

**Discourses/Articles**  
by  
**Swami Krishnananda**  
**The Divine Life Society**  
**Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India**

**MEDITATION AND KUNDALINI**

One must be sure as to why one meditates at all. Most of the difficulties in meditation arise due to aimless practice. There is practice, but it is aimless; it has no purpose. And if you ask anyone why they do it, they give vague answers like peace of mind, and health, and all sorts of not correct answers. In yoga, meditation is not done for peace of mind. I have been telling people that people have generally peace of mind. Who is not having peace of mind? Everybody is well-off, so why you are saying “I want peace of mind by Yoga”? It is not peace of mind; it is a spiritual enhancement of personality that you are aiming at.

What is meant by spiritual enhancement of personality? What is it? You may say it is the elevation of the soul; some such answer may come. But where is the soul? “The soul is inside me.” This is a vague and crude way of defining the soul: *atma andar hai*, or the soul is inside me. This is not a correct answer. The soul is not so easily explainable as something inside somebody. Though it maybe inside, it is not really inside entirely. Why? Because the soul is made up of consciousness. What is the substance out of which soul is made? It is made of something; everything is made of something. What is the soul made of? It is consciousness.

What is consciousness? It is pure awareness of Being that is called consciousness. Can you say consciousness is inside your body only? It may be inside the body because without that you will not be even aware that you are existing. It pervades the entire body; therefore you know that you are a total person. But it is not true that it is confined only to the limits of the body. It is all-pervading. Nobody can set a limit to consciousness. So – now I am taking your mind to a higher point – if the meditation is on the soul for its enhancement, exaltation, increase in dimension, then it is virtually a meditation on consciousness – not consciousness located in some place only, because it cannot be located in one place. It is everywhere.

So, what is meditation? It is consciousness directed in concentration on consciousness. Who is meditating? You are meditating. Mr. Farvani is meditating. Who is Farvani? Somebody is sitting in front of me, this body; is it Farvani? No. Deep analysis has been made by ancient masters as to who this Farvani is. When you are fast asleep you are not aware of the body, but you are still existing. So Farvani is existing even without the consciousness of the body. In what form were you existing in deep sleep? Not as Mr. So-and-so. You did not know whether you are a male or a female; you did not know that you are a human being; you were simply unconscious of all these externalities which you thought are connected with you. You were there as pure awareness only. “I slept well,” you say afterwards. Who says, “I slept well”? The body cannot say that. The mind also was not operating. So who is saying, “I slept well”? That consciousness which was reposing in itself, not being aware of what is happening, is saying, “I slept well”.

So, this is consciousness. You are meditating on consciousness. Now you have found out who you are. You are consciousness. Therefore who is meditating on what?

Consciousness is meditating on consciousness. Where is consciousness? I have told you it is not only in one place, it is everywhere. So who is meditating on what? Universal consciousness is meditating on universal consciousness. Why are you meditating? What is the purpose? So that you may become universal existence. And what happens? You will be deathless and immortal; this is the aim of life. So here is yoga for you, briefly.

*Visitor:* Regarding the meditation technique, what are the signs of awakening of *kundalini*, because it is not clear in books. Sometimes they speak of waking of *kundalini*, but the signs are not quite clear and precise.

*Swamiji:* You are asking what are the signs of its rising, but do you know the way by which it can rise? What is the method?

*Visitor:* Yes, that is important to know.

*Swamiji:* That is more important than experience. But according to your studies, what are the techniques by which it can rise? As far as your studies are concerned, what have you observed? How does it rise? What is the technique? What is the method of rousing it?

*Visitor:* I see two kind of rising, you know, methodical rising by *hatha* yoga or *tantric* meditation and things like this...

*Swamiji:* *Hatha* yoga cannot raise it. It cannot work like that. *Hatha* yoga is only physical exercise. With that it cannot rise. But when you said *tantric*, what is *tantric*? What is your idea of *tantric*?

*Visitor:* Yes, meditation...just on that and this...

*Swamiji:* Meditation on what?

*Visitor:* On this energy...

*Swamiji:* Energy? But how will they conceive the energy? How will anyone conceive it?

*Visitor:* By asking for its awakening

*Swamiji:* No, no. Where is it located?

*Visitor:* That's why I am asking you; you know. What are the signs of...?

*Swamiji:* No, no, no; the signs are different. The sign is the consequence, but the technique is something that precedes it.

