

A Special Talk Given to the UK Youth Group by Prof. Anil Kumar

“Body, Mind, Atma”

August 11, 2009

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am extremely happy to be amongst you, as you have come to the conclusion of your *sadhana* camp. My visit to the UK is still fresh and green in my memory. I have been to Leicester, London and Birmingham. Amongst these, I visited the Buckingham Palace in rain and by night! It is good that these memories are very fresh and green. Coming to you, I am neither a stranger nor a guest—I am a part of your family. I always claim you as my own, so I am free to come anytime. I do not have to fit in, no formality, nothing! I don't believe in that also.

BODY, MIND, ATMA

Well, my friends, the topic for today has quite a high dosage of seriousness: “Body, Mind, *Atma!*” (*Laughter*) Where is the mind? Never mind! Where is the body? Everybody or anybody or nobody! *Atma*—what is it? These are three different levels.

Before I go into that, I would like to bring to your attention certain important aspects. This is my forty-sixth year of service as a professor of biology working in the university. So I think you will understand if my approach is typical of a college professor.

Naturally we would like to know anybody: “Who are you? Good to see you! Where do you come from? What do you do? How old are you? You look good. Fine! Nice meeting you. See you later. Bye!” These are the common words of meeting and departing. So what do you mean by that “Hello, how are you?” When I say, “How are you?” does it mean the body, the mind, or the *Atma*?

THREE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL WORLDS

So let us first understand an important difference when we think of the world from the material dimension and from the spiritual dimension. The spiritual dimension and the material dimension are two completely different areas. In the material dimension, I may say, “How are you?” “You are good looking,” “You are handsome,” “You are quite tall,” or “You have gotten taller.” These are the words that we often use in the material realm. Going by the body, we engage in a comparative study of how handsome one is or how beautiful one can afford to

be. This is what it is material or outer. We would like to know everybody—who you are, what you are, and all that.

On the other hand, spirituality wants you to know *yourself*. In the world, we want to know everybody else, while in spirituality one should know one's own Self. This is the first difference. Even in spirituality, people are very busy making contacts, making friends, making money and searching for business prospects! That is the material philosophy or philosophic materialism. Anything to do with the outer world is a material approach. Knowing about this and that—whether it is medicine, engineering, social sciences, basic sciences, natural sciences, fundamental sciences, or technology—all is material. But to know my Self is the ritual. That's the first difference, am I clear?

The second point is this: in the material world, there is plurality, multiplicity, or diversity. This is a beautiful building, this one is not that good, the next one is a big mansion, and this seems to be a hut. All this is some sort of comparison. So the material world is based on comparison. We go on comparing: that group is better than this group, this group is better than that group. Actually, all groups are uniformly good and uniformly bad, but we continually go on comparing. This is the nature of the material world.

Take, for example, a professor who has students persistently asking questions. What do we teachers do? We try to avoid the questions until the next class. Or we try to bypass: "Did you read this, did you read that?" Or confuse the fellow so that he forgets the very question! (*Laughter*) Or even divide the class by saying, "The earlier batch is better than this batch; they never ask us silly questions!" This ABCD of teaching is there anyway.

So this kind of comparison is the quality of the material world; but in spirituality, there is no comparison. If we say he is better than that, this country is better than that, this group is better than that group, this year is better than last year, it is material. But all that is immaterial in the spiritual world. So, no comparison is spirituality! Comparison is only in the material world. Therefore, to know everybody is the material world, while to know one's Self is the spiritual world—right?

The third point: in the material world, everybody wants to show off. "Oh, I have a PhD!" "Oh, I have a BSc!" "Oh, I have some special research papers to my credit." Oh, I see. Ego, show, publicity, aggrandisement, and pomp—that is the quality of the material world!

In the spiritual world, there is no ego, no pride, no publicity, no pomp, no self-glorification, and no self-aggrandisement. This is the main difference. In the material world, there are different steps—high school, college, university, doctorate, post-doctorate. In the spiritual world, there are no levels and there are no steps.

People come and say, "Sir, we are not of that level."

I say, "What level? There are only two levels—this plane or that planet beyond—no other levels!" (*Laughter*) In the spiritual world, there is no such thing as stature or levels. No! This is the fundamental point that I want to share with you.

