

Fundamentals of Good Meditation

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<https://youtu.be/GZMKpOITp3U>

Friends, I am very happy to be here in the Sunshine State. I just heard in Kaunas, Lithuania, it's already snowing. Five centimeters of snow is on the ground. In Chicago yesterday, it was 22 degrees Fahrenheit. It's nice to be in this nice warm weather here.

I have come here to meet you friends, and to share with you some of the teachings that I learned from the Great Master Hazur Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh, whose picture you see here. The teachings are very simple.

Today, I was asked to speak on the fundamentals of good meditation. If I have to speak on that subject, my speech will take no more than five seconds. All I have to say is, good meditation requires that before you meditate you place yourself at the third eye center behind the eyes, and the second part is you must meditate with love and devotion. My talk is over. [laughter] That's all that's needed.

If we can understand this simple principle that we are looking for ourselves in meditation—we're trying to discover who we are, our real self, not the body, not even the inner body, not even the inmost body which we call the mind. These three bodies are covers upon our selves. They are not our self. Our self is an immortal unit of consciousness called the soul that is not born, does not die, is immortal. And all the stories about our true nature are about the soul which is hiding inside these three bodies.

The outermost body, the physical body, is the one that creates a physical experience for us and gives us an idea of a material physical world around. And that is why, while we are in this physical body, our only reality is a material, physical reality outside of us.

Inside this body is the astral body. We call it astral body. It might be more appropriate to call it the body with sensory/sense perceptions, which works for sensory perceptions. That means the power to perceive through senses which we are ascribing to the organs of this body actually belongs to the inner body. If the inner body does not function, this body cannot have any sensory perception.

We think we see with these eyes in the physical body. But when we are sleeping, even if the eyes are open, we don't see. Obviously, seeing is something different from seeing with these eyes. On the other hand, we can see things in imagination. Those pictures we see in imagination—things we can remember in memory and

even by closing our eyes we can see them—obviously the physical eyes have nothing to do with it. So those perceptions that can be created by inner eyes, inner ears, inner hands, inner sense of smell, all those are inside, and those constitute the astral body. It's just a body. It's a function. It performs its function and continues to perform this function even when we are imbedded in the physical body. But we begin to believe that the physical organs are the ones responsible for the sensory perceptions, because we do not have any experience of the inner body separating from this physical body. They overlay each other. Therefore, we don't see any difference.

But if we could separate it, if we could separate our astral body, the sensory body, from this and just separate and put it aside—what is called an out-of-body experience—we could look at this body like just a piece of flesh. It's just a structure, external structure. It's like a costume we are wearing. One little experience of getting out of this body and looking back upon this body changes our entire perspective on what this body can do or what it cannot do.

Therefore, our belief that the physical body is our own reality, our self, is a mistaken one. Because inside this, the sensory body operates to create all our perceptions, even those we are seeing with our physical eyes and physical sense perceptions.

Later today, I'll try to have a very short experiment with you to see if the sense perceptions belong to an inner body or they belong to the physical body. If you are ready, any of you are ready, will do some little experiential thing so that it doesn't remain merely talk.

Inside the sensory body lies another body. We call it the casual body. The reason why it's called the causal body is because all events that have ever happened or will happen are being caused by that body. The other name given for that body is the mind. The thinking mind is not really our self. It's also a body. The mind itself is a body. We wear the mind just like we wear the physical body. We wear a mind and on top of it we wear the sensory perceptions. On top of it we wear this physical body. These are three costumes we are wearing, one upon the other.

Why are we wearing these costumes? Why don't we go about in our true spirit, in the structure of our soul? The reason is each one of these covers gives us a different experience, and we like to have a variety of experiences. Why do we want experiences? Because we are conscious beings. You cannot be conscious unless you have something to be conscious of. Consciousness survives on something there to be conscious of, otherwise consciousness has no meaning. When we say, he's conscious, conscious of what? If you are conscious of nothing, then consciousness ceases to exist.

Therefore, we wear these bodies to generate a variety of experiences. And they are so different from each other and in such great variety, that if you personally experiment through meditation, you can experience all these different experiences of each one of these costumes, one by one. It's not necessary to just speculate on what is there. Meditation, good effective meditation, helps us to go personally within ourselves and expose the other bodies—inside bodies—and not have the awareness of the body outside.

