

STATE OF AWARENESS

Defying gravity with spirituality



B.K. GEETA

All matter is subject to the pull of gravity. The gravitational pull of Earth keeps people, animals, vehicles and all other objects on the ground. Without the gravitational force, everything would float around, as happens in outer space.

While the gravitational force is essential for keeping things stable on Earth, going beyond its pull also has its advantages. Gravity weighs one down, while escaping from it enables one to float and move with a lot more freedom. All objects become lighter in outer space, allowing one to move them easily.

The experience of weightlessness in zero-gravity conditions has a parallel in the spiritual world, whereby the soul becomes free of the pull of physical matter, which makes up the body, and experiences freedom and lightness.

Just as astronauts find the experience of weightlessness exhilarating, souls who go beyond the pull of the body into the state of soul-consciousness feel totally relaxed, peaceful and free. It is a state of being in which one is beyond the influence of the physical world. Just as the experience of an astronaut is very much real, soul-consciousness is the real state of the self -- it is not the product of imagination. It results from the soul withdrawing its attention from the body, which is its costume, and becoming aware of itself -- a sentient point of light full of peace, purity and bliss.

To overcome the gravi-



tational force, spacecraft must reach escape velocity, which is the speed at which objects can break away from the pull of Earth. The soul, too, needs to make some effort to be free from the pull of the body. Regular practice of detachment from the body is needed for this experience.

Detachment from the body does not imply the

soul leaving the body, which happens at the time of death. It is a mental exercise wherein one reminds oneself of one's true identity -- 'I am a soul' -- and remains in that awareness. The soul then experiences itself as a living entity separate from the body.

In this state the soul becomes free from the negativity that comes with

body-consciousness, including feelings of attachment, dislike, anger, ego, sorrow, and jealousy. The soul also experiences its innate qualities of purity, peace, and joy.

Regular practice of detachment from the body gradually frees one from its influence, cleansing the soul of negative feelings, memories and traits. As the soul becomes

cleaner, it starts feeling lighter, which in turn enables it to rise above the body's pull more easily.

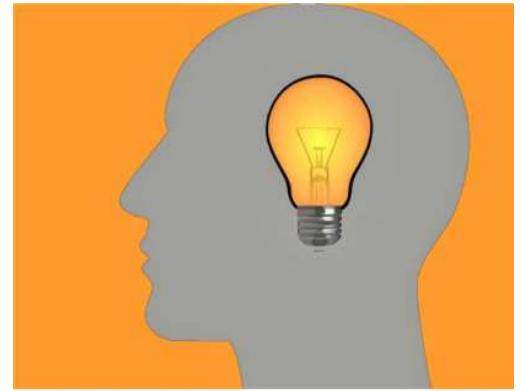
Over time, as detachment from the body becomes easy and natural, one's way of looking at oneself and others changes. One ceases to notice differences of gender, race, age, and religion, and sees others as souls. This ends physical attraction, discrimination on the basis of race, religion and gender, and frees one from the mental agitation they cause.

One who reaches this state of awareness experiences constant peace and joy. They achieve mastery over the self, wherein the mind and body function by the will of the soul. This is called self-sovereignty. Such mastery comes from detachment, without which the soul remains subservient to matter.

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DISCOURSE

PROBLEM-SOLVING



DADI JANKI

The trick to problem-solving is to get to the root of the problem before it even shows up. This requires virtues such as objectivity, clarity and honesty, because the solution to all problems is truth.

Truth means your spirituality; that is, your essence -- the way something is before atti-

tudes and opinions are added. This truth will bring you closer to God, and His pure influence will allow you to perceive the essence of any problem easily.

Working on a problem at this level of its essence is a beautiful experience. This beauty has a transformative effect, not just on you and the problem, but also on the ones who cause the problems.

Every day you should ask yourself how much you have thought of yourself in your essence form, that is, as a spiritual being, an eternal child of the Divine.

This is the method to increase not just your awareness, but your spiritual beauty as well. This makes problem-solving easy.

PERTINENT QUESTION

WHY DO WE OFTEN FEEL SO TIRED?



ARUNA LADVA

"Fatigue makes fools of us all. It robs us of our skills, our judgement, and blinds us to creative solutions."
Harvey Mackay

Who does not complain of tiredness today? Everyone is tired. From young children, to the middle aged and the elderly. But tired of what? Tired of making effort? Tired of coping with the stress and strains of daily living? Or just tired of life itself? Then, perhaps we have not understood the meaning

of life at all.

When we make life a game, then there is fun and only more fun. We all need realistic and doable aims, but when we get serious and start making unrealistic plans filled with expectations, that is when we are setting ourselves up for trouble. That is when we start losing the joy of living.

Look at children when they are at play. They are engrossed in the game and really enjoy the moment of 'just being' present. Plus, they are actually learning a lot of social skills about how to interact with others whilst at play. When we make learning too formalised, then life becomes too rigid, and we are bound to become unhappy. We lose the joy of playing the game of life; really happiness is not in the winning but in participation in the game.

