

THE PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF CONCENTRATION AND MEDITATION – PART 2

by

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In the middle of our elaborate discussion on the way of salvation according to the Brahma Sutras, we entered into the subject of concentration and meditation because I was told that you would like to listen to that aspect of the study also. What I mentioned to you last time in this connection is that mostly ordinary people will not find it easy to concentrate the mind on anything because of a basic lack of knowledge of one's own mind. You don't even know whether you are keeping the mind inside you, or you yourself are the mind – even that question cannot easily be answered. When we speak of “my mind”, “your mind”, etc., you falsely make a distinction between yourself and the mind which you seem to be possessing as a kind of object. Why do you use the word “my mind”? What is the significance of this statement? Are you yourself the mind, or you can exist independent of the mind? This is a very interesting point. When you say, “my mind is like this” you imply thereby you are not the mind. Are you sure that you are different from the mind? Don't

make statements which are incorrect. If you imply thereby that the mind is not you, then what are you? Here is the basic confusion in thinking itself. Without knowing anything about what is happening inside, we go on saying something gibby, by rote, hearing something from somewhere, reading something from some book, etc.

You must understand the mind is yourself only; you are not holding the mind inside because you do not exist minus the mind. Though in a transcendental manner you may say you may be existing independently of the mind, to which subject we need not divert just now, for all practical purposes mind is the person. As you think, so you are. All your joys and sorrows are the operations of the mind. I am happy, I am unhappy, which means the mind is happy and the mind is unhappy. That means you have identified yourself with the mind; you are a psychological existence, though that is not the ultimate reality of yourself.

Now, coming to the point of concentration and meditation. I mentioned last time that when you direct your attention towards something that you consider as your ideal, you simultaneously try to set aside the thought of any other thing which you do not consider as your ideal. You think that everything is fine now, because you have shut off the entry of a thought which concerns things which are totally irrelevant to the effort of the mind to concentrate on a chosen ideal. But it is not like that – you are still in the doldrums. It is not possible to have a single thought directed at a chosen ideal without simultaneously being aware that there is another thought connected with that which you do not want to bring in to the field of your concentration. That you want something implies that you do not want something else. It is not possible to have only wants, without no wants.

Then how would you entirely concentrate the mind on a chosen ideal? The word ‘entirely’ is to be underlined. The mind operates in a holistic manner. You cannot cut the mind into pieces, half for the desired objective, and half for the undesirable – that cannot be done. The mind is an organistic,

organic completeness, in the same way as your personality as a whole is a total organism. You cannot cut yourself into two parts – the wanted part and the unwanted part. Even so is the mind, because you are the mind. Thus, you have to go a little deep into your own self.

The difficulty in meditation is the hardship you feel in reconciling between two kinds of thought at the same time, though you may think that there is only one thought. You may be imagining that you have only one thought of the chosen ideal, but there is another thought which is slowly whispering into your ears, “I am also here, don’t ignore me.” That second thought is concerning something which you do not regard as your chosen ideal. If that thing which is the other side is not your chosen ideal, it has no connection with you. If it has no connection with you, why does it whisper that I am also here, you cannot ignore me? That is because you have segmented the mind into two fractions – the ideal and the non-ideal.

The mind operates as a whole, as a gestalt, as they call it in modern terms. You cannot isolate a section of the mind from another section. When you take your meal, the whole personality is operating. You cannot tell the stomach, “You mind your business. You take the food but I’ll be thinking something else in the mind, doing something else with the hand, and with leg I’ll walk.” This kind of thing will not be permitted. The whole being has to eat the food – only then it can be digested, and it can be assimilated, and it will energize you. You walk on the road with a plate of food in your hand, thinking some mathematical solution and then eat – see what happens to you. This is not the way of eating food – it is an insult to the holy act of eating.

Like that is this act of meditation. That the mind is universal in its nature is the thing that you have to principally admit. When I say mind is holistic, it is incapable of segmentation from any part of the universe. In the mind, everywhere, in every point of space, in every particle of sand, from the galaxies onwards to the lowest cells and atoms –

that is the real whole of mind, which is the reason why you cannot concentrate one part of the mind on one part of the universe.

When you say "I concentrate my mind on a chosen ideal," you have cut the universe also into two parts – that which you consider as your ideal, and that which you are not considering as your ideal. You have created a war between the *devas* and the *asuras* in this meditation. The *deva* is as you consider the object of meditation; the *asura* is the other one. But, as the great Lord in the Bhagavadgita speaks to you, *devas* and *asuras* both manifested themselves as the right hand and left hand, as it were, of one creative activity. In that universal *karma* or action of emanation of the whole universe from the creative principle, the so-called segmented aspects of *deva* and *asura*, the positive and the negative, rolled themselves into a single flow of an oceanic flood, as it were, from the universal whole, and then, being entangled in the two obstructing principles of space and time, they separated themselves.