How do we lose the awareness of the outer cover? It is very simple. When we die, we leave the cover here anyway. Death takes away this cover and the physical body dies. We move around in the astral body anyway. We look at our dead body. And those who have had near-death experiences, they tell us they could see their body even before they fully died. And they already pulled out enough to be able to see—lying on a surgical table with the surgeon around or sitting somewhere else—and they are watching from outside.

But to die in order to find out that you have an inner body is not a very good experiment. [laughter] I mean it's something that happened to all of us. How can we know it while we are alive in this body? To know that we have an inner body that will survive after death and has a much longer life than this body... It was born much earlier than this body, will die much later than this body, it has its own life span. To discover this while we are in this body, we have to do something different than physical death. We have to die while living.

Therefore, true meditation has been called the process of dying while living. That means you can pull the attention away from this body and have the same experience you will have when physical death takes place, but while you're still alive, which is a very great experience for many reasons. One is you discover that you are not this body, that you are there earlier than this body. You will be there after you die. You don't depend on books for that. You depend on your own experience for that. And secondly, you will never be afraid of death after that, because you know where you go when you die in this body. It's a very big achievement not to be afraid of death. You'll also find out that when you lose the fear of death, you lose all fear. Because most of our fears are fears of the unknown. We don't know what'll happen, and that's why we are afraid.

There are only two things that create fear: one, the unknown; second, doubt. If you're doubtful about something, you are afraid. Now doubt and fear are being created automatically in us through the third body, which is called the mind. The mind has a thinking process, and by thinking it creates doubts. We think it resolves doubts. On the other hand, it creates doubts. I have seen people who say we are very certain of something. I said: "Think more about it." And after some time, they say: "We are not so sure."

The thinking mind can create a doubt almost on anything. Why is it possible for the mind to create doubts? Because the mind does not have access to all knowledge. It only operates on what is in front of it. It only operates with a limited knowledge it has in front of it. And because it doesn't know everything—certainly doesn't know the future, doesn't know what is around the corner—it is always in a state of lack of knowledge, and therefore, the unknown comes up and creates doubt and fear.

So the mind is actually the creator of doubt and fear. If we can see how the mind functions—which is just a body, which means if we can really die in the inner body, die in our sensory body while we are alive in the physical and sensory body—we can see exactly what the mind is, how it operates. It's just a machine. It's an accessory attached to us. It is not our selves.

We mistakenly say: "I think." We never think. We make our mind think. We never say: "My mind thinks like this." That's the true statement! The truth is whenever we think, we are employing a computer-like machine inside us, in our head, which is called the mind. And that computer-like machine works, creates thoughts.

Sometimes it creates thoughts that we direct. We tell it to think of something and start thinking like that. Sometimes it starts thinking on its own, because it did not receive adequate instructions from us. When it starts thinking on its own, that is the most dangerous part of the mind, because then it starts guiding us what to do. When the mind starts guiding us, we are in a terrible shape.

Most of our lives are affected today because we allow the mind to guide us what to do instead of our telling the mind what duty to perform. The mind was given to us to perform a duty. What was the duty of the mind? The duty of the mind was to interpret sense perceptions that will occur at different levels that we create with different bodies, and then to reassemble those sense perceptions and make some sense out of it. And then use a thinking process, either in words, images, or in any other logistic manner, put the images together and make sense of things—say, yeah, that makes sense. The only functions of the mind, and that's performing very well when we instruct it to do it. If we don't instruct the mind to perform these functions, then the mind will go on randomly, in a bizarre way, telling things and creating fear in us, and guiding us in the wrong direction.

It is such a subtle matter, that we, the powerful one, we, the consciousness, which makes the mind alive—without us, the mind dies—we, that make the sensory systems alive... Without our soul, without our consciousness, senses will die. Without our consciousness, the body dies. We, the soul, the consciousness, is responsible for the life of the mind, for the life of the sense perceptions, for the life of this physical body. We are the prime trigger for all these, and we are being guided by these costumes. Nothing could be more tragic than that.

