Swamiji: Are u all getting some?

Person 1: afterwards Swamiji

Swamiji: Afterwards

Person 2: Everybody will get something

Swamiji: I hope so. They say people shouldn’t drink alone; I don’t like to eat alone. So, let me ask

you. Do you have any questions? Any questions?

[Song request - ‘Amon din ki hai be ma tara’. Swamiji sings]

I don’t remember.(Swamiji talks in Bengali – Forgive me. I have forgotten) and another thing that my mother taught me was not to talk with my with my mouth full.

Dhuti: Would you like some music, Swamiji?

Swamiji: yeah

Dhuti: Okay. Do you have a request, Swamiji?

Swamiji: Go on alone. This is Tagore’s Akela Chalo. I based it on that.

Choir - Go on alone is played

You know we, in our society we are so much influenced by other people’s opinions, other people’s desires. We are not free. People think they are free because ‘I know what I want’. What makes them want it? That’s really become unfree. You know, the first time I was in Punjab, somebody took me to Patiala. There was a Brighu samhita there. Somebody who lived, Brighu lived 5000 years ago, how will he know about my little life because in treta yuga they knew the future, they demolished the delusion of time as in this Dwapara yuga they will demolish the delusion of space, they will be able to go to distant planets and so on. But it is really amazing to realize that how little we are actually free. We think we have our own thoughts, we don’t. Your thoughts reflect the level of consciousness on which you live and master in Autobiography of a Yogi that thoughts are universally rooted and not individually. I remember when I was about 23 and I fell into a sudden mood and I tried to get out of it by every means possible. I couldn’t reason my way out of it. So I changed my level of consciousness by concentrating here and suddenly my mood changed. It depends on the level of consciousness where you are and then you attract thoughts from that level but you are not free. The only freedom you have and remember this you can turn toward God or away from God, you can turn toward God or turn toward Satan or maya. The moment you take one step then that influence begins to come and so if you want God then you don’t have to do all the work yourself. Just turn toward him, keep thinking of him and His influence will gradually draw you more and more until you become one with him. Then if you think thoughts of maya then Satan will attract you. Some people think ‘oh, its all in the mind. It doesn’t matter.’ That’s exactly where it is and that’s exactly where it does matter. What’s in the mind is your reality and if you turn toward anything to do with maya that influence will take you further and further. How far can you go either direction? You can go toward God and become one with Him. God is not a separate being from us. He made us, he didn’t make us as a carpenter would make a table. He manifested us out of His consciousness. We are God. But we have to realize it. That is the problem. That’s why we are on the spiritual path. But remember the more you offer yourself to God, the more you will attract that consciousness that grace. You don’t have to plead to God to give his grace. Everytime you are kind to somebody He is expressing His grace through you. Every time, you show compassion, you attract more grace. So the more you turn that way, but how far can you go the other way, you don’t have to remain a human being. You may be a cow mowing along the field next life if you don’t live in a good way. If you become an animal from the human level it will be one life time. And you come back to the human level. But if you want to go on living like an animal level you can be thrown many life times. My guru told me that you can go as a germ and then you have to work your way all the way up again. It’s a scary thought. Why not turn toward God. Master said it takes a very good Karma to be a human being. Why not make the best use of it. Love Him in your heart. You’ll find that the more you turn toward Him, the more his attraction will come. So that is why we are on the spiritual path not to ask for his grace. You have got his grace. Just be worthy of it.

Do you have any questions?

Everywhere else people have had millions of questions.

But I enjoy answering questions too. Because it gives me an idea on where I am going in talking.

**So many animals are evolving to become a human being. So why does the population not increase or abnormally increase?**

It is increasing. Do you think this is the only planet on the universe with people on it? There are thousands of planets. You know one very interesting, billions of planets. There are 100 billion galaxies. All those galaxies have suns. All those suns, not all of them but many of them have people. So you aren’t only on this planet. You can reincarnate in many planets. I asked my guru one time, the people who are coming now on this planet, will they be in satya yuga. He said ‘oh no. there are plenty of other planets to go to. You go where your nature attracts you. If you aren’t living sattwic life, you can be, there are whole galaxies that are tamasic, whole galaxies that are rajasic, whole galaxies that are sattwic. Our galaxy is rajasic. But the people in tamasic planets they have cannibalism, ferocious tigers and all sorts of things there. And when they fall, they can fall lower than people and the epidemics that we have in this planet are all souls from those planets and they reborn here to get the punishment that they deserve for having been so bad. You are way ahead of that. Become complete. The number of people in this planet is absolutely meaningless. There could be billions more and …. In fact in the time ahead of us we are coming to a very great depression and in that depression there will be a great wars. Russia, Germany, china there will be a great war. India with Pakistan next door, hitching to do something, china backing Pakistan, its not a safe situation even now. And in my life time no. but in the life time of so many young people may be there will be atomic wars. It will wipe out most of the planets. And then Master said there will be 300 years of peace. People would be so tired of fighting. But also they won’t have many people to fight. So Calcutta won’t be a crowded village as it is now.

