

# Meditation is the Lifestyle

San Francisco, California — February 24, 2013

Welcome, friends, on this third day of this three-day session of this meditation workshop. I am very happy to have met all of you here, and I find in the last two days many of you were able to join me in some short sessions of meditation practice. The idea of doing short sessions was so that we do not end up just talking about this subjective but realize it is a practical subject. The path of the masters is not something merely to be read about, discussed. It has to be practiced through meditation. Without meditation we do not verify any of the truths that have been written in these books. If we keep on reading the books and think we have reached somewhere, we do not go anywhere. It is like reading a guidebook about Hawaii and the Waikiki beach and keep on reading every day. You don't reach the beach. You don't get the experience of the beach. What we do with the scriptures is we keep on reading, and we think that the reading is going to give us salvation, that the more we read the more enlightened we are. Actually, it can be the exact opposite of that. The more we read, the more egoistic we can become, more arrogant we can become that we have read so much. We argue with people: "I know more than you. I have read all these books."

So, reading books does not always enhance our state of enlightenment. Sometimes it can hide our enlightenment behind our own ego. Reading itself can give us some guide lines, can give us some indication what to do, but you have to do what it says. We read books; we don't do what the books say. So that's why it is very important to make this path experiential. That means you must practice what you read, must practice what you hear. That is why, even in these short sessions we have here, I always make it a practice that we should do some practical meditation. We will do some more today so that you get used to something that you will be doing every day.

As I explained yesterday and the day before, the path is very simple. The spiritual path is very, very simple. It is merely pulling our attention from this world and putting it within our own self behind the eyes. It's as simple as that. Bulleh Shah, one of the great mystics, says, "*Rab da ki paana, etho putna te othey laana.*" It's not difficult to find God. Just pull your attention from here and put it here." He makes it so simple in one sentence. That is the truth, but the difficulty only comes because when we try to put our attention behind the eyes, all the different attachments we have created, they are like ropes, like little threads that are tying us down. When we try to sit there, every rope pulls us out. Things we have forgotten we can remember when we try to meditate. People we don't think of normally, they all come to mind when we are trying to meditate. It is the pull of the outside attachments that makes it difficult, so a simple process becomes difficult because of our mental attachments.

Now the problem is that there is no way to practice detachment. If somebody says, “From tomorrow I will not be attached to anything,” it doesn’t work because the more you try to think of that which you are detaching, the more attached you get! For example, I loved Shakey’s Pizza when I came here. Supposing I want to say, “I don’t want Shakey’s Pizza. I don’t want Shakey’s Pizza,” I am thinking more of Shakey’s Pizza. Actually, I am getting more attached. You cannot practice detachment. Therefore, it becomes a difficulty that attachment is creating a problem, and we cannot practice detachment. How do we go about it? The answer is that it is not the practice of detachment that can help us but the practice of an alternate attachment, an attachment to something else, and that happens all the time.

When we are attached to one thing and we get attached to another thing—more attached to the other thing—we forget the first one. So, it is the attachment that can create a detachment, not the other way around. That is why that is another role that a Perfect Living Master performs in our life, that he enables a being, a person like ourselves, to be attached to, so when we are attached to a master, it automatically pulls our attachments away from others. It is only by a new attachment that we can have the experience of detachment. That is why the master’s love has to be experienced by us. We have to feel that pull, and that pull comes from the unconditional love of a master. His love is so unconditional that very soon we begin to find this is something different. There is no judgment involved. There are no questions of whether you are good or bad involved. The masters know we are all good and bad. We all are good and bad. If we were not good and bad, we wouldn’t be here! You have to be good and bad to be human. The masters know that. The masters are not making any judgment on who is good and bad. Their judgment is how long you have been trapped in this business of good and bad. How long you have been trapped in this law of karma here, how long you have been seeking to get out from this mess and what a strong seeker you are. How intense is your desire to get out from here. On that basis, they say, let’s take you back now. Your time has come. When they do that, then they show unconditional love. The more you associate with a Perfect Living Master, the more you feel the experience of unconditional love that pulls you. That automatically attaches you to the master. When you practice meditation, your *dhyana*, contemplation of the master, it takes you further into the master’s attachment, and the other attachments become detached.

So, the practice of detachment is by experiencing an alternate and different attachment, and that is why people sometimes do not realize that it is not easy to push away things. You have to be pulled in the other direction, and then only you go.

I also mentioned to you the importance of *satsang*, the importance of getting together and thinking of master, thinking of the spiritual path. Satsang is not where we just narrate stories. Satsang is we are remembering the master and the path. It helps us to concentrate our attention better when we meditate after that. Therefore, I also suggested that satsang should be followed by meditation.

When should you meditate? That is a question very frequently asked. Which is the best time to meditate? When we were in India in the Dera in Great Master's time, he used to say that three o'clock in the morning is a very good time to meditate. The reason he gave for that time was that the dawn hasn't come and the day hasn't broken, everybody is sleeping, you are awake, and you get a peaceful time to meditate. By the time other people wake up, you have completed your morning two-and-a-half hours, two hours, whatever you can do in the morning, you have done it. He also recommended that in order to make the mind get habituated to get repetition of the simran, or the mantra, you should do short sessions of meditation, maybe about half an hour before going to sleep. He said you could break your meditation time between the early morning and before going to sleep, and that was a good idea. It worked. Somebody said, "Master," (to the Great Master), "Master, you are so powerful you can give whatever you want. Why are you making these hungry, thirsty people wait so much and tell them meditate, do this—just go and give what you want. Give the goodies you are carrying all the time." He said, "I carry a basket of goodies every morning at three o'clock, and I carry it with me and I find everybody sleeping. Nobody is ready to take it, so I come back with the goodies in my basket. If people were awake, ready to receive, I would distribute them there." For some people, he was particularly keen that we should get up in the morning at three o'clock, so he had his cane like this, a better-looking cane but still a cane. He would come in the morning at three o'clock. In the summer we were all sleeping outside on little cots because it was very hot. There was no air conditioning or anything there. We used to have our little beds, cots, taken out, and we would sleep outside in the Dera. He would come walking with his cane and find us sleeping. He would nudge us with his cane, "Wake up, three o'clock!" We would say, "Oh, sorry, master," and we would get up and say, "Yes." We would sit up on the bed and look when he goes away. He would just turn the corner, and we would go to sleep again. He was too clever! He would come back. He would come back again. "I know you are sleeping," and then we couldn't sleep after the second wakefulness. Those are experiences which we remember that made him so human, made him such a friend, made him like different, made him a different kind of being for us.

So, the best time is when there is least disturbance. Those people living in big cities, there are disturbances all the time. There are jobs being done here in the West which are different hours of work. So, he did say, that depending upon your jobs, you can modify these timings. Supposing you have night duties, then you can't meditate at three in the morning. You meditate during the day. In fact, you can meditate any time you like. The main emphasis was that the meditation by sitting up and closing your eyes and ears and going inside is only a small part of meditation. Meditation is a lifestyle. Meditation is not merely sitting up for a little while. Meditation is to think of the master all the time. Meditation is to repeat the words of simran all the time, whenever you can, to make it a habit for the mind. The mind has the habit of making habits. It gets habitual things. When the mind is habitually repeating those words, the words come automatically, and then you move to the next step. If the words, if your attention is in repeating the words, then you are losing a lot of your attention with the first exercise of trying to repeat the words. If you make your mind habituated to repeating the words by constantly repeating while

walking, while cooking, while doing other things in life, then the mind repeats those words automatically. You can then move faster towards other things, like conversation with the master during meditation, like thanking him for everyday happenings which look miraculous once we begin to see the great coincidences and miracles happening in our lives, and we can immediately see that, but for the master's hands, those things would not happen. We thank him for all those daily gifts that he gives us. All this is part of meditation; even to thank the master is part of meditation. Part of meditation is that we think about the master, think about this, and that cultivates love and devotion.

People ask me, "You constantly say meditation should be done with love and devotion. It doesn't work otherwise. How can we develop love and devotion?" I say you cannot develop love and devotion. You cannot develop love. Our experience of love is attachments to the world. Attachment is not love. There is a fundamental difference between attachment and love. In attachment you are conscious of your own self. When you say, "I love you," do you realize that you are placing "I" before "you" and you are conscious of "I" more than you are conscious of "you." If the response is not good after saying I love you, you can also say, "Then I also hate you." This is not love. This is trying to build an attachment. It is an ego trip. It is virtually an ego trip when we talk so much of "I" doing things...I love this, I love that. The word love is being misused. It is only an ego trip for attachments. Love is when you forget the "I" and you only think of "you." When the "you" occupies your consciousness and "I" is not there, that is love.