We were supposed to be in control of things are gifted to us. These are very great gifts, I must tell you. The physical body, the sensory perceptions and the mind are the greatest gifts anybody could give us, and God has given us these gifts. Instead of using these gifts the way they're intended to be used, we are being duped into being slaves of these gifts. How does this happen? How come that we lost touch with our own power? We lost touch because we made a very big blunder in starting to identify ourselves with these costumes. We began to believe this body is myself. We began to believe these sensory systems are my sense perceptions with which I am seeing the world existing outside. This mind is my self. I think and decide what I want to do. I employ logic. I employ these different techniques in my mind to live.

This is exactly the biggest blunder we could make, to identify ourselves with gifts that were given to us to use. We should have used our body as best, as best as we could, take good care of it while we have it. We don't have it for very long. The average life of a body—not even a hundred years. People are dying earlier than hundred years. If some live over hundred twenty, hundred thirty—nobody lives more. It's such a short period in terms of cosmic time when we talk of billions of years and billions of light years to see the cosmos around us. In that, what is hundred years? If there was a clock, and the world started at 12 o'clock... We are about 5:00-5:30 pm or 5:25 pm according to the scientists. And at 5:30 pm our life is just no more than a few seconds. Can you imagine? It's like a bubble that comes up and glows in the light, has colors, suddenly goes away.

Our life is like that, and yet we are putting so much on this body and thinking this is the only one to take care of, and we don't take care of it. What kind of food, junk food, we dump into it. What kind of junk thoughts we dump into it. What kind of life are we leading? A temporary thing given to us to hold on and have an experience of the physical matter and material world, how are we using it? We're not making good use of it. The mistake is we think that is us.

What about the inner body? The sensory body has a life of about one thousand to three thousand physical years. That means we have been that long and have had several bodies, maybe different forms in the physical, material world, and what are we doing with that one? We don't even know about it. We are totally locked out of our own self.

What about the mind? The mind has an age in physical time of several million years, three or four million years, and then it dies. It's born and dies, like anything else. We, occupying these three, have never been born, will never die. We are the immortal consciousness that last forever!

Our true home, from where we came, is somewhere which never is born, never dies. And where can we find it? Inside consciousness. Where is consciousness? Inside us. Inside what? Inside the physical body, inside the astral body, inside the mind. It's

right inside. If it weren't inside, these outer covers wouldn't operate. Therefore, the entire truth that we're looking for is lying inside. In every cover, it's lying inside. Not that at some point we'll have to go find outside.

So therefore, the spiritual journey—if you want to find immortality and your immortal home—the spiritual journey is the shortest journey you can perform. How far do you have to go? You start from where you think you are now, that's the thing, the starting point. You start where you believe your consciousness is now—not your body, not your mind, not your senses—where your consciousness is right now. Where are you listening to me from, where are you speaking from? When you close your eyes where do you think you are? It doesn't take very long to find out you are not operating from your hands or your limbs or your torso. You're operating from your head. Where exactly in your head?

If you are a single point of consciousness and you are spreading out from there, what point would that be? Only on a very simple introspection of one's own mind and own head, one can find out it's somewhere behind the eyes. It's somewhere in the center of the head. If I were to put my two fingers with thumb—if these tips of the fingers were my eyeballs, where these two fingers meet—that would approximately be behind the eyes, inside the head, almost between the ears, a single point from where you're operating in a wakeful condition right now. If we have to find consciousness ourselves, that's the starting point. I said in the very beginning, good effective meditation starts from there.

If we go around searching the rest of the body and we go into the various energy centers that lie below it, and we say we go to the heart chakra, and we go to the *khant chakra*, the throat chakra, we go to the other chakras, right to the bottom, to all the six chakras and float around. We are not starting a journey on spirituality. We are starting a journey on energy experiences. That's all.

Nobody has ever got spirituality by going to any of these centers, but they got lot of experiences of fantastic energies. Of course, fantastic energies exist all over. In fact, the fact that we are held together as a physical body and are working so well, that itself is a fantastic energy, it's a fantastic miracle. And what is holding it? These six energy centers. They operate to hold the system together. There are similar six centers which are holding the astral body together, but they are not the same centers. There are similar six centers holding the mind and our internal consciousness together. The eighteen centers. We have never explored them. Even people who want to meditate on the centers, they think the six are good enough.

