



# Talks on the Gita



by

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## Talk 1

Let us start with a glimpse of the background story of the Bhagavad Gita. Essentially this story is eternal drama. Probably it is taking place right here and now. Those who believe in its historical truth, believe this actually took place about 5000 years ago. Your belief or disbelief is irrelevant. What is relevant is how it is related to you, to your life.

The story begins with two brothers, the elder had a hundred children and the younger had five children. It is said that the hundred were vicious and the five were tolerably good. This is about the best ratio of good to evil we can expect to find this world. Naturally, when you find a bunch of people with different ideology and opinions living together, there is conflict. You and I argue. If both of us are good, then we agree to disagree and walk out. If I am quick tempered, I roll up my sleeves and the argument I cannot win by brain I will try to win by brawn. That, in essence, is the story. The five good brothers were devotees of the incarnate God-head called Krishna. The conflict continues to build up until it reached a climax which resulted in the good brothers being banished from their kingdom; all that they had was confiscated. The wicked brothers were ruling without the least mercy. So, the good brothers approached Krishna and asked, 'What must we do now?' Krishna told them, 'Fight'. That is the key, Krishna, God Incarnate, ordered them to fight.

On the eve of the war, both these parties went canvassing for supporters. It is said that, at one stage, messengers from both parties went to Krishna and asked for his help. Krishna remained impartial saying that he would try to help both of them. He agreed that his army would help one side, while he himself would be the chariot driver on the other side. Arjuna chose to have Krishna on his side, feeling that so long as Krishna was with him, victory was certain. Jesus Christ expressed exactly the same thought in His sermon on the mount 'Seek ye first God, His Righteousness.' If you have these on your side, the battle is won. This is beautifully illustrated in the battle of the Mahabharata, where some sought God and Righteousness, so assuring success.

If you read the whole story of which the Bhagavad Gita is a small part, you will appreciate in how many ways Krishna saved his devotees. When war was declared, the two armies were lined up on the battlefield. It is said that, in those days, there was a regular battlefield. Nowadays, anything is a battlefield - combatant and non-combatant - we do not make any distinction at all. The fact that Krishna, God Incarnate, was prepared to become the chariot driver of Arjuna, teaches us the dignity of labour. It is said that Krishna knew that he was God descended amongst men throughout every moment of his life on earth.

Arjuna asked his charioteer to place the chariot right in the middle of the two armies. 'Let me have a look at my enemies.' This is an extraordinary situation and an extraordinary teaching. Here is a fantastic message. All of us are pestered by problems in our life, but we do not sit down and ask ourselves if we are ready to

face them. 'Am I ready to look at these problems myself? Can I place myself right in the middle of the problem without trying to skirt round it? Can I look my enemies squarely in the face without flinching? Can I come to know them as they are - without trying to condemn them? We are talking about the inner enemies now. Is it possible for me to come face to face with the problem? Will it thus dissolve? You are anticipating something.

Krishna drove the chariot right between the two armies and said, 'Look at them - all these people you have got to kill'. Nothing here is new to you. Yet, when faced with the reality of a problem, your knees buckle when you are facing real guns, real problems. It is not so easy. Why is it so? Why is it that in my own imagination, in what I call my own meditation, I can solve all problems, yet when I am faced with the reality itself - that seems to be different. I know what the President or what the Prime Minister must do. But when I am faced with an insignificant problem, I quake. When 'your' head aches, I say, 'Forget it', and declare, 'I am the immortal Self'. 'Identify yourself with your Immortal, Eternal Self'. When 'my' head aches, that is another story. Isn't that true? Why is it so?

I think that it is a most important point to remember - to come face to face with Reality, not with imaginary friends, nor imaginary enemies, but real ones. To be in a situation, to be vulnerable and open - completely open. What happens then?

Arjuna looked at the people that he had considered to be his enemies and realised, 'No, they are not my enemies - they are my own people.' How often this happens to us. We think that prejudice is dangerous. We think that mental conditioning is probably the biggest problem. We think that desires and cravings are great problem-makers. Yet, in real life, we suddenly come up with some desires which we justify by saying, 'Oh, no, these are my friends, these are alright,' we come across some cravings, 'Oh, no, these are alright'. We come across some religious, social, communal, racial, national prejudices, 'No, these are friends you now. They are not enemies. Enemies are something else.'

When I come face to face with them, and identify myself with them, I do not want to get rid of them anymore because they are all born of my own ego. They are all born of the identification of myself with that desire, and therefore I do not want to get rid of any of them. I only want to get rid of the problem which they create. But that is not possible.

Arjuna collapses and says, 'I do not want to fight', just as most of us do. We enter into the spiritual path, the spiritual battlefield, with great vigour and many resolutions. Often we make a resolution today which we break next morning. I resolve earnestly, 'I am going to destroy all inner enemies'. It is really quite simple, because all these inner enemies are shadows - but then, when I face them, I see them in a different light. The shadows appear to be terribly important - they are mine. 'Oh, my cigarette'. How long have we kept company with each other, how many sleepless nights you have spent with me, how often you have consoled me. Are you not my great friend. Can I give you up now? No. When I become

nervous, irritable, you helped me. I will give up everything else, but not you.' This is the type of argument that we use when we are faced with the problem-makers. Not with the problems themselves, but with these contributory causes that create the climate for this problem.

When Arjuna collapses, Krishna gently chides him. Then Arjuna did something fantastic. He approached Krishna humbly with the admission of his complete dependence on His teaching. Falling at the feet of Krishna, he said, 'I am your disciple, my mind is confused. Please teach me.'

This attitude is vital to any disciple. The attitude of receptivity. This attitude seems to me essential in any meaningful communication. Arjuna does not say, 'You are my Guru.' It is good to remember that he only says, 'I am your disciple'. There is a big difference. Have you ever been taken as a Guru? It is my very humble prayer to God that you may never be put to that difficulty. When people say, 'You are my Guru', they mean, 'You are my Guru so long as you obey me'. Arjuna does not say that. He says, 'I am your disciple'. The Guru can be anyone, provided I am a true disciple.

The question is often asked: Can I not attain Self-realisation without a Guru? Some of you may have to face this question. The answer is extremely simple. Whom are you asking this question? Why are you asking this question? You want an answer, otherwise you would not ask me. That shows that you already regard me as your Guru. When you ask enlightenment from somebody, that person is your Guru. Even if he says, 'No, a Guru is not necessary', it means that you received enlightenment from him. The person who says, 'No Guru is necessary. I am not your Guru. Find the Truth within yourself,' is in fact your Guru.

There is a great Saint in South India. In his own youth he was terribly fond of a prostitute. He used to live day and night with her. You can imagine what kind of man he must have been, if even the prostitute got fed up with him. One day, it is said, she turned to him in disgust and said, 'Get out of here. If only you had a hundredth as much devotion to God as you have to me, you would have attained God-realisation long ago.' He turned to her and said, 'Namaste. You are my Guru', and went off. He has written a beautiful classic. There the first words were dedicated to her. 'That great prostitute who turned my attention from her to God. I salute her with this composition.'

If I am a disciple, anyone is my Guru. The person to whom I go to ask the first question in my spiritual life is my Guru. The person from whom I receive the first spark of light is my Guru. Arjuna went to Krishna saying,

My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity, my mind is confused as to duty. I ask Thee. Tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee. Gita - II,7

It was a rule in those days that one should not teach unless asked with the right attitude. This is something we have ignored in recent times, and therefore, come

to great grief. Unless you are asked, do not offer any advice. Even when you are asked, wait until the right attitude, the right receptivity is made manifest - then and then only can the communication be meaningful. Otherwise you can go on like a hawker standing at a street-corner. It becomes like peddling - the pedlar is held in contempt by the customer. Do not go on your knees to sell your wares. Spiritual Truth is not something which can be sold as a commodity.

To get back to our story. When Arjuna thus fell at Krishna's feet, literally and metaphorically asking the right question, with the right attitude, in the right spirit, then Krishna taught him what has come to be regarded as Bhagavad Gita, which means, 'The Lord's Song'. I will give you just a glance of the fundamental teaching of the Gita.

War has been waged from time immemorial. It is significant that the teaching was given on the battlefield, because we find ourselves, each one of us, right in the middle of the battlefield of our own life. The pros and cons of each situation of our life is a continuous battle. If it is not, you are not awake. Two kinds of people do not have any problems in their life - the congenital idiot and the enlightened man. All others are in between, awake but not enlightened. The wider awake we are, the greater and the more intense the problem. The butcher has no twinges of conscience. Only when you become more sensitive to life itself, only then do you begin to wonder. Is this right? Is that right? Must I do this or must I do that? Must I do this or must I refrain from doing it?

Most people do not ask these questions. One of the beautiful ways in which this question is avoided, so that the problem does not arise, seemingly, is to look for commandments. No one wants to sit down and work out a problem. One goes to some priest, rabbi, or swami, asking, 'What must I do?' Just like asking for a diet sheet or a prescription.

There is a story about a very fat woman who went to a dietician and said, 'Doctor, I want to lose weight. Will you help, me?' He said, 'Of course Madam,' took her fees and then wrote out: 'Breakfast'- fruit juice. Lunch - a salad. etc.' She had been to other doctors before and when a doctor gives a prescriptions, he normally says, 'These medicines are to be taken before lunch or after dinner.' She asked, 'Are those to be taken before or after a meal?' The doctor said, 'Instead'.

Here is a similar solution given by Krishna: 'Must I do this - or must I avoid this?' 'Neither'. Neither is the right action. Who are you to say, 'Must I not do this?' Who are you to say, 'Must I do this?' The problem is elsewhere - completely different. The problem is not which course of action is right and which is wrong. Must I do this or must I refrain from doing this? Neither. Forget it. Look elsewhere for guidance. This is one thing which we have completely and deliberately ignored. We have sought guiding lines, commandments, yet as soon as they are given, we are going to break them. You can elaborate upon this yourself. We have the 10 commandments in the Bible, 63 commandments somewhere else, the 374 commandments in the Buddhist scriptures. We always

have way of getting out of all these commandments. These commandments are asked for and produced only in order that we can suit our conscience, do what we want to do, and find some justification somewhere.

There is a rule: 'Do not tell lies'. That is true. But then there is an other commandment: 'Do not hurt anyone's feelings. I feel that here in this particular context, I should not hurt her feelings - so I am bluffing. Or I am rude and justify the injury by saying one must not lie ad so I told her what I thought of her. Whatever my conduct, I can always find some support in the scriptures. I never face myself, never face any problem.

The basic problem is that we do not want to look within, we do not want to see for ourselves. But we want these sets of rules to guide us, knowing full well that we are going to violate them all. The problem is elsewhere.

Is doing certain things right action, or refraining from doing it right action? What is right action? How can I decide? How do I determine right action? By the results? That is absurd. The results come after the action. Right when I am faced with a problem, can I make a right decision? How do I make the right decision? How do I know when the decision is made, that the decision is already right? That is the basic problem in life. How do I know at the time I have to make a decision that that decision is right? If you say, 'By the fruits they shall be known', then, by the time the fruits come, it is already too late. That is what happens to most marriages nowadays. By the time the fruits come, you discover you made a mistake - three years ago. You cannot recall past time and rewrite the story of your life. What is gone is gone. I have to make a decision before undertaking the action and that action must be right. How does one do this? Who is to decide?

Forgive the grammar - if 'I' is to decide and 'I' is the 'doer' of the action, 'I' is the 'prosecutor', 'I' is the 'judge', then naturally 'I' justify myself. I am caught in the trap. Is there a way other than egotistic action, other than ego-based action, which is free from ego-centered activity? That is the problem. The problem is not whether I am going to do it, or to refrain from doing it. I can see quite clearly that all problems in life spring from 'I', the ego. 'I' suffer, 'I' enjoy, 'I' succeed, 'I' fail, 'I' enjoy great honour, 'I' subjected to dishonour - the whole of life seems to be 'I' - yet any action that proceeds from this 'I' is bound to lead to some problem sooner or later - whether it is called 'right' action or 'wrong' action by the world around.

The entire teaching of Krishna throughout the Bhagavad Gita is a clear pointer to what could be called non-volitional activity. Is there such a thing? If so, what is it? This we shall discuss in the following sessions.

## Talk 2

As we said yesterday, the problem of what to do does not arise as a problem in the case of the born imbecile, as also in the case of the enlightened person. The idiot has not awakened himself to the problem of life. The enlightened man has already solved it. In , between, most of us are confronted by the problems of life with varying intensity and frequency. The more awake we are, the more intense the problems feel, the more frequently we are baffled. Some of us try to get round this business because it is so painful, so frustrating. Every day I have to find out again and again what should be done. It is so annoying. So many of us try to get round this frustration by asking for a set of rules. What do we do with those sets of rules? Exactly what the fat women did with the recommendation of the nutritionists. I get some do's and don'ts from a priest, or somebody. He says, 'Get up in the morning, do Japa for so long, do some worship, say some prayers, go to church, etc. I do all these things religiously. But the bad habits that have been causing the problems in my life are kept very safely. They are not disturbed. All these prescriptions are added on. Thus, our life becomes a continuous playground of conflict. In the morning, in meditation, I am one thing. When I come out of it, I am another thing.

Take the case of people who spend a lot of money on pets - dogs, cats, horses, donkeys. There is a lady in Australia who left a whole fortune to polar bears. Now, these same people do not feel it is wrong to eat meat. We are full of compassion for the dumb brethren. Yet one of the dumb brethren is winking at us right from our plate. We have not only humanitarian, but 'animalitarian' hearts - yet we quarrel and fight. Animal-loving husbands/wives would even shoot one another, or if the servant did not feed the beloved cat or dog, he will be punished with a couple of bullets. This is what comes out of packaged ethics, neatly tied, like a Christmas parcel.