Any other questions?

Swami ji, why is the world not cured of, if we could come to this path, there are others like us in similar paths…

There are many paths to God. It is the mistake that so many people make, ours is the best. Our guru is the best. No. they are all same. And don’t make comparisons. I know that Ramakrishna’s disciples, not his direct ones, but … used to say to Yogananda, He is a very good cook. Unnecessary to talk like that. Yes he was a good cook but he was also a great master. But you see this everywhere. People try to compare. If you want to compare, compare more with saints. Think how I can become more humble. Humble doesn’t mean self-effacing, self-forgetful. You yourself are not significant. The most important thing on the spiritual path is to overcome the sense of ego. And what surprised me is Bengalis love to talk and no body is asking questions. There was one gentlemen in Calcutta, who said to a young man, my boy are you married? ‘What do you mean I am married? I am married to your own daughter… I know, I know. I just wanted something to say and I couldn’t think of anything else to say.

So anyway…

**So now that you have come here meeting all of the people here, and how the people in Calcutta can make themselves happier?**

Why Calcutta, everywhere. We are manifestations of God. We can say God is us….God is infinite.

He became us. We are part of His dream and we have to wake up from that dream. Now God’s nature is satchidananda, ever-existing, ever-conscious and Yogananda added the term ever new bliss. That bliss is always fresh, always new and we, the only thing we want in life, everybody in the world, not Calcutta, everywhere, they all want happiness. They all want bliss but they don’t know it and so they want happiness and some people define happiness in different ways according to their nature. So the people who are tamasic in nature they may want happiness in the sense of revenge, ‘I got even with him, ha ha ha’. But they still want the same thing, they just don’t understand. Well if people can understand that then can go the finer and finer happiness. I had a dream in Florence, Italy many years ago in which I saw crowds of people, some evil, some good, some mediocre, business types, criminal types all of them passing me and I saw one thing that they had in common, they all wanted the same thing that I want, they all wanted happiness and that was my reason for loving everybody and so I really feel that love for everybody. I think, the more you can forget yourself the more happy you are. The more you can forget yourself in serving other people, helping other people the more happy you are. Jesus Christ said ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’. If you give to people, your consciousness expands and to receive and if you take from people it contracts. The whole trouble today is that people are greedy. They want more and more. And that is why there will come this great depression to learn that lesson. Countries are grabbing from each other, people are grabbing from each other, business are grabbing even. I remember, I saw some beggars in Delhi and I stopped to ask a beggar how to get somewhere. He was angry. How do I dare ask from him. He was supposed to ask from me. Well that is very bad karma…. He will go probably to animal level next time. But when you give to other people, when you help other people, when you give happiness to people, there are different things that you can give people. You can give them food. But food they will digest and they will be hungry again… .meal time you can give them jobs, well that’s ok. But they are not secure in that job, you may lost it. If you can give happiness to people that’s the greatest gift that you can give. You can give them God. So whenever you see anybody just try to feel that you are blessing him and in that you will feel greater and greater happiness in yourself. The less you live for yourself, don’t think your own importance. It will help very much if people insult you. Say thank you. You don’t have to answer them. You don’t have to fight back. You’ll find more and more bliss. Share your own happiness with others. Ok.