The next point: in the material world, we always want to achieve something. "Yes, I achieved this, I accomplished this, or I attained this." Attainment and achievement is the nature of the

material world. But in the spiritual world, there is no attainment and no achievement—nothing. How is that? A simple example: I am Anil Kumar. Suppose someone said to me, “Hi Anil Kumar, how are you?” If I reply, “I have achieved Anil Kumar” what do you say? “*Arah!* I met you this morning. You were alright. But what has happened to you now?” (*Laughter*)

So, to know my name is not an achievement. In the spiritual world, you know yourself already. There is nothing like attainment or achievement. In the material world, there is success and failure, while in the spiritual world there is no success and no failure. In the material world, there are goals. What is your goal in life? To become the king of England, right? Simple goal! In the material world, we have some goals, some ideas and some ambitions. But in the spiritual world, there are no goals, no ideas and no ambitions because to reach me, to know me, to understand me, is it a goal? No! To know you, is it a goal? It's not a goal! So, to know one's own Self is not a goal. Hence, spirituality has nothing to do with goals, ambitions and desires. Therefore my friends, these are introductory points which I wanted to draw your attention to before I delve further into the details of this topic.

HAPPINESS OR BLISS

People often get confused and ask me, “Anil Kumar, I do not have peace of mind despite coming to Puttaparthi for the last twenty-five years.” And I reply, “Repeat your visit a few more times and you can nicely end your life.” If you are not happy in the spiritual field, where else can you be happy?

In the material field, there is happiness and unhappiness; but in the spiritual field, there is only bliss. What is bliss? What is happiness? These are important words, though they appear to be simple. Happiness and unhappiness are two contradictory situations. But bliss, you cannot be in bliss and then in ‘un-bliss’—no, no, no! Bliss is bliss. Bliss is non-dual, while happiness and unhappiness are dual. Therefore in the spiritual world, no one can be unhappy.

What is spirituality? Bliss. That is why when I see somebody with a long castor oil face, I pity the poor fellow because they cannot smile wholeheartedly. And those who cannot laugh, I don't know where else they are going to laugh; they will be laughed at. If you do not laugh, people will laugh at you! Spirituality is bliss; so be joyous, be happy and full of smiles!

EXPERIENCE IN THE MATERIAL WORLD IS LIMITED

Any experience in the material world is limited to your senses. Suppose I have a good cup of coffee: I have the satisfaction, not you. If I have a delicious dinner, I will have the satisfaction, not you. On the other hand, a spiritual man has around him joy, pleasure and smiles. A spiritual man has very beautiful and positive vibrations. When some person sits among us, we may feel like weeping, while with another person, we may feel like smiling. This is because of spiritual vibrations. You understand? (That is the introductory part which I wanted to tell you in the beginning, as people are often confused between the material and the spiritual worlds.)

Now, there was once a gentleman (it's better I don't mention any names because I do not want to get into trouble), (*Laughter*) with a hefty personality walking there. Swami said, “Hmm...he looks like a question mark almost.” (*Laughter*) And then one boy came to Swami and He said, “Do some exercise!” In Kodai Kanal, after the first two weeks, He looks at

everybody and says, “Ah! Two months! Ah no, you are four months, nine months—you are ready for delivery! (*Laughter*) The body should be slim and trim. The body should be slim and trim so that people should be able to look at us and we should be able to look at others comfortably. (*Laughter*) Comfortably! Baba tells us, “You see that my body is the same weight, same temperature, same degree. Everything is the same.” Why?

The body is a limited company. If you breathe more, there is a problem; if you breathe less, there is a greater problem. If you don’t breathe, the problem is solved once and for all! (*Laughter*) So how many times do you have to breathe? Twenty one thousand, six hundred times. “No, I am capable of breathing twenty one thousand, eight hundred times.” “Please consult the cardiologist tomorrow morning!” (*Laughter*) “Well, I never breathe at all.” Something is wrong with us or with you.

So this breath is under control, blood pressure is under control, body temperature is under control. Even food taken should be under some check. As Baba says, “Half the stomach should be empty.” Half the stomach should be empty and the other half should be filled with water. It’s not possible for me, but anyway that is what He said. But one statement I think we can follow, “You should be able to get up as comfortably after dining as you did when you sat down for dining.” You should not require a crane to lift you up! (*Laughter*)

FOOD REGULATION

As is the food, so is the head. As is the head, so is God. Body should be perfect. Baba will also ask, “Petrol, *posukunnara*? Did you have your breakfast?”