Even concerning the concept of duty one has to be extremely cautious before swallowing it whole. When some Yogi or a teacher talks of Ahimsa, the first question people ask is, 'What about mosquitoes? Can I kill them?' First stop hitting your wife or your husband. We will talk about mosquitoes later.

If you watch very carefully - and it needs extraordinary vigilance - you will see that when the mind asks for prescriptions of what shall be done or what shall not be done, it is already busy looking for escapes - 'that is all right - this is not all right.' The commandment 'Thou shall not kill' has been translated now, I believe, 'Thou shalt not commit murder.' Half a dozen of us can sit down and discuss what constitutes murder - first degree murder, second degree murder, third degree murder, murder with extenuating circumstances, and so on. It is only an immature mind which demands ready-made rules and regulations to be handed down. That mind is not awake at all. That person is still asleep. He is still an idiot - but he is clever enough to think that he is not.

What we are concerned with in the Gita is the fact of life. In real life - take any

situation you like - the conflict is not between 'right' or 'wrong' - the choice is not between 'right' and 'wrong'. Hitler considered what he did to be quite right and so did millions of people in Germany. Millions of Americans today consider that the war in Vietnam is quite right. If you and I stop judging, you and I will immediately see that the conflict is not between 'right' and 'wrong', but between one interpretation of what is right and another interpretation of what is right. In our life too, if you watch yourself extremely vigilantly and carefully, hardly ever do we do anything knowing it is wrong. 'Why do I do this? There is a reason - I find a justification for it, a rationalisation for it in my own mind. 'It is reasonable.' It may not be according to her, but it is right according to me, according to 'these circumstances.' Therefore the conflict is between one view of what is right and another view of what is right, between one opinion versus another, one set of traditions versus another.

It is a sin for a Catholic priest or a Hindu Swami to marry. It is optional for an Anglican priest to marry or not to marry. I was told it is a sin for a Jewish rabbi and for a Russian orthodox priest not to marry. What does God think? 'If I die, must I take those Swami's robes with me - I am a Hindu Swami so I am alright'. Must I produce my identity card up there? Is right and wrong then dependent on all these circumstances?

Our problem is not between 'right' and 'wrong', but in understanding what is right. Is this right, is that right? Must I do this - Must I refrain from doing this? That is the problem. Therefore it is called Dharma Sankata. It is a problem concerning Dharma - not a problem concerning Dharma versus Adharma. Adharma is something different. Leave it alone. It is a problem concerning two viewpoints of this Dharma - from one point of view, it looks as though this is not right and from the other point of view it looks as if not doing it, it is not right. What must I do? How must one arrive at that decision immediately?

Krishna, right from the heart says, 'Fight.' Must I go about fighting? Then does Krishna sanction violence? Is violence to be tolerated? Or on the other hand, is non-violence an absolute principle? How does one decide this? It is like the story of a silly servant, a cook, who wanted clear instructions. He did not know how to switch off the electric stove, and the milk boiled over. He ran to the office where his boss worked to report to his master. The latter was cross and shouted, 'Do not disturb me for such silly things.' A few days later the milk boiled over again and the table caught fire. The whole house burnt down. The cook took his suitcase and waited outside. When the boss returned an hour later, there was no home to come back to. He asked, 'What happened to the house?' 'It burned down'. 'Why did you not come to tell me?' 'Because you told no not to disturb you in your office. So I did not want to come and disturb you to tell you that your house has been destroyed.'

We are looking for rules: Must I fight? Must I not fight? And then: Why must I not fight? Ah, because you know all these people will be killed. They are all my friends. There is an enigmatic statement in the Gita where Krishna says, 'All these

people are already dead, so whom are you trying to save?' This has been interpreted in a beautiful way by a lot of saintly people who took it to mean: 'I - God - am the Doer of all actions' - which is true. 'By My divine will, I have killed all of them.' It may also have a much simpler meaning: Can I not be a sort of 'God' here, and tell my friends, 'I have pronounced a curse this afternoon - that all the people who are in the hall today will not live in the year 2072.' Does it need a God to say this? No one here will live in 2.123 - unless you hope to do something miraculous and live for 200 years. It is normal. Everyone who is born, is born to die. Perhaps that is all Krishna means. Therefore, do not bring in convenient excuses. If you are worried, face the worries directly. If you grieve, face that grief - do not try to justify it with excuses.

*Thou has grieved for those that should not be grieved for, yet thou speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead. Gita - II,11*

Literally it means: Wise people do not grieve for those who are dead, nor for those who are not yet dead. They are also in the queue. Someone went today, someone is getting ready to go. I have a few more days, he has a few more months, she a few years. We are all in the same queue. It does not mean I shall be callous, indifferent. No, indifference is not sanctioned. That is escaping to the other extreme. It only means this: When you are worried, when you are weak, when you are vacillating, anxious, miserable, face the misery and not the excuse that your mind presents to itself in order to rationalise this misery. I think this is a fantastic teaching. This can apply not only to grief, but to all our emotions, to all our inner motives.

'I am afraid'. Fear is the only truth now. I must face that fear. 'I am afraid because he threatens to kill me.' That is beside the point. This man may threaten to shoot this pillar - the pillar does not shake. Why should I shake? He may put a couple of bullets into the pillar. The pillar does not shake. Why do I shake? I am angry with someone. I am terribly fond of someone. I hate someone, ... I can always find a cause. If you hate me, you can easily find some reason why you should hate me. If you love me in spite of all my defect, you can still find some reason why you should love me even because of those defects.

I had an example of this in South Africa. There was a man who had all the undesirable traits that you and I can imagine. The police, the government, the income tax office, everyone was after him. Yet, a middle aged woman, who was a school mistress, was madly in love with him. The worst of it was that he literally spat on her - but she would do anything for him. He was not even physically attractive. The fact is that she loved him. The reason comes later. In the same way, the fact is: I am angry, or jealous or hateful. The reason comes later. We must avoid suggesting excuses to ourselves. 'I will not do this because ...' Like Arjuna, who argued, 'I will not fight, because it means killing my own kith and kin, they will suffer, their wives and children will suffer.'

Krishna only questions that excuse finding. The moment you find it necessary to rationalise your behaviour, you are admitting guilt? Any actions you find it

necessary within yourself to rationalise, is not quite right. It is of doubtful validity. If you pursue this line of thought, you might see that the truly right action leaves you no choice.

We are all taught, and I think most of us even think, that we have freedom of choice. That again is a half-sleepy state. In man's half-sleepy state he thinks that he has freedom of choice. When he thinks so, the only truth is that he is in a state of confusion. He does not do what is right or wrong. The only thing that he does actually do is to worry. The only action he commits unceasingly is to worry. 'Must I do it. Must I not? Yes? No? Yes? No?' What are you doing? Just scratching your head and worrying yourself - that is the only action that is being correctly performed. And there is procrastination and all this sort of thing.

I hope you will forgive me if I use a rather primitive example to illustrate my point. If you watch yourself very carefully as you actually do something, you might discover that you really had no choice. When you thought you had a choice, you had, in fact, no choice but to worry. When something happens, it happens like when you want to go to the toilet urgently. You just have no choice. If you think you have a choice, it means it is not yet urgent. Is it not so? The man who thinks he has choice is insensitive - he does not see the problem. The problem has not yet become urgent. When it becomes urgent, he will get up and run. He will have no choice whatsoever.

In exactly the same manner in our own life we have really and truly no choice. Please do not jump to another conclusion. This is a funny expression which makes me smile every time I look at it: 'jump to conclusion.' Those jumping from the Empire State building in New York are the people who jump to conclusion. As soon as they jump, it is a conclusion. That is the end of it. Do not 'jump' to the conclusion that what we are talking about is predestination, that everything is written somewhere on the head - therefore we Swamis shave our head every fortnight to see what is written on top there.

Everything may be determined - nothing may be determined. That is not what is being considered here. What is being discussed is simply this - that when the real urgency of the problem is seen, action is spontaneous. When there is no spontaneity in our action, it only shows that we are not sufficiently awake to the problem. We are not looking squarely at the problem.

We are still finding excuses. Finding excuses is literally looking around. 'I am trying to see why I am afraid.' Ah, here is why. I am trying to look around instead of looking within where the fear is, instead of looking within where the worry is. I suppose people would say it is normal, natural. 'Someone is pointing a gun at me - how can I not look at him - how can I look within to detect my fear? If I look at him, I can see why I am afraid.'

Here Krishna comes along with a very beautiful teaching. That was also one of Swami Sivananda's favourites.

He is not born, nor does He ever die. After having been, He again ceases to be. Unborn, eternal, changeless and ancient, he is not killed when the body is killed. Gita - II,20

Do not imagine anything at all. There is a man who points a gun at me - so what is the truth? The truth is: my time is up. That is all. It is quite sensible. It is beautiful. If I am metaphysically inclined, if I have fertile powers of imagination, I can immediately imagine stacks of bananas, salad and some cherries packed together which is this body, and this silly fool is trying to shoot these bananas and cherries. It is funny but that is the truth. That this body is made of food and it is ever changing. I do not know if there is anything that is never changing. Change is never changing. Only change is something unalterable. This body has got to go, whether it goes on what the calendar calls February 29th or September 23th, who cares?

This is the teaching again. When you are worried, do either or both of these two things at the same time. Look at the worry within yourself - face it. do not bring in excuses. If you must face the circumstances, look for the facts, look for the truth - not what appears to be there, but what is truth. Then the worry is dissolved. The rationalisation is dissolved. The motives are dissolved. What remains is what we shall discuss next.

### Talk 3

True action is always spontaneous. There is probably some confusion between spontaneous action and impulsive action because of their similarity. Spontaneous action has got a character of its own. From moment to moment action takes place. It is something interesting if you watch what is happening and follow it carefully step by step. We are conditioned by logic and by tradition, which say, every action has its cause. The cause is thought to follow a previous cause and so it goes on and on, without beginning or end, like the hen and the egg.

We believe that an event takes place as the cumulative result of a lot of factors. This may not be true. Why must I take anything for granted? Does in fact something happen from moment to moment possibly totally independent of what went on before and what is coming later? This might also be the meaning of Krishna's warning, 'Do not relate your present to the past or the future and get muddled. Look at the present, look at each thing as it is. Learn to look at each event, each happening as it is - then you realise that life is a series of moments, and the event or the happening of each moment is totally independent and spontaneous.

If we are able to look at our life without linking it with the past or the future, then it is possible to see that in our life too, each event takes place, just happens. It is my conditioned, ignorant mind that links it with the past and the future - leading to fear, regrets, remorse, and frustrations about the past which has gone, or projecting it into hopes, fears, and anxieties about the future yet to come. Is all this necessary?

To modern men and women this is very easy to explain using the example of the TV screen or movie. In a movie, nothing moves, even the film on the projector is rolling, not moving - on the screen too absolutely nothing moves. Someone lifts a hand, jumps, a plane crashes, a fire rages - but if you know exactly what is happening, you realise that a piece of celluloid rolls from one reel to another. There is a light shining through and that strip of celluloid has completely independent frames. There is no motion whatsoever in these frames. For instance if I raise my hand and someone takes a movie picture, the movie camera only captures, say, twenty independent positions of the hand, and when all these events happen fast in front of us, the mind, which is so conditioned by education, tradition, and past experiences, thinks that there is motion there, while there is in fact no motion. Each frame records a complete and independent scene.

So, in life too there is possibly no continuity of action, each action being a completely separate and independent unit. This is what may be termed 'living in the present'. This again is not to be confused with the doctrine which says: 'live in the present', which often means utilising past experience logically in order to achieve a future goal. It is not really possible because, before you utter the word 'present', it is gone.

What is needed is a complete, total attention to the action that is taking place right now. This is actually what happens throughout the world, throughout our life. I think that I have to plan now what is going to happen next month when I go to Europe. It is possibly true - but what is the truth concerning this? It is that today I am, let us say, worrying about what is going to happen in Europe. The truth concerning the whole thing being that worrying is the only action I am doing now. I am still not in Europe, I am still in Canada. So, there is no sense in imagining that I am there already. But I am doing this - that means: the present action is worrying. In the course of worrying and thinking about it, I may write a few letters in this connection - whatever I do about it, that action alone is true. It may not necessarily follow that this brought about that - something else, something totally unexpected might happen. Why should a change of events, when the unexpected happens, surprise you? Because you relate this to that - the mind relates a present action to a future result and therefore it is shocked, surprised by an unexpected turn of event. Nothing turned - you turned. You stood crooked already and so when time straightened you out, you felt that this is crooked.

There is a marvelous scripture known as the Yoga Vasishta. It says, 'Forget this business called cause and effect'. It may not be true all. No one who is wise is dogmatic. There is a form of logic in Sanskrit called Kakataliya. Those of you who have been to Nassau have seen coconut palms which have heavy fruits. Nature in its supreme wisdom attached that fruit so tightly to the tree that it does not easily get dislodged. If it did, your head would be broken. There is a story of someone sitting near a palm tree and looking at it. A crow flew down to the tree, sat on the fruit which fell. The man said, 'What a mighty crow. It needs a sharp blade to dislodge the coconut. Yet this crow merely sat on it and cut it loose.' What actually happened was that it was about to fall in any case - crow or not or no crow. But right at that time the crow happened to come and sit there. This is what we call coincidental association. This sage, Vasishta, has the courage to say that all things that happen seemingly in a cause and effect relationship in our life may be coincidental.