**You have written about Faith being your armor. Could you please tell about how faith can be an armor?**

When you have faith in God, this is something I have mentioned to you too that master said that those who love God will be protected. There is a very interesting story that I read not too many years ago. You know when America dropped those two bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan there were two places in, near the center of where those bombs fell. They were religious societies and they were untouched. You couldn’t … you have to call that .. .seems like a miracle but you’ll find it that if you love God, you will be protected. Faith is putting all your energy in that direction that’s also beginning of love and the more you put yourself in His hands the more He will protect you. I have seen that , in fact Asha (where is Asha) Asha has just written a book, ‘Loved and protected’ is that the name? yes. Its about the miracles ordinary individuals have had by faith in God. You’ll see again and again, I have seen. I remember one time I came here to Calcutta many years ago, 1972, there was a man named Mishra. He was from Bhubaneswar and I had wanted to see him. He was a friend of mine from, he was in school, in college in America and I have made friends with him but I didn’t know his address and I was sorry that I was coming all the way to Calcutta and wouldn’t be able to go down and say hi to him or something and so when my plane landed in Calcutta, I, my people who had to meet me there at Dum Dum weren’t there because the traffic was heavy and they were late. So instead of doing the thing people usually do, they run to the telephone, try to find out what the matter is, I just stood there and said to Divine mother what do you want and right at that moment a man stopped in front of me, he said what is your good name and I told my name. I thought you were he. I have seen your photographs in a album of photographs in a friend of mine, a Dr.Mishra and I said, I have been wanting to see Dr. Mishra. He said, he is here in Calcutta and I have come to see him and not take you to his home.

So you see really I have had many experiences like that and it can happen to everybody. Nobody is special or different from you. We are all children of the same God and if you have that faith, you will find that in extraordinary ways he will take care of you.

Yes

**When you are in deep pain, say, from parting of your family member. How do you overcome that?**

Well you don’t do it easily nor do you do it quickly but if you place your faith in God, you will find that in the end that would be the best thing that could have happened to you. You know, I am a disciple of Yogananda. He founded a organization and I was active in that organization for 14 years. I was very dedicated. I was completely serving this organization would be serving him and I was too creative for the people above me and one day they called me back. The last stop in India was Calcutta, called me to New York, not Los Angeles and why New York. In New York they told me I am out of the organization. They didn’t want anything more to do with me simply because I was creative. I hadn’t been betraying him but they didn’t like it. Well that to me was a terrible thing. Worse than that, they were my, the people whom I looked upto and admired. And suddenly overnight, I was thrown out into New York streets with they saying just take along any job that comes. They gave me nothing. That’s a hard experience to go through. It took me many years. But I came to understand that is was the best thing to have happened, the best possible thing. Master told me ‘you have a great work to do and I couldn’t do it under them. They’ll always say ‘no,no,no..’ when I was on my own, I could start writing books, I could start giving classes. I could create communities. Everything that I had done in my life began with their throwing me out, the best thing that could have happened. You will see that if you live for God everything that comes will be good karma. It may be painful but it will be good karma. Ok. I have seen that with other kinds of pain too because we live in a world of duality. Everything is up and down. Nothing can last for ever. You finally get to the top of the ladder and become successful president and the next day something happens, probably a cancer, you wife dies, who knows what. But always everything is up and down. The only safe place you can be is in God, beyond dwaita, beyond duality. In Him there is nothing but peace and bliss but in this world whatever up you have, you are going to experience the opposite. So be even minded. I remember one time, I got a severe kidney stone attack, trying to pass through my bladder and it was so severe that my whole body was shaking like a leaf and I said Divine mother, I refused to pray for myself and so for 2 hours I was sitting just shaking then I remembered that I had a service to give and in 15 minutes I was supposed to give the service. So I said, Divine mother do what you like but if you want me to give me the service then you have to take the pain away. Just like that it went away. So by praying to God, everything will be fine and putting yourself in His hands. The greatest pain physical or mental, I try to be even minded always. When I go to the dentist, I don’t take any pain killer and sometimes the dentist is perspiring with sympathetic pain but I don’t feel it. I just compose music or think about some point of philosophy. One time the pain was very intense and so I felt that my reality was not just this body, I was much larger and then what happens with the little body doesn’t matter and you can rise above.. firmly tell yourself I am not this body. I am He.

Any other questions?

**Why does God give such challenging things to encounter difficulties?**

You know Krishna in the Bhagavad gita says ‘Get away from my ocean of suffering and misery’ and you would think that, everybody would think that let me get out of this suffering and misery but for every suffering there is also pleasure and people decide that when suffering goes the pleasure is worth, let me have my little wife, children, me and pleasures and all that and they go on and on but there is always some reason to hang on. But if one for the suffering you would seek God. I remember, I was at the lake shrine, property of SRFs. We were being, it is a beautiful property but there were little nats that were getting into our eyes and ears and nose and I said to Master with a smile, ‘why would with all this beauty to be spoiled by these pests?’ and he said ‘that’s God’s way of keeping us moving toward Him.’ So don’t worry. Always when you feel pain, ‘right God. I will remember you all the more’.

