

LIFE MANUAL

HOW TO LIVE LIFE

BY


Atman in Ravi

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By
AiR
Atman in Ravi

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Preface

After I completed writing my 30th book on Spirituality, Life, Happiness, and God, with the mission of helping people realize the truth, I stumbled upon a new realization. People don't know how to live life. We wake up in the morning and we just jump into the day. We all seek happiness, but we are going the other way. Although we are given the gift of the human intellect, we are slaves of our own mind and ego, and thus we suffer.

We learn how to operate our mobile phones and our laptops. We are quite familiar with the features of our microwave and our refrigerator. Whenever we get a new gadget, be it a Bluetooth speaker, an electronic clock or simple earphones, we read the Operating Manual before we actually start using our gadgets.

But have we ever read a Manual on Life? Is there such a Manual? There is no simple document that tells us what life is and how we should live. Thus, I decided to write a book on how to live life and I titled it 'Life Manual'.

In this book, I will share my personal experiences in life – how I faced problems and how I solved them. How I dealt with different people, adverse situations and how I made the best use of opportunities that I discovered on the way. How I found everlasting happiness by overcoming misery and how all the events and happenings that I experienced made me understand what makes people struggle through life.

People just zoom from womb to tomb, without realizing who they are and why they are here. We are so busy discovering everything outside that we have lost sight of what is inside. We have gone on quests and discovered continents, invented cures for diseases; we even yearn to go into outer space to explore the universe, but we have not stopped to contemplate and go within to realize our biggest treasure.

Thus, we live and we die, but do we actually live? Most of us think that life has a destination that we must reach. We forget to enjoy the journey that is life. We think success is happiness, and we keep climbing that peak of achievement which in reality, is an illusion. Our greed overtakes our need and we fail to live with contentment. We become attached to our possessions and people, and then we cry. We don't go on a quest to understand the meaning of life and we live in the constant fear of death.

Of course, we learn to sail through our life's voyage by facing hurdles and obstacles on the way. We stumble, suffer and then learn. Like my mentor used to say, 'Every fall is but a rise; to learn this is to be truly wise.' Undoubtedly, through experience we discover new ways to cope with the problems that strike us. But is that the best way to live? Is it necessary that we make all those mistakes and learn ourselves how to live life? Just like we get to see a book of guidelines at the very beginning of purchasing a product, how nice would it be if we could get a Life Manual that would enlighten us to make the best use of our life, and help us to make informed and wise decisions.

Unfortunately, most of us just live life without learning how to manoeuvre through this journey called 'Life'. We

don't even know that life has a purpose. We set and achieve goals, but we continue to remain thirsty as these don't satisfy us. All the time, we want peace of mind, but ironically, we do things that cause us anxiety. We continue to get baffled by problems and sometimes give up. We don't find eternal peace and everlasting bliss.

We see good people suffering and then we wonder, 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' We don't realize that bad things can't happen to good people just like apples can't grow on mango trees. There is a Universal Law that makes this world operate – the Law of Action and Reaction, the Law of Cause and Effect. The Law that states, 'As you sow, so shall you reap' – popularly known as the Law of Karma. Thus, we do not take care of our actions but regret and cry when the reactions unfold as the circumstances of our life.

We live life as directed by the mind. Thus, our decisions are mostly emotional because we don't take charge of our intellect, the most important tool that a human being is gifted with. Because we don't discriminate, we believe in the myth and live with anger, fear, worry, and other negative emotions that make us crave till we reach our grave.

Life is our most precious gift. It is more precious than all our possessions put together and all the beautiful relationships that we enjoy with the people we love, because if there were no life, then all these people and possessions too would be of no use.

It's time to stop, to read the Life Manual and discover how to live life. It's time to realize the truth and overcome the

myth that makes us live in ignorance. It's time to find a way to eternal joy and everlasting peace, and to experience true love that is bliss. It's time to overcome our spiritual blindness as we open our 'Real Eyes'.

We mustn't be one amongst those who try to live life without reading the Life Manual, only to reach the end with regrets, 'I would have,' 'I could have,' 'I should have,' but 'I didn't'. You can't rewind life. You can't go back to yesterday, but you can stop and discover life today. From this moment onwards, as you read the Life Manual, you can discover the true meaning of life and live a life of bliss and peace!

*A Manual guides us to use a product,
How to operate it step by step.
We just jump into this gift called 'Life',
And through it we are swept.*

*A precious book is this Life Manual,
It will help you reach your goal.
It will tell you what life is and how to live,
As each page you will scroll.*

Chapter 01

Explaining the Product – Life

***Life too is a product,
There is a way to get the best of it.
But first, we must read the Manual,
If we want to fill Joy and Peace in it.***

When we go to buy a product, what does the salesman do? He tries to explain what the product is. If we are buying a mobile phone, he explains how the mobile has two special cameras on either side. If it is a laptop, he explains how it is the lightest laptop in the world, with a feather touch screen. Whatever be the product, we try to understand the features of the product before we buy it. If we are buying a massage chair, we will compare it with other chairs in terms of cost, functions, warranty and whatever else we seek from it.

But what about life? It is one product we can't choose. We do not decide where we will be born and when; who will be our parents and what will be our gender. All this is to do with the product 'Life', but not many of us understand who decides all this. Is it just by chance that somebody is born in Africa or Japan? Whether we are born in a wealthy family or one afflicted with poverty; whether we are born healthy or most unfortunately blind, all this is controlled by the creator of the product called 'Life'. Although there is no scientific proof, but it seems quite obvious that just like we believe in the Law of Gravity through inference, life happens based on our Karma or our past actions. The Law of Action and Reaction, Cause and Effect states, 'What you give is what you get.' It is this Law that ensures

that apples don't grow on mango trees. The Law of Karma seems to be universally in force in this world and it controls the destiny of our life.

Nothing in life is certain. We may be happy or unhappy, a success or a failure, healthy or sick, but one thing is certain - death. Nobody can escape out of life alive. The day we are born, we are sure that we will die, but we don't know when. How we are born and how and when we will die are two things that are beyond our control unless we unnaturally inflict death upon ourselves.

We human beings are blessed with this gift of life. We are the only unique ones who are given the gift of the intellect. We can choose and discriminate between right and wrong, good and bad, the truth and the myth. We have been blessed with a choice to act based on our thoughts, our feelings, and our decisions. This is the most unique feature of the product, life. Animals can't discriminate and choose, nor can plants and trees, although they too live, they too have a life, and they too die!

Unlike a product that pops out of a machine, a human body is a unique creation of the Divine. Although our conception is due to an act of copulation of our parents, they are not in command of the creation of life in us. We celebrate our birthday on the day we are delivered on earth but our date of conception is about 9 months before that. Our life starts as a zygote, a tiny cell that is formed with the union of two cells after fertilization. The zygote becomes an embryo and then the foetus. During this process, all our organs are formed within the womb of our mother. Therefore, we believe that it is our mother who

created us, although the key raw material came from our father. Most of us don't realize that life itself is Divine. However much parents may try or want to conceive a child, unless there is Divine intervention, this product called 'Life' would not arrive on earth.

Life is a journey between birth and death. Although we were kicking in our mothers' womb, we start living only after we are released into the world. Our journey starts as a little child and our parents control our life till we grow up when we take charge of our life. In that sense, our life becomes our life only after we cross our teens. Till then, we live, we play, and we have fun. But we don't even know what life is all about. Children don't live with worries of the past and fear of the future. Thus they are always in joy and peace living life moment by moment.

There are many things that we can choose in life. While we cannot choose our gender or the religion that we are born into, we have a choice to believe or not to believe in God. Whether we choose to or not, we are empowered to do what we want, to go where we like, and to build relationships of our choice. Everybody's life doesn't have the same freedom. It is influenced by our family, our society, culture, religion and even the country we live in. But one thing is sure, our life belongs to us.

There are some people who do not realize that the biggest treasure that they possess is this product called 'Life'. There is nothing more valuable than life itself. Still, there are many who just exist. They don't truly live. They kill time as life flows by like a river. It empties into the ocean at death.

Have you taken charge of your life? Do you treasure the biggest gift you are blessed with? Have you understood the true meaning of life, 'Who are you and why are you here?' For you to learn the art of operating this product called 'Life', this Life Manual will guide you and show you the way forward. Then it will explain everything about life so that you can live a purposeful life. You mustn't just drift through life without understanding what it is and without making the best of this gift called 'Life'. This Life Manual can be your most valuable treasure.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life is our biggest treasure. Not many of us know how to truly live.
- Before we start living life, we must first understand it.
- We must read the Life Manual and discover how to live life.
- We human beings have a choice. We must learn to choose wisely.
- Of all living creatures, only we humans are blessed with an intellect to discriminate.
- We must make the best of this precious gift called 'Life' by reading the Life Manual before life is over.

Chapter 02

The Body and its Functions

What is our Body? Who is this 'ME'?

Who is the one that can walk and can see?

The body has over 30 trillion cells as such,

Limbs to walk and hands that can touch.

If we truly want to live, we must do an anatomy of the body to understand who we are and what we are made of. We are aware of what we look like - our face, our hands, our feet, and our body. We have 5 sense organs, eyes to see, ears to hear, a nose to smell, a tongue to taste and skin to feel. But that's not all that we are.

If we try to understand our body further, we have the epidermis which is the outer layer of skin. If we peel the skin, it reveals the dermis that has tissue, blood vessels, hair follicles, and sweat glands. Unless we are students of science, we will not bother to go deeper. But what lies below the skin? If we cut our skin, we see blood. We also see flesh and muscle. And then there is the bone. Didn't we learn in school that we have a brain that has millions of neurons all across the body? We also have a heart that pumps blood to every corner and every cell. The lungs purify the blood through the process of respiration. The oxygen from the air replaces carbon dioxide in the blood. We also have kidneys that are responsible to remove the waste products and excess fluid from our bodies. This process is so important that we are blessed with 2 kidneys. The junk food that we take into our body is quite likely to make one kidney fail. If one looks at the human body, it is such a marvel! Along with the intestines and the stomach,

and all that we have listed above, it makes the human body the most sophisticated machine invented on earth.

If one goes deeper to understand the functions of the body, one can write an entire book on it. But the purpose of doing an anatomy is to realize who we are. We are the ones who walk and who talk. We are also the ones who eat and who then digest the food, excreting the waste. To keep our race alive, we are blessed with genitals and reproductive organs that create life most naturally. These organs of action are part of the functions of the human body.

Not many of us contemplate and thus, we just live and die. We don't get amazed by the wonders that the body possesses and instead we are flabbergasted with the wonders of the world. We don't look within and thus, we don't discover who we truly are. How did the journey of this body start? It started with just 2 cells, one from our mother and one from our father that fertilized as if by magic and conceived what became this most magnificent human body. That one fertilized cell that is referred to as a zygote, grew into an embryo. In a matter of a few weeks, the shape of a little baby was visible. But it took 9 months for us to be created.

It is fascinating to study this cycle, but that is not the objective. It is just to make us realize that we were already alive as a foetus inside our mother's womb, much before we were delivered on earth. Then, one day, we were born, and it started our life journey on earth. We grew from an infant into a toddler. Then we went to a preschool and became aware of our existence. In school, our ego developed, but it only became full-blown when teenage took us into

university. It actually seems that our life started then. As a young adult, we fell in love, we even got married, produced children and life kept going on.

Ultimately, we grow old and we die. Death of the physical body is certain. Nobody can escape death. But while we see our picture and scream, 'That is me!' we don't even know who we are. Our body along with our name is cremated or buried and the game is over. But people say that we passed away, we departed, or we moved on. Although the physical body is right here, waiting for the final rites to be performed, it is blatantly declared that these are only the 'mortal remains' and we, the ones who were alive, have moved on.

If we depart at death, then who are we in reality? This physical body is just the habitat of who we truly are. What happened to the one who was alive? What happened to the power that kept the heart beating and the lungs breathing, as the body was walking, talking, eating, digesting, and even reproducing? We human beings live, but we don't contemplate who we truly are. In fact, we don't live, we just exist! We just consume this gift called 'Life'. And instead of using our body to discover who we are and why we are here, we abuse it in every possible way, not just by what we eat and what we drink, but also by what we think and how we live.

Some people realize that the gross physical body is made up of five elements - Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and Space. Every living creature is made up of these. At death when the life power leaves the body, the body returns to dust. The air escapes into the atmosphere just as the water evaporates when the fire inside us leaves us. We become cold and

degenerate into ashes as the space we occupy shrinks and our existence as the body comes to an end.

It's time to stop, to think, to introspect, and to realize that the functions of the physical body are just what appears on the outside. There is something on the inside that we are blissfully ignorant about. If we break the bones of our skeleton, we will find bone marrow, but we will still not find the energy that gives us life. Isn't it time to discover the truth beyond the body that we seem to be? Only then, we will learn how to truly live.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Our body is not what we seem to be on the outside.
- Of course, we have 5 sense organs that make us see, smell, hear, taste and touch.
- We also have several organs of action that cause, amongst other things, digestion and reproduction.
- Our critical organs, like the brain, the heart, the lungs, and the kidneys, facilitate our normal life.
- We have flesh, muscles, blood, and bones beneath our skin.
- But the most important thing that we do not realize is what lies within.
- Who are the ones we truly are? We must realize this before our life is over.

Chapter 03

The Mind - Our Software

*Just like a computer needs software
That will process data to find,
Our body too needs thoughts to think...
And that is the mind!*

Life is impossible without thoughts. The moment a person is brain dead and the thinking process of a human being ends, then everything comes to a standstill. It is the mind that creates thoughts that lead to feelings and then actions. If we truly want to live, we must understand the 'mind'.

What is the mind? It is a thought factory. It is constantly producing thoughts. It produces one thought practically every second and this can sometimes be up to 50,000 thoughts a day.

While we are all aware of our mind, have we ever seen it? The Mind seems to exist. It worries and it wanders. But where is the mind, we cannot find. While it is commonly believed that the mind is in the brain, or is a part of it, thoughts appear to us from every part of the body. Our 5 senses trigger thoughts and thus, even if our toe steps on a moving creature, the mind triggers a thought. It seems that all the neurons and the sense receptors of our body are connected to the software – the mind.

The mind is both positive and negative. It creates thoughts that are both productive and destructive, and this depends on the raw material that we feed our mind. If we feed the mind with NEP - Negative Energy Poison, then it will

produce poisonous thoughts. Some of the NEP emotions are fear, worry, anxiety, hate, revenge, jealousy, and anger. Instead, if we feed our mind with positive emotions like courage, confidence, optimism, enthusiasm, faith, hope, compassion, and love, our mind will produce PEP - Positive Energy Power that will produce positive thoughts. Therefore, we have a choice to control what we think, although most of us are unaware of how our thought factory works.

We also have another invaluable weapon which is the intellect. While most people think that the mind is the subtle part of our body and different from our hands, feet, and head which is our gross body, we do not discover that the subtle body is made up of 4 different entities: the Mind, Intellect, Memory, and Ego. The intellect is the tool to discriminate thought. It is a gift that only human beings are blessed with and it facilitates us to choose as we differentiate good from bad, the myth from the truth.

Therefore, while the mind often jumps like a monkey from one thought to another, it is the intellect that can control it. It also discriminates between the thoughts that our mind creates. The mind has a habit of jumping into a past that is gone, and a future not yet born. It is the intellect that can stop such thoughts from becoming feelings that will make us regret and worry and live with anxiety. The mind can sometimes be a rascal as it produces aggressive thoughts that create stress and anxiety for a human being.

Those reading this for the first time may be surprised because they have always thought that the mind is King, it is everything! Unfortunately, they have confused the mind with the intellect. Therefore, while the mind is a very important

aspect of our life, unless it is reined by our intellect, it will gallop with the 5 horses of our senses and become uncontrollable. It is only a properly disciplined and controlled mind that can think right and lead us to our destination.

A human body needs both hardware and software to live. If the body had no mind, we would limp. And if the mind did not have the body, we would not perceive it. But because of the subtle nature of the mind, the world today questions the existence of the mind. While it appears to exist, where it is actually located, we cannot find. We can look at a mirror and see our eyes, nose, ears, hands, and feet. We can even take an X-ray and see our heart, kidneys, and brain, but has anyone seen a picture of the mind?

We human beings do not doubt the existence of our mind. Not only does the mind make us act when we are awake, it also causes fantasies and nightmares when we sleep. This is supposed to be the subconscious mind that doesn't even sleep when the body does.

To truly live a meaningful life, our biggest challenge is to understand the mind and then take charge of it. The mind can be a very powerful weapon if controlled by a well-developed intellect. It is this mind that will ultimately create thoughts on how we should live life. However, if we want to make the best of our life, we must learn to control the mind. We must make the monkey mind into a monk. Then we can introspect and contemplate life, as we live with peace, joy, and bliss.

Most of us who become the slaves of an uncontrolled mind will be led astray in life, not only with wild thoughts but

miserable feelings, unwise actions and habits that would make us wish that we get a chance to relive our life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- The Mind is an integral part of our life, although it is invisible.
- It is a subtle part of our existence and works like a software.
- While most people think of the brain and the mind to be synonymous, the mind is everywhere, not just in our head.
- Millions of neurons all over the body may trigger thoughts that will lead to action.
- The mind is a thought factory that constantly produces thoughts.
- It is different from the intellect; the latter is a gift meant to discriminate thoughts and control the mind.

Chapter 04

Discover the Soul

***There is a Power within,
It is the Spirit, Atman or Soul.
To discover the truth of this Energy,
Is our life's Ultimate Goal.***

Who doesn't want to be happy? Every human being seeks happiness but we all suffer. Any person born on planet earth passes through a cycle of pleasure and pain. There is only one way to escape from this suffering – to realize the truth that we are the Divine Soul.

Most of us know nothing about the Soul. The only thing that we talk of is 'good' Soul and 'bad' Soul - whether our Soul will go to heaven or hell. When somebody dies, people often say, 'Let's pray for the departed Soul,' but unfortunately, we know nothing about the Soul.

The Soul is the power that gives us life. It is the energy that is present in each of our over 30 trillion cells. The moment we are conceived, the Soul seems to be present, although many wouldn't agree with this theory. They believe that the Soul arrives later, anytime between the fourth and ninth month of our journey in the womb. While people have different opinions about when the Soul enters, nobody denies that the Soul departs at death.

Therefore, the journey of the Soul is from birth to death. Just like a computer has the hardware, software, and the power supply, the Soul is the power that causes our existence. There can be no life without the Soul. Unlike the power in a

gadget, we have no idea where the power of the Soul comes from and where it goes. Over 5,000 years ago, the *Rishis* and the sages living in the Himalayas realized the Divine truth that the Soul is Divinity that manifests as you and me. Thus, they folded hands when they met one another as they bowed down to the Soul that exists in everybody. However, over the centuries, this got diluted into a religious practice that prayed to a God with name and form. The significance of the Soul as the Divine got lost as it gave way to rituals of myth and superstition.

Most of us are so busy in this material world that we don't have time to discover the Soul. We are so consumed by the cravings of the body and the wandering of the mind, that our ego stops us from realizing the truth. While we believe that we have a Soul, we think that it is just another aspect of our life. Little do we realize that without the Soul we are nothing.

The Soul is the cause, we are just effects. Our body doesn't receive a Soul after it is created. Rather, it is around the Soul that the body is formed. Where does the Soul energy come from and where does it go? To understand the Soul, one should take two pieces of dead rubber balloons. They seem to have no life. But suddenly, when we blow air into them, they distinctly stand out as blue and white balloons, both bouncing with life. If we deflate the balloons, can we retrieve the air that was in the two balloons separately? 'Impossible!' you would say. The air in the balloons has merged with the air that is everywhere. So is it with the Soul! When the Soul leaves the 30 trillion cells, it departs in a flash to merge with the Soul that is everywhere. It is *Maya* - the cosmic illusion that makes us believe that there is a Soul within us. It would rather be more apt to think that we

are in the Soul. The Soul is everywhere, inside us and outside of us, just like air is not just in the balloon, but also all around it.

Somehow, we think of the Soul as a distinct entity. We don't realize that it is one power that makes us all live. It is just like the power that comes to our house. The power is distributed to the lights, the television, the air-conditioners and all the other gadgets in the house. Each of these is a separate entity, but the power is one. So it is with us. You and I seem to be different, but the power within us, the Soul, is the same.

If we truly want to live life, we must decode the mystery of the Soul. We must not believe that we *have* a Soul as is most commonly thought but rather realize that we *are* the Soul. The moment we realize this truth that we are not this body that is constantly changing, nor are we the mind that seems to have a subtle existence, we will evolve in our life journey. It is when we realize that we are the Divine Soul, that we will truly learn to live life. This realization is not easy. But reading this book may open the door to such enlightenment. If we don't overcome our ignorance and realize that we are the Divine Soul, we will continue to live as a physical body and a subtle mind, and will continue to suffer as the ego. We must go on a quest of the truth to realize who we are and why we are here. This will help us discover how to live life.

Because the Soul is such a mysterious subject, people believe in the mummifying of bodies and perform all kinds of rituals after death, believing that the Soul is present as a ghost. The mysteries of the Soul have created so much confusion that what the Soul is and what its real power is, elude us. The Soul is God, but those who read this will

never understand this. We have to realize this truth by overcoming ignorance. When we proceed on this journey as the Life Manual unfolds, we will hopefully reach a point of our spiritual 'aha' and see the light of truth. Then, we will realize the Soul as the God power within.

IN A NUTSHELL

- While we think we *have* a Soul, the truth is that we *are* the Divine Soul.
- Because of ignorance, we do not realize the truth and we believe in all the mysteries associated with the Soul.
- The Soul in you and the Soul in me is not different. It is one power.
- We think that the Soul becomes a ghost and goes to heaven or hell.
- We also believe that there are 'good' Souls and 'bad' Souls.
- Little do we realize that the Soul is the very power that causes us to live from birth to death.
- When we realize the truth about the Soul, we will discover the secret of how to live life.

Chapter 05

There is No Warranty

*You may get a warranty for your car,
And with insurance, be reckless and drive far...
But there is no warranty for life,
Anybody can go first, husband or wife!*

One may take insurance for their life, but the fact is that life has no warranty. Nobody can guarantee life. You may get a one-year warranty for your washing machine or a three-year warranty for your car, but life has no warranty. It can't be replaced by anybody on earth. Birth and death are not in our hands. When, how, and to whom we are born is not in our control, just as death is in the hands of the Divine. There is no guarantee that I will finish writing this book. The warranty for life is only for the present moment. Therefore, we must learn to live life in the 'now', moment by moment.

Most of us live taking life for granted, believing that we too will live at least for 70 years which is the average life expectancy. But is there any guarantee? Some people die even before they can walk. Some meet with fatal accidents in their teens. Then there are others who are afflicted by some terminal disease and they die even before they are 25. While most people go on to live, some have an extended life span. They even live till they are 100. Of course, there is no assurance that our life will be healthy and happy but human life has been so designed that we can live for about 70-80 years on an average. Turtles live for over 120 years, whereas dogs don't even live till they are 13. Golden eagles live for 30 years and elephants may live up to 70 years. It is said that some trees live for 5,000 years. Only the Creator

knows why our life span is what it is.

Who decides all this? Who is the Creator of life on earth who decided how long human beings must live? Who has designed all the beautiful butterflies, the gorgeous flamingos and playful dolphins and penguins that exist in different parts of the world? The Creator is most powerful, and the power exists all around us. Unfortunately, we are blind. We don't see the power of the Creator in all His creations, His manifestations.

Creation is unique and therefore, if we really want to live our life with peace, joy and bliss, we must learn to live our life moment by moment. Our mind makes us swing to the past which is gone and then makes us jump into a future not yet born. Alas, we lose the present moment called 'Life'! The 'now' is so precious that people call it 'the present'. Instead of making the best of our life moment by moment, we lose it to our regrets and our fears and before we realize it, it is over.

While there is no warranty for life, life also has no rewind button. Unlike an exciting moment in sports on television or a beautiful song on YouTube, that can be replayed, life cannot be revisited. Therefore, many people in this world do not live life the way they should, and thus they end up regretting their past, 'If only I had my life to live all over again, I would learn to play the guitar, I would play more sports, climb more mountains, watch more sunsets.' Unfortunately, nobody can go back and relive their life. A life that has passed is like a river that can't go back on its path.

Therefore, it becomes so important to read the Manual of

Life, to understand what life is all about, and to live it. Some people see life escaping them and they regret but then it is too late! Nobody in this world, neither the richest man on earth nor the most powerful man in the world can rewind even one moment of life. Still, although we know that life has no warranty, nor can it be replayed, we waste this beautiful gift called 'Life'.

We don't prepare for the end, which may come anytime. We live with ignorance, without even realizing what life is all about. We don't know who we are and why we are here. We just live, we exist, and we die. Very few people even bother to open the Life Manual. But those who do, discover how life must be lived and live it. They are the ones who are truly happy.

It's strange that people are very busy insuring their life. They are preparing to give away what belongs to them to their near and dear ones. It is funny that they don't spend as much time preparing to live as they do planning their legacy. What we don't realize is that we cannot control what will happen after we die. Once we are dead, we will not carry a remote-control button to manage what happens on earth. All we can do is to live well before we die. We should have no expectations of what will happen once we are gone. There is no guarantee that people will respect our wishes, our preferences and our directions after our death. If they do, we will be lucky. If you look around, you will find, as is popularly said, 'People are dead and gone!' Therefore, it is time to stop and realize that we must learn to live before it's too late. Let us learn to do what we want to do before this journey of life comes to an end, which it will—sooner or later.

Death is certain. The one thing that has a guarantee, is death. Nobody can escape it. And while there is no warranty for life, we should always be prepared for death, which is a certainty and which could be just around the corner. This does not mean we have to constantly worry about death, but we must be prepared for it even if it comes today, for there is no assurance when it will come.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life has no warranty. Nobody can guarantee life.
- We may take an insurance cover for our life, but this does not guarantee how long we will live.
- A human being is expected to live for 70 to 100 years, while dogs are expected to live for 10 to 13 years and some trees for over 5,000 years.
- The Creator is unique and has created this unique world.
- But the Creator has not permitted us to rewind life. Nobody can replay life. Therefore, we must learn to live each moment with joy.
- Death is certain. It is guaranteed. It can come at any moment.

Chapter 06

Who doesn't want to be Happy?

*The whole world is seeking happiness,
We all want to be glad.
But in this chase for pleasure,
Most of us go mad.*

Everybody wants to be happy, but not everybody is. We live life like a merry-go-round as we pass happiness and sorrow in cycles. Just like there is loss and gain, there is pleasure and pain.

Man hasn't understood the meaning of true happiness. Therefore, he constantly desires pleasure. Happiness is not a product that we can acquire. It is not a person that we can live with, nor is it a place we can go to. Happiness is a state of being. Therefore, the moment we say, 'I want happiness', we fail to be happy. Desire ultimately leads to disappointment. As we fulfil our need, our greed takes over and thus we are never happy.

Is there a way to happiness? Is there a recipe to be happy? Yes! If we take an exit from the highway of achievement, there is a possibility for us to be happy. As long as we believe that it is only achievement that will give us joy, we will live and die with this illusion, without being truly happy. Those who stop climbing this illusory peak of achievement that is based on pleasure, attain a state of peace.

Peace is the foundation of happiness. Pleasures are a paradox. They may make us happy for a while, but soon,

we are thirsty again. Once we start to live a life of contentment and fulfilment, we will experience far more bliss and joy.

Most people are looking for happiness. They shuttle between yesterday and tomorrow and live with regret and fear. They don't realize that happiness is in the NOW. You can't be happy in the 'yesterday' that is gone nor can you be happy in the 'tomorrow' not yet born. Instead of being blissful and peaceful in the present moment, NOW, we lose this moment by either living in the past or the future, and then once again, we start chasing happiness.

Happiness is like a shadow. The more you chase it, the further it goes away. But if you stop, you will find happiness is with you wherever you are. As we go through the Life Manual, analyzing who we are and understanding life, we will discover a way to live a happier, healthier and wealthier life. But we must read the Manual and follow its operating instructions. Otherwise, like some of our gadgets with which we experiment without following the complete procedure, our life too shall experience a short circuit.

There is nothing wrong in seeking happiness. But there is a way to be happy. Most of us don't realize that we have happiness within us, but we are searching for it outside. We live and die like that musk deer who is searching for the fragrance of the musk that is inside its own navel all along. Ultimately, it falls off the cliff and dies. Unfortunately, many of us in the pursuit of happiness live and die without truly experiencing *Ananda* or bliss.

We all experience suffering and this interferes with our happiness. We experience physical pain of the body, misery of the mind, and agony of the ego. Those who go in

quest of the ultimate peak of happiness are enlightened with the truth. They experience Divine bliss that is far beyond happiness that comes from pleasure and peace. They discover the true meaning of life and with that, live a life of eternal peace and everlasting bliss as they escape from the triple suffering of body, mind and ego.

It seems like the whole world just has one goal – to be happy. While different people dream of different goals to be achieved, nobody wants any achievement that will make them miserable. The ultimate purpose of all achievement is happiness. But no sooner do we achieve one goal than we jump into chasing another. We keep happiness for a later date. Before we realize it, our life is over. First, we want wealth and we run behind it. Once we achieve wealth, we spend the rest of our life and our wealth to take care of our health. We forget to discover true happiness and to live.

Do you want to live a life of bliss, peace, and joy? Then stop and understand the meaning of life. Realize who you truly are and what your purpose on earth is. Don't just jump into life as if it were a swimming pool and you keep swimming till you hear the whistle blow. We are 'human beings', not 'human doings' and unless we realize this, we will keep on doing without being happy. There is a way to enjoy pleasure, to live with peace, and to find purpose in life. Once we do, we will arrive at a state of *Satchitananda*, a state of eternal bliss that knows no sorrow. We will become conscious of happiness every moment that we live.

But this is not for everybody. It is only for those who realize the truth about life. They are the blessed few who stop seeking happiness. They are the ones who live in an ocean of joy, conscious of their Divine self. They seek nothing, but

they are the happiest people in the world. You too can be one amongst them.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Everybody wants to be happy, but not everyone is.
- Most people are chasing success and achievement because they think that wealth and pleasure will make them happy.
- Few people are lucky to take an exit from the highway of achievement to live a life of contentment and fulfilment.
- While happiness comes from pleasure and peace, ultimate happiness is when we discover our life's true purpose.
- There is a way to eternal happiness and everlasting joy – a state that knows no sorrow.
- Very few people understand life and live moment by moment being conscious of the happiness that is within. They are the truly happy ones.
- They live a life of *Satchitananda*, being conscious of the truth and their life is full of bliss.

Chapter 07

Everybody has Problems

*Problems are guidelines,
Problems are not stop-signs.
If only we learn how to deal with problems,
Our life can be full of smiles.*

How does one traverse through life with so many problems? Whether or not there is rainfall, there is always a shower of problems in life. Everybody has problems. It is not unique for you and me. A problem-free life is an illusion. It is like a mirage in the desert. It doesn't exist.

