

Questions and Answers

Question: On the experience of *Brahmakara vritti*

Many of the poems Swami wrote are on the Yoga practice and the experiences of the various states of Samadhi (See the book “The Saint and The Scientist”). In the poem entitled “Through the path of Silence” Swami wrote of the experience of the ground state of consciousness as the experience of *Brahmakara vritti* (the experience of *Aham Brahmasmi*, “I am Brahman”) that will not be lost even when experiencing the excited levels of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. **One of the prominent Pundits Brahmasri Guntur Sitarama Sastri from Mogallu of Andhra Pradesh, India visited Swami and expressed his doubt as to whether that experience remains even in the deep sleep state.** He asked Swami to produce evidence from Vedic Literature. Swami spoke of that experience as due to the establishment of equilibrium in the experience of various consciousness levels and it is known in Vedic literature as *Dhruva Sruti*. Swami later sent him the following Sanskrit verses from various books of the Vedic Literature that described the experience of the ancient sages.

Vedic Text: *Narada Parivrajakopanishad*

1. *Thuriyamaksharamithi Jnatvajagarithe sushuptyastapanna iva yadyachryutham, Yadyadrushtam thathathsarva mavijnathamiva yovasethasya swpnavasthayamapi, thadrugavastabhavathi | Sajivanmukta ithi vadanti sarva srutyardha prathipadanamapi thasyaevamukthirithi |*

A person fully awake will see the individual self as the blueprint of the Cosmic Creative Self (*Brahman*). This awareness once realized will be there even in deep sleep. This experience is as captivating as sleep is to a sleeping person. In the sleeping state, sounds and the changing scenes around one do not reach the person's ears and eyes.

2. *Swapnepi yohiyukthaha swajnagratiiva viseshathaha | Idruscheshtaha smruthaha sreshtho varishto brhmavadinam |*

Such a person with deep knowledge of the Cosmic Self is considered as the best of all yogis.

3. *Nanaham brahmethi vyvaharetkinthu brhmahamasmi tyajasram jagratswapna sushipthishu | Thuriyavastam prapya thuriyatithatvam vrajet |*

The thought that the self is a representation of cosmic intelligence (I am *Brahman*) should pervade the mind even in the waking, sleeping and deep sleep levels of consciousness. Thoughts that negate this experience should not be entertained. One should not only experience the

transcendental super consciousness level (*Samadhi*) but also transcend further and experience the finer states of unbounded unity in the unmanifest.

Vedic Text: *Mantrikopanishad*

4. *Om astapadam suchim hamsam trisutra manu mavyayam | Trivarthmanam thejasoaham sarvathaha psyannapasyathi | Bhuthasamohanekale bhinne thamasivaikhare | Anthaha pasyanti satvastha nirgunam gunagahvare |*

People who practice *Dhyana Yoga* (meditation) will begin to witness the Cosmic Self in their waking level of consciousness once their ignorance gets shattered by their practice.

Vedic Text: *Yogavasiste upasamaprakarane*

5. *Sadatmana sadevedam jagatpasyathi nomanaha | yadha swapne thadhae vasmin jagratyapi janeswara |*

The even minded person will never find the world as separate from the Cosmic Self.

6. *Antharmukhamananyam supto budhovrajannapi | Puramjanapadam gramamaranyamivapasyati |*

An introspective person in all levels of consciousness finds the busy villages, cities, and even nations with its citizens lacking the experience of the transcendent, as wild jungles.

7. *Balyayauvanavrudhashudhukheshuchasukheshucha | Jagratswapnasushupteshu svasamvitti parobhavaha |*

One should be coupled to the transcendental pure consciousness (*samadhi*) level while in waking, in sleeping or in deep sleep, in happiness or grief, in childhood, adulthood and old age.

