

Excerpts from Nitya's Gita video:

This book is presented in the form of a dialogue, a dialogue between a teacher and a person who was very active, who came to the battlefield and something happened to him. Here is a picture of a person who is in a state of frustration, in conflict. He feels very depressed. This picture is very symbolic. If you look at it, you can see that he is shutting himself off from the rest of the world. He's holding himself apart. When you go to a strange place, if people do not know who is sitting next to them or standing before them, they always fold their arms across their chest as if they want protection. They want some sort of fortress behind which they want to protect themselves. When you're not sure of the world, you want to flee it. This kind of a state in Sanskrit is called *viṣāda*.

The word *viṣāda* is very significant. *Viṣ* in Sanskrit means poison. *Ad* means to eat. It is as if you have taken poison. Conflict is taking poison. Something has poisoned your mind, something has poisoned your intellect, something has poisoned your vision. Even physically, something very toxic is happening within you and your system is poisoned. Once your system is poisoned, when you are in a state of anger, a state of sadness, grief, if somebody tells a joke you cannot smile. Your sympathetic system is inhibited until that poison is all washed away. Hence the Indian medical system begins by saying *rāgādi roga*. *Rāga* means coloration. Your mind is colored with a sense of attachment, a sense of anger. There are a number of things with which the psyche can be colored. Such colorations are called the *rogas*, the diseases. Dis-ease – you are not at ease because of this *viṣ*, the poison that has gone into you.

What is the answer to this? Today I received a very beautiful paper from one of my old colleagues, a professor who is in the Benares Hindu University. He says how knowledge can be used as a medicine for therapeutic purposes. Sometimes people use Haṭha Yoga for therapeutic purposes, and he is speaking the same way of Jñāna Yoga. It is very true, how knowledge can be a corrective. A person like this that you see in the picture, he wants a release from that poison. That release comes by entering knowledge. The Bhagavad Gīta is like psychotherapy, because

Krishna is talking Arjuna out of his blues. It is not ordinary talk. Wisdom is administered as a medicine. We all need that. Every now and then, we also go into such states. Then we need the wisdom of a teacher, a wise person, the light of God, to bring us out of it. (Introduction)

What is war after all? War is born in the minds of people. It comes only when you have disagreement with the other. You are here, the other is there. Between you and the other there is always war or love. War and peace is between you and the other. What I call “you,” you say “I” – I and the other. ‘I’ is called the self and the other, the non-self. What is non-self for me may be self for you. Western psychologists, when they use the word ‘self’, are mostly using it in the sense of the ego. In R.D. Laing’s ‘Self and Others,’ ‘The Divided Self,’ and books like that, what he means by ‘self’ is that ego in us, which we refer to as ‘I-consciousness’.

We look around, we see a horizon. Beyond the horizon we cannot see. Is there anything called horizon? No. Our eye is so made and our brain so functions that the span of our vision becomes limited and becomes circular to us. So we see a horizon. Wherever we move in the world, we carry a horizon around us, which is the limit of our own eyesight. Similarly, the self that we carry around has also a boundary. You may call this the ego boundary, the boundary of the self. In a person, the ego boundary can cave in, can become so close that he feels stifled. All around him he finds there is rejection. He is not recognized, he is not admitted. That means his horizon contracts, it smothers him, it stifles him. Then he has to fight and push it and he puts all kinds of pressures or he succumbs to it. Either he fights or he succumbs. But when your understanding of the self increases, your horizon also widens. A person who is fully enlightened of the Self, it is as if he has no finite horizon. Wherever he looks, he sees a continuation of his own self and thus he has no ‘other’ there to fight. Two people who say ‘I’ and ‘you’, when they melt in love, they say ‘we’. When you say ‘we’, when you say ‘us’, the boundary is gone. You have melted, you have become one. (I.1)

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You may have seen the dancing Śiva statue. In it, Śiva is standing on a small dwarf. On the head of the Śiva is a crescent moon. The dwarf is representing the alpha point; the crescent, the omega. From the alpha to the omega, there is a rise of your energy. This dwarf is called *apasmara* which means hysteria. In all of us there is a hysteric energy. No one is free of that, but it becomes pathological only when we cannot sublimate it. Once you sublimate it, it becomes more and more refined and that becomes your creative energy. When it is absolutely resolved, sublimated, then you produce the most beautiful poetry, the most beautiful art, the most intuitional writing, etc. It is all one and the same energy. It is all a question of how well you can sublimate it. (I.14)

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When you read the Mahabharata, you find that all the people who are on both sides of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, one after another they all die in the great battle or after the battle. There was no one left except the five brothers, their wife and mother. They were all walking towards their final destiny. First, the mother fell down and died, then the wife fell down and died, then the younger brothers died, Arjuna died, Bhīma died. Only Yudhiṣṭhira survived. All others came to their doom. He was singled out. There came a divine chariot to take him to the heavens. He was about to step into that. There was a dog. The dog also wanted to enter, but the guardians of the heavens said no. That's not possible. We will not allow a dog to enter the heavens. Then Yudhiṣṭhira said, if you don't, then I also don't want to enter. If my dog cannot enter the heavens, I don't want that heaven. Such was this person, steadfast in his resolve. Whether it is heaven or hell, if my dog is following me and my dog cannot come, then I also don't want to go. Such was his resolve. (I.16)

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In this chariot, there is a banner flying and on the banner is shown the image of a monkey. This monkey is none other than Hanumān who stands for great devotion to the Lord. That is taken from the other epic, Rāmāyaṇa. In the story of the *Tripitaka*, a Chinese classic, the Golden Monkey, which is more popularly known as Monkey, where we find Monkey having the qualities of animal and man, and also a man who is tending to become divine. In his devotion to the Absolute, to the Supreme, there is no parallel. But in the external world, he behaves like any other creature. Hanumān agreed to preside over the banner of Arjuna in the battlefield so that he may be always reminded of a relationship between man and God which is taken from the Rāmāyaṇa. Rāma represents God and Hanumān the lover of God. Here, Arjuna and Krishna are related in the same way. The entire success of Hanumān was his undivided loyalty and love for God. This is called *ekāntika bhakti* – devotion which is one-pointed, not flagging at any time.

In the modern world, we are living in a competitive world of so many rivalries. Even spiritual teachers seem to be in a world of competition and rivalry. But those who understand the true worth of having a path, a way, a master, they don't go by the externalities. They do not know of the master other than the divine. The external person to whom you may prostrate, you may listen, he is like a window who is giving you a peep into the divine. Once you have received your real spiritual initiation, not something formal – how you have initiated yourself to look through that window into the divine, you make your gaze steady and you always move in the same direction. There may be so many other ways, but this is your way. You have found it. So you stick on to it. That is called *ekāntika*, one-pointed; *bhakti* means devotion. That is represented here by Hanuman, who is on that banner. (I.19)

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This is our discipline. We are reading the Gita not for becoming scholars, but for the personal effect on us. The personal effect is how we can liberate ourselves from the various bondages. The bondages here are not something which we have to think of in terms of the past karma (of course past karma is there), but here and now, what we feel, how we can make our mind liberated from a very constricting feeling – something which makes you feel so bad in this moment. To release from it and bring in joy, bring that cheerfulness. And for that, you learn how to equalize the mind. That's a good discipline. If you have no pain, how can you learn how to withstand pain? So, you welcome it. (II.15)

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The Absolute reality has three unchanging qualities or aspects – one is that it always exists (*sat*), second thing is that it lends itself to be known (*cit*), and then it is representing one value or another (*ānanda*). Even in garbage, there's a value. So, you see the continuation, the overall presence of one existence, the overall presence of one knowledge, and the overall presence of one value. That value may be presented in a million forms, that knowledge may be presented with a million names and forms, and that existence may be presented also differently. (II.16)

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The Gita itself teaches that only when there is *kuṣalata* – dexterity, expertness in your action – your action is of a yogi. So whatever you do, you can do it only when you know the whole scheme of it. You are only asked not to covet the fruit of it. Your intention is to make the fruit so much available to all, and that itself is an incentive to make the action more intense, more valid, more correct. Not that you should do it with indifference. But people speak as if this is teaching us a kind of indifference to our actions. No. There we should correct ourselves. (Gita video, II.47)

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Only if the performance is done as if the Absolute Itself is guiding us, only then does karma become karma yoga. (Gita video, II.48)

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We think that if we restrain ourselves from doing a thing, then we kill that interest in us. The Lord says that does not happen. You can starve an interest, but when you are put in a situation where it is favorable for your old desires to come back, they will return. When can you rid yourself of it? *Param dr̥ṣṭvā nivartate* – only if you are seeing the Absolute, only if you can relate yourself with the Supreme, with the Divine, then of course it leaves you. So our higher correction comes not by a brute suppression or by repression but by re-education, a sublimation. How do we sublimate? By relating ourselves to a higher value, and the highest value is the Absolute. When we see That, then automatically we are relieved. (Gita video, II.59)

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Many disciples expect the Guru to tell them what exactly they should do, and this is what the Guru does not want to say! There are people who are dictators and people who love power and they will always say, “Come on, obey me! You are my disciple. Do this, do that.” But I don’t think a right Guru does that. The Guru will only show how things are. It is entirely up to you to choose your path and do that. Of course, he will show you how things are. Then you have to use your discretion, your own volition. Otherwise, what will happen is that the Guru will have all your karma upon him. The disciple will say, “I did not do anything. I’m only a servant. The Guru asked me to do it, and I did it.” (Gita video, III.2)

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Krishna says, “I agree that there are two paths. From the very beginning of time these two paths were there. What we have to decide is, how much Arjuna is fit to take a model of a renunciate, a contemplative. This is one of the major contributions of the Gita – to enable a person to discover his personal identity, called *svadharma*. If it is in your *svadharma* to be a contemplative, you will become a contemplative. This was very kindly done by nature to all beings.

