.

Brahmacharya: The first of four stages in Hindu life; the life of a celibate student of religion.

Chakra: (Lit., wheel) Wheel-like vortices of energy which exist in the subtle body.

Chela: Disciple or student of a spiritual teacher.

Cosmic Consciousness: Expanded awareness of the mind encompassing the entire universe and its inherent knowledge.

Dharma: Righteousness, duty; the inner constitution of a thing which governs its growth.

Gita: The same as the Bhagavad-Gita.

Grace: The quality of Divinity which empowers everything and every function in the universe; e.g., milk is provided in the mother's breast even before the baby is born.

Gunas: The three forces or substances which constitute the material cause of the universe of mind and matter; usually translated as "qualities known as rajas, tamas and sattva." Rajas expressing itself as activity or restlessness, tamas as inertia, and sattva as balance and tranquility.

Guru: Spiritual teacher (lit.,—"He that leads one from darkness to light").

Hatha Yoga: A school of yoga that aims chiefly at physical health and well being.

Incarnation: The embodiment of the Divine force or deity in an earthly body or form, e.g., Jesus Christ, Buddha, Krishna.

Ishta: The chosen Ideal, Spiritual Ideal, or the form of Divinity chosen by the devotee for purposes of personal worship.

Jivatma: The embodied soul, the soul, the universal self transformed into an individual self. An individual being—the Self in association with the mind, body, and the senses.

Karma: Action in general, duty; ritualistic worship; the effects of action performed, the resulting effect. (Lit. union with God through action). Karma Yoga is the path by which the aspirant seeks to realize God through work without attachment; also the ritualistic worship prescribed in the scriptures for realizing God.

Mantra: A sound used in meditation as a focal point; a sacred word by which a spiritual teacher initiates his disciple.

Maya: A term in Vedanta philosophy denoting ignorance obscuring the vision of reality, cosmic illusion in which the One appears as many, the Absolute as the relative. It is also used to denote attachment.

Niyama: Regular habits of outward and inward purity, contentment, austerity, self-study and surrender to God.

Oneness: The lack of separation between God and man.

Prana: The vital breath which sustains life in man; the Universal energy which sustains every form of life.

Rajas: The principle of activity or restlessness. (see Gunas)

Raja Yoga: The yoga of meditation based on Patanjali's Sutras. The Royal Path to illumination.

Relative: Life as we see it from this earthly plane of existence, i.e., the physical world. Forms which are eternally changing.

Shakti: Divine power; generally the creative power of Brahman often expressed in the form of the Mother of the Universe.

Samadhi: Ecstasy, one-pointed concentration of the mind in meditation where one achieves communion with God.

Samskara: The impression created in the mind from an event, or experience from the past. Tendency inherited from this life or previous lives.

Satsang: A gathering of students with their teacher for the purpose of learning and expanding awareness.

Sattva The principle of righteousness, purity or balance in nature. (See Gunas)

Sattvic: Pertaining to, or possessing the quality of sattva.

Subtle Body: One of the three bodies contained in man, or seats of the soul. At death the subtle body accompanies the soul; during the dream state the soul identifies itself with the subtle body.

Tamas: The principle of inertia or dullness. (See Gunas)

Vedas: The oldest scriptures of the Hindus.

Yama: Practice of the moral virtues; harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, self-restraint and freedom from greed.

Yoga: Union of the individualized soul and the universal Soul; also the method by which one realizes this union.

Yogi: One who practices yoga.

The International Emblem

The International Emblem expresses the universality and spiritual purpose of the teachings. Its nine disks represent some of the world's major religions. Starting at the top, and proceeding clockwise, they are as follows: The Vedic tradition, represented by the Aum symbol; Judaism, represented by the menorah; Zoroastrianism, represented by a brazier bearing fire; Confucianism, represented by two tablets of philosophical teachings; Islam, represented by the star and crescent moon. The spiral, or Eternal Circle, represents a symbolic location for all individuals with self-styled belief systems, agnostic, or atheist positions. Taoism is represented by the yin and yang, Buddhism by the eight-fold wheel of life, and, finally, Christianity is represented by the cross. The nine disks rest on five golden cords, symbolizing a musical staff with its five lines and four spaces. This suggests the idea that all religions and spiritual paths exist in harmony and are various avenues to the same goal. Gururaj, who designed this emblem, has often said that each person is his own individual path to Divinity. The religious traditions are recognized as man-made systems, forms of inspired belief, resting on concentric circles which radiate out from and seek to return their participants back toward the one formless light at the center. The flame in the center represents a formless reality which has been given many names: the inner light, the light of divinity, the divine truth, the source, the light within each of us—the goal to which all men and women aspire. The basic idea and feeling portrayed by this emblem is that all paths exist in harmony and are different ways leading to the same goal of Self-realization or God-realization. The member Societies of the Gururaj Ananda Foundation are spiritually- oriented, non-sectarian organizations made up of individuals from the world's various religions and persons who simply seek spiritual growth.

Additional books from the talks and teachings of Gururaj Ananda Yogi:

The Path of Unfoldment, An Introduction to the Teachings of Gururaj Ananda Yogi, by Savita Taylor

From Darkness to Light, Selected Talks of Gururaj Ananda Yogi, edited by Vidya Anderson and Roopa Morosani