How does one deal with problems? How do you live life when there are so many problems? *Maya had a good job. But her husband made her quit because he wanted her to take care of their child. Thereafter, every day he would insult her and accuse her of being useless. There was a constant fight. Because they lived in a small house, their child would hear his parents arguing and fighting all the time. Soon, another problem followed. Her husband quit his job and forced Maya to go back to work so that the family could survive. By now, Maya was so frustrated doing all the household chores and being insulted by her husband that she was eager to get back to work and start her new career. But problems never stop, do they? They keep knocking at the door. It was only a matter of time before her husband found another job and once again, he asked her to quit and take care of the house and the child. She refused, and the problems only magnified.*

Maya's life is not a rare example of modern-day full-of-problems life. Those who don't have problems with money or their better halves, have issues with their in-laws or their health. It seems like life is a journey of problems and our

primary focus each day is to solve the problems of life.

But those who learn how to live life, learn how to deal with problems. They realize that just because we have problems, it does not mean we should not be happy. They learn to put their problems in a proper perspective as they view life with the paradigm that problems are like zooming trains. While they come, they don't stay. They go away! Yes, there are people who have learnt to deal with life and its problems, without problems defeating them. They face their problems with courage and confidence and more often than not, defeat their problems and live blissfully.

Then, there are those people who know how to live without creating problems. They identify the cause of their problems and avoid creating new problems. *Raj knew that if he questioned his wife on her expenses, there would be a problem. They would argue and fight. He had learnt to avoid all such discussions.* Many of us aggravate our problems. Not only do we suffer a cut on our hand, but we also scratch it till it festers and becomes a bigger wound. But is life all about problems? Have we come to planet earth just to face problems, to live and die resolving them? It starts with problems in school and gets only more complicated as we get into college. Then further on, there are financial problems and family issues. Once we grow older, poor health is added to the list. Life is consumed with dealing with problems and solving them. But that is not the case with one who understands life and learns to live it.

The wise ones don't get paranoid with problems. They understand that problems will come, and problems will go. This life is just a show. Therefore, they anticipate problems,

they welcome them, and they deal with problems with a game-playing attitude. They laugh at their problems and look at each problem in its micro-size. They don't let the wolf look bigger than it is. They learn to say, '*For every problem under the sun, there is a remedy or there is none. If there is one, try to find it. If there is none, never mind it!*'

While such people are the ones who don't get overly hassled by problems, there are people who don't get affected by problems at all! They realize the true meaning of life. They understand that problems are challenges and whatever happens in our life, is not happening by chance or luck. It is our own past actions or Karma, the fruit of our past deeds, which is unfolding as problems. Thus, they deal with issues of life without being overburdened or defeated. They put on a positive coat and fight life's battles in the best way they can. They realize that problems have a limited life span.

These people realize the truth about life. They realize that nothing is real. Everything is like a dream. Even though we are awake, and it seems that whatever is happening in our life is real and the problems are not imaginary, they realize that nothing lasts forever. This drama of life will come to end and so will our problems.

We must live life as observers of a big drama that is unfolding on the earth-stage. While we are actors and we must do our part and face the challenges of life, we must come to the realization that soon the show will be over. Thus we should live as the audience and enjoy the drama called 'Life'. We should view both comedy and tragedy as an exciting part of the drama of life.

Those who read the Life Manual, learn the art of managing problems. They learn the uselessness of worrying about problems. Why? Because if there is no problem, then there's no need to worry. But even if there is a problem, there is still no need to worry. For when there's a problem, there are only two options: one, we can do something about it. If so, then, why worry about it? And two, if we can't do anything about it, then why should we worry? Therefore, they realize that it is useless to worry. Whether there are problems or not, life must go on. They are the ones who truly live life!

IN A NUTSHELL

- A problem-free life is an illusion. It does not exist.
- Problems are guidelines, not stop signs.
- Those who realize the truth about problems, face them courageously.
- Problems have a limited life span. They don't last forever.
- The wise understand that problems are our own Karma or past actions returning to us.
- They welcome problems and deal with their issues without being defeated.
- Those who realize that life is a drama, live with bliss and joy despite their problems. They know this just a show, we come and we go.

Chapter 08

Time Keeps Ticking

*Time in a clock,
May come to a stop,
But only Death is capable of
Stopping a heart's throb.*

We think that time is something we can't stop; it keeps ticking. But have we stopped to understand the meaning of time? Time is just a measure, the difference between then and now. When this moment becomes the next moment, a second has passed. Some people may watch time passing by the breath, whereas others have created a more scientific method of seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years. Of course, it doesn't stop there! We have also created pentads, decades and centuries.

But what is time in reality? Time is life. If the entire world were to die, then everything would come to a standstill. Time records the birth and death of generations and makes it easy to understand history.

But stop for a moment and contemplate – is time actually ticking? The earth rotates on its own axis once in 24 hours. Each hour is broken down into 60 minutes, each minute into 60 seconds. Ancient civilizations created the week, a period of 7 days so that we could go to our God at least once in 7 days. For Christians, that day is – Sunday and Hindus go to different Gods on different days. How then did the month come about? The month came about looking at the moon and its journey from a new moon to a full moon. Twelve months fitted into a year; the time taken for the

earth to finish one cycle around the sun.

Most of us don't realize that this is all what time is. It is just a measure to monitor moments as they pass, moments that grow from minutes to years.

What is important in all this is that our life is passing. That is the only thing that we must take away from the ticking of time. Every time the pendulum swings, one moment of our life has lapsed. Every time we take a breath, we are closer to destination death.

Just like most people don't understand what time is and will not bother to discover what all this is, a majority of humanity is indifferent towards what life is. Their time on planet earth just passes away and they don't discover how to live life.

Can we stop time from ticking? Can we pause life? We can't! Even when we sleep, time is ticking, the earth is rotating and revolving as we are breathing or are sound asleep. But ultimately one day arrives when the breath stops. That day is our final day. The moment we are dead, our life on planet earth is over. But time keeps ticking for the rest of the world. The Drama called 'Life' goes on. We are like actors, we come on the earth stage, do our part and go. Nobody can escape death; it is certain. Just like we cannot control the moment we were born, this too is beyond our control.

But who controls all this? Who controls our time and life on earth? Who decides our death and our birth? Who has created the universe with so much precision that scientific

clocks match up to Divine laws that cause the earth's rotation and revolution?

We human beings are so lost that we have no time to stop, to think, and to contemplate. We are so busy buying our Rolex watches to see the time, that we forget to realize that time and life will soon be over. Instead of discovering who we truly are and why we are here, instead of finding out our true purpose, we kill time till life is over! We are so zapped by this world of attractions and we are so lost in the wanderings of our mind, that our ego doesn't realize that we are nothing. We come with nothing and we will go with nothing. We live and die in this ignorance, without realizing the truth.

When will we stop and watch the clock tick? When will we value the 60 seconds in a minute? When will we spend a few minutes in silence? When will we take charge of the 1440 minutes we are gifted with each day and the 168 hours we are blessed with each week? When will we stop in the moment to be conscious of our breath, to watch our monkey mind jump?

The moment we are able to be still, we have conquered time and life. We have discovered the secret and started our journey of true consciousness that will lead to ultimate bliss and joy.

Don't let time pass without meaning and purpose. Time is life and life is our biggest gift. We are conscious of time, but plants and animals, most probably, just exist without understanding what all this means. Only human beings are blessed with an intellect. We can learn to make the best use

of our life. Before our journey of life comes to an end, let us read the Life Manual and learn how to live life. Otherwise, it will just escape us. There is a way that we must spend our time and if we do so, we will realize that we are the Divine Soul and achieve our ultimate goal and purpose of life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- What is time? Time is just a measure between one moment and another.
- Seconds, minutes, hours, weeks, months, and years take us through, from birth to death.
- We are gifted with this human life and we must make the best of each moment.
- We are blessed with an intellect so that we use time and not waste it.
- Before our time is over, we must realize the truth of who we are and why we are here.
- The clock can constantly remind us to stop, to think, and to introspect.
- It can make us conscious of our true self and teach us how to live.

Chapter 09

Starting the Day

*There is a way,
To start the day.
But most of us, just jump into it,
And before we realize, it is time to exit.*

Each day is precious, and the most important thing, if we really want to learn how to live life, is to understand how we must start each day. Technically, the day starts at midnight when the clock declares that the date has changed. But we have not even started our day. In fact, many of us have not even ended the previous one.

Our real day starts when we wake up in the morning. What do most of us do once we wake up? We jump into the day. We give over the day to our mind and we lose the day! The mind picks up all the chaos that we went to sleep with and starts bombarding us with thoughts. We visit something that happened the previous day, which may have a connection with our past. Then we jump into something that we have to do today and the many things that face us. We don't realize that we have already lost the day! We have given over the day to our mind and lost control of it.

But there is a way to take charge of each day. As the day starts, we can be conscious of the beginning of a wonderful new day. The best way to start the day is to start it with the sunrise. The fresh air of the morning skies and the chirping of the birds make us realize that a new life has bloomed. The light of the sun takes away all the darkness of doubt and despair that may have appeared the previous day.

Very few people are blessed to start each day with the sunrise. Is there any other better way to start the day than this?

To be able to steal a few hours or even minutes before dawn can be a priceless gift, a time where the whole world is asleep and all we can hear is the whistling of the breeze and the swaying of the trees. The sky reveals that the day will soon break, but one must sit in complete silence and be conscious of who we truly are. One must not let the mind start its monkey business. We must be still, aware and conscious of the Divine surroundings.

Most of us miss the early day and we just jump into the day either with a late start or a stressed-out mind. To add fuel to the fire, we bury our heads in the morning newspaper or glue our eyes to the breakfast television show where we drink in all the misery of the world. We watch how some people died, how someone was murdered, and all the other evils that unfold on the news. Then we read about how the stock market went up and down. We are attracted to products advertised that trigger desire in our senses and even before the day can start, we are lost in it.

What next? Then, we zoom through the day. Some of us are so busy that there is no time at all, while others are bored to death because they have nothing to do. We mostly fall into one of these two categories. But both kinds of people miss enjoying the gift of each day.

If only we become conscious of the day and what our purpose is for the next 24 hours, we would look forward to an exciting and fulfilling day. If only there was a purpose,

then we would enjoy every moment of each day. There are some of us who are achievers and we start the day with excitement, looking forward to the day's success. But we don't realize that the way we are starting the day, will ultimately get us to a dead end. We may think that success and achievement is all that each day must create, but we have never stopped to realize what true success is all about.

We human beings have become like machines. Although we are 'human beings', we live as 'human doings', constantly doing things that start when the day is born. It's time to change our life and start each day in a new way. It is time to realize that every time we sleep, we wake up not just with the gift of a new day, but a new life. We mustn't just jump into the day, finish it, and consume it. We must catch hold of each day and try to discover life. We must use the day to make the best of this journey called 'Life'.

The next time you start a day, don't just jump into it. Stop! Become conscious of your surroundings. Look up at the skies, ponder about all the beauty that is around you, become conscious of your own heartbeat and your life. As you count your blessings, be still and contemplate – Who are you, why are you here? What is the purpose of your life and your day? Is this day just going to be another day that will pass away? We have a choice. We can start and finish each day, day after day, and before we even know it, life will be over.

The way to start living is to learn how to start each day. If we can become aware of a day, then we will become conscious of life itself. We will not let our mind jump into the day, even before our body does. We will shut it down as

we live with awareness and consciousness about the day that is about to begin. If only we can learn how to start a day and live it, we can discover how to live life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- If we really want to learn how to live life, we must learn how to live each day.
- To live each day meaningfully, we must not just jump into it.
- When we start the day, we must be conscious as a new day, a new life begins.
- If we just rush into the day, it will be over and so will life.
- The best way to start the day is to wake up before dawn and spend time being conscious of our Divine surroundings.
- Those who miss starting the day with a sunrise, don't just lose the day, they lose life itself.

Chapter 10

Living Moment by Moment

***Life is all about Moments,
It's Moments that create the hour and the day.
Those who lose a Moment,
Lose life itself, they say!***

What is life? It is the period between birth and death. But can we live our entire life in one shot? People say, 'You can't eat an elephant in one bite. The only way to eat it is one bite at a time.' So it is with life!

If we stop to analyze life – what is it? It is made up of years, years that are broken down into months, weeks, and days. Each day has 1440 minutes that form the 24 hours. Each minute has 60 seconds. Before we even realize it, the second is gone! We can't stop the second from passing, but we can be in the moment. We can be in the 'now'. When we live moment by moment, life seems to stop for us to live. The clock's ticking doesn't matter as we become conscious of our life moment by moment.

What are you doing now? Chances are that whatever you are doing, your mind is not still. Like a monkey, it's jumping from thought to thought. It is the mind that stops us from living in the 'now'. Because it jumps here and there, we lose the moment – in fact, many moments. We lose life itself!

How does one live life moment by moment? By letting go and by surrendering to each moment as it unfolds. Can we control everything that is happening around us? We can't!

Then what is the point worrying about it?

Those who live moment by moment, accept and surrender to the Divine will. They don't constantly fight with everything that unfolds. They realize that whatever is happening, is unfolding as per a Divine law. While they cannot change the circumstances around them, they can change what is happening within them. Thus, they take charge of their life moment by moment. They try to enjoy the 'now', rather than living by regretting the past and worrying about the future. They realize that they can't go back to yesterday, nor can they live in 'tomorrow'. 'Tomorrow' never comes! They realize it can come only as 'today.' Even 'today' cannot appear as a chunk of 24 hours. 'Today' can unfold moment by moment. Those who live their life with hope and wonder are not as happy as those who accept and surrender. Thus, the ones who live moment by moment believe in the philosophy – Accept, don't wonder! Replace hope with Surrender.

What happens when you keep on hoping? You create expectations and more often than not, these expectations are not met. Consequently, we become disappointed and instead of enjoying the moment, we mourn our disappointments.

Somebody very aptly called this moment as the 'present'. It is a gift to us. If we don't use it, we lose it. It is up to us to make the best use of the present because if we don't, it will soon become the past that will be gone forever. However, if we grab hold of the present, and live it moment by moment, each moment will be a gift to treasure and to be happy.

Not everybody lives life blissfully. They may live moment

by moment, but they may fill each moment with regret and misery. They may fill their moments with fear, worry, hatred, anger, and revenge. This is not living life moment by moment, rather it is destroying life by the moment. To truly live life in the present, we must develop the art of being happy in the 'now'.

Everybody wants to be happy, but not everybody learns how to be happy. Happiness is not about getting pleasure or joy. It is experiencing a state of peace and bliss and it is only possible to be happy in the 'now'. You can't be happy in the past, nor can you try to be happy in the future because neither the past nor the future exist. The only thing that exists is 'now'. Those who develop the art of being happy, do not lose even a moment in misery and sorrow. They make it a resolve to be happy as every moment unfolds in their life. Then, this becomes a habit – to be happy, moment by moment. There are others who lose the opportunity of these joyous moments. Unfortunately, they don't realize that they are not losing a moment of happiness. They are losing life itself.

Resolve to live in the 'now'. Resolve to live blissfully, moment by moment. Don't transact your moments for anything else because your moments are your most priceless possessions. I know people who yearn to go to the turquoise beaches in the Maldives. Once they are there, they become lost in their laptop, their mobile phones, and social media. Then soon they are back home, only to regret that they lost those beautiful moments on the white sand beaches. They missed some Divine sunrises and sunsets because they were busy planning a party at night and waking up late the next morning. They forgot to live life in the moment!

Every moment has its own purpose. Let us live fully in that moment. Let us give our moment all our life without diluting it. Let us enjoy and savour each moment fully, extracting the most of every moment of life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life is made up of moments. But most of us don't realize this and lose this precious gift called 'Life'.
- Instead of living in the present moment, we jump to a past that is gone and a future not yet born.
- The moment is priceless. That is why it is called the 'present'. It is a gift.
- Our challenge is not just to live moment by moment, but to be happy.
- Those who develop the habit of being happy in the 'now', truly live life.
- There are some who put off living for a future moment. Not only do they lose the moment, but they also lose life itself.

Chapter 11

How to get Peace of Mind?

*People spend their entire life,
Peace of mind to find.
Alas! They don't realize the truth...
The thief is their own Mind.*

We human beings are searching for peace of mind, but it is the mind itself that steals our peace. By constantly producing thoughts, the mind is creating stress, worry, and anxiety. In fact, in the beginning, we are very peaceful. Recall those days when you were a child. You had all the peace of mind that you could dream of. Then what happened? Then came alive the rascal mind and stole your peace away. It produced so many thoughts that eventually, your peace broke into pieces!

We all want peace of mind. Then, why do we lose our peace? What causes turbulence in our still life? We human beings are designed in a manner that we have 5 senses. Our eyes, nose, ears, tongue, and skin are constantly sensing and triggering thoughts. Each sense creates ripples in our still life. It creates desires and may also cause jealousy or other negative emotions like anger to erupt. What do these negative emotions do? They rob our peace of mind. How do we control our senses? We must learn to tame them. We must learn to discipline our senses so that they can help us live a happier life, rather than cause stress, worry and anxiety. There will be times when we are able to tame our senses, but the monkey mind will not sit still. It will still create ripples of thought that will disturb our peace and tranquillity. Somehow, we grow up believing that it is these

desires of the body and mind that will make us achieve happiness. We don't realize that we were already in a state of peace and bliss. When the body and mind create ripples of excitement, we disturb our peace, the very foundation of our happiness.

Sometimes we fulfil our desires and feel a sense of achievement and the peace returns. But that peace was already there. We had momentarily lost it, creating ripples of desire, excitement, and achievement. After all that, we only returned to our original state of *Ananda*, Divine peace that we were already experiencing before.

It is our foolishness to lose our peace of mind and crave and desire. We are ignorant about the truth that peace is the foundation of happiness. *Where there is no peace, there can be no joy and bliss.* Therefore, creating turbulence in our life for achievements only makes us go round and round in circles where we first lose our peace of mind and then restore it.

Those who are blessed to understand the importance of peace as the very foundation of happiness, do not become slaves to their desires. Unlike those who crave till their grave, they don't let their need become their greed. They try to create peace in their mind as they discipline their senses and faculty of thought. How do they do it?

The mind is constantly producing thoughts. These aggressive thoughts create a lot of anxiety which steals our peace. It is like throwing several rocks on a still lake and creating many ripples that disturb the calmness that prevailed. Unless we stop this agitation in the mind, we will never be able to create the stillness that is needed to be peaceful.

To attain Peace of mind is not difficult, if only we realize the truth about how we can achieve that state. If we program our life and live it with contentment and fulfilment, we will largely be peaceful. If we realize that life is not a race, for us to chase and be an ace, then we can live with grace, with peace and tranquillity. It is not impossible to live a peaceful life. But this is only possible if we make the 'monkey' mind into a 'monk'.

The moment the mind stops jumping like a monkey from thought to thought, creating ripples that destroy our peace, we can regain our tranquility. If we make the monkey into a monk by silencing the mind, by reducing this constant thinking, rather than worrying, craving, hoping, and desiring, we can reach that point of stillness where we will experience Divine peace. It is for us to realize that it is the mind that robs our peace.

Today, the whole world is talking about meditation. They believe it is some magical way of attaining peace and tranquillity. What they don't realize is that true meditation is not about sitting in some fancy posture and doing some exercises of the body and mind. True meditation is making the mind still, using any method that can calm the mind. It doesn't matter how we bring the mind to a halt. What matters is to stop the aggression, and this is what true meditation does. Those who succeed in meditation attain a state of peace and tranquillity. They contemplate a thought and experience bliss that comes from being conscious of their Divinity within. While it seems easy, the problem is that most of us do not know what peace of mind truly is and how we can attain that state of blissful tranquillity.

How does one attain peace of mind? One must become

conscious of the truth. We human beings live in ignorance, and because of this, we lose our peace and tranquility. We believe in the myth and this hides the truth. This is the main cause for the mind to be agitated. If we want to overcome the agitation of the mind, we must evolve into that state of consciousness where we become the witness, the observer, and we watch the mind jump from thought to thought. This is consciousness and this is guaranteed to give us peace.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We all seek peace of mind, but most of us live stressful lives.
- We don't realize it is the mind that robs our peace.
- Our senses are constantly triggering the mind as they crave.
- The mind is like a monkey, constantly jumping from thought to thought.
- If we want peace of mind, we must make the monkey mind into a monk by silencing it.
- Today most people use meditation to calm the mind. However, true meditation is not about a fancy body and mind exercise.
- If we can still the mind, we can find peace and tranquillity.

Chapter 12

Life is like a Dream

*Dreams are not real;
They are the mischief of the mind.
For when we wake up from a Dream
It was just an illusion, we find.*

We human beings are intelligent, and we understand the difference between being awake and dreaming. We know that when we are awake, our body and mind are both conscious. We walk, we talk, we scream, we shout, and we go about with our usual duties and responsibilities in life. But after all this, the body needs rest and restoration. It needs to be re-energized and so the Creator has designed that we fall asleep. When we fall asleep, we lose consciousness of what is happening around us. Earlier the eyes could see, the ears could hear, and the skin could touch and feel. But when we sleep, our senses stop perceiving unless provoked and we wake up. But we are still alive. After we sleep, we wake up.

While asleep, we are unconscious but our subconscious mechanism continues to work and makes us breathe. Our body goes to sleep, but our mind doesn't. It wanders into distant lands, even into the unknown with dreams. We experience images, ideas, emotions, and sensations in a dream which may seem very real. Dreams happen when we are asleep, and when we wake up, they dissolve into nothingness. We may have a couple of dreams every night and dreams may last for a few seconds or even up to 20 or 30 minutes.

But dreams are dreams. They are not real, unlike what

happens when we are awake. Suppose I borrow one million dollars from you today. After we sleep and wake up, does the loan remain, or it disappears? 'Of course, it remains,' you will say. You have taken my signature and have documented the transaction, and I cannot escape it. You will hound me till you collect both principal and interest of the loan. But suppose I borrowed one million dollars from you in your dream when you were fast asleep. When you wake up and realize that it was just a dream, will you still approach me to return the one million dollars I borrowed from you in your dream? Ridiculous! You wouldn't even try. You clearly understand that this was just a dream and in reality, I had not borrowed the money that you had dreamt of.

While we human beings clearly understand the difference between the 'waking state' and the 'dreaming state', we don't really learn how to live life because we don't realize that even the waking state is like a dream. Thus, we suffer. To truly live, we must realize the truth – life is like a dream.

How can life be considered a dream? Let's analyze. A dream is not real. It is just an imagination, a projection of thoughts, be it a fantasy or a nightmare. When we wake up, the dream dissolves. But life is different. While the dream gets over in the sleep during the night, our life doesn't get over every time we go to sleep. In the dream, I might have married a princess, but when I wake up, the princess is gone! However, if I married the princess when I was awake, the princess will be there when I get up from sleep. There is continuity in life, day after day, unlike in a dream. The dream is not real, it appears and disappears. But while we clearly understand that the dream is an illusion, we firmly believe that life is real.

When we were born, what did we bring with us and when death occurs, what will we take with us? At birth, we are born into a family and we build relationships. But at death, all relationships come to an end. Life too is like one big dream. The only difference in the life dream is that it starts when we are born, and it ends when we die. But because we don't realize that life is but a dream, we scream, we shout, we fight, thinking everything is real, when in reality, it is not.

If we contemplate, we will come to the realization that just like a dream, life too is nothing but projections that seem to be real. Finally, there is no doubt that life will end just as a dream ends. Our journey on planet earth will dissolve into nothingness just like a dream does. Then, why do we take life so seriously?

Because we don't realize the truth that life is no more than a dream, we get possessive about people and possessions. The ego builds its identity remaining ignorant of the truth. We are quite intelligent when it comes to dreams and we realize that dreams are just dreams. However, we are ignorant that even life is a dream. The moment we realize this truth, we will discover how to live life.

While it sounds very simple, most of us continue to live in ignorance throughout our lives. We think dreams are not real, but we think life is real, it's not a dream! Because we live and die in this cosmic illusion, we suffer. We become miserable because we misunderstand the true meaning of life. We know the truth beyond doubt that death is certain, and everything will dissolve like a dream. But we are unable to realize this truth and accept it.

Because we don't realize that life too is like a dream, we take life too seriously. We account for every penny and we bargain. We cheat. We fight. All because we think, 'This is my business, my money, my family,' when in reality, nothing is ours. The moment we realize life is like a dream, we will transcend the ego and we will discover true peace and bliss.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We think life is real and a dream is just a dream.
- What we experience when we are dreaming dissolves into nothingness.
- But what happens when we are awake continues day after day. It seems very real.
- However, the truth is that life is also a dream, a long dream that starts at birth and ends at death.
- Because we don't realize that life is just a dream, we suffer.
- As long as we do not realize this truth, we will not discover how to live life with peace and bliss.

Chapter 13

Nothing Belongs to Us

*We spend our entire life making money,
But to this truth we are blind...*

*We fight, we cheat, we do everything we can,
But ultimately, we will leave everything behind.*

Isn't it strange? We human beings think, 'This is my house, my car, my money, my bank account. Of course, this is my business, is there any doubt? This is my family.' Throughout life, we live with this myth that everything belongs to us. But ultimately, nothing will be ours. We will leave everything behind.

Is there any doubt about this? If there is, consider the death of the richest people in the world. What are they taking with them? Nothing! Although everything seems to belong to us, we take nothing with us when we depart. We spend our entire life collecting possessions and creating and building relationships with people which we will finally leave behind.

Dave was a millionaire. He spent his entire life chasing success. He moved from business to business, working 18 hours a day, 7 days a week. He had interest in real estate, hotels, the mining industry and he had just started a logistics business. He had a life coach who often advised him, 'Stop. Realize that ultimately, nothing will belong to you.' But Dave, like many of the millionaires and billionaires of the world, was blind to the truth. As he was discussing his new business with his mentor, the coach told him, 'This is my favourite Montblanc pen. Can your logistics business pack it and deliver it to me after I die?' Dave was so preoccupied with his money and success that he just took the package. Later in the

evening, he thought, 'How can our logistics company deliver this pen after his death? We can deliver it anywhere on earth but can't give it to him after he dies.' Dave was struck by a big realization. He stopped running after his business and started contemplating life. He asked himself several questions, 'What am I actually seeking? What do I really want in life?'

Most of us live life without realizing that ultimately nothing will belong to us. Life is like a game of monopoly. We may buy railroads and hotels, and collect all the money, but in the end, the game will be over, and we will put the monopoly board and the money back in the box and close it. So does it happen in life. The game of life will soon end, and the lid will close over our head. Everything that we collected throughout the life we lived, will all be left behind.

We may earn and earn, but the truth is others will burn what we earn once we die. Whatever belongs to us is only ours till we die. If we don't use it, we lose it. Therefore, the wise ones don't just live, earn, and die. They spend before their end and when they die, others cry for the kind of amazing life they lived.

Why is it that we all live our life without realizing this simple truth? Although the reality stares at us in our face, why do we continue living our life, believing everything to be ours? We make more money than we need as we are overtaken by greed. Not just one beautiful house, we buy several homes in several cities, and even several holiday homes. To secure ourselves, we have stocks, shares, bonds, and deposits in the bank. We are constantly accumulating wealth, be it in gold or diamonds. Why do we forget the simple truth that none of this belongs to us?

It seems that all of humanity is living in a trance. We are all enveloped by a myth that all this belongs to us. Thus, we cannot see the truth. In the bargain, we spend our entire life chasing money, success and wealth and we forget to live our life.

A rich man who recently died in a Hong Kong hospital told his trusted friend, 'If only I had spent my life spending my money, rather than just making it, I would have died a happier man.' The Hong Kong millionaire is not alone in his thoughts. Most people seem to live, but in reality, they just exist, and they die. They zoom from their womb to their tomb without realizing the truth that nothing belongs to them.

Isn't it time to wake up? Should we not realize that life is a short journey. We come without anything and when we go, we will go empty-handed. While we do need resources to live, why should we invest our entire life creating more and more resources which will be ultimately left behind? Those who realize this truth start living in the true sense.

The majority of humanity sees life escaping them as they continue in their treasure hunt, even though they have passed the ripe age of 70, or 80 or even 90. The wise ones, however, stop and go on a quest. They earn to fulfil their needs and they accomplish noteworthy success, but they live with the realization that nothing is theirs. Everything is like a loan given to them. It is a trust that must be handed over when their life journey comes to an end. Such people really live life. They are detached from their possessions and though they love people, they are not attached to them. Their paradigm of life doesn't view anything as theirs. They live happy and peaceful lives.

What about you? How are you living your life? Do you realize that nothing belongs to you? Or are you imprisoned by your ego that believes this is 'mine', and that is 'mine'? If that is the case, it is time to stop and make a U-turn.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life is a journey that will eventually end.
- We come with nothing and when we go, nothing will go with us.
- Unfortunately, most of us don't realize this truth. we spend our entire life making more money and chasing success.
- In the bargain, we forget to live life, and life escapes us.
- Why do we earn and earn, for others to burn what we earn?
- Because we live in ignorance, we just run and run till life is done.
- Very few people realize that nothing belongs to them. They live a life of detachment. They are the ones who have learnt how to live life.

Chapter 14

Living with Fulfilment and Contentment

*There is a way to live,
With Bliss and Fulfilment.
We will have Peace, Joy, and Bliss,
If we live with Contentment.*

Why is it that we human beings are unhappy? Throughout our life, we have desires, expectations and we want more and more. Somehow, we are never satisfied. First, we have a need and we work hard and fulfil our need. Then our needs increase. We don't realize, but the need becomes greed. We seek more and more, and, in the bargain, we see a few achievements, but many more disappointments.

There are a lot of people who think success and achievement give happiness. They think of life to be a peak and they must climb to the top. Therefore, though they fulfil their need, their greed, disguised as goals, dreams and passions, makes them continue climbing the peak of achievement. They move from success to success, but suddenly life is over. They never reach the top! In fact, there is no such peak. The peak of achievement is an illusion.

John was an achiever. Although he was rich and famous, he wasn't happy. He was stressed as he overworked himself to keep up with the image the world had of him. He enviously eyed those who lived blissfully with contentment and fulfilment and used to tell such friends that he too will get out of the rat race and would stop after he completed his current project. But he never did. Years passed, but John was caught in the maze to be an ace. One day, he died as a rich and famous but unhappy man.

Those who learn how to live life, take an exit from the highway of achievement. They realize that life is not a race. They stop the chase and switch over to a life of contentment. They have achieved enough for themselves and they learn the secret of not letting their need becoming their greed. They live a life of contentment and fulfilment. What is it to live a life of fulfilment?