*Visitor:* Yes, yes, and so what I can see too, and it will be subjected. It is a confluence of the energy body of man, you know. So, they will discuss...

*Swamiji:* It is a very vast, very little understood subject. Everybody has some wrong notion about it, because they read some *hatha* yoga books and they hear from these

books that if you do some *asanas* - bending and breathing, and put the neck like this and lock the chin here - they think something will come out of it. It will not come like that. It is only an imagination of people, because first of all, one must know what the problem is. You see, you are a doctor. Unless you know the problem of a person, the medicine cannot be prescribed. So what is the problem of man? Has anybody understood it? And why should he rouse the *kundalini*? What is the purpose? Is it clear to the mind of any person? He has vague, unidentified notion of all things.

Energy is in the whole cosmos. The whole universe is energy only. So when one speaks of rousing the energy, what energy is one thinking of rousing? Now, when it is everywhere - if the universal energy is everywhere - where is the need for rousing it? It is everywhere. It means, though it is everywhere, in a human individual it is locked up in a physical location. It is not everywhere as far as the physical consciousness is concerned. It is everywhere theoretically, and metaphysically, spiritually, absolutely - yes, it is so, correct; but the mind of the human being cannot think like that. It cannot imagine that a thing is everywhere. Nobody thinks like that. It is somewhere only. If the energy of the human personality is identical with the universal force, then it will mean virtually that a person is everywhere; it will mean that. The consequence follows. As energy is everywhere, it is also in one's own person; and as a person is made up of this energy, it will follow that every person is everywhere. Ultimately it is the truth. Everybody is everywhere only; that is the final truth, but the consciousness of the human individual is locked up in its intense attachment to this bodily limitation, and it can think only through this body. A human mind can think only through the body. It cannot think through the Universal Being. It is not possible. I am slowly leading you to the point of this *kundalini*.

So as the whole energy is locked up in this bodily personality by a concentration of energy at a point of space and time, what has happened is there is agony of consciousness. Agony - it is something like the fall of man from God, as they say in the language of the Bible. To fall from God is agony, great sorrow. So the consciousness, universal that it is, has fallen headlong, upside down as it were, into this - what they call - earthly condition of physical personality. So there is agony, sorrow; and one cannot exist in this condition for a long time. It is like living in hell. It is suffering. So, it tries to create a situation of removing this agony while still living in this finitude of body. There is a line in Milton's *Paradise Lost* - Lucifer fell down. He was in hell. Every human being is a Lucifer, because he has fallen from the kingdom of heaven; and Lucifer in hell says, "It is better to rule in hell than serve in heaven". So, likewise, it is a story for every man - not only Milton's poetry.

So now we are thinking, this bodily personality, the consciousness locked up in the body is saying, "I am in hell but let me create a heaven". How does it create the heaven? It manifests sense organs. Ears, eyes and five sense organs are there - seeing and contacting something by sight, hearing and contacting by sound, smelling by odor, touching by skin, tasting by tongue - these are the sensations this consciousness manufactures by intense thinking of the necessity to remove this finitude consciousness; because if it is always conscious that it is finite, it is like hell only. It is not possible.

A human being, every human being knows that he is finite, but he creates circumstances in society to remove the consciousness of finitude by somehow or other creating an atmosphere of bigness, importance. "I am a socially recognized person; the whole world knows me." If this idea enters the head, you feel somehow that the finitude has expanded into the world area. It has not really expanded; it has

only conceptually expanded. So, a socially great man is not a really great man. He is a small man only, but people say "Very good! Very good!" But one day they say "Down!", and put him down. You know the history of great people. They are great only in the imagination, but still the foolishness of the mind is such that it is working for it. It doesn't want only importance socially; it also wants satisfaction inside.

How will it get satisfaction? One way to get satisfaction is to spread the consciousness of social contact, as I mentioned to you. The other is the sense organs want to come in contact with something outside. What happens is that a peculiar psychological drama takes place inside. The mind is inside, within the personality. It is suffering due to the fact that it is inside only. It is like a prison. It wants to get out from this prison. Every human individual is not made in the same way, psychologically. The mental structure is different. What I want is different from what you want. They are all different things. So a particular want or longing of the mind arisen out of that particular type of finitude wants a counterpart of it in the world outside, of a particular type only, so that only certain things will satisfy you, certain things will satisfy me, and nobody can be satisfied by all things. So the sense object is chosen by the mind - a particular sense object. It wants one beautiful thing; and what is beautiful to me will not be beautiful to other people because the finitude is structurally different in different individuals. Similarly the sound - it wants to contact certain sounds. By that you also feel satisfied. It may be music, it may be some good word, or whatever it is. Similarly with taste.

