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The Path to Lasting Health: Cultivating Discipline, Sensitivity, and Joy in Ayurveda

When you return to your countries, the true test of your **discipline** begins. You will have learned a great deal during your time here—knowledge that will help you maintain balance, health, and peace in your life. But the real challenge is applying what you've learned once you're back in the familiar, often chaotic environment of daily life.

You'll recall that during your consultations here, we've spoken about the importance of making conscious choices. You may have received advice on habits to avoid, practices to adopt, and how to follow a healthy lifestyle. Most of you will make a sincere attempt to follow these recommendations for the first few months. You might see visible improvements in your health, experience better energy levels, feel more aligned with your body, and think, "This is how I want to live."

But then, there's a tipping point. After that period, the mindset of many changes. There's the temptation to loosen the reins, to try a bit of indulgence here and there. You might think, It's okay to have a little of this, or skip a practice for a day. But slowly, these small exceptions add up, and eventually, they become regular habits. At some point, you start to notice that your health isn't what it used to be. Your energy might dip, your digestion may suffer, or your mind might feel more scattered. It's at that point that many people come back for follow-up consultations, saying, "I've tried everything, but I just can't feel the same balance anymore."

This is a cycle I've seen countless times in my 20 years of practice. People tend to fall back into old patterns after a period of improvement. This is why it's so important for me to visit you regularly in your home countries. When you are here in the peaceful environment of the center, it's easier to adhere to the practices we discuss. But the moment you return home, with all the distractions of work, social life, and stress, it becomes much harder to maintain that same level of discipline.

Discipline isn't about being rigid—it's about **understanding the true value of your health**. Living a disciplined, healthy life is not about deprivation. It's about ensuring that your life is balanced so that your body, mind, and spirit are aligned, and so that you can feel the joy of living in good health.

Knowledge and Practice: The Key to Health

Knowledge alone won't make a difference in your life—it has to be **put into practice**. Many people come to Ayurveda because they want something: to lose weight, to gain energy, to manage a health issue, or simply to feel better. But once they achieve their goal, they often stop practicing. It's only when the benefits start to fade that they realize they need to return to the practices.

This is where **Ayurveda** offers something beyond just health: it offers **a way of life**. **Health** in Ayurveda is not an end goal; **it's a foundation**. **Health gives you the strength and vitality to pursue higher goals**, whether that's physical, mental, or spiritual well-being. The joy that comes from health is a **subjective experience**, meaning it's **felt deeply** in your body and mind.

When we speak of sukha (joy), we refer to that joy that comes from living in harmony with your body's needs. For example, feeling genuinely hungry—not from emotional craving, but from your body needing nourishment—is a natural and beautiful experience. Hunger, thirst, and digestion are not just biological processes—they are ways your body communicates with you. When we lose touch with these signals, we also lose the connection to our natural vitality.

Sensitivity: A Strength, Not a Weakness

In Ayurveda, we talk about different constitutions, and this is where sensitivity plays an important role. Some people have stronger constitutions, and others have more sensitive ones. On the surface, strong constitution might seem like an advantage. But it's actually a disadvantage in many ways. People with a strong constitution may not feel when something is wrong with their health. Their body has the strength to mask the imbalances. The problem is, by the time they feel the effects, the damage has already been done.

Sensitive constitutions, on the other hand, are often a blessing. People with this constitution feel imbalances earlier and are able to correct their course before it leads to bigger issues. The sooner you feel discomfort, the sooner you can correct your habits.

There is a very basic principle: **cause leads to effect**. Just like if you place a pot on the stove, the water will eventually heat up, **your body reacts to every action you take**—whether it's eating, sleeping, or exercising. The effects may not always be immediate, but they will show up eventually. So it's important to be aware of how your body responds.

The Impermanence of Joy

In your pursuit of health and balance, remember this important concept: **Health is the foundation, not the destination**. Health allows you to experience life in its fullness, and it brings you closer to the truth of life—that all external joys are temporary.

The goal is to seek a permanent state of joy and balance. This is the real search in life. Once you understand that external pleasures and comforts are impermanent, you naturally begin to seek a deeper, more lasting form of joy that comes from within. This deeper joy isn't dependent on the world around you, but on your inner balance, your health, and your connection to your true nature.

Reflecting on Your Health

So take a moment now, after listening to this lecture, to reflect on the current state of your health. What are the habits you've built over time? How does your body respond to your choices? Write down the things we've discussed—your hunger, thirst, energy, digestion—and see where you stand. Have you lost touch with any of these signals?

For many of you, this awareness may have been lost at an early age, perhaps due to difficult circumstances or lack of love growing up. This can make it harder to connect with your natural needs. However, even if you didn't have the ideal start, it's never too late to cultivate awareness. People who face hardships early in life often develop incredible strength and resilience. They learn to face problems head-on, which is a skill that leads to success in life.

In Ayurveda, we don't focus on avoiding problems. Life is full of challenges, and each challenge is an opportunity to grow. The true skill is not avoiding problems, but learning to face them and solve them.

Health: The Foundation of Life

Ayurveda teaches us that health is not an isolated goal—it's a foundation that supports everything else. When you live according to Ayurvedic principles, you can experience true joy, longevity, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment. This path doesn't just bring you physical health—it elevates your entire life, moving you closer to enlightenment.

In conclusion, remember that health is the beginning, not the end. It is the starting point for a deeper connection with yourself and the world around you. When you live in harmony with your health, everything else—joy, purpose, even spiritual awakening—falls into place.

Now, reflect on these ideas and think about how you can integrate them into your life. Stay connected with your health, and let that connection guide you toward a life of balance, fulfillment, and inner peace.