Dukhe bhi… aashi ho

Pain is when you remember God more. Remembering Him, don’t turn back from Him. But I don’t think if anybody, I had a dream one time, I was being burned at the stake and I thought what does it matter, body after a little while be free and my torturers were sitting at a banquet table. This is how dreams are and they were feasting and laughing and having good time and I just thought well this is fun. Then friends of mine came and rescued me and I was just as indifferent when they were rescuing me when they put me to the stake. If you can be indifferent to this world, not attached to the ups and down, not be like those television personalities who leap up and down… because they have got some soft drinks or something. They say that have a cococola will give you happiness, well in fact it makes you depressed. But they don’t show that in the ads. I remember one time, I saw a movie of the Song of Bernadette, the movie about a saint. But it was on television and there was this vision of virgin mary and beautiful music and everything and so on, then they cut, cococola. It seemed utterly blasphemous. But anyway, be grateful for the pains because they keep you moving toward god and I am, I have had my share. I had my hips operated on three times. You know, he said it is the worst case he had ever seen. He said you should have been bed ridden years ago and when I was walking, people would try to talk to me and I say, I can’t answer you because every ounce of my will power is devoted putting my foot one foot in front of the other. I didn’t want to bother it with hip operation after a while it became convenient to have one and so I had one. Three times he had to replace that much of my hip bone, it had …. Along the wayon bone on bone that long. I just don’t think about those things. Why bother? I had open heart surgery. Of course that didn’t hurt, it took this much out of my intestines and they have had, my body has been a battle ground, it just doesn’t matter to me. They talk of the suffering that Jesus experienced. He didn’t suffer. He was above suffering and this is how we should be. Your ego is what suffers. When you don’t think of your body, you ego,.. myself is suffering, you won’t suffer. Really. I know it. Ok?

**Is earth is changing its consciousness from third dimension to fourth dimension from this year on? Will it keep on changing like this?**

I don’t know what you are talking about. There are 3 dimensions in this world. Up, this way, that way…one dimension is beyond this world. Fifth dimension, I don’t know what it is. Really, I am not a physicist. I don’t anything about this. So thank you for asking a question I couldn’t answer.

Any others?

Swamiji how you are feeling visiting Kolkatta after such a long time, how you are feeling today?

I love it. I love Calcutta. The one thing that I specially love about Bengal is that there are lot of heart quality here. I know, I was 32 when I first came here. That’s a few years ago, Not quite yesterday. Dr. Das was one of our board of directors. He lectured me for one hour on how much I ought to know before I could presume to speak to these sophisticated Bengalis. I don’t like

sophistication. I like being a child .I like being not ignorant but open to everything. I used to be, I used to

be very intellectual. But it didn’t give me happiness and so I am happy as I am. I don’t like that aspect of

Bengal, I like the heart quality. I like the language. The language is the sweetest language in the world. I’ve never heard more sweet and I like the kindness. So be kind. Any other questions? Okay. Thank you for coming.???(lots of whispers and someone says something in Bengali )

Any other questions?

**Swamiji could you describe your first impression when you met Yoganandaji and how do you remember him?**

It’ll seem strange to you. I was so, I read his Autobiography, I’ve been seeking truth all my life. I used to

try to seek it without God and I thought I’d find it in Astronomy, I thought I’d find it in Politics and the arts and I wanted to be a poet and writer and nothing gave me what I wanted. I remember I was learning playwriting and I was in Charleston in South Carolina and I thought what is the use of writing plays if all I have to share with people is my ignorance and I decided I have to know if there is a God. If there is a God what is he ?The God that I learned about in church did not touch my heart and I went out in a long walk and I said if there is a God what must He be? And Finally I decided I’m consciously asking this question. That means he must be consciousness and my job in life has to be to know him and I began to worry am I going crazy? I didn’t know anybody in history who had ever sought God and I tried to get away from that by going to the country and I saw that being in nature isn’t going to do it for you. I finally realized that I just had to, I didn’t know anything about India or Indian philosophy and I thought that going to a jungle in Brazil and may be becoming a hermit there and if I found anything I imagine finding may be some peace of mind or something, then I would share that with people if not why impose my ignorance on them and at this time God heard my prayer and he got rid of my parents. He sent my father to Egypt and the day that I put my mother on the ship to go join him, if they had been there I was only 22, their objections would have been powerful enough to make it very hard. But the day I put my mother on the ship I went uptown New York, I found Autobiography of a Yogi and I read that book and I took the next bus from New York to Los Angles, that’s 3000 miles and I was so desirous of meeting, of being accepted by Master the first words I said to him were ‘I want to be your disciple’ and I was so fervently desiring that I had no time to have any impressions .I just knew he was he was my Guru and he accepted me, so that’s why I am here. But I could not have an impression of him because I was too too full of my own need to be accepted. I didn’t need an impression of him. I knew he was a great man and I knew he was what I wanted so anyway that is my answer. It seems strange because usually when you meet somebody you get an impression. I was too busy sending my impressions out you have to really..