If you look at the world, the mango trees bring forth only mango fruit and not apple, and the coconut tree brings only coconut. A tiger lives by killing other animals while a deer or a gazelle which is in the same forest lives by eating grass. These are all programmed by nature – their taste, their tendencies, their urges, everything is somewhat fixed. But man has a wide variety of choices. Also, he moves from place to place and puts himself in circumstances which are not as fixed as in the case of other animals and the vegetative world. The result is that he is confused. The Gita is giving a method by which you can make an analysis of your own personality, your own self, your own psyche and decide where you can fit in and unfold yourself in a harmonious manner. Not that whimsically you run into something that looked good for the time being and after a few days you find that you are a misfit.

I have this experience in the ashram. Many youngsters come with great enthusiasm to become a *sannyāsi* and join the ashram. When they come, they have so much of *vairāgya* and so much of *śraddhā*. Sometimes, due to pressure, we may agree to what they want, but after a few days we find that they cannot fit into it. They made a mistake, and those who allowed them to be in the ashram also made a mistake. My Guru finally asked me not to give *saṁnyāsa* to anyone who is not at least 60 years old. I gave *sannyāsa* to two people who were 60 years old. One fellow turned

out to be much worse than a 17-year-old boy. So even age is no guarantee here. We have to find out what one's true nature is. That *svadharma* decides whether a person should take a bow and arrow or whether a person should sit as a contemplative.

These two models are taken in Jung's psychology. He made a general classification of people into two – the extroverts and the introverts. The introvert is a person who is always turning inward, and the extrovert is a person who wants recognition, attention, all the time some action to go on. He cannot keep quiet. One is called *antar mukhatva* and the other is called *bahir mukhatva*, or one who has a great karmic tendency. When we look at the history of Arjuna so far, there is very little to think of him as a contemplative. He was a man of action, always wanting to take up some cause and fight. Krishna does not take him very seriously when he speaks of *sannyāsa*. (Gita video, III.3)

III.4: *By refraining from initiating activities a person does not come to have the attainment of transcending action, nor can one by renunciation alone come to perfection.*

By giving up action, you do not become a renunciate. By not performing an action you do not attain wisdom either. In America, electronic devices are made to create a feedback system so that you can train your mind to create alpha waves. When a yogi sits in meditation and goes into a state of *samādhi*, he establishes an alpha wave in the EEG. Taken reversely, if you can establish an alpha wave, that means you go into *samādhi*. So you make a machine and condition your brain in such a way that it is pacified and the same result is achieved. But does that make a person wise? Will he come out of it as a *paramahansa*?

If you go to the mental hospitals, you can see people who sit like a Sri Ramakrishna or a Ramana Maharshi. To praises and reproaches, they are the same. Heat and cold are the same to them. Thus, they show great equanimity. They do not cry; they do not smile. They have no reaction. We see that a *paramahansa* also behaves like that. What is the

difference? When the *paramahansa* opens his mouth, pearls of wisdom come out. When this mad man opens his mouth, it is just rubbish. So, the mere outward conformity will not help you.

When I first went to Ramana Ashram, I thought how wonderful the life of Bhagavan is, that he is sitting absolutely unconcerned of the world. You cannot make out from his eyes whether he was seeing you or not seeing you. The whole world is in oblivion. Why not you also remain in that state? Then I read in his biography, that when he first came to Thiruvannamalai, he sat under a tree and for several days he did not even move. People had to go there and thrust food into his mouth. I thought I should also adopt the same thing. So, I went and sat under a tree with the resolve not to eat, not to talk, not to look at anyone, but just be like Maharshi. Sit under the tree. After two hours, I found my body was aching, my mind was not there, I had no concentration. So, I looked everywhere. Again, I said, “No, no. This is not how I should be. I should not look at anyone. I should not give any thought to anything.” Then teatime came. I could not sit there. I very badly wanted one cup of tea. I thought I would take the cup of tea and then come back to sit again! It’s not possible. By outward conformity you cannot come to this. This is what the Lord says. (Gita video, III.4)

In Western psychology or behavioral psychology, the theory is that the stimulus comes from the outside and your senses are stimulated. The senses carry the message to the mind, and when the mind receives this message, it reacts. So, there is a receptor which is receiving the stimulus and then reaction is coming through the affector.

This is not the view of the Indian rishis. The Indian rishis see that in us there are already pre-established conditioned states. These pre-established states are called *vāsanās*. Every person has his own library of *vāsanās*, a lot of *vāsanās*, and the external world has a variety of choices there. According to my *vāsanās* I choose one thing, according to your *vāsanās* you may choose another thing. So, when both of us go to the same city, one of us may look for the best library there, and the other

for a night club or a tavern or a pub, depending on the *vāsanās* within both of us. Therefore, instead of beginning with the stimulus that affects the senses, it begins from your own *vāsanās*. *Vāsanās* are like a big group of enthusiastic people, who all want to get a chance to come out from their hiding place. They are standing one behind the other since the mind can only attend to one thing at a time. So only one *vāsanā* presents itself and the next *vāsanā* is already there waiting for the first one to move out so it can come out as well. Thus there is rush in the mind.

Each *vāsanā* presents itself in the form of a question called *manas*. *Manas* is an interrogation, a question arising in the mind. When a question arises, it pulls a string of associations of ideas. All these associations are our memories. There are big complexes of memories or matrices of memories which are pulled. According to our *vāsanās* we assemble some of the memories that give a kind of strength to our desire, and based on our desire we start acting. We take a resolve, called *iccha*, which we make with our intellect. So we have a question, we have memory, we have a volitional desire with which we make a will and the next thing is action, karma. So, all karmas originate in the mind from *vāsanās*. If you regulate your *vāsanās*, regulate your mind, your senses will not give you any trouble. The organs of perception and the organs of action are all willing to obey the orders of the mind. So, begin the reformation in the mind. (Gita video, III.8)

Take the life of a *sannyāsi*. He does not sign a contract with anyone, and he does not work the way in which a person goes to an office and works. He wanders. But he is always doing something for the benefit of the world. Day and night, he is working. But the person for whom he is working may not be the person who is feeding him or giving him shelter.

I work usually 10-18 hours a day. Is it obligatory? Do people ask me to work? No, nobody asks me to work. But I say, those who have gone before me, other *sannyāsins* – the Buddha, Sankara, Vivekananda – they were all tirelessly working to enrich this

world, the understanding of the world, the value vision of the world, the compassion of the world, to make the world culturally, spiritually, intellectually a better place. And it is because of that, that I am accepted by people, recognized by people. If I just live on their glory, I become a thief. I am not doing justice. So I should make my own contribution to this non-paid job.

Yet it is fully paid. When I was with my Guru, I never thought of leaving the shores of India. Then one day, he said, "Go around the world. Now you should go. My money is in all banks, so you can always go and write a check and get the money." I thought that was very sneaky of Guru to put money in foreign accounts and not let me know! Then he said, "Oh, I didn't put it. That was put by the Lord Buddha. That was put by Swami Vivekananda. What kind of money is that? Goodwill. Goodwill in the hearts of people.

Through their sacrifice, they created goodwill in the hearts of people. That's the best bank. And if you add to their goodwill, then you have a license to go anywhere. The whole world is yours. I have found that to be true. No hitch anywhere. There are little formalities like getting a visa or some such thing, but that is nothing. The whole world is open. That's only true when you're not a thief. (Gita video, III.12)

Once, when Narayana Guru was traveling in Tamil Nadu, it was very hot. The summer was very hot and people had no water. All the rice fields were dry, and the farmers were all crying. He went and sat near an old *vināyaka* temple, so people of the locality came rushing to him, and said: "Swami, there is no rain. Our cattle are all dying. There is nothing in our field. No drinking water. Please help us."

He is a wandering mendicant. How can he bring rain? But people have faith, belief, in the invisible, *adr̥ṣṭa*. Even though he's also one like them, they think that he has some connection with that *adr̥ṣṭa*, that power. We call the rain God *varuṇa*. It's a very

beautiful name. *Vara* means blessing. *Varuṇa* is one who bestows blessings on you. And how does *varuṇa* know that we need his help? There is a God in our heart. His name is *mitra*. *Mitra* means the friend. Every thought in your heart is conveyed to the Divine by a friend in you, called a *mitra*. So *mitra* and *varuṇa*, they always go together. You pray and the prayer is answered.

In the story I was mentioning, Narayana Guru said, "Look at this temple of *vināyaka*. You have discarded it. *Vināyaka* is not getting any attention. When you show such kind of callousness, carelessness, indifference to God, how can you expect God also to be kind to you? So, break a coconut for him. Can you?" They said, "We will break." So they all ran home, brought coconuts and they started breaking them. And even when this was going on, clouds gathered, and there was a big rain. And this may look like just a coincidence, but it is not always a coincidence.

Moni was with me one day when we were in Sydney. It was a Spring day. A big farmer is there called Jimmy Walker. They went to feed the cows. Cows were dying because there was no grass. No green grass. So Jimmy came to me and said, "Swami, can you not bring rain?" I said, "How can I bring rain?" But that is his need, you see. He's not in India, he's in Australia. Whether Indian farmer, or Australian farmer, or Chinese farmer, or American farmer, when you need rain, you should have rain. And you know that you cannot make it with all your science. You can probably produce half a bucket of water as rain by spraying some chemical.

So I went out and looked around. I did not want to get a bad name for my psychic *siddhi*. So I said, "Jimmy, I don't see any cloud anywhere. Can you give me three days?" He said, "No. In three days, all the cows will die." I said, "All right. I'll try."