I'll share a little story. It's a little interesting because Great Master... He made his first trip to Karachi, which is now in Pakistan, in the forties, 1941-42. I accompanied him on that trip and so did some others, and it was a very interesting thing. My uncle was in the weather service, meteorologist in Karachi. He had a very nice house on

Clifton Beach and there he invited the Great Master to come and spend a few days, which he did. We all went there.

Now, my uncle and my aunty, my aunt, they used to go to a Swami Ji there, Swami Brahmanand Ji, who used to practice the various kinds of yoga, Raj Yoga and Kundalini, Reversal Yoga, and so on, but he also used to give Ayurvedic medicines. So, my uncle and aunt... They were, of course, initiated by the Great Master and were following the spiritual path of going behind the eyes and above. But they would go to the swami ji to get Ayurvedic medicines.

And once, the Great Master decided to come there. They told Swami Ji: "Our Master is coming from Punjab and he will be staying with us, and we would like you to come and have his darshan." And Swami Ji said: "Yes, bring him to me and I will give him my blessings." This was a little bit of an odd reaction, but they decided how to cope up with the situation...that we wanted to get the Great Master's blessings on the swami. The swami wants to give his blessings. So, they arranged to have a lunch and put a love sofa seat, two people can sit on it, and they said: "We'll make the Swami and Great Master sit on that, and let us see how they interact with each other."

So, on the appointed day, Swami Brahmanand Ji came and he was seated on that love seat. Great Master was in the bedroom. We called him that Swami Ji has come, before lunch. And Great Master came, and we said: "Please, sit down, this is our Swami Ji, Swami Brahmanand Ji." So Great Master sat down and folded his hand and said *pranam* to the swami ji. Swami Ji raised his hands like this on the head of Great Master: "I give you my blessings."

We watched the scene in some kind of amazement, that this is some reversal going on here. After a little while, Great Master says: "Swami Ji, isn't it a pity that all the swamis and yogis are so much caught up in these six centers that control our physical and astral systems that nobody wants to go and see the eighteen centers?" And Swami Ji looked at Great Master. He says: "Master, I have never heard of these eighteen centers. Can you explain to me a little bit more about these eighteen centers?"

He said: "Haven't you heard that this body is called the Pinda, and the astral system is called the Anda, and behind that, the mind and its higher regions are called Brahmanda? And this Pinda, Anda, and Brahmanda each have six centers, the total of eighteen. Haven't you heard of it?" He said: "Master, I have never heard of it at all. This is something new. I'd like you to explain a little more about these higher twelve centers. I only know about the six centers." He said: "You know, it's very long subject, Swami Ji. And if you come to the Dera in Punjab sometimes, I'd be very happy to explain it to you."

Swami Ji was very intrigued by this. He felt so intrigued that he had never heard of something that he was talking of eighteen centers. So, when he went back, he told his followers: "I am going to wind up this ashram. I am going to Beas to study those eighteen centers. If I succeed, I will come and tell you. If you want to come along with me, you can come. But I want to find out what that white bearded man was talking about those eighteen centers." So, he wound up that ashram and came to the Dera in Beas, and I was there. I was trying to practice Homeopathic medicine in those days and had a little clinic there. And Great Master set up a little Ayurvedic clinic for Swami Ji, so he could also do his practice there, and we would share information.

When Swami Ji came, Great Master said: "Swami Ji must sit next to me on the dais," from where he had discourses. Swami Ji used to wear saffron colored robes and he used to wear a turban, saffron turban, and a little scarf, saffron colored, which he used to hold in his hands and walk with great pomp and show with that. In fact, I copied him once with my white scarf. It looked so good.

When he came, he was given with VIP treatment. He put up in the best guesthouse in the Dera, and he was asked to sit next to the Master when he gave a discourse. So next day, when discourse was going on, he was sitting next to the Master. Master said: "What a pity. The yogis are trapped in these six centers. They are so trapped they don't know that there is anything beyond that. Nobody has heard of the eighteen centers." And Swami was looking like this at him and wondering what he is going to say next.