Do not jump to any conclusions - as we said yesterday. Just keep your minds open. You see, therefore, that it is possible to live a life of pure action or pure acting where you do not exist. Nothing else exists, except the action - the action itself, the happening itself, the event itself. What is the Truth in that? The fruit fell. Who dislodged it, how did it get dislodged? It is of no consequence whatsoever. The fruit fell. The wind blows. The leaves rustle. The sun shines. Water flows down the road. This perhaps is the meaning of Krishna's commandment:

*Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction. Gita - II. 7*

It is difficult to translate, and even so it is very difficult to put into proper words what we are discussing - not only non volitional but non intentional activity: The sun shines - not intending to shine; water flows - not intending to flow at all. You

do not say, 'Water flows', because there is no 'because. Water flows, sun shines. This seems to be vital teaching of the Gita of Krishna: do not imagine that I am fighting this war - and therefore I will not fight - or I will fight. Let it happen. If battle has to happen, let it happen. If no battle has to happen, let that happen too. I do not say you should fight. I do not say you should not fight. Is there not a third alternative? Who are you to say, 'I fight', 'I do not fight', 'I will do this, I will not do this'.

Impulsive action is the action of the ego that is asleep. Or: the action that springs from an ego that is not aware of itself - and yet it is egoistic action. Impulsive action is self-protecting, the operation of a defense mechanism, where you want to defend yourself, consciously or unconsciously. Impulsive action is usually the action of your defense mechanism, unconsciously, and therefore it is terribly foolish. One who is given to impulsive action is full of regrets. His or her life becomes a whole series of endless regret and remorse - 'I should not have done this' - because, at the time it was done, there was unconsciousness. The defense mechanism sprang to activity unconsciously.

Law is something funny. If I did something nasty, insulted someone, he gave me a blow that killed me. If he is tried and it is proved that he did it in pure self-defense, he is let off. It is wrong. In any case, he committed a murder. That he was unaware of the consequences of his action, unaware of the fact that he was killing me is another point. So there are two crimes, not one, certainly not zero. There are two crimes: one, not being aware that it is a crime, and two, committing the crime. In law one is usually absolved. But that does not happen in spiritual life. If you say it was an impulsive action - it came just like that - then it is a double error. The action itself was wrong action and your unconsciousness of the action adds to the mischief. All impulsive actions are foolish actions - actions of ego that is not aware of itself.

Then when you wake up or, are half awake, you begin to calculate: take, for example, an imaginary event. He is mad at me and he throws something at me. What must I do now? If I say, 'God bless you', then all these people will respect me more. Jesus Christ also forgave the man who assailed him. The next thing I know is that a couple of my teeth are gone - if I report it to the police, maybe I will get some insurance. I do not know what benefit is possible here. For a few minutes I weigh the pros and cons. As I am weighing the pros and cons, I am thinking. Thinking is the action that 'takes place' and eventually I decide one way or the other. In this calculated action, who is the actor - who is the doer of the action? Not only the ego; of course the ego - but who is the doer of the action in this calculated activity? A million things. Broadly: likes, dislikes, and fears. When it comes to this calculated activity, if you are keenly watchful of yourself, you will see that your thoughts begin to act or your memory begins to act or your feelings begin to act. 'I liked something and therefore I did this', 'I disliked so and so and so I did this.' 'I1 was afraid of X and therefore I did this'. Therefore the action is not just something which takes place - but it is the ego that acts, that does it. And why does the ego do this? Naturally there is a 'because'. 'Because I like it', or

'because I do not like it', 'because I am afraid,' of, or 'because I hate it'.

Now comes something very important to understand, and it is not easy to understand. The action takes place regardless of Mr I or Swami V. But when the ego links itself with that activity, it experiences what comes after as pain or pleasure. For instance, the coconut palm stands there with all these coconuts hanging around - it is totally unconcerned if the coconuts are hanging there. Someone comes along and cuts a coconut. A coconut is cut. Does the tree feel any loss? Not at all. It was there and it is gone. But if I hold a bag in my hand and someone snatches it - 'Oh, it is mine. I have lost it'. Why? Because the ego was holding it. And because the ego was holding it, what had to happen is resented by it. Because it is the ego that creates ownership - it is the ego that creates this identification, and therefore it is the ego that creates, projects the idea of pain or pleasure - and then the ego itself comes round to suffer it

It is a beautiful thing if you watch what goes on in your own mind, when something comes to you, comes to me - why comes to me? Something comes - why comes to me?

Now you must listen very carefully, otherwise again the mind will play some fun. Water falls from the cloud - the cloth becomes wet. That is alright, is it not? The cloth becomes soaking wet and the skin is cold. 'Ah. I am cold'. What is this 'I' there? Each little bit of event is completely and totally independent of the other. But from somewhere or from nowhere 'I' creeps into it - 'I am wet' - I am caught in this rain, and the moment the idea comes - 'I am caught in the rain' - then you begin to shiver, you catch cold. You have caught cold already. The moment the thought entered into you 'I am wet', you are already cold

The whole secret of the Yoga that is taught by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita is this: is there a life, is there a living totally independent of ego? Is there an action totally independent of thought, of memory, of one's own private feelings? In that action is moksha. That action is itself liberation. In that action there is no sin. In that action there is no suffering. Because it is the ego that creates this thing called 'sin', and it is the same ego that turns round and suffers. When you pick up a pen, you cannot pick up only one end, the other end also comes up. The one end is called 'sin', the other end is called 'suffering'. When the ego picks up this thing called 'sin', the other thing called 'suffering' comes along too. And if you want to drop it, you must drop both - the whole thing. The entire message of the Gita can therefore be summed up in this: let action 'be' in this world, let no action spring from your own private intentions, desires, motives - your own private ideas and ideologies. Let no action spring from your will or your wish, but let action 'be'.

## Talk 4

Yoga is not something which can be discussed in the abstract. Let us say that I am working somewhere as a civil servant, or a doctor, a professional. A thought occurs: I must give up all this and go to an Ashram and meditate, attain Self-realisation. That frame is over. The previous frame was a fact. I am a civil servant. The next frame is a thought. And the thought is in this shape: I must resign this job - go to an Ashram, meditate, attain God-realisation. Frame 3: it is done - I have given up the job. Frame 4: I take the next train or bus and go to the Ashram. Frame 5: the man in charge there says, 'Do this - write a book or sweep the kitchen'. This is a different frame. If I do not link this frame with the previous frame, there is no problem. He says, 'Sweep the floor.' - Alright, I sweep the floor. A problem arises only when there is a link between frame 5 and the previous frames. I came here to meditate, to attain Self-realisation, and this man says, 'Sweep the kitchen'. What for? Now comes the most important and the glorious factor: it is possible for me to look both at this frame and at that frame. I came here for Self-realisation and this gentleman says I must write a book or sweep the kitchen. Even if it is not connected with the past, there is still the desire for Self-realisation, the desire to meditate, to go into seclusion. If at the present moment there are two sections in the same frame - frame 6 - one half says, 'I must attain Self-realisation, meditate', the other half says, 'I hear this than telling me to sweep the kitchen, to cut the vegetables.' I can look at both parts of this frame - I have to make a decision. How do 'I' decide? What is this 'I'? How does it decide? When you are confronted with a choice like this, what is it that makes the decision? In our example of two days ago: if I have to go to the toilet urgently, what is it that makes a decision?

The whole being make a decision - the thought, the mind, the feelings, the will, and if you have a soul, the soul, or God - whatever it is. The whole lot makes a decision. But here, when I am confronted with these half frame pictures, who is it that decides? The half frame picture is a broken picture, a picture of conflict, o. confusion. Who makes this decision here? Mind, thought? If thought has to help 'me' make a decision here, it means that there are the two things: a fragmented being, plus a big chunk of my being standing aside and watching this being. Who makes a decision or who helps 'me' make a decision? How do 'I' make a decision - with the help of what?

I can think out the whole problem very nicely and beautifully. I came here to meditate - that is true. I came here to attain Self-realisation. Ah, well, I think: 'This Swami is a good man. He has probably meditated for years and years, and eventually discovered that cutting vegetables is more fruitful than going to the forest. He has gone ahead of me, so he probably knows better than I do.' Rationalisation, thinking.

When the mind thus interferes, counsels me, advises me, and helps me make a decision, how does the mind function? What is the mind? I am reading a very interesting book: 'The Mind of Man'. The author says mind is nothing but your

brain. Possibly. This much is true: in the case of most of us - that 'most' is very important, i.e. not all of us, the mind is nothing more than the functioning of the physiological brain. The mind seems to be totally identified with the body and the brain. The mind seems to serve the body and its causes: self-preservation, procreation etc. The mind seems to live totally for the body the brain. So that, whatever judgment the mind makes - if you watch very carefully - is completely limited to our physiological, biological survival. This is the animal nature of our being - 'animal' nature in the strictly technical meaning of the word 'anima' - living substance. I do not believe that animals are inferior to us - I often think they are superior.

Since the mind is involved in this business called living, the mind functions for the sake of this living. It is not interested in altruism or the search of truth. It is not interested in dissociating itself from the body and looking at the truth as it is - in the case of most of us. As I said, this word 'most' is important. So, if I let the mind take a decision, the mind will necessarily and naturally function as an adjunct to the physiological aspect of our personality. The mind advises me how best to survive in this world. But something somewhere tells me it is absurd. When the body takes birth, it comes with only one guarantee - death. Why is this emphasis on survival then? What am I looking for? There is confusion here.

That is: the mind's effort to perpetuate the physical body is a contradiction, because it turns a blind eye on the fact that this physical, this physiological life must come to an end. Since the mind does not recognise this fact in our day to day, moment to moment life, it is caught up in a contradiction, in delusion. This is what is called maya .

It is very difficult for the mind of most of us to appreciate the totality of life. It is caught up in this physiological, biological existence, so that it refuses to see the other side of the picture - death. It seeks pleasure but refuses to see that the other side of pleasure is pain. It entertains hopes, it desires success, but it refuses to see that success is bound to end in failure. If I am constantly successfully climbing, climbing, I have to come down at some time, otherwise I will land on the moon. You cannot keep on climbing. You go up a hill for a few miles, then you come down. For instance, there is a shrine in the Himalayas, 168 miles from our Ashram. Right from the start you are climbing - if you are climbing 168 miles, probably you are half way to the moon. But you do not leave the earth at all in this pilgrimage. So, in order to be on the surface of the earth, and yet walk 168 miles in the Himalayas, you have to go up, then come down. Every time you come down, you do not come right down to the rock bottom of altitude zero, but you keep on going up and down.

Success means failure at some time or other. But the mind does not want to see this. It sees only one side and therefore it is partial, limited, and the advice it gives 'me' is bound to be inadequate, limited, and therefore frustrating. Any action based on the counsel of the mind therefore is bound to lead to this frustration - because the mind is by nature fragmentary. Those who insist that

the wind is expanding do not realise the fragmentary nature of the mind. Mind only sees the aspect that it wants to see. How does the mind in this 'half frame' business make a judgment? 'I want to meditate, and attain Self-realisation, yet the Swami wants me to sweep the kitchen and cut vegetables. What must I do now? I must decide.'

How does the mind enable make to make a decision? The mind looks into the memory bank. What do these people say about meditation and Self-realisation? They say you should sit firmly in a seat in order to meditate. 'I cannot sit like this and I cut vegetables.' Also do they not say you should look straight at the tip of your nose and not look elsewhere. 'If I look at the tip of my nose, I cannot sweep, I cannot cut vegetables. I cut my nose.' That is from the memory bank. But the memory bank also says something else. 'This Swami is the boss of the whole Ashram; if he is displeased, he will throw me out'. That is where the calculation comes in. And then the memory bank, which is like a computer, does a tremendous lot of work. The computer says, 'What does it matter if I am thrown out.' But in Canada winter is cold it is not like India. To survive winter is very difficult here. How does one know what winter is like, especially if one only knows Canada in summer. In the memory bank there are some winter scenes, pictures, photographs. Some kind of memory bank feedback is there; and the mind reconstructs a scene and projects itself into the future on the basis of all these parts from the memory bank - thinking all this might happen. But the future is not there, is it? So, what the future brings I do not know. 'I may not live at all to see the next winter. Therefore, the mind creates imaginary fears, anxieties, worries.

In short, the truth of the matter is not seen at all. I entertain hopes, which will be shattered. I entertain fears, which might never materialise. In all this, the only thing that suffers is truth. Therefore, anyone who seeks truth, firmly avoids taking the counsel of the mind.

If the mind is not going to enable us to make the decision - what else does? How is an action projected? How does an action take place? When we write a letter, we use a fountain pen, paper, stationery and we use the hand. The hand itself is propelled by the brain, the mind, and the mind itself is propelled by something, some unknown entity. All these being instruments of some Intelligence. Even the mind is but an instrument. It is called antahkarana in Yoga. These organs of the body are the external organs of action. The mind is the inner instrument of action, but it is no more than an instrument. The instrument obviously should not become the doer, the 'boss'. The typewriter should not dictate to you what you should write. You should tell the typewriter what is to be written. If the pen dictates to you what you should write, it does not make any sense, but is merely scribbling. So, just as the body composed of the various elements, is an external instrument, the mind with its varied aspects is an internal instrument.

There is a beautiful verse from the Gita about the fact that this body shares with the rest of the material universe the elements of which it is made.

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism - thus is My Nature divided eightfold. Gita - VII.4

The body is nothing more than recycled material - recycling is a word getting more and more into vogue. The body is nothing but processed matter. Nothing but the fertiliser that you threw out. You discarded the fertiliser, thinking that it was filth. But then it comes back to you again as potatoe, bread, butter, which you consume - recycle. The body goes back to the earth again, this recycling takes place. It is a fantastic jugglery. Where do you get your bones? From calcium. How is calcium obtained? From the earth. How does the earth obtain calcium? From the bones of other people who died before. Pure recycling. Only for recycling wastepaper etc, do you need a big factory. For this natural recycling of nature nothing at all is required. You do not even have to dig a pit, throw this body into the nearest ditch, and you will get a rich harvest of potatoes.