“Swami–petrol?”

“Yes, but not that I want you to drink petrol. Petrol is the food or breakfast that we eat. Just as a car has petrol, the body has breakfast.”

Oh, the body is a car? Why not! The car has two beautiful bulbs in the front: the bulbs are your eyes. The car has a petrol tank, which is our stomach. Of course, the tank of the car may be empty, but we are never empty. The two hands and the two legs are the four tyres. The mouth itself is a horn, (*Laughter*) and the breath is the air in the tyres. The brake is the intellect, while the mind is the steering.

So, the body is the perfect automobile; it is a vehicle of transport. I had a car not to keep in the garage, but a car to drive to work. Similarly, the body is a vehicle to take us to the destination.

Some people, in the name of spirituality, go on starving and fasting. That practice may solve the world’s food problem, but it has nothing to do with spirituality. No! This is because you should be very healthy with a sound mind and a sound body. You should be energetic. That way, the body is a gift of God. Some people have a half-baked philosophy: “Ah, why is the body given? How shall I maintain this body? I am waiting for this body to go.” Better they finish their career as early as possible!

BODY IS A GIFT OF GOD

Body is a temple of God. Just as the temple is clean and pure, the body has to be clean and pure. Because of this body, we can come to Puttaparthi. Because of this body, we can see

Him. Because of this body, we can hear Him. How can you condemn the body then? So the body should not be neglected: the body is most precious, the body is most valuable. It is a vehicle of transport to take you from one shore to the other shore. Am I clear? That's the body. But it should not be like a garbage bin to fill with dirt.

WHAT IS MIND?

If there is a mind at all, where is it? Brain is here, but mind is all over! Please understand this. Brain dies or is lost at the time of death. But the mind never dies. The mind appears life-after-life like a piece of software. If you keep the software, you get all the programs on the screen. Like the software of the previous life, the mind appears on the screen of the present life. Am I clear? So, mind recurs and repeats life-after-life.

But the body is not so. To give Baba's example, the body is like a medicine bottle. For every medicine bottle, we have two dates: the date of manufacturing and the date of expiry. This bottle knows only one day—the date of manufacturing (date of birth)—but the date of expiry is not known. Therefore the body has a beginning and an end, but mind repeats life-after-life.

Then what is mind? It is present all over. *Mana Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokhsayohoand*. What is mind? *Manana Iti Manaha*. Mind is recapitulation. Mind is memory. *Sankalapa Nishalpatmakam Manaha*. Thoughts and counter thoughts are the mind. So mind is most important. But, it is a monkey mind in most of the cases. Mind is just mind in the beginning. But we make it a monkey mind over time.

Baba gives an example: a bundle of thoughts constitutes the mind. Thoughts are like threads which are interwoven to make a handkerchief. But, if the threads are removed, there is no longer a handkerchief. So when thoughts are lost, or when there are no more thoughts, there is no mind.

Control of the mind and knowledge of the mind are most essential. In fact, Baba says every time, "You are God, you are God." It is very difficult to believe that I am God. Sometimes I feel better when I don't believe that I am God because I can enjoy life more as a human being. But since as God, Sai Baba does not eat ice creams, as God I should stop eating ice creams. Also, He does not eat sweets; so as God, you should not eat sweets. It is very difficult, so let us not be God, but be comfortable as human beings.

But Baba insists, "You are God, you are God." Why do I not know that I am God? Just as a curtain separates the audience from the actors before the drama begins, our mind separates us from God. Mind is a curtain. Mind is a partition. Mind is the Great Wall of China or the Berlin Wall—something hard and tough. Once this is gone, the curtain drops. Once this wall collapses, you realise that you and God are one. To know that you and God are one, this mind has to be withdrawn. Yes! The mind can be withdrawn.

When you teach in a class, some students may think of the hostel or breakfast and withdraw their minds. And some people can sleep with their eyes open! It's a great art, or at least it appears to be so. (*Laughter*) Some people do that. When the father tells them something and the mother says something, they simply switch off. So we know what withdrawal of the mind is. But if we do it in spirituality, it is called *sadhana*. This withdrawal of the mind in the material world is indifference, whereas the withdrawal of the mind in spirituality is *sadhana*.