Vedic Text: *Kashmirasaiva dharsene sivasutre spandhakarikayamcha*

8. *"Jagratswapna sushuptibhede thuryabhogasambhavaha"*

The experience of bliss also happens in waking, sleeping and deep sleep levels of consciousness.

9. *"Sarvadasasu yogina savadhanena bhavithavyam ityaha. –Trishuchaturdham – Thilavadasechyam" [Trishujagaradipadeshu chaturdham sudhavidyaprakasarupam thuryananda rasatmakam dhama, thaila vad asechyam vyapnuyat yenathanmayebhava mapnuyat]*

Always a Yogi should be in attention. The experience of the flow of the illuminating pure knowledge can happen without interruption at any time in any level of consciousness even in waking, sleeping or deep sleep levels.

10. "*Trithayabhokta veeresaha*"

A knower of reality (*Jnani*) will be possessed by the inner experience of the unbounded Self even in the three excited levels of consciousness, namely waking, sleeping and deep sleep.

11. "*Thasyopalabdihi sathatam tripada vyabhicharini nityam syat suprabhuddasya thadadyante parasyatu*"

This experience of the Cosmic Creative force as located within oneself will certainly come to any person of steady intellect.

Questions: On Yoga Philosophy and Practice

During Swami's stay in his home town Goraganamudi, Andhra Pradesh, India in 1952, he gave an interview to a prominent lawyer of the time by the name, Sri T.V.R. Apparao, while Swami Prajnananda took notes of the conversation. It is reproduced below.

Question: Revered Swamiji, does this scientific research of yours come in the way of your spiritual realization?

Answer. No, not at all. Had it not been for this research, my life and realization would have been incomplete. My physical research is one hand and spiritual contemplation is the other hand with which I embrace the Divine in his two aspects, viz., Material and Spiritual.

The realized soul sees the Divine both in Nature, dynamic, and in that Absolute State, Static. For a layman, an idol looks like an ordinary stone while a realized soul sees the Divine in the idol in the form of his beloved *Ishta-Daivam* with full of life and Godliness. You can know this from the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who could see and feel his worshiped Mother, Kali in the idol.

Take the instance of Newton. Many have seen an apple fall from the tree with no effect; but when Newton saw it, his inquisitiveness was aroused and with deep concentration he went into the matter and arrived at the Law of Gravitation.

Question: Pujya Gurudev! Of the two, heart and the *Agnachakra*, which is the better place for contemplation?

Answer: Both are correct. Without knowing the true value and nature, preceptors prescribe and advise the *Sadhakas* to fix or change the places of concentration. Each of the two has got a value and unfolds psychical and spiritual powers.

Question: Swamiji, is it necessary to sit and meditate?

Answer: It is a kind of discipline. A stable and comfortable posture is recommended. There are certain *Nadis* in the body. There are 33 vertebrae in the spine and there are a number of *nadis* connected with it. On either side of the spine there are *Ida* and *Pingala Nadis*. The energy is stored and working in and through these *Nadis*. *Kundalini* is latent in the *Muladhara Chakra*. If you meditate, *Kundalini* is roused through *Sushumna* and gradually rises up to the higher *Chakras* through the spine. If you sit curved, the energy will not flow and will be obstructed. So there will not be any spiritual elevation. So you must sit erect till you attain steadfastness in your spiritual enlightenment. Once you attain the Realization, it is immaterial whether you sit or stand or lie down etc.

Question: Gurudev, is it necessary to give up figure meditation and take up *Sunya* worship?

Answer: Not necessary. It all depends on the aptitude and stage of the *Sadhaka*. In my young age, if I had not taken up *Saguna* worship, I would not have advanced in my spiritual realization. In those days I needed to contemplate on *Saguna* which suited my temperament then and which brought me to these higher stages of life. So you need not give up *Saguna* contemplation if you have got a taste. Scriptures advise different courses to suit different *Sadhakas* of different aptitudes and stages. By that you need not change your course of *Sadhana* on seeing different courses in the Scriptures.