He heard one or two discourses, and then he complained to Great Master. He says: "Master, I have a problem." He says: "Yes, Swami Ji, what is your problem?" "When I sit next to you I have constantly to bend my head to see you and I am getting a pain in my neck." Great Master said: "I also noticed that. I think you should sit in front." So, from the pedestal, Swami Ji now sits in front on a special chair, low chair. Then after two days, he complains, says: "Master, I have a complaint that I, when I sit down, you're sitting too high up. I have to look up like this and I have got a pain in my neck." Master said: "I also notice you have a pain in the neck, so you should sit further, twenty feet away." Then he is moved twenty feet away. Then he says: "Master I have a complaint" after two days. "What is your complaint now, Swami Ji?" "My complaint is you've given me chair to sit on, people behind me can't see you." He said: "I also noticed that. Remove the chair." After one week, Swami Ji sitting like anybody else, right at the back. [laughter]

He was asked to see the Great Master 24/7. Any time he wanted he could come and see him as a special VVIP guest. He tested it out by going at midnight. One day knocked the door: "I want to see the Master." "Oh yes, Swami Ji, we have instructions you can see him any time. Wake him up." He woke up. "Welcome Swami

Ji. What can I do for you?" "I came to test if I can see you anytime, 24/7." After a week, he was standing in line with the rest of us to get an interview. In one week.

I was sitting with him one day, comparing notes on Ayurveda and Homeopathy, and he said: "Your Master is a very big diplomat. If he had told me that he'll be making me like a commoner to go and attend his discourses and stand in line to have interviews, I would never have come here. I would have gone away. He did a very clever trick. He boosted my ego by putting me on VVIP treatments and then, now I realize, he has trapped me with his love. I can't go anywhere. His love has captured me because his love flows automatically from him. There is no question that what he speaks he doesn't speak from any book. He doesn't speak from any hearsay. He speaks from direct experience, and that's what makes it so authentic. He's not telling stories like we hear from other places. He tells us what he has experienced, and therefore, it makes great sense to me, and I am going to follow exactly what he says." By the way, the swami made great progress after that. He stayed and passed away in the Dera itself. Great guy and I still remember.

Why I brought the story in is that we are sometimes trapped even in our spiritual endeavors. We think that we can find everything in the physical body. These are just bodies. We have to find our selves. Therefore, our effective meditation starts from behind the eyes, where we are at all times in the wakeful state. We are not there all the time. We are there only in the wakeful state. Now we are there. When we are not awake, when we are sleeping, we are not here. The focal point from where consciousness is operating, is only operating from behind the eyes...to look out of the eyes at the world in wakeful state. When we go to sleep, it descends down into the same chakras. When we have a dream, it's in the throat center. The same thing that it is right now behind the eyes, our own notional position, shifts from the third eye center to the throat center.

People say: "Is there any proof of that?" You know, I always believe in proof, and the best proof is, do it yourself. I don't believe anybody else's proof. I am a very big skeptic that way. I think spirituality should be such that you can experience yourself, and you should believe only what you experience. You don't have to disbelieve the rest because you haven't seen it. You can't say: "I haven't seen it; therefore, it doesn't exist!" You haven't seen it.

But whatever you have seen is the point up to which your belief goes, and when you see more, your belief increases, your faith goes up. That's why I distinguish between living faith and blind faith. Blind faith is a onetime faith. You believe something somebody has said. Living faith is... grows every time with your experience. It grows like any other growing thing. It has a metabolic evolution of its own. And therefore, the faith that grows by every little experience that you add on, both externally and internally, that's good living faith. That's what one should have.

So, when we go to sleep, what happens? Try it out tonight...when you're half a sleep, about to sleep, try to touch your eyes. Now, even with your eyes closed, you can bring your hands up and touch your eyes any time you like. You don't have to see where they are—and nobody can ever see one's eyes anyway—but you can touch them with your hand. And when you are half a sleep, try to touch your eyes, you will touch your nose and think you're touching your eyes. You can try it out. Now when you go to sleep in a dream you forget about the body all together, so you can't do it. Some yogis can do it. When they can do it, and their consciousness is retained partially in the body state and they can go down into the dream state at that time, and there to touch their eyes they touch their throat and think they're touching these physical eyes.