Suppose I have something on my mind, please don't ask me any questions. You are not supposed to withdraw the mind in the class. You should be attentive and have a strong mind. But in spirituality, I am meditating. In meditation, the mind is withdrawn. The mind is parted, the mind is inactive. That is meditation. Now we come to the third aspect, *Atma*.

WHAT IS ATMA?

What is *Atma*? Just read Sai literature, my friends, and you will have all knowledge. Three words: body plus *Atma* is *Deh-Atma*; mind plus *Atma* is *Jiv-Atma*, and this *Atma* (which is individual) viewed as universal is *Param-Atma*.

Dehatma, *jivatma* and *Paramatma*—what are they? The body is here. Suppose there is no *Atma* in the body—then it cannot function. The body is like a bulb: when there is a power-cut, it is completely dark. Similarly, when the *Atma* is not there, the body is functionless. Am I clear? So *dehatma*: *Atma* is electricity, *deha* is the body.

Second, mind plus *Atma* is *jivatma*. Suppose you say, “I know that I am so-and-so. This is my house; this is my office.” This ‘I’-ness is the cause of the mind. Possessiveness, attachment, and identity are the qualities of the mind. The mind is sharp because of *Atma*; but once *Atma* is withdrawn, mind gets separated out and inactive. So individual soul is *jivatma*.

And third one: here is a balloon full of air. If you burst it, what happens? The air in the balloon merges in the air around it, right? So, air in the balloon is the same as the air around. Limited air is in the balloon and unlimited air is all around. That unlimited air is *Paramatma*. The limited air is *Jivatma*. This *Atma* is electricity, the power that is responsible for the functioning of the mind and the body. Let us think of mind, body, and *Atma* in this way: ‘BA’ is ‘body plus *Atma*’. BA is a graduate degree, body plus *Atma* = *dehatma*. Then ‘MA’, ‘mind plus *Atma*’ is equal to *jivatma*. ‘A’ is *Paramatma*.

Because of the limited time, I must be able to share more thoughts on this favorite topic of mine - the MBA.

Baba speaks of this repeatedly, and these ideas have been also covered in my books which brother Ajit has already announced. (By Baba's grace, twelve books are available in English. The latest one is titled *Sai-the Indweller*. Prior to this publication, I have composed *Alarm Bells Divine*, which contains details of the festivals and their significance, *Sai Vedam*, *Divine Daffodils*, *Divine Blossoms*, and *Sai-chology* with Bhagavan's grace. I'm not a salesman. I don't get any commission because all of these books are the publication of the Sathya Sai Book Trust.)

BABA MEANS BEING, AWARENESS, BLISS, ATMA

The topic of MBA (mind, body, *Atma*) is amply covered in these books. My friends, Baba is all MBA: Baba is the body, which means He is in this body and all bodies. Therefore, His body is quite substantial: Baba's devotees of all ages are highly energetic, doing village *seva*, *bhajans*, and service activities. They can work more than other people in society. Why? ‘B’ plus ‘B’ is ‘body’ plus ‘Baba’. So, He is the *Dehatma*. Am I clear?

When Baba is there in our mind, it becomes ‘M’ plus ‘B’, ‘mind’ plus ‘Baba’. What happens? The mind is never perverted or misdirected; the mind is never mischievous or conniving; the

mind is not managing or manipulative; it is straightforward. In fact, 'Baba' means 'Being, Awareness, Bliss, *Atma*' (*BABA*). So my friends, remember that Baba will protect our body, but we must take care of our body. Even if we want to misuse it, He will not allow you to do that. No, He will not allow you to misuse your body.

There is a small violet-covered book, sold in the shop outside, written by African devotees. Did they mention in the book that the two African brothers who came here for the first time came with a whisky bottle because they were not aware of the rules of the *ashram*? They had evening *darshan* and *bhajans*. Then they went back to their room, filled their glasses, and started drinking. They were surprised to see that it was not Scotch whisky, but H₂O! (*Laughter*)

Then they emptied the glasses, cleaned them well, and filled the glasses again with whisky. Once again, when they tasted, it was aqua water! Well, they were very angry and upset and decided to drink from the bottle itself. The whole bottle was full of water only! The next morning, when they sat for *darshan*, Baba passed by the *darshan* line and said, "Cheers, Cheers!" with a large smile. (*Laughter*) 'Body' plus 'Baba', body plus *Atma*. Baba is *Atma*, Baba is *Paramatma* and he follows the body. Then the body can never be misused or abused under any circumstances, as He is in charge of the body.

