

September 17, 1978 Satsaṅga with Baba Hari Dass

Edit notes: The following was typed from notes handwritten at the time of the darśana. Q denotes a question. B indicates what Babaji wrote on his chalkboard, as read by the reader, and then as heard and noted by someone present. R is comments likely of the chalkboard reader. Comments in square brackets are generally those of the typist. There was editing for format and IAST transliteration of Sanskrit terms.

- Q: Can our parents help us in our spiritual life? Or are we on our own?
B: First we are related to them with saṁskāra. They can affect only our outer level. But in our inner level, our own saṁskāra are stronger. They [parents] can't change a person from non-spiritual to spiritual. And they can't reverse. But the outer discipline can be changed.
- Q: Is it only in our physical bodies that we can make progress and have spiritual development?
B: No. Spiritual development has nothing to do with the body. It is directly related to vijñānamayakośa, the intellect sheath. If a person's body is crooked or a limb is lost, it doesn't mean the person can't be spiritual or can't attain God.
- Q: Must we be in the body in order to develop spiritually?
B: The physical body is important for the development of our consciousness. Because the four minds act together in the physical body. After death, mind can't act because it only remains in a print form.
- Q: Who or what is one's sat preceptor?
B: The Self.
- Q: How much of our spiritual progress is due to our own effort and how much is grace or guru?
B: It is all on your own effort. The grace comes by faith. Faith also to be developed by your own mind. [Babaji might have capitalized grace and guru.]
- Q: When meditating, this young man has thoughts of food....
B: When a person meditates, the thoughts become less, but that vacant place at once fills with saṁskāra.
R: The inactive thoughts that have been buried until that time.
- Q: When you become aware of saṁskāra so that you can see them in your life, what is the most effective way to deal with them if you want to change them?
B: The main thing is to eliminate the saṁskāra. Thoughts, desires, saṁskāra are all the same thing. The most effective way is meditation. There are different ways of meditation, which relate to different people. Some can do it by devotion, some by jñāna, some by austerity, some by dissolving the mind in the object, and some by karma yoga.
R: ... yoga of selfless service.
Q: How does one know which is the right path?

B: In the beginning we all need to purify our minds, which can be done by positive attitude, āsanas and prāṇāyāma, and concentration. When the mind is purified, then we can see our own path.

Q: Recently while meditating, this young woman has felt a lot of energy in the front of the forehead. What does it mean?

B: It should start from the middle of the eyes [between the eyes], and extend up to that place. If it is there, then you can bring it to ājñā center.

Q: If a negative tendency is manifesting and affecting you, can you stop it right then?

B: By dwelling in the positive.

Q: The direct opposite?

B: Yes. If you play out the negative saṃskāra, then it will make a deeper print.

Q: What is the dharma of the world and the part to be played by souls being born now?

B: Dharma is peace. We came out from the eternal peace and we have to dissolve into that peace. But in between there are all kinds of illusions which disturb the peace. So the duty is to remove the illusions and find the peace.

Q: I have difficulty making decisions. What is an effective way to make a decision?

B: It is always difficult to make decisions, because we don't know the result. But if we wait for the results, all works will stop. So we have to give decisions. But we want to make right decisions. Right decisions come when the mind is positive and calm.

Q: Chickweed reduces appetite?

B: I don't know its Sanskrit name. But apāmārga reduces appetite. There are several other ways also.

Q: If we come out of the peace, then we are part of the peace, and why is this different from the peace? If it is one thing, then why is it necessary to change anything?

B: I also said in between there comes much illusion that disturbs the peace.

Q: If the physical world as we know it is illusion, then why are we here?

B: Who says [it is illusion]? The illusion is what we see, and not the object. We are here to expand the illusion, and then go back to the real.

Q: Is Babaji saying then we are here to create more illusion?

B: That's the nature of prakṛti, and we are in prakṛti. The absolute = Puruṣa. The absolute in its potential form or potential manifestation is prakṛti. In that manifestation, positive and negative both develop to keep a balance.

Q: In that illusion, how do you distinguish?

B: In the gross level, the mind is responsible for that which can discriminate between water and fire, earth, or air. But in the subtle form, the mind has no reach. Only the high consciousness can see the reality.