Those who live a life of fulfilment are first of all, fully satisfied and content. Their thirst doesn't make them burst. They would rather enjoy a life of peace and bliss, than waste their life accumulating money and fame. Having achieved noteworthy success, they shift their focus in life from *making money to making a difference*. They touch, trigger and transform people's lives as they fill their life with positive emotions. They share love and laughter as they live with faith, hope and enthusiasm. Their inspiration is contagious. They don't consume their life pursuing their passions. Instead, they find a greater purpose and their life becomes more meaningful. They build a universal connection with the Divine as they live a life of liberation and freedom. They are the ones who truly live with tranquillity and peace. Their life is full of bliss and joy.

But such people are rare. A majority of humanity wants success and wealth. People trade their happiness for their dreams and goals. What would you choose? Would you like to live a life that is fuelled by your passion and consumed by your desires? Of course, you will experience excitement, but this would also be accompanied by stress, worry and anxiety. Most of us get carried away when we look at successful people, the rich and famous of the world and we wish we too could be like them. We don't realize the misery they carry on their heads; the challenges they face to

keep up with the expectations of the world. They are flogged by their own desires, and rarely enjoy peace and tranquillity. We have a choice. We too can climb that illusory peak of achievement or choose to live a life of contentment and fulfilment.

Life is a gift given to all of us, and we have an intellect to make choices. If we don't understand the true meaning of life, then we too will become like machines producing success. We will not have the time to experience life or enjoy it. Soon, before we realize it, life will be over.

It would be interesting to ask some rich and successful people what they would possibly change if they had their life to live over again. Most achievers would wish that they had spent more time doing the things they love. They would not regret that they did not work hard enough or that they should have achieved more. Now that they have reached the sunset of their life, they realize how they should have lived. We, who are still in the prime of our life, must not follow the herd. We must realize that there is more to life than success, achievement and money. While these will give pleasure and temporary happiness, they will not give eternal bliss that comes from contentment and fulfilment. Unfortunately, because we are driven by the mind and the ego, we too want to be one among the Forbes Fortune list. We too fall prey in the trap that was set for those who preceded us. Even if we are the best in that race, it's still a rat race and of what use is it to live and die like a rat?

It's time to stop and treasure this gift called 'Life'. We must discover how to live with bliss, joy and peace. We must enjoy our life before it escapes us, not consume it and then

regret that we did not live our life to its best.

It is far better to live a life of fulfilment and contentment than to be caught in the whirlpool of achievement, where we go round and round in circles, till finally, our life is over. When we live with fulfilment and contentment, we go beyond the ordinary pleasures of life and enjoy peace, the very foundation of happiness. It is time for us to stop running towards achievement and enjoy the bliss and peace that comes from fulfilment.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Most people live a life pursuing their passions and success.
- They think life is a peak called achievement, but they never reach the top.
- Some people realize this is an illusion and they take an exit on the highway of success.
- They switch to live a life of contentment and fulfilment.
- Instead of being controlled by their greed, they achieve noteworthy success and stop after they fulfil their need.
- Those who live with fulfilment, are not only content, they also live a life of peace and tranquillity; their life is full of love and laughter and positive emotions.
- They develop a universal connection and live with faith and inspiration, living a life that has meaning and purpose.

Chapter 15

There is a Way to Eternal Happiness

*The whole world is seeking Happiness,
We want Joy, Peace and Bliss.
But as long as we don't know how to Live Life,
This treasure we will Miss.*

There is a way to eternal happiness, a life of seamless joy and everlasting peace. Somehow, we human beings have got into living life like a merry-go-round. We keep going round and round in this journey called 'Life' as we pass day and night. We experience pleasure and pain, loss and gain, sun and rain, and we do this again and again. Before we realize it, life is over! We believe that this is life, that this is the way life is meant to be and so, we struggle through life. Not only do we struggle through this life, but our ignorance also makes us live as body and mind, that suffers physical pain and mental misery. As the ego is agonized and lives in anguish, we are trapped in a prison of misery.

Our ignorance makes us suffer as we believe that eternal happiness is just a dream. We think nobody can experience everlasting joy and peace. Just like every rose has a thorn, every pleasure must end in pain. Not only do we live through life experiencing suffering, but we also die without realizing the truth. Then, we are born again to suffer once more, and this never ends. The suffering goes on and on and we don't discover the way to eternal happiness.

What is the way to eternal happiness? What is eternal

happiness? It is that state of bliss and peace that is not interrupted by misery and suffering. It is like being at the North Pole on a mid-July night, with the sun never setting. There are 24 hours of sunlight. Is there a state where we can actually experience such everlasting joy? There is good news. There is a way to eternal happiness. We must learn this art before death makes us depart.

We all know the way to be happy, to live with pleasure, to experience bliss. But no sooner than we are enjoying life, that there are disappointments. Our desires, expectations and cravings are not fulfilled all the time and thus, our heart breaks. We cry as we lose that state of joy. So, is it enough to give up all desires? Will that give us everlasting happiness? While it will reduce our disappointments and misery, it will not give us eternal peace.

Some people think they have learnt the 'secret'. They stop chasing success and start living with fulfilment. They are fully satisfied and content. Do these people experience eternal happiness? While their life is peaceful and blissful, they are not insured against suffering and the world continues to throw sorrow at them.

As long as we live as a body that experiences physical pain, as a mind that becomes miserable and as an ego that screams and shouts in anger and anguish, we can never experience seamless happiness. Seamless happiness is only achieved when we realize who we are and why we are here. Then we are transported to a new state of consciousness.

What is this consciousness that guarantees eternal happiness? A rare few blessed people are graced with the realization of the truth that they are not the body, mind and

ego that suffers. They become conscious of their true self. They realize they are the Divine Soul. The Soul doesn't experience any suffering. It is a manifestation of the Divine, the very life that makes us walk and talk. While all other aspects of our life, both our gross body and the subtle body suffer, the Soul is devoid of all this as long as we live with Soul consciousness. The moment we are able to transcend the body and its senses, the mind and its wanderings, the ego and its passionate craving for its identity, we automatically experience a state of *Ananda*. Such a state makes one feel that they are floating in an ocean of happiness, where there is nothing else except happiness.

To reach such a state, one must be committed to the realization of the truth and one must develop a resolve to live life moment by moment being conscious of their true identity. As long as we live as the Divine Soul, not the body that we wear, as long as we are able to keep the monkey mind tamed as a monk, and as long as we realize we are not this – the body and mind, and we are That, the Divine Soul, we are blessed with eternal happiness and everlasting peace.

Do you want to achieve a state of *Ananda*? Then stop living a miserable life. Stop being fooled by sensual attractions that take you away from true happiness. Stop being a prisoner of the mind that makes you jump from the future to the past. Overcome the ignorance of the ego that only lives to make us suffer. Become conscious of our real Divinity, become an observer of this drama called 'Life'. View every comedy and tragedy with equanimity and you will be floating in *Ananda* as you live life moment by moment in joy and bliss, far away from the suffering of this world.

Remember, while there is a way to eternal happiness, there is a price we have to pay for it. We must transcend the ego and the mind, just as we must control the cravings of the senses of the body. This is the price to pay for eternal happiness but it is definitely possible. There is a way to transcend all suffering and to live a life of bliss, peace and joy. If we read the Life Manual and we learn how to live life, this will be one of our biggest gifts - eternal happiness.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Most people live a life that has joy and pain, sunshine and rain, loss and gain.
- We think life is such and there is no way to eternal happiness.
- But there is a way to seamless joy and eternal peace.
- If only we transcend the body, mind and ego, we can experience bliss as the Divine Soul.
- Those who live as the manifestation of the Divine, become conscious of their true self and are free from all miseries.
- If we live in Divine consciousness, we can experience eternal happiness.
- But if we lose the battle to the cravings of the body and the wandering of the mind, then we will live and die as the ego that suffers.

Chapter 16

We have a Choice

*Life is a wonderful gift ...
To the intelligent and to the wise.
They use the gift of the intellect,
And they make the right choice.*

If we don't use it, then we lose it. Life is such! We have the opportunity to choose. Nobody stops us from making a choice. But most of us don't use this gift of choice. Somehow, we believe that it is a gift only to a few that are wise. But the reality is, we are all given the intellect and we are all gifted with the tool of discrimination. Most of us live and die without even knowing we possess it.

Most people think they are doomed by what they call 'bad luck'. They look around and they curse. Their circumstances are hateful and they dread every moment of life. They don't realize that life has two critical aspects - one, our circumstances, which we cannot change. And two, the opportunity to make a choice. Let's delve into both. There seem to be some things in life that we can't change. We can't choose our date of birth, our place of birth or our parents and the nationality or religion we are born into. Whether we are male or female; white, black or brown - all these seem to be something we are gifted with, and we don't even understand why this has happened. Unlike common belief, this is not just luck, fate or serendipity. These circumstances are all part of the universal principles, the Universal Laws that prevail in the universe. There is no doubt that we can't change these naturally, but we have a choice to make a change.

Can we change our nationality? We can! If we want to change our religion, nobody can stop us. Time has come in the modern world that we can even change our gender. The fact is, we have a choice. Most things in life are open for us to choose – what we eat, drink, we wear, is all up to us. We can choose to educate ourselves the way we like. We can decide who should be our life partner. All this is a choice. But do we exercise it?

There will be many in this world who live and die like Tommy. *Tommy is my friend's dog. When I first went to meet my friend, I asked him, 'Why is Tommy groaning?' The dog continued its constant 'Grr....grrr..... grrr.....!' 'Oh, don't worry,' said my friend, 'Tommy is sitting on a nail.' 'Why does he not get up? Why is he groaning again and again?' I asked. My friend smiled and replied, 'Because it is not hurting that much.'* Many of us live through life groaning and moaning. We accept things as they are. We sit on the nail of life, although we have a choice to get up and to move.

We must not be like Tommy, moaning and groaning through life. We must not let anything stop us from making the right choice. Finally, there is only one entity that can stop us from choosing – we ourselves! We must realize that while there are things in life that we can't change, we can choose everything we do in life and this controls our happiness more than our circumstances. We can't control people's actions, but we can control our reactions because they are ours. If we react negatively and we suffer, we should not blame our circumstances.

Sometimes, we blame others. We believe that there are people who stop us from making a decision or there are limitations that do not let us make a choice. A few of us, are

under pressure, either from family or friends and that stops us from making that wise decision. Whatever be the reason, that is another choice – to let faces, fences, forces or farces stop us from our choice. Suppose we believe a farce, a myth and we continue to suffer, who is to blame?

If we truly want to make our life meaningful, we must awaken to the reality that life is a choice. Of course, we must also learn that whatever is unfolding as our circumstances is not luck but is returning to us as our Karma. Even Karma doesn't stop us from making a choice. A human being is the only gifted creature of all living organisms who has the free will to choose. We must develop this willpower to be stronger as we move forward in this journey called 'Life'.

Choices, not chances determine the destiny of our life. Don't blame luck. Remember, your life doesn't depend on luck. It depends on pluck! You can mourn as you wait for others to bring you roses or you can get up and pluck your own flowers. The choice is yours. If you really want to live life to its best, then activate your power of choice. Become conscious and aware of everything that you can choose. You must remember, however, that there are things you can't choose! You can't choose whether a tsunami, a typhoon or a hurricane will destroy you. But you can choose to take a flight to a safer destination.

There are two types of people in this world, one who choose and the others who lose. If you decide not to choose, then be prepared to lose this gift called 'Life'. Then things will happen to you and you will think that they were beyond your control, when in reality, it was your inaction that caused it.

Today, you have a choice. You have a Life Manual in your hands. It is telling you how to live life. It is up to you - you can decide to read it or you can just dump it - the choice is yours. It is a Manual that can give you bliss, joy and peace. It can help you overcome problems. But if you believe that it is just junk, then nothing can help you make the best of this gift called 'Life'. Remember, the choice is in your hands. Use it or lose it!

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life is a choice. If we don't choose, then we will lose this gift called 'Life'.
- We are blessed with an intellect that has the power to choose.
- Some people develop willpower and make wise choices.
- Others live and die as they blame luck. They forget to pluck.
- If you want to make the best of your life, then don't blame circumstances that you cannot change. But whatever you can, change it.
- Make the right choices because it is your choice that determines the destiny of your life.

Chapter 17

Material Life or a Spiritual Life?

*Material life or Spiritual life,
You have to choose one of the two.
Most people live a material life,
Spiritual bliss is a blessing for a few.*

Human beings are in essence material in nature. We believe, we are the body, mind and we have a Soul. We are driven by our material desires; our senses see something and seek it. We hear about a new mobile phone and we want it. We see the pictures of food and we crave for it, just as we smell a lovely fragrance and want to buy it. It is very common for a human being to be carried away by the sense of the skin, to touch someone and then fall in love. If it is not the senses, the mind can make us wander. This is normal for any human being. But this will not give us true happiness. While the majority of us live and die in the material world, we don't discover the world of real bliss and joy.

There is another world – the spiritual world. This is a very different experience. It happens when we realize that these material pleasures are making us sink in misery, life after life. We realize that we are not the body that we wear. We are the ones that wear the body. *We come to know that we are not a human being who is having a spiritual experience. We are in fact, the Spirit having a human experience.*

What is material life? We are born and before we realize it, we become a slave of the material world. We are attracted by material pleasures that give us temporary happiness.

But we become puppets as we fall prey to advertisements on the television and brands on huge hoardings on the streets. We base our life on fulfilling the need of the body and mind and before we realize it, the need becomes greed. We set material goals and we get to see only the outer surface of life. We are unable to go beyond and deeper to realize the spiritual world. We are covered by layers of ignorance that act as dark clouds that stop us from seeing the clear blue sky and the beautiful sunshine that lie beyond. We live as the body only to die, and we don't realize the Soul.

Even those people who live a material life can be divided into two categories- first, who just believe that they are the body and at death it is 'game over!'. They live a purely material life and sometimes lack love, kindness, and compassion as they are blind to what others feel. The second lot believes in the Law of Karma. Though they live a material life, they somehow believe in the words of the scripture – *As you sow, so shall you reap*. Thus, they try to live with ethics and values, being kind and compassionate, although they live a material life. Still, they suffer due to ignorance of the truth.

These people live as the ego and are responsible for their Karma, their actions. At death, the body returns to dust but they are reborn in a new body. The mind and the ego, that was the driver of their actions is rewarded or punished for their past actions in the new life that they will begin.

Spiritual life is very different. It is believing in the Divine Spirit, that is the very life within us. It often starts with being religious and believing in God. The baby steps are faith, hope, trust and enthusiasm. However, even those

living a material life may follow these baby steps as they live in a material world. Spiritual life takes one deeper. It makes one ask questions and investigate the basis of our existence. It tries to go deeper to understand the Soul or the *Atman*. It doesn't blindly follow religion and scripture.

One who lives a spiritual life, slowly transcends the body and the senses knowing that these are the causes of suffering. While material pleasures are attractive, those who live a spiritual life choose a life of peace and contentment, as they let go of material desires and cravings. They seem to have different aspirations. Their focus is to realize God and thus, they start on the journey of self-realization. Not everybody who lives a spiritual life attains the ultimate goal of spirituality.

While a majority of the world lives a material life, it is the ones who live a spiritual life that experience true peace and happiness. They discover the meaning of life as they overcome the illusions of the material world. They accept death as a reality, and unlike those who are prisoners in their material world, the spiritual ones enjoy liberation and freedom from misery and sorrow.

We all have a choice, not only to do what we like to do, but to choose our path of life. While most of humanity is on the highway of achievement, seeking success, money, wealth, name and fame, there are a few that take the road less travelled. They tread on the spiritual path and start their journey towards achieving their ultimate goal of life. To the material ones, life is just to live - eat, drink, and be merry. To the spiritual ones, there is a deeper meaning and purpose in life. They don't get carried away by the attractive pleasures of the material world that are transitory. They seek everlasting

bliss and eternal peace.

Each of us must make this choice. Do we want to live life and just consume it as we zoom to our tomb? Or do we want to stop and realize the truth? Are we willing to trade momentary pleasures for eternal happiness? That is our choice. That is the right way to live. We must activate our intellect as we discriminate and make the right choice.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We have a choice. We can choose to live a material life or a spiritual life.
- Most of humanity is carried away by sense pleasures. They experience only momentary happiness.
- There are a few amongst these who live with prayer following the Law of Karma.
- However, very few are fortunate to go on the spiritual path, to realize the truth.
- They are free from the prison of material pleasures, desires, and cravings.
- They are the ones who overcome all misery and attain eternal bliss and everlasting peace.

Chapter 18

Discover the Intellect

***Of what use is it to discover,
What lies on Mars and in the Stars,
If Man does not discover the Intellect,
The weapon of discrimination that is ours.***

We human beings are busy discovering how to find a cure for the heart and the brain. We are constantly trying to improve technology for the train and the plane. But we have not stopped to realize the biggest gift that we are blessed with – the intellect.

Scientists around the world know of the brain, but because they seek proof for everything, they have not discovered the subtle body. Spirituality talks of this as MIME – the Mind, Intellect, Memory and Ego. Because there is no scientific proof of the MIME, we only record what we know of as the brain and nervous system. How then can science justify the presence of the intellect?

Thousands of years ago, spirituality tried to awaken our ancient civilizations to man's biggest gift – the power of his intellect. The ancient sages spoke about how plants too may have life, but they don't have a mind and thus, do not respond. Animals respond as they have a mind. They even feel pain. Human beings are the only living creatures, the most advanced of all, who have an intellect. The intellect can discriminate what is wrong from what is right, just as we can discriminate black from white. Through the power of the intellect, man is gifted with the ability to distinguish between the truth and the myth, the good and the bad, and

after contemplating, he can make the right choices.

For centuries, we have confused the mind with the MIME – the Mind, Intellect, Memory, Ego. Somehow, we have believed that all this is the mind. But the faculty of memory and intelligence is not the same as the mind. The mind only produces thoughts. But it is the intellect that discriminates what we must do and what we must not, just like the memory has a very different function. Its purpose is to record whatever is happening in our life and to be able to recall it when we need to. However, most of us believe all these faculties are that of the mind. This is a myth.

While man is gifted with the power of intellect, which is very unique and special, man does not use it all the time. We are not conscious that we have to develop this faculty and put it above the mind. Most of the time, the mind bombards us with thoughts and the inactive intellect remains a powerless spectator as we are swept away by thoughts and feelings that seem to develop into our emotional choices. If we activate the intellect, we stop this barrage of emotional reactions, then we begin to use the power of the intellect to understand, evaluate, discriminate, and choose. We live with intellectual choices rather than emotional ones. This is the right way to live.

What should we do to live a life that is controlled by the intellect? The first step is to realize that the mind is a rascal. It is a monkey that keeps jumping. The mind is not the king. It is foolish to think that the mind is everything. The mind is only a thought factory and it will produce thoughts based on the emotions that we feed our thought factory. If we feed the thought factory with negative emotions like fear, worry, hate, jealousy, anger and revenge, then our mind

will produce negative thoughts which are poisonous. However, if we feed our mind with positive emotions, like faith, hope, trust, love, courage, enthusiasm and confidence, then our mind will produce positive thoughts. Who decides what raw material we should feed our mind? It is the intellect. The intellect is the tool that helps us choose. It is like a valve that stops the mind from pushing us into living a life of negative poison. The intellect can choose thoughts that will ultimately become feelings and make us happy as it will make us live with faith and be optimistic. While the mind may force us to live with fear, it is the intellect that brings forward the facts and helps us contemplate. The intellect discriminates between fear and danger. Unfortunately, not many of us develop the intellect.

The moment we have a well-developed intellect, we are no more the slaves of the mind. Otherwise, the mind acts like a dictator and pushes the body to act without intelligently choosing what we must do. If we realize the truth about the intellect, then not only will we discover its significance, but we will make it in charge of our life.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says that our body is like a chariot with 5 horses – our 5 senses. These are controlled by the reins, the mind. However, unless there is a charioteer who holds the reins, the 5 horses will go wild. The charioteer is the intellect. The intellect controls the mind that controls the senses.

When will we realize that our biggest wealth is our intellect? Adi Shankaracharya, in the 8th century, wrote a book – *Vivekachudamani*. Translated, this means – the intellect is our most valuable treasure. He explains how

man must learn to be free. Our ultimate goal is liberation. We are prisoners of our own mind. If we want to be truly happy, we must be free from the clutches of the mind and the cravings of the body. Only then, can we live a life of peace and joy. For this, we must live our life making our intellect the Master over the mind.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Man is the only living organism who is blessed with an intellect.
- Plants and animals do not have the faculty of discrimination.
- Unfortunately, man has not developed his intellect. Most of the time, we are the slaves of the mind.
- The mind makes us live with our emotional decisions.
- Until we discover the intellect and activate it, we will not make intelligent choices.
- If we really want to be happy, we must put the intellect in charge of our life. Then we will discern what is right and choose the way we live.

Chapter 19

Success is Not Happiness

Success is not Happiness,

Happiness is Success.

Those who mix up the two,

End their life in a mess.

We human beings are taught right from the time we are in school, that we must be the best. We must come first in class. We should succeed in cricket, in debates, and in quizzes. We have been indoctrinated into believing that Life = Success! We grow up being programmed to believe that we must be an achiever because achievement will give us happiness. But this is a myth. This is not true.

If success was happiness, then all the successful people in the world would be happy. But is this so? If we look around, we see misery in the homes of the rich and famous, which sometimes ends in suicide. If success was happiness, then the rich should be glad, not sad. Somehow, the world has grown up believing in the illusion that success is happiness.

There is no doubt that success gives us name and fame and it also creates wealth that gives us pleasure. But is pleasure happiness? Pleasure is only momentary happiness and although we may love a pizza, but if we are served 3 pizzas, chances are that we will be fed up. There is a Law of Diminishing Returns when it comes to the things we crave for.

Success is not bad, and everybody must work towards

achieving something in life. But when we believe that only success can give happiness, we head in the wrong direction. We let our needs become our greed and we want more and more. For us human beings, enough is not enough. We live with desires and we crave till our grave, seeking happiness, but not *being* happy.

Then, there is the 'Paradox of Success'. While the Olympic champion celebrates victory with a gold medal, the one who gets the silver with half the prize money cries, because the expectation was to be the champion. Paradoxically, the one who received the bronze dances with joy because there was no expectation to win. Even when we achieve success like marrying the person we love or getting a dream job or the target that we were aiming at, we soon lose the excitement and yearn for something else.

Life is not just about achieving success. Once we achieve noteworthy success, we must learn to live life with contentment and fulfilment. If we make success the philosophy of our life, we may end up being an achiever, but we will not experience true happiness. We will be so busy chasing our dreams and heading towards the destination, that we will forget that life is a journey, not a destination.

Even if we achieve success, we end up being stressed and anxious, either protecting the title or the wealth we possess. Thus, we hardly enjoy it. Then we compare our success with that of others, and we become jealous and unhappy. What about those who fail? They end up being the most miserable! Right from the beginning, success creates stress and makes our life a mess. Somehow, the world believes that success is everything and somebody reading this for

the first time, will think all this is garbage. Unless we introspect and contemplate the true purpose of life, we too will continue climbing the peak of achievement, which is an illusion. One day, we will fall off the cliff of that illusory journey, into our graves. Then life will be over.

Can we take our success with us? Nothing belongs to us. In the end, our success will dissolve and the very thing that promised us happiness will disappear. Alas, all that it did in the bargain was that it stole our life away!

Life is meant to be lived. Life is not a success chase. A very few people are fortunate to stop and understand the true meaning of life. They discover that the equation that they have been taught is wrong. *Success is not happiness. Happiness is success!* All through life, we seek to be successful, because we believe that success will give us happiness. But it doesn't! If we realize the truth that happiness is success, then we can develop the art of happiness and be happy without pursuing success.

The wise ones achieve the objective of success without wasting their life creating it. They live far more peaceful and blissful lives. They learn to achieve noteworthy success and then stop. They take an exit from the highway of achievement and live a life of contentment and fulfilment. All this because they realize the truth – Success is not happiness.

If we really want to live life, we must break the myth that the world lives with. The whole world is seeking happiness but chasing success. How will they ever find it! Happiness is not about achieving bliss. It is all about being happy. We must remember that we may have everything and still be

unhappy, just as we may have nothing, but be very happy. If you are in the mad pursuit of success, it is time to stop and to live before life is over.

Finally, ask yourself this question - can you be successful all the time? You can't. But can you be blissful all the time? You can. What would you choose?

IN A NUTSHELL

- Success is not happiness. Somehow, we are taught this myth and we grow up believing it.
- We chase success and before we realize it, life is over.
- The wise ones realize that the equation is wrong. Success is not happiness. Happiness is success!
- They take an exit from the highway of achievement and live with contentment and fulfilment.
- Those who keep chasing success, forget to live their life and then, it's too late.
- It's time to stop seeking success and to start being happy.

Chapter 20

Money is Not Everything

Of course, money is important...

It helps us make a living

But we must discover the truth of life,

That money can't buy everything.

There is a big debate in the world on the importance of money. Even a fool will agree that we need money to live. Life without money would be a tragedy. We need money for our food, our clothing and our home. Money is very important, but unfortunately, we start believing that money is everything. We become so blind that we keep chasing money. We even make money our God!

There are different types of people in this world. There are those who develop the art of being happy, eating a simple cheese pizza. But there are others who go to an expensive restaurant to eat imported crabs and lobsters to fill their stomach. There are women who are satisfied buying a designer bag at Zara or Charles & Keith, but there are some who will crave for a Louis Vuitton or Bottega Veneta handbag. We may desire many things and to fulfil these desires, we can make money the ultimate objective of our life. But where will this take us? Even if we get this branded merchandise, will we be satisfied?

A man was eying the new Mercedes Benz and had saved all his money to get it. But the next day, after he had celebrated his new car with a glass of Champagne, he was heartbroken, because his neighbour had bought an even better car, the latest model of BMW.

We human beings tend to believe that money is everything, when in reality, it is not. We somehow are unable to choose a balanced way of life where we give importance to money but don't believe that it is the only thing that we should focus on.

Somebody said it very well that with money you can buy a diamond ring, but you can't buy true love. With money you can buy an expensive mattress, but you can't buy sleep. With money you can buy all the medicines in the world, but you can't buy health. Yes, while you can buy many things in this world, you can't buy life.

Life is priceless. It is our biggest gift. But unfortunately, we make money a priority in life, so much so, that we are unable to understand the significance of life. Because the whole world salutes those who have money, we tend to follow the herd. *In fact, some people are so poor, the only thing they have is money.* As we read this contradictory thought, we may start wondering and even worrying what life would be without money. We should immediately stop and put our thoughts in perspective. Nobody ever said that poverty is a good thing. Each of us is blessed to earn our money and to live. But is the objective of life to make more and more money?

Does becoming rich guarantee that we are going to have a better, happier life? Unfortunately, those who don't have money look up to those who do and wish that they could be in their place. In fact, they spend their entire life trying to make money, and sometimes, life is over in the chase of cash. If you look at those who have a lot of money, most of them are so enamoured with their plastic life, that they seek to continue to make money, as they fear the loss of financial

resources will not only make them lose their standard of living but also their name in society.

Then there are those who have so much money that they are stressed managing their wealth. Their money may be in cash, in banks, in stocks or shares, in business or even in expensive jewellery and merchandise they stock at home. Their life is spent dealing with their anxiety of having too much money and managing it. They live and die with the myth – Money is everything. But is it so?

Those who treasure life and want to make the best of it, stop and introspect the role of money in life. Neither do they condemn money as evil, nor do they make money their God. They correct those who read the Bible wrongly – *Money is the root cause of all evil.* This is not what the scriptures say. Love of money is the root cause of all evil.

Those who escape from this craving of money and wealth, lead far more peaceful lives. They may not have all the riches to live in expensive bungalows and drive the world's best cars, but they sleep peacefully at night. After all, isn't that more important than money?

We have a choice. We can start our life with a goal and ambition to make a certain amount of money and then, continue to be greedy, wanting more and more. Or we can make sufficient money to live a decent life and then, make the best of this gift called 'Life'. It is most unfortunate, that very few people are blessed to do so. We are attached to our possessions and we want to please the people in our life with all the expensive things that need money. Thus, we exchange our life for money and soon, we are left with a lot of money, but no life!

Of course, it will be foolish to say money is nothing. But it will be even more foolish to believe that money is everything. Money has a place in life but we can't take money with us when we depart from this world. We must understand the meaning of life, that is far more important than just living our life in pursuit of money. Peace, bliss and joy are greater treasures and what is more important is to achieve the ultimate goal - to realize we are the Soul and unite with the Divine.

IN A NUTSHELL

- To truly live a meaningful life, we must realize that money is not everything
- While money is important, it has limited uses.
- Money can buy a bed, but not sleep. It can't buy everything.
- Poverty is not a good thing and we need money to live.
- However, we should not spend our entire life making money.
- In the end, we will have money, but life will be over.
- We must learn to live our life, valuing money, but not making it our God.

Chapter 21

Living with Detachment

What is living with Detachment?

Should we give up everything?

Sure we can love our 'loved ones'

But not be a slave of any being.

In this journey of life, a lot is spoken about being detached. What does it mean? What is detachment? Why should we be detached? Why is detachment even a subject in the Life Manual?

Attachment is a common attribute of a human being. We human beings get attached to people and to things. Where does this come from? It starts with desire. Suppose we desire a Ferrari car, we dream of it, until one day, after a lot of hard work, we buy our dream car. This car is something very special to us. It is not like any other car. We love it! We seek it and we are possessive about it. We even clean it with our own hands, because we don't want anyone to scratch it. We are attached to it. People may be attached to their Ferrari car or their Montblanc pen. Some are so attached to their mobile phone or laptop that they won't let you touch it. Why? This is a personality trait of a human being. Based on certain emotions, it is natural for a human being to be attached to things.

More than being attached to things, we human beings are attached to people and we think it is love. But love is very different. When we are attached to somebody, we become overly protective, overly cautious and very possessive about them and their life. The fear of losing them is

immense and we try to please them all the time. It is not something we do but rather we just become attached to some people.

It is very difficult to analyse why we become attached to specific people. We are not attached to all our friends, but there may be one friend we are specifically attached to, and he or she becomes our best friend. Sometimes, we are attached to our parents or children. It is very common for a mother to be attached to a child she gives birth to. So, what is wrong in being attached? Why must we learn to live with detachment?

There was once a man who was very attached to his teenaged daughter. One day, she did not return in the evening and he rushed to her college only to find that no one was there. He frantically started calling everybody he could think of—her teachers, her friends, the neighbours but nobody could trace her. His attachment was so intense that it led to fear and he called the police and asked them to start a search. His anxiety heightened and he started calling all the nearby hospitals one by one, checking if anybody with her description had been admitted but he could not find trace of her. Later that evening, a car stopped outside the house and his daughter walked into the house. He was aghast! 'Where were you?' he screamed. She smiled and replied, 'I told you last week that I had a new Buddhist friend and I will be going for chanting and meditation for a few hours. That's why my phone was switched off.' He was so relieved. He loved his daughter. But his love was not just love, it was attachment. That is why he got paranoid, instead of peacefully awaiting her return.

