

SRI SARVESHWARI TIMES

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2005

*In this world no one is either your
friend or your enemy.
Here, it is your behavior that
creates friends or enemies for you.
Aughar vani, Avadhuta's wisdom*



Aghoreshwar
Baba Bhagwan Ramji

Thus spoke Aghoreshwar on conscious way of being

The shackles of dependence leave us utterly helpless. In such a condition we remain totally disintegrated, and little to big things rule over our lives. This situation arises due to conflict and disorientation within our heart-mind. We say something and do something else, we listen to something and understand something else. This kind of behavior weakens us and we fall prey to various influences.

We all must try to do something in our life where we put others' interests before our own. When we put others' interests first, our own interests are met automatically. It always happens, it has happened and it is happening now.

Although forced to live in a crowd, we are saved from suffocating by finding a moment in our busy life for calming and centering ourselves.

A person who lives an unostentatious life of simplicity shuns all kinds of addictions and even shuns the next-of-kin who are immersed in lowly activities, and cultivates a heart-mind that is worthy of contemplation. This person, having cultivated such a heart-mind, measuring the limits and boundaries of cause and effect by his own measures, understands it clearly and becomes liberated from it all.

Nothing can be said about the people who do not appreciate this human life of theirs and behave like animals. Instead of being focused on one thing, they keep looking for happiness here and there. This mentality gives birth to immeasurable suffering. Looking for happiness in all kinds of unsubstantial things, they keep moving towards old age without tasting real happiness.

As we begin to abandon our weaknesses (envy, hatred, animosity), ego will surface, speech will be compelled to praise the self and criticize others, eyes will be tempted to see the faults of others, and ears will be eager to hear others' criticism. Aware of all

these, the day we decide to work on ourselves, our speech will begin to express pleasing and compassionate words, eyes will begin to see divine attributes in others, and ears will begin to hear divine wisdom everywhere. Our sensory faculties will be completely cleansed. In such a state, what remains is the feeling and knowledge that “I do not know anything, and that is all that I know.”

Practical Pearls of Wisdom

During his recent visit to New England, Baba Harihar Ramji addressed a gathering of seekers at the YogaEast yoga studio in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on the evening of Friday, October 28, 2005. The following are excerpts from his talk:



NAMASTÉ

Sitting here with you feels like I do not need to explain what Namasté means, but I will. I bow to the Divine in you. So if you are curious what I am going to talk about, I can sum it all in one sentence: I am Divine. Divinity resides within me and in everyone around me. That's the only truth.

What does the word Divine mean to you? What words come to mind? Unconditional love, forgiveness, tolerance, acceptance, kindness. Wherever these qualities are being practiced, God is right there. When these qualities are coming from me into the world, the Divine residing within me is expressing Itself in the world. When I give these virtues a chance, I am giving a chance to the Divinity within me to express Itself. I am acknowledging the Divine that I am.

DAILY PRACTICE

We have to do something daily to acknowledge the Divine, and while doing it, we know we are doing it for that purpose. This effort can be called sadhana, spiritual practice.

You have heard the word sacred? The root of the word sacred means that which has been carved out. Carve out a little time from your twenty-four hours to acknowledge the Divine, to acknowledge your own Divinity.

It doesn't matter how you acknowledge it. There are all kinds of traditions in the world; each is equally valid. As long as you know in which form you are acknowledging the Divine, that is what matters. It could be just a mindful breath. A spiritual practice is something that can be practiced, not a lengthy ritual. Something very, very simple that you can do, and you do it daily.

TWO ASPECTS OF LIFE

There are two aspects of our life. One is very engaged in the world and active, playing all these different roles, wearing all these different hats. But there is another part of our life that is constant, in the background.

It's just like going to the movies. There is a screen on which the movie is projected. We get so identified with the images, the story, the songs, the violence, the plot – how often do we think about the screen? If the screen is not clean, the movie could even look distorted. Any practice we do is an attempt to keep the screen clean.

Here is another example. We read the newspaper. How often do we pay attention to the blank sheet of paper on which it's all written? It's there. In the same way, there is a divine aspect of our life which is very constant, ever pure, unblemished and totally whole.

People say, I feel so empty. To acknowledge your wholeness, you have to take time for it. It's there, provided you take time for it.