Any other questions?

**Swamiji,Tell us something about Nirvana**

Nirvana You know is an interesting thing. Buddhists are said to be atheist. Buddha was not an atheist. He was an avatar. But in before him Karmakhand, they did these different rites and rituals to please the gods and he said its not that it’ll do it. You don’t have to please the Gods. You have to do something yourselves. So his mission was to tell people to do their part. And because of that his followers tended to think that we are atheist and its all done by ourselves. Its not true. Every master who comes, comes

at a time when… well let’s put it this way. Let’s say the goal of life is to reach the equator. People north of the equator are told to go south. People south are told to go North. When the people from the North start getting south of the equator, people say “No, no you are supposed to go North. No you are supposed to go South and so we have all the argument which you find in the religion. But its all the same

goal.You have to find that the centre in your own self and Nirvana is a state that you reach before

attaining liberation, before attaining Nirbhikalpa Samadhi. You’ve lost all your impressions and everything and you are an emptiness. Then comes flooding in the bliss of God. So Nirvana is a state my Guru explained that you have to pass through to get to that but its temporary.

Is it a state of mind?

Yes. But you don’t have a mind.

Thank you

**Swami ji My question is like each soul has the same time period to merge back in God?**

No. You’ve got days of Brahma. In fact it says in the Gita and in the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam which is

a great scripture. Most people don’t understand it .They think its a love poem. But its written by

somebody who had to protect his religion from people who wouldn’t understand it and he says many who are thrown out at the beginning of the day of Brahma are still wandering at the end of a day of

Brahma. And Krishna in Bhagavat Geetha says many who are thrown out are with the beginning of a new day of Brahma, they are thrown out again and how many times were you thrown out, why waste all that time? But there is no fixed time. You have this much freedom of will to go toward God or away from him and some take less time than others. I asked my Guru one time, because somebody has seen him in vision back in Lemuria which is supposed to have been 80,000 years ago and he was with Master then I said to him,”Master have I been your disciple for thousands of years? He said ‘its been a long time. Thats all I’ll say’. So its not a quick thing. He said desires for this and that take people away again and again and that’s after finding my Guru. You may get quickly. I don’t want to get discourage you. But the chances unfortunately are you get a little pleasure and a little hint of desire and you go that way. Oh, I want to be a famous pianist, I want to be a famous this or that and I warn you it can last a long time but to find a Guru is the greatest blessing in the three worlds. When you have a Guru, and he gives you his touch, then you are almost there. Almost means a few lives but still almost. Before that all these people in the streets that you see their minds are hooked on sex, on money, on power, on all the things of this world. When you finally, really, when you begin to want to know God Master said there is first of all God sends to little things, books, nice lectures, things like that. When you want him intensly, then he will send you a Guru. You don’t have to look for your Guru. You pray to God deeply and he will send him. When I met my guru, when I read Autobiography of a Yogi, I had never heard the word Guru before. I didn’t know what it meant. I knew I wanted help but I didn’t know. All the people I had met, I knew they couldn’t help me but as soon as I read his book, I knew he could help me. This man has what I want but this is a big job. That’s why I say don’t waste time. It is so easy to waste time but you will find that there’s more and more pleasure… I used to love reading books, now I don’t like to very much, I just like to think of God, you will find more and more pleasure in that. Okay.

Any other questions?