That means there is a notional drop and there is a notional rise. If you are in meditation and you are withdrawing to different experiences inside, the notional point of yours also shifts behind and up. So, this body is very remarkable apart from the remarkable physiology of this body, remarkable anatomy of this body, which itself is a miracle. The bigger miracle is it is housing within it the astral body, housing within it the mind, housing within it the soul that can house all these things and have them accessible while we're in the body. I can't think of a bigger miracle that's taking place right now to have a human body.

The human body also has one great superiority over all other forms of life. In our Indian spiritual literature, they have mentioned there are 8.4 million species of life, that life exists in 8.4 million species. Each species can have trillions and trillions of life. So the life is huge! Out of living things that we have been able to observe, some of you may not know, about 80 percent of all life that we know exists in the dark waters of the sea, right at the bottom, which we have never seen, and they haven't seen us.

Bulk of the majority of life, living things, are sitting somewhere we have no access. It's completely dark. Our bodies, even with the best of equipment, is unable to go down that low in the sea. And whatever has been gone—and cameras have gone and taken pictures there—they have shown that a bulk of life is marine life. Of course, three-fourth of the planet is covered by ocean and bulk of the life is sitting inside. A very small fraction sitting outside—out of them are very, very small, tiny fraction is a human being—and we think we are the really owners of this planet, and here a very minor, minor occupant of this planet.

But what is so unique is that all other forms of life are acting on instinct, on built reactions on their DNA molecule. They perform functions as they react according to the programming already done in them. The only species, the human species, Homo Sapiens, is the only one that thinks and says: "Should I do it, or not do it?" who deliberates and makes choices, and therefore has the experience of free will. No

other species has the experience of free will. They all act according to preprogrammed program.

We also work according to preprogram, but we don't think so. Why? Because we have choices, we have options and we make choices, so we use free will. When we go inside, we find that the way we have to make choices, the way we have to think about how to choose was predetermined, but that we only find out inside. While we are here, we have freedom of choice. What is the advantage of this experience? However real or unreal it may be, it looks very real. The experience of free will looks so real.

And what's the advantage of having an experience like this if later on we can find out that the whole thing has been predetermined and designed by our own inner, higher self? The advantage is that by having the choice, we can seek, and all the spiritual literature in the world says: "If you seek, you will find. If you don't seek, you will not find." The ability to seek in a human being is unique to human beings. And therefore, the ability to get out of this mess of the creation where we are trapped and think we cannot get out. The way out lies through seeking inside us, in the human being. It is a very unique form then.

The human being is the one that is created at the highest level of creation. It's called one that's next to God, the Creator. It says: "Man is made in the image of the Creator." You might have heard that we are made in the image of the Creator. In what... On what way do you think are we made on the image of the Creator? Does the creator have any eyes and nose like us? Of course not. Creator is formless. Creator is a power. It's a creative power. Then what is similar that we should say that man is made in the image of the Creator? This is the point. Creator has real will which created the whole show, and we have the freedom which looks like real will and we have free will. That's the common thing. That's why we're made in the image of the Creator. The free will is the one that makes us next to the Creator as human beings.

Human life is very, very precious. It's very wonderful. It's the best thing that could have happened. If somebody say: "I want to see a miracle." Well, the miracle is you are a human being. That's the biggest miracle that can happen. As a human being, you have the freedom to choose. You choose to go within, you choose to come on a spiritual path—you've made the wisest choice and the way out from all the problems in the world.

Problems are not yours! Problems are of the body. Problems are of the sense perceptions. Problems are of the mind. Tell me any problem beyond these! There's no problem we have except those that we have or ourselves taken up by identifying with these covers upon us. And these covers we can leave by dying while living.

