

Mrs. Kamaraju's Talk in Atlanta, Georgia

April 25, 2009

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Thank you, Swami, for giving me this wonderful opportunity, and thanks to the management of Sathya Sai Service Centre of Atlanta. Thank you everybody.

*Singaramu Olikinchu Chamanthi Haralu Seesamulugajesi
Kadamba Kanaambarala Kavanumallali
Mallelu Mollalu Kollalu Kollaluga
Tene Telugu Tetegeethula
Kasturi Sannutha Sathya Sai Neeky
Sashtanga Namaskruthulu*

*The beautiful, dancing Divine chrysanthemums are very eager to reach Swami's Feet.
The flowers of mixed colours are yearning for Swami's darshan.
The white jasmine and its species are very eager, jumping in joy to reach Swami.*

Many scholars have rendered their poems and offered them to Swami. I am a simple housewife, a humble being. I am offering these flowers and this poem to Swami. (*Applause*)

UNDERSTANDING THE MIND

As I am still in the mind stage, I want to continue with the mind only, sharing these thoughts with you. What is happening in the mind? If we are given a paper and five minutes to write down our thoughts, what comes to our mind?

Some peculiar thoughts will come to us. If we are given ten minutes, the thoughts will be different. You would be surprised about the thoughts you have noted down. Nowadays, we don't have time to look into ourselves, or the time to inquire into what is happening in our mind. This is because we are very afraid of the mind and its thoughts. The mind has become almost sick.

How can we understand what is going on in the mind? We will be able to do this by following some of the points given by the sages and many great scholars. Here are several of the points.

They are:

One: we are escaping from the Real Self.

Two: our mind is always dual.

Three: we hide our tears by laughter, thus following a mind that is hypocritical.

Four: we should shed all fear from our mind.

Five: we should be a silent spectator of whatever enters our mind, and not make an immediate judgement.

Six: we should not suppress our feelings. We should allow them to flow and not be worried about them.

Seven: the mind is very restless and difficult to control.

HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE MIND

So let us understand what is happening in the mind by looking at a few of these points.

“We are escaping from the Real Self.” There is one example for this. Whenever the ostrich sees its enemy, it buries its head in the sand. It feels that by not looking at the enemy, it is hiding itself and is safe; but this is not true. If the enemy is visible, we can do something; but if the enemy is not visible, we cannot do anything. We must face the enemy directly, only then can we do something about it. We should not be like the ostrich. Instead, we should have direct contact with the mind.

DO NOT FOLLOW THE DUAL MIND

“Our mind is always dual.” In this world, we find that we are always dual. Even in our families, the world outside, or in our offices, or wherever we go, we see dual-minded persons.

As an example, there was a father and son who lived together. They were both sleep-walkers. One night, the father got up in his sleep and went to the garden behind the house. After some time, the son also went there in his sleep.

The father sat in the garden and thought, “Why is this boy accompanying me? He does not want to leave me alone even in his sleep.”

Then the son thought, “This old man is teasing me and following me wherever I go. Even in his sleep, he does not leave me alone.”

See, both these persons were criticising each other, while still in a sound sleep. At three o'clock, both were awakened by the cock's crow and they walked together towards the house.

When they got there, the father said: “Dear, why did you get up so early? You may catch cold. Come on, let us go inside.”

The boy touched the feet of the father as a sign of respect and said: “Why did you get up so early? Your health is not okay. Come on, let us go inside.”

See the difference between their waking state and their sleeping state? That is how the mind is—so dual! One could call it a double personality! One mind is for the outside where we greet each other and talk, but inwardly, the mind is completely different. We should not adopt or follow this dual mind.

BECOME THE ONE YOU REALLY ARE

“We should shed all fear from our mind” How can we do this? Let us suppose you are a bad person, but after attending many seminars like this, or after going to *satsangs* (spiritual meetings), you become a good person. But when you are bad, you don’t want others to know of the badness in you. So what happens then?

A fear builds up that others may know about your hypocrisy, selfishness, bad temperament—qualities you don’t want others to know about. This is a fear that must be shed by becoming the “one you really are.”

Swami always says, “*You are not one, but three—the one you think you are, the one others think you are, and the one you really are.*” Therefore, we should not bother about the opinions of others, but should stick to what we feel is right. ‘Be what you are’ is the quality we must adopt, being the real Self.