Earth, water, fire, air, space are the components of the physical body. When Krishna describes nature - inferior nature, you must remember it is all grouped together: earth water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence, as well as ego-sense. Rather, brain twisting. You and I have come to regard the mind as an intelligent factor. Buddhi is enlightened, illumined, awakened intelligence. Even that Krishna brings into alignment with the material substances: earth, water, fire, air. Either this means that mind or Buddhi are insentient, or that earth, water, fire and air are also sentient, intelligent things. Either demote the former or promote the latter. It is up to you. These are the substances of which the body is made - as also your mind. The discriminating faculty which is supposed to be the cerebral cortex and also the ego sense, the things that says 'I' - all these belong to one category - the 'inferior nature' of the Cosmic Being. What I would call the 'animal nature' in the sense of the living things - 'anima', not in the sense of clogs, cats, etc.

*This is the inferior Prakriti, O mighty-armed Arjuna; know thou as different from it, my higher Prakriti - Nature, the very life-element, by which this world is upheld. Gita - VII.51*

Hidden as the inner Light in all these, there is this Jiva. Jiva is the living the sentient, the conscious spark of God. The inner Light that alone sustains this inferior nature - it is 'different' in the sense that the Intelligence that dwells in this body is almost distinct from the body, yet the electric current passes through the copper wire. There is no hole in the copper wire for the current to pass through. It is not like water flowing through a water pipe that is hollow. When the electric current passes through the copper wire, the current is there in every particle of that copper wire. In other words, while the current is passing through the copper wire, the wire is the electric current. The moment the current is switched off, the wire is 'dead'. No analogy is perfect. But this may help your comprehension. Therefore, while there is this conjunction of the Jiva with this body-mind complex, the Jiva is the totality. This Jiva is everything from the tip of the hair, right down to the sole of the foot. It is the whole being. The Jiva is the superior Nature of the Cosmic Being, which is omnipresent and yet dwells in each

person - wrong word, but remember that the word person means 'a mask'. Even this glass could be called a person, as possibly there is a spark of God even here.

In that manner, you will see that whatever exists in the universe has this apparent duality of 'matter - spirit'. But in that duality there is an indivisibility. That is what is called 'individuality'. Here the two words 'indivisible' and 'duality' are telescoped into one, after dropping out a few letters, it becomes 'individuality'. You cannot possibly separate the electric current from the copper wire. In the same way, you cannot possibly separate 'spirit' from 'matter'. They are together. They are one. It is merely for the sake of our comprehension that this distinction between 'spirit' and 'matter' is made.

The whole universe is composed of this Individuality - indivisible duality - matter permeated by spirit. There are no two omnipresences. The single Omnipresence has these two aspects - the material and the spiritual. The material include the elements of which the body is composed, the mind, the discriminating faculty and also the ego-sense. The superior aspect of this Individuality is the divine spark in each being. Whatever there is in this whole universe is pervaded by this Consciousness.

Now, if you can lay all these pieces on the table and construct this jigsaw puzzle, you will get a different picture altogether. The ego-sense, the mind, the judging faculty, the discriminating faculty, or Buddhi, they are all little pieces as valuable - or as valueless - as your tooth. But why does the mind suddenly jump up and look after the tooth? The tooth does not look after the mind - why does the mind look after the tooth? It is also a member of this inferior family. But such is the force of delusion - the mind being 'superior' in the sense of the brain being 'on top' of the anatomy, seems to think 'I am superior'. Therefore, 'I will dictate, I will lay down what shall be done and what shall not be done.' The brain being comparable to a computer functions on the basis of the information which it has already received from the memory bank. This brain is limited by memory, by fragmentation, because it cannot possibly see the whole picture at any one time - it itself being a fragment of this Truth. Therefore, whatever judgments, whatever recommendations it makes, prove to be disastrous.

What is the solution? What must we do then? I can quite clearly see this - that the mind, being limited, being a self-appointed guardian Deity of the body - the physiological, the biological organism, which is bound to perish, to go, the mind being conditioned by its own foolishness is that it is able to see only pleasure and not pain, success and not failure, life and not death, is untrustworthy. The moment that one is able to see this, faith in the mind drops. Hence the wise man does not take counsel with the mind which suggests what is pleasurable to the body - which is constantly trying to reproduce and perpetuate pleasure - so turning life into worry and trouble.

Between pleasure and pain, which is more interesting and meaningful? Pain. Because pleasure is boring. Once, twice, thrice, fourth and fifth time - then you do

not want it anymore. You seek some other pleasure. I am not referring to the normal satisfaction of human appetites, but what you run after as pleasure - e.g. a tv - you buy a set and for ten days you sit there, glued to it, then it is finished. I learned this lesson in Hollywood. Millions flock to the movies, just to have a look at these film stars. One thinks Hollywood is a paradise on earth. I went there to find that there is nothing there. I was introduced to some of these film stars. They are also human beings. And a beautiful star whose picture people pay to see has a husband who then divorces her. After a few months he got bored.

Pleasure is terribly boring - because it makes you insensitive. You may sit on first class cushions, etc, - those who enjoy these luxuries probably not even notice them. But pain is not like this - every time you get a headache, it is fresh, it is exactly the same as it was the first time. Life is not monotonous - it can be anything; but it is not at all monochrome. It has got its ups and downs - which makes it interesting.

From the study of the vagaries of the mind, one understands that the mind is untrustworthy. That is all one can do. When the mind becomes suspect, put the mind in it's place as one of the little pieces in this jigsaw puzzle, and the total picture comes into view. Even the ego-sense is nothing but a 'cell', another piece in this jigsaw puzzle. 'Cell' and 'Soul' seem synonymous to me. I do not know if there is a soul in your body. It may be just a cell. But if it offends your religious susceptibility, you can think of yourself as 'cell' in the 'body of God'. What you call a soul - the 'I' - is nothing more than a cell in the body of God. So, neither the mind nor the 'I' have intelligence enough to act. Any action that springs from the mind or the physical organism is pure 'animal' action, meant merely to preserve this physical organism - which is unpreservable, condemned to death, disintegration. Any action that is thrown up by this biological organism is instinctive, impulsive, and therefore futile, fruitless, stupid, blind. Any action springing from the mind is fragmentary and must lead to frustration. Any action which springs neither from this physiological biological organism nor from this 'computer' called the mind, which includes the ego - but from the inner light, the Jiva, the spark of God within, that action is what we call God's Will i.e. Real Action.

## Talk 5

The message of Krishna in the Gita seems to be this: that the real Doer of actions is not 'I', that actions do not spring from the mind but from elsewhere. The mind is itself a tool, an instrument. The real Doer of actions is elsewhere. Elsewhere - not in the spatial sense, but in the spiritual or psychological sense.

The ego, which is another tool, can be regarded loosely as the decision maker, yet part of the tool. It is like a switch in relation to a big machine. The switch seems to whip the machine into operation, but the switch is part of the machine. The switch can almost say, 'I make this thing function'. But it is the finger that presses the switch that really makes the whole thing move. The switch is probably comparable to the ego. The whole machinery is there, some inside, some outside. The mind is inside, the other organs are outside. From here on one must proceed very cautiously, otherwise we will once again commit the same mistake that we have been committing from time immemorial.

The ego assumes: I am the doer, and looks at the mental substance, the mind-stuff, the Chitta, of which it is also part. It sees the changes that take place in that mind-stuff from moment to moment. It says, 'I am doing this. I am enjoying or suffering this.' Then the ego says to itself, 'I am responsible for this action, and therefore all glory be to me'. Or, 'I shall be responsible for this action and I am afraid I will not allow myself to be responsible, so I shall not do it'. Krishna laughs at both these.

All my actions are wrought in all cases by the qualities of Nature only. He whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks, 'I am the doer'. Gita - III.27

Actions take place in nature. It is a beautiful vision if one can rise to it. One cannot capture a vision, one has to rise to a vision. Action takes place in nature and the foolish ego thinks, 'I am the doer'. But the ego can also do something else.

'If, filled with egosm', thou thinkest, 'I will not fight', vain is this, thy resolve. Nature will compell thee.' Gita - XVIII.59

On the other hand, committing the same blunder, but with a different sequel. If you - the ego - thinks, 'I will not do it because it is not good', then you are a fool. Prakriti or nature will drive you, compel you to do it. Once again, a word - please do not jump to any conclusion. It is too dangerous. One cannot say, 'My actions are egoless'. No. We think we have a clear idea of what 'egoless' means, of what 'humility' means. We think that we have an absolutely perfect picture of what 'sincerity' means. But all these are merely pictures - not the Reality.

The whole Mahabharata War during which this Bhagavad Gita was given was fought and won by egoless people. Some of them died, some of them survived. Is it possible for me to fight the battle egolessly. Of course.

To give again a crude example. Does rain have an ego. What wonders rain brings

to us flowers, trees, vegetables, fruit. We say, 'This is the ideal man, the totally egoless person; he is so pure, so kind; he flows along and brings untold happiness to all kinds of people.' Does he? Does rain bring untold happiness to all beings? The other day we heard of a whole village or town being washed away. What about that.

So, please, right at this stage, right at the beginning, let us remember that you and I cannot possibly lay down rules on how and in what manner the totally egoless person will behave. I have seen this in the case of my Master. Since then I have come to this conclusion: that the actions of an egoless person are totally unpredictable. The only thing that you can safely say about Him is that you can say nothing about Him.

Egolessness is the only manner of living that we have completely neglected. Egotistically, we have tried to do a world of good, all of it eventually proved to be disastrous. Egotistically we have tried to refrain from doing harm. I suppose this is quite simple.

In the West, two things have worked wonders - the missionary and machinery. Both of them have gone round - extremely dynamic - to save everyone. Even if I do not want to be saved, somehow I must be saved. There is this terrible anxiety to save. Both the missionary and the machinery save - in exactly the same manner. Both of them are mechanical operations, soulless, lifeless, grinding, dull dosing, saving, driving, pushing. This is egotistic drive, egotistic action, not inaction.

In the East they say, 'No, we cannot want all this egotistic action. We refrain from it and say, 'Ram, Ram, Ram'. Who is it that is saying that? The ego who refuses to come out into the open. There again we can see something similar. The religious men went into one type of cave. The non-religious people went into another kind of cave. The religious men withdrew from life and the non-religious people were deserted by life and were overtaken by fatigue, old age, and death. I do not know whether they withdrew from life. They grew old and died - that is also withdrawing from life. But this message remained hidden in the Gita. Is there not a saying from Jesus. Who can add a cubit to this height by taking thought? That whole section of the Bible is about non-volitional living.

Non-egotistic action, egoless action. This is not an extraordinary teaching of the Hindus only, nor do the people of India practise this. In India, it is conspicuous by its absence as anywhere else in the world. We have completely neglected this essential, fundamental teaching of Krishna, of Christ. We have not understood it, because for everyone of these concepts, everyone of these great tenets of their teaching, we have created an image - 'an egoless man must do this, and must not do that'. The one who says, 'I will do this', 'I will not do that', is an ego man. And you turn around and say, 'An egoless man must not do this and must do that'. One prescribes, 'A humble man must go round like this'. He is a hunchback, not a humble man. You say, 'A sincere man must always be truthful and consistent'.

You know where you find consistency? In the soup. You see the consistency of the soup. Only he who is in the soup is always consistent. How to be consistent - what is consistency? I was here in Canada in January 1971 and I had to have an overcoat. Coming back in June, must I be consistent and wear an overcoat, a sweater, boots and a cap? Then I will certainly be in the soup.

The great ones said we should possess all these things: truthfulness, sincerity, consistency, humility, egolessness. We could not understand what they meant, we were not prepared to concede that we did not understand these, and therefore we did not wish to start looking at life as they commanded us to. We jumped to conclusions: egolessness means this, sincerity means this, humility means this, truthfulness means this, and therefore we got married to portraits. These are all images. We have been living with these images. There was someone I heard about who was crazy enough to dance with skeleton. On the wall of a church in Berlin, I saw portrayed possible atrocities in the world. It showed this woman who, I believe, kept a skeleton in her cupboard; she took it out every evening to dance with it. That is what we have been doing all this time - we have been dancing with a skeleton in the cupboard.

It is not possible for us deliberately to perform non-egotistic action, or to live a non-egotistic life. But it is possible to be intensely aware within oneself and to detect the play of the ego from moment to moment. When one thus recognises the play of the ego, it is possible to avoid the ego taking over. You realise then that this is the ego, and this is what it does. It has its own role to play in life, as the decision-maker, in certain situations. The mind has to think. The ego has to decide. The nose has to smell, the eyes have to see. That is all. When this is seen, life assumes a completely different quality.

I do nothing at all, thus would the harmonised knower of Truth think - seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing. Gita - V.8.

Living in this world, playing one's role, fully participating in the activities of this world, the wise man knows that this Self is not involved. If you will forgive the grammar. I is not doing all this, I is not sitting and talking - talking takes place. Patanjali gives an extraordinarily beautiful Sutra in Raja Yoga: 'Seeing alone is the Seer'.

