

Toronto Retreat, q and a, Thursday, August 30, 2001 Anand Dass read the chalkboard.

B: When we say be in the present it simply means be aware of yourself.

Q: What should we do in cases of real pain, and created pain, if we concentrate on the energy centers the mind will create the pain?

A: If the pain is real on the area you are concentrating either concentrate on healing or change the object. Created pain subsides when the mind ignores the pain.

Q: Why do we carry on a bad habit if we know it isn't good for us?

A: 1. weak mind, 2. deep-rooted tendency

Q: What motivated you when you were a child to start meditating?

A: The peace that I felt. In childhood it is easy.

Q: What do you do when household duty overwhelms?

A: Going to movies, the mind likes to avoid meditation is any way it possibly can. It gets caught up in the momentum of doing meditation the outgoing mind is stopped. That outgoing mind keeps the most energy of ego's expression in various ways. You sit to meditate and a thought comes "I have to see my friend" If you meditate the mind says I may merge in God, in merging in God there is the end of the ego that is why in all religions prayers are important.

Q: When you meditate on "I", the instinct is to go there, you still end up being centered in the universe going toward the "I" or beyond the "I"?

A: Iron cuts iron.

Q: Do all roads lead to OM?

A: What is "I"? 1. "I" is individual existence. 2. "I" is universal existence. You escape from the first in order to become universal.

Q: By speaking I have faith that I was designed correctly, that I am not flawed?

A: Yes you are perfect as you are born but later the worldly desires color the ego.

Q: Life has filled me with doubts but the doubts comes from outside not from within?

A: Doubts are in the mind, the mind is inside.

Q: On death, when does the soul/prana leave the body?

R: What is the difference of soul and prana? Did you see a soulless or prana-less living body? There is no living body without soul or prana. They are one yet there is a difference. The soul is conscious principle. Prana is life principle. They work together.

Q: Some people say they should live through bad experiences or should reject them, let them go, how to benefit?

R: Do you know the idea behind it? Go back to your past. A. You remember more bad things that happen to you or b. you remember more good things that happen to you? In bad things our ego feels more its presence. I was hit, I was yelled at, I was punished. Even 20, 50 or 70 years ago those memories are alive as if it happened yesterday. It is ego's creation to bring that bad past.

Q: What is the purpose of memory?

R: Without memory we can't move. Should I go here or there?

Q: What is actually happening when you feel broken-hearted? What is happening energetically ego or soul?

R: It is the ego which created the attachment. It is ego which feels pain at detachment. Soul has nothing to do with it but we say soul because the ego appears as the soul.

Q: For holocaust survivors, those in concentration camps, they don't speak or think of this experience, so is this a way of not being destroyed by the ego that remembers its assault in that experience?

R: The memory is so deep that it makes them cripple.

Q: Why would we cling to pain, fear and defend them? I can understand clinging to pleasure.

R: We want to feel I am alive, I feel pain, I seek for attention.

Q: When does the ego feel pain when it has to give up an attachment and what is the best thing to do to deal with that pain?

R: The main thing is ego's expression it is in attachment and also detachment. Both ways are pain.

Q: We cling to pain because it's also painful not to feel the ego?

R: Seeing the pain in pleasure, the end of pleasure is pain. I may be miserable tomorrow. If you see the pain in pleasure it will be fun [laughter]

Q: How do you work through fear of death? Is it different for different people?

R: When living in the world becomes more fearful then fear of death doesn't appear in the mind. But in a universal human race which is ignored by the society is called homeless (In India it is called sadhu), if you talk to a real homeless, there is no fear of death but fear of living. They can't make a home anywhere. Home means living.