I have tried to see what parts of consciousness, what activities in consciousness can take the ego back. Everything we do puts the ego forward: "I have done this. I want to do this. I want to go there. I want to achieve this." "I" is there everywhere. The ego is everywhere. The only thing that I found in the whole of life that puts the ego at the back bench is love. When you love somebody, the beloved takes the place of the "I" and the "I" is pushed back. Love is a very powerful thing. Love is the most powerful thing. True love is when the beloved takes over, even the ego and the "I." That is what happens. Since we are not practicing that, we don't know how to do that; therefore, we cannot love. How do we have love and devotion? We respond to the love of the master, as we find in our daily life how master is extending his love, giving us all the gifts that we get on a daily basis, and we respond to that, which is devotion. When we get devoted to a master, then we have the experience of love and devotion. Love is the master's love for us, and devotion is our response to his love. That is why they always say love and devotion. They don't say only love or only devotion. They say do your meditation with love and devotion. It is an experience where when you experience the love of the master, that is the love, and you are devoted in response, that is love and devotion. It is love and devotion that really matters. How do you develop it? Just think of the master at all times. Even I said yesterday, have a conversation with the master.

Some people pointed out to me yesterday that if we try to imagine the face of the master, we could go wrong, because we could be just imagining a face and it is not the master at all. In fact, it could be our mind. It could be a negative power. It could be a negative entity misleading us.

How can we be sure that just by imagining the master's face or the master's image that we are really in touch with the master and not deceiving ourselves through our mind and through any negative entities around us? The answer is already given, simple, that when the master initiates us and gives us these words to repeat, these words are charged with the power to prevent negativity from coming in. Any time you repeat those words, even an imaginary figure of master cannot come in. Try it out. The eyes and the forehead of a master will not appear if you are repeating the words given to you by a Perfect Living Master, even if you try to imagine them. You can try it out. I and my friends have tried all our life, it doesn't work. The mind cannot make it up. If the mind can make it up, those are not charged words then. Why do we call the words of simran charged by a master? Because that is the charge he does. The power he puts into those words and makes them magical words, they become magical because they do not allow any negativity to come, not even one made up by your own mind. You cannot even imagine the eyes and the forehead of a master if you are repeating those words which the master has given us. Therefore, there is a safeguard. You will see that there is a safeguard provided to us throughout the spiritual journey so that we may not go wrong. We may not go into negative territory. So long as the words charged as a simran given to us by the master are being repeated, we can't go wrong. Therefore, those words have to be repeated. If you habituate your mind to repeat those words, you are protected all the time. The mind keeps on repeating them, and you then do other things like conversations. It is a nice practice to see that the words are being repeated on top of it, you consider it a conversation with your master, and then you are sure you are having conversation with the master.

In the beginning it is difficult to even imagine the face of the master completely. I recognize that. It takes time even for that. Although we think we can imagine any face, try to imagine the face of your master, it is more difficult than imagining any other face. Therefore, this is a difficulty in the beginning. But don't forget, even if you cannot see the master and you are repeating the words, the master is there but you cannot see him. You can still talk to him, but you won't get an answer because the answer could be made up by your mind. But you can still tell him what you want to tell him. Don't wait for an answer. It is like prayer. When we pray, what do we do? We pray to God. Prayer is to ask for something and then stop. Prayer does not require an answer. Supposing you expect the prayer to be answered, that is a business transaction. It is not a prayer any more. A prayer is one where you ask and leave it to God, to the master, to anybody who you are praying to, to take care of it. Therefore, it is not a one-way conversation like we might think. It is just that we cannot hear the other side, and we only see one way. That is why when we have conversation even in the beginning of our practice, one should not worry that you can't get answers at that time. Answers do come. Answers come in the form of coincidences in your life. They come...as I mentioned yesterday, you open a book and the first line you read is an answer to your question of yesterday, and you wonder how it came. You are driving your car, and there is an ad on a billboard on the road and it answers your question. You wonder how this comes. Small, small things like this happen, and the actual contexts may be unrelated, but a part of it is giving the answer, so you know there is something going on. Masters can give answers through

coincidences, and they can give answers in many ways when you can't hear the answer directly in your head. Of course, if you are able to establish the face of the master inside and hold it steady, this takes time also. I know, during practice in the beginning, the master's face appears and fades, sometimes seems to come near, sometimes seems to go far. Eventually it settles down and becomes close and is always with you then. The radiant form of the master, once it appears, is a permanent friend, and then you can have a complete conversation inside. You don't need to look anything. Of course, coincidences will keep on happening to tell you that the magic is going on, that miracles are happening, and the master is at work for you. In any case, you should be able to have a conversation with the master at that stage without any difficulty. These are just different phases, different stages.

Great Master said, "On the spiritual path, don't be impatient. Don't be in a hurry." We have been sitting in this state, born and reborn again and again, for centuries, for millennia, maybe for millions of years. We have no idea how long we have been trapped in this, and to get out of it in a lifetime, a couple of lifetimes, three or four lifetimes, in that context of the big timeframe in which we have been trapped, is nothing. From the master's point of view, it is a very short period to go back in a lifetime. Whereas we get initiated, we say, "Master, it has been two months—I have got nothing." When we are taking it in months and we are taking it to years, whereas the problem that is being solved existed for millions of years, so we have to be patient.

Another reason for being patient, if you are in a great hurry and you get an experience too fast, it can be frightening, because we are not used to it. We are currently not aware of what happens to us after death; therefore, we are afraid of death. Almost everybody I meet is afraid of death. Very few exceptions I see who say they are not afraid of death. Those who are afraid of death, when they meditate, if the attention is pulled up too fast, they feel they are going to die and they stop meditation. It happened close, in my own family, my father, who was such a good disciple of Great Master, Lekh Raj Puri, when he got initiated and he had the first experience of the attention being pulled out, he got so frightened that he was going to die, he stopped meditation. He went back to Great Master, and he said, "Master, I am not going to do this meditation. I was going to lose my life. You didn't tell me that this meditation makes you really die!" Great Master laughed and told him, "Look, to the best of my knowledge, nobody has ever died in meditation. They have not even died a natural death in meditation. Secondly, if you die, if your attention is pulled up, what do you expect to see?" He said, "I expect to see you, I expect to see the master." "Then why are you worried? Why are you afraid? You go ahead and meditate. Don't do it in such a hurry. Don't be impatient. Take it stage by stage." When you do meditation and the attention is pulled out stage by stage, you lose your sense of where the hands and feet are. Next day, you lose the sense of where the legs and feet are. Next day, you lose your sense of where the legs have gone. Next, you feel little more. You get so used to it, it doesn't bother you. By the time you are able to vacate your whole body by pulling the attention to the third eye center, you don't mind it at all. That is why Great Master himself recommended that you should do it stage by stage, what he called "*darja bae darja*" in Punjabi. He said, "Darja bae darja jana chahiye."

Not that you should say, “I want to jump all the way. I am impatient to see that,” because we are not used to it. There is a good hint given to us that don’t be impatient. Take it easy and go stage by stage.

I also mentioned a story of, in a small gathering, a story of Baba Jaimal Singh, who was Great Master’s master. You have heard the story before, but I can repeat it again, because it has some significance for us. Baba Jaimal Singh as a disciple of Soami Ji, who was his master. His master was Soami Ji, Seth Shiv Dayal Singh, from Agra. He got initiated from there. He was living in Punjab, and Soami Ji was living in Agra in Uttar Pradesh, in UP. It is quite a distance from Punjab, so it was not easy at that time to just travel all the time to go there. They would make an appointment by writing letters. So, Baba Jaimal Singh wrote to Soami Ji, “Soami Ji, I am suddenly feeling so much anxious to meet you. I am missing you so much. My heart wants to go run and see you. Please give me some time so I can see you. I am really missing you.” He sent that letter, and Soami Ji wrote back—letters took a lot of time in those days. After a month a reply comes. “My dear son, Baba Jaimal Singh, I am very happy to receive your letter, and I am very glad to know that your soul is roaming around in Khand Brahmand.” Jaimal Singh said, “My soul is going nowhere. This must be a letter meant for somebody else. Soami Ji might have made a mistake, and he thought that it was for me and he sent this letter.” He wrote again. He said, “Beloved master, Soami Ji, I must tell you the letter you wrote to me was not for me because my soul does not go anywhere. I was just missing you, and I am still missing you. I just want to be with you. Please give me time to come to Agra and see you.”