So I went around calling *varuṇa* to help. By evening, we had rain. And the rain continued for more than a week. It caused so much of a flood there. The big reservoirs became full. Not by my power. Why? What is it then? There is an invisible benevolence in the

whole universe. When you give up your ego, and you relate yourself to that benevolence, it reciprocates. You should have such love for the Divine, and you should believe that the Divine will listen to you. So, these things are even literally possible. Only that one should not take pride in it. If you do it for the welfare of the world, it will always happen. And therefore, this *yajñas* which is given here in the middle, [Pointing to picture] that is the middle link between world of necessity – food – and the world of grace – rain. And this will always happen. (Gita video, III.14)

There is a good story that once the Lord Buddha gave a great sermon in the deer park of Sarnath, near Benares. Five thousand *bhikṣus* were listening to it, and those *bhikṣus*, even though they heard the Lord speaking for more than an hour, they appreciated his words, his love, but no one seemed to have made any connection with the highest realization to which he was making subtle references. Then the Lord turned away from them, and he took a lotus flower, looked at it, and smiled. At that very moment, just by seeing the smile of the Lord at the flower, Mahākāśyapa, one of the disciples of Buddha, became immediately enlightened. So that enlightenment was not because Buddha was there, or he saw the lotus flower. Anything is enough. Anything in this world can suggest to us the beauty, the grandeur, of the Self. When you are looking at a flower, the flower is only an excuse for you to see how the world exists, how it is existing in your awareness, and how that awareness is a great joy. And thus, you're not depending on any object of pleasure for your joy. You see yourself in everything. And this becomes exchangeable. The flower is myself. I am the flower. (Gita video, III.17)

People are asked to meditate on the world as 'I am the cosmos.' Yesterday, I received a letter from a friend who was suggesting a new kind of meditation - not really new, old – but a meditation, saying, “I am not this body, I am not the senses, I am not this

person, I am the cosmos. I am existence.” I said, "Not necessary. You don't have to say 'I am not this body'." This body is beautiful. Why shouldn't I be the body? The senses are so wonderful. Why shouldn't I be the senses? But the question is, what is this 'I', and why should the 'I' be there? The senses are at least there – 'I' is not there. So why do you want to place 'I' above the senses. There is no 'I', but the senses are there, and they are beautiful. This world is there and it is beautiful. Only 'I' am not there. 'I' is a concoction which we make. It is a central reference, the central focus of consciousness, which we mark as 'I' just for our convenience. (Gita video, III.17)

When I came to my Guru, for two whole years, he did not say one harsh word to me. I could see him pouncing upon people and tearing them to bits, but he never did that to me. He gave me two years to establish the rapport. When he knew that I was earnest and that I could stand all the terrible disciplines that he would give me afterwards, then I found that I became like a sheep in the mouth of a hungry tiger! You cannot leave! He would be so harsh in his disciplining because it was required. It was necessary. Some of the stains in you have gone so deep. To wash it out, you need a very hard kind of treatment. A drastic disease needs a drastic treatment. The same is true in the wisdom context also. Only in such a situation, a Guru deliberately changes the conviction of a disciple. (Gita video, III.26)

Renunciation in the Gita is different from what is usually understood as renunciation. It is not the physical renunciation of things or offices, but renunciation of an attitude – the attitude of possession, the attitude of an egoistic relationship with things. (Gita video, ch. IV Intro)

The Upanishad dharma is saying there is this fundamental basic substratum of things on which forms and their meanings are all attributed or all posited. And if there is any decay to that – decay here in the sense that when you mistake the real for the unreal, that

is the only decay possible— the *sat*-ness does not leave. When you are mistaking a rope for a snake, nothing is happening to the rope. The rope is not decayed, it is not destroyed, only for the time being its presence is ablated with the knowledge of the snake. So only the removal of the ignorance is required. Thus, the Lord that is reestablishing here is not to be seen as a person coming and interfering, but as true wisdom prevailing. And that true wisdom is prevailing in everybody's mind. The person, for a little while, he mistakes, and after that, he corrects his mistake. This is the reestablishment of the dharma in the higher sense of the term. Not that in the historical period, a certain person comes, then he comes with a big sword and he punishes everyone, and then asks everyone to sit in their place, like a headmaster. That is how we understand, and so there are many people who want to become chastisers of this world, who correct everything like a Superman coming. Thinking of *avatāra* is like a Superman coming of Nietzsche, and Hitler thought he was that Superman to correct the world. Now, the Secretary of State may say that he is the trustee and custodian of the world's peace and things like that. These are all kinds of megalomania, but that is not what we call here the reestablishment of dharma. When truth prevails, there is the reestablishment of dharma. This is important to know. Otherwise we will make this the philosophy of the megalomaniac. (Gita video, IV.8)

Avataran means from above, you are descending, and for that you have to think of a God above. Only prophetic religions think that God is sitting above. 'The most-high God', they say. Hindus never say 'The most-high God'. For them, God is a here and now reality. So it is a *sambhava*. It happens here, right here. From among you, there comes the torchbearer, the wisdom revelation. You don't have to think that it happens from above as a special grace. (Gita video, IV.8)

Where there is fear, you are on the defense and you are not only afraid of the opponent, but you are also angry with your opponent.

Thus you get into states of polarization. To not have polarization, there should not be the other, and to not have the other, you should be identified with the Supreme. (Gita video, IV.10)

I was reading only today in *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*, an illiterate person went to Sri Ramana Maharshi and said, “I do not know how to read, but all these people are reading great books, scholarly books, and they’re getting the benefit of it.” Bhagavan said, “Well, you don’t have to read anything to realize. If you did not read anything so far and still you know that you exist and I exist and you are seeing this world, that is enough for you to know that you are free. You don’t have to read all those books.” But he was still feeling doubtful. Could that be true? Then Maharshi gave his own experience. He said, when I came here I did not read anything. It was without reading that I came to know, and with me was a Malayali swami called Palaniswamy, who was semi-literate. He used to go and bring books and read them. It was painful to hear this man speaking in broken words with great difficulty. So Maharshi took pity on him and started reading for him. When he picked up the books and started reading, he was so amazed that all the books were recording what he had already experienced. He said, I never knew that my experiences were all described in books. When I read the books, I found that they were all recorded there. How could that be? It was not that I first learned and then became what I am. I became what I am, and only afterwards did I read.

Nataraja Guru one day asked Narayana Guru, at what point in his life he read all the books and understood everything? He said, “First we came to know everything and then we saw it was also written in books.” So, here are two great gurus of our time. They did not read anything. They just came to know. And then they found that there was full corroboration of what they had experienced in books also. (Gita video, IV.32)

When I had just joined the Gurukula, I had so many democratic ideals. I thought, what is this place called an ashram? There are all these households around here. There is so much place in the ashram, why not let all the children come and play here? So, I started a tennis court in the ashram. The same evening as I finished making the tennis court Guru came. He said, “What is this?” I said, “Let the young people of our neighborhood come and play here.” I thought I was doing a social service, something good. It was already evening and no one was playing. He said, “Suppose in Trivandrum, the Water Department allows both the drainage water and the purified water to run into the same system, do you think that water would be good for drinking? Both are water, why keep the purified water in a separate reservoir? Why not mix both the waters?” I said, “No that cannot be.” He said, “If that is so, there is a special reason for calling this an ashram. This ashram means, we are culturing, purifying something here to be given back to the people. For that we have an undertaking, and that undertaking is to have discipline, where there is no discipline.” Then he asked, “What is the name of the ashram?” I said it is called Narayana Gurukula. He said it is not just a *kula*, but a *gurukula*. There should be a difference between the *kula* of a father and the *kula* of a guru. Further, this is called Narayana Gurukula, named after Narayana Guru, who lived for certain ideals, who had certain views. When we are within these premises, we have a responsibility not to go against his teachings. Otherwise you can have your own place. (Gita video, IV.34)

Hatred and desire – *rāga* and *dveṣa* – we think we know, but we do not. Or we know only in a vague sense. *Rāga* here means that our mind is colored in a certain way, colored in favor. That is, we made decisions with a prejudice. With *dveṣa*, we are conditioned or colored negatively. To keep oneself in a neutral center, it is effortless, but if you have not attained it, it is very difficult. How

do you keep yourself at a neutral center, not saying “this side” or not saying “that side”? That is possible only if you are constantly aware of an all-present reality. There should be a consistent, constant, deep, “underground” so to say, experience. In the bottom of your heart, your mind, your consciousness, you are always perceiving the One. What is that One? This itself. But in our mind, we have made categories – spiritual, worldly, etc. Are they there? They are there. Are they really there? No, they are not really there. It is here we make our mistakes. (Gita video, V.3)

Some cookies are made like a fish, some like a bird. In the same packet you can find an assortment of cookies shaped like a fish, a bird, a snake, a camel. We know that it is one and the same thing. Children do not see that way, so they quarrel, and one says, “I want the camel” and the other one says, “No, no. I want that camel. I don’t want this fish.” Similarly, the *jñāni* sees first of all only the Self – Self in its existence, Self as the awareness and Self as the *ānanda*. But there comes a falsification of the One. (Gita video, V.3)

When the second part – i.e., the *tadākāra vṛtti* of a *viṣaya* - interferes, the *priyam* (the endearing quality of it) either increases or decreases. When the endearing quality of it increases, it is segregated from the rest, and therefore the *rāga* operates in alienating an identified consciousness from the totality. When the *dveṣa* comes, it is much worse because *dveṣa* has the effect of darkening your consciousness so much that you totally miss the substratum. The *ātman* is completely ignored where *dveṣa* is. When it is completely ignored, then you’re allowing this organism to take care of itself. The result is that your conditioned nervous system starts dictating there. You start shedding tears, you shiver,

you raise your voice, and you start stuttering. Why do go through all these things? “I am like that.” No, you are not like that. This is called ignorance. This is an ignorant state that has now taken possession of you. It is not your true nature. So do not try to hide under an excuse. You should cure this disease. When *dveṣa* comes, it is a disease....

But suppose you regain the sight of the Self, then the whole thing becomes so beautiful, as if the whole thing is a painting by the Supreme Artist, the great God – that God has painted this beautiful world. That kind of an appreciation comes. You see everything as one beautiful painting. These are the differences. One person who is constantly, continuously seeing all as the Self, then he has neither *dveṣa* nor *rāga*. (Gita video, V.3)

By the Self the Self must be upheld; the Self should not be let down; the Self indeed is its own dear relative; the Self indeed is the enemy of the Self.

In us there is a higher self and in us there is a lower self. Daily activities are mostly done by our lower self and we do not even suspect the presence of the higher self. It remains just watching, witnessing. When we say Guru, when we say God, actually it is that higher self in us. If the higher self in us or the better part of our self is not taking the light of a Guru’s teaching or the grace of the Divine, we are not affected. So it all has to come through the higher aspect of our Self. It’s the best light in us. That light should be made your own savior.