"That's what learning is, after all; not whether we lose the



game, but how we lose and how we've changed because of it, and what we take away from it that we never had before, to apply to other games. Losing, in a curious way is

winning." Richard Bach

As we develop more and more self-respect, we begin to value all our energies. We are cautious about not wast-

ing those energies. The biggest reason for tiredness is our state of mind and thinking too much, or not thinking in the right way. As we begin to manage our

thinking better and think less, or even learn how to think before we think, then we begin to change our attitude towards everything and we become light and enlightened.

A tired mind creates a tired and boring life. If we are already tired in our mind, before we begin anything, then what energy can we give to the task? Often, we can be tired thinking about the jobs we need to do, more than in the actual doing!

What happens when you go on vacation? Even if the flight is at 2.00 am, you will be raring to go. You will forsake your sleep and food to ensure that you are there on time for the flight. Why? Because you are excited, and your mind is set towards enjoyment and relaxation... and not effort. Basically, the mind is geared up for play and adventure and that is why we are not tired. The whole drama of the journey is another matter. But, in a way, we sort of enjoy that too.

The same is true for playing sports. We will energetically chase a ball or run a race or swim for miles. We do not

think of becoming tired then, do we? Interestingly, exercise and movement are not only good for the body, but they clear the brain fog and enable us to think more clearly.

We actually thrive on newness. Think about it. How happy would you be to eat the same meal every day? In the same way the mind needs newness and challenges to grow. Meditation is a tool that helps us to recharge the mind. With just one click of a thought we can change the tired mind into an enthusiastic mind.

So, the moral is, let us learn to love what we do, to make better choices about what and how we do the things we do, and then we will find that we are less tired.

Courtesy of istimetomeditate.org
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TRUE LIBERATION

BECOMING FREE FROM EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCE



B.K. SHIVANI

Sometimes, when we are unhappy or irritated, if asked why we are in a bad mood, we say that it is because of the way things are going in our life, or that another person made us angry. Similarly, we credit our happiness to circumstances or other people's behaviour. This is a deeply ingrained belief system which reinforces our emotional slavery, stopping us from living life the way we would like to.

If someone repeatedly nags

us about what we should and should not do, we thank them for the advice and make it clear that the decision will be ours. We like to have the freedom to choose the way we live, and that is what we tell others. But we need to tell ourselves the same thing. We create certain dependencies and bondages which we need to be free from. It only takes a little attention on the self and some understanding to be emotionally free.

We believe that our thoughts, feelings, words and behaviour are shaped by situations or other people and their conduct. This is called emotional dependence. If situations or other people decide whether we are happy or not, we are dependent on them. We complain, "They hurt me...", "They insulted me..." If there is sorrow, anger, peace or stability in the mind, have we chosen to create it or is it there because of



someone else? We need to ask ourselves this question.

What are we all slaves to? We become dependent on circumstances, or other people, or facilities and objects that we use every day. We say, "I cannot do without it." If one of the objects is lost or stops working, we are dejected or worried.

We can become dependent on certain foods, and have them even when we know they will damage our health. Words such as "I cannot manage without it", or "I feel distressed if I do not have it", increase our emotional dependence and slavery.

If we become upset over

trivial matters, and get angry if someone does not look at us the right way, these are signs that our dependence is increasing. When we blame others for the way we feel, we undermine our freedom, and this erodes our inner power...

Now we have to choose to be free. We take numerous small decisions throughout the day. Suppose someone speaks to us improperly. We can respond with certain kinds of thoughts, words or behaviour. But are we consciously choosing the response or merely reacting to the situation? We even attribute our reaction to the other person's behaviour, which means we are so dependent on others that we are unaware of having chosen our reaction.

When we keep reacting to situations and people, our inner power gets depleted, as a result of which our innate qualities of peace, happiness, love, and re-

spect diminish. The weaker we become, the less our reactions will be in our control. Stress, anger and fear are uncomfortable emotions -- they are emotional 'dis-eases'.

Meditation teaches us the right way of thinking, enabling us to shift from dis-ease to ease, which is a state of being relaxed, peaceful and stable. Regular practice of meditation helps us decide what to feel, think, say or do in any situation. When we recognise the fact that we are souls, children of the Supreme Soul, and contemplate our innate purity, peace, love, and power, and our Father's vast store of these qualities, we realise that we have everything we need. The feeling of fullness and contentment this brings, frees the soul from all dependence.

B.K. Shivani is a well-known motivational speaker and Rajyoga teacher.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

If the weather makes me happy, it will also make me sad. Cold or grey climates can affect a person's mood. It can be a challenge to stay happy in spite of the weather. Although, even with the sun it is possible to be unhappy. Generating happiness begins by looking inwards and recognising that my inner climate can be independent of the weather. Today let me smile regardless of the weather.