

Deeper Understanding of Our Mind 94-09-18

Om. A-sa-to ma sad gam-ma-ya. Ta-ma-so-ma jyo-tir gam-ma-ya. Mri-tyor ma a-mri-tam ga-ma-ya. Avir avir ma e-dhi. Rudra yat te dak-shi-nam mu-kham. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam.

Lead us from the unreal to the Real. Lead us from darkness unto Light. Lead us from death to Immortality. Reveal to us Thy Resplendent Truth and evermore protect us, Oh Lord, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face.

The subject of my talk this morning is: A Deeper Understanding of the Mind – A Deeper Understanding of Our Mind.

In the Bhagavad Gita we have this saying, “Our mind can be our enemy. Our mind can be our friend.” [Bhagavad Gita 6:6]¹ Our mind is the most important element in our personality. Just as we cannot get away from the sky, from the space, wherever we go there is space. So also, time. Always there is time. In the same way, we cannot escape from our mind at any time, at any occasion, but we do not pay much attention to our mind. We take our mind for granted, just as we take the space for granted, unless a special crisis comes. If there is an earthquake, we are at once conscious of space.

So, our mind we take for granted. If we speak, if we read, if we write, if we cook, if we go from one place to another, or if we do any kind of work, there has to be the mind. But we do not pay attention to the mind. We pay attention to the objective, which the mind has helped us to achieve.

I am sitting here on this chair. Am I thinking of the mind? No. I am thinking of the lecture. I am thinking of the congregation. I am thinking of the subject [with which] I have to deal. So, [also] is the case with every person. We have no necessity to pay heed to the mind. How the mind helps us is taken for granted.

In the Indian scriptures there were three words: satva, rajas, and tamas. These describe the three states of mind through which we pass. Satva is that quality, which brings contentment, which brings calmness, which brings... All the noble traits of our character are in this general category called satva.

Rajas is that quality which makes us restless, which makes us full of desire, greed. So when rajas comes to the mind, our mind becomes very restless, because the mind wants so many things. And, most of those things he cannot have. The only consolation he can give to himself is: well, in this life, I do not see any possibility of attaining that. So I shall wait for the next life. So when the mind is in a state of rajas, it is full of misery.

A satvika person does not complain. He has faith in God; he has faith in religion. He is... he exhibits a nobility of character. Persons around a satvika man, are bound to be influenced by his behavior, by his talk, by his attitude. But if you are in the company of a rajasic man, you will be tired! If you are a driving with a rajasic lady... you are also a lady... two ladies, both are grandmothers. No one is a mother and the other is a grandmother. The grandmother has a boy and the mother has a son. So the mother opens up the conversation, “The...my

boy, he did this, he did this, he did this...He got an A on his test.” And before she has completed, the grandmother goes on saying, “My grandson does this, does this.” So the conversation is always crossed. No conclusion about the grandson, or the son. In this way, at the end of the journey, both feel they are tired, dead tired. [He chuckles, with the audience.]

So it is true, when you are in the company of a rajasic person, who is full of rajas, he will tire you out, by his desires, by his plans, by his frustrations, by his efforts and so on. You don't feel happy, unless you too are a rajasic person. Then you are a good match... though both of you are bound to be tired!

And tamas. Tamas is that quality of the mind, which makes you sleep, which makes you idle, which makes you averse to any activity. You want to get away from things. Let others do it. Let me sleep. He is the type of ... inaction, laziness. Also, in his emotional life he is full of lust. He likes eating, though he cannot digest it. But he likes... He eats food like an animal. You can at once see that this person is a tamasic person. If you, yourself are a tamasic person, you will enjoy the company of the other man. But if you are a satvika man or a rajasic person you don't like the company of [a] tamasic person. So these three traits of the mind are described in our scripture -- in the Gita – in the Upanishads also.

When we come to a mood of philosophy, or a mood of religion, we can try to understand [in] what [way] the mind can help us in attaining our objectives, progress in spiritual life. We want to love God. We want to attain knowledge of things. Normally we are busy with our own affairs. What little time we have, we spend in watching sports in the tv [television.] But there are persons who have higher aims. They want... they have studied the scriptures. They have come into the company of noble souls, who are deeply religious or highly philosophical. So this person thinks, “How is it possible to elevate myself?” This person exhibits noble traits of character. He is a lover of God. He does not hate anybody. He does not want to steal. He is a noble person, of noble character. “How can I be like that?”