These two separated things have to be brought together. When you think something, you think another thing at the same time. The idea that there is another thing cannot arise in your mind unless there is a third mind, a third aspect of the mind, which connects the two thoughts. This was the theme that I took up at the end of my speech last time.

The necessary and the unnecessary aspects of thought cannot even be known to exist and be operative unless there is a third synthesizing mind which transcends both the necessary and the unnecessary. Just as the subject and the object in a particular sentence is harmonized by a principle called the verb and without the verb sentence cannot be there, so you cannot know that there are two things unless you are there between the two things. So a third transcendent aspect of the mind operates, knowingly or unknowingly, when you are busily engaged in isolating an aspect of the mind as a desirable one, and another aspect as an undesirable one. This is the reason why the mind cannot

concentrate on anything, because it has an opposition from the other side which it has ignored.

I mentioned to you last time that there is always a continuous activity going on of position, opposition and synthesis. This state of affairs continues endlessly, endlessly, until, if I remember well, I told you that you reach a state of ultimate position and opposition, God and the world, in a synthesis which is the Absolute, towards which the mind rises. You must be a little bit of a philosopher also, apart from a psychologist. I don't want to go deep into this subject now because time is short, and we have not too many days here to discuss these things.

You are all devotees of some principle of divinity; you believe in God, that's what I have to take for granted. Your concept of God, whatever it is, should be the object of your meditation. In the beginning, what you should do – I am speaking to you as if you are small children and not knowing anything about things. I take it that you don't know anything about meditation. In the beginning what you should do is, the desired divinity should be in front of you. The divinity cannot be in front of you because it is not in this world; so you prepare a portrait of this divinity – a picture you keep. That picture may be actually a conceptual form presented by an artist as the Creative Almighty, as Jesus Christ, as Rama or Krishna, or Devi, or whatever is your concept of God. That portrait, whatever be the divinity that you are thinking in your mind, should be in front of you. When you look at a thing, the mind also concentrates on that thing. When you close your eyes, it will just run about in other directions. Now when I open my eyes and see one of you, I am thinking of you. I am not thinking of other persons at that time. This is the advantage of opening the eyes and seeing things.

You open the eyes and look at this divinity. This is the mighty divine that is in front of me. From that divinity, forces are rising and touching me. I am feeling that I am energized by the balming emanation of divine forces. Now it is only in the form of a portrait. It may be a diagram, it may be a

mandala, as they call it, it may be a symbol, it may be an idol, it may be a lingam; it may be any blessed thing which will remind you of the Supreme Being. It may be even a *japa mala*, it may be a mini Bhagavadgita, or Bible, or whatever be the scripture, or Dhammapada, or whatever it is which will remind you. The divinity on which you are concentrating with open eyes is symbolic of what you are actually aspiring for in your mind. The divine itself cannot be seen or conceived, but symbols will take you to that true reality.

The next stage would be to feel that this form that is presented through the portrait is not only in one place. It is to my right, it is to my left, it is behind, it is in front, it is on the top, it is below. When you turn your eyes like this, you find that everywhere. Everywhere it is – everywhere; this form is everywhere I am seeing. When you gaze at the sun for a long time and then close your eyes, you will see sun everywhere. Everywhere the orb will be visible because of the impact of the sun on your eyes by gazing like that. That on which you have been concentrating with open eyes will produce such an impact upon your mind that afterwards you cannot see anything else anywhere. Wherever you cast your eyes, you will see only that. But, still, that would be a multitude of the forms that you are seeing. Everywhere I am seeing that thing in a multiplicity of manifestation. It is like seeing one person everywhere; the same person is here, here – everywhere the same person. Like seeing a tree – everywhere you see the same tree. This is the third stage, where that which you beheld with your open eyes became an all-pervading individual filling the whole space, and nothing is there except that. It is planted in every tree and every bush and every mountain and every river and the sun and the moon and the stars – everywhere you find the whole world is peopled by this form. This is the third stage.