Here is a small story to explain this point. There was an emperor who had a big palace and many staff members to assist him. He had a wife and children, and was leading a good life. But in the middle of the day, he used to go into a room by himself. He would lock the door and never give anyone the key. This stirred the curiosity of all the members of the royal family and the staff. They wanted to know what this man was doing daily there for one hour, and so made a hole in the wall to have a look. They saw that when the king entered, he took off his jewels and royal attire, and became simple and relaxed. He spread his arms and started saying his prayers.

He spoke to God thus: “I am the real man now. I don’t have any jewels on me; I am not wearing any costumes or royal attire. I am the naked and real man. I am made of You, God. I don’t want to deceive You. When I am in royal attire, I may be deceiving people; but I don’t want to deceive You. I am the real Self who is standing before You.”

That is how he offered his prayers before God. The people outside the room peeped through the hole one by one. They could not understand what was going on inside. Was he offering prayers or was he doing *asanas* (yoga exercises)? What was this? They could not understand it at all.

Then the king came out. They asked him what it was that he was doing inside, and said they could not understand. Then he said: “I became the real man. I was so blissful and relaxed in that room. That was my real Self.”

We can understand from this story that all the attire, jewels, whatever we put on, hides our real Self. The real Self is here . . . the blissful, peaceful Self should come first. That is another point in the understanding of our mind.

BE A SILENT SPECTATOR AND DO NOT MAKE AN IMMEDIATE JUDGMENT

“We should be a silent spectator of whatever enters our mind, and not make an immediate judgement.” Our thoughts are always flowing. They are there when we sit for meditation, or when we listen to a discourse or lecture. Sometimes we become diverted to our own thought flow; but we should not react to those thoughts immediately. Our judgment may not be perfect. Today it may be perfect; tomorrow it may not be. What may appear good today may not be so tomorrow, and vice versa. Therefore we should be cautious about making judgments.

For this also, there is a small story. In a village, there was a monk. He was very good and was worshipped and respected by all the villagers. The villagers were attracted to him and went to him to clarify their doubts. This monk also used to sing many songs and the children were also attracted to him.

But one day, a young girl and a few other people went to him with a small child. The young girl, who had given birth to the child, had mentioned the monk's name as the child's father. So the villagers believed that and did not make any further inquiry into the matter. They placed the child at the feet of the monk and said, “This child is yours.” Those who had worshipped and respected him the previous day reversed their behaviour that day, saying, “You are not a good honest person! You are bad.” So their opinion changed after a day!

He took the child in his arms and started singing a lullaby. The villagers threw stones at the monk and set his hut on fire as he was sitting by the side of it. The hut was burning, but he had the child in his arms and did not stop singing to it. He never reacted. He was respected the day before, but that day he was not. The monk was not bothered. Good people don't bother about anything. Whether you respect them or not, they will remain calm. The monk managed to put the child to sleep.

The next day, he wanted some milk for the child. He went to every house, but everyone closed their doors. They did not give him any food. At last he arrived at the girl's house and said, “I may be at fault, but the child is pure and not at fault. Please give some milk for the child.”

The girl was distressed because she had told a lie; the monk was not at fault. She went to her father and said, “Father, please excuse me, I am at fault. I told a lie. The father of this child is some other person and not this monk.”

The father felt very guilty for all the humiliation the monk had undergone and apologised to him. “Sir, please excuse us—my daughter told a lie! You are not the person who is responsible for this child's birth.”

The villagers asked the monk, “Why did you not deny that you were responsible for the child's birth?”

The monk said, “It does not make any difference to me what you think; even more so because you burned my hut. In your emotional state, with your feelings, you might have burned the child also. So, to save the life of the child, I accepted this fault.” Sages and monks do not bother about good or bad, respect or disrespect. Their life goal is to be a good sage.

This is why we should not make any judgment immediately. The bad may turn good tomorrow, while the good may turn bad tomorrow.

DO NOT SUPPRESS THE FEELINGS

“We should not suppress our feelings.” Let the feelings come out. Only then will we be able to know the state of our mind. Otherwise, we won’t know what is going on there. The mind is a dark room. Until we take a lamp into that room, we will not know what is going on there. Are spiders, snakes, and scorpions there? We will not know unless we take a lamp.

