

Monday, 21 October 2024

Union and Conscious Living

So, did you eat in silence today? Yes? I'm trying to explain the concept of daily routines and regimens, which are essential for healing. There's a beautiful saying in one of the scriptures, or rather in many scriptures, about the single cause for health or disease. What could this cause be, which can either lead to disease or result in health?

Emotions? Thinking? Energy? Environment? Physical activity? Yes, all of these are true, but the scriptures use a specific word—yoga. What does yoga mean? Union. Yes, union with God or the divine. Yoga means union, but what is union? It's often said it's with divine nature. But I wonder, when we use the word union, are we truly aware of its meaning? Union means oneness, becoming a single entity.

Union is the process of becoming one with something. This is what happens during perception. When you perceive something, such as when you watch a movie in a dark theater, you can become one with it. You might even forget who you are—you become absorbed. This happens constantly in life. We are always becoming one with something.

We've spoken in detail about the false identities we create in this process of union. This union is something we must become more conscious of. Here's a simple example: Ayurveda places great importance on choosing your friends. Who your close friends are will decide your fate. Are you aware and conscious of this?

Let's change the word union to contact or exposure. Any exposure or contact leaves a deep impression on your consciousness. The more constant, frequent, and prolonged the exposure, the more significant its impact. In ancient training methods, disciples lived with their masters—just like how Jennemieke is living with us now. This is how you transform—through constant exposure.

You become one with what you perceive. This union is categorized into four types in the texts: proper union, excessive union, minimal union, and improper union. The first three result in either health or disease. Proper union leads to health, while the others may lead to disease.

You've already mentioned some examples like food and exercise. These principles apply there too. The texts classify this union into three categories:

1. time,
2. sensory objects, and
3. actions.

You cannot escape time—global warming and climate change affect us all. We are exposed. There's no other way if you are on this planet Earth, in this galaxy. You will be exposed. But when it comes to sensory objects and actions, we have a choice.

The difference between a living being and a non-living object is the ability to sense and react. This capacity must be used wisely. During the process of perception, it's the mind that decides what you listen to. You could be sitting here with your eyes open but not listening to a word I say because your mind is elsewhere. The senses are completely ruled by the mind, and you must use your mind to listen to yourself too.

When I was speaking about the functions of your soul. Do you remember some of them? Basically it is experiencing. And it comes as either pleasant experience or painful experience. Sukha or Dukha. Even to look at that perception. You have to bring your mind to yourself. You have to listen to yourself. So, mind gains so much of importance in this whole drama. You have to use your mind very consciously.

The Sanskrit term that is used for health is *swastha*, which means "to be situated in oneself." It's about being stable, seated in your true nature. This is not something anyone else can do for you—you must place yourself in that position.

When you are not in your place, it's like being misidentified or lost in false identities. Health, in this sense, is about returning to your true nature, being centered and aligned with yourself. When you are stable in yourself, that is true health.

Our senses are often compared to wild horses—they can pull us in many directions at once. The mind is like the reins, and if you don't hold it tight, the horses will pull you in every direction. Intelligence is what holds the reins, and the soul is the traveler. The body is the chariot, and this is the symbol of the Kurukshetra war in the *Bhagavad Gita*. It's an internal battle, and the soul is the observer of this entire drama.

Now, speaking endlessly or thinking constantly won't lead you to victory. Stopping the mind is yoga. This is why yoga is often defined as stillness of the mind. When you begin to enjoy stillness, nothing external can attract you because stillness brings a permanent joy, unlike the impermanence of other pleasures.

Your fate is in your hands. It depends on what you expose yourself to. A child who has never tasted ice cream will never miss it. Similarly, we become one with what we expose ourselves to, be it through actions, words, or thoughts.

In summary, our actions are the key. Time is beyond our control, but it's influenced by our actions. So when someone says they're having a bad time, it's often due to past actions. This cycle of time, sensation, and action is continuous, and we must be mindful of how we act. To create a good life, we must consciously cultivate healthy actions, rituals, and practices. These bring us into alignment with *swastha*—a state of being situated in oneself. This is the treasure we are all seeking, and it's not found outside but within.