A person who is always sitting and crying, saying that I am a hopeless case, I will never be able to do anything good, I am a lost soul, I am a sinner, I am wicked. There is a lot of self-criticism in this country which then becomes an excuse. I am a bad man! Once you have established that you are a bad man and cannot be improved, you believe that is why

you behave the way you do. That is not the right thing. It is said here that the Self should not be let down – either you can be your own friend, or you can be your own enemy. When others are already wanting to be our enemy and wanting to find fault with us, at least we should not turn against ourselves. We have every right to defend ourselves and present our case properly.

In this verse, what we usually take as a social function is to be understood as a personal correction. Here the Guru is not an outsider, the friend is not an outsider, the enemy is not an outsider, the brightness that happens is not an outside thing, the darkness is also not an outside thing. All these are happening within the psyche. So you assume the responsibility to brighten yourself and therefore brighten your future also. (Gita video VI.5)

VI.8 includes: A yogi is *one to whom a lump of earth, a stone, and gold are the same*.

One meaning usually read into this is that mud and gold are alike. They have no value. But that is not the right meaning. Mud has no value? Gold has no value? But how can one say that mud has no value or that gold has no value? Everything has value – the entire universe has value.

If there is a crack on the floor on which the potter is sitting, he will not put mud or gold there to repair the crack. He will use marble or stone to repair it. Similarly, he will not use gold to make the pot; he necessarily needs clay. If he wants to give jewelry to this woman, he won't make it either with stone or mud but with gold. Each one in its own place has a value. When you say value, value is the same. The category called 'value' is the same. Where you need clay, clay is valuable, where you need stone, stone is valuable and where you need gold, gold is valuable. This is not a marketplace where you are exchanging one for the other. Here, the

use value is considered, not the exchange value. Use values can all be reduced to *ānanda*, and *ananda* is the *svarūpa* of the *ātman*. For the one who is established in *kūṭastha*, she knows that what she sees as a value in the thing is the *ānanda* aspect of the Absolute, and thus she does not prefer one over the other. She only looks for the appropriateness of each value, not that she runs after one and pushes away another. (Gita video VI.8)

It takes a long time for us to come to have that kind of sameness of attitude, but it is possible. At the Ramanā Ashram, many people and all sorts of people came to see the Maharshi — the very rich, the very poor, people of all ages and religions, men and women, scholars and illiterate people. I always watched him to see if he ever gave preference to some and not to others, or if he was impressed more by some than the others. It was not so. He was the same at all times. Where it was necessary to give a consoling touch or assurance, he did; where it was not necessary, he did not. He treated everyone the same irrespective of their social status.

There was a person who wrote many wonderful things about Maharshi. Later, he fell out with the ashram people and wrote the opposite about him – very stupid things. That was brought and read out. I was sitting there and could see the reaction. There was no difference at all in Maharshi even when the worst kind of slander about him was published and read out to him. The ashram people, on the other hand, were very

angry with this man. In fact, Maharshi was made very popular by that person's writings! Eventually he wanted to come and personally seek pardon from Maharshi for what he had done, but the ashram people did not allow him to do so. So even right where this teaching is given, for others to imbibe it is very difficult. This equanimity, this sameness, which a great master can have and be established in, is difficult for most people.

When you say it is difficult, we should also see the position of those who cannot get to it. When we have an institutionalized life, like in a home or family or in an institution, we have to look for the security of that institution, and for that security it is necessary that we have certain preferences. That brings about a social attitude. Only one who has gone beyond that can do be truly equanimous. If I am the head of an institution and somebody comes in who I think will have an adverse effect on the other members of the ashram, I will certainly ask that person to be removed. Does that not show that I am not at the level of the Maharshi? Of course it does, and of course I am not at his level. I want to be there, but unfortunately, I cannot be. Maharshi was not in charge of an ashram. Only his brother was. That makes all the difference. (Gita video VI.9)

For this [meditation] you need determination. It's not a *rājasic* determination, but a more thoughtful consideration. You take into

account everyone involved in the situation and what is beneficial to all and then you regulate. (Gita video VI.25)

We have senses in the forefront, the mind behind it, and behind the mind is *buddhi*, the intellect, and then comes the *ātman*. Mind has the power to attract the intellect and make it into a kind of a lawyer or a defendant, thus making the intellect somewhat vicious. It tries to find reasons for doing what you like. Instead of that, if the *buddhi* is allowed to exercise proper discrimination, it will be in resonance with the soul or spirit, so to say. The ‘yes’ and ‘no’ that you get from the intellect will be more appropriate, more helpful than allowing your intellect to be influenced by the mind. (Gita video VI.25)

Two things which assail our mind are the *vilāpa* of the past and *cinta* of the future, but both are generically called *cinta*. “This happened to me. I shouldn’t have done that.” “If I planned like that it would have happened like this.” “If at that time I had chosen this it would have happened like this.” This is all remorse, called *vilāpa*. *Cinta* is about what will happen tomorrow. “Will I be able to make it?” “Am I going to lose?” “Will somebody find fault with me?” “How can I make someone agree?” A number of uncertainties are seen before us and those uncertainties cause worry. That worry is called *cinta*. So, when you are asked *kimcid api na cintayet*, that means do not worry. Not that you should not have any thoughts in your mind. Thoughts will always be in the mind, but the quality of thoughts can be controlled, can be changed. (Gita video VI.25)

We have a wrong idea that *brahman* means something very big. When you use a word like Absolute, it gives us a better sense. When you say “I am absolutely happy,” you don’t change from what you are, but a new dimension comes to your life, and that new dimension is called the Absolute. When you say, “This is absolutely beautiful”, it’s not that all

the beauties of the world are there. You have given to that particular experience of beauty the highest rank. So, you become the Absolute by filling yourself with a wholesomeness. The outside world and the inside world are not separated with any wall. There is a free flow of the external into the internal, of the internal into the external. You don't want to bar anything, you don't want to close your door against anything. Then that is an Absolute state. But to arrive at that, first you may have to make many controls. Then you say in that state you say you have become a real yogi, and you start understanding what is *ānanda*. (Gita video VI.27)

Now I am speaking to you. I have no idea whatsoever how the words are presented within me and how one word after another word is coming sequentially, according to the requirement of grammar, according to the requirement of logic, according to the requirement of the presentation of my arguments. There is such a rapid flow of words. The way in which I have to use my muscles, my nervous system – these are all outside my consciousness. It's all done for me. I do not know how it is done. So, we have to think of a dark area within us – dark in the sense of “we do not know.” You may call it the unconscious. If it is not known to us, we may say it is unknown. The unconscious and the unknown seem to be working meticulously so that our consciousness is manifested, our consciousness is maneuvered, controlled, regulated. And it is with that consciousness alone you think, you reason, you think you can find out ultimate truth, the absolute truth. It is not absolute. It is only relative phases of consciousness, and it is with the relative phases of consciousness you presume that you will be able to get at that which is not relative. When you say relative, you contrast it conceptually to what is not relative. Although we call it the Absolute, the Absolute is as much a concept as the relative. Both are concepts of the mind, concepts of

consciousness. We have control only here – where the words come, ideas come, awareness comes. Until it comes, we do not know. Only when we come to it, we know.

But within that, there is a possibility of having access to what you do not know. If I sit in my room and want to give a talk about this chapter like this, no words will come. When an occasion is made and I put the expectation of you people before me, and I take up the challenge, and I gear myself to it, then all these ideas open up. So that means irrespective of the fact that I do not know what I am speaking, I can create a situation by which such areas in us can be opened up. (Gita video VII introduction)

Cast away the feeling that you are you and that the Total or Supreme is another. Then comes yoga. You are one with whatever is. You always have a tendency to separate what you see and the seer. Actually, there is no separation. Yoga is not anything to be established because it is already there. Only a mistaking of what is, is to be avoided. The mistake is “I am the subject, and the object is here.” When that mistake is discarded, you have understood your original union, which is always there. Union is not anything to be established. There was no time when you are not united with it. (Gita video VII.1)

It is the word ‘Me’ here which is confusing. When we speak of "me," we refer to an embodied person. Here, Krishna also refers to Me, and therefore we are comparing a person with another person, and that kind of a comparison is delusive. The delusion is we are attributing the qualities of *prakṛti* to one which should be known as pure principle.

When we speak of pure principle, *brahman*, there is another difficulty creeping in. The difficulty is what will we do with our bhakti? How can you love a pure principle? A principle is a principle. How can you pray to a principle? Bhakti is also defined by Narada and Shandilya as

parama prema rūpā - absolute love, which like the *tailādhāravat*, a continuous flow of oil. We usually understand bhakti as an intensified form of love. We have love for our children, husband loves wife, wife loves husband, parents love children, friends love each other. If that is ordinary love, this is called *parama*, an absolute form of love. Even when we say absolute love, we only see love as a quantitative exaggeration of sentiments. To correct this, Sankara says “*svasvarūpa anusandhānam bhakti*” (contemplation of Reality as your innermost core, is bhakti). If you think of this form as your body, that is corrected. This body aspect is only a very superficial aspect of us. It is not our true form. (Gita video VII.13)

This verse is brought here because it is preceded and is going to be followed by verses which are given for a correction of the attitude of people towards the Absolute. But that can have one damaging effect on the mind – it may take away from you a sense of blessedness, a sense of grace. In religious life, it is a very important thing to believe that there is grace, there is divine grace. You are a helpless individual. When you pray, there is a God who listens to you, a God who is interested in your welfare. With His grace everything happens. Without His grace nothing happens. And if that is taken away from our life, life becomes very insipid. (Gita video VII.16)

Even non-theistic religions, like communism, for instance, ask people to sacrifice. (They may say it is not a religion, but it is a religion.) What for? If you sacrifice, the State will protect you. The State will be beneficial. Where we put God, they put State. And everybody is made to think of the State as a very benevolent being. That is a hypostatic idea. You are deifying an idea, and you are expecting from that, everything which you expect from God. In theistic religions it is only natural that we think of divine grace, and that is also to be fitted into this. If you have an idea of the Absolute where there is no grace, then what is all

this? It can all be reduced only to one thing, and that thing is nothing that you have experienced. If it is not anything that you have experienced, then you do not know that, and when you do not know that, you can only say *sarvam śūnyam*. But the idea of *sarvam śūnyam* truncates life.