Then he has to turn to his own mind. He will see that it is mind, my mind, which has to be my friend. If the mind cooperates, then I can be lifted from stage to stage. That is called spiritual practice, or religious practice also. In religious practice, we have to take care of the mind. We have to make the mind, raise the mind from the state of tamas and rajas and lift it, lift it to the stage of satva, by practicing these virtues. You must have the faith that it is [possible]. The scriptures say [that], and I see in the world also noble persons. I read books about noble characters like Saint Francis, like many other saints of all countries. They were human beings like us, but they had elevated their minds. Their minds were really friends to them.

So a spiritual seeker has to examine his mind. He has to take help from the scriptures. A part of the scripture, what he reads, he can understand, but there are many parts which he cannot understand, because his mind is not ready. The mind has to be ready to understand the mind itself. Normally, each one of us is functioning with a mind: in our actions, in our desires, in our family relations, mind is there. But [in] this case of a spiritual seeker the mind is... it has to be changed. It is not sufficient to say [to] myself, “Well, why should I be

bothering [about spiritual life.] I have plenty of money. I have a good house. I have a good family. I have a good job. I have good friends. So why should I bother? But that is not the case of a spiritual seeker. A spiritual seeker may have all those things, but he feels that he lacks something. He lacks spiritual knowledge, spiritual love. So he has to examine his mind.

The first thing to understand is: that mind is not something that is within the body. Most of us think that just as we have teeth, just as we have inside so many organs, so mind is also within me. It is natural to feel like that. "The mind is something that is within me." But that is not the case. A spiritual person who is examining the mind finds very soon that the mind is something universal. Wherever you go there is mind. If we look into myself [ourselves], [in] all the organs inside-- there is mind. If I look into my mind itself, there is mind. So mind is something. It is widespread. It is universal.

So if he is a very sincere person, a sincere spiritual aspirant, he begins to find that – "Where is the beginning of the mind? And where it goes?" The answer, he finds, [is] that we do not know where the mind begins – just as we do not know where the space begins, where time begins. We have to forget the word "beginning" and "end." There is this mind. And this mind, since I am a spiritual seeker, I have to find... I have to change this mind. The rajasic and tamasic traits of the mind have to be changed into satva.

We remember the incident in Jesus Christ's life, that he was sitting in a place with his disciples and his critics, the Pharisees and Sadducees. They wanted to find some flaws in the character of this man, because that man was becoming increasingly popular and he was speaking against the church, the vanities of the church, the falsities of the church. And so, these churchmen tried to find out the flaws, legal flaws, so that they could condemn him.

So we find in one place that Christ is sitting with some of his disciples and eating food. But they did not clean their... it is the custom, a Jewish custom to clean your hands and foot. Everything would become [clean,] and then you can eat. So these Pharisees and Sadducees called Christ and said, "How is it that your disciples do not observe the customs that are prevalent in our scriptures? We see that they did not wash their hands and feet, and they are eating."

Then Jesus Christ said... that is very noble... "You are speaking of cleanness, but the real cleanliness is of the heart. You do not know what dark and rubbish you are harboring in your heart, inside yourself" (a long list of [bad things]). "Out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications..."² [Mark 7:1-3, 22-3] "Foolishness." And others. I did not write all this, a long list-- and so the Sadducees and Pharisees could not say anything. But everyone, when he looks into his own heart sees, that so many things: temptations, risks [?], greed, lust all these things are in the heart.

So a spiritual person has to change his mind. He has to know that mind, is outside. True, but the mind is also inside. So slowly, by paying close attention to the mind and if a thought comes, a thought of greed, a thought of some nasty desire comes to his mind, he at once has to dilute that. He at once has to chide his mind – slap his mind. "You. My mind, you don't remain satisfied with what

you are. You have to grow.” That it is his sadhana. That is his spiritual practice.