What is that lamp? It is the lamp of inquiry. We should inquire into our minds, only then will we be able to know what is going on in the mind. So don’t suppress your feelings. Let the feelings come out; only then will you be able to know the status or level of the mind.

There is a small story for this, too. Milarepa was a Tibetan monk and a mystic who attained many powers. After hearing about this mystic, a young man went to him and asked him for a *mantra* (a sacred chant to attain spiritual enlightenment). Many people also go to Swami asking for a *mantra*. But unless we deserve this, even saints or *gurus* will not initiate us with a *mantra*. Mere wishing for such an initiation will not make it happen.

When this young man asked the mystic for a *mantra*, he replied, “No, no! I don’t give any *mantras*. You go to another *guru*.” However, the man would not accept this and repeatedly asked for the same thing. To get rid of him, the mystic wrote a *mantra* on a piece of paper. He told him that it should be repeated five times on a full moon day, and that there was a condition attached to it. The young man took the piece of paper and without even thanking the *guru*, he ran off fast because he wanted to attain powers.

As he was leaving, the mystic called him back and told him about the one condition. What was this condition? It was: “You must not think of monkeys when you recite the *mantra*.” The young man said, “No, no, I will not do that, because I don’t have any ideas about monkeys.”

On the way back, monkeys started chasing him. Then when he reached home, he saw many monkeys inside, even in the bathroom. He had had no thoughts of monkeys earlier, but after the mystic specifically cautioned him not to think about them, monkeys started chasing him! He wanted to rest, but the monkeys were there throughout the night as well. He was so restless that he could not sleep.

Early the next morning, he took the paper back to the mystic. He was very angry that the mystic had prevented him from learning the *mantra* by putting the idea of monkeys into his mind. Otherwise he could have chased the monkeys away as he always had done in the past.

He told the mystic to take back his *mantra*. He said, “I don’t want any *mantra*. You should not have mentioned the monkeys. Because of that, I am unable to acquire any powers.”

The monkeys came in his way as an obstacle because, when we try to prevent anything, it means we are inviting that very thing inside. When we make an effort to stop anything, we are automatically attracted to that. That is the ‘attraction of opposites’ theory. So we should not suppress our feelings.

THE MIND IS DIFFICULT TO CONTROL, BUT CAN BE DIVERTED

“The mind is very restless and difficult to control.” In the *Bhagavad Gita* (the famous Indian scripture, also known as “The Song of God”) Arjuna said this:

*Chenchalam Manahi Krishna Pramaadi Balavadrudam
Chenchalam Manahi Krishna Pramaadi Balavadrudam
Tasyaham Nigraham Manye Vayorinasu Dushkaram*

*See, the mind is so turbulent, it is disturbed, it is restless, and it is powerful.
It is very difficult to control the mind because it is faster than air.*

We cannot control the mind, but we can divert the mind. That is what we can do. We can divert it to spirituality, or to the worldly side—whichever side you are inclined to choose.

These few points help us then to understand our mind so that we can improve ourselves. We can look into our mind and get rid of all the bad qualities, the spiders or scorpions, or whatever may be residing there. We can get rid of all that and have a clean heart where God can reside.

SWAMI OBSERVES EVERYTHING

At one time, I underwent a cataract operation. Usually, being devotees, we expect Swami to say something to us about these sorts of things. Sometimes Swami will respond, sometimes He may not. I wanted Swami to tell me the date on which to have the operation, or even whether I should have the operation. So I did not confirm the admission date to the people in the hospital. My husband was teasing me saying if I had been a minister, I would not hesitate to go straight to the operation table! But unless Swami said something to me, I did not want to do anything.

I was due to go to the hospital that day. Early in the morning, Swami came into my dream and said, “Go for the operation.” Only then did I agree to be admitted to the hospital. Whenever Swami comes in my dreams, He comes as a lady with a big *pottu* (vermilion dot on the forehead) that signifies the Mother Divine. Swami is our Mother; He protects and guards us. So He came in the form of a lady and instructed me, “You should eat well before the operation.”

After I was admitted to the hospital, Swami told me, “I will come to the hospital.” I was so foolish, expecting Swami to come in His physical form, so I got ready early. The operation was scheduled for 9:00am. But Swami never came, so I went to the operating theatre and the operation was done.

I came back to the ward and they gave me some liquid. I did not like it and I did not eat any food that day. Swami had told me to eat well, but I could not. I wanted some coconut water, but that was only available at a place far away from the hospital. I felt so weak.