What does attachment do? It makes us possessive of people and things. It leads to fear and anxiety, as we worry about those people and things we are attached to. Is this the right way to live?

The learned sages of the world have written a simple prescription for peace and happiness - Live with Detachment. Unfortunately, we have not learned to do so. Not only have we ignored an invaluable suggestion but we have also misunderstood it. Living with Detachment does not mean we must not love our near and dear ones. It just disciplines us into not being attached, because the problem is our attachment. Fear of losing our loved ones makes us miserable. *A woman was so attached to her beloved husband, that she became possessive about him. She began to doubt him and eventually lost him. He too loved her, but he was attached to none. He lived a life that appeared as love on the outside but detached within. This is a lesson for us to learn.*

When we become attached to people and things, we become a slave to them. They control us and our wellbeing is held to ransom by our own attachment. If only we live a life of detachment, we can be free and liberated. We will overcome the fear of losing the person or the thing we are attached to. This is the way to live.

People misunderstand detachment as not loving anybody or anything. We can be madly in love with a person and even express our love, but being detached means, not being a slave to that person's actions and words. Attachment makes us hurt at everything the person says or does, and it emotionally drains us. We must learn to let go from the inside, even as we tie strong bonds on the outside. That is to truly live with detachment. Those who live with detachment enjoy life without being enslaved by the fear of losing people or the things they love so much. We must learn to live a life of detachment if we want to live in peace.

This Life Manual will teach us the art of joyous living without attachment. As we realize the truth we will live with peace, conscious of the truth that everything is a drama. Nobody belongs to us. Nothing is ours. We come empty handed and when we go we can take nothing with us. It is better that we live with detachment and not lose our Peace of Mind.

IN A NUTSHELL

- It is very common for human beings to be attached.
- We become attached to some of our favourite things.
- We also become attached to people whom we love.
- When we are attached, we tend to become miserable as we become over-possessive.
- Attachment also makes us fear losing those whom we are in love with.
- If we really want to live a life of peace, we must learn to live with detachment.
- Detachment does not mean we don't love somebody.
- There may be tremendous love on the outside, but we can be detached inside.

Chapter 22

Living in the World

*There is a way to live in this world,
Which most of us just miss.
We seek, we crave, we desire, just these...
Happiness, Peace, and Bliss.*

How should one live in the world? Most of us don't live life. We just consume life chasing success, achievement, wealth, name and fame. Ultimately, we want happiness, peace, and bliss. But we don't achieve these. We are so busy trying to get to our destination, that we forget to enjoy the journey.

What is life? It is the journey between birth and death. Nobody can escape death. Ultimately, we will have to go. This is just a show! But we don't realize this. Therefore, all that we do in life is to earn and earn and earn, only for others to burn what we earn. We are so busy doing things, that we put off happiness for a later date. For reasons unknown, man lets his greed take over his need and wants more, more, and even more. Eventually, he has too much, much more than he needs. Finally, he will leave all this behind.

Although all of us know this, we don't realize the truth. Like the generations that have gone before us, we too continue to live in ignorance and ultimately, we suffer the triple suffering of body, mind, and ego. We don't discover how we should live in this world.

We human beings have come to planet earth with a reason,

a purpose. It is perfectly alright to seek happiness and to enjoy this world. But instead of doing so, we sink into this world and forget to discover our purpose of life. If we want to truly live in this world, we must understand what this world is, who we are in reality and what this life is all about. Eventually, the body will die, but what happens to the one who was alive? Because we don't ask these questions, we continue to live with ignorance, and we don't attain the happiness that we seek.

Those reading this philosophy and book for the first time will encounter a few questions, 'Isn't life just to have fun, to enjoy with friends, to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries? Isn't this beautiful world for us to make merry, to eat, to drink and to indulge?' Most of the world believes that life is about earning and spending, falling in love, enjoying sex and romance, getting married, having a family, travelling the world and then leaving the world! Sure, there is no harm in doing all of this. But while we live in this beautiful world, should we not discover who we are and why we are here? Or should we just exist till we die, without realizing why we came to planet earth?

Most of us pray to the God of our religion. But there are not many who understand who God is, where God is, what God is. They mumble something, but they don't know what they say when they pray. And then, there are others who are so lost in this world, that they forget God. Should we not stop to ponder on who created this planet, the stars in the cosmos, the mountains, the rivers, the seas, the birds, the animals and the trees? Sure, our parents caused us to be born, but who created the life that makes our heart beat? Who decided the time and place of our birth or the country and religion we belong to?

Does everything in this world happen by magic, or is there some intelligent design that has created the gorgeous flowers, the beautiful birds and the exotic underwater world? How did these playful dolphins come about and who created the penguins? Isn't life meant to discover the truth before our journey is over or must we just live, exist, and die?

We have a choice on how we will live in this world. A book like this may come into our hands and we may fling it or decorate it on our library shelf. But there will be some people who will read such a book, ask questions and then realize what life is all about. They are the ones who truly live.

The majority of humanity lives in this world without a clue about their life. Reading a Life Manual is a far-fetched thing. They are not even interested in listening to somebody who is explaining what life is and how it must be lived. After all, unless we learn the secrets and realize the truth, how will we attain true bliss? How will we experience eternal peace and everlasting joy?

There is a way to live life. Just following the protocols of our religion, our society and our family like a herd without realizing what we are doing will take us nowhere. We must fly like a bird in the open skies of life trying to discover life. To truly enjoy this gift called 'Life', we must learn to ask questions, to investigate the various options and to realize the truth. We must use the gift of our intellect and the power of will and choice, to choose the way we want to live. Either, we too can just exist, enjoy and finally exit the world or we can stop to realize the truth.

Life comes to us but once. We must make the best of it. If we don't use it, we will lose it. We cannot save our life like we save money in a bank. Life has to be lived. We must make the best use of each day. It has 1440 invaluable minutes which are ticking away. Alas, we don't use our life and soon it is gone!

How would you like to live life? Are you the one who will destroy a beautiful new gadget before you read the Operating Manual, or will you study what the treasure is before getting it to work? The choice is yours.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We all think that we live. But unfortunately, we don't realize that we just exist.
- We come into this world, and ultimately we will die.
- We don't discover what life is really all about because we don't ask questions.
- We just follow the herd and before we realize it, life is over.
- To live a life of bliss, joy, and peace, we must investigate and realize the truth.
- There is a purpose, a deeper meaning for us appearing on earth.
- While it is good to celebrate and enjoy life, we must not forget to discover what life truly is and how to live it.

Chapter 23

Stress, Worry, and Anxiety

*Why do we worry? Why do we fear?
Why do we let stress and anxiety appear?
Because we don't realize that the cause is our mind,
The rascal plays havoc, and peace we don't find.*

What is the use of living with stress, worry, and anxiety? Why do we fear, regret and live with these emotions again and again? Do we do it by choice? It seems we are helpless prisoners who are enslaved by these negative emotions and we live and die with them. We don't realize that emotions are 'Energy in MOTION'. They drive our thought process.

Many of us realize it is useless to fear. It is meaningless to live with stress, worry, and anxiety. These make us miserable and we feel so helpless when these take charge of our life. However, we don't go on a quest to find a way out. There is a way to eliminate these negative emotions.

It is our own mind that produces negative thoughts and these trigger negative feelings. They cause us misery because our mind bombards us with these thoughts again and again. Thoughts create feelings and the feelings manifest as our actions and our life.

Many people feel so helpless. They hate these negative emotions, but they don't realize that they have a choice to eliminate them. They have not learnt the art to flip over from NEP to PEP. What is NEP? It is Negative Energy Poison. Many emotions in our life create poison, like anger,

hate, jealousy, revenge, and fear. These emotions become the raw material of the factory that produces thoughts – our own mind. Our mind produces thoughts depending on what we feed it. If the raw material we feed the mind is negative, then obviously, the thoughts will be negative, and they will poison our entire being. It will create stress and anxiety.

But suppose we flip over from NEP to PEP; PEP is Positive Energy Power, we feed our mind with positive emotions that create power. Emotions like faith, hope, trust, love, compassion, courage and confidence. These emotions act as the raw material and the mind will start producing positive thoughts. Then there will be no stress and anxiety.

We must learn how to flip over, how to change our emotions. This is a choice. We are all blessed with an intellect which can discriminate and then, execute through our willpower. If we choose positive emotions, we can wipe out the messengers of misery that are constantly produced by our mind. We can eliminate poisonous, negative, toxic emotions and replace these with healthy, nourishing, positive and powerful emotions. But this is a choice.

Those who learn how to live life, do not feel helpless when they are bombarded with negative thoughts. They realize that they can take charge of their mind. They have learnt the art of minding the mind and so, they control the negative monster and make it a silent monk. They use the power of thought effectively, as they eliminate the useless negative emotions. Not only do they take charge of their thoughts, but they also take charge of their feelings and actions. They develop positive habits that build the foundation for a

positive character and destiny. However, this is a choice.

But what about the common man? He continues to say, 'I am worried, I am stressed out! I fear.' He doesn't realize that it is his mind that is experiencing these emotions. He has not learnt to separate himself from the mind. Those who become conscious that they are not the mind, but rather, they have a mind, they don't suffer the misery of the mind. They watch the mind as it experiences fear, but they don't become fearful. They observe the mind generating worry and stress, but they become immune to such negativity. They just let these thoughts blow over like the breeze and not defeat them. They realize the uselessness of stress and anxiety. Not only do they overcome worry and fear, but they stay away from hate, revenge, jealousy and envy. They become conscious that their mind is their enemy and it produces these negative thoughts to make us suffer. Because they have learnt the art to live, they bounce back with faith, enthusiasm, courage and confidence. When hate comes, they replace it with love and when the mind creates despair, they shoot back at it with hope. They replace fear with courage, just as they choose to forgive and to forget. Their life becomes a garden of roses as they eliminate the thorns of life. Such people are always cheerful. They smile. But it doesn't take long to look at a person and know that he is drowning in depression because such a person is a prisoner of his own mind. Unfortunately, such people do not realize that all it takes to get out of this mess, is to understand life and live it.

Life is beautiful and there will be situations in this drama called 'Life' that may cause us anxiety. But once we realize how to deal with it, we will just let go. Not only will we

surrender and accept, but we will replace the negative with the positive as we learn to laugh through life. Eventually, it is just a drama and we will face the final moment of 'The End'. Then why live with stress and worry, and not enjoy life?

IN A NUTSHELL

- Our life is in our hands. We can choose to be negative or positive. It's our choice.
- If we choose negativity, we will drown with worry and anxiety.
- If we flip over from NEP to PEP, then we can live with courage and confidence.
- NEP is Negative Energy Poison and PEP is Positive Energy Power - the negative and positive emotions.
- Those who learn to live life, learn to enjoy it as they take control of their mind and its negative thoughts.
- They replace the negativity with positive emotions as they live with faith, and laugh with enthusiasm.
- They choose a life of Optimism over Pessimism and overcome all stress, worry and anxiety.

Chapter 24

Live! Don't just Exist

*Life is a precious gift,
Given to us to live.
Alas, many of us just exist!
Neither do we give, nor forgive.*

What is life all about? All of us live, but many of us in reality, just exist. We go through the motion called 'Life'. We breathe, we wake up in the morning, we eat, we make merry and we sleep. Eventually, we die. We forget to live life. We human beings have been given the most precious gift of a human life. Can a tree choose what it can do? It is bound to the ground. It is meant to exist, not live. Animals are luckier. They can move and explore the world. Some of them can love and be loved. They become our darling pets and wag their tails or use the gift of their voice to communicate through their sounds. They seem to have some kind of an instinct, but they too can't choose how to live. They survive, till one day they die.

But human beings are unique. We are gifted with an intellect. The intellect discriminates as it helps us choose. Then, we use our willpower to decide. Some of us truly live, while others, we just exist! What is it to live and not to exist?

Life has a purpose. We did not come to planet earth for nothing. Unfortunately, we have not realized the purpose of life. In fact, all living creatures and organisms have a purpose. Plants were created to provide oxygen for human beings. If there were no plants, how would the carbon dioxide that 8 billion people breathe out, get converted back

into oxygen. Plants also provide food, building materials, medicines. But we human beings haven't stopped to realize what our purpose is.

The Creator has made a unique world and if we stop to introspect, we will be amazed at creation. The fascinating world of the birds, the amazing animals in the jungle and the glorious underwater world must inspire us to realize there is a purpose for us human beings. Unfortunately, these creations of the Divine have a purpose, but they don't need to find their purpose. Through certain laws of nature, the Divine has organized the world in such a way that things happen automatically.

However, there is one thing that other living organisms don't have and that is the gift of the intellect. It is this gift that lets us discriminate and choose what we must do. We are the only living beings who can decide what we want. This is because it was meant for us to discover our purpose and not just exist or survive like the rest of creation.

Many people just exist. Of course, they choose what they eat, what they wear and where they go. But they don't contemplate life's purpose. While it seems that they live, they exist till they die. A very few people actually stop to live. They stop to wonder what life is all about. Not only do they appreciate the beauty of nature and creation, but they also fold their hands and bow down in prayer, expressing their gratitude to the Creator. This too is a choice and we are blessed to pray, although not everybody does. Have you ever seen a dog, a cat or an elephant, fold its hand in prayer? That is probably why they were designed with 4 legs. Do we even realize that we have 2 hands that are precious and

meant to do things? This is a unique gift to us humans!

A human being is very unique. Unfortunately, we take things for granted. We, sometimes, simply sway like the trees without realizing that they don't have a choice, but we do. The trees go by the breeze, but we can choose to conquer the seas. We can do what we want, go where we like and even discover our purpose on earth.

Look around and observe how many people are truly living. Most of them are having a blast with life till it lasts. They think life is all about being merry, eating, drinking, enjoying and above all, being happy. But humanity is not happy. We experience pain and suffering, only because we forget to live, we forget to discover the purpose of life. The few people who decide not just to exist, but to truly live, they live life moment by moment as it should be lived. They are conscious of every moment, as they experience a state of blissful consciousness. They discover the purpose of life.

Do those who exist even realize that they are just existing? Are those people who are not truly living life even aware that they have not made the best of their treasure called 'Life'?

James had moved to a town from a small village. He was given a smartphone and he was amazed. Smartphones were unheard of in his village. Even cell phones were rare. James loved the idea of calling folks back home and thought it was a great device. But he had not discovered all the features of his handset. When Robert started explaining that he could also make video calls, he could browse the internet, he could use so many apps, he could stream live videos on social media and do so much more, he was flabbergasted. He had not discovered the true potential of his gift.

We human beings may laugh at James but aren't we too like him? We have been given this beautiful gift called 'Life'. We have not explored the possibilities as we have not discovered our purpose. We think life is great when in reality, we haven't used any of life's possibilities!

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life is a gift. We must not just exist, rather we must live.
- Most people think the purpose of life is to be happy, to make merry.
- A very few people realize that there is a deeper meaning, a purpose in life.
- Life has far more possibilities, but we have not discovered these.
- We are not like the trees and the animals that just exist.
- We have been blessed with an intellect to discriminate, to make choices, and to discover the true purpose of life.
- When will we stop existing and start living? When will we discover the true potential and purpose of life?

Chapter 25

What is the Purpose of Life?

***Do you know
Why we came to planet earth?
Have you discovered
The purpose of this human birth?***

Many people find this to be a strange question – why did we come to earth? Why did we take birth? Did it happen just by chance? Nothing happens by chance. It all happens by design. We didn't land upon the earth without rhyme or reason. Our birth is controlled by the Law of Karma. Once born, we are in command of our actions. Either we can drift through life and reach our end, or we can discover the purpose of life.

What is the purpose of life? Life is the journey between birth and death. Neither can we control birth, nor can we control death. But we are in charge of everything that happens in between. If we don't discover the purpose of life, then we will just come back to planet earth again and again. We would have a new body, but as per Karma, we would experience the triple suffering as we visit this planet again and again.

Is there a way to escape this transmigration, this constant cycle of death and rebirth? The Buddha, the Enlightened and the Awakened One shared his realization, that is known as *Nirvana*. It is an escape from this cycle through a process of self-realization. Different saints have given this different names, but it means the same—that one ultimate goal—our life's purpose. The purpose is to discover who

we are and why we are here. Most human beings don't have a clue about the purpose of life. They don't believe that there is something called Karma or rebirth. They just live and they die, and they think life is just to have fun. We too can live life without believing it has a purpose. By doing so, we will experience all kinds of suffering as we come back to planet earth repeatedly.

The purpose, if discovered, has a reward. It liberates us from coming back to earth and by doing so, from the constant suffering of life as a visitor to planet earth.

Most of us don't like this idea of living with discipline. We like life to be free-flowing. There should be no questions asked, no purpose to discover. We must just chill and enjoy this journey. And as we do just that, we forget the existence of the one who created this universe. We don't realize that the Divine is within us. We don't express our gratitude. Therefore, there are times when we are so lost in the world and misery strikes us. Then, when we are helpless, we are forced to think of the one we call 'God'.

Is it not a simple truth to realize that all this magic happening around us has some logic, some meaning and some purpose? Can the entire universe unfold day after day without a reason? Are we all meant to come to earth and consider life a picnic so that we can have fun and then leave? Don't we have a responsibility to find out the meaning of death and what happens thereafter? Should we not introspect on why some children are born blind and some born into families with wealth and happiness? Most of us are zapped by what happens, till we face 'the End'. Even when it is time to go, we don't stop to think about the

mystery called death. Do we ever stop to ask, 'Before my body loses its breath, what am I supposed to achieve?'

A few people are lucky. They discover the purpose of life. They go on a quest and they realize the truth. Self-realization not only makes their life meaningful; it also liberates them from all kinds of misery and suffering. It shows them a way to communicate with the Divine, just as it liberates them from the constant cycle of death and rebirth.

Not many of us are fortunate to discover our life purpose. In fact, the majority just follow the herd. A rare few open their wings and fly like a bird up in the sky alone, searching for answers. It is amongst those few who search that a few find the purpose of life.

It is most unfortunate that religions only teach us the basics because that doesn't help us evolve in discovering our life purpose. Even our education system teaches us so many things but it doesn't help us realize who we are and why we are here. We give importance to success and wealth, to rituals and superstitions. We are so lost in this world that before we realize it, life escapes us. Then, because we have not discovered the purpose of life, we are reborn in a new life, to go through one more cycle. We continue living, cycle after cycle, without discovering the purpose of life. We struggle through life just because we have not paid attention to finding out the true meaning of our life on earth.

Do you want to make the best of your life? Then pause for a moment and understand what life is all about. Realize there

is a deeper meaning to this gift called 'Life'. Ask questions, and don't accept everything people say. Investigate what you read, till you find out the truth. If possible, find a life coach, a Spiritual Master, who will guide you forward on this journey called 'Life'. Don't just consume life, thinking that you are having fun, till you suddenly realize one day that life is done.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Life has a purpose. We have not come to the planet for a picnic.
- We must discover who we are and why we are here.
- Only a few people are lucky to discover the purpose of life.
- The rest just drift through life. They live and they die, to come back again and again.
- Those who discover the purpose of life, not only escape from the triple suffering on earth, they also escape the cycle of death and rebirth.
- We must not just zoom through life. We must pause and find out our purpose
- Those who do not discover the purpose of life, don't learn how to make the best of it.

Chapter 26

The Quest - Who am I?

***Who am I? Go on a Quest.
Put all your prior beliefs to test.
When you realize the truth, you will find,
You are not the Ego, Body or Mind.***

Everybody lives. But not everybody discovers the truth about life. A rare minority goes on a quest. They try to find out who is this 'I' that says, 'This is my body, my hand, my head.' Why do we say, 'My mind is wandering?' If the body and the mind is not me, then who am I?

The rest of humanity is racing through life. There is no time to think. They believe, 'I am who I am. I am a white American, aged 34, who is a lawyer living in New York city. My parents are British, and I have 2 beautiful daughters who go to school. I am a Christian and am not yet a millionaire, but hope to be one soon. I know everything about myself, why do I have to go on a quest to find out who am I? Is this some kind of a joke?' Most of us may tend to agree with this argument. There is no need to go on a quest to discover ourselves. But the fact is that a majority of us, do not see the truth. Only 1% of this world is visually blind. 99% is spiritually blind. We do not discover that we are, in fact, the Divine Spirit, the Soul. The moment we realize this truth, our life transforms. In fact, some people go through a metamorphosis when they wake up to the truth and achieve self-realization.

All through life, our ego says, 'This is me' and 'This is what I want', and 'All these are mine.' We don't realize that

nothing is ours. We start our life without anything and when we end, we take nothing with us. Still, throughout life, we are constantly living with the illusion, that this is my car, my house, my family. This illusion is caused by our mistaken identity about ourselves. We get angry and upset, we worry and get anxious, all because of what we think we are. We get so attached to people, that it is not uncommon to get possessive about them. This life of attachment breaks our heart and makes us cry. All this is because of our ignorance - we don't know the truth, 'Who am I?'

If we truly want to live life, the key that will open the door to the truth about life is a quest. It is about going on a search; it is about asking questions, and investigating the truth, before realizing the self. This body, which has said a thousand times, 'I am here, can you see me?', will suddenly realize 'I am not the one I thought I was all through my life. This is only a habitat. I have lived in this body for decades, but this is just my body, it is not me.'

What else will the quest reveal? It will bust the myth of the mind, the one that says, 'I needlessly worry, I am so afraid,' will suddenly be relieved of all anxiety when we realize we are not the mind. In fact, if we try to find our nose, our eyes, our ears, we can. We can even find the location of our brain, our heart and our lungs in a scan of the body. But where is the mind, we can never find! The mind is an illusion. It does not exist. It is just a bundle of thoughts. These very thoughts make a fool of us throughout our life and stop us from living life the way we must.

Who is the leader of the body and the mind? It is the ego, the one that says, 'I'. Along with the mind, it becomes the ME -

Mind and Ego, that makes us go round and round in circles and live life as if it is a merry-go-round, till one day, we stop and realize that life is over, that the joy ride was just an illusion, that we were neither the ego, the body nor the mind. We were something else. The quest reveals the truth that most of humanity is oblivious to. Because we don't realize the truth, we don't live life the way we should. We just consume this gift till one day, it's time to go.

Why is it that most of us never go on this quest? It is because, the moment we do, it threatens the existence of the ME, the Mind and the Ego. Once we realize we are not the Mind and the Ego, they cease to exist. Therefore, the mind and the ego push us to believe the myth, as it hides from us the Divine truth. They make us pray to a God in the distant skies, although in reality, it is within where the Divine lives. The ME brainwashes us and we don't treasure this amazing gift called 'Life'. We just seek to be happy and chase happiness, when in reality, the ocean of bliss is within.

Those who live life after going on a quest and realizing the truth, live in a state of eternal bliss and peace. They discover what is known as *Satchitananda*, the truth that makes them conscious of the Divine within. This state of *Ananda* or *Nirvana* is bliss beyond description. Very few people are gifted to even know of it. This is because they have not read the Life Manual.

In the Manual of Life, one of the most important chapters is this – to go on a quest and discover, 'Who am I?'. This will create a paradigm shift, just as it will transform the way we think and live. It will change the very person who was alive all along. Instead of being a prisoner to our thoughts, we

will start living as the Divine consciousness that we truly are. It will bless us with a sense of peace and tranquillity, unknown to the common man.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We human beings don't even know who we truly are. We just live and we die.
- A very few people go on a quest to find out 'Who am I?'
- They discover that they are not the body and mind that they always thought they were.
- As they overcome the ego that says, 'I,' they realize the Divine truth - We are the Divine Soul.
- Very few people are blessed with this self-realization. Those who are, live a life of eternal peace and everlasting joy.

Chapter 27

Death is Certain

***The death of the body is certain,
No 'body' can escape from it.
It's not the end but just a bend,
Not many bust this myth.***

Death, in the true sense, is an illusion. It seems like somebody has died. But in reality, only some 'body' has died. Death happens only to the body, not to the one who was alive inside. Because we don't realize this truth, we suffer through life. Most of us never learn two major lessons about life and death.

First of all, the body is only an instrument of action. It acts at the behest of the ME – Mind and Ego. What I want to do, and what my mind thinks and feels, is enacted by the body. The body through its actions creates Karma. Based on these actions, our life unfolds day after day as per the Law of Karma.

Death is certain. One day, the body will die. The life in our body will escape, and the one who was alive, the person with a name and an identity, will not exist any more. But death is not 'The End'. It only finishes one chapter for the ME – the Mind and Ego, who 'passes on', who 'departs', and who we believe is 'no more'. The ME will start a new chapter in a new body. Because we don't realize this, we don't live life the way we should.

Those who understand the truth about death, try to live a life of good Karma. They know that there is life beyond

death, and they realize that they are in charge of their destiny. They understand the Law of Karma. They accept and surrender to it. But there are others who view death very differently. They mourn and cry when they see a person die. They don't realize that nobody can escape from death. When we are born, nothing is certain, except death. Then why do people fear death? Why are people unable to face the final moment of life? It is because we have not understood Life. We have ignored some important facts about the truth of life and death which are covered in this Life Manual.

There are a few people who go beyond understanding life and death. They realize that there is a way to escape from rebirth after death. They learn how to overcome the triple suffering of the body, mind and ego. They realize the truth that will liberate them from returning again and again as the ME - Mind and Ego, birth after birth, based on its Karma.

Those who realize the ultimate truth about death, don't mourn death. In fact, they celebrate it because they realize that death is the doorway to our ultimate destination. Not only do they understand that nobody can escape from death, they also realize that death is the only way for a human being to be liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth and to ultimately unite with the Divine.

Why then does the whole world suffer from the fear of death? Why do we cry when we see somebody die? There is no way for anybody to escape from the reality of death. Moreover, aren't we clear about the fact that when we see the mortal remains of somebody, we know that the dead body is not the person who was alive? It is just the mortal

remains of the one who was alive! Although it is absolutely clear to us, why are we gripped with fear at the moment of death?

Death teaches us many lessons. It shows us that the one who was alive leaves everything behind. It opens our eyes to the fact that all relationships are temporary and transitory. It reminds us that nothing belongs to us, and there is no sense in being attached to possessions and people. Death also reveals that all our problems and suffering will ultimately end one day. Most important of all, death teaches us that the end of life, is not 'The End', it's only a bend.

Still, although all this is crystal clear, we continue to live in ignorance, and we suffer. We suffer through life and we suffer death, although, life and death are both to be celebrated. The moment of death which is certain must be accepted in surrender and every death that crosses our path, as we traverse the journey of life, must remind us of the lessons about the reality of death and beyond.

The wise ones prepare for the ultimate moment of death as they live. They are ready to die, although they know that death is in the hands of the Divine. When and how we will die, seems predestined, not based on fate or serendipity, but on our own past actions, our Karma. While we have the free will to choose our actions, it seems that we do not have the liberty to choose our death.

Some people end their life by committing suicide. They think that by ending their life they can escape from all their problems and miseries. What they don't realize is that when we put an end to our life through a death which is not as

per our destiny, we are interrupting the natural law. This act will inflict upon us an equal amount of suffering, if not more than what we were experiencing when we were alive. We may have ended the life of our body by committing suicide, but the ME, the Mind and Ego will take rebirth and suffer. We will have to face our carried forward Karmic account. There is no way to escape from it. Such is the law of life and death.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Everybody who is born, has to die.
- Death is certain, nobody can escape from it.
- But death is not the end; it's just a bend.
- The body dies, but the one who was alive inside moves on at death.
- Death is not in our hands; it is controlled by a universal law.
- It is only through death that we can be liberated from suffering again and again on earth.
- Because of our ignorance, we mourn death, we cry when we see somebody die.
- Because we have not learnt the lessons death has taught us, we don't make the best of our life.
- Some people even try to commit suicide due to ignorance not realizing that we can't escape from our suffering.
- We celebrate life and mourn death. Realization of the truth will help us reverse this.

Chapter 28

Karma - The Universal Law

*Karma is a Universal Law on earth,
It applies to one and all who take birth.
The law states, 'As you sow, so shall you reap,'
Those who commit sin, are sure to weep.*

The world operates by certain Universal Laws. We are aware of the Law of Gravity. When we throw something up, it doesn't fly away into the sky. Why? We infer that this is because of the Law of Gravity. Just like the Law of Gravity, there are many universal laws that preserve life in the cosmos. The Law of Cycles ensures rotation of the earth exactly once in 24 hours, just as it manages revolution and the seasons that it causes. There is a Law of Opposites and several other Universal Laws.

One such law that controls everything that happens on earth, is the Law of Karma. It is also known as the Law of the Boomerang – what goes around, comes around. The law states, 'What you give is what you get.' How does this law work and what is the proof of its existence?

Have you ever seen apples growing on a mango tree? Impossible! The Universal Law will not permit it. This explains the simple principle, what you sow, you reap. It is not only the seeds that we plant which will bear fruit but also the deeds. 'Whatever you do, will come back to you' – such is the law!

Karma means Action. Therefore, the law has to do with our action. Every action of ours is recorded and will be

redeemed. Either it will be redeemed in this life or if not, then it will unfold in the next life. This makes us understand that whatever is happening in our life today, is not what we popularly think as luck or chance. Everything that is happening in our life, is a result of our own past actions. It is not luck; we pluck our destiny based on the actions we perform. So, we must not regret whatever happens to us in life. It is our own Karma returning to us as per the law. We must realize this.

The Law of Karma doesn't end at death. The body dies, but the real doer of action is the ME – Mind and Ego. Thoughts of the mind and decisions of the ego make the body act. The body, mind and ego experience results of past Karma. Then the body perishes. But our Karma doesn't.

If our cumulative Karma is bad at the time of the death of the body, the ME will be reborn, either as a child that is blind or in utter poverty and misery. This is just an example as the Karmic Law can only be inferred and not fully known. However, we can clearly infer that birth happens for a reason. It is not chance - when, where and to whom we are born and in what circumstances is the unfolding of Karma. Thereafter, Karma continues to unfold every day that we live. This may be due to our past or present actions which accumulate to unfold as our destiny day after day.

While we have no control over our past Karma and it unfolds in our life as good or bad circumstances, we have complete control on our present actions. This will determine our future destiny. While the law is very simple and straightforward, many people do not understand it. They wonder how Karma is carried forward from one life

to another. They do not realize that death is not the end, for the ME - Mind and Ego, which is reborn carrying its Karma. Thus, they celebrate life and make merry without paying enough importance to their actions. Such people eventually suffer because their bad deeds become the seeds that sprout in the future as their suffering.

The Law of Karma is a Universal Law. Nobody can escape it! We control our destiny through our own actions, but because we do not realize this truth, we become the cause of our own misery and suffering.

