

SPIRITUAL POWER

Look within to be free of fear



GAYATRI NARAINA

The power to face is a spiritual power. This power connects to the spiritual heart of the soul. When the soul uses this power to face, what is released is courage, clarity, confidence and the capacity of the spiritual heart. The power to face springs from the ability to be in solitude and introverted. In other words, when we use the power to face, we look inwards to see what is going on inside, activating the third eye, the eye of the soul, to look at the self.

What is happening when I look within, to face my fears, is that I am looking beyond the layers of illusion to the authenticity within me. Those illusions are what become



manifest in my personality traits, or 'sanskars'. These characteristics, 'sanskars' are covering up the underlying cause of the fear. I need to connect to the courage that is there within my spiritual heart. I am the only one who can do this. The only one who can look at the fear and understand it. When I do so, I am building an inner capacity, an inner strength.

However, I must be able to recognise the consciousness that I am in, and the awareness that emerges from that consciousness. When I am

in the consciousness of being a soul, the awareness is very different than being in the consciousness of being a body. When I am in the consciousness of being a spiritual being, a soul, then I can connect to the spiritual heart, which is often referred to as the genius of the soul, and I find so much beauty and power. The heart loves silence and solitude. If I sit quietly and peacefully, come into the consciousness of being a soul, a being of light, I can hear the whispers of the heart. Then I can let the feelings of internal

love touch the core of my being, and therein find the courage to deal with my fears.

Fear is based on illusion. Fear is a disease of this spiritual heart, and it is curable. Originally, the heart is filled with love and light and liberty, which is freedom. As each one moves along through life, sometimes there are experiences that are beyond our understanding, beyond our ability to cope. For example, people that I depended on, people I admired, may have done something to break the trust I had in them. That then

lays down the fear of ever trusting again. Or, perhaps I experienced a natural calamity, and in the aftermath of that, the situations I had to bear left me with a fear of poverty. These kinds of fear, that are borne during times of extreme anguish, leave the heart with an overwhelming sense of powerlessness.

When I practise meditation, and look deeply into the spiritual heart, I am able to transform the feelings connected to the cause of fear and thereby transform the thoughts connected to that fear. Just changing my thinking alone may appear to have changed the way I respond to the fear, but if I have not worked on the 'heart of the matter' then the feelings will emerge again. If I am able to transform the feeling, then I become free of the fear.

Now is the time to face our fears and transform them into a powerful energy, full of love, to create the world of love and peace we want to live in. Gayatri Naraine represents the Brahma Kumaris at the United Nations in New York.

DISCOURSE

LEARN YOUR LESSONS TO PROGRESS SPIRITUALLY



DADI JANKI

There is benefit for you in every situation. If, that is, you know how to look for it. The idea behind steady spiritual progress is to see every circumstance and situation (particularly those that challenge you) as a tailor-made lesson in your personal plan for self-development.

For example, in a situation where hurtful or angry words were ex-

changed, why not see it as the chance either to perceive things about your own character which need changing or to rehearse some virtue or quality that you need to put into practice more often? Actually, we should be grateful for the opportunity to evaluate ourselves. In this way you can transform anything into a constructive lesson. Never think that you have learned enough and now can stop. You should love it when people try to correct you or give you advice. It keeps you alert and gives you plenty of opportunity to put your truth into practice. It is a sign of great danger to be unable to accept criticism and instead use your understanding to criticise others. Realise deeply the significance of every moment, and your spiritual progress will be assured.



LIFE MANTRA

CONTROL OVER THOUGHTS BRINGS EASY SUCCESS



B.K. DR. SAVITA

As long as the human soul is in a body, it performs actions, even if it is just thinking or breathing. Each of the body's organs has a task to perform, which it does naturally. You do not labour to move your hands or feet, unless you are debilitated. Similarly, the mind and intellect, which are faculties of the soul, are naturally applied to the job of thinking and discerning.

Normally, one focuses primarily on the tasks one is assigned or required to do, but if that is not happening, it means one's attention and energy are engaged elsewhere. This was the case with ancient

rulers who had power and wealth and could have used them with wisdom, but they often cared more about their own pleasure than undertaking the complicated task of ruling their kingdom for the benefit of their subjects.

On the spiritual path, too, if one is attracted by the fleeting pleasures offered by the material world, one forgets God. Enjoyment of physical pleasures and remembrance of God cannot go hand in hand.

When someone fails in their spiritual effort, it is the intellect that falls first, as it is diverted from the source of divine power. Just as in a battle the enemy cuts your communications and supplies and then attacks, spiritual aspirants first lose awareness of their true self, the soul, and the connection with the Divine through which they receive power. To prevent this, one needs to constantly observe the intellect.

Control over the intel-

lect should be such that one can stabilise it in one thought at will, for as long as desired. This ability to control thoughts is developed by practice. Thoughts are our creation and we are their creators. We can acquire the ability to think of something for only as long as it is necessary; the intellect should be engaged only where it needs to be. Regular practice of meditation makes this possible.