- Q: If the positive and negative keep a balance in prakṛti, does that mean it's the nature of prakṛti to keep us in illusion?
- B: Yes. If all are enlightened, then what is the need of this world?
- Q: If we work on positivity, then somewhere negativity is also developing, to keep a balance?
- B: You are going back.
- R: ... by developing positivity.
- B: Nivṛtti.
- R: ... contracting.
- Q: So we're withdrawing ourselves from the illusion?
- B: Yes.
- Q: Was there a choice originally to develop the first saṁskāra that took us away from the peace?
- B: As soon as the form took place in the beginning, that action was a saṁskāra of creating. In creating saṁskāra, the three energies work together. Those are the energies of consciousness, action, and matter.
- R: Sattva, rajas, and tamas respectively.
- Q: But what is responsible for the form's first taking place?
- B: It's the nature. Like the sun rises from the east.
- Q: We have no control?
- B: We don't have control on the past, but we can build the future.
- Q: I read that there are planes where spiritual work is easier, without the hindrance of the material plane.
- B: No one proved it. Only people say. People prove by physical body. The saṁskāra remains in a dormant stage because there is no instrument to act it out. No mind, no senses.
- B: Didn't you say that there are more worlds than just ours?
- B: Just like so many beings in this world, the planets are so many worlds in this creation. We are not the only ones living in this world. Who knows how many worlds are in this creation, better than our world?
- Q: In those worlds, do they confront the same reality of pleasure and pain?
- B: Prakṛti created it, and the created world expands by negativity and positivity, but the equilibrium can be different, 3/4 pleasure, 1/4 pain, or the opposite, or 1/2 each.
- Q: So based on saṁskāra, do you tend to be drawn toward what you have to learn?
- B: Planet saṁskāra.
- Q: How about the inhabitants?
- B: As beings we are drawn to this planet. But in involution we draw more toward the positivity.
- Q: Would we then evolve toward a different planet where the ratio might be 3/4 positive? According to our quantity of positivity, do we evolve toward a more positive place?
- [Babaji nods.]

- Q: So that seed form of saṁskāra can actually manifest on a different planet after death, depending on what condition they're in?
- B: It can, but we are so much attached to this reality that we don't even think of any other reality. So that pulls us down to this reality again and again.
- Q: Does mankind evolve as a whole, or is it more the individuals evolving?
- B: It happens in a particular ratio, not the whole planet. If it happens, the planet will not exist. So there's a balance.
- Q: Do groups within it evolve?
- B: Yes.
- Q: Can saṁskāra be neutralized by prāṇāyāma, and are some prāṇāyāma better than others for doing this?
- B: Prāṇāyāma are designed in such a way that some are for air- predominant people, some for bile-predominant, and some for mucus-predominant. When a person does the prāṇāyāma which fits his body type, it eliminates the thoughts, which means reduction of saṁskāra.
- Q: Did you choose to incarnate here, and if so, how do you like it?
- [Laughter.]
- B: I am here. It means the saṁskāra chose it. I like it.
- Q: The lessons to be learned on this earth before we can be born on another higher planet are: awareness of the presence of God, and mind control. Right?
- B: Yes.
- Q: Why have I been feeling a lot of undesirable feelings I haven't had for a long time? Like wanting to eat meat and buy clothes and go go-go dancing. It's very disturbing. Why should these come up all of a sudden?
- B: The mind preserves all kinds of desires from all pasts. They become active when they get the right atmosphere. Just like a seed, when thrown on the dirt, it will grow, if the right season comes. Somehow those particular desires of yours have been triggered. Sometimes by some association or someone's talks or by seeing someone.
- Q: Is it bad to fulfill those things?
- B: I don't know good and bad. But anything which expands the saṁskāra will expand the illusion.
- Q: Is there anything I can do to stop them and regain my peacefulness?
- B: The mind created it and the mind is capable of stopping it. A little will power can stop it.
- Q: So it takes will power to live in an environment where people are doing these things and not get carried away?
- B: Yes.
- Q: Is there a thought I can hold in my mind?
- B: Thoughts of God or any positive thought.
- Q: When is one too sick to do prāṇāyāma?

- B: When you have a fever or any injury, abscesses, high blood pressure, lung disease.
- Q: Of the basic prāṇāyāmas, which is most useful for a bile-predominant person?
- B: Sahita.
- Q: For air?
- B: Śītalī .
- Q: For mucus?
- B: Ujjāyī.
- R: The four purification methods are designed for everyone. After they have been learned and practiced, sahita can be done, because it keeps a balance on all three humors. After that, aspirants can go to different paths.
- Q: What is the relationship of art to spirituality?
- B: Art comes out from the heart, the same in spirituality.
- Q: So the path of the artist can be a spiritual path?
- B: Yes. The Ajanta caves and the Alora caves are carved by saints who did nothing but art.
- Q: So if one feels a very strong attraction toward the arts, that can be a positive attachment.? I feel a very strong attachment that is worldly but I also feel it has a spiritual source.
- B: When the mind is purified, art automatically becomes spiritual. Musicians, poets, artists poured out their feelings about God. Some even dissolved into God.
- Q: What changes one's level of consciousness when on goes on a fast?
- B: By fasting, the body and mind are purified. That eliminates the thoughts, and that place is taken by higher consciousness.

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