Those who study the Law of Karma, realize that it has 3 accounts. The first account is the corpus, the carry forward account, which is the cumulative Karma of all our lives. When we finish each life, our closing balance or net Karma gets added to our Karmic corpus. The second account of Karma is what we start at the beginning of every life. It can be considered as our opening balance. We take some portion of our cumulative Karma to start a new life, not all of it. It is as per this opening balance that our life unfolds. Everything happens in life based on the Karma that we carry with us. Then, there is a third account – our present actions. This is our current account. It keeps recording all our actions and adding it to our Karmic account. It merges with the opening balance and causes our life to unfold. At the end, whatever is the balance, it gets carried forward and added to the corpus at death. Based on the Karmic corpus, our next birth is decided.

Those who understand the Law of Karma, learn to live in Divine surrender, accepting everything. They control their actions and do their best so that they create good Karma for the future. However, the truly wise ones who

will read the Life Manual and follow it, will learn to escape from this cycle of death and rebirth by dropping all the Karma in their corpus. This will happen as they will realize the truth that they are not the Mind and Ego, the ME, that is creating new Karma. They are the Divine Soul. This realization will lead to liberation from all past Karma and with it freedom from the constant cycle of death and rebirth. All of us who live in the world are controlled by the Law of Karma, irrespective of our religion or nationality. Our ultimate goal is to transcend Karma and unite with the Divine.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Everything that happens in this world is controlled by the Law of Karma.
- It is a Universal Law and it states, 'As you sow, so shall you reap.'
- Whatever is our action, so will be the reaction.
- Our deeds become the seeds that bear fruit in the future.
- Therefore, we are in command of our destiny.
- The body dies, but the Mind and the Ego, ME, is reborn in a new body based on the Karma.
- Nothing happens by chance. Everything is controlled by the Law of Karma.
- A few wise people realize the truth that they are not the Mind and Ego, ME and are liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Chapter 29

Rebirth - Another Life

What is it that creates birth?

What brings us back to planet earth?

***It is our actions, our Karma that will decide,
How and where we are born after we die.***

Many people ask the question, 'Is rebirth real? Will we be born again?' Let's analyze.

Is birth real? Do we see people being born? Yes, of course. Are these people born by luck or by chance? Some are blind, some are healthy, some in rich families and some in abject poverty. What causes birth? When, where, and to whom we are born is not micro-managed by God. The Creator has commissioned Universal Laws by which this universe is controlled. The earth rotates once in 24 hours. It revolves around the sun in 365 ¼ days. Is somebody sitting up there and doing all this? Seasons change, just as the Law of Gravity pulls everything back to earth. While we cannot prove these Universal Laws, we infer that they exist.

Therefore, without doubt, there is the existence of a Law of Action and Reaction, the Law of Cause and Effect. As discussed, this Law of the Boomerang is known as the Law of Karma. What goes around, comes around and as we sow, so shall we reap. There is no other way for Karma to be executed other than rebirth.

Death is a reality. It is certain everybody has to die. However, the person who has died has performed certain deeds. These have to be settled. But the person is no more.

Who died? Only the body! The one who was alive, the Mind and the Ego - ME departed. Don't we say, 'He passed away, moved on, expired or left the body?' Where has the person gone and how will that person settle all past actions that remain unsettled? How will the law unfold? The answer is simple, through rebirth.

Therefore, if we contemplate life, it becomes obvious that death is not the end, it is just a bend for the one who was alive in the body. There is no rebirth for the body. We see that it is cremated or buried, and it returns to dust. But what about the one who was alive? If we use our intellect, we can realize the truth that the one deceased is reborn.

Who are we in reality? As we live, we are a body, mind, ego, and Soul. The body is gross and physical. It is made of 5 elements - Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and Space. At death, all the 5 elements disintegrate and return to earth. The ME that was alive, the Mind and Ego, has to settle its past actions as per the law and is reborn as per its Karma. The Soul is the power that gives us life. It is the Divinity that is with us from birth to death. Unfortunately, we don't realize the truth of all this. We live and die in ignorance and thus, even question the occurrence of rebirth.

Because of our ignorance that rebirth is a reality of life, we live as the body, mind, and ego and we suffer. We don't discover the truth. We don't realize we are the Divine Soul. If we really want to live a life of peace and joy, if we want to be liberated from misery and sorrow, if we want to overcome fear and worry, we must realize the truth about rebirth.

Modern-day science and technology is making it possible for people to identify case studies where a young child remembers its past life. The Mind and the Ego, ME that is reborn, carries with it the flashes of memory and in rare freak cases, people remember their past life. One can study the case of Shanti Devi in India or the Japanese Navy fighter pilot James Leininger who it seems knew of their previous life as they were reborn. Many such cases have become a subject of study in many universities around the world. But they are still to coin a clear explanation about how this happens.

Long ago, in ancient India, there was a prince named Siddhartha Gautama. He saw the world as full of suffering. He gave up his kingdom to go in quest of the truth - How can we escape from this constant cycle of death and rebirth? He was awakened and thus, after his enlightenment, became known as the Buddha. He advocated the concept of *Nirvana*, to escape from this cycle of rebirth. The Hindus called it *Moksha*, the Western world, enlightenment and salvation. Most of the religions in this world preach that we must ultimately become one with God. We must escape from suffering on earth. We must be liberated from taking rebirth.

How can we escape from being born again? As long as we have unsettled Karma, we have to return to redeem our past actions. When death happens, it happens all of a sudden. It does not give us the opportunity to clear all Karma. Be it good deeds or bad deeds, we have to be reborn. However, there is a way to escape from rebirth.

Those who go in quest for the ultimate purpose of life, realize that we are not the body, mind and ego. Therefore,

our actions are not our actions. They are not our Karma. We are only instruments that act on behalf of the Divine. For such realized people, there is no Karma, and therefore, there is no rebirth. In fact, all the past Karma, carried forward over many past lives, dissolves and disappears the moment we realize the truth that we are not the ego, mind or body, we are the Divine Soul. This only happens if we learn to live life overcoming our ignorance. Then we can escape from rebirth.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Rebirth is a reality. It is not some mystical belief.
- Death happens when the life energy leaves us.
- The body dies, then who takes rebirth?
- The one who was alive, ME - the Mind and Ego departs at death.
- It carries with it its past Karma that needs to be redeemed.
- Thus, we are reborn in circumstances depending on our past actions, our Karma.
- There is a way to escape from rebirth and not to suffer repeatedly on earth.
- For this, we have to realize the truth by overcoming our ignorance. Then we can be liberated from rebirth.

Chapter 30

Overcoming Ignorance

***We human beings are ignorant,
We don't realize the truth.***

***We suffer on earth again and again,
We don't get to the root.***

While we human beings think we know everything, the fact is that we know nothing. What we know as compared to what we don't, is a tiny fraction. Unfortunately, we are ignorant about our ignorance. As long as we don't overcome our ignorance, we will not discover how to really live life.

What is life? It is a journey on earth between birth and death. Death is certain. We come and we go. Alas, we don't realize that this is just a show!

This Life Manual has already opened several doors for us to contemplate life. But it is just the beginning. We have discussed the body, mind, ego and the Soul. Everybody wants to be happy, but we are so busy sorting out our problems, that we become miserable. Before we realize it, life escapes us.

By now, we have learnt how to tame the monkey, our mind and how to live, moment by moment. Don't we know that nothing belongs to us, then why is it that we continue to hoard and collect things that we will ultimately leave behind? Why have we not learnt the art of giving? It is because of our ignorance.

We all want to be happy, but we are prisoners of our material desires. We don't use our intellect. We let our emotions take charge of our life and continue to let negative toxins poison us. We live with hate, anger, fear, worry and jealousy, only because of our ignorance. If only we realize the true meaning of life, we will not only forgive those who harm us, but love one and all, as we overcome our ignorance.

What is the cause of our ignorance? It is our own mind. Along with our ego, the mind becomes the ME that keeps us lost in this cosmic illusion. This is often known as *Maya*. *Maya* has two powers – it conceals the truth and projects the myth and we just believe it. Our mind and ego are slaves to the cosmic illusion, and we don't realize the truth because we don't use the gift of the intellect. Thus, we continue to experience suffering as long as we are alive.

If we want to be truly happy, if we want everlasting peace and tranquillity, we have to overcome our ignorance and realize the truth. We have to use our intellect to discriminate, just as we live with discipline and with detachment. This is the way to live a life of bliss and joy. Unfortunately, because of our ignorance, we continue to suffer. Not just during this birth, but we are born again and again to repeatedly suffer due to our ignorance.

Statistics show that about 1% of the world is visually blind, but it seems that 99% of us are spiritually blind. We cannot see the truth because of a 'spiritual cataract'. Just like we need a cataract surgery for our physical eyes to see, we need a spiritual awakening to overcome ignorance and see the truth.

We human beings are lost in this world of attractions and distractions. Our senses are attracted by all the allurements of this material world as our mind is distracted by thoughts and emotions that keep us caught in a trance of the cosmic illusion.

Although we have the gift of the intellect and we are privileged as human beings to ask, to investigate, and to realize the truth, we don't use this weapon effectively. We follow the herd and believe in whatever we read or hear. We don't question our religion which only teaches us the basics about God, and we remain distant from the Divine because of our ignorance. We let the mind and ego get the better of us as we suffer each day that we live.

Is there a way to overcome suffering? There is good news. If only we overcome our ignorance of who we are and why we are here, if only we see through the cosmic illusion, we will be able to discover the truth that is beyond and be free from all suffering.

What does ignorance do? It acts like a blanket of dark clouds that blocks our vision of the truth. Our ignorance continues to make us live with an opaque vision as it blinds us from reality. We live and die, again and again, life after life, being ignorant about the truth. If only we overcome our ignorance, we can escape from Karma and rebirth. For this, we must realize the truth.

To realize the truth, it is necessary to let go of our false beliefs. We human beings are programmed to believe and live in a particular way. Just like we reset our laptop or mobile, we have to wipe out all our ignorance and reprogram our thought process with a fresh spiritual

philosophy. We must remove all the mythological viruses that continue to create ignorance. Most importantly, we have to learn to investigate as we go in quest of the truth. Only then, will we overcome our ignorance and realize the truth about life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We human beings suffer because of our ignorance.
- Our biggest problem is that we are ignorant about our ignorance.
- Due to a cosmic illusion, we do not see the reality that lies ahead.
- We seem to be spiritually blind due to a 'spiritual cataract'.
- Unless we eliminate our ignorance, we will continue to suffer as we are born again and again.
- To overcome ignorance, we must learn to ask questions and investigate till we realize the truth. We should not just believe in myth and superstition.
- We have to reprogram our life with a fresh spiritual philosophy to realize the truth.

Chapter 31

Realizing the Truth

*If we want to realize the truth,
We must get to the bottom of the root.
All through life, in ignorance we cry,
We suffer on earth as we live and die.*

How many people who live on earth even realize that the purpose of life is to 'Realize the Truth'? We just live and we die. We believe that life is about being happy. We console ourselves that as long as we don't hurt others, we have achieved the object of living. We pray to a God and hope that by offering our Lord money and gifts, we will be forgiven for our sins and be liberated to heaven. We are not to be blamed. It is not our fault, because this is what we are taught. Unfortunately, we do not use the gift of our intellect to overcome our ignorance. We don't ask questions like, 'Who is God, where is God, what is God?' We don't go on a quest to realize the truth of what happens after death.

What do we do when we see somebody die? We just cry. But why? Because we are ignorant. Since we lived with ignorance, we became attached to the one who has departed, just as we get attached to our possessions and then become angry and miserable when our treasures are taken away from us. We have not contemplated the reality, that nothing comes with us and nothing will go with us.

Our instant reaction is, 'Of course, we know this. Who doesn't? Which fool doesn't know the truth that we will not take anything with us when we go?' Why then, do we human beings continue to earn and earn, only for others to

burn what we earn? It is ignorance and though we know the fact, we don't realize the truth.

There is a difference between knowledge and realization. We know that we have a nose on our face, just as we know how to drive our car. But we don't realize we are the Divine Soul. We don't realize the true purpose of life. For that realization to happen, there is a 3-step process. First, we must listen or read about the truth. Once we know about it, then we contemplate the knowledge and become convinced of the reality. Still, it is knowledge. When we get a spark within, then the knowledge becomes realization. We don't just know that we have a Soul, we realize that we are the Divine Soul. We realize the truth about life, about death and about God. This realization will result in a transformation. When knowledge becomes realization, it is natural for us to change not just the way we think, but also the way we live.

Most of the world is so busy, lost in the world, that there is no time to go in quest of the truth. There is no time for silence. We are so busy doing things that don't matter that we don't have the time to do what matters. This is because of our ignorance. Somewhere, there must be a spark in us to seek the truth. Unless we start the journey of questioning and seeking, we will continue to live in the darkness of ignorance.

The light of truth will reveal so many things about life. The truth that nothing belongs to us will make us detached and dispassionate. The moment we realize that our mind is our enemy, we will activate our intellect and live with discrimination. Once we realize the truth about death, we

will start living as the Divine Soul.

Realization is a rare gift and it is not everybody's blessing to come face to face with it. But that is our ultimate goal - to overcome ignorance, to realize the truth, and to be liberated from all suffering.

Most of us live life without understanding what it is all about. It is just like playing with the most sophisticated machine, understanding nothing about it. Therefore, the importance of a Spiritual Master who can make us understand what life is all about. We need a life coach, who can explain the Life Manual to us, so that we can make the best of the product called 'Life'. Otherwise, we may glance at some information, but practically, will not be able to manoeuvre through life and achieve our ultimate goal.

Because most of us don't have a life coach, we struggle through life. When things happen to us, we cry and look up at the sky. Nobody explained to us that this was not luck, it was our own Karma, coming back to us. If only we realize the truth, we will celebrate each suffering we experience knowing that we have redeemed our past Karma.

There are many things that we have to realize in life. We have to realize the truth about life and death, God and enlightenment, the Soul, Karma, and rebirth. Unless we realize the truth, we will continue to go round and round, as we suffer in the merry-go-round of life, only because of our ignorance. If we realize the truth, the merry-go-round of life will be full of laughter, bliss, peace, and joy. If only

we overcome ignorance and realize the truth, we will overcome all suffering.

Realization is the key in learning how to live life. It helps us achieve our ultimate goal of liberation. If we don't realize the truth, we return to earth again and again and suffer.

IN A NUTSHELL

- The ultimate purpose of life is the 'Realization of the Truth'.
- For this we have to overcome our ignorance.
- Realization is not knowledge. We have to go beyond knowing.
- To realize, we have to learn to ask questions and investigate.
- Realization will liberate us from all suffering.
- Once we realize the truth, we will live a life of joy, peace, and bliss.
- If we don't realize the truth, we will live as the ego, mind, and body and suffer as we lose this precious gift called 'Life' without the joy of living it.

Chapter 32

The Triple Suffering

***We experience pain in the body,
And there is misery in the mind...
The Ego bursts with agony,
In Triple Suffering, we grind.***

Everybody in this world suffers. Whoever is born experiences the 'Triple Suffering' of the body, mind, and ego. Is that the reason why when a child is born, it doesn't come out giggling and laughing? It screams and cries as if it already knows that it is going to experience this triple suffering.

Every 'body' experiences pain. From the time we are young children, till we die, we suffer due to our body. A young child suffers as it falls, trying to walk. Who hasn't experienced bruises as we grew up? Toothaches create a phobia for us to visit the dentist. Haven't you experienced a fractured bone, a pulled muscle or a torn ligament?

Then there is the suffering of the mind which is greater than the pain of the body. The mind creates fear and we shudder in anxiety. It makes us jump to a past that is gone, as it nurses, curses, and rehearses a hurt. No sooner are we free from this misery, that it jumps to the future and makes us worry. It makes us presume so many things, through its toxic thoughts that we sink in stress and anxiety. Unlike the suffering of the body, which is a physical reality, the misery of the mind is psychological. Sometimes, it needs us to go to a psychiatrist because otherwise, we could get into a state of depression and even commit suicide. Haven't we heard of

many people, even those amongst the rich and the famous, who have ended their life due to depression?

The third suffering, lesser-known to man, is the suffering of the ego. Who doesn't experience hate, revenge, jealousy, and anger? We all suffer the agony that is caused by the ego. Only, we don't realize that this suffering is due to our own ego. When do we get angry? When 'I' don't get what 'I' want. When do we take revenge? When 'I' want to settle a score with somebody else. Why do we hate? Because we consider the 'one' we hate different from us and not worthy of our affection. Jealousy too agonizes us as we compare our belongings with others. We are agonized by all this, because of our own ego, and thus we suffer.

As we go through this journey called 'Life', we live and die with this triple suffering of the body, mind, and ego and we think that it is a compulsory evil. What we don't realize is that there is a way to overcome it. If we understand life and realize the truth about who we are, we can be free from all suffering.

Today, people use all kinds of remedies to take care of physical pain, not just simple paracetamols, but even opioids to deal with excruciating pain like that of cancer. The doctors have understood the cause of pain and often use not just medication, but even tranquilizers and anaesthesia to get rid of suffering that is caused by physical pain.

While we can overcome physical pain and suffering if we wish to, we can't wish away the misery of the mind. The mind is a rascal and it constantly troubles us. The suffering of the mind radiates in the body, and we shiver and

shudder. While there is some medication available and a psychiatrist may prescribe exercises like silence and meditation, unless we realize that we are the Divine Soul, not the mind that wanders, we will remain prisoners of the mind.

Overcoming the agony of the ego, is the starting point of becoming a life expert. A few are lucky to graduate in the university of life. They realize that it is meaningless to suffer the agony of the ego. They transcend the ego and realize that in reality we are all one. The Soul in you and the Soul in me is the same. But realization of this truth is not easy. A very few realize the truth about the self. They transcend their ego and realize the futility of its agony. They use their intellect and learn to choose positive emotions like love, forgiveness, and compassion. They are the lucky few who live a life of peace and bliss.

While this Life Manual will help us overcome suffering as we discover who we truly are, and find ways to be happy, we human beings will continue to suffer as we are born, again and again, along with our Karma to experience a new chapter of life on planet earth.

The body suffers as it is born, lives and dies. But the ME - the Mind and Ego, suffers life after life. After one chapter in the book of 'Life' is over, the ME comes back in a new body once again to experience the triple suffering, that of the new body, its habitat and of itself - Mind and Ego.

There is only one way to overcome the misery of the triple suffering. It is realizing we are the Divine Soul, not the body, not the mind, not the ego that appears to be us. Because we have not understood the true meaning of life

and have not realized our true identity, we continue to live with suffering, not only day after day, but life after life.

A few of us are lucky. We master the Life Manual and are liberated from suffering. We live in a state of eternal bliss and everlasting joy. You too can overcome the triple suffering and live happily ever after!

IN A NUTSHELL

- Every human being suffers as they live on planet earth.
- We experience the physical pain of the body and we suffer.
- Our mind makes us suffer with fear, worry, and anxiety.
- The ego causes agony, as we live with anger, hate, revenge, and jealousy.
- Not only do we suffer this triple suffering day after day, but we also suffer it life after life as we are reborn in a new body.
- There is a way to overcome this triple suffering and live in eternal joy and everlasting peace.
- If only we realize the truth about life and master how to live it, we can be liberated from all suffering.
- Those who read the Life Manual are the lucky few who can be liberated from this triple suffering.

Chapter 33

Monkey or Monk

***When your mind is full of anxiety,
Fear, worry, and other junk...
It's time to tame your Monkey Mind,
And make it into a Monk.***

All of us are blessed with a mind. The mind produces thoughts. It is our thought factory. Without the mind, it seems that we cannot live. It is the software of the body and through the organ of the brain and the nervous system, it transmits thoughts to and from every part of the body.

The mind is not a physical organ. It appears to exist. That is why we tell people, 'My mind is wandering.' We experience it and we feel it. But if we go in search of the mind, where it is, we cannot find.

Most of us know this much about the mind. What we probably don't know is that the mind is different from the memory and intellect. We consider the memory to be part of the mind, just as we think the intellect to be the mind. In reality, along with the ego, the intellect, memory and the mind form our subtle body or *Antahkarna*. Because we do not differentiate between the mind and the intellect, we become prisoners of our own mind and we don't realize this.

The mind wanders here and there. It behaves like a monkey that is constantly jumping from thought to thought. The mind doesn't know how to sit still. It can produce a thought practically every second. This can become a whopping

50,000 thoughts per day! All thoughts are not bad thoughts. The mind offers a bouquet and it is for the intellect to separate the roses and the thorns. The intellect discriminates and then activates our power of choice. Some thoughts become feelings and then lead to action, while others wither away in the mind. Therefore, the intellect plays a very important role in what each human being does. A well-developed intellect can become the master of the monkey mind. Otherwise, we just live and die like monkeys.

The mind doesn't stop even when we go to sleep. It continues to produce thoughts as we dream. These can be fantasies or nightmares. Every time we wake up, there are chances that we experience a lingering dream that the mind cooks up. We might sheepishly shrug away the dream or sometimes be impacted by certain distinct thoughts of the dreaming mind. The time when we do not dream seems to be the time that we experience bliss and peace. Haven't you heard people say, 'I slept like a log.' A sound sleep always gives us bliss and peace.

How does one live controlling the mind? How can we cut the tail of the monkey and stop it from this constant jumping and wandering as it swings from the past to the future? We want to enjoy 'the moment', but the mind steals 'the present' and we lose our biggest treasure - 'the now'. Most of us seem to be like little puppets as we sway and dance along with the mind. Is there a way to change this?

Those who understand life and read the manual carefully, realize they are not the body or the mind. They are in fact, the Soul—Divine consciousness. Unfortunately, we don't experience this Divinity because of our own wandering

mind. It dominates our life and makes us believe that it is king – it is everything! If we work towards taking charge of our mind, then, we will become the master and the mind, our slave.

We have to make the monkey mind into a monk. We have to stop the ever-jumping mind, going from thought to thought, by contemplating and focusing on one thought at a time. This is a tough challenge, and a very few are able to master it. The moment they try to silence the mind through different methods of meditation or simply sitting quietly, they watch the mind jump to another thought.

If we really want to live our life with peace and bliss, we have no other option, but to make the monkey mind into a monk. We have to reduce our MTR, the Mental Thought Rate. Every time the mind jumps to an unwanted thought, we need to go and gently bring it back. We need to become conscious of our mind. We have to observe the monkey mind as it jumps from thought to thought.

As we become conscious of our mind and we watch it as it goes here and there, the monkey mind quietens. The moment we use our intellect to discriminate, it slows down the mind. The mind will not stop its monkey business, until we discipline it, silence it and eventually, make it into a monk. We have a choice – either we can live a life with peace, or we can permit our mind to tear our life into pieces. Most of us live scattered lives, with thoughts going in all directions. We pride ourselves on multi-tasking, when in reality, we are handing over our life to the monkey mind. If we really want to live our life with joy and bliss, then we need peace, the very foundation of happiness.

Peace depends upon whether we have made our mind a monkey or a monk. Have we trained our mind to be constantly swinging to a past that doesn't exist and a future that's imagined or have we disciplined the mind to be in the present moment, living life moment by moment, peacefully and blissfully, in the 'now'?

IN A NUTSHELL

- We all have a mind. It is our thought factory and is constantly producing thoughts.
- We mix up the mind and the intellect. They are different.
- The intellect discriminates thoughts and helps us choose.
- If we do not slow down the mind, it becomes a monkey that constantly jumps.
- The mind jumps from the past to the future, as it makes us live with regret, fear, worry, and anxiety.
- Those who know how to live life, make the monkey mind into a monk.
- They discipline the mind to be in the present moment, as they live life thought by thought, in the 'now'.

Chapter 34

Let Go of the Ego

Who is the one that says 'I'?
Who says this is 'mine' and that is 'my'?
It is our Ego that makes us cry,
Isn't it time to bid the Ego goodbye?

In the journey of life, we all experience hate, anger, jealousy, and revenge. But we rarely stop to understand the cause of it. These negative toxins arrive because of our ego. Ego means 'I'. We find ourselves constantly saying, 'This is my house, my car, my wife, my family.' What makes us say so? It is the ego. Although we know that when we come to this world, we bring nothing and when we go, we can take nothing with us, still we are bound by the cravings of the ego that make us believe that the people and possessions belong to us and this makes us miserable.

Most of us know that while it is good to have a healthy self-esteem, the ego can be very damaging. It becomes attached to our loved ones and our material wealth and eventually, we become miserable because of the ego.

Those who understand life, realize that they must let go of the ego. It is not easy to do so as we live imprisoned in a body-mind complex. From the time we are born, we are given a unique identity. We live believing that we are the name, with a nationality and a religion, that makes us who we are. Because we don't realize we are not this body, we also don't realize that this identity is fake. We are the ones who are alive inside, but the ego identifies us to be what we appear on the outside.

Giving up the ego means realizing that we are not the ones the world thinks us to be. However, we don't have to give up our possessions or break ties with all the people in our life when we live beyond being the ego. Letting go of the ego means not being attached to anything, whether it is a person or a product. Ultimately, nothing will be ours. We must realize this truth. This will help us to live, letting go of the ego. Because of the ego, we are not able to realize that we are manifestations of the Divine. God is within us. God is the Power that makes our heart, beat. Although we read this, and most scriptures advocate it, why don't we believe it? Even though we believe it, the Mind along with the Ego, ME, creates a veil between us and the Divine within. The ME acts like a layer of dark clouds that blocks us from seeing the beautiful blue sky and the sunshine. Although we are aware of how the dark clouds block the beautiful Sun, we are not aware that the ego blocks our vision of truth and we continue to live blinded by ignorance due to the ego. If only we let go of the ego, we will find God.

The reality of life is that we are all nothing but the Divine Soul. The body may appear to be, but in reality, we are Divine energy. The wise men and the sages of ancient civilizations used to say this thousands of years ago. Today, science endorses it. We human beings are nothing but energy though we appear to be a mass of cells that becomes identified by the ego.

Those who discover the truth of life learn the art of letting go of the ego, they realize that we are all the Divine Soul. In the end, the body that we think is us, will die and return to dust. If we think we are the ego, then along with the mind, we become the ME and we create Karma through our actions. Thereafter, the ego is born again and again, to

suffer its past actions and invariably it suffers on earth.

Those who let go of the ego, realizing it is an illusion, do not take ownership of any action. They act as an instrument of the Divine and they do not create any Karma. All the carried forward Karma disappears and dissolves at death, as they let go of the Ego.

What happens next? Those who live letting go of their ego, become *Jivanmuktas*. They are realized human beings who are liberated when alive. At death, when the body returns to dust, they are liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth and they experience unification with the Divine. The mention of this can be traced back to the ancient story of the *Kathopanishad*, wherein Yama, the Lord of death is in conversation with Nachiketa. Nachiketa learns the secret that if we let go of the ego, we will become one with God.

The Ego is a wild monster. It will never let us believe that 'I' am not 'I'. It will never let us go on a quest to realize the truth, 'Who am I?' It wants us to be imprisoned in ignorance, as we live identifying ourselves with the body and mind, which we are not. Although we are the Divine Soul, the ego does not permit us to realize this.

The ego will never let go of us. We must make a conscious effort to let go of the ego. We must realize that we are not the ego, mind and body that is always saying, 'This is me.' We must learn to disassociate ourselves from our ego if we want to be truly free.

Those who do not let go of the ego, never achieve their ultimate goal of liberation and unification. They continue to live as an embodied Soul, as they suffer, and they are

born again and again. Although we are Divinity, manifesting as a human being, the ego hides this truth from us, making us prisoners. It's time to break free. We must let go of the ego!

IN A NUTSHELL

- Don't we all believe we are 'I'? This is 'me' and all this is 'mine'.
- Although we bring nothing with us, and at death, everything will be left behind, we still say, 'This is my car, my house.'
- All our relationships will end, but the ego doesn't realize this.
- Unless we let go of the ego, we will never realize that we are the Divine Soul.
- Because we live as the ego, we continue to suffer.
- We create Karma and we are born again and again.
- If only we let go of our ego, we will achieve our ultimate goal and realize God.
- At death we will be liberated and escape from the cycle of death and rebirth as we will be united with the Divine.

Chapter 35

True Love is Bliss

***True Love is Bliss,
It's not just a Kiss.***

***Those who don't learn what True Love is,
This Divine ecstasy, they miss.***

A Life Manual without love would be incomplete. Everybody who lives, loves. But we have not discovered the true meaning of love. Those who live life at the surface, think that love is just about kisses, hugs, romance, sex and Valentine's Day. We think that love is all about broken hearts. What is the secret of True Love?

True Love is Divine. Just like white light from the sun creates a rainbow with VIBGYOR, the 7 beautiful colours of Violet, Indigo, Blue, Green, Yellow, Orange, and Red, pure White Divine love from the Soul manifests as the 7 different colours of love throughout our life. When we are born, we experience the love between children and parents. This is a beautiful love and often lasts throughout life. Our first love is Violet as is the first colour of the rainbow.

As we grow, we experience Indigo love, love between friends. Haven't we all had best friends in our school, whom we loved a lot? This friendship is another manifestation of Divine love and as per some philosophers, more powerful than other forms of love.

Blue love is romance. Who doesn't fall in love as we grow up from a child to an adult? However, this love is very transitory, although deep, as it soon evolves into other colours of love.

The love that is Green is very unique. It is love for ourselves. Self-love or self-esteem is known to exist throughout the world. In fact, many people believe that the strongest love in us is love for the self.

Yellow love is intellectual love. As people mature, they often get into an intimate relationship, driven by the intellect. People with intellectual love will love to talk to each other for hours or days and not get bored of each other.

Orange love is emotional love that blooms more in women. Women are said to be more emotional than men. So, they say, 'Men are from Mars and women are from Venus!' While both genders love, their love manifests in different ways. For men, love is all about Red erotic love. It is the physical expression of love. The whole world is gripped by sensuality and sexuality, mostly to do with red erotic love.

As we define the 7 colours of love, we must realize that all these 7 colours originate from the White love from the Soul. Just like the rainbow appears from sunlight that is white, the 7 colours of love, appear from the Soul. If there was no Soul, there would be no love. Can you ever imagine a dead body loving? Impossible! Because there is no Soul, thus there is no love. All the manifestations of love emanate from the Soul, the source, the fountain of love.

Unfortunately, the world has not come to terms with the truth that true love is bliss, which is not just a kiss, but far more divine and beautiful. All the 7 colours of love create an ecstasy of joy and bliss. Why then does the world only imagine love as hugs, hearts, and Valentine magic? It is

because we have not discovered True Love.

Because we have not discovered the truth that we are in fact, the Divine Soul, we continue to believe love to be that of the body and of the mind, when in reality, the fountain of True Love, springs from the Soul.