What is Yoga? I will give you the Sanskrit words. Yoga is Chitta-vritti nirodhah. What happens when there is this condition? 'Then the Seer is established in himself'. These are the first two or three Sutras. Later on there is a brilliant Sutra whose vital purpose is overlooked by most commentators. The Seer - who is the Seer? In English you have a beautiful expression. When a tourist goes to some place, e.g. Montreal, he is taken on a sight-seeing tour. This is a beautiful expression: sight sees. The optic nerve sees, the brain sees, the mind sees and as the seeing happens, suddenly something, the ego, says, 'I see'. The ego is there. It is not a non-entity. It is part of the mind structure, mind-stuff or the first thought. The ego is nothing more than the first thought. The mind-stuff is there constantly - the first thought around which the individualised personality or

mind-stuff revolves is the ego. The ego has no other role to play, has no other purpose; it is merely the king-pin that holds the whole wheel in motion. That is all. It has no greater value than any other part of the mind. It is not the doer of actions, any more than the brain is the doer of actions, or the nose is the doer of actions. So, while this thing called seeing takes place, the ego jumps up and says, 'I see him', thereby creating bondage, misery, sin, suffering. The wise man knows that 'seeing' happens. I do not see. And, if he takes this enquiry a little deeper, he sees that nature, which is God's Nature, Cosmic Nature, the Nature of the Cosmic Being, enables all these things to take place here - nothing more, nothing less.

The energy of the Cosmic Being enables all those things to take place, turns on the switch. Not 'I' but 'It' is the Doer. This is the great message of the Gita. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna has given quite a number of techniques which are called Yoga. The few techniques which Krishna has given for reaching this understanding of Self-realisation, we shall discuss tomorrow.

## Talk 6

In our quest of Truth, we should be extremely cautious, because intellectual Truth, conceptualised Truth, cannot act and if it acts - it cannot free us - it only leads confusion. The thing that speaks now - the lips, the tongue, etc. are naturally flesh and membrane. It is quite possible that this flesh is modified bananas. I must have eaten some bananas a few years ago. If I keep a few bananas in front of me and say, 'Come on, talk', the bananas do not talk. Yet the same bananas are going to talk later. When do they talk and when do they not talk? When these bananas are assimilated, they are able to talk. This word assimilation is terribly important. It means that it becomes similar 'as similar' to me.

Even so, unless the truth is simulated, i.e. I become like the Truth, or I become the Truth, the Truth is not true to me. It is no good my saying, 'God is everywhere Om, God is omnipresent, Om, I am the immortal Atman'. I am not immortal Atman. Not now. I cannot jump on my own shoulders. So, what must I do. The 'doing' part of it is to find a way to assimilate this Truth.

Again the analogy may be terribly crude and it may be imperfect. I hope you will take just what is relevant. When I eat that banana, a part of it is obviously assimilated and goes to make the tongue, which will be able to speak later on, the other part of it is discarded. This may be true in all that we learn - a part is assimilated, a part is discarded.

As I am assimilating the Truth that will free me, the truth that will enlighten me and enable me to act in the right manner, something else is being discarded. The thing that stands between me and such an assimilation is removed. Vedanta calls it the veil of ignorance. It is not a factual or material veil - it is psychological, spiritual. As I am endeavoring to assimilate these Truths, something else is discarded. It goes down the drain.

Our attempt is not to act as if we have reached there, but to assimilate the Truth. 'I believe that God is omnipresent'. This word 'believe' contains a lie in itself. In the spelling, in the word 'belief', there is a lie. When that lie is removed, then it becomes Truth. I may entertain a belief. I have got to start somewhere. I have got to believe in something. But I should not forget that in this belief there is lie. I must remove it. This lie is unassimilated Truth. Unassimilated Truth itself is the lie. Almonds are good, but if I swallow them along with the shell, it may not be so good. The shell is probably stronger than the almond. Almonds are good, but if they are unassimilated, they become a danger.

Unassimilated Truth is a lie, is falsehood, is menace. As I am endeavoring to assimilate it, something else is discarded. That is ignorance, that is the shadow. My effort therefore, is not to pretend that I have reached there, that I know what God is, that I know what all this is about. This is Maya, this is God, this is this, this that - and God is omnipresent.

A funny story was given to me with a stamp of authority and reality. It seems there was a great swami in Northern India who was fond of girls. He was young and handsome. Girls were also attracted to him. He liked to play with them, make fun. He used to say, 'All is Brahman. You, I, all are Brahman'. None could beat him in an argument. People had great faith in him and did not mind what went on. One clever young lady thought she could fix him. She went to his Ashram. One does not go empty handed to an Ashram. She brought a basket containing sweet balls made of solidified milk. She was also very beautiful and he fell for her at first sight. He said, 'Another Brahman has come, a beautiful Brahman has come. He promptly laid his head on her lap. 'What a nice Brahman, a beautiful Brahman,. That everything is Brahman is incontrovertible, theoretical Truth. His head was in her lap, she put one of the sweets into his mouth and he said, 'Ah lovely Brahman, wonderful Brahman', and went on eating. She put her hand on the ground which was wet and she took some of the earth and moulded it into the shape of the same sweet. The third time he opened his mouth, she put that in. He spat it out and yelled, 'What is that now?' She said, 'That was Brahman and this is Brahman. You recognise a difference between 'Sweet Brahman' and 'Mud Brahman', but you do know the difference between man Brahman and woman Brahman? You make believe that everything is the same to you, that all is God, but here you react as if it were not the same.'

It is dangerous to pretend to assume the Truth. Unassimilated Truth is falsehood, unassimilated Truth is menace, danger. Therefore, our endeavour will inevitably seem to involve contradiction. To all intents and purposes, we may have to contradict ourselves. I am sitting here and saying, 'God Alone Is', or the universal, prayer, 'Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient', but in my actions, in my life, I deny this, contradict this. I do not behave as if God is omnipotent or as if God is omnipresent. Why? Not because I am a hypocrite, but because I have not discovered that Truth, because the Truth has not been assimilated by me. I have faith in it and therefore I repeat the prayer; but since I have not assimilated it, it is still not mine, it does not act.

Is it a healthy idea that we should allow ourselves to be so hypocritical? Perhaps yes. If my life, if my behaviour, if my conduct involves contradiction, and if I am aware of it, it is not a contradiction anymore. In other words, if I hate to be a hypocrite, and if I know I am a hypocrite - I am not a hypocrite. Yet I see that some of you at least want me to do this and I am trying to oblige you. What am I doing? I can see a contradiction, but so long as I see this, so long as I am aware of this contradiction in myself, there is no contradiction. If, on the other hand, I pretend to myself, convince myself that I am a great Self-realised sage, come here to enlighten and save, then I am a hypocrite. In other words, if I know why I am doing this, then that awareness which is aware of the contradiction is free from the contradiction. The awareness that is aware of the hypocrisy is free from the hypocrisy. And this inner battle goes on until the Truth is fully assimilated. Our effort therefore should be to assimilate the Truth.

To crack the nut - cracking this nut of truth is called 'Yoga', is Yoga. Krishna has a very special name for this Yoga. He calls it Buddhi Yoga. It includes, but is not confined to all the other traditional Yogas, that we practise - the meditational, the devotional, and the hatha practices, etc. What is known as Bhuddi Yoga in the Gita seems to underlie all these, and without Bhuddi Yoga, any of these become a travesty. Without Buddhi Yoga, Hatha Yoga becomes gymnastics, without Buddhi Yoga, Karma Yoga - unselfish, egoless, self-sacrificing service, becomes social service - a lot of work and not Yoga. Without this Buddhi Yoga background, 'all the singing and dancing and the devotional practice of Bhakti Yoga become emotional practices, sentimentalism. Without Buddhi Yoga, meditation becomes hallucination or daydreaming. Without Buddhi Yoga, what is called Jnana Yoga becomes an intellectual game.

What is this Buddhi Yoga? We go back to the ground of our being, where experiences are received and from where action proceeds. There is the mind, the senses, the Buddhi or intelligence - intelligence for the present, individualised, circumscribed by my personality, and then the ego - the ego is the decision-maker. This is one block. And then the Jiva or the Indwelling presence seems to stand aside as a Witness of this whole phenomenon.

The ego is the decision-maker or the decision maker is the ego. It is the same thing, is it not? There can be no other decision-maker. The decision-maker is the ego. There is no problem there. But on what is this fellow's decision based? How does he make this decision? On Buddhi,'s recommendation. Buddhi is the intelligence in me which says, 'The sun is too hot - get into the shade.' That is the Buddhi's recommendation. The Buddhi merely coordinates the function of the mind, the inner instrument, and makes a recommendation to the ego: 'The sun is too hot. Get away into the shade.' Somebody else might say, 'Oh no, what for?', or, 'Why not?' When the recommendation has been made, there are two alternatives possible - 'what for?' or 'why not'.

What enables one to make the right decision? That is where we are caught. It entirely depends upon which way the Buddhi is facing. If this Buddhi is facing towards the mind and the senses - the mind with its conditioning, with the impressions of past experiences it has gattered, with all its preconceptions, predispositions, prejudices - if the Buddhi is merely facing that, it is voluntarily limiting itself foolishly. If the Buddhi is facing towards the senses, the Buddhi is definitely going to function in manner suited to the pleasure of the senses. Then the ego functions, works or decides in a manner suited to pleasure. Then it is said that he is fond of pleasure. All your decisions are made with only one object in view - pleasure, profit, survival, all of which have their counterpart - all of them lead eventually to unhappiness, shock, failure, disillusionment.

If the Buddhi however, is united with its own source - the Cosmic Intelligence, then the whole process is different. The ego is completely isolated. It performs a routine function of making decisions, and the Buddhi does not give the ego a choice. That is the important thing. When the Buddhi is linked to its own

substratum - the Cosmic Being, the Cosmic Intelligence, it does not give the ego a choice at all. 'This is to be done.' You merely sign it. You sign the dotted line. There is no choice, because the Buddhi is not torn between the senses, the mind and the Reality. The Buddhi is facing the Reality. One who faces the Reality finds no choice at all in life.

From this point of view, there may be a shocking interpretation of the Bible in the Adam and Eve story. Adam had no choice. It had to be. Once you realise that, to this action, there is no choice, there is no sin.

When you are facing the truth, you realise that there is no choice at all. It is only when you are looking at the shadow, the untruth, the falsehood, that there are different parts, different modes of behaviour to choose from. But when you are facing the truth, there is no choice whatsoever.

To go back to our rather primitive illustration again. When nature does not call you so urgently, you have plenty of choice, you can sit in the sun, you can jump into the swimming pool, you can do a hundred other things. But if you must go to the toilet immediately, there is absolutely no choice. That is it.

Nature constantly functions like that - physical or psychological, emotional, spiritual, whatever it is. Truth functions inexorably. The earth rotates, revolves at a certain speed - inevitably. Nothing seems to alter it - it has no choice. If you look at Truth, you realise that there is no choice whatsoever. Of course this may be a very controversial point; even in regard to what you and I are going to do, there is no choice. I do not know if you remember what we said the other day. Now I am thinking: shall I go to New York - shall I not go to New York?. I bluff myself that I have a choice. Am I making the choice? No. At present I am merely being worried, I am merely vacillating, I have no choice but to keep worrying, to dilly dally. A fool has no choice but to worry. Come back later - I am either still thinking or I shall be gone. Then there is no choice. Has anyone ever done two contradictory things at the same time - eat the cake and keep it? Has anyone done this? No, it is not possible. I have to do, from moment to moment, one or the other. It is because I am not seeing the total situation, the truth, that I am dilly dallying - worrying before actually acting, taking the step.

In that situation, worrying is what is inevitably being done - because I am a fool. If I discard this foolishness, then worry will disappear too. Then I am able to look at every single thing as it is - the Truth. That is called Buddhi Yoga. Then you realise that, from moment to moment, you do exactly what you have to do without any choice whatsoever.

There was a great sage of India called Ramana Maharishi, of whom many of you have heard. He said that even with regard to your actions here, you have no choice. It seems to be utter determinism. Everything is laid down. You have no choice at all. If you are going to murder me, you are going to murder me. Nothing in the world is going to alter it. In this determinism, then where does free will

come in? Am I a sort of machine, a robot? It seems he said that whatever you are destined to do, you will do. But you have a choice here - whether you identify yourself and think I am the doer of this action, or stand aside and realise 'God's Nature does it'. That is a tough pill to swallow.

The question is - to be a fool or not to be a fool. That you can choose. Being a fool is like a shadow, foolishness is like a shadow. That foolishness is not the Truth. It is like a dream or sleep, or the best example, a shadow. This shadow is not the Truth, there is nothing there - one cannot pick it up.

You ask whether one can choose being a fool or a wise man. Possibly there is no choice. I do not know. I will tell you why. There is a choice - but there is a snag. If I am a fool and I love being a fool, I have no choice. If I am a fool and by what is called Satsanga - what we are having here - I come into contact with a wise person, with a master, I learn from him. He awakens me to the fact that this is only a shadow. Then the foolishness is gone. And I have no choice there either. Before, when I was a fool, I had no choice but to be a fool. Now that in the presence of a master or by some mysterious event - physical, individual personal, impersonal, whatever it is, this ignorance has been dispelled. I have no choice but to be a wise person.

This spark of God or the Light of God within is constantly witnessing this whole phenomenon. There are the senses, the mind, the ego, and in between there the Buddhi - which is nothing but a reflection, a mirror-reflection of the Light of the Self. Individualised, the intelligence is naturally caught between the devil and the deep sea. It is trapped by the mind and the senses. While we are still foolish, caught up in this foolishness, the discriminating faculty or the Buddhi itself is perverted. The Buddhi is so confused that it thinks that this body can be perpetually preserved, that I can enjoy pleasure without paying the penalty of suffering later on, that I can meet somebody without the possibility of parting again, that I can be with somebody and forget the pain of parting later on.

You see, there is a fragmentation. I am looking at only one side of the picture. I refuse to look at the other side - these two sides put together being the Truth.

I meet him and I am very happy. But in that happiness there is sorrow hidden because he is going away again tomorrow morning. The foolish mind, the deluded intelligence, looks at only one side of this picture. Therefore, when this discerning intelligence is associated with the mind, which is conditioned by the senses, then it leads a fragmentary life, seeks pleasure, seeks to prolong life here, seeks to amass wealth, name, fame, etc., forgetting the Truth. In other words, it digs up the shadow. Is it forever doomed? Is this inevitable? No. This is where Krishna's Buddhi Yoga becomes meaningful.