Now, these methods of the mind, adopted by the mind, to overcome its limitations and expand the energy that is locked up in the body are futile in nature. Therefore anybody who is sensual and interested in sense contacts too much cannot practice this yoga, because he is doing something opposite of what is required. An artificial heaven is no heaven; it must be a real heaven. Conceptually, you can imagine, "I am the emperor of the whole world, I have got everything in me, I am a very big man." What is the use of thinking like that? Really it is not like that. The universal consciousness has cut off this individual consciousness by a fall, as they call it.

So, what is the method? The method is to prevent the senses from going outward - not thinking something that is outside. We started by saying energy is everywhere. If it is everywhere, it is not outside. This is a very subtle point. You cannot say anything in the world is outside, because outsideness is different from being everywhere. You understand the point? So, the ultimate reality is that which is everywhere. Therefore the consciousness of the fact of something being outside should be stopped, withdrawn. This is what they call sense control. They call it by various names - *brahmacharya*, ethical discipline, morality, goodness, and charitableness - so many things are said which all finally mean the method of sense control. What is sense control? It is the withdrawal of the consciousness from contemplating anything outside.

Now, as you are speaking to me only on *kundalini*, I am touching that point. This energy is located under certain pressure points in the body, and you feel different sensations in different parts of the body. If I touch your nose, you will feel something; if I touch your ears, you will feel another thing; if I tickle your arms, you feel a third thing; if I tickle the stomach, something else, and so on and so forth. The different parts of the body can generate different sensations. In this gross human personality, energy has descended to the lowest physical level, and the *hatha yogins* or the *kundalini yogins* say it is in the lowest level - it is the *muladhara*.

*Muladhara* is a Sanskrit word. It is like an unconscious level, and so often times we are in a state of unconsciousness. You don't think at all. You sleep. You seem like a stone, like an inanimate being. In fact, we have descended to that level also. It is said by philosophers of evolution that there is evolution from matter to life, life to animal, animal to human – you might of heard of it. We have come to the human level from the lower level - that is from the rock itself - so that the rock-consciousness is also present in us little bit; and we can sleep like a rock, we can breathe like a plant, we can behave like an animal. Every human being has the animal quality also, and he can manifest it if he wants; and he can feel hunger and thirst like the plant; and he has the human qualities, as I mentioned. The lowest level is the total unconscious level.

In the next higher level, the consciousness is involved in different layers of nerve centers. It has to be roused by concentration on different parts of the body (there are seven centers, from the lowest up to the crown of the head), intensely concentrating. It is not concentration merely on that which is inside the body; it has a corresponding location outside in the universe also. There are seven plexuses - nervous plexuses - here. Correspondingly, there are seven planes of existence. In the scriptures they are all mentioned - the physical, and the astral, and the mental, and the intellectual, and the spiritual - these are the levels of being. They are cosmically existing levels, and we are to set ourselves in a state of harmony at each level between ourselves and that.

So in each type of meditation you must conceive, “Physically I am one with the physical cosmos, vitally I am one with the cosmic energy, mentally I am one with the cosmic mind, intellectually I am one with the cosmic intellect, and I am, as a positive principle, one with the creative energy of the cosmos. As a spiritual light inside me, I am one with the Absolute Spirit. This is how you have to meditate - gradually through the levels. Then the rise of *kundalini* will take place. Actually rise of *kundalini* is the rise of mind from the lower level to the higher level of dimension, expansion until it reaches the absolute stage.

Now, you asked me what are the symptoms. What did you ask - symptoms?

*Visitor:* Yes, before that to clarify a point. When you said meditate gradually, in fact in experience of meditation it seems to be a realization...

*Swamiji:* Experience will be exactly as I told you just now. You will feel gradually united with cosmical levels, stage by stage. In the beginning it will be a little circle, then it will become a wider circle - they are like concentric circles - until you reach the final circle, in which all the lower circles are included, so that the circle here includes all the lower. This is briefly the soul of the subject.