White Soulful love is Divine and thus finds its presence in all the scriptures of the world. It would be rare to find any scripture of any religion, where love is not talked about. We talk of love for God. What is this love all about? It is love that is born from the Soul that is seeking the Universal Soul that is omnipresent.

Because we have not learnt the true meaning of love, we have not learnt to live with this beautiful gift called love. To love is to live, but most of us live with a very narrow perspective of love. Love has become a taboo as it is connected only to the physical aspect of sexuality when in reality, it is all about Divine spirituality.

Those who go in quest for God, experience Divinity and they love one and all. They realize the truth that God appears not just as human beings, but as everything alive on earth. A true lover of God, therefore, loves without hesitation and unsparingly.

How should one live and love? One should eliminate possessiveness that restricts love to be only between two people. This love is just from body to body. But love from Soul to Soul is universal. Thus, sometimes, philosophers have considered Indigo love between friends as more powerful than Blue love between lovers or Red erotic love. True Love is unconditional and flows from Soul to Soul.

True Love is bliss, not just a kiss. True Love is the source of all joy and ecstasy but it's not the love that we talk about. True Love is Soulful Divine love that comes from the very essence of our life power. True Love used to be called as *Ishq Haqiqi* by the Sufis and *Agape* by the ancient Greeks. Its origins are found in history that is a few thousand years old. Let us learn the meaning of True Love in this Life Manual.

IN A NUTSHELL

- As we live, we must learn the true meaning of love.
- True Love is bliss, not just a kiss.
- True Love emanates from the Divine Soul that is within.
- It manifests as the 7 colours of love, just as the white light of the sun creates 7 colours of the rainbow.
- Violet love is between kids and parents.
- Indigo love is between friends.
- Blue love is romance.
- Green love is self-love.
- Yellow love is intellectual.
- Orange love is emotional.
- Red love is erotic physical love.
- All love comes from the Soul. One who is dead has no Soul and is incapable of loving.
- It is this White Divine Soulful love that is the source, the fountain of love and of all joy, bliss and ecstasy.

Chapter 36

Prayer and its Purpose

***We all Pray, but why do we Pray?
When we pray, what do we Say?
'I have a problem Lord, I seek from you this...'
Is this the reason, why Prayer is?***

We belong to some religion or the other when we are born and most of us pray. It is natural for us to put our religion as a part of our life credentials. Just like we put our name, our surname, and our nationality, we also put our religion, whether or not we believe in it. Thereafter we may even change it. But as we live through life, we must pause to understand who is the God that we pray to and what we say in our prayers.

Prayer has a purpose. As life unfolds, we face so many problems, and when a problem becomes unsolvable, we take it to our God. We see this happen most often when a doctor gives up hope for somebody who is critically ill and very dear to us. Then, we turn to God. We fold our hands in prayer and cry. We even beg God to save the life of our dear one and to relieve their pain and suffering. Not only do we pray to God to save a life, we even turn to God when there is a pandemic, a disease, a business loss, a family feud, or an anticipated result.

Faith and hope in our God, keeps us seeking and even begging from God, 'O Lord, please bless us with a son.' 'May my child get the first rank in class.' We perform prayers to please God, and request God to fulfil our desires and wishes. Most prayers fall under the following two

categories: either we go to God when we have a problem, or we pray when we seek something from God. But some people don't forget God when their wishes are fulfilled, and problems are solved. In fact, they make it a habit to make 'Gratitude Prayer' a part of their daily life. Some people thank God before they eat a meal or before they start any important work in life. Very few people pray to God because they love God. These people, sincerely, have a deep longing for God. It is this small group of people that go further, beyond religion in quest of the Divine and they find eternal peace.

Isn't it strange that most of us don't really know who is the God we pray to and what we say when we Pray? We grow up divided by our religion and we believe that our God is the most powerful God. People get so obsessed and attached to God, that they start believing in a statue and fall in love with that physical form of God. As kids, we grow up with mythological stories, but somehow, we don't get over them and continue to believe in our fantasy God, without using our intellect to build a connection with the Divine that is not only present within but exists all around us.

While it is very good to pray to a God with name and form, our love for God should make us climb the ladder to heaven as we overcome our ignorance and realize, the several truths about life and our relationship with God.

Prayer has a deep purpose. It is communication with God. It helps us build a connection with the Divine, as we not only talk to God from the depth of our heart but we also pause and wait to listen to the sweet and silent voice of

God. Effective prayer thus, is a two-way communication.

Unfortunately, most of humanity doesn't understand what they say when they pray. How many people actually understand the true meaning of the scripture of their religion? How many of us really know how to interpret what the word of God truly is? While we understand the concept of religion and prayer, we learn about love and kindness; we become compassionate and live with virtues; we often mumble prayers without actually understanding what we are telling God.

In many Eastern religions, just like it is in many monotheistic ones, we sing *bhajans* and *mantras*, spiritual hymns and songs, to praise God. But we get carried away by words that express the physical beauty and the worldly powers of God. We don't evolve in our prayers. We have learnt to by-heart tunes and lyrics but what do all these fervent recitals mean?

The real purpose of prayer is to build a Divine Union with the Creator. It is to take us closer to God as we understand the Divine and realize the presence of our Lord within. As long as we continue to imagine God as someone who wears a fancy attire, who appears in magical and mystical ways, we will never make prayer a means to realize God. As long as our prayers are meant to invoke miracles, we will continue to live believing in the stories that were meant to introduce God to us, but we will not go beyond. No doubt, as young children, we need to be told tales, as our capacity to understand is limited. But isn't it time for us to stop and understand the true meaning of prayer, to realize that God is one power? Our immaturity makes us

fight with people of other religions, and even wage wars. If only we could discover the true purpose of prayer and realize that we are all children of one God, our life would be far more peaceful. While we may live in different countries, following different cultures, speaking different languages believing in different religions, the God of this universe is one. Our prayers may be different, but the one we pray to is the same.

Prayer is meant to build this beautiful relationship, not only with God, but with all the children of God who are none other than God manifesting as you and me.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Prayer has a purpose, but very few of us discover it.
- We all pray, but we all don't know what we say when we pray.
- We go to God whenever we have a problem and fold our hands before God, asking him to solve it.
- We are constantly seeking favours from God in our prayers.
- We pray to a God without realizing who God actually is.
- Because our religions make us believe in different Gods, we even fight with one another in the name of God.
- True prayer will make us love God, realize God and then love one another.

Chapter 37

Where is God and Heaven?

***Where is Heaven and where is God?
What is the real name of our Lord?
Are there many Gods or is there just one?
In search of this truth, life goes on.***

Most of us live and die, but we never learn the truth about God. We believe in some kind of heaven and that if we pray to our Lord, one day, we will go there.

Although human beings are intelligent, it is strange that we get carried away with such fairy tales. Most of us believe in what we are told. Of course, we might have learnt it when we were kids but even after we grow up, we still believe that Santa Claus leaves gifts under the Christmas tree, and this is a real pity.

There is a difference between fact and myth. Most of our religious stories are mythological. They are epics crafted to make children believe in God. Once we start believing in God, and as we grow older, we must discover on our own the real nature of God and where the so-called heaven truly is. *Is God a person made of bone and skin or is God a Power that lives within?* Many of us don't question. We just believe in the God of our religion and we think it is blasphemous to ask any question.

Although the scriptures of most religions reveal the truth, we adults go around in the merry-go-round of life like kids believing in fairy tales. The Bible says, 'The kingdom of God is within you,' Luke 17:20,21. 'Do you not know that you

are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?¹ Corinthians 3:16. The Upanishads say, *Tat Tvam Asi* and *Aham Brahmasmi* - Thou That Art, the Divine Soul. Most of the scriptures indicate that God is within us, still we search for God in a temple, monastery, and church. How will we ever find God?

Saints and sages over the centuries have tried to make us realize the truth. The Buddha, 'The Awakened One' even said that enlightenment is about going within to realize the truth. Guru Nanak, the revered Guru said that we have 9 doors or openings in the human body. The eyes, the nose, the ears, the mouth and 2 organs, one each for procreation and excretion. We must open the tenth door – *Dasmay Dwar*, to realize God within. We human beings are so caught up with what the priests of our religions tell us that the truth hides behind their narratives. Unfortunately, we don't discover the truth about God.

Then, we want to go to God. So, we go to our place of worship – temple, church, monastery, synagogue or gurudwara. Not only this, but we also go to faraway places of pilgrimages to get a glimpse of God. The more exotic the destination, the better. Up in the mountains or in the middle of the desert or ocean, we get carried away by the fantasy that our God's 'heaven' is somewhere on this pilgrimage. After visiting these places, we then dream of 'heaven' being up in the skies, somewhere on a distant planet and we are so sure that after death, we will go there. We don't use our God-given intellect to realize that the body returns to dust as it is cremated or buried. Then, how will anybody go to that distant heaven? We live and die, but we don't realize the truth that heaven or hell, are experienced right here on earth as we live in a human body. Rewards for our good

deeds or punishment for our sins will not be proclaimed by a God wearing a crown and long robes as we are made to imagine. The Divine resides in each one of us and we are redeemed of our deeds right here on earth after we die as we return in a new body to experience the results of our actions in the so-called heaven and hell right here on earth.

Why is that we human beings live as an ignoramus when it comes to the subject of God? There is no doubt that God is, although we don't know who, what or where God is. When will we realize the truth that *God is not a statue or saint, the Divine is a Power that no human can paint? God defined is God denied.* We don't need to prove God. Our existence itself is enough proof of it. All the beauty around us is a manifestation of the Divine. Because we live and die in ignorance, we don't experience God's Divinity all around us.

The very life inside us, the Soul, the Spirit or the *Atman*, is nothing but a God particle. It gives life to each of the over 30 trillion cells in the human body. But we don't realize this. We see a person die, but we don't question, 'Why?' We don't realize that when the Soul departs, there is no breath. We don't realize that the Soul is Divine, and thus, Divinity reveals itself in all of humanity, in the animals and plants that surround us. Still, we human beings search for God, when in reality, God is within us, in each and every cell of the body.

Those who read the Life Manual, realize the truth about God. It may be only a few who get to know the truth, and even a lesser minority who are blessed from taking the knowledge further to realization. But it is these blessed ones who ask, investigate and realize God. Not only do

they live a life of bliss, overcoming ignorance, living fearlessly without any concern of death or disaster, they feel the Divine presence all the time. They believe in the God of their religion, but they go beyond the kindergarten of religion as they yearn for God, love God, and seek God. If we do not realize the truth about God and heaven, we will never learn to truly live.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We don't know who God is, where God is, what God is. But beyond doubt, God is.
- God is not a statue or saint. God is a power that no human can paint.
- We live and die as we get carried away by mythological tales about God and heaven.
- God is within, but we search outside.
- We go to a temple, monastery, and church, instead of taking our search inwards.
- We believe in the fairy tale that heaven is somewhere faraway, up in the skies.
- Those who really learn to live, realize God within, in the temple of their heart.
- They realize that heaven or hell will be experienced right here on earth as we return in a new body to experience our own past actions.

Chapter 38

Religion is just a Kindergarten

*Religions are good,
But they only teach us the basics about God.
They help us to pray and to believe,
But we don't become one with our Lord.*

All religions are good as they teach us to live with faith, trust, hope, and enthusiasm. But religions are only kindergartens. Just like we learn ABC in nursery, religions only teach us the ABC about God. It is not the fault of religion. The subject of God is beyond human definition. Therefore, religions create a God that young children can identify with, God with name and form. But unfortunately, it seems that we continue to remain in the kindergarten of religion all our life.

What is life all about? We have to move on from school to university where we graduate. While we all grow up and achieve a master's degree as we develop skills in our career, it is most unfortunate, that as far as religion is concerned, we don't grow up. People remain in the kindergarten of religion all through their life, not till they are 40 or 50, but even when they cross, 70, 80 or even the ripe age of 90 years. We don't graduate in the university of spirituality.

Spirituality is not another religion. Despite our religion, we must evolve to graduate in spirituality. What does this mean? We must not just live our life believing in the mythology of religion. Of course, we all pray to our God and that is good. To live a life of faith, hope, trust and enthusiasm is the right way to live. But should we not go

beyond that? If we really love our God, if there is a yearning for the Divine, then we must go in search of God. We must evolve from religion to spirituality.

Nobody needs to change their religion. Spirituality is about going beyond religion. It is climbing the ladder to the Divine. It is discovering the Divine spirit within and realizing that God is not far away. Somehow, we get so addicted to our religion that we feel safe following it. In fact, there is a fear of going beyond it and it is considered blasphemous to question the teachings of our scriptures.

By asking questions about God, we are not becoming atheists or agnostics. We love God and we want God. Therefore, there is no harm in studying about how the concept of God evolved in the world, how so many different religions came about and what the truth about God is.

Spirituality reveals the truth. It respects all religions but makes us realize that we are all manifestations of the Divine. You and me, are not two different entities. We are like two waves in the same ocean. God is the cause; we are just effects. Spirituality reveals the truth.

Today, it is sad that people are fighting against each other in the name of religion, even waging wars. All this is because we have not realized the truth.

All scriptures are good, just like all religions are good. But they have a limitation. Unless we delve deep into the spiritual truth, we will always think of God as an entity far away from us. We will never realize God within. We will always be confused about God, about whether we will be

rewarded or punished by our Lord in heaven, just as we get zapped with different cultures and different beliefs of the different religions of the world.

We should not get carried away by other religions nor should we judge them. We should not think our religion is superior, nor should we try to convert people to our religion. God is one – when will we realize this truth? Just because different religions give different names to their God, does it mean that there are different heavens in different planets? Spirituality busts this myth. It makes us love God without any bar of caste, creed, gender, nationality or religion. We are all Divine manifestations. The truth is we are nothing, God is everything! Because of our ignorance, we continue to blindly follow our religion and remain in the kindergarten of religion till we die.

Many people think that religion is an easy way out. We can sin and God will forgive us for our sins, as long as we offer God 10% of our earnings. When will we overcome our ignorance? Is it true that God wants our money and thus, gives us a license to sin? Do we want our Lord to suffer for our sins and then settle the bill through our charity? We human beings suffer only because we live without realizing the basic truth about life and about God. It's time for us to review our belief systems. We must do a check not only on our philosophy, but also on our theology, not so much to prove it wrong, but to learn and grow beyond and realize the truth about the Divine. Unless we open our real eyes, we will not realize the truth. We will continue to fight in the name of God and always remain distant from the Divine who in reality exists in each cell of our body.

When will we realize the truth about the Divine Soul

within that is God? When will we realize that the *Atman*, Spirit, Soul, *Prana*, *Chi*, all mean one and the same thing, just like Jesus, Krishna and Shiva? These may appear to be different Gods with different names but God is beyond name and form. Spirituality will reveal the truth!

IN A NUTSHELL

- Religion is a kindergarten to spirituality. Unfortunately, we don't realize this.
- All through our life, we remain in the kindergarten of religion. We don't graduate to the university of spirituality.
- We don't have to change our religion. All religions are good.
- But religions only teach us the basics. We have to go beyond religion, having faith in God.
- We must love God, yearn for God, and seek God.
- Spirituality reveals the Divine in the temple of our heart.
- Although the world may refer to God by different names, the ultimate truth which we all must realize is that God is one Power beyond all religions.

Chapter 39

Realizing God Within

*God is not on a distant planet,
Somewhere far away.*

*God lives within the temple of our heart,
He is with us every day.*

In this journey called 'Life', one of the most important lessons that we forget to learn is the truth about God. We love God, we pray to God, but, sadly, we don't realize God. The ultimate purpose of man on earth is to realize he is the Divine Soul, and to be ultimately liberated at death and experience unification with the Divine. Because we don't realize God, we return to planet earth and go through the merry-go-round of joy and sorrow, again and again.

Anybody with basic intelligence knows that God exists. The Creator of this universe, for want of a better name, is called God. Different religions give their God different names, just as several saints and mythological deities become God for civilizations around the world. The only reason that God has become such a creative piece of art, is because man is not able to comprehend God without name and form. God is the energy that is present everywhere. God is the Power that makes our heart beat. God is the very life, the spirit, the Soul, the *Atman*. Because we are unable to comprehend God, religions teach their followers to follow a God that adorns snakes, one who sits on a lotus flower in the ocean, one who will die so that we can be forgiven for our sins or even one who lives far away in the skies. Then we perform all kinds of rituals and follow superstitions, to please that heavenly God, which all along is within our

own body. The God power in us gives life to each of the 30 trillion cells. It is the same God-Power in me and in you, and in the 8 billion people on earth. This is not 8 billion Gods, but one God, empowering all of this universe to live.

In our house, we have different kinds of bulbs and lights. We have televisions and air conditioners, hair dryers and other appliances. Each of them is different, but the power that comes to all these gadgets is the same. It is not a different power that is present in each of the appliances or gadgets. While we realize this, we don't realize that the power in you and the power in me is the same universal power that we cannot see.

What happens at death? In a fraction of a moment, the God Power within leaves and we are pronounced dead. It is different from sleep where we wake up. Death is different. It is not like a breakdown of our car or air conditioner, which can be repaired and reconstructed to work again. Death is the end for that body. Thereafter, the body is cremated or buried. Although we see this happening day in and day out, we don't realize the Divine that is within us. We search for God in a temple, monastery, and church. We look up at the sky. We fold our hands and cry. But we don't realize that the very 'I' hides the God that is within us. When we let go of the ego, when we transcend the body and mind, then we can realize God. *God can never be found; God has to be realized.*

Have you ever wondered why a human being normally doesn't pray with eyes open? Even when we go on a pilgrimage far away, once we reach our destination and we stand before our God, we automatically close our eyes to pray. This is because God is within. God is not outside in

front of us. The power of God is throbbing inside us. If we contemplate this, we will realize the truth that God is within.

There are many methods of Realization. Different human beings are sparked with God-realization through different ways. The most common realization of God within is first the realization of the self, realizing who we are not, not the body, not the mind. Then it is realizing we are the Divine Soul. The Soul in me is the same energy. God energy! While it may be very easy to read this and even possible to understand it, it is a rare feat to realize it, to experience the Divine within.

Those who realize God within, realize that God is the cause, we are just effects. Without God we are nothing. Just like a statue, a pot or a plate are all made of clay, if there is no clay, none of them exist. So, without God, all of us perish. We return to dust.

Have you ever stopped to contemplate the beauty around you? There is so much natural beauty in the flowers and the trees, in the butterfly and the bees, in you and in me. What is the cause of all this beauty? It is the Divine life within. The moment life departs, the beauty disappears. When will we realize that it is the Divinity that causes all the beauty? Once we become conscious of God within, then we realize that God is everywhere. We see Divinity in all the beauty around us, as we live a life of eternal peace and happiness.

In this journey called 'Life', the most important lesson on how to live life in the Life Manual is realizing God within. Once we do, we will be blessed to live as the Divine Soul, in

eternal joy and everlasting peace. For this, we must learn to give ourselves up, then we will find God.

IN A NUTSHELL

- We love God and we pray to God, but we don't realize that God is within.
- God is the very life power that makes our heart beat.
- The Soul, the Spirit, the *Atman*, we know it by different names, but it is the Divine.
- God can't be found. We have to realize God.
- As long as we don't let go of the ego, we will not find God.
- There are different ways and methods to realize God within.
- Most often, it is self-realization that leads to God-realization – Realizing that we are not the body and mind, we are the Divine Soul.
- Once we become conscious of God within, then we realize that God is everywhere. We see Divinity in all the beauty around us, as we live a life of eternal peace and happiness.

Chapter 40

Living as the Divine Soul

***We all think we are 'ME',
The Ego, body, and Mind.
When we live as the Divine Soul,
Joy, Bliss, Peace we Find.***

As we go through this journey called 'Life', we may be one set of human beings, but we live very different lives. Some of us live purely physical, material lives. How do we live?

Those people who think that life is only from birth to death, and then, it's over - they are pleasure-driven. They seek success and achievement. They don't delve into the true meaning and purpose of life. They may or may not believe in God. But they don't go beyond the skin to find the power that is alive within. They are attached to their family, friends, and their possessions. To them, the more the merrier, as they build an interactive community around them, whether it is partying, playing, golfing or just, whiling away time together. They go through the merry-go-round of life experiencing joy and sorrow. But they rarely experience peace and tranquillity. It is strange, but most people live and die this way.

There are a few people in this world, who realize that there is more to life than just the physical aspect. They are driven by ethics and values and their life has compassion and love. They believe in the Law of Karma- *As we sow, so shall we reap*. They realize that death is not the end. While the body dies, these people believe that they will be reborn as per their Karma. So, while they may live like the first group, which is

how the majority lives, they are different in as much as they are conscious that death is not the end. They know very well that we cannot escape from our actions. Therefore, while they may be pursuing success and pleasure, the river of their life is controlled by strong banks and they try to flow towards their destination with righteousness within the prescribed limits of their religion, philosophy, culture and their belief system.

There is a third category, a minority that is different from the two groups as given above. They are less than 1% of the world who go on a quest to realize the true meaning of life. They know that life is not all about success, achievement, money, and pleasure. Their life too is built on the strong foundation of Karma, but they go beyond. They ask questions and they investigate as they try to realize the purpose of life. This small group of people live far more peaceful and blissful lives, as they start their journey as the Divine Soul. They seem to understand that they are not the body, but they look deeper and try to realize the true meaning of life. This quest takes individuals on a journey, through different paths. Many of them are religious, just as others may be spiritual. Not only do they read scriptures and books on philosophy and theology, they also go in search of spiritual masters, mentors, or a life coach. They seem to have a thirst for the true nectar of life.

Of this 1% whom we can call 'seekers', a very small fraction realizes the truth about life. This is a unique blessing and this rare group of people who experience self-realization, transform their lives. They realize that we are not the body that dies. We are not even the Mind and Ego, ME, that is reborn as per our Karma. We are the Divine Soul. We are

all manifestations of the Divine. Our Ultimate Goal is Liberation while alive and Unification at death. These unique realized beings live in this world of pleasures and illusions, as they fight a war within. They experience the wandering of the mind, and the craving of the body, as the ego struggles between a material and spiritual life. While they have realized the truth, they are not yet free from the ignorance that constantly attacks them. But they have started their journey of living as the Divine Soul.

Realized beings are rare and few, just about 0.00001 % of the world's total population. These blessed few, a handful of people, have spiritually evolved beyond the rest of the 99.99% people in the world. They realize that this world is a cosmic drama. Nothing is real. We are all Divine manifestations, the Soul. We are not the body and mind that we appear to be. Not only do they realize this truth, but they also live it! Such a state is called *Sthitpragya* by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. The Upanishads and the Vedas title such people as the *Jivanmukta*. They live as a Divine Soul that is liberated while they are still alive. They live with a steady intellect, having full command over the mind and the body. They live a life of bliss and peace.

Such people enjoy a state where they live a life of eternal bliss and everlasting peace, as they are conscious of the truth. They overcome the cravings of the body and the wandering of the mind, as they become an observer of the life drama that is being enacted on planet earth. They overcome the misery that is experienced by those who think they are the body. They also overcome the stress and anxiety that fills the lives of those who think they are ME, the Mind and Ego. As they let go of their Karma, realizing that they are not the doer of the action, they become

liberated from all the petty annoyances, experienced by most others who just live and die.

People who live as the Divine Soul, just have one goal – not to sink into this world or *Samsara*, but to escape *Mithya* and *Maya*, the illusion, and to be liberated. At death, they seek to be united with the Divine. They seek nothing else. They live as Divine manifestations realizing who they are and why they are here. They are the ones who truly live.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Very few people live the life of a Divine Soul, experiencing bliss and joy.
- Most people live as the body and chase success, achievement, and pleasure.
- A few people are lucky as they go beyond living as ME – Mind and Ego. They live a life as per Karma, wishing to do good deeds. They too suffer as they are born again.
- A rare minority goes in quest of the truth. They realize that they are the Divine Soul. But not all those who go through this realization are liberated from misery, suffering, and rebirth.
- A very small, rare minority lives as the Divine Soul, as manifestations of the Divine, in eternal bliss and everlasting peace.

Chapter 41

Being in Divine Union All the Time

*Being in Divine Union is not a Joke.
For most of us sink in the worldly Smoke.
But once there is this Eternal Bond,
We experience a Bliss that is beyond.*

What is being in Divine union all about? Normally we human beings are prisoners of our mind. We are slaves and we are constantly whipped with the thoughts of our own mind. Thus we suffer. But the one who experiences consciousness of the Divine, he remains connected in Yoga. Yoga translated means *Yuj* in Sanskrit. It means union with the Divine. But we are unable to be united because we are distracted by thoughts and attached to the world.

Our biggest challenge in life is to be ever-united with the Divine. To understand it in simple terms – How is a SIM card in a mobile phone always connected to the network? The satellite is far away but the SIM card doesn't lose the connection. So should our life be lived. We should never break our connection with the Divine. Is it even possible to be in Divine consciousness all the time? Practically speaking - No! As we live in a body-mind complex, it is natural for our body senses to look outward and trigger thoughts. This makes us lose our Divine consciousness. Even if we shut off our senses, our mind wanders like a monkey from thought to thought. This disturbs our connection with the Divine. We lose consciousness, and our network gets disconnected. What is the way to remain in Divine Union all the time?

Yogis of the ancient world, those who lived in Yoga advocated the way to remain in Divine consciousness all the time. Normally, when we wake up in the morning, naturally our mind jumps to thoughts, but the Yogi doesn't permit the mind to go here and there. He starts his day with *Dhyana* Yoga - in silence or meditation. He doesn't rush to grab a newspaper or to switch the television on, nor does he start talking to people. The Yogi remains in silence.

Man is created in such a way that there cannot be freedom from action. He has to act, do something. What does the Yogi do? The moment he finishes his Yoga of meditation, he gets into *Karma* Yoga or the Yoga of action. What does this mean? It means he surrenders himself to be an instrument of the Divine. He transcends the ME- the Mind and Ego and his actions become the actions of the Divine that are performed through him. The Yogi thinks he is just a flute, the music is not his. The music plays *through* him.

Normally it is very difficult for the common man to live like a Yogi. We are attached to so many people just as we are passionate about so many things. We are so connected with the world that we get disconnected from the Divine. The Yogi does exactly the opposite. He disconnects from the world to be ever-united with the Divine. What else does the Yogi do apart from *Dhyana* Yoga - silence and meditation and *Karma* Yoga- Yoga of action? The Yogi spends a lot of time in *Bhakti* Yoga.

Bhakti Yoga is the Yoga of devotion. The Yogi is united with the Divine in several modes of prayer. It may be singing songs or hymns about God, or just chanting or

even performing certain rituals that keep his devotion for God alive. This *Bhakti* or devotion is a key way of being united. But there is one more way that unites a sincere seeker with God.

One who lives like a Yogi is united with the Divine through *Gyana* Yoga, Yoga of education to attain wisdom. One who truly wants to live a life of meaning and purpose doesn't just follow the herd. Whatever he reads or hears, he asks questions, he contemplates and realizes the truth. True Yogis spend a lot of time in *Gyana* Yoga reading scriptures, philosophy, theology from the East and the West. Thus a true Yogi becomes enlightened with the truth.

There is magic in living a life that is ever united with the Divine. It is not everybody's cup of tea. A rare few are blessed to become awake, aware, and conscious of the truth. They are the ones whose life experiences the constant cycle of Yoga. They move from *Dhyana* Yoga to *Bhakti* Yoga and then from *Karma* Yoga to *Gyana* Yoga. Moving from one Yoga to another keeps them ever united with the Divine. They do not disconnect and they do not sink in this world of desires and cravings.

In contrast to a Yogi, one who lives in *Bhoga* or is united with worldly pleasures is consumed by lust, anger, greed, attachment, and jealousy. The ego makes us sink in what is called *Bhoga* - the opposite of Yoga. While Yoga uplifts us into the skies, *Bhoga* makes us sink in worldly pleasures. In the former, one experiences eternal peace and bliss; in the latter, one enjoys temporary pleasures but then repeatedly suffers.

The choice is ours. If we truly yearn for the Divine, we can achieve the state of Yoga and be ever united, enjoying bliss unknown to the common man. We must beware that Yoga is not what the world defines it to be. It is not just *Asanas* or physical exercises and *Pranayama* or breathing techniques. Yoga does not mean giving up of the world and sacrificing everything. If we truly love God, we can be in Yoga living in the world as a Yogi united with God. But if we don't, we can live and die enjoying the pleasures of this world just as we experience misery in cycles losing the Divine connection.

IN A NUTSHELL

- A true Yogi is the one who lives in Divine Union.
- Just like a SIM card that is always connected to the network, the Yogi doesn't lose the Divine connection.
- The Yogic cycle starts with Yoga of meditation, goes on to action, devotion, and education or gaining wisdom.
- Whatever be the Yoga - *Dhyana* Yoga, *Karma* Yoga, *Bhakti* Yoga, *Gyana* Yoga, the challenge for the Yogi is to remain ever conscious of the Divine.
- One who is able to remain in Yoga enjoys eternal bliss and peace.
- It is a choice. If not Yoga, we can live in *Bhog*a and sink in the attractions and pleasures of the world.

Chapter 42

Consciousness is Bliss

***Consciousness is Bliss!
Because we are caught in a world of illusions,
This Divine bliss we Miss.***

How can anybody explain to us the feeling of Divine Bliss that we have never experienced? How can we imagine a life devoid of any misery or suffering, when we have always been troubled by them? We human beings are used to seeking happiness and becoming happy. We have not learnt the art of being happy. Why?

Throughout our life, we are slaves of our mind. It drives us to act and to do what the ME wants to do. The ME – Mind and Ego, sets the agenda, and as helpless puppets, we dance through life as if the strings of our destiny are not in our hands. We go through a cycle of pleasure and pain. We struggle through loss and gain. We experience sunshine and rain. But we live and die in vain. We don't understand life. Before we even know it, life escapes us.

At first, we are little children and the first two decades pass as we play with our toys and are busy with girls and boys. Then, the next decade is about waking up and wanting to be somebody, finding a life partner and creating a career or an occupation. Before we even realize it, we have lost 4 decades. The fifth decade is the one where we enjoy the rewards of success or struggle through the pangs of failure. Very few among us wake up in the sixth decade of our life to realize the true meaning of life. Most of us slip into the

seventh decade and even further into our grave, without even realizing what life is all about.

A rare minority is able to tame the monkey - their mind. They are able to let go of their ego and experience Divinity within. They become conscious of their Divine Soul, their true identity and they defeat their physical self with their spiritual strength. They become observers of this drama called 'Life', as they live in Divine Consciousness.

What is this Divine Consciousness all about? To most of us, it is an unheard experience because the mind never lets us get to that point, a point where we watch the mind as it wanders. A state of being where the physical pain does not elevate into suffering, a blessing where the agony of the ego does not let us become aghast in anger, hate, revenge or jealousy.