I will give you another example: Baba had been to one place to inaugurate a factory. I went there too. But all the top people were seated already. And they did not have an extra chair for me to sit down. It was a very embarrassing situation, but what could I do? I just came out and, after lunch, we returned to Bangalore.

In Bangalore, Swami's first sentence was, "There is one man who has not had his lunch. Therefore, let every item be served to him first. Give him doubles: two sweets, two drinks, etc." Swami knew that I had not had my lunch and that was noticed by Baba; the body that has not had food is known to Him.

Another day, in Kodai Kanal, Swami did not sit with us for breakfast. But suddenly He brought a glass, mixed something, and then walked away. Watching His mood, I simply went to Him and said, "Swami, where are You going?"

He said, "One boy is suffering from fever and all of you are here. I have made some porridge for him. I will make him take this and then join you later." Body and Baba! When this body suffers from something, He knows immediately.

Simply passing by the *darshan* line long ago in the same hall, He looked at a boy and said, "Hmm! You are not well. Take him to the hospital." His father, who was sitting by his side, asked, "What's wrong, my son?" "No, no! Take him to the hospital." Later it was diagnosed that this boy had some isonophilia problems or something like that! How does he know? Body plus *Atma*= Baba.

Similarly, 'mind' plus Baba, 'mind' plus *Atma* is *jivatma*. He knows how our mind is, whatever we do, whatever we want to do, whatever our plans are. He passes by a boy and says, "Monkey mind! Hopeless! What's wrong? You are like a cat and a rat moving room to room in

the hostel. Are you a cat or a rat? *Chi, chi, chi.* You should not do that.” How does Baba know?

He asked the boys, “Arey boys, what do you want to do after your M.Sc? MRS?”

“Swami, MRS?”

“Mrs.! Mrs. . . . get married!” (*Laughter*)

“Oh Swami!”

And then Swami would walk around saying, “Wife is life, life is wife. But when wife becomes knife, then you will come to Me.”

We cannot hide anything from Him. He knows our mind, whatever it wants to do because mind plus *Atma* is Baba.

Then *Atma*, the consciousness: when we meditate and rise above the body and the mind (if you can), that is what is called *samadhi*. Many things can be said on this, but for the constraint of time.

Now I would like to answer your questions. Thank you very much! (*Applause*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

You can now ask me any questions. If I can, I will try to answer them.

Sai Ram, sir. You said earlier that we should not fast; but there are many people who fast on Thursday for Swami. Is that wrong?

I did not say you should not fast; I only said that fasting has nothing to do with spirituality. You can fast to regulate your body, to improve your digestion, and to regulate your body weight. But fasting is not a spiritual activity. It is not *sadhana!* Am I clear?

Sai Ram, as we are all on a spiritual journey, what are the key pitfalls and what should we be aware of?

You mean, what should we do at the very beginning of our spiritual journey? The first thing to do on our spiritual journey is to know our own limitations. Our own limitations—what do I mean by that?

Know that there are many things that are not under your control. The span of life or the longevity of life is not under my control. The end result of my activities is not under my control, nor is the technique. So there are many limitations. I may eat food, but the digestion is not under my control; neither is the circulation of blood nor the breathing process. Seventy-five percent of things happen without our interference or without our efforts. So in the beginning, we should know our limitations.

Second point is that once we know our limitations, we will not be egoistic. We should not be proud; we should be humble and simple. When we are humble and simple, we will be prayerful, respectful, and worshipful. Then we will develop some type of love and devotion.

Then we start doing some *bhajans*. We start caring and sharing with others, rendering service. So the spiritual journey for all devotees of all age groups begins with *bhajans*. *Bhajan* is an open gate. It is the best thing that will take you to deeper and higher realms. Am I clear?

Sai Ram, uncle. It is said that we use only ten percent of the brain, so the rest of the ninety percent is that which is not connected to the mind. How do we have capabilities to control it?