I had a friend, a German friend, who adopted Buddhism as his religion. So, he was always meditating on *śūnyata*. The result was he came to an absolute negativity. Nothing was of any value to him. Friends are of no value, beauty is of no value, music is of no value. Nothing is of any value. In Sri Lanka, even now, the Sinhalese have not taken to music, because they are taught that music is opposed to the highest truth. So, you should not listen to the senses. Indian cinema and music became very popular in Sri Lanka. That's the only stuff they could hear. This has a corroding negative effect. So afterwards, I told this friend, even when you reduce everything to nothingness, we still say "nothingness is". There is an 'is' aspect - the final affirmation. When you turn to the affirmation, then you start affirming many things in this world. We can see that 'is' is in everything that exists. (Gita video VII.16)

There is a secret in saying *neti neti*. We don't say one single *neti*; we say *neti neti*. You have to say *neti* twice. And when you say *neti* twice, by double negation, you will come to an affirmation. We don't come to that affirmation by just saying *neti*. (Gita video VII.16)

A man may be a great scholar, but he should have the humility to know that he does not know, and everything is done for him. Thus there comes a great *āśraya* in him. "Everything is done for me," he says with gratitude. It is that gratitude which gives him faith and strength. Without faith, there is no strength. That faith stands him in good stead always. Even though he is at the brink of a fall,

something in him will tell him, “Hold fast, I will save you.” (Gita video VII.16)

The Absolute and the relative are the same – it’s only a matter of how you know it. (Gita video VIII.5)

A most synthetic, integral view is given in the Gita. Things which are lying scattered in a fragmented way in the Vedas and Upanishads are all taken, and an integrity is given to it. (Gita video VIII.5)

There is no such thing as an absolutely honest Marxist or Vedantin. (Gita video VIII.7)

In love, the idea of possession is very difficult to suppress. The person whom you love, should belong to you entirely, that person’s opinion should be your opinion, that person’s belief should be your belief, that person’s everything should be yours. And you are willing also for the other person to think that you belong to that person. The first thing is you belong to me, I belong to you. You are me, I am you. There is a kind of an identity established. But then the rivalry comes. Is he going to dominate me? Or is she going to dominate me? That I should not allow. Even if now I agree, it is a concession that I make, so that the next occasion he or she will completely agree with me. That’s why I am agreeing. You make it a condition. The result is that a subtle rivalry wells up and it grows in you. First you do not want to look at that rivalry, but when the rivalry becomes more and more strong in you, it starts creating irritation. The irritation wells up. Two people loving each is like playing a kind of a computer game where you are bound to fail. And the result is that the stress increases. If that can be lowered, there is no *asūya*, no jealousy. (Gita video IX.1)

The Absolute that we speak of here is not a person. It is the whole meaning of your life. Life is that you see the meaning of life, the wholeness of it. That comes only when you give a purpose to it. You are the one who is giving the purpose. If another person is

giving a purpose and you are trying to reach it, you make yourself a slave and you are enslaved by somebody's system, somebody's program. You should not allow yourself to be programmed by another. (Gita video IX.3)

We are afraid of altering a tradition. People say, “Oh, Guru did it like that and so now if I don't do it like that, people will say I have no faith or loyalty to my Guru.” I say, this is all trash. Make a break. If you find that it's becoming mechanical and if it provides no help to you, no vigor to you, and no inspiration to you, it is time that you should break it off and start something new. But we are afraid to break an idol. We become idolatrous. The idolatry we are talking about has nothing to do with an image. I am not saying that there should be an image or that there should not be an image. But we create mechanical images in our mind and then succumb to it. In such a case, it is necessary to break it and to allow fresh blood into the veins of your search. (Gita video IX.12)

The principle here is – what you meditate on that you become; what you look for, that you see; what you expect comes to you. So we have to make our expectation right; we have to make our meditation right. Meditation is that which is occupying your mind all the time. If your consciousness is filled with anxiety, your blood pressure increases; if your consciousness is filled with serenity, you become peaceful; if you are filled with fear, you tremble; if you are sad, you become choked in the throat and your eyes become moist and you shed your tears. Thus, your consciousness can change. Similarly, your physical changes can change your consciousness. It is a vicious cycle. When you change your outer environment and correspondingly change your consciousness for the better, then you have a proper *upāsana* going on. (Gita video IX.25)

People try to meditate on the Absolute, meditate on God, meditate on an *iṣṭa daivata* – a personal God of a certain form. And then

they complain that they cannot concentrate on that God, they cannot concentrate on the formula that they have accepted from their teacher. They do not find it easy to keep the mind ever in union or in relationship with what they want to relate. This chapter is an answer to such people.

One difficulty in this chapter is that it takes us away from our normal concept of the sense of sacredness or holiness in religion. Religion approves of certain values, a certain kind of sacredness and holiness. We have images of what heaven would look like, and how God can be visualized. Those ideas are somewhat rejected in this chapter. The overall epistemological coverage of this chapter is not according to any set pattern that we know as religious or even mystical. (Gita video X, intro)

In this meditation of which we spoke, our first mistake is that we are looking for a God. We already made a bifurcation in our mind, a dichotomy in our mind of the world and God, and we look for a conceptual God which we have conceived, and it is not fitting in anywhere. If you already have a picture in your mind of what God is, when you see God face-to-face every day in a million ways, you do not recognize God in any of them, because you are carrying your picture of God. And you're saying: "Is Andy God? No, he's Andy, he cannot be God." "Is Johnny God? No, he cannot be God." So, you go on rejecting – this is not God, this is not God, and you don't see Him anywhere.

At the same time, you accept certain fundamentals, like God is omnipresent. Present means, She's here. Then how do you say this is not God? That means you have not genuinely accepted that God is omnipresent. They say without God there is nothing. You're not your mind, you're not your consciousness. Then why do you think you are different? Why do you think your consciousness is different? So we have to educate ourselves first to have a concept of the whole against what we are conditioned to always know: the

particular. We know the particular and we know how to look for the particular, but we do not know how to look for the universal. Apart from the particular, the universal does not exist; and every bit of the particular belongs to the universal. Thus, from the inside, if you get an awakening, that all this is That, then your world gets a new glow, a new dimension, a new savor, a new fragrance. It is already divinized.

But then there are certain impossible situations. When you think of the Divine, you think it is peaceful, beautiful, generous, glorious. Then you see this sham, the stupid things of life, something very cruel, very nasty. How do you relate that? So, religious people have drawn a line and they say, this side is divine, and the other side is satanic. In the next chapter we will see that this idea is totally abolished by the Gita. If you make a dichotomy of the Absolute into God and Satan, then the Absolute is not absolute. Darkness and light – both are to be given a place in your total vision. We'll come to that slowly as we proceed. (Gita video X, intro)

However, there is what is called the *deva* aspect and an *asura* aspect of it. *Deva* is when a thing is understood as it should be, or placed as it ought to be, or kept in its natural order. When it is misplaced or chaotic, then it becomes *asura*. I begin the day by arranging my table and arranging my room. Then I pull out one book and then another, then a paper and two pencils and one pen and another book and another reference. By about noon, my table is so chaotic. Then I worry, "Look at how ugly I made this place! How dirty it is! This is just chaos!" Then I start again and try to put some order to it, and it becomes neat again. I feel very comfortable. But it's only for five minutes and then the chaos starts again. Can you say, I was neat and that's the only time I was, and when it was chaotic, I was another person? No, it was the same person, the same things. The neatness or the chaos are arising out

of the placement of the same things. But we have separated the two so much that we only accept one half and we do not accept the other half. The *deva* and the *asura* are two aspects of the same thing. Like Bertrand Russell says, mind and matter are two ways of looking at the same reality from two ends. From one end when you look at it, it's all spirit; from the other end when you look at it, it's all matter. We need this kind of a monistic vision. (Gita video X, 2)

Another sense is, when *vasanta* came, the spring season was suddenly brought to the Himalayas by the minister of desire, Kāma. When Kāma came to distract Shiva so that he may fall in love with Umā, suddenly the spring season came. Kalidasa makes a very beautiful description of how there is love everywhere, so their very *prāṇā* is affected by the one vital energy, vital force that is coming from the same source. Thus, birds come to each other, and they sing, they rub their cheeks and rejoice. The antelope is scratching the eyelids of the female with his horns, and thus making her pleased. There are the pairs of elephants, the bees, and the bees coming to the flowers. Thus the flowers rejoice and the bees rejoice. Everywhere you can see, life is so construed, that from one source, the idea of enjoying in the company of the other is there. In that enjoyment, they do not remember the source. (Gita video X, 9)

Who created this wonderful world for me? Nobody remembers. In fact, it is not created as separate from the Creator. The creation and the Creator, and the stuff of creation and the act of creation, are all one and the same. When you bring your two hands together, two fingers together, and you touch, there is a mind behind it which is doing it. But the touch is felt by the tip of the two fingers. Similarly, in everyone who is enjoying, behind their touch, behind their enjoyment, there is one common thing. We forget that. (Gita video X, 9)

In the Yoga Vāsiṣṭha, there is a story. There was an Ahalyā who fell in love with an Indra. This is not the same story of Ahalyā and Gautama. This Ahalyā was also the wife of a Gautama, and a youngster called Indra fell in love with her. The husband reported this to the king. The king asked them to be brought to the court, and they were asked to be whipped. This man and woman got into an embrace and then they were whipped. But they both only laughed. They did not feel any pain. Then they were asked to be thrown in the water. They were still clinging on to each other. They did not drown. So many such kinds of persecutions were done to them. The king became so puzzled. He wanted to find out why none of these persecutions had any effect on them. They said, in our love, we have forgotten our body, our senses, our mind, our separate identity. We know only one thing here, that is this ecstasy, this *nirvṛtti*. So that stage of *nirvṛtti* is what we may call *ānanda ghanam*. When you have a *kevalānandam*, you forget everything else. That is a union of *svarūpa yoga* or *brahma sāyujya* that one gets, and is spoken of here.

Every time we experience this oneness, this ecstasy, that is a time for thanksgiving. We should be very grateful that the Supreme is so considerate, the Divine is so considerate, that He presides in our heart and He lights this lamp of wisdom, by which our darkness is dispelled at least for a little while, and we see His own glory there.