When spiritual aspirants come together for a task and all of them have one focus, the combined energy of their common thought brings success.

Their vibrations spread far and wide, touching other souls and kindling their spiritual awareness. This is a powerful way to reach out to those who are suffering, and help them find peace and contentment in their lives.

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EXPLORE INSIDE

MAKING THE MIND YOUR FRIEND



MAUREEN GOODMAN

Our thoughts shape our experience of life, colour our view of the world, and affect our physical health. They also create the atmosphere around us, through our vibrations.

We all have experience of the racing mind seemingly running away with us. Make no mistake, negative, critical, or angry thoughts have real power.

Yet we should not try to stop them; it will just not work. Instead, recognizing the active and lively nature of the mind, we should aim to harness our thoughts, and direct our energy, positively.

This is so important in the current circumstances since the more positive the mind, the more it helps boost the immune system. Dadi Janki taught that

thoughts, breath and energy are connected. You may notice that when you are upset or worried, the mind is racing, your breathing is shallow, and you quickly feel tired. By contrast, when you are calm, the thoughts are slower, more meaningful and carry a powerful energy, and physical vitality is increased.

The key to having control over the mind is to understand who I truly am. Identifying with the physical body means taking on shifting and fragmentary

identities based on external circumstances and conditioning such as gender or culture, occupation or values. These roles distract and clutter the mind with mistaken perceptions.

The practice of meditation guides me to wake up to my true identity as a spiritual being, a soul. I understand that although I play many parts in daily life, they do not define me. Developing the awareness that I am a stable and constant soul provides an anchor to help me live in the world as it is.

It also unlocks rich inner resources as I move away from the effects of external conditioning and follow the path to rediscover my original state as a being of peace, love and wisdom. Self-respect increases and, as I navigate through life making conscious choices based on inner wisdom, my thoughts, words and actions change. So, too, does the impact they have on others.

The journey takes time, honesty and courage. The mind is like an ocean,

sometimes stormy on the surface, yet still, silent and filled with beauty in its depths. Exploring the inner recesses, we discover more recent thoughts and experiences, and also the stored memories and long-held attitudes that have formed our personality traits. By using the intuitive capacity to discern what will be useful and what should be discarded, we begin to clear away the clutter in the mind. Akin to the intellect yet connected to the heart, the intuition is a sure guide in deciding what to keep and what to leave behind.

The deeper our exploration through meditation, the nearer we come to reaching the true, original self, and to setting ourselves free. We discover we are beings of strength and peace, filled with unconditional love and wisdom, and deep inner joy. These qualities make up our inherent goodness and they are present in all of us. We only have to find them.

Maureen Goodman is the Programme Director for the Brahma Kumaris UK, and BK NGO representative to the United Nations in Vienna



GOLDEN RULE

For better relationships, change yourself



B.K. SURYA

If we wish to have harmonious relations with others, we need to resolve in our minds to change ourselves — our perspective, attitude, and behaviour — in order to adapt to any situation. When

we change, our world will change.

The formal education we receive, unfortunately, does not make us humble, but instead fosters our ego. This has become a major cause of broken relationships. When there is a difference of opinion or conflict between two people, both blame the other and neither is willing to back down or compromise in any way. This widens the rift and the two drift apart.

Maturity in relationships calls for understanding others and behaving appropriately in the best interest of all involved. This may re-

quire me to keep quiet, not respond to provocation, and have the wisdom and patience to give others time and space to make considered choices that will strengthen the relationship.

The conviction of being right often makes us rigid and inconsiderate, stopping us from accepting another's point of view or giving them any leeway. This can cause a lot of sorrow and distance us from many people. Even if we are right, a little flexibility and kindness on our part will create confidence in others and make our interactions easier and



less stressful.

Are we aware of the kind of atmosphere we have created at home with our attitude and behaviour? If there is stress or irritation in the air,

can anyone there feel happy? Creating a happy environment where I live is simply a matter of remaining light and cheerful.

One more reason for conflict in relationships is expectations. We want others to live according to our wishes. We seek respect, cooperation, and support, without actually saying so. When these expectations are not met, the result is dejection, bitterness and anger.

Most people today are empty within and in no position to give anything. They themselves yearn for what we hope to get from them. The

better way is to give rather than try to get anything from others. It is a spiritual law that what you share will come back to you multiplied several times over. Start giving love and respect, and you will never again crave for them.

Finally, another truth worth remembering is that we will be treated the way we treat others. So it is best to live by the golden rule, do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

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A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

My world is a reflection of my inner state. When rushed and frenzied inside, my external world seems to move faster. When I move more slowly, the world slows in response. This is a practical expression of the relativity of time. Today let me use this understanding and move slowly to create a world of peace around me.