**Swamiji, does the same guru helps us all our lives?**

Not necessarily. It will be in the same line. In other words, you may have been Lahiri Mahasaya’s disciple and now you are Yogananda’s, that kind of a thing. But it won’t be a different guru. Yogananda, this is sort of strange. He said that Judas.. you know, who betrayed Christ, people think of him as the greatest sinner and villain in history. Master said he was a prophet. I said ‘Is that so’? He said “Oh yes, he would have had to be one of the twelve.” He said ‘I met him in this life’, that means in the beginning of the 20th century and Jesus appeared to this master and asked him to free him and that master was Ramakrishna **and I think his name in this life was Saradananda**. I think, I am not sure. The cluethat I have Saradananda, Master said ‘He still had little attachment to money’ and Saradananda was attached to getting money for the wife of Ramakrishna and so he didn’t wanted for himself but he still thought in those terms and the other disciple made fun of him for it and the guru said ‘Don’t. Leave him alone. He has suffered enough’ Master said many strange things. So Jesus appeared to Ramakrishna and asked him to free him. But is there a tie between Ramakrishna and Jesus? I myself have to say ‘I think so’. They are subtle things that I can’t talk about too much.

Any other questions?

**Beloved Swami ji, Can you tell us any way to overcome fear?**

The best way to overcome fear, I have found is just to accept the possibility that its happening to you and if you can accept that then you have overcome the fear. I have never been nervous in public because I have always thought if people think I am a fool and it doesn’t matter if I am and not, it doesn’t matter, so let it go and so people are usually afraid of death, it will come anyway, why be afraid. But the truth is all sorts of books have told about near death experience and after you die, absolutely you don’t loose consciousness, you are stuck with this world. You can’t get out that easily. So there’s nothing to be afraid of. If somebody comes to you with a knife and kills you, ok, let it be. You’ll still be around. I think if you can face fear and accept it then you have overcome it.

Narayani, how much time do we have?

Any other questions?

**Swami ji, how can we overcome the worldly desires?**

The lesser desires are overcome by indulging in them. Whenever you enjoy anything, you eat food for example, don’t feel I am enjoying it. Its there. When everything that you enjoy, enjoy with the grace of God, with the joy of God.

I met a sadhu in Puri, years ago. He was a 132 year old. So he must have had something. But he told me, you mustn’t enjoy anything. I said ‘not even a beautiful sunset?’ ‘No, nothing.’ But to me that’s a very dry attitude. My guru said enjoy everything but, with the joy of God. Which is to say whatever you enjoy, share it with God, then you feel freer. Do you understand? So all the things of this world, if you can bring God into iy, even into sex, even into worldly things, if you share it with God, you’ll gradually be able to become free of it. Whereas, if you try to think, He didn’t see that, of course He saw it. He did it through you. So the more you give it to Him, the more you become free. Ok?

Have I beaten you into the ground here? Yes Dhuti.

**This is not a philosophical question, But I am curious if you had thought about writing anything with the Upanishads?**

No. I don’t know enough about them. I know the philosophy but I don’t know the specifics. I’m not a scholar. You know when Master was…the Maharaja of Kasimbazaar gave him first the land at Dihika. It was very malarial and the children were getting malaria. So he asked the Maharaja if he can give him land or a place in a more salubrious climate and the Maharaja said, He said if you want to teach spirituality, I would like to have you tested because Yogananda was still a young man, I would like to have you tested. So he had a whole room full of pundits in the room and Yogananda said they were all ready for a theological bull fight and Yogananda said ‘let’s not talk about what we have read, let’s talk about what we have experienced. There is something all the scriptures say the four aspects of mind, they are mon, buddhi, ahankara, chitta but the scriptures say also that they have a specifc location in the body and they don’t say where that location is. Can you tell me where it is?” well they know that there was no scripture that they can quote, so master said this is mon (top of head), this is buddhi (point between the eyebrows), ahankar (medulla), chitta (heart). When you perceive things you perceive them like Dhritarashtra who is blind, signifying the blind mind. Let’s say that you see in a mirror and in the mirror you see the reflection of a horse. Then the Buddhi steps in and says ‘oh that’s a horse’. Mind doesn’t know, it just reflects it. Buddhi says ‘Oh that’s a horse’. This is why when you think deeply or feel, try to use your intellect, you tend to frown, what does that mean. Now if you are proud, if you have ego, that comes from here and you see people looking down their noses at other people and this is chitta, this is feeling. The rule of patanjali, if you had read my book, ‘Demystifying Patanjali’, I go into this at length. The feeling, chitta does not mean mind stuff or those vague words. It means feelings. When you see that horse and you say ‘its my horse’, you still are not completely hooked. What hooks you is ‘oh how happy I am to see my horse.’ That chitta is what keeps you bound to maya. That’s why Patanjali defined yoga as ‘yogas chitta vritti nirodha’. Yoga is the neutralization of the vortices, chitta means vortex, not waves of feeling. All the feelings, every, I want my horse, I want my daughter, I want my position in life, I want my home, all these create little vortices and the energy coming up the spine, there is caught along in little vortices along the spine. We have to get rid of all those vortices of chitta, feeling and therefore when you go to bed at night, a very good practice would be mentally to create a bonfire and think of all your desires, all your feelings, all your attachments and throw it into the fire, so that when you go to the bed at night, you are completely free. You know, before I had my heart surgery, the surgeon said to me if you don’t have the surgery immediately you could die very easily in your sleep and people do die in their sleep, it could happen. Why not be completely free before you go. So before you go to sleep, just give everything back to God. You will feel freer that way. So dissolve all your likes and dislikes. It is very important. As long as you have likes and dislikes, ‘I want that’ desires, attachments, these are the things of maya. Otherwise, you can go through maya and be untouched. Ok.