After another wait of a month, another reply comes. “My beloved son, Jaimal Singh, I have received your second letter. I am very happy to know that your soul is roaming around in Khand Brahmand. So far as coming to Agra is concerned, come in the first week of next month. I will see you.” With these two letters in hand, Jaimal Singh goes to Agra and presents them to Soami Ji. “Soami Ji, these letters were not for me, because my soul was not going anywhere, and you addressed them to me.” Soami Ji laughed and said, “Jaimal Singh, let us go inside and meditate for a little while.” There were ten or 12 people, disciples of Soami Ji, sitting outside. Both Soami Ji and Jaimal Singh went inside the little hut that they had. After about half an hour, they both came out, and then Soami Ji asked, “Jaimal Singh, now tell me. When I wrote those letters, was your soul not going around in the higher regions?” Jaimal Singh said, “Yes, master.” Swami Ji said, “I am not asking if during this session of half an hour of meditation your soul went up. I am asking when I wrote those letters was your soul not going into Khand Brahmand?” He said, “Yes, master, it was at that time.” Then Soami Ji turned to the other people who were sitting there, and he said, “When you miss your master so much that you can’t do without going to see him, where is it coming from? It is the ascent of the soul inside, but you are blindfolded. You do not see where you have gone. The masters can blindfold you and let you do your worldly work whereas you miss the master so much, and that is coming from where? Coming from an ascent of the soul inside, ascent of attention inside. Outside you don’t see it because there is no spectacle. There is no vision about what is happening. Then Soami Ji explained that masters deliberately do

this sometimes so that your karmic work, the work you are to do in this world for your living, for your taking care of family, for taking care of your karmic obligations, can be done because it may happen that if your attention goes and you see there, you may never like to come back and do anything, and then the whole karmic pattern gets postponed to another time. They want you to finish your account, and they help you to finish the account. Masters help you to finish the account you have, karmic account, while you are still in this world. This is one of the ways of helping. They also lighten the burden in other things if it is too much, but this is one way that they can put blind folds so you don't get stuck there and say, "No, no, I can do the rest afterwards." They say, "No, finish your karma. It is only light karma because now it is not for all the previous karma. It is only for this one life's karma, what you have pralabdh."

Now when you say it is only light karma, what do they mean by that? What they mean is when a Perfect Living Master initiates, gives Naam to a disciple, he at that very time destroys all the reserve karma held in a cloud which is being picked up again and again to make our destiny for different lives. Therefore, the only karma left after initiation is the pralabdh, the destiny of this life. The only karma after that is what we create in this life, so it is a very light burden. The heavy burden was the sinchit karma, the reserve karma sitting up in the cloud from where the time machine was pulling out karma and putting us into reincarnation again and again—that is not there anymore. Therefore, the karma becomes light. It is only the pralabdh; it is only the destiny for this one life that you are going through. You do create more karma during this one life, and if you have to come another life, if a second life after initiation is indicated where you have to come, it is only based on the karma of the present life and not any past lives. That is a very big advantage and you get lighter. Every time you have to come again after initiation, if you have to, it is always better, more conducive to meditation, more conducive to go on a spiritual path than before. So these are advantages, but when masters handle this problem of our karma, they make us go through it, but they do it in a certain way, because they have a deal with the negative power that runs the universes, Kal, the time frame, the time machine that is running these three universes, there is a deal because they are upsetting the time machine and pulling our souls from here. Therefore, they have said that we will not disturb the time machine, we won't disturb this universe of the three worlds. Therefore, they pull out. They say they pull out so smoothly the souls. The example given is like pulling out a hair from butter. You know if there is a hair stuck in butter, you pull it so smoothly you don't even know if you pulled it out. The soul is pulled out from these three-world pattern of the mind, Kal and time, like that smoothly. For that, they do these wonderful things. They block anything that makes you feel that we postpone this karma here and go away.

Another thing they do which many people don't like is when there is a little heavy karma to go through, they disappear, not a good sign. You say, "This is a time when I needed you," and you can't find them. As soon as the hump is over, they reappear. "Master, what happened?" "Oh, really? You had to go through that? Oh, don't worry, now it is over," because they feel that if they intervene you would not like to go through that karma and just postpone it.

This karma is a strange thing. Karma consists of some strange elements which we don't realize. Karma is not a simple thing. Karma is not events. Karma can be emotional events, can be mental events, can be physical events. The pralabdha we come with, the destiny we come with, consists of events like birth and death, birth at a certain place, a fixed place over which we have no control. The previous karma is deciding where we are born, who will be our parents, and the whole thing sets off from there because we could be born into different places and have entirely different kind of life. That is a very major event, where are born with our past karma. Then we have accidents. We have coincidences, accidental meetings. We have marriage, children. We have parents who are already there. We have relatives. We have friends. We have occupations, jobs. Everything is laid out by the pralabdha karma by our destiny with which we come, right up to our death. Death is also determined the same way.

This pattern of a lifetime has all these events already fixed into it, but in between these events there are gaps left of a different kind of karma, which is not pralabdha, which is not destiny. We call it kriyama karma. Kriyama means it is a new opportunity for us to act. Those new opportunities that come again and again in our lifetime are the ones where we have choices, where we use free will, where we say, "Should I do this or not do this?" Those gaps we fill up with our choice making. When we make a choice, that is the establishment of a new karma which we have to pay off later on. Therefore, if you look at life, you will find that the gaps which we fill up are not so many as we think. Most of the events are prefixed and already there. Within them we are operating to use our free will, our choice, to fill up those gaps. When we fill up those gaps, depending upon how we make a decision and when we make a decision, what moral value we give to the decision determines the nature of the karma. Supposing in making a decision our conscience says, "This is not good. You are doing something wrong." Nobody else is telling us. Our own conscience is telling us from inside. "This is wrong." We say, "No, but it is good. I like it. I am a bad person anyway. At least it is pleasurable. At least I get some fun out of it." For whatever reason, we take the decision. It is considered to be the karma deserving a punishment. We made it up. We decided to punish ourselves by doing that. Knowing it is going to be like this, we do it and punish ourselves. That is standing as a punishment in the future. The punishment can come within the same lifetime or can come in the next lifetime, so it is held up there. If we say, "This was a time for me to help somebody and that is a good deed I am doing," you are establishing that moral value that I am really doing a good deed for somebody or I am helping somebody, it is a good thing I am doing, you have established a karma which will give you a reward and will give a reward in the same life or in the next life or later on. If it is held up as a good karma. It is these moments when we deliberate and see clear choices and say, "I can do this or that" and then take a decision that new karma is created, not otherwise. What you do automatically instinctively is not new karma. That is payoff of the old karma. Therefore, the new karma is confined to where free will has had to be used, where you had to make a distinction between one choice and another and pick up one choice. Therefore, these two combinations of the pralabdha and kriyama, this combination of the destiny and new actions works to create our future lives. But then it is not the actual act that creates the karma, because karma is neither held

in the body nor in the sense perceptions but on the mind. Karma is a mental activity. The mind creates karma and not the body. If the mind does not know the body hit somebody, there is no karma. It is a payoff of the old one. If the mind knows, "I am going to hit," it is a new karma. If you say, "I want to hit that person" and don't hit, even then it is a karma. So the karma is a mental activity. It is not a physical activity, and we make that mistake sometimes thinking, "Oh, it is only in my mind," but even if you are in the mind, it is still karma. So that way, by your mental activity and making decisions in our mind, we create a lot of karma.

Karma can be paid off, of course, also mentally. Mental illness, mental deficiencies, they come into play to pay off old karma. Emotionally we can pay off karma. We get emotionally wrecked by disappointments. We get wrecked by things not happening according to the way we want. Those are also karma. Most of them, emotional karma, is from the past, but the mental karma where we decide what to do is for the future. Now the difficulty is that if you have a set of bad karma requiring punishment and a set of good karma requiring rewards, they don't cancel each other. That is the biggest snag in this whole system, that you can't cancel. You can't say, "Oh, I did something bad. Now let me atone for it and do good things." You are punished for the bad; you are rewarded for the good. Therefore, otherwise you could wipe out your karma. Because both are independent, you can't do it.