PICK PEARLS, NOT PEBBLES

Instead of picking pebbles, we have to learn how to pick pearls. This is spiritual practice.

We criticize ourselves. We remember all the negativity that happens to us throughout the day. Somebody did this to me, somebody did that, she said that, he did this. Lying in bed at the end of the day, we think of these kinds of things. This is called picking pebbles.

A person who is bringing spirituality into his or her life, who is acknowledging the Divinity within, forms a habit of picking pearls. What is picking pearls? Thinking of all the good things that happen to you during the day. Somebody just gave you an unconditional smile. Somebody gave you a glass of water. Somebody overlooked your weakness. Somebody forgave you. Somebody did something good to you and you did something good to somebody else. Thinking of those things is called picking pearls.

Divine moments happen to us all in our life daily. Without those moments, we couldn't be alive. We couldn't be sane. We'd become insane.

So a yogi, one who is on a path of yoga, a person on the path of spirituality, trains his or her mind to pick pearls.

Anybody can start it. It's not a mystery. It's not complicated, it's not only found in India. It's found right here, in your home, in your daily life.

People come to me and say they want a practice. I say, what is the simplest thing you can think of doing in the name of that Divinity, to acknowledge that Divinity? Oh, I can't think of anything! I say, well, how about three nice deep breaths every day as soon as you wake up in the morning? Before you leave the bed, just take three nice deep breaths, and while taking that breath, you know why you are taking it.

TANTRA – EVERYTHING THAT I DO IS SACRED

How many people in this room have heard the word Tantra? To sum it all up, Tantra means everything that I do is sacred. Thus I acknowledge the Divine that I am. Everything I do...not only that act with my partner. Here just one aspect is emphasized too much, which is a much bigger fire to deal with. There are other smaller acts, like the way I get up, the way I step on the earth, the way I wash my hands, the way I put on clothes, the way I talk to somebody, the way I eat, the way I bathe. Each one is sacred. All the way to how I have my intimate moments with my beloved. This is why in Tantric India a prayer has been devised for everything. Before you get up and set foot on the earth, you say a prayer. When you wash your face you say a prayer. When you put on your clothes you say a prayer. Just to remind you of the sacredness of each act.

In other traditions, like Buddhism, a mindful breath is taken before every action. This enforces the same concept that every act I do is sacred. When I take a mindful breath,

I allow space for that action. I'm not carrying my previous action into the next action. Punctuate your life with a mindful breath. Then it makes sense. Just like you punctuate a sentence with commas to make sense, punctuate your life with mindful breaths. Then your life makes sense.

Whenever you can remember that every act is sacred, you're acknowledging the sacredness, the wholeness, the Divinity residing within you. We'll forget, we are human. But as much as we can, we keep remembering it.

AGHOR

The tradition I come from is called Aghor. In Aghor, the basic philosophy is you are boundless, you are limitless, you are free, you are Divine. The very moment you say, I hate this and I love this, you're limiting yourself. Anything that we hate, are afraid of, are disgusted by, or pass judgment on, we invest so much energy in it.

When you are angry at someone, just see how much energy you invest in that person. Find a way to free the energy through whatever means you know. Then that energy can be used for creative endeavors in the world. This is our practice. Whenever I feel limited by anger, greed, lust, hatred, jealousy and fear, I acknowledge it and try to keep chipping away at it, keep releasing that energy and using it.

PARTICIPANT: How do we stop judging ourselves? If we have a harsh conscience, how can we be free from that?

You have to start training your mind. Start picking pearls, you have picked enough pebbles. It's weighing heavy on you, drop it. There is no time. Life is precious; every moment is precious. You can choose. Maybe you have been conditioned to feel separate from God, but you are not separate. You couldn't exist if God was not in you.

So please, drop that bag of pebbles. Start picking pearls. Think of what good you did today and what good came to you today. Just start thinking about it. Lying in bed, just take the inventory of those moments of grace, and that way you start training your mind.

PARTICIPANT: As far as starting the day, it would probably be advisable not to start it with the New York Times, to give up that kind of daily routine.

Start with the breath first, and then pick up the New York Times. Once you have started with the breath, then you can tackle the New York Times.

Another thing, whenever you are really having lots of fun, a good 'ole time, or when you are wallowing in your miseries, there is not much difference in the two. They are both two sides of the same coin. To live fully, to enjoy anything, you have to learn the art of detachment. It's only then that you can enjoy it.