Consciousness is experiencing the Divine at all times. It is that Blissful state which is rewarded to a fraction of humanity. In this state of blissful consciousness, one does not get excited with pleasure, nor does one suffer with misery. One lives a life of Divine surrender and acceptance as they enjoy the show called 'Life'.

Those who enjoy this Bliss, are conscious that everything is a manifestation of the Divine. We may see it as a butterfly or a bee, a fruit on a tree, you or me, but in reality, everything is HE - Holistic Energy of the Divine. When we become conscious of this, the mind ceases its monkey business. Even if it tries to jump from thought to thought, Consciousness brings it back to be a silent monk. It tames not just the mind, but also the senses of the body as it

enjoys the Divine bliss that it experiences in all the beauty around.

Beauty is Divinity. But normal mortals are not conscious of this. We think of natural beauty as a creation of the Divine, and continue to live in duality, not realizing that we are ourselves the cause of all these effects which appear beautiful.

Only those who experience this Divine Consciousness experience this state of *Satchitananda*. They experience *Ananda* or bliss that comes from the Consciousness - *Chit* of the Truth - *Sat*. Those who live in this *Ananda*, are liberated from all misery and sorrow. Like waves dancing on the sea, nothing matters to them. Neither do they fear death, nor are they concerned with the petty issues of life. They learn to laugh as they live with love and laughter. They have realized the truth and have gone beyond mundane living. They are the few who have mastered the Life Manual and discovered how to truly live life.

Most of us miss this Bliss. We miss experiencing the Divine Consciousness that comes by overcoming ignorance and realizing the truth. We struggle through life as the body-mind complex and miss enjoying the beautiful journey of the Divine Soul.

Consciousness is Bliss, but how will anybody understand this? If they don't experience Consciousness, they will only be caught in petty pleasures and temporary triumphs, till one day before they realize, life is over. They never bothered to open the Life Manual, to read it, to understand it, and to drink from the nectar of it. They never took the help of a life coach or a Spiritual Master to

discover how to live life. They abused the gift that was priceless just because they did not discover the value of it and the purpose and meaning that was hidden.

It's not too late. Even now, we can study the Life Manual and discover how to live life. We can still learn from the Life Manual how to realize *Satchitananda*, consciousness of the truth that is bliss.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Most people live and die without discovering how to live.
- They do not make an effort to read the Life Manual and life escapes them.
- They do not even understand the meaning of Consciousness that is so Blissful.
- Those who experience Bliss, being conscious of the Divine, truly live.
- They observe this world as a Divine drama and enjoy every moment of this show.
- Before this gift of life is over, we must read the Life Manual, discover how to live and make the best of this gift called 'Life'.
- We must reach the state of *Satchitananda*, bliss that comes from consciousness of the truth.

Chapter 43

The Need of a Guru - A Spiritual Master

*Just like we need a Teacher,
To guide us in Achievement,
We need a Guru, a Spiritual Master,
To reach Enlightenment.*

Who doubts that we need a coach, a mentor, a guide to evolve in life? It starts from the time we go to kindergarten. If it were not for a teacher who taught us ABC, we would never be able to build a foundation to graduate in a university. While we are all grateful to our teachers, and our mentors for guiding us, not many of us are fortunate to have a life coach, a Spiritual Master or a Guru. A Guru is one who takes us from '*Gu*' to '*Ru*', from darkness to light. Although we may get our hands on a Life Manual, we will still need the help of a Guru to interpret that knowledge and to realize the truth.

Some gadgets are easy to operate. We don't even need to read the Operating Manual. But some gadgets are so complicated that despite having a Manual in our hands, we are unable to operate them. It may be a high-tech drone that we lay our hands on for the first time. Though we may read the Manual, we still wouldn't know how to fix the propellers, the flight controller, and other parts of the drone. But if somebody who is an expert is called in, the drone will be up and flying in minutes!

A human life is the most complicated of all machines. It immediately gets functioning as a body-mind complex the moment it is born. While a kid is taught by teachers in

school and parents at home, after we grow up, we need the guidance of a Spiritual Master to realize the truth, to be enlightened. Without the help of a Guru, we will never be able to realize that we are the Soul. It is impossible for a normal man to transcend the rascal mind that keeps jumping from thought to thought. It is beyond human capability to suddenly transform from being an ego-driven individual with a name, nationality, and religion, to renouncing everything that he is and everything that he has, in order to realize the truth. For this, one needs the help of a Divine Spiritual Sage, an Enlightened Master. Only a true Guru can make this transformation possible.

A Guru who is not qualified to guide one on the spiritual path will fail in helping us reach that state of enlightenment. Enlightenment is a complicated subject and unless the Guru has been coached by another enlightened Master, the chances are, he will not be able to effectively help us realize the truth. Any teacher can impart spiritual knowledge, but knowledge is not realization. Realization is a gift from the Divine and needs both the guidance of the Guru and the grace of God. Therefore, if one wants to achieve the ultimate goal of life, one needs a Spiritual Master to hold their hand and show them the way.

Is there any guarantee that having a Guru will lead us to liberation? No. A Guru can show us the way, a Guru can switch on the light on the truth, but it is for us to open our 'real eyes' to realize who we are and why we are here. People often ask the question, 'How can we find a genuine Guru?' Spiritual Masters of the past have advocated that when a genuine seeker is ready, the Guru will appear. The Guru is a manifestation of the Divine, only far more evolved than the other seekers who have to shed their

material layers to discover the Divine Spirit within. It is the task of the Guru to peel us off our desires and cravings, our attachments and passions, our weaknesses and limitations and help us grow and evolve into a Divine Soul. A true Guru is capable of creating a metamorphosis in our life, after which we will be completely transformed.

If one wants to learn how to live life, then one needs both – a Life Manual, which is the document that guides us at every step of life, and a Guru or a Spiritual Master. The Guru will interpret the Life Manual for us, just as he will enlighten us on how to live life as the Divine Soul. Without a Guru, a Life Manual may have all the information, but it will be insufficient to take us to the realization of the truth. Realization is an inner experience, and often a Guru can create magic in opening the door to that state of enlightenment. Without a Guru, we would live and die in darkness.

Whatever truth I have realized in life, I owe to my Guru, my Spiritual Master, Dada J. P. Vaswani. He held my hand for 25 long years and made me realize the truth about life. This Life Manual is a tribute to my Guru, without whom it would be impossible for me to share the principles of how to live life.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Not many of us are fortunate to have a life coach, a Spiritual Master or a Guru.
- A Guru is one who takes us from 'Gu' to 'Ru' - from darkness to light.
- The Guru is a manifestation of the Divine, and is far more evolved than the other seekers.
- Though we may have the Life Manual, the importance of a Guru cannot be negated.
- Enlightenment is a complicated subject that needs the guidance of a Guru. A Guru who has been coached by another enlightened Master, is an ideal choice.
- The Guru will interpret the Life Manual for us to refer, just as he will enlighten us on how to live life as the Divine Soul.
- When a genuine seeker is ready, the Guru will appear.
- A Guru can show us the way but we need to open our 'Real Eyes' to realize the truth.
- Realization is a gift from the Divine and needs the guidance of the Guru and the grace of God.
- The Guru helps us evolve just as he opens the door that will lead us to the ultimate goal.

Chapter 44

Our Ultimate Goal

***We think that our Life Goal,
Is Joy, Peace, and Bliss.
To discover we are the Divine Soul,
This Ultimate Goal we Miss.***

Most of us live and die, and we don't even know why we have come to planet earth. Were we made as an intelligent human being just to exist, to have fun, and to die? Did the Creator create the magnificent heart, the amazing brain and this sophisticated human machine with over 30 trillion cells just to eat, drink, and make merry? There is a purpose for us on earth. There is no doubt that there is a greater meaning that we are ignorant about. We human beings have lost sight of our Ultimate Goal, which is to realize we are the Divine Soul.

Why is the whole world just chasing success? It is because we think success will give us happiness. From the time we are born, until we die, we go behind achievements, although ultimately, they do not give us everlasting happiness and peace. No doubt pleasure that comes from success makes us enjoy life, but soon, we are thirsty again. Our greed overcomes our need and we are once again back in the race, caught in the chase and we get stuck in that maze. In the bargain, we lose sight of our Ultimate Goal.

It's a pity that we intelligent human beings become and remain slaves throughout our life. We are slaves to our own senses and to our mind. We crave till our grave, but until the end, we do not take an exit on the highway of life and go

in search of the truth. It seems like we are paralyzed by our own desires and we fail to understand what this gift of life is all about. We think we are the body, mind, and ego, and we lose sight of the truth. There is nothing wrong in wishing to be happy. But we don't understand the meaning of true happiness.

We can't get happiness. Happiness is a state of being. Therefore, we have to be happy. Why are we not happy? Because we have not learnt how to live life. We have consumed life without paying attention to the Life Manual. We get attached to people and possessions and live in constant misery. Although we have a choice, we live as emotional beings rather than intellectual humans. We let the monkey create ruckus, as it drags us back into the cosmic illusion and stops us from our ultimate destination.

ME, the Mind and the Ego, are our biggest enemy, but we don't recognize that these thieves steal from us our Ultimate Goal. It is the mind and the ego that stops us from realizing that we are the Divine Soul. We pray to a God without realizing to whom we pray and what we say. Thus, if our intellect analyzes, we don't pray, we just bray. We live and die, no better than donkeys that graze the earth for the years that we are alive. Isn't it a pity that an intelligent being like man goes through the motion of life without even realizing what his Ultimate Goal is? Most of humanity lives and dies without being conscious of the Divine Soul.

It's time to wake up, and learn to live life, not as the body, mind and ego, but as the Divine Soul. It's time to be conscious of the truth, as we control our life like a chariot. Our life chariot has 5 horses, the 5 senses that are

galloping. To control the chariot of life, we need to control the reins which is the mind. Without a charioteer, the reins will let the horses loose and so, the intellect must be the controller of the mind that keeps the five senses under control.

Who is in ultimate command of the intellect, the mind, and the senses? It is 'we', the consciousness, the Divine Soul. We are that ultimate consciousness that observes everything and should control everything. Because we think we are the body, mind and the ego, our life chariot is not controlled by the Divine consciousness and the intellect. Our 5 senses and the wandering mind delve into the pleasures of this world and we get caught in the attractions that promise pleasure and happiness. We are so entangled in the world of allurements that we forget we are the Divine Soul and lose command of our intellect. We live and die, only to be born again and again and suffer on planet earth. Thus we fail in achieving the ultimate goal of life.

Can we reverse the way we live? Yes! If only we realize that we are the Divine Soul, then we will take charge of our body, mind and ego and live with Divine consciousness. We will become aware that the God we are seeking is within us. We are nothing, just 5 elements of nature - Earth, Water, Air, Fire, and Space, that come alive with the Divine Soul. We are these 5 elements that appear to be the body. When the Soul departs, the body dies, and we think our life has come to an end.

Death is just a bend. If we do not realize the truth, that we are the Divine Soul, then based on our Karma, our ME, Mind and Ego, will be reborn. But if we achieve the

ultimate goal, and realize that we are the Divine Soul, then, we can be liberated from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Our challenge is to feel the Divine presence within, to realize that we are not this body, mind and ego. We are the Divine Soul. Then we will be liberated and united with the Divine. To realize this, is our ultimate goal.

IN A NUTSHELL

- Most people think that our Ultimate Goal is to be happy.
- We spend our entire life seeking success and pleasure.
- Our ultimate goal is not just happiness. It is eternal happiness that comes with the realization of the truth.
- The ultimate goal is to realize we are the Divine Soul.
- Once we realize this, we attain a state of everlasting bliss, joy and peace.
- We are liberated from all misery and suffering and from the cycle of death and rebirth.
- Alas, man is lost in the world. He doesn't realize the ultimate goal that he is the Soul!
- Our ultimate goal is to realize that we are the Soul, then to be liberated and to unite with the Divine.

Afterword

I did not know how to ‘Live’ life. For 50 long years, I just wandered here and there with anger, with worry, and with fear. My life had experienced several transformations. I lived 25 years of my life just chasing money, success, achievement, and pleasure, until one day I realized that making a difference was far more fulfilling than just making money. At 40, I shut down my business and transformed my life. Although I was very happy travelling around the world, my life had no purpose. The biggest gift of my life was my Guru, my Spiritual Master, Dada J. P. Vaswani. I spent 25 years with him as I evolved and finally realized the truth about life.

He inspired me to go on a quest, a search to find the true purpose and meaning of life. Till then, I thought I knew everything. I lived as the Ego with arrogance, as I made my millions. As my life coach, Dada not only taught me the meaning of humility but led me on the path of spirituality. I am grateful to my Guru, for without him, I would have never been able to discover how to live life. This book, Life Manual, is a tribute to the teachings of my Master, who was liberated after he traversed the earth for 100 years.

This book covers all my personal experiences and my learnings. I have not put theoretical knowledge in the book, but what I have practically experienced. Therefore, this Life Manual is my personal life manual. It is ratified by teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, and the Upanishads. It is inspired by the knowledge of saints like Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharishi, and Adi Shankara. This Manual has been

carefully crafted after reading all the scriptures of the world, just as it has taken into account the philosophies of the world's greatest philosophers, right from ancient civilizations till the present day saints and sages.

What is life? It is a journey from birth to death. We are all gifted this life of human birth, but have we discovered how to live it? Since I wandered for 5 decades, I decided to create this manual. We refer to many manuals, not only operating instructions for our gadgets, but also the process documents for our businesses. In today's world, we cannot imagine running a business without SOPs, which are laid down in the Standard Operating Process Manual. Not only organizations, even countries are managed by constitutions, but we have ignored this important task - the need to create a Life Manual, a manual for our most important treasure - Life.

We all want to be happy, but we haven't learnt the simple truth that we can't achieve happiness. We have to *be* happy. After having written several books on happiness and considering myself to be amongst the happiest people in the world, I have covered the simple processes of being happy. I have also explained how we can overcome misery and sorrow as we face the trials and tribulations of life. Who doesn't have problems? But those who discover how to live life accept problems gracefully. They know that pain is like a zooming train. While it comes, it never stays. It moves on.

In this Life Manual, I have shared how I live as an observer of this cosmic drama that is being enacted on planet earth. Nothing is real, in the end, we will all realize it is like a dream. Nothing belongs to us. We are merely trustees.

Whatever we receive in this world, we will leave behind and pass on to others. Then, why do we fret and fume as we miss this beautiful journey called 'Life'?

Those who haven't understood life are trying to climb the peak to reach the destination. They don't realize that the destination is death, life is a journey. We must live it moment by moment, making the best of it. This Life Manual will show us the way to 'Live' as we enjoy every moment of life before we finally face death. Death is certain. Nobody can escape it. Then, why does the whole world live with the fear of death? Today, the whole world has shut down due to the Coronavirus. Because of the fear of Covid-19, we have become prisoners of our mind. Our intellectual decisions are bombarded with our emotions. Perhaps a Life Manual like this could have helped people live otherwise.

We don't realize that life and death are in the hands of the Divine. Just as we cannot control when, where, and to whom we are born, we cannot control our death. It will come at the appointed time. Yes, there are a few who are frustrated and depressed and try to end their life by committing suicide. It is a pity that they have not understood life and thus, do not treasure it.

Those who understand life and read the manual, will take precautions but will not panic. They will live by faith and surrender to the Divine Will. That is the way to truly live.

When will man learn how to live life? This Life Manual may be an aid to help people discover the secrets about life. It shares how I realized the truth and live each day, joyously, with peace and tranquillity. Yes, you too can live

your life with bliss and joy. Follow the Life Manual and discover what life truly is. Then start living it right from today, moment by moment. This Life Manual will show you the right way to live life. You can't put away living your life for another day.

IN A NUTSHELL

- This Life Manual is a treasure. It shares how I discovered the true meaning of life and how I live with eternal joy and everlasting peace.
- Just like we use Operating Manuals and process documents to achieve success and excellence, we must not only read the Life Manual, but use it to live our life.
- There is a way to overcome all misery and suffering and live a life of bliss.
- There is a purpose for us on earth. Those who achieve it are liberated. This Manual shows us the way.
- This Life Manual has it all. It is not just some theory, but my practical experience with life.
- Today I share my most important treasure with you - the Life Manual. Read it and learn how to live!

Life Troubleshooting Guide

If you experience any trouble with your life, try the following: Go through the relevant chapters and apply the guidelines. If you continue to have trouble, consult a Spiritual Master or a Guru.

If you have trouble with the Life Manual, you can write to AiR at air@air.ind.in or WhatsApp +91 98451 55555.

Common Troubleshooting Issues in Life

1. I am constantly worrying

There is no need to worry. Life is like a drama. We are actors. We come and we go. Learn to enjoy the show!

2. I can't find happiness

Happiness can't be found. It is a state of being. We have to be happy. Stop searching for happiness and learn to be happy.

3. I have no peace of mind

The mind itself robs our peace. Make the mind still. Spend time in silence. You will find peace.

4. I have no money to be happy

Money can give you pleasure, but not everlasting happiness. Count your blessings and enjoy what you have.

5. I am in a state of depression

You are not in a state of depression. Your mind is! This is because of negative energy. Flip over from negative to

positive and you can be cheerful.

6. I get anxiety attacks

Anxiety is mostly caused by FEAR. It is the product of an overthinking mind. It makes False Expectations Appear Real. Relax. Live with faith. Surrender and trust.

7. I can't sleep

If it is because of the mind, learn to cleanse your mind every night before sleeping. Give your mind a shampoo and eliminate all the junk that is troubling you.

8. I can't find my mind

The mind is an illusion. It is just a bundle of thoughts. You can find your brain, but you can't find your mind.

9. I am not able to concentrate

This is because the mind is like a monkey that is constantly jumping. Catch the monkey mind and make it into a monk. Quiet the mind through silence.

10. I feel jealous and miserable

Because we are ignorant that we are all manifestations of the one Divine, we think we are different from one another and get jealous and miserable. Overcome this ignorance.

11. I get angry quickly

Anger is caused by the Ego. When what I want doesn't happen, I get upset. Transcend the ego. Let go of the ego and you will be able to overcome anger.

12. I feel like dying

Death is in the hands of the Divine. Make life exciting. Look forward to life by doing something that you enjoy.

Add meaning and purpose to life and you will enjoy it.

13. I am bored of life

Instead of adding years to your life, add life to your years. Make your life interesting. Go on a quest. There are many exciting things to do in life.

14. I feel so lonely

This is because of ignorance that we are separate from each other. The truth is that we are all manifestations of the Divine. We are all one. This realization will take away all loneliness.

15. I can't find fulfilment

Replace greed with fulfilling your need, and be satisfied and content. Learn to say, 'enough', and fulfilment will come to you.

16. Nobody loves me

Love is like a boomerang. Go out and love others and you will feel loved. Love will come back to you in the measure you love others.

17. God doesn't listen

This is because you think God is far away. You don't realize that God is within the temple of your heart. Be still and you will hear God's voice.

18. I am always miserable

Because of our ignorance, we suffer. We suffer triple suffering, first the pain of the body, then the misery of the mind and finally, the agony of the ego. This makes us miserable. Realization of the truth that we are the Divine Soul will create eternal bliss. Realize the truth!

19. I want to be young again

Only the body grows old. There is no rewind button to make the body young. We must make the best of each day and also realize that we, the Soul, never grow old.

20. The body is suffering too much pain

Every 'body' that is born in this world must suffer and die. Such is the rule. Our goal is *Nirvana, Moksha* – to be liberated from death and rebirth. Then there will be no pain.

21. Mind is creating misery

The mind is a rascal. We must destroy it before it destroys us. We must use our willpower and our intellect to control the mind from creating misery.

22. I don't want to die

Nobody can escape from death. But only the body dies. The ME, Mind and Ego, will either be reborn in a new body, or if we realize the truth, we will be liberated and be united with the Divine.

23. I don't want to lose my money

Money is only a trust given to us. We come with nothing and we will take nothing. All our money will be left behind. Such is life.

24. I am suffering for no fault of mine

This is what you think. All suffering is due to our own Karma, our past actions that come back to us. This is a redemption of our past actions.

25. I have become old too soon

We don't age. Only the body ages. We must find out who

we truly are. Realize we are the Soul that never grows old.

26. I can't find my life warranty

Life has no warranty. Any moment it can come to an end. Enjoy the present moment of life. There is no guarantee about tomorrow.

27. I am always hurrying to achieve success in life

No need to hurry. Life is a journey. Not a destination. Learn to enjoy the present moment. Remember, Success is not Happiness.

28. I am afraid of losing people I love

Then you will live and die with fear, for eventually, we will lose everybody. As long as people are around, enjoy their company. When the time comes for somebody to go, we can do nothing about it.

29. I want to learn to be detached

The only way to learn to be detached, is to detach yourself from people and things. Reduce your passion and practice letting go. Renounce whatever you are attached to and you will learn detachment.

30. I want to truly live life, not just exist

Who is it that stops you from living? It is the ME within, the Mind and Ego. If you transcend the ME, you will start living in the true sense. You have a Life Manual in your hand that shows you the way. Start living today!

Life FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why should I discover my Soul?

Because that is your real identity. When we realize our Soul, we are liberated from all misery and suffering and from the cycle of death and rebirth.

2. What is the guarantee that there is life after death?

Just like the Law of Gravity makes us infer its existence because anything that is thrown up is pulled back to earth, so also, we infer that there is life after death because of the Law of Karma. We see young children being born in fortunate or unfortunate circumstances. This is not luck. We infer that it is the rebirth of the ME – Mind and Ego, that has left the body at death.

3. Can astrologers predict what will happen in life?

Yes, they can. But there is no guarantee that the prediction will be right. There is more chance that what the weatherman predicts will come true. Man is incapable of decoding God's plan on earth, be it looking at palms or the stars.

4. Can I be reborn as an animal?

Some Eastern religions that believe in the Law of Karma strongly advocate this is true, while some deny it. What is important is to realize that we will be reborn, if we are not liberated. We should focus on being liberated, rather than planning to come back to planet earth. Our goal should be Realization, Liberation, and Unification.

5. Can I take my money with me to my next life?

Yes, if you know what bank there is in heaven and the currency that works there. Can't we see that a dead person doesn't even take a penny, even if he is a millionaire? Then why do we even ask such a question?

6. Will we meet our loved ones after we are reborn?

When we take birth, we leave behind memories of our past life, our loved ones. Do you remember the loved ones of your previous life today? This should make us understand that when we leave our loved ones, we move on. We do not return. The body returns to dust and is not recreated.

7. Will the actions of this life be carried forward to the next life?

Actions of this life will come to an end at death. But each and every action of ours, good or bad is recorded by the Law of Karma. Whatever Karma we have created, based on our past actions, it will be carried forward life after life as we are reborn in a new body.

8. What exactly happens at Death?

At death, the Divine Soul within departs. There is no breath. And the body returns to dust as it is cremated or buried. But the one who was alive in the body is the ME - Mind and Ego. At death, one of the two things happens. Either we will be reborn as per our Karma or if we overcome our ignorance and realize the truth while alive that we are the Divine Soul, not the Mind and Ego - ME, then at death there is no rebirth. We are liberated and united with the Divine.

9. Is it not true that my mother and father created my life?

Of course, they did! The act of copulation caused the two

cells to fertilize. But the Soul within is the work of God. Many couples try very hard, but they do not give birth to a child. While we must respect our parents for causing our birth and taking care of us, we must realize that the life within us is Divine. It is the work of God.

10. What exactly is the Ego?

The feeling that 'I am me' and 'This is mine' in every individual is the Ego. It is the sense of identity that every human being has, and it remains with us till we die. It is the Ego that gets angry when its wish is not fulfilled.

11. How can I achieve Happiness?

You cannot achieve Happiness. You have to be happy. Happiness is a state of being, not a product, a person or place that will give you happiness. Things, people, and places may only give you momentary pleasure.

12. What is the best way to overcome life's problems?

Expect problems, and acknowledge them. Face them, fight them, finish them. Realize that a problem-free life is an illusion. Go one step further to realize that life itself is an illusion and all problems will disappear in the end. So learn not to worry about problems.

13. Why does God make me Suffer?

God doesn't make us suffer. God is not sitting in some control room taking care of the suffering of 8 billion people. God has created the universe and to control everything he has instituted universal laws. One such law is the Law of Karma. If our deeds are bad, then, to redeem our sins, we have to suffer. Whatever is happening in our life depends on our own actions that are returning to us. Let us not blame God for it.

14. How can I discover my intellect?

All human beings are blessed with an intellect. Animals and plants are not. The intellect is the one that has to control the mind as it wanders and makes us miserable. We have to activate the intellect, and this happens either through realization, the grace of the Divine or the guidance of a Guru or Spiritual Master.

15. What is the true meaning of Success in life?

People think success is achievement, money, wealth, name, and fame. But real success or achievement is to realize who we are and why we are here. The ultimate success of life is to realize that we are the Divine Soul, to be liberated and to be united with the Divine, as we escape from the cycle of death and rebirth.

16. What is the purpose of life?

The purpose of life is to realize that we are not this body and mind, to overcome our ignorance and to realize the truth about ourselves. The ultimate purpose is to move from self-realization to God-realization. Most people think that the purpose of life is to be happy. But this is not true. There is a bigger purpose and we must find that.

17. What is the Law of Karma?

The Law of Karma is a universal law that states as you sow so shall you reap. We human beings are born. But what decided our birth – when, where, to whom and in what circumstances we were born? It was our own past actions, our Karma. As per the Law of Karma, which means action, every action of ours is recorded and must be redeemed. One day, the body dies. But the one who was alive, the Mind and Ego, ME is reborn as per its Karma. Thus, some children are born blind, while others in the lap of luxury.

This is not luck. It is the Universal Law of Karma, of Action and Reaction. It is the same law that ensures that apples don't grow on mango trees.

18. Which is the best religion in the world today?

All religions are good. They teach us about God and how to pray. Unfortunately, they are only kindergartens and they do not help us to graduate to spirituality, which is the university of God and theology. Religions make us believe in God, but they don't show us the true method to realize God. Thus, we believe in our religion and go round and round in circles, and our life is over! We don't realize God.

19. How can I meet God?

God is not somebody that lives far away in heaven. God is the very power that is within us. Because we do not realize the truth about God, we keep on searching for God, when in reality, God is within us. Thus, the best way to God is to realize the Divine within, to realize God in the temple of our heart. Then, we can feel God's Divine presence all the time.

20. What is the way to go to heaven?

There are no flights, trains or buses to heaven. Neither can you walk to heaven, because heaven is not a place that we imagine it to be. We experience heaven or hell right here on earth itself. It depends on our actions, our Karma. Our Karma will decide whether we will experience the bliss of heaven or the torture of hell, as we are reborn here on earth.

21. Should we not do our duty, rather than renounce?

Of course, we must do our duty. But we must realize what our biggest duty is. It is to realize who we are and why we are here. To achieve this, we have to renounce the physical cravings of this material world and escape from the prison

of duty, lust and shame. Therefore, we must do our worldly duties but not forget our spiritual duties and renunciation of desires is one of them. By not renouncing our cravings, we will remain as prisoners in this world.

22. Why should I give up this life and pray to God?

We cannot give up our life to pray to God. We have to commit our life to God. We have to choose God, and this is a wise decision for it will lead to peace and bliss. What we think is pleasure from the worldly life, is a recipe for disaster. We must learn to live prayerfully.

23. God hasn't done anything for me, then why should I love God?

Your very existence is due to the grace of God. Unfortunately, we don't count our blessings. God has given us eyes to see, ears to hear, nose to smell, tongue to taste, and a skin to touch and feel and love. Should we not be grateful? Every moment of life must be spent in expressing our gratitude.

24. There are so many Gods, who is the real God?

Because we have been taught that the God of our religion is the only God, we live with this belief that different religions have different Gods and there are many Gods. However, the truth is that there is only one God, one Power, one Creator. We may call this God by different names, but the Power is one.

25. What are some of the best tips to enjoy life?

The best tip to enjoy life is to understand who we are – we are not the body, not the mind or ego, but the Divine Soul. Then, it is to live in the moment – to be happy in the now, and not live in the yesterday that is gone, or tomorrow that

is not yet born. It is knowing that God manifests in everybody and everything around us, seeing the Divine in all. There can be no better way than this - living with ecstasy, with *Nirvana*, with total peace, bliss and joy.

26. How do we stay enthusiastic in life knowing that everything is fake and superficial?

You stay enthusiastic when you realize that you are the Divine Spirit, the Energy, the Life. You don't view everything as fake and superficial. You view yourself as real and you take it as a challenge to be liberated. This should inspire you - you must have a purpose to realize you are the Divine Soul which is very real.

27. How do we always live in the present moment? And what should we do when thoughts of the past and future trouble us?

We can live in the present moment always by being conscious of the truth of who we are and why we are here. The thoughts of the past and the future are bound to trouble us but we must learn to use our intellect, our willpower to destroy these thoughts. In fact, we must stop the mind, which is a monkey, from jumping to the past and then to the future. If we consciously control the mind, we transcend it, then we can live in the present moment joyously and blissfully as the observer of the mind.

28. If hard work really pays off, why do some people fail despite all efforts for years?

There is no doubt that hard work pays off. But if someone's hard work is not paying off, there may be some negative Karma of the past which might be stronger and hindering the hard work that is being put in. Therefore, they have to continue putting in good work, just like a stone cutter

keeps hitting at the rock. After ten blows, the rock doesn't break...50 blows and it still doesn't break. Finally, at 100th blows, it may break. What does it mean? We have to keep on, and on, and on trying till it happens. But remember, whatever happens, happens not only because of our present actions, but it is also affected by our past Karma.

29. Like they say sadness is temporary, happiness is also temporary. What is permanent in life? I want that and how do I get that?

The only thing that is permanent is unification with the Divine which is attained by overcoming our ignorance, attaining liberation from this body and mind knowing that we are the Divine Soul - and ultimately, uniting with the Divine. In that state, there is no sorrow, there is eternal peace and everlasting joy.

30. How true is it that anyone dying in Varanasi (Banaras) and having his/her last rites done on the bank of river Ganga will attain liberation/Moksha?

Anybody dying in Banaras and attaining *Moksha*, is as true as eating an apple and becoming the Prime Minister of India. There are many mythological tales or superstitions that we believe in, for instance, if a black cat crosses our path, it is said that we will have an accident. We must use our intellect to realize the Truth and not be carried away by folklore.

31. What can I do in this life so as to attain salvation and never be born again?

The only way to escape from rebirth is through the Realization of the Truth, the Realization that I am not the body, I am not the mind – this will lead to liberation. Once we are liberated, we will be united with the Divine and will

not have to come back into *Samsara*.

32. Why do we pray to God if our fate is already pre-destined?

We pray to God for various reasons – out of gratitude for this life, asking Him for help, begging God for His benediction. He is the Creator, giver of life. He is the power that is inside us. Therefore, praying to God is essential.