The story is told of Krishna, who was an enlightened avatar, an avatar, an incarnation of Vishnu, the god of sustenance of this world. He even from childhood could speak of some great truths. He was a cowherd. He used to take care of cows in the pastures. He had a very young student, not a student but a classmate who used to go to village school. His name was Udho, and Udho and Krishna used to go together to look after the cows. One day Krishna tells Udho, "Udho, we cannot understand the nature of karma." He is telling as a child. "Udho, we cannot understand the nature of karma. It is so strong holding us back. Look at this ant crawling," and he points to an ant that is crawling there. "Look at this ant crawling. It looks like a little insect, a little ant crawling. Twice it has been Brahma, the creator of this universe, and once it has been Indra, lord of a heaven existing, and now it is an ant because of karma. He got so much reward for the good things he did and became the creator of the three worlds, and he did so much evil that he had to come back again as an insect." He said karma is too strange. The words he used which are now recorded are "*Karman ki gatti nyari se*" That is how they say it in eastern UP, Uttar Pradesh. When I went to visit the land where Krishna worked and was born in that area in Uttar Pradesh, I saw poor people, the gardeners and others working there, singing in the evening, and this was the song they always sang. This is the refrain of their songs, "Udho, *karman ki gatti nyari se*." "Udho, you can't understand the nature of karma. It is not so easy as we think it is."

This whole thing is a complicated system of karma requires that we have to be here for good or bad. Yet masters have come here from time to time and have given us another way, a different way to overcome this problem. They said, "If you want really, you can live a karma-free life." How can you lead a karma-free life if you have to make decisions all the time? They say, "Well, leave the decision to the master. Live in God's will. Live in master's will. If you are living in

God's will or master's will, you don't make a decision. Somebody else makes a decision. If you have an enlightened good friend and he can decide things for you, don't jump in and say, "I want to decide," say "George knows best. He can decide." Your friend can know better. You are not getting any decision making. This is a very important part, that if you live in God's will, in the master's will, you don't create karma because you are not making a decision. You are living by his decision. But how do we do that? How do you know what is God's will and what is our mind's will? The truth is that there is a category of living. You can live like one with mind's will and one with God's will, or the guru's will. The two categories of people are called manmukhs and gurmukhs. Manmukh is a follower of the mind and follows how the mind decides between choices and creates karma. The gurmukh lives on the will of the guru and follows that and does not create karma.

How do we know if a particular action we take—if the guru is not there, God can't be seen, we can't ask him is this your will or no, and we have to make a decision—how do we know which is God's will and which is our mind's will? There are, of course, Rumi, Maulana Rum, gives an answer. He says, "Why do people ask me what is God's will? It is so simple. If he has placed a spade in your hand, he has expressed his will—dig. If you are given a pen in your hand, he has expressed his will—write. If he has placed circumstances indicating what to do, do it. That's his will." He simplifies it, that if you live by following the circumstances and coincidences around you, coincidences themselves are an expression of God's will if you follow them. Then of course more recently the masters have further explained that there are two functions in our mind. One is the mental decision making and the other is the intuitive decision making. There is a difference between the two. In the mental decision making, we always take time to decide, because the mind has to reason what is better or worse and then make a decision. If the mind makes a decision, it is karma. Intuition does not have any time. It is a gut feeling that comes. When you follow that, no time has been taken, you have not taken a decision except the gut feeling that came, and there is no karma. People who live intuitively do not create karma. People who live mentally create more karma.

There is another angle to it. How do we know it is true intuition or not? Some people mistake a quick mental judgment to be intuition. One man told me, a friend of mind, "I have been developing my intuition." I said, "I don't know how to develop. I am very glad. You tell me how do you develop intuition? Give me an example." He said, "I'm going to give you an example. I want to decide whether I want to go to that city tomorrow or not. I ask my intuition to give an answer. "Ahhh...we'll go." I said, "What was that 'ahhh'? That was time." That was exactly the time that mind takes to make a decision. This was a mental decision, not intuitive. When the intuitive hunch comes to us, there is no time. It is just sudden, completely sudden. It is the sudden hunch that comes. Is there any way to verify—if you get these intuitive hunches and we get this gut feeling—is there another way to verify that whether it really was intuitive? Yes. The circumstantial evidence of coincidences outside corroborates whether the intuition was right or not. You will find this is a remarkable thing. When you have a hunch, a gut feeling, then you go

out and drive and see the same thing written on a billboard, it is a confirmation of your intuitive hunch. The more intuitive you become, the more coincidence of that kind happen. You can check them out in your life. So therefore, God speaks to us, guru speaks to us, master speaks to us in all these languages, and if we follow those, we are living in Lord's will and don't create karma. So we can make to quite a large extent a life with much less karma than we have. So there are some guidelines how to handle karma for a seeker, for a disciple of a Perfect Living Master. I am giving you these little hints because they work. You can test them out. They actually work.

The fact that karma works in a certain pattern and goes on until we die leads us to the question how is the next life created then? What part of the karma of one life is used to create the next life? Is it just all of it going and in reflection into the next life? Not at all. Only some pieces are picked up from here and there and from the reserve. Pieces are picked up from the reserve, pieces are picked up from here, pieces are picked up the tenth earlier lifetime, hundredth earlier lifetime, fiftieth earlier lifetime. It can be picked up from anywhere to make a new lifetime.

There was a blind king in the *Mahabharat*, Indian, an epic story, and he was blind at the time of Krishna, and he told Krishna, "With your help I have been able to look back into 100 of my past lives, and I don't remember anything I did to be blind in this life. How come I'm blind?" Krishna says, "No, you have to go farther back, 104th life. Earlier 104th life you as a king took out the eyes of a man, and that is why you are blind. He says, "After 104 lives?" [Krishna] says, "There is no limit. Karma can be created from any of the past lives and brought in to make a new life." This arrangement is such that since we have had so many past lives that we could continuously have life even if we tried to live karma free. The only way that a karma-free life can really help is if we are initiated by a Perfect Living Master and he destroys the cloud of all previous lives karma. The only thing left is the pralabdha destiny made for this life, and we pay off that in this life. Whatever we create, then we can control if we know this is the only life that can be used to make the next life, we have a karma-free life, live in the will of the master, you don't have a next life!

What happens when you die? Most people can't tell us. Some people have near death experiences, and they tell us they saw white light, they saw colors, and so on. The doctors and psychologists say, "No, no, that is only a remembrance of the birth canal and you came out and saw the lights, so they see the light when they die. It is a memory going backwards." They give significant explanations. What is the answer which mystics and the masters give us? They say, "When you die you suddenly find the world retracting from you and you are being pulled away." The whole of this life, the pictures of this life, run like a movie in front of you, and you see all the events suddenly running in front of you. You see, "Oh, I did this, I did this, I did this." Very rapidly, your whole life is replayed as it were in front of you. At that time, in the last few moments of your death, when this is happening, whatever your wishes at that time are, whatever you think of at that time, is the fundamental basis of the next life. Then other things are added on to it. They say the last moment's wishes and desires are very important in establishing what your immediate next life will be like.

But immediately after death, when you are pulled out and you are disembodied, if you are not an initiate you are brought before somebody, some character who has been assigned the role because of his good karma, or bad karma, who sits as the Lord of Judgment on you, and he says, “You saw the picture, and now I am going to tell you what is entailed for the next life.” And he spells out, he spells out that from the karma that you created, he tells us that it entails that you have done so much to go to hell—three days in hell, or ten days. You have done so much you are entitled to heaven for a month. You have done so much to have these events in your life, but before we go into other forms that you can go into, including life forms other than human, you could go into a whole sequence of life forms starting from plant life all the way to insects, birds, mammals and human again. By your karma you have created the cycle of rebirth in different life forms, but before any of that starts it will always go in the same order—by the way, that happens to be Darwinian order also, I was seeing the sudden coincidence. Before we start the Darwinian order of—you don’t have to go through all life forms, only some of the selected ones, but the order is always the same—before you go into that order, you decide you want to go to hell or heaven first—the last choice you are going to make with your free will. After that, until you become human, you will have no free will. This is the last opportunity to exercise free will.