And let me tell you briefly what dying while living is so that we can practice it little later. Dying while living means withdrawing your attention to the point where you're operating it from, where you're spreading the attention out from. Attention is going out from our bodies, from the third eye center behind the eyes. That's why we are putting our attention through the eyes, putting our attention through ears, putting our attention through thoughts, putting our attention through memories, and we are scattered all over from that point. The art of meditation consists of bringing all this attention back, withdrawing the attention to the point behind the eyes.

Now, people have not practiced this. Very few people I've come across who practice withdrawal of attention. I have met thousands of people, including spiritual practitioners, trying to learn how to focus attention. We have been focusing attention all our life anyway. What the great deal to focus attention on one or the other? We're still going out from where we are. Even if you make an image of yourself in the head and try to focus your self on it, you are not moving towards your self. You're moving away from yourself. Withdrawal of attention is the opposite of focusing of attention. Withdrawal of attention means pulling the attention back to where you are. We never practice that.

So, the art of good meditation is to practice withdrawal of attention to yourself. When attention is withdrawn, you have the same experience you would have in physical death. The attention is withdrawn from the world gradually. You don't think of them, you think of something inside. It is withdrawn from this body in stages. If you have seen a dying person in a hospital, you'll see that the feet and the hands die first. The patient doesn't know what's happening to his feet and hands, doesn't know where the legs have gone. He doesn't know where the torso has gone. Patient's still speaking to us. The withdrawal is from the extremities back to the head, and when it comes to head, you're brain dead, you're gone. It's the same process when you withdraw your attention in meditation, but everything is intact. Your only awareness is going away from this. So, the experience is of dying while living. If you can withdraw your attention completely, you will see there is another world existing inside—a world very different from here, where you are more alive than you are here. You are more free than you are here.

This body traps us. It's like a very constricted place. We can't fly. We can't do anything. We have to take airplanes to fly. Why can't we fly on our own? Our inner body can! Our astral body can fly wherever it likes, and it can think, and the other person can understand. It doesn't need a language translator because thoughts are transmitted directly. The whole... There is no gravity there at all, and it's our world. It's a world which we can experience as much as this physical world, by one process only, withdrawal of attention to where you belong, from where the attention is being scattered, behind the eyes. We'll try a little experiment later on, so that you will know exactly what it means.

Withdrawal is different from focusing of attention. And that's a very key question. When you withdraw attention here, you can withdraw the same attention repeatedly in the inner bodies til you discover who you are. When you discover that the mind is a cover upon yourself, you find many wonderful things apart from the sensory perceptions. You can leave them, because we think we have to touch separately, see separately, taste separately. They are all just one sense. There is a mental sense in the causal plane where directly you get all the sense perceptions. They are spread out to create a variety of experience, and you can have that at the causal plane. And yet it's just a mind we are using to create that experience. Behind that, is experience of immortality, that you don't belong. You just creating these experiences through these covers upon yourself. You discover yourself.

Self-realization is just one-step away then from God realization, because you find that the self, the soul, is merely a unit of totality of consciousness, which is the Creator, that you have never been separated from it, that you are still part of it. All you have to do is to expand your awareness to totality. Then you know who the Creator is.

Nobody has ever seen the God or seen Creator. Why? Because you are the Creator in your own totality. When you become total, you are the one that created the whole thing. Now, in separation, you are trying to worship something that you yourself are the reality of. You are the reality of that, and then you're worshipping. You're worshipping little, little forms of it at different stages.

So, the discovery of the self is the biggest thing. And that's discovery of your soul, which is in Par Brahm. That means beyond the mind. It is beyond this creation of the three worlds, and it can all be achieved while you're still in this body. And I'll explain a little more when we do little experimental work later in the afternoon.

But the point is, for effective meditation, all this mechanics that I am talking of, mechanics of going in, doesn't work because all this mechanics is mind made, created by the mind. It's created by one of the accessories to our self. It's not by our self. Then what can pull us to ourselves? Is there something that belongs to the self, to the soul and does not belong to the mind, does not belong to the senses, does not belong to this body? Yes, there are three things. One: love... Love cannot be created by thinking. Love comes directly from our consciousness. Two: intuition, intuitive knowledge. That doesn't come by thinking. Thinking can destroy it. It doesn't come by thinking. Three: the sense of joy and beauty. That's doesn't come from these. In fact, if I showed you a lovely painting and you enjoyed it and then I start analyzing through the mind every bit of it, the beauty is lost. So, love, intuition, and beauty come from the soul. And to get pulled to the real place to discover yourself, meditation must be done with love and devotion. Without love and devotion, it's a very hollow thing.