So he looks inside and discovers these evil things that are [there.] Outside I may look like a saint, but inside I am harboring these unworthy things of rajas and tamas. So I have to... that is what Jesus Christ in one place said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”³ [Matthew 5:8] So we have to make our heart pure. In other words we have to remove this, we have to discover like a policeman, we have to see what things are in the mind. Then, if he can do that, that is the first part of his spiritual practice: to examine my inner tendencies. Instead of criticizing others, I have to see within myself what I am. Am I truthful? Am I compassionate? Am I observing my true duties of a man? This is... this examination, self-examination, this is an important part of our mental discovery.

Then, when the mind is prepared to some extent, he can see [it is] primarily universal, but the mind also has its depths. He looks into himself [and] he sees of course, the evil things, but he also finds... the person can find noble things. There is desire for God. There is desire for friendship. These sattvika tendencies he finds. In this way, he goes deeper and deeper into himself. The person finds that instead of saying the mind is here or there, let me say the mind is everywhere! And if he is sufficiently prepared, he sees that the mind overcomes, not only the tamas or rajas or even sattva, but the mind goes deeper. And that mind is also his mind! So he does not speak of “my mind”, “your mind”, but he speaks of “Mind,” capital “M”, the MIND. And that Mind is the same as God. And that God is in the deepest level of our existence.

This spiritual seeker first meditates on his body and he finds that this body is filled with mind. Instead of saying “the body” it is better to call it mind, because whatever object we see, the mind has to be there. So this spiritual person tries to feel that the mind, it is in a stage where there is neither tamas, nor rajas, nor even sattva, [but] an eternal light. That light is the Light of God. If he uses the word for God, he could say Mind, with a capital M. In the Upanishads and in the Gita, we have descriptions in terms of God. But it is not necessary, because the God, Who we are worshipping, that God, as the True Mind, the Mind of Minds, is in myself.

First examine your own body and see -- the mind is pervading every part of my body. Outside and inside there is mind. So you can call [it] God. It is God, Who is inside me. In the heart, as Jesus said, there are many unwelcome things of tamas and rajas, but in the heart there are also noble things, sattvika things. But this spiritual aspirant has to go deeper and say that it is God, what we call mind, we see that mind in our daily life, in various conditions, but in its deepest truth it is an indescribable... it is an indescribable... where there is no...the mind has assumed a state where there is no time, where there is no space, where there is no life or death. So it is quite proper to call that Mind, God.

It is God or Mind... M-i-n-d, Mind, that is with me and out... and without me. When the time of death comes, that death is also the Mind. So the Mind is all pervasive. The Mind is at the root of things and so he calls this Mind, God. If he prays, for him no external prayer is necessary. He has to pray to his own

Mind. "Oh Mind, you are truly God, because I see you... I feel you always. At all times I feel you, in some way. But now I feel that you are beyond any Name, or any Function. So you are my God." So he prays to his own Mind. The prayers that we read in spiritual scriptures -- all those prayers can be applied to the Mind.

When we pray, in the beginning of the lecture, "Lead us from the unreal to the Real," to Whom we are praying? Usually we think, to a far away God, Who is sitting in heaven. For some time that kind of feeling is necessary, but when we have gone through a revelation of the mind, when you say, "lead us from the unreal to the Real," our prayer is to my Self-- my own Nature, my Mind. My Mind is everyone's Mind. There is only one Mind, just as there is one God. So there is Mind, and that Mind, we should be familiar with that nature of the Mind.

Normally we have no time to examine the mind, but if we are spiritually inclined, and if we have practiced the initial disciplines, then a time comes when we see that Mind is God! The Mind is in the past; the Mind is in the future. Whatever you see is coming from the Mind. So this person feels a kind of joy and peace, which cannot be found elsewhere, when we go to the deepest nature of our mind. Our mind, our normal mind, everyday mind is a little mind. It is angry. It is happy. Sometimes it is kind. It is sattvika. It is rajasika. It is tamasika. But still it is a very limited mind.

But when we have gone to the deeper level of the mind, we see we need not use the word, God. It is that Mind, which is ever-present. It is ever-present in me, outside me. In everyone, we see there is that same Mind. That is the same God -- that Reality, which we cannot really describe. So the deeper level of the mind is... It is possible to reach this deeper level of the mind where you will become free from many superstitions-- religious superstitions, social superstitions -- because there is One Shining Truth, and that truth is God. And that God is in you -- your mind, your true mind, your greatest Mind. Mind has many levels, but this deepest level is God.