The next morning, I wanted some coffee. I still felt very weak and faint. My blood pressure went down to almost 40. I was calling my husband about it because I was not able to do anything. I could not even walk for a short distance; such was my condition. Then the doctor came and put me on a saline drip, and soon I was all right.

When Swami says something, it is important to follow His instructions strictly. I have observed this many times. When Swami says, “Eat something”, we have to eat something whether we like it or not.

We came to Parthi in 1995, and have been here since then. Because we come from Guntur in Andhra Pradesh, it took me a long time to adjust to life in Puttaparthi. Every day I used to tell my husband that we should go back to Guntur—that was my *suprabhatham* (a morning hymn)! (*Laughter*) This went on for almost three years. One day, I did not chant that *suprabhatham*. I think I forgot! Swami came into my dream that night and said, “What happened to your *suprabhatham* today? You did not say it!” This shows how He observes everything!

EVERY SERVICE REACHES SWAMI

At one time or other, we naturally have many doubts about whatever Swami says. He says one thing, but it can have two or three meanings to it. We don't understand which meaning we should follow. I have had that doubt.

For a very long time, I had many doubts. Whenever I had doubts, I used to go to an old lady who was a *Bal Vikas* (spiritual education for children) teacher. She has since passed away. She used to clarify all my doubts in the early years. Not that I am perfect today! But she helped me a lot in the beginning. I used to go to her in the evenings and whenever I asked her, she used to tell me about Swami.

One day, we all were there and were discussing something about Swami. Suddenly, she got up and went to the altar and started performing *arathi* (the worship of God with a camphor flame).

I asked, “Why did you go to the altar?”

She told me, “Swami came here.”

I could not understand this, so then I asked her, “How do you know Swami came here?”

She said, “It is a feeling. Do some *sadhana* (spiritual practice) and you will be able to know about it.”

I said to myself, “Oho, I must do some *sadhana*.”

But what *sadhana* can I do? I cannot do *Nagarsankeerthan* (devotional group singing in the streets in the early morning). That is not possible for me. Then what *sadhana* can I do?

Then I thought, “I can cook because I have to cook for my children and my husband; so that is easier for me. I will cook and give that food to somebody in need. That will be a *sadhana*.” From that time onwards, I started cooking food to give to other people.

Next to my house, there was an old man who was a Hindi scholar. His family was not with him, so I thought it would be a good *sadhana* for me. I would give him some food every day. When I make lunch and everything is ready, I wait for my husband so that he can take the food to the

scholar. The scholar accepted it; otherwise we would not have been able to give him the food. It doesn't mean that if you are prepared to give food, people will take it. He accepted the food and this is my good fortune.

My husband used to take *thali* (a traditional South Indian rice meal) daily. There was some curry, *sambar* (spicy dal and vegetable soup) and everything. Because of living in Andhra for a long time, we eat spicy food. The people from North India don't eat spicy food; they eat bland food. Because my husband likes all the pickles, our food is spicy. I used to cook lunch according to our preferred tastes and give it to the scholar.

After two or three days, Swami told me, "You are putting too much chilli powder in that food. North Indian people don't eat so much chilli, so please don't do that." I was astounded as it was the old man who was eating the food I gave, and yet it was Swami, not he, who had responded to me. Then I understood that wherever and whenever we do some service, it goes to Swami. That was the first astonishing experience for me! (*Applause*)

Through such minute and subtle things, Swami teaches us so much. We should stay tuned to His 'system', that is all.

THE REAL JEWELS FOR LADIES

At one time, both my sisters stayed in the US: one in Boulder, Colorado, and the other in Philadelphia. My second sister has three daughters. Two are married, and the third one just got married. At the time of her third daughter's marriage, she asked me to send her a few saris because she wanted to distribute saris to all the people who would come to the wedding. I made a list of whatever she wanted—pure silk saris, some ordinary saris, and some cotton saris. This took me one month.

In my heart of hearts, I was thinking I was wasting my time. Swami does not like us to waste time, money, or food, whichever it may be. I was thinking along these lines, and in the meantime, Swami recited a poem to me about this:

*Kottha Koka Etancchu Kulikadu Oka Kodalamma
Kalikithurai Sahanamu Nee Sommu
Katinasila Kariginchu Karuna Needhani Nammu
Oh Kanaka Mahalakshmi Idi Mee Atha Svaanubhavamu*

Kottha Koka Etancchu Kulikadu Oka Kodalamma: You are thinking of new saris, buying new saris, enjoying the shopping, and so on.