In the fourth stage, bring these forms into one form. Let all these forms melt into one form – a mighty cosmic form. This is practically the idea of God that we have in our minds. The person that is the God, the Supreme Person who we speak of in all the religions, God Almighty, Father in heaven –

this is all divinity commingled, merging into one being, beyond every manifestation, every form, in every direction. So what are you looking at now? You are not actually looking at a visible, conceptual picture, but a meditative form, a mighty submerging ideal – you may call it God Almighty. You will feel a tremor in your body at that time; you have to concentrate deeply in order to feel that tremor. Your whole being should be immersed in that concept of the total, integrated, Supreme Person which religions call God Almighty. You will shudder by the very thought of such a being. Visvarupa is the name that we give to this form. In the scriptures, especially in India, we have various descriptions of Visvarupa. One such instance is the elaborate details we have in this connection in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavadgita, “Everywhere, everywhere, everywhere, everywhere.”

So this concept of Almighty Being as inclusive being – the whole universe is inside this great being. That would be another stage of meditation, but still you are there outside it in spite of your having raised your consciousness to the level of concentrating your whole consciousness on that total identity of cosmic personality – you will be feeling simultaneously that you are beholding it. So it is still a cosmic object, and you are an individual subject. This is the penultimate stage in meditation, where you see God everywhere but you are outside it. According to the descriptions we have in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, this is equal to *savikalpa samadhi*, a merger into the being of God with a simultaneous feeling of independence maintained by oneself. That kind of independence cannot be permitted finally, because the same position, opposition and synthesis principles will come in and tell you that this will not work. If you have beheld the Almighty as a mighty, creative person and yet you are outside it and looking at it, there must be something that causes this perception. You are on one side, that which you behold is on the other side – the two have to be connected in order that perception is possible. No

perception of an object is possible unless there is a link between the perceiver and the perceived.

Here, taking for granted that the mighty Supreme Being is your object of meditation, and you are the beholder and the perceiver of this form, you cannot achieve this concentration in that manner unless there is an element which connects both together. The impossibility of perceiving anything as an external object without the intervention of a third principle in between – that principle operates here also, in God perception. So the externality of God is obviated completely by the necessity of there being a connecting link between yourself as the beholding principle, and God Almighty as the beheld. You transcend even that personality concept. You enter into it – God beholds Himself. When you have reached that stage, you have attained the pinnacle of meditation.

Brahma Sutra, which was our real subject with which we began and with which we should conclude, is the book of salvation. You are bound by your own inadequate, segmented operations of the mental makeup. That is called individuality or *jiva*. Your individuality, your existence as a personality is actually the existence of an isolated mentality, falsely distinguishable from the cosmic mind. When you are entangled in this individuality forced upon you for whatever reason, you perform actions. Actions are performed for the sake of ridding oneself of the sorrows of life which are consequent upon the very concept of individuality, and no one can be free from sorrow as long as one is conscious of one's isolated individuality. Anything that is finite is a source of sorrow; and if every person is finite, then every person is a bed of sorrow only. Because of it being impossible to be always in a state of grievous, sorrow and agony, the individual manifests potentials of externality called sense organs, and then grabs things of the world by way of an activity which sets up reactions of its own nature – that reaction is called *karma*, or the fruit of *karma*. That

determines the experiences in life; not only experiences in life, it also determines the length of life for which you will be permitted to live in this world. When the force of karma exhausts itself by experience through this particular body, the body is cast out, because that force of cumulative energy called *karma phala* does not want this body anymore as a suitable instrument. When the instrument is useless, you throw it out. If the fountain pen has a nib which is broken, you throw the fountain pen and have a new fountain pen. This is like a fountain pen used by the *karma* forces – it has broken completely, and it is of no use.

Then what happens? These forces of remnant *karmas* condense themselves, congeal into a form which is suitable for the enjoyment and suffering of remnant *karmas*, and takes another birth of a new kind altogether. Inasmuch as a portion of the *karma* that we had in our previous birth is totally different in nature from the kind of *karma* which has given birth to this particular body, nobody can remember the previous birth, and you cannot also know what kind of birth you will take in the future. The attachment to a particular individuality is so strong that it precludes memory of the past and any kind of idea of the future. So we live in this world as if we are in a fool's paradise, everything looks all right, but we do not know that we are totally conditioned by the pressure of the past and the anticipations of the future. We are pulled in two directions. That we are stable and existing as if we are not a moving flux of non-identical powers, that idea arises because of the tension that is equally exerted by the past and the future and we are sitting on a fence, as it were – we can fall this way or that way.