The capabilities of the mind can be used in this way: half of the mind is related to the arts—poetry, painting, and creativity. The other half of the brain or mind is related to the management the worldly. So one part of the mind is materialistic and the other part is creative. One part of the mind is repetitive and the other part of the mind is Divine, spiritual. So when you make total use of the brain or mind, it means you are spiritual and also material. A perfect balance in life controlling the mind means that one would not exceed or bypass the other. Am I clear?

MEDITATION AND YOGA

Is meditation for the mind?

Good, I think you are in the process of meditation! We start with mind. In the process of meditation, there are three steps. First, the mind is focused; this is concentration. Next the mind goes on thinking of that object of your concentration. If you concentrate on Rama, you will be thinking of Rama's story. If you concentrate on Christ, you will be thinking of His message. That is contemplation. So concentration and contemplation are the two steps related to the mind. As you go to the third step, there is no thought. Thoughtlessness! The mind is withdrawn all together. There are no thoughts at all, and that is meditation. So I start with my mind and end with no mind. That is what meditation is all about.

You said that when the body dies, the Atma and the mind live on. So do we take our thoughts with us into our next lives? Would these thoughts not determine who we reincarnate into?

I don't know exactly what you expect from me, but from what I understand, I will be able to teach you this way. When the mind is completely withdrawn, when you experience thoughtlessness, there will be no birth at the end. Birth and rebirth are because of the mind. When the mind is withdrawn, there is no question of birth and rebirth. There is a total state of liberation, *moksha* or *nirvana*. So in order to succeed in no rebirth, one must withdraw the mind. That is what it is.

Sai Ram sir, you mentioned 'no mind'. Can you kindly explain to us how we can train our mind? When we are here in Parthi, the energy is positive with everyone. Yet when we go back to the UK, it changes. Could you advise please?

I understand—good question. Many people are highly spiritual. But the moment they leave this place, they start fighting. Here love, love, bliss, and outside, fight, fight, fight. The point is that we are peaceful here because of emotion; the peace that we experience here is emotional. *Shanti!* But when this emotional peace or *shanti* becomes your nature, you will be in peace here and outside also. That is *prashanti*. *Shanti* is conditional to a place and time,

while *prashanti* is beyond time and space. So we should try and aim for *prashanti*, eternal peace, continual peace, non-stop peace. How do you get it? Observe the surroundings, observe people, and watch Swami. Then, once all that is absorbed and imprinted inside you, you will enjoy peace within. The peace now is because of all factors around you; but the peace that lasts is because of this inner feeling. It leaves a permanent, individual impression on your mind. So it is not *shanti* that is important but *prashanti*. Am I clear?

You mentioned there are different goals in the material world and the spiritual world. For example, in the worldly goals there are different degrees one can obtain, while in the spiritual path there is no quantitative measure. So how does one know how well they are doing in the spiritual world?

Good. Well, if you just disassociate with the results, that very act will become *sadhana*. A simple example: I plan to come here, expecting Swami's *darshan*. Swami will come and I will have *darshan*, give my letter, give my rose, take permission, and get an interview. You are dreaming of this on the airplane when you come here to Parthi.

Now when you actually get here, on that day the *darshan* is cancelled. Then what happens? You are completely shattered. But what happens if you take the spiritual approach? 'I have come with a desire to have Swami's *darshan*. I have got it. Thank You, Swami.' If I could not get it, maybe next time. Maybe it is only a preparation; it could be that I will turn to Him more seriously and worship Him more intensely now so that I get His *darshan* next time. The spiritual perspective adds a meaning, a positive view-of-life. It is not a result-orientated life, not a goal-centered activity, but a positive attitude towards the results. It is a positive attitude that makes it spiritual.

While in Parthi, we practice time management (discipline) of getting up at a certain time. When we go back after a few weeks, this discipline of time is gone. Have you got any advice about this?

Take brother Puppet to your destination. He will make sure that you get up in the early every morning! (*Laughter*) My friends, we are here doing *yoga* and all of that because of a certain force, because of a certain discipline, because of some promise given to us, because of some hope, because of some training, or because of some kind of liking for it. But if I am completely convinced that what we do here is useful for me, I will treat this as a training ground so that I can continue to do it thereafter. On the other hand, if I treat it as a seasonal activity, an occasional activity, a recreational activity, it stops there.