Some people like to go to hell first, get it out of the way, and some want to go to heaven. Maybe in heaven you may pray and avoid the hell. All kinds of thoughts come. I have sometimes in these meetings taken a poll of how many people, if they got a chance and they had to go one month to heaven and one month to hell, where would they like to go first. I am going to check what is your opinion. If you all had a choice and you have to spend one month in heaven and one month in hell, how many of you would like to go to hell first? Okay, how many of you would like to go heaven first? Pretty well divided. Thank you. That has always been my experience. It is pretty much divided. There must be some good reasons why we have such a 50/50 poll on this issue. But that is the last choice we get in the law of karma.

After that, the different life forms we have, they have a very strange effect again on karma because every lifeform you go through leaves its imprint before you go to the next. For example, if you have a karma where you have to be a tree, you have to be a wooden tree for 100 years, you stand in the garden as a wooden tree with its subdued consciousness of a tree. You can’t do anything, but you are conscious that you are a tree. You are conscious of other trees around. People are there. You can’t share. You can’t speak. You can’t communicate. You can’t move. You are stuck until you die as a tree. For that long period. You carry that wooden tree experience to the next life. Supposing you have only two lives, tree and human and nothing in between, that was all your karma, you will find yourself wooden and tree-like even when you are human. This carries on. It is amazing. Every experience! Supposing you had the experience of being a dog before you became human. The dog’s attributes come up as a human being, and you have a tendency for that. So, it is not merely that they stand alone by themselves. Every form of life in which we appear carries its imprint into the next one, and ultimately when we become human, we are carrying the imprints of a lot of life forms. That is why they behave in all those forms. It

is a very complex sanskar. Sanskar means the establishment of attitudes based upon all previous lifetimes. Sanskar is different from karma because sanskar...that is just sanskar. Sanskar means the accumulated effect of all the previous karma. It is not one. Events that come are one life. This event happened there; it is happening now, but sanskar is accumulative. Sanskar develops our attitude, and our attitude is very uniform. It hardly changes. I have seen that the attitude of people does not change, but with a Perfect Living Master's initiation, it does change. I have seen that. So it is accumulative. How does it change with a Perfect Living Master's initiation? Because the very cloud carrying all the previous sinchit karma is destroyed and immediately leads to change of attitude for that is no longer affecting your attitude.

If you watch people, you will see. If you watch initiates closely, and I have watched initiates all my life, and I watch closely how they react when they come and get initiation, how they are before, how they are after, how it happens as they progress. The distinct change of attitude comes after initiation, and the attitude towards people, attitude towards things, begins to change. So that's because of the law of karma. It is all built into this particular law. So, karma is not simple like it is just action-reaction. It has all these strange features in it. If you are initiated by a Perfect Living Master, you do not go to any other life form except a human life form if you have to. Do you have to go to another life form? Not necessarily. One day Great Master gave a discourse, and he said, "If you are initiated by a Perfect Living Master, you will not have to go through more than four better-and-better human lives." My dad was not there on that Satsang, on that discourse. He heard it from somebody else, and he ran to the Great Master, and he said, "Master, I understand that you said today a person initiated by a Perfect Living Master cannot have more than four lives. Is it true?" Master said, "Lekh Raj, why are you worried? This is your last life. Why are you worried about four lives?" He said, "No, I am worried that if I want a fifth one I won't get it." He said, "Why would you think of a fifth one?" He said, "Because who knows, you may come again and again. Some people say masters come again and again. You decide to come a fifth one, will you leave me behind?" Great Master then explained. He said, "Four lives are mentioned as a limit. It is not necessary for everybody to have four lives. Indeed, if a person, after initiation by a Perfect Living Master, follows the instructions of the master, just follows the instructions of the master, this is his last life. He is not reborn again. If a person, after initiation, cannot follow fully—tries but misses, fails, tries, misses—he may come for one more lifetime, which will be a better lifetime where he can follow the instructions. Only where a person gives up the path and does not want to follow at all, he comes for another third life. Only a person who goes against the path, against the master, works against the master, comes for the fourth life. It is not that everybody has to come for a fourth life." Most people who are following the instructions of the master this is their last life. Therefore, it is not...this story went around that we have to come four lives. That's not true. That is not according to the power of initiation of a Perfect Living Master which takes care of you. He can also intervene in this karma. Divine intervention is possible to lighten even the existing pralabdharma karma. But what happens? Because of the deal that masters themselves have made with the lord of these regions, the time frame, the time machine that is running these regions, because of that deal, they say, "Okay, if you want

your pound of flesh, we will give the pound of flesh before we go.” If they help a person, very often they take the karma upon themselves. If they find that the disciple is really in pain and agony, as human beings they have utmost compassion. They are very compassionate human beings. With that compassion, they don’t want the person to suffer or not suffer so much. They can take on, but then they pay the price. But the price they pay is much less because the negative power itself is not wanting them to suffer. So, when they take on a little suffering on behalf of their disciples, the negative power itself is anxious they should not suffer. So, they can take on a little bit and it solves a large amount of karma, it takes away a large amount of karma of that disciple.

People have to go through some very tough karma. The masters they can get injured on their hands. They can get injuries on their body. They can fall sick. There was a case where a man had a very heavy karma. We all have very different loads of karma, but one was a very heavy load of karma and could not have been ready for initiation in this life, could have been ready next life with the grace of a master whose darshan he had had. But his friend, who was a disciple of Great Master, was very keen to give him the initiation. He kept on pleading to the master. “Master, he is my friend. I love my friend. Forget all his weaknesses. You don’t judge people, so just initiate him.” The Great Master said, “For your sake I will initiate your friend, but then I will go back straight home. I will cut my tour short.” He initiated that person, went back, and had a high fever for himself, which he predicted in advance. So, masters can take on their bodies visible karma, which we can see, for the sake of their disciples. Some disciples say it is very unfair to load a master with our karma. What kind of Sikhs are we, what kind of disciples are we that instead of helping the master do his work, we are putting our karma on the master? That’s not fair! The question is, the answer master gives is, “Look, I am helping you with this much load of karma. I will be able to do this little. Therefore, it is a good deed. Don’t worry about it.” But still people, loving disciples, they don’t want even to give that much of karma to master. Eventually it is all left to the discretion of the master. When we live in the will of the lord, he determines how much we can take, how much he needs to help us, and we go through karma.

I have told you all these things about the law of karma because very often we don’t hear these details, and we think karma is a very simple process: Do good and you are rewarded; do bad and you are punished. It is much more complicated and has a cycle of events that goes with it. So far as we are concerned, the best is to create as little karma as we can in this lifetime, and that is by living in the Lord’s will, which means we look up and see what the coincidences are telling us, what our hunch is telling us, what masters talk is telling us, what specific instructions he has given us or telling us. Follow that. If you follow all these things, you will be on the right track. If sometimes you get confused, we have these two options. We can go this way or this way. Master is not here, we can’t contact him, we can’t telephone him, we can’t speak to him. How do we know which way to go? Is there is a rule of thumb that we can apply to what we should do? The rule of thumb is look at the two options. The one that brings you closer to the master is to be preferred over that which takes you away from the master. The one that makes you think more of

the master is be preferred over that which does not. The rule of thumb that you will find if you apply this rule of thumb in making your daily decisions, you will be generally quite right. Therefore, you will make the right choices. Of course, you can also in meditation ask the master and repeat the words of simran. Very often, either directly in meditation or coincidentally, the next day you will get the answer. So, then you don't have a problem, because you are living in the will of the master, and you can create a more or less karma-free life, lose the burden and follow the instructions of the master and go back home in this very lifetime.

In this age—this is called the Iron Age, the Kali Yuga—the grace and generosity of the master is flowing more than ever before, I can tell you that. This is a time to keep our cups open to get filled up. People say, “Why don't I get enough grace of the master?” The grace of the master is flowing all the time. It flows like rain. Rain falls, the shower is falling, it is like grace. If you have a cup and put it upside down in the rain, it never gets filled up no matter how much the shower is. If you turn it around a little bit, a few drops go in. If you turn it straight up, it gets filled up very quickly. What is this cup we are talking of? This cup is the cup of our own attention. If our attention is entirely the world, it is upside down. If our attention is towards the master, it is upside up, filling up with grace. Grace is never stopping. It is our cup that we manage, our attention that we manage, which side we put it. If we put it up, it gets filled up. If our attention is on the master day and night, walking, talking, thanking him for everything, the cup is up and grace comes and we experience it. If our attention is worldly and say, “Master, I tried to do this work, but you didn't help me. Master, I failed at that job. Master, I couldn't do that,” your attention is all on the worldly things and all that you want is for worldly activities, grace is there but the cup is empty because it is not turned in the right direction. So, keep the cup of your attention in the direction of the master, and his grace will fill it up.