And, so you pray to God, you sing to God, and you be in God. Such a person does not run away from anything. Even after having this experience, he can be a very active man, because he has known that all activities are coming from the deepest level of my mind. This is real freedom -- freedom from these three gunas, freedom from all superstitions. He is also called "jivan mukta," that is: "free even when he is living." He is not an idle person. His God is everywhere. In all persons, he sees himself.

As Vivekananda said, in one of his poems, that "I see myself when I see any face. When I see any face, I see my own face."⁴ That is the type of experience which Ramakrishna and Vivekananda [had], they were not for discarding anything. Everything has to be accepted. Why? Because everything is God, and that God is Mind, my Mind, the highest state of my mind. So this person is really a holy person. This person is really a saint, because he sees God as Mind -- Everywhere! In all his activities, he reveals the presence of this God.

As we see in the life of Ramakrishna and Holy Mother, Sarada Devi, they had attained the highest spiritual wisdom, but at the same time they were intensely active. They are always eager to help others. That is the type of

character that is needed. We speak of spirituality. We speak of religion, speak of God. But real spirituality is to find that God as my true Mind, my deepest mind within myself and outside myself. Just as we are always in space and time, so we shall... we have to be always in God, as Mind.

So this mind attains a dignity, which is free from all superstitions, all dualities. It is all One – and that One: this “me,” “you,” and “everyone!” And substitute the word God for mind with a capital M. Then this little mind, everyday mind, which always suffers from, however happy he may be, he has, he always suffers from so many troubles. He feels happy because he knows that he has sufficient money, he has a good happy family. His children are all educated. So he does not worry. That is the nature of the normal person. But a spiritual seeker has to be abnormal. And abnormality grows, from worship, prayer, study, to inner analysis, to come to that point where all these things have all merged in God, the God whom you are dealing with always, every time – your own mind, your true Mind -- mind with a capital M.

So the glory of Mind, when you understand it, is really infinite. We should not allow our little mind to be the ruler of our life, but we should bring the Great Mind, God, into our life and allow Him to function in all our actions and thoughts, all our situations of life.

Om. Madhu vAtA R^itAyate madhu xaranti sindhavaH.
 mAdhvlrnaH santu auShadhIH..
 madhu naktamutoShaso madhumat.h pArthivam.h rajaH.
 madhu dyauH astu naH pitA..
 madhumAnno vanaspatiH madhumAm.h astu sUryaH.
 mAdhvlrgAvo bhavantu naH..
 Om madhu madhu madhu⁵ [Rg Veda 1:90, 6-7]

Sweet blow the winds and the very oceans give forth blessedness. May the herbs and plants bring us health and happiness. Sweet be unto us be the nights and dawns. May every particle of mother earth be charged with blessing and may the heavens shower us with benediction. Sweet unto us the noble forest trees. Sweet unto us be the shining sun. Sweet unto us be all living creatures. Om. Sweetness, Harmony, Peace.

1. Bhagavad Gita [6:6], Bhagavad Gita Trust, c. 1998-2015.
<http://www.bhagavad-gita.org/Gita/verse-06-06.html> accessed November 14, 2016.

2. Mark, Chapter 7. King James Version.
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+7&version=KJV>
 accessed March 15, 2017.

3. Matthew, Chapter 5. King James Version.
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5:7-9&version=KJV>
 accessed March 15, 2017.

4. Vivekananda, "A song I sing to Thee." [poem]
<http://www.vivekananda.net/Poetry/SongISing.html> accessed April 6, 2017.
"The eye looks out upon the universe, -- Nor does it seek to look upon itself; -- Why should it? It sees itself in others. -- Thou art my eyes! Thou and Thou alone; -- For every living temple shrines Thy face."

5. [Transliteration of Rg Veda verse is taken from
http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya_baskegar.html] accessed June 26, 2012.

Alternate version of prayer with somewhat simpler spelling

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rvsan/rv01090.htm>

madhu vātā ṛtāyate madhu kṣaranti sindhavaḥ |

mādhvīrnaḥ santvoṣadhīḥ ||