What is *yoga*? Is it a physical exercise? No! Is it a mental exercise? No! Is it a breathing exercise? Certainly not! What is *yoga*? *Yogam Samatvamuchya*: equal-mindedness is *yoga*. What is equal-mindedness? Taking failure or success with equal composure. What else is *yoga*? Discharging your duties is *yoga*. *Yoga Kartavyamuchyathe*: doing your duty. What else is *yoga*? Doing duty to the best of your ability: *Yogaha Karmasu Kausalam*.

So, if you understand what *yoga* is, you will do it at home. Then what happens to the breathing process? *Pranayama* will extend the longevity of life because those who breathe heavily and more frequently live for a shorter period. A dog that breathes heavily lives for a short time. A snake spreads its breath over a longer time, and lives for a longer time. Do you

understand me? Breath control is *yoga* for longevity, while mind control through *yoga* gives you awareness. So *yoga*, taken in a psychological direction, will make you a *jnani*, while *yoga* in a physical dimension will make you a *yogi*. Once you know what *yoga* is, you will certainly follow it.

Do you do practice any physical form of yoga?

Let me be very honest. I don't do that. (*Laughter*) Why I don't do that? The *pranayama* exercise given in *Dhyana Vahini*, written by Bhagavan Baba Himself, has to be done under the strict supervision of an expert. If I do all this *pranayama* all by myself, instead of becoming a *yogi*, I will be a successful *rogi*, a sick fellow! (*Laughter*) So this *yoga* requires direction and supervision under an expert. Since I don't have any experts here to teach me or coach me, I will not touch that area.

Furthermore, Baba has cautioned that if a type of exercise is not done properly, the lungs will be affected, and circulation will be affected; I am not prepared for those things yet. Baba mentions that the easiest method is *namasmarana*. There is no regulation there, no direct control there, no time limit, nothing. When easier things are there, why should I struggle unnecessarily? That is my psychology.

Can you talk of your experiences?

When you have given me the topic, how can I speak of my experiences? I am a teacher. The topic is "Body, Mind, *Atma*". If I speak on my experiences, I shall get a zero. As a teacher, you have set a topic. So I have to limit my talk to that topic.

What is proper meditation?

As I said, just a sugar candy when immersed in water gets dissolved. In the process of concentration, the monkey mind goes and the mind remains. In contemplation, the mind becomes thinner and thinner. In meditation, the mind becomes silent and withdrawn. That's how the mind improves its level of experience or awareness during the process of meditation.

I understand the principle of the body and the mind, but the Atma is very complex. How can we go about experiencing this on a basic level?

Atma is not to be experienced; it is the reality! Body you have to experience because I have to see, I have to hear, I have to touch, I have to think. So, through experiences, I can make use of this body. You should also think about the mind. But *Atma* is like a current. You can see the bulb and the light, but you don't see the current. Because we don't see the current or power supply, you cannot deny its existence. Without the power supply, all of these bulbs are useless. So the fact that the body is functional, the reality that the mind is functional, means that there is an undercurrent of *Atma* or consciousness.

How do we maintain that current?

When the mind is a curtain, how to lift it? How to experience it? How to know one's own reality? Good question. When do you know that the curtain is lifted? A simple example: here is a curtain. All of you are here watching and waiting for the drama to begin. We may start

talking during the wait. But when the time comes for the curtain to be lifted, all of us will concentrate on the actors as the drama starts. Similarly, if there are many thoughts, it means the curtain is there. But when the thoughts are gone, the curtain is lifted. So lifting the curtain is like withdrawal of the mind. Silence is the state of experience. Identity with reality is *samadhi*. So if thoughts are disturbing you, it means that the curtain is still down; it has yet to be lifted.

Thank you very much. The topic of “Mind, Body, and *Atma*” is a serious one. I think I have discussed the topic to the best of my ability. However, a comprehensive talk on this topic requires four speakers: one exclusively on the body, one exclusively on the mind, one exclusively in *Atma*, and finally another talk linking all three.

So next time I would like to suggest that we take each dimension separately, giving a particular aspect to a particular speaker who will talk on that aspect only, and then he will connect us to the next speaker who will speak on the next aspect and so on. That will leave you well-equipped and give a total understanding of this subject as a whole. Thank you very much for your time. (*Applause*)

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