I am very happy you paid such attention to what I was saying. Keep it in practice what I have been saying. Keep it as a guideline. This is just guidance. It can only be actually worked out if you meditate, go within and check it out. Do not believe any word of mine unless you check it out yourself inside. That is a principle on which Great Master's teachings work, that you can hear these things but check them out. All these things that I say, the truth about them is lying inside you. All the questions you have, the answers are lying inside you. If you go within, you will get the answers to all these things.

We will have a short break for questions. If you have any questions, you can ask them now.

Yes? (Claudia will help with the microphone.)

[Question in Punjabi. Ishwar answers in Punjabi.]

This is an important question he has raised in Punjabi, so I will translate into English for the rest of the people. He was first asking about the life force, the soul, the shabd sound and the face of the master we see, the radiant form. Where do they exist? I said all three exist at the same place. Second question was the distinction between the face of the master, the radiant form, and the

*shabd sarup*, the sound form. I told him that when we go higher, Par Brahm, both of them merge and become the same thing. The sound and the face become the same thing, and no distinction is left at that time. But the question he is now asking is that what about people coming for the first time. Where does their karma come from? Now that is the question I wanted to share with everybody, that when we had no karma in our true home in Sach Khand, coming to this world for the first time, a world created by karma, how did this karma come when we had no karma at all? What kind of karma was there? Now that is actually when the individuated soul descends below Par Brahm into the world of the three worlds, in the causal stage, Trikuti, the top of the three worlds, at that stage there are what is called...there is Akash, a sky containing all possible permutations/combinations of destinies karma. They contain the blueprints of every type of life that can be created in any life form. Most particularly it has a large selection of human life forms which you can take. It shows what your life from the beginning to the end will be and to have that life what past life will exist with this to create that life. It will also show what that life form will create in the future lifetime. So, the packages are such, if you want to pick up one lifetime of a human being here, it has to carry with it past lives to create that human life, because no life can be created without past karma. The packages are there. We are karma-free. We have come here and get a choice. You can pick up any one of these combinations that you like. The time machine offers us this option. Go look around this library of videos and DVDs sitting there. Pick up which one and you play it out. That will be your life. We go and pick up our tape, pick up our DVD and say, "This one looks good, reasonable, and that looks pretty good." We don't go too far to see how long we will be there because of that. It looks like a good life now, so we pick up that and come and get trapped here, and all the other lifetimes that are part of that package comes into play. Or we can be one of the marked souls and say, "I can pick up an experience through the DVD, but I want to make sure that I escape, so I look into this life with this, and I want to find a life where I find a Perfect Living Master and go back." It doesn't matter if it has some ups and downs, but I like to make sure of that. You pick that package. We come at the right time, the master appears, and we go back home. That's a great choice, but the only choice that a soul, an individuated consciousness, makes when descending into these three worlds. Therefore, when you pick up that you play it. The play is called life. We are all playing that DVD, and it looks like real life, because while playing it in that DVD, we have not only placed ourselves as audience of the DVD, we have placed ourselves as a character also acting in the DVD. We are acting in that, we have a role in that, and we become a witness to the play as well as an actor at the same time, which is exactly what we are doing now. We are looking at the play around us, and we are also acting in this play. We do not realize that the entire play is prerecorded. We do not realize all the free will choices we will make are prerecorded. We do not realize that the whole law of karma that will operate is prerecorded, that when it says you will choose this and have this, we chose it at that time. We made a choice of all choices at one go that we got in here, so the karma that we get here is picked up from a predetermined package of karma. We didn't have any karma.

Now a second point, which is more important, we never have karma even when we are here. The karma is held by another part of an equipment called the mind. The mind plays that karma, and we are powering the mind to become alive because we are consciousness. Without consciousness the mind cannot function, the body cannot function, senses cannot function. We provide the power to work that. We are the power house for playing that DVD, so when the DVD plays, we are providing the power, and we go through the whole experience as if it is happening to us. When we go back, we find the truth of all this, that this is what we chose. We wanted to have an adventure. We picked up our own life frames, past, present and future. Now the beauty is when you pick up one lifetime, you pick up infinite past lifetimes, not five or six, because you require infinite. Every lifetime requires a previous lifetime, so the nature of time that is available for this play is such it will always be an infinite past, an infinite future. These things can go on forever until we step out. When we step out, it ends. It is just like a dream. When we go into a dream, it looks like the things we have seen have been there forever. We see old buildings in a dream which don't even exist outside, and we say how old are they? One thousand years old? This is four thousand years old. We wake up and see there was no building seven minutes ago, and now a 4,000-year-old building has come into being. So, time and past-present are created like that. That is the method by which we get, but then don't forget that karma is not real. Soul never has karma. Soul is just experiencing karma. It is experiencing in the company of the mind and in the company of sense perceptions, which is the next level, the company of this physical body, just the next level to that, and in the dream state, which is still the next level. So, these are different levels of experiences in which we have these karmic experiences. When we go back, nothing was ever experienced.

I might add for those who are very interested in knowing the truth, the absolute truth, the absolute truth is that this whole show of picking up DVDs, coming into this world, is all taking place in our true home, Sach Khand. We never left it. We just picked up these experiences and caused a descent of experience to take place. When we go back, we find we are back home and we never left it. It was a very bad dream we had or a good dream we had. That is the real truth.

It is not a journey as we call it. We call it a spiritual journey because, having lived in time and space, to go anywhere we think it has to be a journey, so we call the spiritual journey to our own self as a journey. When we wake up, we find it was not a journey. It was a successive awakening, that we awaken ourselves again and again to our own true reality.

Q. [Inaudible question.]

A. Oh, yes, Perfect Living Masters who come here are commissioned to do their job. That is their role. Their role is to bring marked souls back home. They are human beings commissioned to do that. Therefore, they don't do anything outside the will of God.

Q: I have a question about when the soul incarnates in so many lifetimes and you see all these individuations of self... After we leave this world, what happens to those different parts of ourselves? Does it persist?

A: The different parts of our self are not really part of the self. They are covers upon the self. For example, this body of ours is a cover left behind when we move to the next step. The sense perceptions we have is another cover. When we go higher, that's left behind—it's discarded, it disappears. When we go to the mind and we go above it, the mind disappears. We all put on these costumes. These are costumes we wear to have these experiences, and once we go above, these all disappear. The self does not leave any part of it anywhere. The self remains intact and integrated and remains the same. So the self does not break into any parts. The self experiences parts. For example, the self experiences that there are so many people here. It goes up there and finds all those people were a creation of a single self. Just like you go to have a dream, in the dream you see a thousand people. When you wake up, the thousand people disappear, because they were only created for the dream. In the same way, all things other than the self have been created only for the experience of the self. Self remains one all the time, right up to the top.

Yes?

Q: You say that karma, in fact, is not real... So, if it is not real, then why can't we just say we realize it's not real... Are there some things that we are not supposed to know while we are here?