The senses are superior to everything else - you enjoy the world through your own senses. The mind is superior to the senses. And the discerning intelligence, the Buddhi, is superior even to the mind. Beyond that mind, beyond that Buddhi,

is the Cosmic Intelligence, of which individualised intelligence is but a small fragment.

Drop this fragment, let this fragment realise that it is but a part of the whole. When this Buddhi becomes united with the Cosmic Being, Cosmic Intelligence, the ego which has to make a decision from moment to moment in your life, takes the queue from this Buddhi, which is in contact with the Cosmic Intelligence. Therefore, the decisions of the ego are no longer deluded. You no longer function as a crazy individual, fighting against the rest of the universe, but you work in total harmony with the entire Cosmos. You are the Cosmic Being.

How will such a person function? We do not know. Except that he will not have any personal, private desires and he does not work egotistically - which again, as we saw yesterday, means nothing - it has no meaning to us. How a person who has transcended the ego in this manner functions in this world is not possible for laymen describe. It is not possible to describe at all.

This is Buddhi Yoga in short. The Buddhi turning away from the mind and the senses, turning away from the limitations imposed upon it by the mind and the senses - and the Buddhi turning towards the Truth, which is Cosmic Consciousness, Cosmic Being.

## Talk 7

Buddhi Yoga could be vaguely described as Krishna's special message in the Gita. One should beware of setting the Buddhi Yoga up as something opposed to the other forms of Yoga. That is what we tend to do in saying, 'My Yoga is superior to yours.' Someone may preach that all religion is one, and then start a group of his own which develops into another 'ism' which is supposed to unite all the others - instead of that it has become a belligerent force which has only added to the belligerency of religious people. So that someone who follows this Buddhi Yoga, if it is possible to follow it, does not go round hitting everyone else on the head saying, 'You are a Hatha Yogi, or, 'You are a Karma Yogi', - useless. There is really no such thing called Buddhi Yoga. Buddhi Yoga 'is' life - your entire life, your normal life, is Buddhi Yoga.

Krishna specifically warns in the Gita,

As the ignorant men act from attachment to action, O Bharata, so should the wise act without attachment, wishing the welfare of the world. Gita - III.25

The wise man must act, work, live in this world, without necessarily distinguishing himself from others. We saw this in the life of Swami Sivananda. Externally He was no different from ordinary people. I have never seen a holy man of His stature behave so humanely. I never heard Him talk philosophy. I am sure some of you have met some yogi or swami who, when asked if he would like some tea, will philosophise saying, 'Occasionally this body takes a cup of tea,' instead of simply saying, 'Yes, please.' I never observed our Master do that. On the contrary. I have seen Him behave more humanly than human beings. If a young mother went to Him weeping over the death of a child, you could see tears in His eyes. He did not say, 'Shanti - You and your child are Immortal Self.' we are all tempted to be ponderous - talking philosophy at the wrong moment.

I never saw Gurudev behave so impractically. He was absolutely down to earth. When the occasion demanded, He sympathised up to the point of crying with the person. Then, when your heart opened up - perhaps after you had stayed at His Ashram a couple of days, He planted some seeds of wisdom. Krishna demands this. Do not pose as a wise man. Wisdom must shine through the pores of your body. People who have been to the Ashram while He was alive were aware that He did not talk high philosophy. The first question He would probably ask would be: 'What do you like, tea or coffee?' Then He would ensure that you had a comfortable stay in the Ashram, that your food and bed were satisfactory. He would probably give you a couple of books. Only when you went to question Him, then He might talk to you about yoga.

Your total life, your everyday life is Buddhi Yoga. It is not something which you can, as it were, demonstrate. But Krishna does say,

Far lower than the Yoga of wisdom is action, O Arjuna. Seek thou refuge in wisdom; wretched are they whose motive is the fruit. Gita - II.49

Buddhi Yoga is turning the Buddhi - your own inner intellect, which is but a reflection of the Cosmic Intelligence, so that it is facing this Cosmic Being, and turned away from the mind and the senses. Buddhi Yoga is certainly superior to all actions - instinctive action, impulsive action - action that is proposed by the mind and its limited purpose of ensuring physical and biological survival.

This ego-centred action is directed for at least 23 hours 59 min out of the 24 hours, purely towards this physical biological survival. It is useless and futile - not because it is unnecessary, but because it is concerned with a body that is disintegrating all the time, is going down, whatever I may do. The hair is getting greyer and greyer - never mind what I do about it. Looking at the passport, I can see I am not getting younger, but am one year older than last year - getting closer to the end of this life. If I pour some water into this glass - the glass is open one side, closed the other - if it were open both sides, I would not pour anything in. Yet this is what I do the whole time in daily life. I am not saying these actions are unnecessary or dangerous, but one must realise that a life lived for the sake of physical and biological survival is deluded - deluded in the sense that I am seeing only a small fragment of the Truth. Fragmented Truth is not Truth.

If you are going to attain enlightenment tonight, it is because of all those tons of food - bread and butter and fish and chicken etc. that you have eaten. If you suddenly say, 'I will give up this silly nonsense and eat no more, you will be dead and enlightenment would have been denied to you. So, eating, clothing, etc. are terribly meaningful. Even the sexual activities of your parents were meaningful, otherwise you would not have been here. Without Buddha's parents there would not have been a Buddha. All the activities that you can think of in the world become meaningful given this Buddhi Yoga. But minus this Buddhi Yoga, life becomes a burden, a totally meaningless, purposeless drudgery toil. I do not know why I am living.

Karma by itself is blind activity. If I look at these trees, especially the fruit bearing varieties, you will understand this. It is equally true of human reproductive activity too. Here are a thousand or more fruits each season. You can look at the fruit-bearing nature of the tree in two ways. First, how remarkably unselfish, humanitarian you are - I planted a seed which I could not eat and you have given me luscious plentiful fruits. Secondly, you could say, 'You are clever, you are producing luscious fruits in the hope that I will eat the fruit and plant the seed somewhere else. You are not interested in me, but only in propagating your seed.' If all the seed that a tree produces in every season became trees, we would not have a place to stand on this earth. In the same way, if all the human seeds became human beings, there would be no standing space. The world would be over populated in three days. Nature produces this abundance in order that out of this abundance someone may realise God, may reach enlightenment..

Among thousands of men, one perchance strives for perfection; even among those successful strivers, only one perchance knows Me in essence. Gita VII-3

One in a thousand, it could be one in million. Wake up to this Truth. I do not know. One in a thousand, in a million begins to question this routine life, routine action, animal action. The futility of perpetuating life for its own sake, for the pleasure of living. I do not think there is pleasure in living. There is hunger and thirst, jealousy, hate and strife. Even what little pleasure there is in life is like this fruit, temporary, fleeting.

But there is a purpose in this life. You can see the true purpose in the tree's message: I shall give you all these thousands of fruits, so that one of them can become a tree like me. In exactly the same way, nature tells you: I shall give you all these millions upon millions of babies in the world, in order that one perchance may become a Buddha, reach enlightenment.

It is not easy. Karma or one's action leads us no-where. We need enlightened action. Buddhi Yoga refers to the individualised intellect, directly facing the Truth - Cosmic Being, and thus providing the right non-motivation to the mind and the senses. These senses still function, whether you are a Yogi or a Super yogi, an enlightened person or whatever. In the ignorant, unenlightened state, your mind and senses function stupidly, with the sole intention of physical and biological survival. In the enlightened state, your whole mind and senses, guided by your individualised intellect, facing the Cosmic Being, function as a pure instrument of the Cosmic Being. That is called Buddhi Yoga. Anything can be Buddhi Yoga. The whole of life, all you do from morning to night, if done in the right spirit, is Buddhi Yoga.

What is the right spirit? Who is the real doer of this action? We discussed this in great detail during the past few nights. When I speak, is it the vocal cord, the mouth that speaks? Is it the brain, the mind, 'I' that speaks? No. When the 'I' says, 'I speak', some power sitting in the throat says, 'Nonsense'. When the vocal cords are paralysed, how does the 'I' speak? The 'I' seems to speak, but factually it is the vocal cord that speaks. It is the mind that dictates what the vocal cord speaks. It is the intellect that dictates what the mind should order the vocal cords to do. Yet, behind all this, there is this great intelligence, the Soul, the Jiva, regulating and providing the energy for the whole action. This Jiva is the Light in which all these things shine. Is there then a sort of dichotomy here?

It is not as if the 'I', the ego, is watching the mind. Does the mind watch the ego, or does the ego watch the the mind? Does the mind know what the ego looks like? The mind creates an image of the ego for me, and when I watch ego, I watch the mind. The eye looks these fingers. The eye is seeing the finger. The finger is wiping the eye. The finger and the eye belong to the same organism. They are not two different things. I can just as well say, 'I am wiping my eye', or, 'I am looking at my fingers.' All these statements being statements of fact. The eyes look at the fingers. The fingers wipe the eye. I am looking at the fingers. I am wiping the eye. All these statements are partially or totally true. One statement differs from the other superficially, according to the point of view. In the same way it is possible for 'I' to watch the mind, for the mind to watch the 'I' - because the Light in which

this watching or this observation takes place is the common factor. The common factor is that Light, that Intelligence, Atma, Inner Reality, Jiva, call it what you like.

When you think of Inner Light, there is a tendency, sooner or later, to make it into an image. If you are a Hindu, you probably use one of these big lamps or, if you are Christian or a Jew, you will use a candle. So it is better for you to use another word. Some extra-ordinary word - Inner Light, or Inner Reality, or the transcendental Truth, or the Christ Consciousness, or the Buddha, or the Soul, any word you like. It is not terribly serious, provided it means something, provided it forms the substratum on which all of these function - the mind, the intellect, the individualised intelligence, the ego-sense and the senses.

This Inner Light is the common factor. Hence the mind thinks, the senses function, the ego directs all these, and the intellect performs its own role in life. All of them seemingly independently, but all of them dependent for their existence upon this Inner Light. The only thing that is absent in Buddhi Yoga is the shadow, the evil of darkness, the darkness of ignorance. Otherwise, everything is there. Your senses function, the mind thinks, the intellect is able to discern - this is a glass, that is a jug. Your ego-sense is able to take the glass and to put it into this mouth and not into that mouth. When the body demands water, the hand picks up the glass and tells it, here and not there. It takes discerning intellect to do that. Each one performs its function without stupidly refusing to do so, nor arrogating to itself the overlordship of the whole show. Beware of the ego saying, 'I am an instrument in the hands of God. God is working through me.' The great ones have definitely used the word 'instrument'. It is a wonderful expression if you understand what it means. Krishna definitely refers to it in the Gita.

Therefore, stand up and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. Verily, by Me have they been already slain; be thou a mere instrument, O Arjuna. Gita - XI.33

Although 'being an instrument in My Hand' is Buddhi Yoga, although Buddhi Yoga is to realise that this body, this mind, this intellect, this ego-sense, all these function merely as an instrument in the Hands of the Cosmic Being, saying is not Being. Can you not detect an undertone of arrogance when I sit here saying, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I am not saying anything to you because I am a big Swami, an instrument in Divine Hands.' Why must this Cosmic God choose this fool as an instrument? Why does He need an instrument at all? Watch yourself. Note when we are supposed to be Yogis and Karma Yogis, and so on - how often we are tempted to exalt this 'me' over others. God's chosen instrument. God's chosen disciple. We are all chosen - I am chosen. And yet, if you scratch underneath the surface, you see such terrible vanity. I am so great that God has chosen 'me'.

Next time you lift a fountain pen to write a letter, look at it. It is an instrument in your hand. Does it even know? Put your hand on your heart and see how it functions. It goes on without even making its presence felt. It does its work

without even making you know what a precious thing it is, what a 'chosen' organ it is in your body. When the mind thinks it is a chosen instrument of God, it is in danger of vanity. One who is truly an instrument in the Hands of the Cosmic Being will not say so, will not even think so. The mind, the whole body, the senses, the ego, spontaneously respond to that Cosmic Being. The intellect reflects this Cosmic Intelligence, because the ego or the individualised Being is like a 'cell' in the Cosmic Being of God.

In your own physical body, there are billions of cells, each one performing its own task - 'duty' is a loaded word. Each cell does its task without the beating of the drum, without letting you know, without demanding anything. 'Why can I not do that?' Even the question 'why can I not do that' is wrong, because there is an anxiety to do. An instrument has no anxiety to do. Leave the pen on the table and sit looking at it. When you have an urgent letter to write, does the pen write in anxiety, 'I must write; it is very important. I must write'. Not at all. You left it on the table - it is there. Why is it then that in my heart there is such a tremendous anxiety to be an instrument in the Hands of God. That anxiety is the surest sign that the ego is very much anti-God. It thinks, 'Without me God cannot function.'

So, the important thing here is to 'be'. In order to be, I do not have to try to be. 'I am trying to be a good man.' When you say, that you are actually saying, 'I am not a good man.' Pick up that glass. I am going to ask this person who has picked up the glass not to hold it and not to drop it, but to try to drop it. Would anyone like to try? It is impossible. Either you hold it or you drop it. There is no such thing of trying to drop it. So, when someone says, 'I am trying to be a good man', it means, 'I am not a good man.' Because, if I were a good man, I would not be trying to be a good man. That is obvious. Also, I have no intention of being good. If I had, I would have dropped the viciousness long time ago. I want you to recognize me as a sincerely good person. I am really a vicious man, but I want you to think that I am sincerely wishing to be a good man. So I am telling you that I am constantly 'trying' to be a good man.