Basically speaking, individuality does not exist. It is only a floating bubble made to appear as an existent something due to the push of the past and the pull of the future. There is no such thing called the present – it is only an enigmatic concept which passes the moment you start thinking about it. Here is the philosophy of Buddha before us – nothing is, everything moves, everything flows; there is flying everywhere without anything that really flies. The

individuality is a conceptual bubble – it is not a solid existence. That it appears to be existing for a moment is an illusion created by the equally forceful pressures exerted from two sides, from the past and the future. These are all difficult things to understand.

However, the point is that we take rebirth. What will happen to you when you take rebirth? Whatever you have thought in your mind in this world, whatever you have done, will gather themselves into a force which jet-like moves in the direction of that which you have to enjoy or that which you have to suffer. Nobody punishes you and nobody rewards you. You reward yourself and you punish yourself. That is because from the beginning itself there is a wrong movement of the so-called isolated individual, the ego principle, the fallen man, as you call it, in theological terms. There is a topsy-turvy thinking because of the fall. The fall from God is a topsy-turvy running down to the earth-plane; something like the thing that happens when the head is down and the legs are up, and we see everything topsy-turvy. The world that was there even before you were born looks like an object of your perception, and yourself which came much later in the process of evolution look like a very mighty person with all prerogatives. You are the perceiver, the knower of the world that is outside. You assume a role of importance as a perceiver, knower of that which was existing even before you were born. This is a topsy-turvy perception. Really the subject is the world; you are the object – you came later on. It is the world that is observing you and not you that is observing the world. This is completely contrary to what is taking place, and then, because of this contrary perception, many other sorrows come in – endlessly, endlessly, endlessly they come like that. You may go to heaven, you may go to hell or any region, or you may come back to this earth, as the case may be, according to your desires.

To some extent we can know what you will be in the next birth. You should not say, “I do not know anything, I am helpless.” Do you know what you’ve been thinking since morning today, let alone the things that you thought right

from your birth – forget all that. Right from the morning today up to this time – what were you thinking in your mind? This will tell you what kind of person you are and what you will get in your future birth. Great confusion. You will realize to your horror that there was a great confusion in your mind today itself, right from the morning onwards. You cannot remember just now what you were thinking – a muddle, a heap of chaos, that’s all that was there in the mind. How would you expect pleasure and satisfaction in a new birth? Unless you are integrated today, you will not be integrated in the next birth. Unless you are strong now, you will not be strong in the next birth. Unless you are unselfish today, you cannot be unselfish in the next birth. If you have grabbed things but given nothing; you have possessed a lot but not given in charity – nothing – you can imagine what you will get in the next birth. You will get nothing. That which you gave will come back to you. That which you have enjoyed wrongfully will flee from you. The more you give, the more also you will receive. Nobody should think that this world is all-in-all and nothing will happen afterwards. Whatever you think and feel and act, that will be your future.

Don’t say God will protect me; there is no God protecting you. You have done a mistake in the beginning itself, and God is a judiciary sometimes. He will give you what you deserve. There is no he or she or anything, this also is a kind of anthropomorphic conception in our mind. The law of the universe operates almost like an automatic computer system, and nobody is there to punish you and nobody is there to reward you also. You punish yourself, you reward yourself; you go to a hot and forceful magnetic field and touch it and you know what will happen – it will give you a kick. If you are far away, it will not do anything. A magnetic field is not responsible for whatever has happened to you – you have approached it wrongly, that’s all. If you are a good person, if you have given something, you will say, “What can I give, I am a poor man myself?” There is no one in the world so poor as not to be able to give something to somebody else. Such poverty is unthinkable. You may not have material

possessions, but you have a mind. Are you poor in mind also? Are you poor in words? You may not give anything materially to anybody because you do not possess anything, but your mind will go for things, and you will utter kind words, soothing words. Charity is a disposition of the mind rather than a material act of parting with objects which are sensible in nature.

Whatever you want, the world is giving you, but you have also to give in return to the world whatever it has given to you. There is a cooperative activity going on between yourself and the world. There is no taking without giving. The universe maintains a balance of give and take. It is not possible to have an overwhelming majority on one side and nothing on the other side. If that happens, if there is a tendency to some such thing going on – immediately an earthquake will take place. Nature will create a cataclysm and a big bombshell; anything the world can do in order to bring the two points together.

So be harmonious with yourself, be aligned in your mind, don't have torn emotions and grievous thoughts, and be calm and quiet within yourself. Be a contented person with alignment of personality; don't be non-aligned in your psychological individuality. Then aligned also you should also be with nature, with society. There are four things with which you have to align yourself. Firstly, with your own self – this is personal alignment, psychological alignment of the layers of personality. Then you have to align yourself with the society of people and all the creation, whatever you can think of. Then you have to align yourself with natural forces. You cannot oppose nature's activities; then you will fall sick and die.