Any questions?

**How can we get over our attachment to our children?**

You have to remember that they are Gods. You know, you can have a child, a son and you love him dearly and he dies and he is reborn next door, you won’t even know him probably. So whose child is it really? You have children, God gives you that thought that he is mine or she is mine and that thought is necessary because you have to help him to grow but you have to accept the thought too this is God’s child. There was a women who had this problem, she went to Ramakrishna. He said think of your baby as Balakrishna and just do everything for Balakrishna and in that way she was able to worship Krishna even while taking care of the baby but it doesn’t mean you have less love, mind you this is an important point. When you see everything as God, then you care for it much more, so you love your child more. When there is attachment there is less love because it is my child. You don’t have that thought of my, you take care of it because of it being God’s. everything is God’s. Your husband, your wife, your children, everybody is really God’s and we live only temporarily here and then we have to go. Ok?

**Swamiji, how can we deepen our love for God?**

I would say that pray for that love. As you pray for it that love will develop. Chanting is very important. That song ‘Aman de ki ye matara’ is a very important song because that helps develop the devotion of the heart, and loving other people and helping other people. The more we soften our hearts, the more we feel love for God. So in this way, we need other people. I think that very few hermits attain God, because they should also be helping other people and if they help other people they are doing sadana. Ok?

Any other questions?

**Swamijji, Tell us how easy is it to control our mind?**

That’s a tough one but the more you give your mind to God, feel Him thinking through you and remember its not even your thoughts so just feel Him thinking through you but its very difficult. The world makes us restless. I would say one very important thing is ‘Don’t watch Television’. It makes you completely restless. I never watch TV but I was in a barber shop in Rome, Italy and he had his Television set going. I noticed every two second the scene changes. How can you have a calm mind when you have that kind of thing. Many people have several TV sets going in their homes. Different programs in different rooms. So please get away from those things that make you restless. I think that Television is the greatest instrument of maya. Ok?

**How can we be content in all situations?**

Take everything as it comes from God. Even if it is pain, just say God you are giving me this. When I go to the dentist, I am content. When people insult me, I remember I had to be, I was at a large conference in eastern part of America. I came from California and there were many people who were in the lecture circuit, famous people because of having been in public so much and I invited them all to dinner at a restaurant and because the people were better known, they kept talking to each other, ignoring me, I was the host of the gathering. I thought how wonderful it is to be completely unimportant. It’s a nice feeling. If people ignore you feel happy with it. You don’t have to respond to useless questions.

Any other questions?

**Swamiji will you be visiting Master’s house while you are here?**

If I had time, I would want to. Do you know?

Jyotish: I think we are going tomorrow.

We are tomorrow. Ok.

**Swamiji, when you read like lot of scriptures, do you become dry inside and your devotion just goes off.**

I think you don’t have to read. If you read one hour, meditate two hours, love God all the time. Scripture is a very unimportant thing. There was one man unfortunately for me has my name Kriyananda. He lives in Washington, in Chicago and he came to Master with his long list of questions. He thought he was very important for having thought about all these intellectual questions and when he asked the first one, Master’s answer was love God. He went on to the next one. ‘Love God’. Third one – Love God. He got up and walked out and ever since, this man has always said that ‘even saints have their problems.’ He had the problem.

Any other one?