An instrument does not do any of these. It 'is' spontaneously good. It is spontaneously divine. You cannot possibly turn round and say, 'I am trying to do the Lord's Will.' Either you are or you are not doing the Lord's Will. Your only job is to look cautiously, constantly within at the springs of your own action.

From where does this action proceed? From a desire for pleasure? From animal instincts? Selfish motives? Is there a feeling within that I am doing this with a specific private motive? No. Because this body is part of Cosmic Matter. This mind, this intellect, are parts of Cosmic Intelligence, and this Spirit or the Soul is part of Cosmic Being. Each one of the billions of cells in the body do their allotted job without a private selfish motive at all. Therefore the Buddhi Yogi watches himself constantly to ensure that these un-yogic desires and attitudes do not manifest themselves in his consciousness. That is all he can do. And that is more than enough. When those are swept away, then the light shines by itself, our intellect is enlightened. It becomes Buddhi. Till then it was 'not Buddhi', but

dull intellect. Now it becomes enlightened intelligence, and this enlightened intellect naturally will guide the mind and the senses to function in the right way. This is the Gospel of Krishna.

Once we arrive at this understanding, immediately we realise a host of extremely valuable truths. When the heart palpitates, engages itself in the function of circulation, it does not ask for a reward. Imagine the heart saying, 'Oh no, if you will not do this or do that, I will not work.' Then you are also dead. It is like the funny story of the two-headed bird. One head became jealous of the other, became angry with it, and this head ate some poison to spite the other one. The result was that the whole bird was dead, including the head that took the poison.

In real life, what is extremely important and interesting too, is that in order to live I need to love and to be loved. If I am interested in living, I also need to work, I need to serve, I need to be active in this world. So, if I come and do some work in your house for you, then, when I take leave of you, I must thank you very much. 'If you had not been there for me to serve, I would not have had this opportunity of exercising my limbs. I would have wasted away. Thank you very much for giving me this chance. That is what Swami Sivananda used to do. He would do some service and thank the person who gave Him a chance of doing so.

In the same way, when we love one another, I need to love, and therefore I do not expect anything in return, any reciprocity. Nor when someone does not love me, do I feel I must return hate. If I return hate, then I am injecting hate into my own heart, killing myself. So, whatever be the attitude of the other person, I have a need to love, I have a need to serve.

That is the nature of an enlightened person. He is an instrument in the Hands of God. He functions as an instrument in the Hands of God. There fundamentally no difference between him and the Cosmic Being. Hence Krishna tells us that, 'They are keenly interested, devoted to the welfare of all beings - even as God is.'

## Talk 8

Yoga means Harmony, Union, Integration. If this harmony is not brought about by Yoga practice, it is not Yoga. It is something else. There must be an inner harmony, a total harmony within the total being. We call it Buddhi Yoga, we call it Karma Yoga. It does not matter what call it. But it must lead to the integration of the total personality. The oneness, the harmony that exists amongst the billions of the cells in the body, the total, continuous, unquestioning, undoubted, supranational unity - that is what we are looking for. And when all actions that are performed by this body, this mind, this intellect and this ego-sense - when all these spring from the Cosmic Being, the Cosmic Intelligence, the resultant action is Karma Yoga.

Karma Yoga is not doing something and telling oneself, 'I am doing it unselfishly.' If you are totally unselfish, you are not even aware that you are unselfish. If you are egoless, the ego is not even aware that it is egoless. So, non-volitional activity is when all actions spontaneously spring from this Cosmic Being. When you look at yourself, you realise that there is a body. That 'I have a body' is probably a wrong idea, but one cannot deny the existence of a body. There is a mind, an intellect. There is also an emotional aspect of this personality, the feeling, and there is the will or the ego-sense. If we watch ourselves now, if we look into ourselves and into our behaviour, it is not difficult to realise that there is no harmony between the three - thinking, feeling, and willing. They seem to run in different directions. They all have their own different goals. In whatever we do, one or the other of those elements is not participating.

You know Jesus is supposed to have said that if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can make a mountain move. Can you do that? Why do you not try? 'I have the faith, not like a mustard seed, but at least an apple-size faith.' I look at this jug of water and say, 'Go away'. As you are saying 'Go away' to the jug, if you can look deeply within, you will see something is doubting. There is non-participation, non co-operation. It needs a little bit of what I call 'curious seriousness' to see this.

If you are too serious, you go to the psychiatrist - if you are not serious at all, you go to the night club. Somewhere in between, there is a playful, joyful seriousness. If you have that, you will see clearly that, in everyone of your actions, there is this inner split. This inner split has first to be recognised - this is terribly important. When this split is recognised, and the misery that the split causes in your life is directly apprehended, the split disappears. When the split is gone, when there is total harmony between thinking, feeling and willing, that action has got the power that Jesus alluded to. If you tell the tree to move, it must move. If it does not move, you make it move. At that time, there is this harmony within you, there is an almost unimaginable power, because you are not working, because you are not 'doing' - the Cosmic Being is doing it. Obviously, if this is not to be - in the sense that it is not the Will of the Cosmic Being, not the Will of God, whatever you call it, then your ego-sense, your individual will, will not participate in it.

Being in state of yoga, in a state of complete harmony, can I say, 'The sun must become cold'. I will not do it, because the Cosmic Being, which is the ground of my thought, feeling and willing has not willed it so. Since my Buddhi, my discriminating intellect is facing this Cosmic Being, it immediately says, 'Nonsense', or in common parlance you say, 'It is not the Will of God, so I will not entertain such an idea, such a desire'. This harmony of total integration has that Force. If you look into yourself, if you watch yourself again, the thing that is most rebellious in our personality is emotion.

You are listening to what I am saying, and it seems to make some sense. That is what your brain says. The words are clear, the ideas seem to be quite simple. Too simple for our enlightened intelligence. Those ideas are too commonplace. Then, from somewhere within, someone says, 'Yes, but ...' 'Yes but', means 'No.' You know this equation. It is simple arithmetic. Someone asks, 'Would you like to come for a swim?' 'Yes, but ...' It means 'No'. 'Why do you not say, 'No'? Why do you use two words where one would do? The intellect always assents, seems to understand, seems to grasp the Truth. But there is, deep within oneself, the heart, the emotion which says, 'That is painful. It is rather difficult.' To bring about a total emotional participation in the Yoga that we are discussing is an uphill task.

Theoretically we know that all of us are one. Intellectually, we know a hundred other things - everything ... The world is one. God alone is real. All this is unreal', all these formulas the intellect accepts. But there is this emotional aspect of our personality which says every time you present any Truth to it, 'Yes, but ...' If you tell it, 'It is good to meditate in the morning'. 'Yes, but ...'

Therefore, the sages invented special techniques and exercises to cajole and coax your emotional being into these Yoga practices. That is called Bhakti. This is not a crazy oriental invention. It has been prevalent everywhere, all over the world - devotional practises. Even an iconoclastic religion such as the Jewish faith found a need for it. You can see why the Hassidic people jump and dance. They are forbidden to even utter the Name of God, but somehow they just take the first or second syllable and weave around some kind of nice sound - I nearly said some meaningless sound - but all sounds are meaningless till you put meaning into it. If two Japanese are talking to you, it sounds meaningless noise, but to them it is meaningful. Hassidic Rabbis sing "Yambalam" - that is meaningful to them, even though it may not be meaningful to you, that is their business. If they choose to pull out one of the syllables of the Name of God and weave a song around it, what are they trying to do? They are merely coaxing their emotional being to participate. There is a barrier - the intellectual seems to say, 'Yes'. The emotional being seems to say, 'Yes, but ...' If only I can somehow manipulate this emotion, then there is integration and harmony here. This is the problem.

The problem is yours too. Down through the ages people have been inventing rituals to help to release this locked-up love in the heart. The problem is that none of these rituals - dancing, singing, whatever they might be, are certain to be

effective in dealing with this emotional aspect. They must evoke God-love in you, that love which is hidden in your heart and which the heart refuses to let go.

Nobody, no practice whatsoever can possibly make you love someone. All kinds of things have been invented: make-up, short and long hair, perfumes, incense and nonsense. All sorts of things have been tried to unlock this chamber in your heart and to let the love flow. This is common knowledge, is it not? Whatever you do seems to end in frustration, to become meaningless. A girl wanting to attract her boy friend might make-up heavily - he objects saying she is like a painted doll. 'I like to see your skin, not your make-up.'

It is possible to excite someone's passion. But is it possible to make someone love me? I can brainwash you, I can condition your mind, but love is in this silly physical heart - the heart of your being. It is not the surface, not the skin, not the brain. It is the very heart of your being. This love seems to be so securely locked in your heart, that it is nearly impossible to invent a method by which this treasure could be unlocked. Hence all the methods that Yogis invented have unfortunately remained 'methods' - singing, dancing, etc.,. Yes of course, that easy - is it not? 'Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.' Work yourself up into a 'frenzy' - that is possible.

There was swami, a marvelous man - I am not criticising him, I am only bringing his story in to illustrate this - he had a couple of wooden clappers and he would sit there, singing, 'Jaya Ram, Jaya Ram.' He would go on like this for about 45 minutes; then he would collapse from fatigues. Naturally, if you did it for 3 minutes, you would go into deep trance. Then his devotees used to sit there and say, 'Ah, he is talking to God - he is in samadhi.' He was merely tired. Drugs are also being tried to see if they can remove this resistance. Intellectually I understand that God alone is, that God is the substratum. God is the word we use for Cosmic ground, Cosmic Being, etc. Intellectually it seems quite clear. But how to remove this silly 'but'. Take drugs, jump up and dance, the problem still remains exactly the same.

Here is something deep within: Love, which seems to flow when it wants to flow, and does not flow when it does not want to - regardless of provocation, regardless of what you and I may do. It is totally irrational. It flows when it wants - it ceases when it wants to. All these practices which have been handed down to us as Bhakti Yoga fall under this category. People have tried to imagine - in the sense of creating an 'image-in' - God as abstract. They have worked themselves up mystically into trance condition in which the intellect stands still and the emotional barrier is battered. It does not succeed very often. It needs a certain amount of ability to perceive and believe in the abstract, which all people do not possess. Then they said, 'All right, we will use a visual representation. Moses went to Mount Sinai and had a vision of God. God appeared to him in a burning bush - fire that did not consume'. This is almost a symbol of Love - a burning fire that does not consume; it is a creative fire. So, here God is represented as a flaming bush, a fire that did not burn anything.

The Jews dress up the ark scrolls beautifully. They do not call it a deity, but all the adoration that the deity deserves, the ark receives. Elsewhere, in India, people worship books such as the Vedas. There are certain other sects which worship their scripture as something of a divine Revelation. It is said however that the masses cannot love a Book.

The book is after all a paper, parchment. The masses can still not reach up to that level. So, it was thought, 'Why not paint those ideas in such a manner that the masses will be able to appreciate them.' Krishna, I believe is a historical personality. But Siva is not a historical personality. This picture which represents Siva, is 'audio-visual philosophy' - audio in the sense that we are inspired to go on chanting 'Om Namo Sivaya', visual in the sense of the representation of different ideas through the image depicted.

An image of God, or an idol, is to anyone who worships such an image, 'visualized philosophy' or 'philosophy made visible'. The word 'Siva' means auspiciousness, goodness, prosperity. This third member of the Hindu Trinity is one who is looked upon also as the Creator, the Redeemer of the world. He dances in the beginning and, as He dances, the whole universe is created. As soon as the universe is created, in order to ensure its prosperity, and protection, He goes into a deep meditation. Remarkable, is it not? You create the world and wishing to protect the world, you go into deep meditation. There is possibly a hint here: that the idea that you and I have that we should be constantly busy in order to ensure commonwealth, is probably not right.

You know the Zen and Taoist maxim: the glass may be made of gold, but what makes the glass useful is the place where there is no gold - the empty glass. That is what meditation symbolises. It is not the feverish activity in which you and I are engaged constantly that ensures our prosperity, but the period when you are in meditation. That is the creative vacuum, that is the creative silence, the creative peace.

## Talk 9

We were discussing the philosophical symbolism of Lord Siva's image the other day. Having created this whole universe, he is absorbed in deep meditation. Such meditation and such inner communion is more vital to prosperity and progress than feverish activity.

One who practices serious meditation may feel that the whole body and even the mind are hot. The entire nervous system feels hot. A great Yogi has suggested a simple remedy for this: a drink of the juice of grass. But, Siva has another remedy. He has a fountain on his own head - the holy river Ganga. While the meditation goes on, two things take place: energy is produced and heat is generated. You want the energy which sustains life, but you do not want the heat. Hence the meditator is cautioned to avoid tamasic and rajasic - exciting or heating - foods and to resort more and more to satvic - healthy, non-irritating and cooling - food.

If you are in meditation, you are totally non-violent. If you have reached that state of total non-violence, when there is no aggressiveness, when there is no hate or violence, anywhere in your being, then even a cobra does not touch you. You can then wear a cobra round your neck as a garland, like Siva, and no poison, no suffering can afflict you.

The trident represents the three parts or the three aspects of your personality: body, mind, soul - thinking, willing, feeling. All these are integrated, and Siva holds them as a trident. Then there is the sacred ash on Siva's forehead. When fire burns something, ash is left behind. Krishna uses the symbolism in the Gita: 'All the actions of your life, whether they are apparently good or not so good, are reduced to ashes by the Fire of Knowledge in your heart.'

Throw whatever it is, any kind of filthy thing, into the Fire - whatever it is, once it is burned, what is left is pure ash. Ash is never dirty. Even so, if all your actions can be consigned to the Fire of Knowledge - Self-knowledge, only pure ash is left - the pure ash which Siva loves to wear on His forehead.