Then finally, there must be an alignment with God Himself. You have to try to think as God thinks. God created the world – all right, let it be – but before creation God alone was. You may say God is thinking of the whole universe because He created it, but what was He thinking before He created the universe? Now, take your mind to that principle.

What was God conscious of before the world came into being? He was conscious of Himself as All-in-All. That is the ultimate reality. Can you think as God thinks, as All-in-All? Don't say, "I am thinking of the whole creation." There was no creation before He created the world. The Pure Being is God Almighty – God is Pure Being, not a human being, a person, or anything observable through the sense organs. The pure substance of equitable existence present in all things, a common denominator which connects everything as the Being of all beings – Pure Being, Supreme Being of which you are a part being – on that, if you can concentrate, you will be rid of all the sins of the world. To be rid of sins it takes one minute. You will say, "I have committed so many blunders." It doesn't matter. But this fire of the power of concentration on this magnificent attainable Pure Being will set fire to the mountains of straw which are like the sins that you think of. In God's kingdom there are no sins; they started afterwards when you fell down. Pure Being is sinless, it is perspicacious; it is resplendent, there is no night there, there is only day; there is no time there, it is all eternity; there is no death there, it is all life; there is no sorrow there, it is all bliss. Impossible to describe is that transcendental state.

If this aspiration is in your mind, as I mentioned last time, your soul will be taken through the rays of the sun to the orb of the sun, as the Upanishads tell us – by stages of gradual ascending you will reach the creative principle of God Himself. Whatever you want, you will get, and if your want is only of that Mighty Being who created this universe, you will be taken there. *Krama Mukti* they call it, a graduated system of ascending from the lower stages to the higher stages, stage by stage, from material existence to biological existence, from biological existence to psychological existence, from psychological existence to rational existence, from rational existence to spiritual existence, and beyond that something which we cannot describe in language – Being as Such. You'll be taken to that level. This is a graduated movement, systematic action, taking place automatically because of your absorption in the concept of God – true God, not the false God

that you have created by the segmentation of your individuality from That. Whole being is concentrating itself on whole being of the universe. The whole of your being is immersed in the thought of that whole being of the whole cosmos. The whole is meditating on the whole, not a part meditating on something outside it, because anything that is outside the part will also be a part only. A finite thinking something else is like the finite thinking another finite, but here is something different. The whole thing is concentrating on the whole in which two wholes merge – *Purnamadah purnamidam purnat purnamudachyate, purnasya purnamadaya purnamevavasishyate*. The whole has manifested itself as the whole universe, and the whole universe is before you as the whole which you yourself are. The individual is a whole, the universe is a whole, God is a whole – so several wholes are rolling themselves one over the other – *Purnamidam purnat purnamudachyate, purnasya purnamadaya purnamevavasishyate*. The whole has come from God and the whole is going back to God. Fractions are not coming from God, and fractions are not going to God, and fractions don't exist also even now. Even now, as this moment, fractions do not exist – there are only wholes rolling one over the other. If this meditation is possible, you will be sure that you will never be reborn into this world of sorrow. This is *krama mukti*, gradual salvation, stage by stage, arising from the lower material condition, biological, psychological, etc. until you reach utter perfection of spiritual existence.

But the scriptures, Brahma Sutras, tells us that there is also known what is *sadyo mukti* – immediate salvation. It means salvation is immediate; it is not by stages, slowly moving like an ant. That can take place if your being is bursting with God just now – I can only use that word. Your whole being is bursting because of the entry of God. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva used to give an illustration – God entering man is something like a mad elephant entering a thatched hut. It will simply break the hut into pieces, pound it and destroy it into pieces and go. If God

enters an unprepared individual, you will have a shock from the core of your heart; you may fall sick and you may perish at that moment. But you need not perish if you have been a built-up, strong personality with disciplined practice right from the beginning. The whole of God enters you at one stroke – what will happen to you? That is called *sadyo mukti*. You are not entering God – God is entering you; that is the difference between *krama mukti* and *sadyo mukti*. When you want to reach God stage by stage, it is called graduated, gradual salvation. When God wants to enter you, it is like the ocean wanting to enter the rivers and not the rivers entering the ocean. Can you imagine God wanting you? Is it possible? If you want God you are a blessed person, but if God wants you, what is that condition? If you can imagine what it is, you are freed just now. *Hari Om Tat Sat*. God bless you.