In India, the housewives prepare butter by churning a *madhani*. It's called a madhani. It's churned inside butter milk or inside curd, yogurt. And then by churning it, the butter comes up. So, the Great Master used to say that if you do meditation without love and devotion, you are churning the madhani in water. No butter will ever come out. If you want to get the butter out of the churning, it must be done with love and devotion.

So, I cannot emphasize the importance of this, because people have been meditating for years and years and said we saw no result. And when I compared notes with them, what was missing? This element was missing. They thought it's a mechanical thing. It's just to sit the body in a certain posture.

You can... I've got a book which says 84 good postures for meditation. Those are yoga postures. Why those different positions of the body were created? Have you any idea why they were created? They were created so that you could exercise sitting in a cave—without having to do jogging—that you could move your body in different positions in a small place and get all the exercise you want to keep the body in good shape! That's the whole purpose and today we are calling those exercises as if they are spiritual exercises. There's nothing spiritual in physical exercises, but it's good to keep a body in good shape. And that's why I am not against yoga practices. I said: "Do yoga practices. They're very good." They can also calm the spirit in the body. Jogging can also calm the spirit. Walking at night in the moonlight can also calm the spirit. There are so many ways of calming the spirit, but calming the spirit is not the same thing as self-realization. It's not the same thing as a spiritual journey into the spirit to finding out who you are.

Therefore, you can take any posture. The only secret for a good posture for meditation is it should not be so easy and so comfortable that it puts you to sleep. Because I can tell you meditation is a great inducer of sleep. I want to confess that in one of the meditation workshops I was doing in Wisconsin one day—I must have been tired also—I was telling people close your eyes. After time, I heard myself snoring. [laughter] I opened my eyes. Everybody was staring. [laughter] I said: "I am giving you a proof what meditation can do." If somebody's suffering from insomnia, cannot sleep properly, try meditation. [laughter]

So therefore, if you are of a very comfortable position, that meditation does not then succeed there. If you are in a very uncomfortable situation, then also it doesn't succeed. Because if you are having...putting your legs across, which you have never done before, and saying, "I want to put in the lotus position in order to meditate," and the knees are hurting and the ankles are hurting, and you say you will meditate, where will your attention go? To the knees and the ankles. That means it's called meditation of the knees and the ankles. [laughter]

The other, other important thing is that if you meditate and have a special place set up for meditation... People take me to their homes and say: "This is my meditation chair, very special." So, I also sit on the chair, see if I can see God from there. [laughter] If chairs could bring about God it would be a very easy game. But if you emphasize so much on the chair, don't forget, when you meditate your attention is on the chair. You're not meditating behind the eyes. You're meditating on the chair. If you set apart, set apart a special room for meditation, your attention is on that room. Therefore, no special things are needed.

In fact, the meditation, to be effective, should be done in the room that lies on the sixth floor of this body, behind the eyes. If you close your eyes, you will find this body shaped, because of the energy centers, as if it is a body, it's a building with six floors—specifically each creating a separate energy experience—and you are automatically in the wakeful state sitting on the sixth floor. It's not necessary to go down. There are steps that lead to the various centers in the front. There's an elevator going behind in the spine. It's a very well-structured body. You are sitting on the sixth floor. Have a nice floor, have a nice carpet, put a nice chair there. If you put a nice chair behind the eyes with your imagination, and if you are able to sit on that chair, it's far better than anything you can improvise outside.

Therefore, the meditation...the starting point should be that you go to the meditation chamber. Your meditation chamber is sitting on top of your body in your head. And when you sit in the head, behind the eyes, that's the starting point, and all good things happen there. I'll demonstrate a little bit to you later this afternoon. We'll have a short break now.

Thank you very much for coming and indeed it's a great joy to meet all of you, so many old friends, so many new friends, all good friends.

Thank you.

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