**Is there any proofs that we have past lives?**

Ya you. All of you. Each one of this. It is a wonderful thing to watch a crowd of people and everyone is different. Two eyes, a nose and a mouth. What God can do with all those? Those aren’t your DNA. It develops over many life times. Your different qualities, you can see them in people and really its fun watching people and seeing all the different qualities. But there are also ways by which you can remember as you become unattached to this body. Patanjali said that the more you are unattached the more you can remember past lives. So you go to Bhrigu or Agastya, they tell you your past lives and I went to one in Barnala in Punjab and he told me my past life and it wasn’t all together happy. I was a rich man lived in Karachi and we went on a pilgrimage and I came to a desert of Rajasthan and there I was in a Ashram, Kapila had his Ashram. I met my guru and underwent a complete change and sent my wife home. After 10 years/12 years, she came and wanted to be with me and I told her, I didn’t want anything to do with women and send her away and that was a ‘paap’. It was wrong to do that because she was a good woman. To renounce a woman who is materialistic or pulls you down, that’s right but to renounce a woman who is good, that was wrong. He said I will not find liberation until this life. Then I went to another one in Delhi. I become interested in this whole phenomenon because somebody living 5000 years ago could know me, the little me in this century. It seemed inconceivable and he said I have given him a reading already in my yogavali and it said that a man has many lives to live and in the time of the battle of kurukshtera he was a ruler of a small kingdom and he didn’t want to get involved and so he went to the forest and took initiation from a guru and he reached shanti in his vrittis. That must be sabikalpa at least and then he argued with his guru and his guru told him to leave and he said you will have to wander until you meet Yogananda. So there are many things like this too. They are very interesting and I have had a few others. But I can remember some of my past lives too and its fun but its not a relevant thing. The relevant thing is where you right now. Be freed of everything. I’d been a king many lives, that is no more being important than a serf being a farm labourer or anything we are all just children of God and we have played different roles.

**In the connection of past lives, I want to ask you that I heard from you when I met you in Gurgaon that guruji was Arjuna, in another incarnation he was William the conqueror.**

That to me, you know I grew up on the English system and I was born in Rumania, but of American parents, so I went to an English school and I had always learned that William was one of the great villains of history and here I find him as my own guru. So I had one of our members research his life for ten years and she found he was a great saint. 400 years after he died, his body was found to be incorrupt, still preserved. That only happens to saints. He was very noble, he had to live a very difficult life but he was an avatar. A saint has to worry about his own humility and so on, an avatar comes to destroy evil and to put virtue back and sometimes an avatar has a fierce life. Krishna had too and so I was amazed by this. He was a great saint but he didn’t look like it from what the historians say and I was his son Henry, the first and Master said that Babaji was Krishna and he said that’s why I am close to Babaji in this life. I didn’t know he was close, he is. So a master is, like our guru he has been a avatar many incarnations. He says in his poem ‘God’s Boatman’, I will return if need be a trillion times as long as one stray brother is weeping by the way side and that kind of self-sacrifice is beyond our understanding. Most people when they get out of it they say that’s that. A few people have this desireless desire to help other people and they come back. They are the avatars. So an avatar is a completely free soul who doesn’t merge back into God who postpones that ultimate freedom to help other people.

**When I see small children suffering, it disturbs me a lot. How can I get over it?**

Well, you have to realize that they have been around a long time. Master one time was given a child to bless. He said later that he nearly dropped it. I saw that in that little baby, a murderer. So why do they suffer? Because they have done something wrong in the past and you know karma, it works. You can’t get away from it.

**Swami ji, you met Master when you were 23 and you connected with him in a particular way. How do you connect with Master today after so many years of discipleship?**

In those days, I had to see him, now I don’t have to see him. I feel him in my heart and if I have a question, I ask him, and I get the answer and he is always with me. I don’t feel that I’m talking. He is talking through me.

**Swami ji, what is the fate of the person who says this ‘I don’t believe in God’.**

Oh! That’s an interesting question. I know I had a person in Australia asked me that question. He said ‘ I don’t believe in God. What do you say about God that will touch me?

I said, think of God as the highest level that you yourself can aspire to. He said ‘well, I can live with that’. They speak English in a strange way and If you don’t have to believe in God but you have to know that if you go upward you are happy. This is the whole story of the Bhagavad gita. The enemy, the Kauravas are the lower qualities, the pandavas are the upward pulling qualities. If you go upward you feel more and more happy, if you go downward you feel more and more unhappy. You don’t have to believe in God. If you want happiness you believe in God. You can’t help believing in Him because He is ultimate happiness. So everybody believes in God, they may not believe in the definition of God but they can’t help believing in happiness, that’s because that’s God, Bliss, satchidananda.