A: When we go to see a movie, the movie is not real. They are not real people. Do we leave the hall because it is unreal? We stay for the movie. We don't leave it. The same thing. We don't look for a shortcut because it is not real. The thing is that when we look at a show... Aristotle was a Greek philosopher. He said, "Why do we go to see a play? We don't go to see a play because it is unreal. We want to go and see a play because we make it real. We make it so real that we cry and laugh at the play." They are all actors, and we take them as real. He says what he called is a willing suspension of disbelief, that we willingly suspend our disbelief in order to enjoy the show. If we did not suppress our disbelief, we would never enjoy the show. So, when we come here, we make it a reality. We want it to be real. Even though it is not real, we want to make it real, so to make it real like we make a movie real, we have made this life so real. We have taken no chances that we should think it is not real, so we have defined our reality as that which we can check with perceptions right here. So, we check. "Oh, this is solid. This is real." This is happening like this because there is nothing else we can compare with to say it is not real. So, whether it is real or not, we can only find out if we find something other that is real. Since we don't know anything else which is real, we are blocked from that, this becomes real. So, we have used the power of illusion in such a great way to not create another illusion but to create reality. Now if you want to know what is really real, supposing you want to know is there something really real. Shall I give you an honest answer? Nothing is really real. Everything is created—here and there. The only reality is the power of consciousness to create reality, and that is reality. Even Sach Khand has been created by the power of consciousness, which is permanent, but not

real in the really real sense, because it is the function of consciousness that creates all experiences at all levels. Therefore, it is a comparative reality, relative reality. When you wake up from a dream, this is more real than the dream, so we take it as real. When you go to the next stage that is more real than this, and this becomes unreal, that becomes real. If you go higher, that becomes real and the lower one becomes unreal. At one time we are experiencing one level of consciousness which we consider real. That is our definition of reality. That is how we are experiencing reality. So, no shortcuts. If we wanted shortcuts, we would not make it in the first place. If we didn't want to have this experience, why would we come down anyway? So we set it up ourselves for adventure. The only thing is, enjoy the adventure. Don't get messed up with it. Don't get tied up here. Don't say, "I'm going to be here forever." Say, "I'm ready." After the adventure is over, go back home.

Q: ...One thing that might be real—I hear over and over—is unconditional love. Is that what is real, the unconditional love?

A: Yes. That again is a comparison. Unconditional love is real. I'll tell you why. Because unconditional love is the nature of consciousness. Like the other nature, the nature of consciousness, the original consciousness from which everything became conscious—love is part of that. Therefore, love continues to be real at every level right up to here. But what we call attachments and that becomes unreal, true love remains real, even here. So there is some reality coming right down. What is the reality which we know is real out here? The real thing right here is that there is someone watching the unreality. That is real. A witness to all this show is real. Consciousness is real. All else is made up. Love is real. All else is made up.

Q: [Mostly inaudible question about negative thoughts.]

A: The thoughts come from the mind. The mind is a thinking machine. The mind thinks all the time. The mind thinks when we are sleeping; the mind thinks when we are awake; the mind thinks all the time. If the mind stops thinking, we will die. Therefore, thinking for the mind is like the heartbeat for the body. The heart beats, we are alive; the heart stops, we go. So similarly the mind's heartbeat is the thinking. It has to keep on thinking. It thinks randomly. It thinks on all the stored information we have. It thinks on all the memories of several lifetimes we have picked up. Picking up all the elements from those, it keeps on thinking all the time. Therefore, strange thoughts come to us which we don't know where they are coming from. They are coming from an area which we have forgotten. They are just being picked up randomly by the mind, and those thoughts are coming. If we keep on listening to those thoughts and are concerned with those thoughts, we get into trouble, because those negative thoughts then affect our actions. They affect our behavior. They affect our feelings. They affect our suffering and pleasure. These negative thoughts affect us to that extent. Therefore, what is the answer to the problem? The answer is, don't let the mind think randomly. You direct it what to think. The mind is a machine in your hands. You the soul are the owner of this machine. You can direct the mind. When we do meditation, we do simran, what are we doing? We are directing the mind: Repeat these words.

Like that we can direct the mind to think on any line we like. We can direct the mind to think of any subject we like. We can direct the mind to think of master. We can direct the mind: Now think of this thing what we are planning for the master. You can direct the mind and make it occupied with your direction. You will find the mind is a beautiful servant also. It works so well for you, but when we let the mind go randomly thinking, then those negative thoughts come into the mind from the past and affect us. So, the answer is control your mind by directing it what to do. It's our slave. Remember the mind is supposed to be a slave. Somehow, we made some mistakes somewhere, and we have become slaves of the mind. Now we need to make the mind back our slave by giving it directions what to do.

Q: [Mostly inaudible question about emotional karma.]

A: Emotional karma comes from the emotional acts that we had in the past. When emotions come, we take decisions based on those emotions. You are emotionally inclined to do something, and you say, "I should do this," because your emotions are guiding you. When you do that, that creates an emotional karma, and that is paid off in an emotional way and you have suffering. Emotion can be good and bad. You can have a bad emotional reaction to that or you can have a very good emotion. When people feel loved and they feel they are loving somebody, tears come into their eyes. They are full of emotion. It comes from their heart center. It is also good karma, so emotional karma, like all other karmas, can be good or bad. But the emotional karma is created by an emotional decision we took earlier.

Q: [Mostly inaudible question about over-thinking.]

A: Very good. When you say over-thinking, "Am I over-thinking," what does over-thinking mean? You always think, so we don't over-think or under-think. Thinking is a very steady thing that happens in the mind. What we really mean when we say over-think is paying too much attention to what we are thinking. That looks like over-thinking. Thoughts come in our head all the time. How much attention we pay to the thoughts is what creates a feeling that we are thinking too much or thinking too little. Thoughts are all the time there. Actually, when you are meditating and you are repeating words, thoughts are still going on. What happens is we don't stop the thoughts. We don't stop thinking. We only ignore the thoughts. We don't pay attention to them; therefore, we think now we are away from thoughts. Actually, thinking takes place all the time. If we don't pay attention to it, it looks like we are not thinking that much.

There was a student at Harvard University when I was studying there, and he one day found out that he had learned the art of stopping thinking, how to stop thinking. He called me and says, "I have found a new kind of yogic position in which when I sit and concentrate, I stop my thinking." I said, "Do you still remain alive?" and he said, "Yes, that is why I am talking to you." I said, "Can you come to my house and demonstrate it?" I used to call some of these people who made these claims to demonstrate in front of me how to stop thinking. I would also like to learn because I have never been able to stop thinking. I don't know anybody who has ever stopped

thinking, so I called him and I said, "Let us see what is your procedure how to stop thinking." He said, "I take a certain asana and put my hands on my head like this and then I hold it there and I direct my mind to stop, and I stop thinking." I said, "Let's experiment now. How long can you stop thinking?" He said, "Maybe for about half an hour I can do easily." I said, "How about a 60 second experiment? If you can stop for 60 seconds, I will believe you can stop for half an hour. Let's try 60 seconds. I have my watch with me. Let's start like this. You take on your position, asana, and I will give a clap like this. This means that it is time to stop thinking. I will watch, [and] 60 seconds later I will give you a second clap, and you can start thinking again. And then we will sit and examine what happens to human consciousness, what happens to awareness when a person is not thinking. It will be great research, and it will be totally new knowledge for me. Let's try it." So he got into his asana, and he put his hands in the right position to control his brain and to control his thinking. When I saw he was ready and my second hand had come to the top, I gave a clap. I ignored him because I was looking at the watch to make sure I gave him a second signal after 60 seconds. After 60 seconds I gave another clap, and he opened his eyes and was back with us again. I said, "Now, did you stop thinking for 60 seconds?" He said yes. "I have a few questions to ask you now. When I gave the first clap, how did you know that this was the time to stop thinking?" I said, "Don't make up an answer. Remember what happened. We are checking out what actually happens to consciousness, awareness, when you stop thinking." So he said, "I remember. When you gave the clap, I said to myself this is the time to stop thinking." I said, "That's a thought. It intruded into the 60 seconds." "Oh, yes, yes, but that was only a few seconds and only took two or three seconds to think like that. Cut that out." I said, "Okay, now the experiment is only for 57 seconds. Now tell me how did you know after that that when I gave the second clap you will start thinking. Don't make it up. Think, remember. This is memory; it just happened." He thought deeply. "Oh, yes, I remember. After I said now is the time to stop thinking I also said that when he gives me the second clap I can think again." I said, "That is another thought." I said, "After that, how were you sure I would give the second clap when you were waiting for the second clap?" "Oh, I remember. I did think that the second clap would come and I can restart thinking." In about five minutes of discussion, he said, "Oh, my god, I was thinking more in the 60 seconds than ever before!" Yet he thought he had stopped thinking. How could that happen? How could a person feel that he is not thinking when he is thinking all these things? He had no answer. I had the answer for him. I said the mind does not function in one channel. The mind functions in multiple channels. You can stop one channel, and the mind can go into the next channel and keep on thinking in another voice, another subtle voice, and you think you have stopped thinking.