How do you do that? No matter where you are or what you are doing, take a step back. Take a nice deep breath. Calm your eyes. Soften your belly. Take another deep breath. Then again go back into it. It's the Divine Mother in the form of prana, the breath, that helps you separate from it all. Learn the art of detachment if you want to live a meaningful life. No matter what is going on around you, find a way to take a step back, take a nice deep breath. That nice deep breath is acknowledgement of your wholeness. You come back home with that breath. Then you engage again.

Otherwise we lease our bodies out to lust, anger, greed, fear, jealousy and hatred. We have to be home, and it's the mindful breath that brings us back home.

Darkness is vast, but all it takes is a little spark. So please never ever underestimate what you can do. All it takes is a little spark and darkness is removed. It works like that. No matter where you are, make sure you are enforcing right values, giving the right things to your children.

Thank you so much for being here. Maybe I'll see you next year.
- OM TAT SAT

Bal Ashram News

Our Bal Ashram family is looking forward to Babaji's annual visit February and March 2006. Many friends from the US will be joining Babaji this year, spending time at the Ashram and in the Holy city of Varanasi. We feel immeasurable joy to be able to make this exchange between the children and visitors possible, where the best of both worlds come together in a rich cross-cultural environment.

Babaji's East Coast Programs Fall 2005

Here are some highlights of Babaji's recent visits to the New York & New England areas



The annual evening satsang at Shakti Yoga Center, Staten Island, New York, and weekend retreat at Ananda Ashram, Monroe, New York, marked the beginning of Babaji's East Coast visits last Fall. Satsang with Babaji at Shakti Yoga Center is always meaningful and transforming, and the weekend retreat that follows gives a smaller group of people an opportunity to be with Babaji in an intimate setting.

Welcoming baby Aydan, Drema and Adam's first born, to the weekend made this year very special. More and more friends from Shakti Yoga Center are coming to Sonoma to visit and are a joy to welcome to the Ashram.



Babaji addressed the entire student body and faculty of Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire. Every seat of the 1000+ person auditorium was filled.

Opting to sit on the floor when offered a chair, Babaji gently laid his "meditation carpet" in front of the podium and offered his first words, "Don't get worried if I start flying!" This was the beginning of a profound and very well received talk to the young students of the Academy. Babaji received a standing ovation, which we learned doesn't happen too often at an assembly. Their deep appreciation for his being there showed through their smiles and sparkling eyes. Babaji loved being with this special group of students and sowing the seeds of wisdom that may flourish in their lives.



Boston's Northeastern University hosted Babaji for a unique on-campus weekend retreat of yoga, meditation and satsang. The retreat was offered through NU-OPPS, a program within the University to provide a better quality of life for students and faculty by linking the mind, body and spirit. The students appreciated Babaji's presence, and during the course of the weekend, they opened up quite a bit and shared their deep feelings and questions about life.

YogaEast in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, opened their doors for an evening satsang with Babaji, and kirtan with Shubalananda. Many thanks to Jenny Torok who did such a great job spreading the word about Babaji's visit through her dance classes and yoga studio; more than 70 people showed up. Babaji's words were inspiring and alive, it was noticeable that everyone in the room was deeply touched. They loved Babaji and the simplicity of his being. Satsang and stories, interwoven with kirtan, made the evening magical.



Babaji was also invited to speak in Franklin and Amherst, Massachusetts. Babaji and his teachings of practical spirituality were received with much gratitude and appreciation. He left everyone with the simple yet profound practice of taking just three mindful breaths before leaving bed in the morning. Many participants had never met a spiritual master like Babaji and expressed their gratitude for making the journey to a part of the country so far from his home.

We are thankful to the many hosts who gave their precious time and energy to create these programs: Prem, Alice and Drema from Shakti Yoga Center, Rev. Thompson and Kathy from Phillips Exeter Academy, Phyllis and Colleen from Northeastern University, Kaye and Guruatma from Franklin Yoga & Wellness, Kimberly and Jonas from YogaEast, the Toroks in Dover, New Hampshire, and the Scloves in Amherst, Massachusetts. A special heartfelt thanks to Shubalanada and Durga for traveling to the Massachusetts and New Hampshire programs and enriching the evenings of satsang with their devotional chanting and kirtan.



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