All those beautiful, brilliant ideas were woven into the painting, into the picture, the sculpture, and presented to us - 'Here you are. This is philosophy, this is visual philosophy. This is Truth made visible - God made visible.' Can you love this God? Of course you can love God. 'Om Namah Sivaya.' All these things work for a few days. Then it is gone. This is the difficulty with regard to love. Anything that you do to evoke this love, to provoke this love, to coax this love, seems to work for a few days, and then it is gone. That means you merely stuck the key into the lock and tried to turn it. As you were trying to turn it, the inside probably rattled a little bit and that is all. Then, probably the key broke or the lock did not work - and it remains as it was.

This is the greatest problem in spiritual life, in Yoga: how to unlock this love in

the human heart, in our own heart, and make it flow. You can go to the temple and look at the image of Krishna standing with his flute in hand. This can also teach you a lesson. I was the official pujari in the Ashram temple in India, where they have a lovely image of Krishna. One day in the temple, I was offering flowers to Krishna - feeling that Krishna was standing there. Naturally I would not do all this if I did not feel that Krishna was in that image - God being omnipresent, He must be present in that image also. So, I was cleaning the image, putting flowers and garlands on it, and placing sweetmeats, fruits and lamps in front of the image. Krishna did not say, 'Thank you'. He did not take any notice of me. But I had a need to thank Him for being there for me to serve Him.

To you, this business of thanking someone for a service has become more a matter of good manners than something that is meaningful. If someone gives you a glass of water, you say 'thank you' automatically, it means nothing. However, someone not saying it to you does mean something, it hurts your feelings, does it not? You would think how rude I was if you gave me something and I just walked away. You would think, 'What an ill-mannered man. He does not thank.'

When you have finished laying flowers of worship at the Feet of the Lord's image in the temple, you say, 'Thank you', and walk out. That is all. Why can one not do this in daily life? When I do something for you, the right thought is to thank for giving this chance to serve you. It is I who must do the thanking. It is not for me to just sit back allowing others to thank me.

These are all the lessons we are supposed to learn from the images that have been presented to us. The worship itself is highly symbolic and beautiful - if we care to see it. But still the heart is locked. We come back to square one. We have not moved from square one at all. We have invented all those methods, techniques, but no technique seems to work where the heart is concerned. It seems to be child's play to convey the message to the intellect, but where the heart is concerned, it seems to be totally beyond reach for most of us.

There are, however, some great devotees who are more successful. Chaitanya, the founder of the Krishna Consciousness movement, who lived a few hundred years ago, was supposed to have been dancing all the time. It is said, if he saw anything blue, he went into ecstasy, saying, 'Krishna, this is Krishna'. If you go to India and visit a place called Puri, where he lived, they will even now point out to you the place in the sea where he jumped in. He saw the ocean was blue and he shouted, 'Hare Krishna', and jumped in. It seems he was nearly drowned. His body was washed ashore, and somehow he revived.

Why is the figure of all these Gods painted blue? Look at the sky - the sky is blue. Is there really anything blue there? No. It is limitless space, which appears to your eye as something blue. So, they represented Krishna as blue. I have not seen anyone blue- coloured. I have seen yellow, black, brown, pink, white people, but never blue people. Yet Krishna is supposed to have been blue in colour. It did not mean that he had a blue skin. When I think of blue, I can only think of infinity. If

I look at the sky when it is clear, it is blue. What was hoped for was that you and I would fall in love with this beautiful infinite blue Krishna. The figure is painted beautifully, so you may even have a sort of physical love for this personality. It is said that Krishna looked so beautiful that even Cupid - so called perhaps because he makes people stupid, was enamoured of him and lost his heart to Krishna. The figure of Krishna is given a human resemblance. When you say this, people get worked up and shout, 'That is anthropomorphism.' They fail to realise that the human mind can recognise and love only another human personality. If God suddenly sprang up here as a huge yellow pillar of fire, you would all disappear in less than three seconds. It is one of those absurd habits of the impure mind that it will question every form in which we adore God. If someone says, 'God is nameless and formless', it is characterised a hallucination. If we regard the sky and the sun as divine, it is considered nature worship. If we worship Krishna, we are considered idolators. If we adore Swami Sivananda, it is personality cult.

To return to the beautiful figure of Krishna, when you fall in love with this blue-coloured Krishna, in that love something happens in your heart. This has to happen, no one can make it happen. Then the outlines of that figure disappear; and you, as it were, see the Infinite.

How does one make the emotion participate in all this? I understand intellectually, yet the emotion says, 'Yes, but unless those two fall into line with each other, unless a harmony can be worked out between those two - the intellect and the emotion, the will is not going to function as it should, and there can be no harmony within me, and therefore no Yoga. The work that I do is toil, the intellectual understanding I have is a burden, and life is a continuous confusion without this harmony.'

To come back to our theme - here we have a crystallised concrete philosophy - concrete in the sense that many of these statues are actually made of concrete. And we have seen it is impossible to grasp the Truth, the Divine. The moment it is grasped, it becomes finite, limited, and the limited Truth is untruth, falsehood. So, the intellect is imperfect - it is incapable by nature of grasping this Truth. In order to experience this Truth, there must be a complete whole-souled integration of the intellect and the emotion, which will then pervade the whole personality. Here is a beautiful image of Krishna, this beautiful wonderful boy was very fond of his friends. You and I are his friends. He was very fond of girls and boys, and so let us love Krishna. As you fall in love with this image - the image which represents the personalised ideal of God, the outline disappears and you enter into His Being with your heart, mind, and intellect.

'Enter your mind and your discerning intelligence into Me', says Krishna in the Gita. This is real meditation. Not when God enters into you - but when you enter your mind, heart and your discerning intelligence - everything, into this divine Being, then you are close to Truth, and you are recognising the Omnipresence of God, with your heart, with your mind, with your whole soul. Then one enters into the real state of meditation.

All sorts of symbolism was brought into this worship. When you pour water on the image, it does not mean that God is dirty and needs a little washing. In doing this, you are suggesting to yourself that the love in your heart flows constantly towards God, in the same way as rain falls continuously on your head. When you offer the flowers at the feet of a statue, you are actually saying, 'Let each one of my actions be a flower which is offered at your Feet. All my life is an offering to you'. When you offer the fruits, which God does not eat, it means: I surrender the fruits to all these actions unto You. I have no hope, no expectations - I expect nothing in my life'. Camphor is the one thing which burns without leaving a trace. Therefore, it is used prominently in Indian Temples. There is no worship in India without camphor and, as the camphor melts away, you are watching that.

'Even I may melt away - without leaving a trace behind, without leaving any ashes behind. May I be absorbed totally into You - for You are Omnipresent. This division is illusory - this division is created by the mind only. May I be wholly absorbed into You'. That is what we are supposed to pray when we perform this worship.

If we take this to its own logical conclusion, it is fantastic. It may annoy people who are theistic, who believe in God, who believe in a certain thing called 'the ultimate reality', or the soul, or immortality. You should believe in nothing, absolutely nothing. 'I will not believe in anything anymore'. Even that statement is as absurd as is 'I will believe.' What I believe is also merely the sparking of other brain cells. Let it go.

When everything has gone, I look at what is left. There is no 'I', there is no ego-sense in this complex. We have not discovered an ego amongst the brain cells. So there is no ego. The eye sees him. The ear listens to her cough. The nose smells the smoke. If we understand this correctly, we come to the conclusion that there is no ego. It is highly interesting. There is no ego. One brain cell 'sees' that he is nodding, another brain cell makes this mouth speak, a third brain cell feels angry when he is impolite. If we go on this basis, which may be regarded as pure materialism, then one thing is certain: there is no ego. Therefore, there is no meaning whatsoever in any religious, spiritual, or materialistic activity.

If, with the cessation of the functioning of this brain, my whole life comes to an end, then why must I acquire anything? Why must I accumulate anything? If pleasure is just a matter of tickling a few brain cells, why must I go after drinking, dancing, or women? I keep pressing the switch - I do not need anything in this world. If I am hungry, I press a switch. So, even if this point is pursued to its own logical conclusion, we are freed from the ego, because in all - whether it is scientific, philosophical, metaphysical, spiritual, or psychical research, only one thing seems to be the target of this attack: the false ego. Not that the ego does not exist. But the false value that the ego assumes to itself must go.

The ego, according to Krishna and the Bhagavad Gita, is nothing but one aspect

of the gross manifestation of God's Nature. In scientific terminology perhaps you can say that the false ego is the hypothalamus, where all the sense impressions are co-ordinated - where there is aggressiveness, lust, passion etc. The metaphysicians gave it the rather interesting title 'I'. This 'I' does not have a divine connotation. It has somehow assumed the misnomers - 'I am the most important thing', 'I am different from you', 'I am superior or inferior to you', 'I am your boss', 'I am your master.' All this is nonsense. The moment this nonsense disappears, we are free. In meditation, again, one comes face to face with this, provided that the meditation is practised meaningfully. Meaningful meditation is described in this manner by Krishna in the Gita: 'Enter your mind and Buddhi into Me'. Do not try to push me into your heart - I am Infinity. Your heart is too small, it will burst. 'Offer yourself unto Me'.

Even in our attempts at meditation there is a technique which seems to be of great value. That is this: as you close your eyes and repeat your mantra, visualize a Divine Presence, an image of God or whatever you like. That is how we start meditation. As the meditation deepens, it is possible to feel that God is not confined to this image. God fills my whole being. He is not confined to this body - so, the Divine Presence extends to this temple and fills the whole universe. It is possible in this way even to visualize the Omnipresence of God. It is pure visualization, pure imagination. Can this imagination save me? Of course, I am only imagining that I am sitting here and you are listening to me. Why am I talking? Because I imagine that all of you are listening to me. You may, in fact, be thinking of something else. So, if this imagination is valid and enables me to speak, why should not the other imagination about God be valid?

Arjuna was allowed to see God with a thousand heads, hands and eyes - all these belong to the same one God. He fills the entire universe. If the vision is not possible, it is imagination. If it is not possible for me to get this vision, I imagine it. In due time, the Truth will be realised. In this way again, one can arrive at the understanding that God and He alone exists, and that even this physical body is part of God's Nature. That is the most important part of Krishna's Yoga. In Krishna's Yoga there is no denial of anything. As a matter of fact, He goes to the other extreme by suggesting: do not torture your body; if you cannot stand on your head, practise some other asana, they are also good for you. Do not try to go to the extremes of fasting etc. Performing foolish austerities and torturing the body is unnecessary. Krishna gives us a common sense viewpoint. Even the physical body is not denied. Anyone who tries to do this, to say that the body is maya, illusion, does not exist, is either blind or mad. Krishna does not commit that error. The whole thing, including the body, is part of this Divine Nature - the inferior and superior body of God. The All in All. All is One.

All these devotional practises were conceived with the very best of intentions. Yet, strange as it may sound, even those become ineffective if they are performed mechanically. You cannot not love a person if you have no feelings, can you? If there is no love in your heart when you mechanically say, 'Oh my darling,' it will be likely to lead to the divorce court. Even when a man who is suing his wife for

divorce, probably right there, standing in the court, still says, 'Darling, I cannot live with you', why does he say, 'Darling' then? That is the routine. 'I have been saying it for twenty years.' It is a mechanical expression and has no meaning at all. The heart and the mind, everything must participate.

Therefore, our Master Swami Sivananda insisted upon what is known as Integral Yoga. You must carry out a little bit of study, some meditation, some worship, some japa, some asanas, and some pranayama. When all those things are combined, there are greater chances of integration, of bringing about harmony within, of discovering the non-existence of the ego.

The ego's non-existence an independent entity has to be discovered by the intellect, by the heart, by the ego itself. To put it the other way: the ego is only one small part of this jigsaw puzzle, the ego-sense. Perhaps it is not even there. I am reading a very interesting book on the mind of man. There we are told that scientists in several parts of the world are coming to the definite conclusion that there is absolutely no evidence of the existence of the soul. They claim that there is no immortality and that it is all pure humbug. According to them, it is the first time that the non-existence of the soul has been revealed by laboratory tests. In fact, it not the first time. There was a school of philosophy in India who took the same line. Now, this theory is very interesting. A child is born and the baby has already inherited a brain from the parent; but who supplies the genes for manufacturing an infantile brain. That infantile brain begins to function. As the baby experiences the world, the numerous connections in the brain get properly linked up. I believe there are about 300,000 million cells in the brain, neurons. As we go on living, growing up, the brain receives impressions from the world through the senses. As the baby develops, the sparkling of the different centers of the brain produce what we call a thought. So, the brain, your consciousness comes into being - the whole thing is consciousness. This consciousness came into being with your birth. It is the brain then that is consciousness, the brain that is the mind, the brain that is everything - the brain is you. When a certain part of the brain is tickled, it gives you great pleasure. So, pleasure is nothing but tickling of a few cells of the brain. Then another part of the brain is tickled - you are amorous, passionate. So passion is nothing but tickling of another part of the brain. Aggressiveness, violence is nothing but tickling of another part of the brain, seeing is another part of the brain, talking is another part of the brain, whether it is pure nonsense or not. It is all just the work of the brain cells, neurons. The entire life of man is nothing but the sparking of neurons. At a certain stage, when there is no oxygen supplied, there is no nourishment for the brain, and the brain suddenly gives up. Nothing is left. No consciousness is left. No intelligence is left. A lovely theory. In any conversation, brain is talking to brain, the speech center of this brain is sparking, and words are coming out. Something else is sparking in your brain. The sounds are being received. That is all. Nothing more.

## All is One.

Hence our Swami Sivananda's Integral Yoga - Yoga is integration, and Integral Yoga is double emphasis - takes into account every aspect of our personality, every facet of our life, and ensures harmonious development of the entire being, so that the whole being participates in the Self-realisation, in the realisation that the Truth is all-in-all, and the only thing that distorted this sublime vision was the little self which, thank God, is nothing but a shadow.