(Nitya Gita video X, 10, 11)

Myth has a great impact on the human mind. We heard most of the fables and fairy tales when we are children of the age of two, three or four from our grandparents or someone who told us nursery tales. All over the world nursery tales are told to children. Children's minds are full of mythical figures – giants, fairies and dragons. Some are very small and beautiful, some are very big and ferocious, and all these go to build the very first foundation of consciousness. Whatever you do, these are the foundations, and you cannot escape them till the end of your life. These mythological stories which were told to you when you were a small child, you can fashion and elaborate them, and you can give them more realistic meaning, but they always remain there. They are the

feeding ground of your poetry, of your everyday life, your dreams, your anger, your love. When you are in love or in anger, you are in a hypnotized state. Then this mythical anger can come to you, this mythical love can come to you. (Nitya Gita video XI, intro)

In mysticism, one way of thinking of God is that you see God face-to-face. God stands there in all His glory and you, a little humble being, are standing there and having a good look at God, and you are filled with great wonder, great joy, and also cursing yourself that you cannot fully comprehend this wonderful vision of God, because He is so vast. In a small way you can see this when you go and stand at the foothills of the Himalayas and look at all those snowy ranges. All that you can see is only a little, and you know that beyond it and behind it there are millions of ranges. You have no idea what those ranges are like. You are already feeling most fulfilled and inspired by what you have already seen, and that vision is enough for you, and yet you know there is much more to know. This is the face-to-face vision of God. (Nitya Gita video XI, intro)

In the Vedanta context, when you speak of the conscious world of gross form, the world of ideas and the deep unconscious from where the gross world is being projected, the projection from the unconscious is possible because of a substratum of pure consciousness. It is that which is emerging from that deep unconscious, which becomes the pre-conscious and then animates the subjective consciousness. Only those concepts are being actualized in the wakeful. There also it is the same light which percolates through the unconscious, through the pre-conscious and then comes into the conscious. The reverse is not possible with the same faculties. You cannot turn the eyes back and look at the source from which the light comes. You cannot turn the mind back. What is mind after all? Mind is only a number of vivified, pluralized questions, pluralized memories, pluralized judgments. Both are not possible.

But one thing is possible. Suppose these three screens – the unconscious, the subjective consciousness, and subject-object duality are dissolved and merged back into the original source or substratum and become flushed by that pure light, then the wonder of it can make every bit of this have its own quality. Or the heterogeneity of the mind is merged back into the homogeneity of your consciousness. There you are not seeing God as before (face-to-face). You are allowed to delve into and be absorbed into what may be called the unitive vision, which is God himself. The consciousness which we have... if it is pure, then it is qualityless. Qualities are black, white; big, small; good, bad – a number of qualities are possible. We have to think of all these qualities being taken away from it. That means, the vision you get is an unconditional vision of pure Being. You cannot even say “you get it”! (Nitya Gita video XI, intro)

In the Old Testament there is the vision of the Prophet Ezekiel, that he has seen a chariot with four wheels, with four animals in it, that rides in the clouds. It is a vision which he is seeing with his eyes. That is considered to be somewhat of an inferior kind of spiritual vision. But if you take the significance of it, then it is not inferior. The wonder which the mystic is filled with is drawn to a depth from what he sees. The objectivized aspect is only an occasion for him to sink into the depth of his myth. It becomes an alchemy, an alchemy of spiritual fusion. That gives another quality to the original spiritual vision. (Nitya Gita video XI, intro)

In the unbroken, there is a circumlimiting. This can be somewhat analogous to the dipping of a pot in the ocean. Water is not broken anywhere in the ocean but there is a pot in it. So the same ocean is in the pot also. Because of that *upādhi* or condition of a pot there, technically the water in the pot is a pot of water, so you cannot call it ocean even though it is still in the ocean and there is no discontinuity for the water in the pot from the ocean. If somebody

breaks that pot, that technicality is gone. That conditioning is gone. So now you say a pot of water and an ocean of water. There is a kind of a duality there. (Nitya Gita video XI, 13)

Vishnu is just another term for memory and recall.... All these books which we see here, we can say these are all aspects of Vishnu. If you have a big library, it is as good as saying that you are a worshipper of Vishnu. What sustains this world through millennia is the knowledge of our forefathers, people who have gone before us, and that is helping the next idea to be built. Thus, knowledge is being piled upon knowledge, and that is the modern way of worshipping Vishnu. Vishnu can be what is in the genes. Vishnu can be what is in the library. Vishnu can be what is in your own memory. From everywhere, for the sustenance of this world, previous experiences are thrust into you in the present. Thus there is a promotion from the storehouse of knowledge, the storehouse of memory, to where that memory can be actively used. (Nitya Gita video XI, 15)

Vishnu's own placement is a positive one because he passes on to one who comes from within himself to create it. The gestaltation of a creation is passed on to an aspect of him. Therefore Brahma is made into an aspect of Vishnu. The navel is considered as the area of the genetics, and a flower is coming from there. The flower is a symbol of the libido and is a representation of flowering forth, of ideas flowering forth. Creation is the flowering of the mind of an artist, mind of a painter, mind of a musician, mind of a writer, mind of an architect, so it's fully appropriate that Brahma is put in the lotus that comes from the navel of Vishnu. Brahma is facing all the four sides. There is creation on all sides. In other words, it's a horizontal function. Something which comes vertically becomes horizontalized and flows in all directions, and therefore Brahma is shown with his face on all sides. (Nitya Gita video XI, 15)

Somebody went to Narayana Guru and asked him – is it true to say that all these worlds are supported on the head of *śeṣanāga*

ananta? Guru asked, what is the theory of modern people? Oh, modern people say that there is no Vishnu, and there is no Ananta, all these are superstitions. But then how are all these stars, the sun, everything being held up and standing there? That is because they are all supported by gravitational pull. How big is it? Oh, it is endless! They also say Ananta, endless. An endless force is supporting all this. Then, your objection is only in picturizing it; don't picturize it. But you understand the same thing.

So, on Ananta's head, everything is being rested for sustenance. It is what we call *kavijñāna kalpitam*, the imagination of the poet. The poet makes it easy for you to memorize it, to structure it, to put it in a compact way. You should be thankful to the poet instead of saying he's giving you superstition. Superstition is because you do not have his imagination. He has this great imagination to piece them all together into one picture. (Nitya Gita video XI, 15)

I once read a very beautiful book called the *Diary of a Russian Surgeon*. A mathematician came to the surgeon and showed him a book of one of his theories. He had made a theory that no machine can make a machine more complicated than itself. So, a man cannot make a computer which is more complicated than his own mind and more perfect than his own mind. He can only make an approximation to what instrument he has. In his book he says yes, that's right, but there are many human beings and each one has a different capability. From one man you can take the approximation of his ability, and it can be complemented with the ability of another person and then of another person and another person. Thus, with all these people put together, it is not just one brain but an approximation of many brilliant brains. In such a case, the computer can supersede the powers of man. (Nitya Gita video XI, 34)

This invocation ends by saying "I adore you." Adoration, salutation. A person who gives adoration should feel small and what is adored is great. When there is a sense of identity in

oneness, there is no one to adore and no one to be adored. What is that particular state of emotion which accompanies adoration? One's love, admiration, sense of wonder. It's so wonderful that you feel like praising it. There is great love, so you want to become one with it. There is an upsurge of an emotion, so you cannot restrain your words. You feel like expressing your love. Something is surging up within you and it is pouring out. It is an expression that is deep within you that finally gets a chance to come out, to flow out. That is given here in the form of a hymn, an invocation, a praise. This is more a praise than an invocation because nothing is asked. It only says that the Guru is great. Guru is as great as the Creator, the Sustainer and the Dissolver. Then it says the Guru even transcends all this. A process is first described, and then this person who gives the adoration goes beyond the idea of a process and says '*param brahman*'. Such an adoration is called *bhakti*. (Nitya Gita video XII, intro)

We are facing the image rather than the original, and we are deluded by the image, so, we forget ourselves and we also forget the original. There is a sense of wonder when you look at the image also.

Is it possible for us to turn 180 degrees and see the original, which is the source of all wonder, the source of all magic? This is something which defies words. We cannot give a graphic description of the entire process or what one experiences. This is to be done more with the language of the heart, the pure feelings of one's heart than through rationality. We are already pre-warned that the more you rely on your rationality, you cut yourself off from the ground, which is the collective unconscious according to Jungian psychology, or your ground which is *turīya* according to Indian spirituality. That becomes more and more distorted as you go from the causal to the dream world and from the dream world to the objective world of tangibility where you have a quantifiable

truth which can be enumerated, measured and understood in terms of cause-and-effect relationship. (Nitya Gita video XII, intro)

There is a difference between *upāsana* and *dhyāna*. In *upāsana*, you are facing God, and you worship. In *dhyāna*, you see the perfection of the Supreme through the excellence that is being revealed to you through the clarity of your own consciousness, the certitude of your own realization. Thus, from inside, like the day opening up from the heart of the night, from the darkness of your own cloud of ignorance, there is the brightening up. The mind which is conscious of the transformation that is happening to it becomes more and more assured of the presence, and clarity comes along with the intensification of that experience from within. Then you may say, now meditation is happening, *dhyāna* is happening. When you sit there and think of an idea right there and try to make it more and more vivid, you cannot say it is meditation. If you're doing that with a sense of adoration, then you may call it *upāsana*. (Nitya Gita video XII.1)

The actualization, which is yet to come, is not a complete product but a continuing process of going from one finite stage to the next finite stage, infinitely, not quite reaching it, nor coming to a stage where you can say now it is perfect. When you think of an infinity which can never be reached but will always be attempted, and we move towards that direction, we have an idea of the Absolute. (Nitya Gita video XII.2)

We are all part of a grand scheme and that grand scheme itself is the expression of the Divine. By knowing that, we find our place in the meaning of our life. Fulfilling the meaning of our life itself is the worship. If we do not obstruct it with our own thoughts, with

our own personal pettiness, then the worship is going on. There is no need for a separate worship other than that. If you give yourself to what is happening with all sincerity and full devotion, then it is as if you have given the very flower of your mind as an offering to the Supreme. (Nitya Gita video XII.7)