Our destiny has not been predetermined. Our Karma is already ingrained in the fabric of our life, which means our past actions have already become the highway on which we will drive the car of our present life. But this does not mean that our future is predetermined. The future depends on our present actions, our Karma of today. Therefore, by praying to God, we can very well change the future.

33. How can we serve God by serving others?

Where is God? Who is God? Who are the others we are talking about? Others are not the body; the body is just made up of the five elements. They are the Divine Soul, the Life Energy. This Divine Life Energy is God itself. Therefore, when you serve a human being who is a Soul, you are serving Divinity, you are serving God. Unfortunately, we are ignorant of the truth - we don't realize the truth that every human being is a manifestation of God. By serving a human being, we are praying to God.

34. What is the importance of spirituality in life? At what stage in life, do people start to believe in spirituality?

Spirituality is the goal. It is the real purpose of life. Therefore, it is very important. There is no specific stage or age when people start to believe; sometimes a small child can start a spiritual journey and sometimes a man of 70 may

not even touch spirituality.

35. Why are people afraid of dying?

People are afraid of dying because they are ignorant about the meaning of death. They think that 'they' will die. Actually we don't die, only the body dies. We continue our journey to face our Karma as the Mind and Ego - ME in a new body. If we realize we are the Soul, then we are liberated and we unite with the Divine. Therefore, because we are ignorant about death, we have two major fears. The fear of the unknown – what happens after death, and the fear of losing everything that is known - we fear that we will lose everything that belongs to us. But there is nothing to fear because in the end, everybody has to leave everything behind – that is life.

36. If I end my life; if I commit suicide, will it end all my problems?

When one commits suicide, it is the end of the physical body but the one who was alive, the ME, the Mind and Ego, doesn't die because death is not the end, it's just a bend. Our actions are the cause of our rebirth. Every time a child is born, whether poor or blind, or fortunate in a wealthy family, it is not because of luck. It is because of the law that states, 'As you sow, so shall you reap.' It's the Law of Karma or the Law of Boomerang. A suicide is an unnatural end to our life which intercepts the Divine will. This will not change anything. The person's problems are not solved, the person's difficulties are only recorded and carried forward into the next life; one will only suffer more because one has interfered with a natural law. Suicide is not an escape or freedom from problems; it is creating more problems that we will face in our next life.

37. What are some good options to be given to a person who wishes not to live?

If there is somebody who wishes not to live, the first thing they should be told to do is to count their blessings. There are people who may be far more miserable than them. When we count our blessings, then we value life. The next thing for a person who doesn't want to live is to understand that to live or not is not in our hands and if we intercept the natural Divine law, we are going to create more misery in the life that follows. We must realize that death is not the end; it's just a bend - the body will die, but we who are alive in the body, will come back. Therefore, we should not interrupt the flow of life. We have to learn to live life and not just live, but live gracefully and blissfully, being enlightened with the Truth, overcoming misery, living with joy and peace.

38. Whenever one feels low, what is that special mantra which can help us to feel good?

When one feels low, it is good to repeat certain quotes like - 'When God is for us, who can be against us?' 'God's delays are not God's denials'. 'Nothing can happen tomorrow that the Lord and I can't handle together'. However, a time comes in life when we don't feel low anymore - that is when we realize the Divine is inside, within us making our heart beat. Then, there is no feeling of being low.

39. Why do humans think suffering is part of life? If you live consciously, can't you not go past it?

Yes, one can go past suffering if one realizes the truth. It is not enough to be conscious but we have to be conscious of the truth. However, humans think that suffering is a part of life because all humans experience suffering. There is physical pain of the body, misery of the mind and agony of

the ego. Even the realized one suffers to the extent that he lives in the body that suffers, he has a mind that suffers and he has to overcome an ego that suffers. However, a truly realized one transcends suffering living as an observer of the suffering. He has realized that he is the Divine Soul. But it's not easy to get to this stage. It needs a lot of effort and grace of the Divine.

40. How can we develop our faith in God and positivity around us in this troubled world of ours, in tough times?

Faith is a decision: it's a choice. If we want to be positive, the world around us may be in turmoil but we can still learn to live with hope - HOPE - Have Only Positive Expectations; learn to live with faith, FAITH - Full Assurance in The Heart. We have to eliminate fear, FEAR - False Expectations Appearing Real. So developing faith comes from building a connection with the Divine. It doesn't depend on which religion one belongs to. God is not a statue, God is not a saint - God is not a picture that anyone can paint. God is a power. As long as we are in union with the power, living in Yoga, we can be peaceful, no matter what.

41. Sometimes I feel God exists, but sometimes I don't. How can I believe in God 100%?

This is the work of the mind, the mind is our enemy. The mind tricks us. Those times that you think God doesn't exist, it's our mind that's taking our thoughts in the wrong direction. How do you overcome this? By activating your intellect. Your intellect becomes so strong that it knows that God exists, and not even for a moment in your life, would you believe that God is not there. But that will happen only when your intellect overpowers your mind. Become so connected to God, living in union or Yoga that you always feel that connection.

42. Did God create diseases and calamities to punish sinners?

God doesn't create diseases to punish sinners. God creates universal laws. The laws manifest as diseases or calamities to settle people's Karma. There is no other logic. Therefore, accept, and surrender. Let's do our best to keep ourselves safe, but realize that this is the Divine drama that is unfolding; it is the *Leela* of God.

43. What is the Ultimate Goal of life?

We may have many goals. Most people think that their goal is to take care of their children and their businesses or profession. But this is not our ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is to realize we are the Soul and to be liberated from suffering when alive. Then at death, to be liberated from rebirth so that the Soul can unite with the Divine.

Poem

Life Manual

By
AirR
Atman in Ravi

*We all have been given this gift of life
But we don't know how to live
We forget to read the Life Manual
Today, this to you, I give*

*This Life Manual that I share
Is what I have experienced
It's not theory, it's practical
It's the way I have lived*

*Who are we? Why are we here?
This we were never taught
We live through life and soon it's over
But these questions, we forgot*

*Are we the body that lives and grows
And then finally dies?
Or are we something else, which at death
Into the universe flies?*

*What about the mind, do we have one?
Has anyone found the mind?
We can touch our nose and scan our heart
But the mind we cannot find!*

*Life is a journey from birth to death
There is no guarantee
We pay nothing for this precious gift
It is given to us for free*

*But there is a purpose for us on earth
Not to just live and die
Before this journey comes to an end
To find out, 'Who am I?'*

*We are not the body, we are not the mind
Nor the ego that we are told
The truth is different, we must realize
We are the Divine Soul*

*Instead of realizing this truth, we wander
In this world of many a thing
We crave for pleasures, but don't realize
Happiness is a state of being*

*Things don't make us happy
Nor people, or places give us bliss
Happiness is an inner thing
In life, this truth we miss*

*Everybody has problems; this is a fact
A problem free life is an illusion
Problems don't come to stay forever
Get rid of this delusion*

*We think time is ticking, but time is still
It is life that actually moves on
Moment by moment, we live our life
Till death, from the time we are born*

*What do we do when we start our day?
We just jump into it
We never learnt what life truly is
For this, we must silently sit*

*It's only when we spend time in peace
That we will experience joy
Then we will feel what true bliss is
It's amazing, oh boy!*

*But we don't stop to understand life
We are just running in this race
We increase our pace and get caught in the maze
Trying to be an ace!*

*Somebody told us, 'Success is Happiness'
So the wealth of this world we chase
In the end, our life is in a mess
Though we have gold, diamonds, and lace*

*But nothing belongs to us, don't we know?
We will leave everything behind
We come with nothing, we go with nothing
This truth – when will we find?*

*Those who try to understand life
They live with contentment
They don't let their greed overtake their need
They find fulfilment*

*There is a way to everlasting joy
And to experience Divine peace
For this, we must smell the flowers
And enjoy the rabbits and the geese*

Poem

*We are so busy in this material world
Spirituality, we do not know
Very few realize we are the Soul
Before the time comes to go*

*Life is a product given to us
But we don't unwrap this gift
The paper and ribbons are still around
Till that time when we don't exist*

*We just exist, we don't really live
We don't discover what life is
Sinking in this world of material pleasure
Peace and bliss we miss*

*And so, I thought I'll write this book
Not just scratch my pen
But share with you what life truly is
Before my life comes to an end*

*We still have time, we can discover
How we must live our life
How we can find joy and peace
Escaping misery and strife*

*We have a choice, we have a free will
Everything doesn't depend on luck
The Universal Law of Karma does work
What we sow is what we will pluck*

*To think our thoughts, we have the mind
But it makes us wander, in fact
To eliminate the stress and worry it causes
We must use our intellect*

*The intellect is a tool given to us
To discriminate black from white
To make important decisions of life
And to choose what is right*

*We live with passion and attachment
While nothing belongs to us
The way to joy is detachment
Just letting go, without a fuss*

*Why should we fear? Why should we worry?
Why be stressed and anxious, my dear?
Find the way to be happy
Right through the year*

*For this we must pause, not rush through life
This gift of life we must understand
Enjoy the mountains and the sunsets
Beautiful beaches and white sand*

*We still have time to realize the truth
Find out, 'Who are we?'
We are not the mind; we are not the ego
That constantly says 'It's ME'*

*One day, the body will die
But the one who was alive within
Will carry all actions unsettled
And be born with a brand-new skin*

*How does death happen, do you know?
It's when the Soul inside departs
When the life power in us decides to leave
Then this chapter ends, another starts*

*Whatever we think and we call, 'Ours'
People, possessions... everything
At death nothing will belong to us
We can't even carry a ring*

*What is death, have you ever thought?
Or do you just blink your eyes?
It's time to stop, to contemplate, to think,
Whenever somebody dies*

*We too will go one day, for sure
We will not be forever on earth
Every living being that lives
Must die, if it takes birth*

*But we don't realize all this
We are ruled by the monkey mind
Until we stop its constant chatter
The truth we will not find*

*For the mind is full of rotten thoughts
We suffer because of this junk
If we want to discover the true meaning of life
We must make the monkey a monk*

*There's one more thing to learn in life
That agony is caused by the ego
For if we want to find our God
We must let go of our ego*

*Our Ultimate Goal is to realize God
Not in a temple, monastery or church
God lives within our heart
When will we start our search?*

*We all remain stuck in our religion
About God, it teaches us ABC
We need to grow and evolve spiritually
Then the true God we will see*

*God doesn't live on a distant planet
Somewhere far away
It's God that makes our heart beat
Each moment of every day*

*Most of us are ignorant
And think ignorance is bliss
How to live this amazing life
Alas, we just miss!*

*We live, we die, we are born again
Such is the life show
Karma will decide when we will die
When it is time to go*

*If we plant apples, we won't get mangoes
It's a law, don't you agree?
Such is the law, we die and take rebirth
From this cycle, we must be free*

*There is a way to escape Karma
And to escape from rebirth
If only we realize we are the Divine Soul
We won't return to earth*

*Realization is a rare gift
Not everybody this treasure can find
Those who truly love God
Transcend body, ego and mind*

*They discover they are the Soul within
In fact, they are Divinity
They don't see humans as bone and skin
They see God in you and me*

*This is the ultimate goal of life
For us to realize the truth
We must discover who we truly are
Get to the bottom of the root*

*But we are so busy consuming life
The Life Manual we do not read
All we know, is to clothe this skin
And our greedy body we feed*

*Having fun, life gets over
But hello! That's not the end!
Death is not the end of the game
Death is only a bend*

*It's time to stop and to start anew
Living life each day
Holding the Life Manual in our hand
And finding the right way*

*Understanding life is an important thing
Who are we? Why are we here?
Realizing the truth and then being free
Living without a tear*

*We can be conscious and live in bliss
We can have joy and peace
If only we understand this product called 'Life'
But we must pay our fees*

*Then we will be free from problems and sorrows
We will only have joy and bliss
We will enjoy each moment of life
This treasure we will not miss*

*This Life Manual is a Divine gift
It shows us the way to live
To realize God in every Soul
As we give and we forgive*

*It's time to wipe out all that we've learned
Cleaning the slate of our mind
Living a new life with this Manual now
Joy, peace and bliss, we will find*

By
AIR
Atman in Ravi

About the Author

AiR - *Atman in Ravi*, is an Embodied Soul whose only mission in life is to '**Help People Realize the Truth**'. He was born in Bangalore on October 15, 1966. At a very young age, Ravi V. Melwani mastered the craft of business and became a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores KidsKemp, Big KidsKemp, and Kemp Fort. After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40 and started making a difference doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work.



As a part of the Humanitarian initiative 3 charitable homes were set up to provide free medical treatment and care to the poor, destitute, and needy. Today, over 600 suffering homeless people who are picked up from the streets are served and cared for in 3 destitute homes and provided with free shelter, food, clothing, and medical care. AiR built a Shiva Temple in the year 1995 in Bangalore, which is now known as the Shivoham Shiva Temple. AiR now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of Spirituality, and people should go beyond religion to truly realize God.

One day, his Guru provoked him to introspect and find answers to the following questions: Who am I? What is the purpose of my life? Is life just meant to seek pleasures and

to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will I be reborn? Who is God? Where is God? What is God? What is the Soul? Where are heaven and hell? What is Enlightenment? Several questions like these took him on a quest, a search for the Truth. He gave up his life of Achievement and Fulfilment in search of the final peak of life: Enlightenment.

After a few years of intense search in retreat, deep in the mountains, he realized that we are not this body. We are the Soul, the *Atman*. He changed his name to AiR – *Atman* in Ravi. He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life as Ravi V. Melwani and started living as an instrument of God doing His Divine Will. This led to several Realizations that formed his new mission of life – to **Help People Realize the Truth.**

Since then, AiR's life has been dedicated to reaching out and helping people to eradicate the ignorance that they live in. Based on his realizations, AiR has published over 32 books, composed and sung about 1112 *bhajans*, written several blogs, quotes, and poems. He has taken up various other initiatives that can lead people towards the Truth like conducting AiR Spiritual Retreats and giving talks that help people evolve on their spiritual journey. He is a TEDx speaker and is also invited to speak at several organizations like YPO (Young Presidents' Organization), Rotary Club, Lions Club, and at many corporates, schools, and colleges. He conducts webinars every week on Zoom and Facebook Live to help people realize the ultimate purpose of their life.

AiR has realized the Truth that we are not the body, the mind, or the ego; we are the Divine Soul. And to realize this is our ultimate goal. He lives his life with just one mission –

to help people Ask, Investigate, and Realize the Truth. Being blessed with everything, he seeks nothing except to fulfil this mission of life.

***Started with nothing
Became something...
Achieved everything
Only to realize we are nothing!***

If you have any questions about Life you can Ask AiR

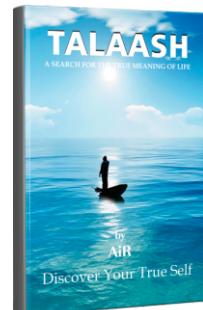
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and you will get answers to your questions

BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

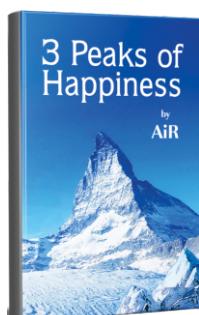
1. Talaash

Talaash means ‘search’ or a ‘quest’. This book by AiR recounts his own spiritual quest for the Ultimate Truth that led him to the realization that we are neither the body nor the mind, but the Divine Soul.



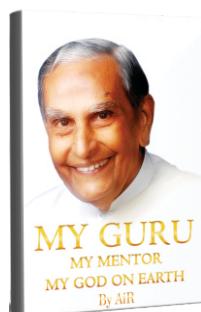
2. 3 Peaks of Happiness

This book talks about the universal quest of humanity – Happiness. It explains the ways through which people can reach the third peak of happiness – Enlightenment which lies beyond the two peaks of happiness – Achievement and Fulfilment. The third peak liberates us from the prisons of misery and sorrow and gives us eternal Joy and Bliss.



3. My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth

This book is AiR’s tribute to his Guru, Dada J.P. Vaswani. AiR shares his experiences with Dada and how Dada’s philosophy and teachings were instrumental in guiding him to begin his spiritual quest and bringing about the transformation in him.



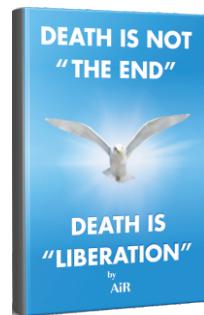
4. I will Never Die, Death is Not “The End”

In the journey of his life, AiR realized many truths. One of the truths is a revelation— we never die; Death is not the end but a bend to transcend. The body will die, but the one who lives in the body never dies.



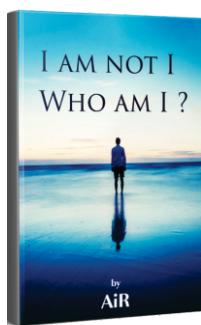
5. Death is Not “The End.” Death is “Liberation”

The second book by AiR in the series of books on ‘Death’ touches upon the secret of *Kathopanishad* which talks about what happens after death. One of the two things can happen: if we think we are the Body and Mind as a doer, we are reborn, but if we realize that we are the Soul and not the body and mind, we are liberated to eternal joy and peace.



6. I Am Not I. Who am I?

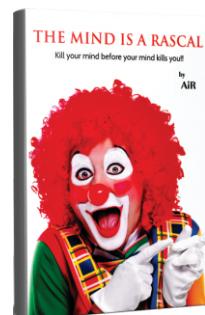
This is an insightful book by AiR which talks of his quest and realization that we are not who we think we are. We have a house but we are not the house. We have a car but we are not the car. Similarly, we have a body but we are not the body. Then, who are we?



7. The Mind is a Rascal

Can you believe that the mind is a rascal? You always

thought that the mind is king – it is everything. But just try this. Sit quietly for an hour, and try to find the mind. Where is it? You will realize that the mind doesn't exist. This amazing book by AiR will teach us that the mind is our enemy. It is the one that makes us suffer. It is time to find the rascal and kill it. How do we do this – is revealed in the book.



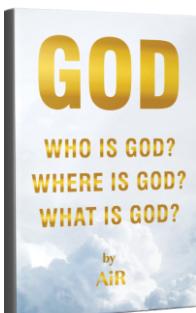
8. A Cosmic Drama

This book challenges the reader to explore the illusory nature of this world – whatever is happening in life is not real; it is nothing but a Cosmic Drama. If we understand this simple truth, we can enjoy the show called life.



9. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

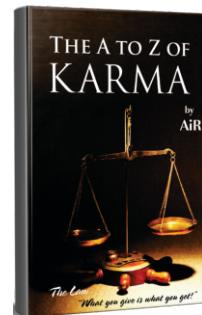
Well, this might seem to be a simple set of questions but nobody really knows the answers. We all know that God exists. We pray to a God as per our Religion but what is the Truth about God? Has anybody seen God? Where is God? This simple book will change your perception and belief about God and bring you closer to the Power called God. It will help you realize God.



10. The A to Z of Karma

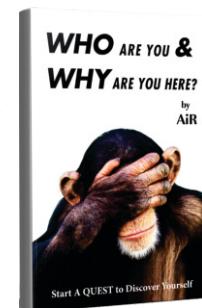
Most people are aware of the concept of Karma – the

Universal Law that states, "What you give is what you get." But not everybody knows the A to Z of Karma that we can actually transcend Karma, escape from it and achieve Liberation or Moksha. This book reveals the secret of eternal Joy and Peace—a life without any misery or suffering.



11. Who Are You and Why are You Here?

This is a simple book that prompts us to ask the right questions to discover the secret of our life—who we are in reality and what the purpose of our life is. The answers to these questions hold the key to a purposeful, meaningful and blissful life.



12. The 4th Factor

Man thinks that his Karma controls everything and he can achieve anything through his efforts, equipment, and the method of his actions. But he is ignorant about something which is more powerful than Karma—the 4th factor. This is an informative book that makes the readers understand why things happen the way they happen and even if ten people use the same equipment and perform the same action, still, they never produce the same results, because apart from their own action, each person seems to be graced with another factor—the 4th factor that is beyond human comprehension and without its consent even the possible becomes impossible.



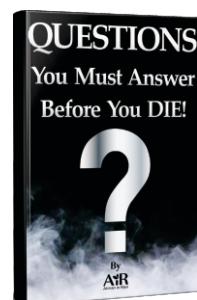
13. Be Happy in the NOW!

Every human being on earth wants to be happy. There is nobody who enjoys pain. People want to achieve Happiness but they fail to realize that Happiness is the journey itself, not the destination. Then, what is the secret of eternal Joy, Bliss, and Peace? It is being Happy in the NOW. With this book, AiR hopes to inspire people to live life moment by moment, if they really want to be Happy.



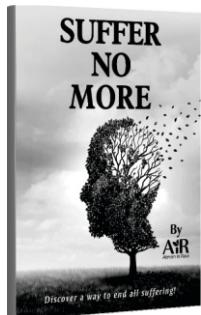
14. Questions You Must Answer before you Die!

Most of us live and die but we don't ask the question—Why? We just exist! This book presents a series of important questions with answers that can guide us to the realization of the Truth and help us live with meaning, purpose, and joy.



15. Suffer No More

'Suffer No More' is a personal experience of overcoming anguish, anxiety, distress, and grief. It is an analysis of suffering, what causes it and how we can overcome it. While there is pain, we can do away with suffering. This book will tell us how!



16. Success is not Happiness, Happiness is Success

People want to win because this makes them Happy, just as

failure makes them miserable. This book explains how success does not bring happiness and how this belief is only an illusion. In fact, instead of chasing success, we should try to be happy! That is true success.

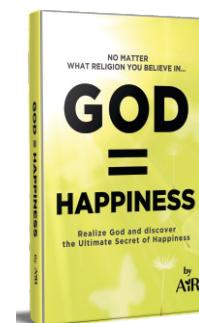
17. God = Happiness

In his quest to discover Truth and the purpose of life, the author realized that people didn't know where exactly to search for Happiness. This is a book that takes us far beyond religion to Realize the Truth about God and how God is Happiness.



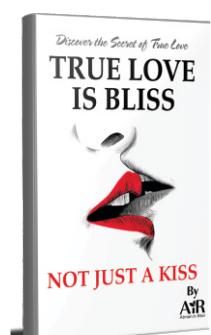
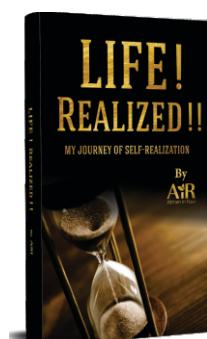
18. Life! Realized!!

This book is a personal reflection of the author on his several realizations about everything that matters in the journey of life – the realizations that he attained while on his quest for the Truth.



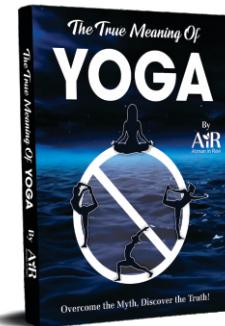
19. True Love is Bliss...Not Just a Kiss

It is sad that love which is the source of joy and happiness is not understood by the world. This book is an attempt to explore True Love that is beyond passion, romance, and kisses. True Love is White Divine Love from the Soul that manifests as the 7 colours of human love from the day we are born till the day we die.



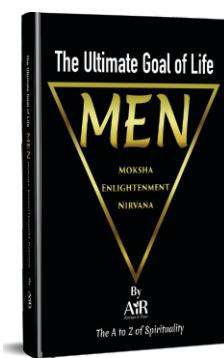
20. True Meaning of Yoga

Yoga, today, is primarily taught as a set of body postures and breathing exercises. But this is not true Yoga! Yoga, in reality, is a Union with the Divine. This book attempts to explain everything about Yoga, its meaning and significance, how it must be practised and how through Yoga, one can be liberated and experience Ultimate Divine Peace and Bliss.



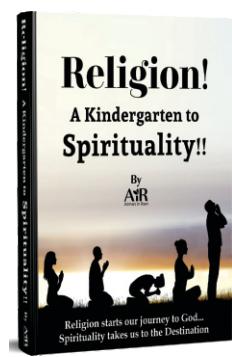
21. The Ultimate Goal of Life, MEN – Moksha, Enlightenment, Nirvana

The three most tenable concepts—Moksha, Enlightenment, Nirvana are discussed in this book that can help us reach our Ultimate Goal of Liberation and then Unification with the Divine.



22. Religion! A Kindergarten to Spirituality!!

This book discusses how Religion is only the first step towards God-Realization. We do not realize that Religion is only a Kindergarten, of which Spirituality is the University, and together they can lead us to God-realization.



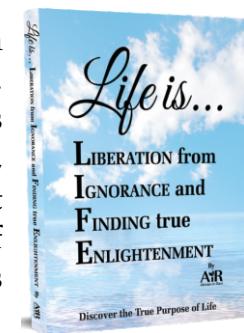
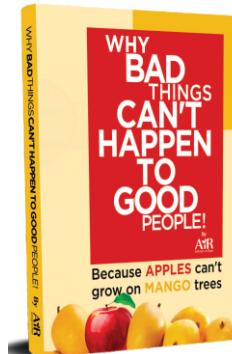
23. Why Bad Things Can't Happen to Good People!

This book helps us understand that this world has been

created by the Divine and it operates through certain Universal Laws that need no intervention by the Creator. Bad things can never happen to good people, just as apples can't grow on mango trees!

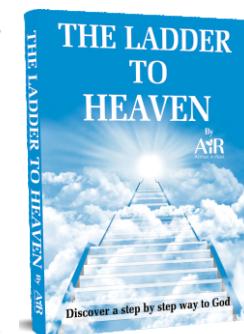
24. LIFE is...Liberation from Ignorance and Finding true Enlightenment

What is Life all about? Most people exist but they don't truly live. They just zoom from womb to tomb, and then life is over. They don't stop to think about their life's true purpose. In the pursuit of happiness, success, and achievement, people don't realize that though they may gain a lot of these, they lose their most precious gift—life itself.



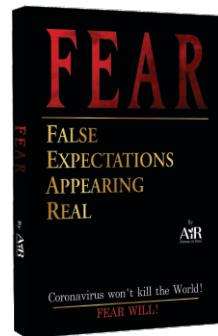
25. The Ladder to Heaven

While we pray to God calling God by different names, the vast majority of humanity believes in God and aspires to go to their God in heaven one day. It doesn't matter what our religion is, there is a way to reach God. There is a Ladder that can take us to heaven but we need to ascend the rungs of belief, prayer, faith, hope, trust and so on. This book is an effort to help genuine seekers of God to climb the Ladder to Heaven. It shows a step by step way to God-realization as we pass through self-realization, overcoming the ignorance that we live in.



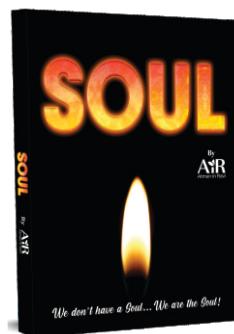
26. FEAR- False Expectations Appearing Real

Through this book, the author wishes to help people change their paradigm and live with courage—that they should take appropriate precautions and not panic. The world has changed because of Coronavirus! But it's up to us to live with FEAR or to live with FAITH. There is a difference between Fear and Danger but most of humanity lives with the constant fear of disease and death. For the first time ever, all the countries of the world have closed their borders and shut down their economies. Facts confirm that when compared to the Spanish flu, it is not as fatal a pandemic as the world thinks it to be. This book F E A R, will help readers overcome these tough times of the global pandemic.



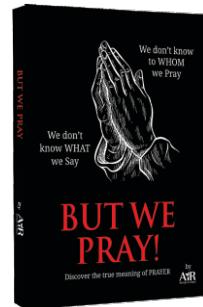
27. Soul – We don't have a Soul... we are the Soul!

The Soul is mysterious. We are alive because of our Soul. But what exactly is the Soul? Where does it come from and where does it go? We cannot see the Soul, but we all believe that we have one. People talk about 'good' or 'bad' Souls, ghosts—spirits of the dead, heaven—hell, and the reincarnation of the 'Souls'. This book will help the genuine seekers of the truth to do some Soul searching and discover the ultimate truth about our most important aspect—our very own Soul. We will realize that we don't have a Soul...we are the Soul!



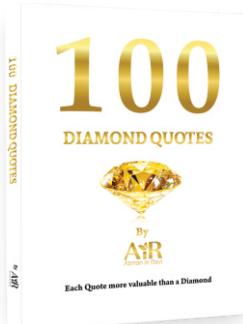
28. But We Pray!

The whole world prays to God. Every religion claims that their God is the real God and their prayer is the most effective form of prayer. Unfortunately, we don't even know the God we pray to, nor do we understand what we say in prayer. This book will make us conscious of what we say when we pray. It will help us know the God we pray to and build a Divine connection through prayer.



29. 100 Diamond Quotes

Our life needs a spark and a simple quote can make this difference. This book, *100 Diamond Quotes* does just that. It is a selection of AiR's quotes on Happiness, Realization, Liberation, Spirituality, and Enlightenment. These inspiring, thought-provoking quotes can trigger a metamorphosis and can transform our life as they lead us forward in our quest for the true meaning of life, giving us more Peace and Happiness than all the Diamonds of this world.

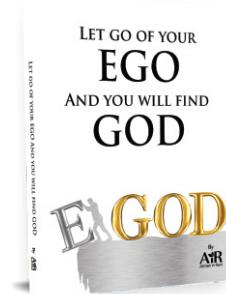


30. Let go of your Ego and you will find God

Are you seeking God? There is a way to find God. All you have to do is to let go of your Ego. Our biggest enemy, ME, the Mind and Ego, envelops us in ignorance and we go round and round in circles without discovering God within. This book will transform your life. It will show you

the way to God just as it will guide you on how to let go of your Ego. It will open the door to eternal peace and everlasting joy. If only you let go of your Ego, you will move from Self-realization to God-realization and will realize God within.

And Now....



31. Life Manual - How to live life?

Coming soon...

32. Peace - When the Monkey becomes a Monk!

33. SatChitAnanda - Consciousness of the Truth is Bliss



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LIFE MANUAL

HOW TO LIVE LIFE

We know how to use our mobile phones, laptops, televisions and washing machines. We read the Operating Manual of each device or appliance that we buy so that we can enjoy all their features. But alas, we have not read the Operating Manual of Life! Before we realize it, life is over, and we often regret that we did not do what we wanted to do. Instead of living a life of Joy and Peace, we suffer in misery and sorrow.

This book can change your life! It is a Life Manual that has guidelines on how to make the best of your life. It will inspire you with the do's and the don'ts, as it discloses what this product called 'Life' is all about. It explains life through a troubleshooting guide and FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions about life. Each chapter investigates an important aspect of life that will make us discover how to enjoy every moment that we live.

We have read so many Manuals, and we have become experts in operating the gadgets of our life. Now, it's time to read a Manual about Life itself!

Discover how to live Life.

by



A.i.R.

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