That is what happens when we do meditation. We do simran. We repeat the words, and we think we are repeating the words, and if you are careful you can see the mind commenting upon those words right there. That is also thinking. If you make the second one also, level, repeat words, a third level opens up, a fourth level opens up. Carefully examine what happens in the head when you are meditating. You will see the mind never stops thinking. His Holiness the Dali Lama came to India, and he was a great meditator as a young man. I received him in India. It was a part

of my government duty to receive him, house him, and we became friends. I had a Land Rover given to me by the government for my job. Normally a chauffeur drove, but when I had the Dali Lama with me, I drove it because we both went out. He was learning English very quickly, so we were able to communicate. We discussed meditation. We discussed the concentration of attention. We discussed thinking. He recognized that the mind can keep on thinking at different levels. He is the only person who has ever told me he could actually identify eight levels of thinking in his head at the same time going on.

Mind is not that simple! It doesn't think in one channel. Therefore, this guy who thought he stopped thinking had stopped thinking in one level, but the other one was keeping on telling him when he can start thinking all the time, and he realized it when I brought him back to recall. When I told him to recall, he was able to recall it. If the mind thinks all the time and we say, "Still your mind," we say stop thinking and do your meditation, do your repetition, first of all repetition is also done by the mind. If it is done with the tongue, it has no value. It has to be done with the mind. It doesn't work otherwise. It starts with the tongue. Your tongue is repeating words, but the mind picks up gradually and the tongue doesn't have to work at all and the mind picks up. In another practice, it doesn't happen automatically. You have to practice it, but once you practice the mind keeps on thinking of other things. You do not stop the mind from thinking. You ignore the mind. You ignore the other thoughts and concentrate on one thought. That is where the power of listening comes in. The power of listening can divert the attention to what you are listening and ignore what you are not listening. That is why when we say listening is the real secret, not the speaking, not the simran but the listening to the simran is the secret. The reason is that when you listen attentively to the simran you do not listen to the rest of the jabbering of the mind that is still going on. Therefore, that is a very subtle point that the mind does not think in one channel, and therefore, you feel that the mind has stopped thinking or is doing something else, it has just moved to another channel. In meditation keep in mind that you cannot stop the mind from thinking. If you stop, you will die. If the mind stops thinking, mind will die, astral body will die, physical body will die, disappear at once. It can't stop thinking. It will think, but you can ignore the thinking. That is the meditation process. Meditation is, in the human body, that we should be able to see the higher regions of consciousness without disturbing the body, keeping it still intact. Dying while living means living in the physical body while having those experiences. So therefore, the intention is not to stop the body from functioning. The body will function. All the vital functions will be there, and we are still able to go to higher levels because we are ignoring that part of the mind which we don't want to put our attention on. We move our attention up, and we don't move the rest of the structure.

There was a lady doctor. Her name was Dr. Shakunthala. She lived in Kapurthala, same town where Dr. Isher Singh lived. She liked Great Master. She liked his beard. She liked his royal face. She liked how he walked. She liked him as a man, and she respected him but didn't believe him. She didn't believe in the Path of the Masters at all. She was a professional medical doctor and said, "There is no soul. There is no such thing. All these are made up. These are the power of

suggestion that we create all these things.” So she didn’t bother about these, but she still would come to the Dera to meet him and greet him and say, “I like you. If you need any medical help I can give you, or anybody else needs medical help I will give you, but I can’t believe this stuff that you talk about. I don’t like your satsangs. I can only meet you after satsang.” One day there was a bibi (out of three bibis who attended the Great Master). One was the one who went and lived outside and was doing work making chapatis in the langar. Her name was Bibi Rakhi, and she was a very advanced soul. Every day in meditation experiences, she would go very high. One day she was sitting in meditation in a little hut and began to scream, loud screaming like she was in great pain. We were her neighbors in the Dera. Our house was just next to hers. We all ran out. Other neighbors ran out to see what had happened to the bibi. We tried to stop her from screaming, tried to console. She kept on screaming without opening her eyes. Something had gone seriously wrong, so we ran to the Great Master, whose house was next door. He came out. He came out and he saw the bibi, and he said, “Call Dr. Shakunthala to look at this bibi. There is time. Send a car and bring the doctor here.” So the car was sent, and the sceptic, nonbelieving Dr. Shakunthala came up. Great Master said, “Doctor, look at this bibi. She is in hell and tried to see if she could come out of the hell.” “Master, she is in very deep trouble. How can you talk that she is in hell? She is in hell because of her trouble, physical trouble.” Everybody tried to help, and he said, “You try to make her get up from the screaming.” The doctor tried and failed. Great Master said, “Bibi, come out,” and she stopped screaming. She came out and put her head on the feet of the master. He said, “What happened to you?” She said, “I went to hell and I saw actual live hell in the astral plane.” “Why did you go there?” “Out of curiosity. I just wanted to see.” “Did they hurt you?” “No.” “Then why were you screaming?” “I was screaming at what I was seeing other people being treated like. There was so much torture going on there, and I couldn’t help it.”

This actual incident made that doctor think there may be something in this teaching. Anyway, she went back. A few days later the bibi, same bibi, was walking and her foot happened to put on a *gur*—I don’t know what you call *gur*—jaggery, the round ball they use for eating for sugar. It is raw sugar. A piece of raw sugar was there, and she somehow stepped in it and went into a room for meditation and didn’t get out for a couple of days. We were worried. We broke open the door of the bibi, [thinking] she might have died inside. She had not opened the door for two days. We found that sweet sitting on her foot was being eaten by the ants. The ants had even eaten up part of the heel of her body. She was almost like dead, but she was in a state of meditation. We were very worried. We called Great Master again, and we said, “Master, this bibi is probably dying. Look, she is not even aware that her own heel is being eaten up by little insects, the ants.” He said, “Call Dr. Shakunthala from Kapurthala. Send the car. Let her come.” In post haste the doctor comes, and Great Master said, “Doctor, examine this bibi. What is happening to her?” She said, “She is in deep coma, because she is completely unaware of what is happening to the body. Her body is being eaten up and she does not know. This is called deep coma, and she won’t get out of it. You move her to the main hospital in Lahore immediately.” Master said, “I think she is going in Khand Brahmand into higher regions.” “Master, this is no

time for jokes. This is no time for talking like this. This lady is in such deep trouble, almost going to die and should be taken to hospital, and you are saying she is going into higher regions? This is a cruel joke.” Master said, “No, but I can ask the bibi, and she will tell you.” “How can you ask her? She is in a deep coma.” Master said, “When the coma is so deep, medical coma is so deep, do the vital forces, the reactions, disappear?” “No, they get lowered.” “Check her vital systems.” “Heart rate is all right, master. Blood pressure is all right, master. Temperature is all right, master.” “What about the reflexes?” So she took her little hammer, and she said, “Oh, reflexes are normal also.” He said, “How can it be? Everything is normal and [in] the cases of deep coma, do these two things go together?” “No, master, I have never seen a case like this. It is the first case. It is more serious than I thought. Take her immediately to the hospital.” Master said, “But I am going to ask her to tell us what she is seeing.” She said, “Master, you can’t wake her up like this. She will need a lot of treatment and may be in a coma for days, weeks.” Master said, “Bibi, come out,” and the bibi opened her eyes. He said, “What have you been seeing?” “Oh, Master, thank you. I was going into those higher regions.” She described the whole description of the astral and causal stages to everybody. That is the first day that Dr. Shakunthala began to believe that there is some truth in the teachings of Great Master.

I am telling you this story to tell you how we are retaining the body. Higher experiences, if we want to have them permanently, we leave everything—they disappear. We are dying while living, which means the body is still functioning, the vital forces remain the same, everything functions. We touch upon those centers of awareness which opens up the experiences of the higher regions. It does not mean that we really die and leave the body. It only means we have an ability, ability to have experiences of dying while living. We have experiences of going to the highest regions, including Sach Khand, while we are still having a physical body that is alive. Just keep in mind we don’t die, we don’t really die. People have done meditation and reached Sach Khand and are still alive and kicking and they move around, because that experience comes by taking the attention to the different points available in the physical body which connect us with those experiences of the higher regions. So that is what we do. Of course, when we go and never want to come back, then we never have another body, we never have another mind, we never have another astral body. We stay in our home unless we change our mind again. How can we change our mind? We have no mind there, but we have will. We have will but no mind.

Be back at three o’clock. Thank you.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wofd3I\\_hpNM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wofd3I_hpNM)

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