Abhyāsa, yoga of practice, is doing a thing again and again till you become fully versatile in it, an expert in it. When do you become an expert in it? When you do not know the effort you are putting into it, and it becomes so automatic, so natural, so spontaneous, that it becomes like your habitual behavior. You are cultivating it, but it is becoming habitual. (Nitya video Gita, XII.9)

I was reading in Jung today how in the early years of our life, during our childhood, adolescence and early youth, we are so totally spoiled by parents, teachers and society, by structuring our mind so much that it becomes fully conditioned and we lose all touch with the original. It is for allowing the original to possess us that we need *abhyāsa*. This *abhyāsa* which is spoken of here, is like unlearning what we have learnt and relearning to become our original nature, our true nature, or what we call the *svarūpa siddhi*, attaining one's own *svarūpa*. We are not trying to conform to a postulated *svarūpa* which is planned by others. In the book, *The Development of Personality and Education*, Jung speaks of the great tragedy of education conceived for a society which is systematized and which is given according to rules, where all individuals have to conform to that system and be educated according to rules, where the person in you is mutilated and you are alienated from your true being. That is what is happening everywhere. As a correction of that you have to think of that mind to which this entire universe and all its functions belong, and to recapture that original mind. For that you discipline yourself through a process of *abhyāsa*. (Nitya Gita video XII.9)

It is very beautiful to say that you have no exaggeration of joy, hate and fear. When we moderate our mind and take away the exaggerations, half the trouble of this world is over. (Nitya Gita video, XII.15)

Krishna's hand is to be seen as everybody's hand because he already said, I am the dweller in all beings. If Krishna is the dweller in all beings, all these hands are his hands, all these mouths are also his, and all these legs are also his.

There is a biographical story of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo was taken to the court with the allegation that he was involved in a bomb case and that he was a terrorist. When he was led to the court, he saw a tree under which he was standing chained to. He could see the form of Krishna in every branch. When he entered the court he saw the judge as Krishna, the prosecution officer as Krishna, the police as Krishna, his lawyer as Krishna. Only Krishnas were sitting there. One may say that was a hallucination. That could be. Whether it was a hallucination or a spiritual vision, it changed his entire life. The change was that he could not raise his hand and accuse anyone. He saw a divine meaning in everything. Things good or bad, all those are to be now synchronized into a total function, just to be known as the divine function. (Nitya Gita video, XIII.13)

First, through meditation we arrive at the dwelling of the Lord within our own self. Then through an act of extrapolation we see that the same Lord is also dwelling in all. Because of this, (the immense love and reverence one has for the Absolute, for the Lord), the *priyam* (endearment) that one has for oneself – that which enables you to excuse yourself, to appreciate yourself, you give a number of reasons why you are not wrong – the same, you also extend to others. Here there is a capacity to move from your

body situation or location, to the body location of all other people. Irrespective of the social and other status of people, you will be able to see the Lord everywhere, and thus cultivate that reverential feeling for all. Maybe at first it's theoretical, but after that it becomes so real that you hardly notice any personal ego haunting any of your actions or your thoughts. (Nitya Gita video, XIII.27)

You do not know the exact origin of the psyche, nor of the body. If you think that when you come to physiology you are on safer ground, that is not so. It is as mysterious, and you can be as ignorant of it, as the psyche. Simply because you can see your hands and legs, doesn't mean you know things better. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.intro)

The chapter seems to suggest that if you understand sattva, rajas and tamas, then you can easily get out of the muddle of this life and get *moksha* and become one with the Lord. That's an oversimplification. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.intro)

The first thing is, even sattva binds you. Sattva binds you with two things: with knowledge, and with bliss. You find a state blissful, so you don't want to leave it. You find a state giving you a lot of insight into things, and that gives you a qualitative difference from the rest of the community. So you want to hold on to that situation. This is a position that is accepted by the Zen Buddhists also, where some Zen masters, as soon as they see that they are getting into a peaceful state and becoming addicted to it, they leave it. They say, even this is binding. Sattva is as binding as the rest, although it is considered to be one where you have a very clear perception of what is presented to the senses and the mind, where the intellect still has the power to discriminate between right and wrong and is not enslaved by your passions and your desires, and there are no motivational urges that cause compulsive inhibitions or obsessions. So it's fairly superior, but it still belongs to prakriti. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.6)

In discussing the types, Jung calls our attention to a dynamic movement from within us, from the very source of us, from the very root of the depth of the psyche, that gives a whole bias or a whole tendency to the formation of a personality, where there is an emphasis on one aspect of your life interest to which you have a great affinity. That gives a lopsided growth to the personality, and that lopsidedness decides your type. This is not something which is happening from outside. He's saying that you cannot create a type with any amount of training or education that you give from outside. Type is formed from the inside, but you can probably tame it, or you could discover and stimulate some of the other deep-rooted tendencies that are not getting attention, and thus create a more rounded personality. This way, you will not be developing only one potential, and other minor potentials can also become satellite potentials of this. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.8)

It is here that a major problem arises about our living situation. They are not speaking of the kind of death we have, but what comes after death. If Buddha is born as Buddha because of his tendencies of the previous life, then Andy is born as Andy in the United States because of his previous karma connected with his gunas. Then the question comes – if that is the case, why call for social justice and social equality? Everybody is born according to their karma and if a man has to suffer, he will be born in the ghetto; and if a man has to live a good life, he will be born into the Carter family or Ford family or some such family. So there is no socialism needed, and all the theories that you give in sociology and politics become defunct. Is it true? Should the millions of untouchables who are held away in the outskirts of villages in India all be considered as people who are born of unclean wombs because of their past karma, and deserving of their state? When we give them a better deal, better education, better food, and better life situations, we see them becoming bright and they change. Does that mean that their sattva, rajas, tamas can be altered by changing their social situations? Sattva, rajas, and tamas are not only of a

prenatal condition of a previous birth, but can be changed in this very world by making the undernourished boy a little more nourished, or by giving the uneducated boy a situation to become literate and study, and if better examples are given to them, better encouragement is given to them.

Otherwise, this book can be used against all progress. Someone can say: Look, the Bhagavad Gita says you are born like that because of your previous karma, so you remain there. Previously in India, if a boy was born in a Brahmin family, one would consider it to be because of very virtuous actions in his previous birth.

However, when we went to Badrinath last time, we saw the most miserable Brahmins frequenting Badrinath, Gangotri, and such places. They pester you like flies because they have nothing to eat, no money to go to school; they are born in such poor families.

What is the use of saying I'm a Brahmin born on the banks of the Ganges? It was considered as the greatest thing that could happen to a human being to be born on the banks of the Ganges in a Brahmin family, but in present-day India it is not so. To be born in Bombay, Calcutta or Madras as the son of a jute merchant or black marketeer has better possibilities! So where do we place our sociology here? That's the question. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.15)

When you look at the progress of a person, there are those who are going in an ascending, vertical direction, those who fall downwards, and some who are in a horizontalized state in the middle. These correspond to sattva, tamas and rajas respectively. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.18)

This is the silver lining in the cloud – that irrespective of the type to which you seem to belong, you can still go beyond to become a seer who transcends these modalities and sees the nature of the Absolute. (Nitya Gita video, XIV.19)

In the external world, there are a number of forces that are not in our hands. You are only one among millions of objects that are flying around in this sea of energy. Your own body and mind are

just one fragment of that, so it is a tremendous thing to pull away from the sea of objects.

Now coming to the interior aspect or the inner aspect of our mental life, there you find that you are even more bound than in the external world! In the external world, if a thing is harmful, you can move away from it or you can get it removed from you. It won't come and haunt you unless someone is insisting on putting it to you. But in the mind, what you want to dismiss comes back with greater force again and again to your attention. So, the problem seems to be more binding than problems of the sensory world. You found one bondage at the physical level, now you are finding another bondage at the mental level. Those bondages are coming from registered impressions that are functioning as memories. They are not just a passive presentation of memories but memories that have dynamics, wanting to be relived. There is an affectivity which is impressed on all memories and that affectivity is asking you to relive them. This is called *vāsanā*. At the second level, the complication goes further and there is a plurality of distraction. You cannot push it away because it is all in your own mind. Another person cannot see it and eradicate it because only you know where the shoe pinches, unless that person is a guru who knows exactly how it works. I suppose it is possible for a guru, because they have undergone all those things at some stage in their life. (Nitya Gita video, XV.intro)

Now we go into something else where there is neither the objective world nor the subjective world. It is as if suddenly everything is effaced, but then you are incapacitated. You cannot use your mind; you cannot use your intellect. Even if you watch how the *vāsanās* come up, there is no explanation why the rotation of memory is such that at the least expected time or occasion, a strong urge comes up and something which you thought you had overcome a long time ago suddenly presents itself. On closer observation you can see that the time and space which we think we know is not exactly the time and space of the wakeful world where the

segmentation is clear cut. There are shadows of the future which may have been brought into the present, and there are lingering shadows of the past that do not leave even when we are removed in time and space from that particular event. For instance, a guilt feeling haunts you long after the whole situation has vanished from public scrutiny. There is no way for someone else to detect it, but in your mind, it can wax stronger. Similarly, when a hidden desire like an ambition generated by greed or revenge comes, it does not leave by merely pushing it away. Sooner or later, you'll find that you are working yourself into its clutches, something which is making you behave in a certain way. You can see this in the life of martyrs. Even when people are not thinking of killing a certain person for a certain cause, the person is already haunted by the feeling that he is going to be a martyr, and his thoughts and behaviors are all happening with constant interaction with the external world, that he finally becomes a martyr. He is happening to his martyrdom. This is where the mind is interacting with the external world and a whirlpool is created in that world. (Nitya Gita video, XV.intro)

We have a world of our desires to become something else, to enjoy. All the hedonistic pleasures are considered to be in the heaven. Nataraja Guru calls them hypostatic ideas. You may not find that word 'hypostatic' in the dictionary. You have to understand that mentally you imagine a value you want to actualize. For instance, democracy is a mentally-conceived idea towards which individual nations are trying to perfect themselves. Communism is another hypostatic idea. There are many hypostatic ideas: Going to heaven, or the kingdom of God coming; a casteless, classless society coming tomorrow, etc. are ideas we aspire towards and try to actualize. These bind us [gesturing upward], and the karma that we do here also binds us [gesturing downward]. We are so tied up with our sense of responsibility, we cannot easily free ourselves from these. If a call comes from the

hospital, the doctors have to leave immediately. (Nitya Gita video, XV.2)

Nobody understands fully what this life is. Although we are all living life, we do not know what it is. We don't know from where it has started, or its end, or what makes it persist. It says we should cut its roots (*asaṅgaśastreṇa dr̥dhena chittvā*). Now, some people say, This is a sacred *aśvattha* tree, don't cut that. The Lord is only saying cut these bottom roots that are binding you to karma or action. The rest are coming from heaven. Don't touch that, don't tamper with that!

Others say, the very first reference in the chapter is '*ūrdhvamūlam*' (roots above). So, cut at the very root of it. The very Veda itself is to be cut down. Why do you say so? Because Bhagavan himself said, '*traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavā 'rjuna*' (Ch. 2 V. 45). Vedas deal with the three *guṇas*. Cut! Go beyond the three *guṇas*. What is Veda dealing with? Veda is dealing with dharma, and dharma causes all this *samsāra* in this world. So, one has to go beyond dharma. In the eighteenth chapter, Krishna says – '*sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*' – Abandon all dharmas and surrender to me (Ch. 18, V. 66). If what you're looking for is *brahma jñāna*, *brahma darśana*, you have to go beyond the pale of the dharma and the Vedas that deal with dharma. The Bhagavad Gita is a *brahma vidyā* and not a *dharma śāstra*, although many people think it is a *dharma śāstra*.

At least in the fifteenth chapter, there is a clear reference that this whole *samsāra* and its cause should be discarded. How do you do it? *asaṅgaśastreṇa dr̥dhena chittvā*. With a *sastra* called *asanga*. What is *sanga*? *Sanga* means a kind of riveting or attachment. What is it that binds you to an external object such that you can never leave it? That is called *sanga*. *Sanga* is generated by an interest between you and that object of your interest. When the

interest is not there anymore, you are automatically released from it. (Nitya Gita video, XV.3 & 4)

I spoke of three levels of bondage: at the level of the physical, at the level of the mind, and the level of *vāsanās*. The bondages at these three levels are all to be broken – the bondage at the bottom part, the middle part, and the top part of the tree. It is not doing any physical violence. When you say *śastra* (weapon) or *chittvā* (cut), it sounds very drastic, but it is the opposite. You're not cutting anything, only the interest is diffused. By diffusing the interest, the bondage is already cut. Why then do they use such aggressive words like *chittvā* and *śastra*? Because there is no slow weaning away from this. You have to make up your mind whether or not you want release.

The Vedantin says, the first requirement is *nitya anitya vastu viveka* – you should have the power to discriminate between a perennial value and a relative value. If your preference is for the relative value, you can go on hankering after all this. But if you are convinced that value is not for me, then you are asked to discipline yourself, to pull yourself out of it. How do you that? With '*samādi ṣaṭka saṁpattiḥ*' – that is, to have *śama* and *dama*; *titikṣa* and *uparati*; *śraddhā* and *samādhāna* (the six treasures).

By cutting off the external distractions (*dama*) and internal urges (*śama*), you experience two kinds of restraints. When previous addictions to things come and cause trouble, one should have a lot of will power to withstand the urges. A simple thing like giving up having coffee or tea in the morning can be very hard. If these simple things are hard, how much more difficult it would be to overcome other addictions?! If you take up a discipline to forego tea or coffee, for example, you will understand what *titikṣa* (forbearance, tolerance) and *uparati* are. *Uparati* is to give priority to what you have decided to be your core program and loosen your interest from all other things. For that, you need *śraddhā*. *Śraddhā*,

in this particular case, is *śraddhā* towards *guru vākya* and *śāstra vākya* – putting your entire trust in what is given as an instruction by the guru or by the *śāstra*. There is a vertical line with *śāstra* at the top, *guru vākya* below it, and *anubhava* at the bottom. Going from the bottom up – “I am convinced, Guru said that was so, and I read it in the *śāstra*.” *Śāstra* are recorded over thousands of years. They are the recorded experiences of many wise people who have all experienced the same thing. I am thus convinced that yes, this is so. That is *śraddhā*. When *śraddhā* is established, the swinging of the mind stops, and it becomes steadied – *samādhāna*. *Ādhāna* is support; *sama* is when mind is steady – not moving this way or that. (Nitya Gita video, XV.3 & 4)

The highest goal according to Vedanta is immortality, and immortality is identified with knowing the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth is called Brahman. Knowing and being are treated as the same. If you know, you are; if you do not know, you are not. (Nitya Gita video, XVI Intro)

When you say divine or demonic, they are not separate beings. What we call the *devas* or the ‘shining ones’ in the Gita are not angels of another world. Our very senses and our mind which have fallen away from right norms, not conforming to natural laws and not conforming to higher values, are called the demonic, the *asuras*. The same sense interests and urges of the mind, when they are in tune with one’s own higher nature, are called the shining ones. These are not separate beings but are aspects within us. Both are in us, but one can become predominant over the other. (Nitya Gita video, XVI.6)

The BBC serialized a number of movies taken to present various religions. Of all the religions presented, I think the best one was the one on Islam. The director of that project chose for his study a dedicated couple in Cairo, a retired professor and his wife. They lived their lives according to the Holy Quran. What this gentleman learned from the Quran and how he lived was to think of Allah as

the only power before which he should bow. Bowing before any other power according to him is idolatry. He understands Allah not as an object, not as someone sitting somewhere, but as the only Truth that pervades life, the only Truth that sustains life, the only Truth that controls life. He understands this not in philosophical terms. All his emotional life, his intellectual life, his intuitive life, and life at the very mundane level are all attuned to that. The clarity with which he and his wife were interpreting Islam would convince anyone that they had a very clear notion of their relationship with Allah, and how that was continuously transforming their life. I refer to this particular instance because this is so true of all religions, not only Islam, if you accept the most central theme of any religion. (Nitya Gita video, XVII Intro)

To live with an illusion is very difficult because it is self-deceiving. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII Intro)

Here, the immanent and the transcendent are both fused into one reality in *aum*, *tat* and *sat*. Everything here, if it is real, the quality is *satya*. Even though individual items are experienced here, we unitively conceive them as all belonging to That. The logos can be considered in its descending dialectics as immanent, and in its ascending dialectics as transcendent. (Nitya Gita video, XVII, 26)

One is not to pursue action with the intention of bringing a certain result, so there is neither a motivation nor the execution of an act prompted by that motivation. This is the *saṁnyāsi* way of being. The relinquisher or *tyāgi* has a motive, accepts a course of action, and brings the course of action to a result, but when it comes to enjoying the result, he says “That’s for you. That's for all of us. I do not make any claim to that.” The Gita wants us to accept the second model as a recommended model for most people. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 2)

Here, the Lord says *pāvanāni manīṣiṇām* – this purifies your intelligence, your mind, your system. For that you need at least three kinds of action. One is to treat life as a sacrifice. Whether

you are a *saṁnyāsi* or a non-*saṁnyāsi*, you cannot get away from a program which involves a sacrifice. Second, *tapas* – that means you have to exert yourself, you have to look for ways and means of bringing redressal to the misery and pain. So, that is an action program in which you accept pain – physical pain, mental torture, everything – but you emerge out of it with strength, with purity. And third, *dāna* – that is, sharing what you have, sharing your talents, sharing your intelligence, sharing your money, sharing your powers, sharing everything. These three are inevitable from which no one should escape. Whether you take the model of a *saṁnyāsi*, a recluse, or the model of an active participant in the mainstream of life, these three should be considered as imperative. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 5)

All of us have our basis. There are two ways you can look at it. Indian religions believe in reincarnation. They think that you have been in another form of life previously and so, in this life you have brought whatever you achieved in your previous life as a new foundation. In modern science it is called your genetic foundation. The gene from which you have come has the blueprint of your life. Whatever is there, you can expand, whatever is not there you cannot do anything about it. So, you have your foundation. How much you know about that foundation we do not know, but there is a foundation. That foundation is called the *adhiṣṭhānam*. You have your foundation; I have my foundation. You become a physician or take some other kind of trade, I become a teacher. It's all built up from our foundation, *adhiṣṭhānam*. One should look into one's own basis. What is my foundation? There can be many talents in me which are unexploited, and I can exploit them, but if that talent is not in me, I shouldn't try that. I will only be wasting my time.

The second thing is, even though the talent is there, I should have a sense of agency. I should feel the call. I am called to do this. If you don't feel that, then your talents will die with you. There should be a personal sense of agency – *kartrtva*. I am the actor, and I am going to do this. Are you not one with the Self? Yes, that's okay,

but when I am in this body and when I am placed in this society and when I have to play this particular role, I should do this. I am the one person who has to do this thing. It's a responsibility that you take upon yourself. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 14)

The problem that confronts man is the problem of the One and the many. When all that can be conjoined are united, that union is yoga. For that union, there is the prerequisite of the knowledge of the nature of the counterparts, the way of uniting the two, and also the result that ensues. The effort that is involved in it, and the process that is undertaken, is an action. Action is preceded by knowledge and also accompanied by knowledge. Thus, the actor should also be a knower, and the purpose for which the actor acts according to his knowledge is what he gains: his *sukham* or happiness. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 20)

Whatever the seeming difference at the level of manifestation, if you see it undivided, that is *sattva*; if you put all your emphasis on difference, that is *rajas*. The present-day problem in sociology, politics, economics, everywhere, is this rajasic attitude of magnifying the difference and deciding not to agree. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 21)

A kind of definition is given here of *sukha*, happiness. That is, when you go on practicing, and you start taking delight in it, that is *sukha*. There is not a very big distinction, but some distinction can be drawn between *sukha* and *ananda*. It is a very appropriate thing to say that *sukha* is cultivated through practice, that when you again and again do it, more and more interest comes, and then it becomes *sukha*. (Nitya Gita video, XVIII, 36)