Kalikithurai Sahanamu Nee Sommu: Patience is the crown jewel, patience. Ladies should have patience.

Katinasila Kariginchu Karuna Needhani Nammu: Compassion is another jewel for ladies. Confidence is another jewel for ladies, intelligence is another jewel.

Swami gave me nine points that ladies should have: Confidence, Intelligence, Affection, Kindness, Compassion, and so on. "All these are jewels," He said. "Why are you worried about wearing all the artificial jewels?"

Oh Kanaka Mahalakshmi Idi Mee Atha Svaanubhavam: Oh lady, this is your mother-in-law's own experience.

Who is the mother-in-law here? Swami is the mother-in-law. Just like the mother-in-law, scolding and criticising whatever we do, Swami became my mother-in-law and told me all this. Then I understood that I was wasting time.

From that time onwards, I never went to any shop. The shop will come to me. If we are in want, Swami will send the shop. Whatever we want, Swami is there to take care of it, as He is our Divine Mother. Sometimes, He becomes Mother, sometimes He becomes the *guru*, sometimes He becomes the tough master, and sometimes He is our Father. Sometimes He is our friend, and our only friend also. We can enjoy so many physical forms of Swami and His proximity, in whatever way we want. So that is how Swami told me indirectly not to waste time.

SWAMI'S INSTRUCTIONS IN MEDITATION ARE NOT FOR EVERYBODY

In the beginning, I thought the inner voice came just to me. I thought it was a privilege that only I was experiencing this inner voice. Later, one of my friends came to my house and said she meditated for one or two hours. I was shocked as it was not possible for me to meditate even for ten minutes. She told me that Swami would tell me in meditation whatever was going to happen, whatever I must do. Sometimes Swami tells me those things in my meditation, sometimes He scolds me, and sometimes He advises me. Whatever it is, He will tell me.

One day, one of my friends told me that she was not going to *darshan*.

I asked her, "Why are you not coming to *darshan*?"

She said, "Swami told me not to come for *darshan*."

I thought, "Just to test this instruction, I will not go to *darshan* today and see what Swami will say to me." (*Laughter*) I went to the evening *darshan*, but Swami did not look at me. I had made a mistake. Swami's words were not for me; they were for her. The statement was not a generic one; it was not for everybody. That woman did not need any *darshan*; but I did, and I must go. That is one lesson.

DIVINE GRACE IS NEEDED FOR EVERYTHING

On another day, Swami told me not to come for *darshan*. So I thought, "Why should Swami say that? I will go and have my *darshan*. If Swami wants to look at me, He will look."

I went there and Swami was very happy that day, even though He had said "no" to me.

But there was another time when Swami told me not to come for *darshan*. I was not at all well that day, and hesitant about going. But somehow I reached Prashanti Nilayam. Swami said, "Why did you come? I told you not to come; you are not in good health. Go back, go soon."

So sometimes we are not able to follow His advice unless grace is there. For everything, His grace is needed. That is my experience.

SWAMI ADVISES AND TAKES CARE OF US

At another time, I was going to the Subramanya Swami temple, next to the Ganesha temple. Swami told me through my inner voice, "Go back, go soon! Why are you wasting time?" Why was Swami telling me these things? What was it all about?

I could not understand and I went home. Actually, I was about to collapse because of my health condition. I was alright in Prashanti Nilayam, going around the temple; but when I got home, I don't know what happened to me. Only Swami knows what is going to happen. He guides us and tells us in advance. But we do not always understand Swami's statements at the time. Swami is our Mother, which is why He protects us. He knows what is good for us.

Sometimes He comes in our dreams.

*Kalalona Kanipinchi Kalatha Theerchu Nokachota
Dhyana Manduna Tochi Darikj Cherchu
Manchi Endhuganundi Manchi Nadipinchi
Nitya Shanti Daayi Satya Sai*

See, in some of our dreams, He makes His presence felt.

He appears to us in meditation and in all His goodness, He makes us walk in the path of good name.

He directs us towards to the good path.

So this blissful Sathya Sai will make us always peaceful and in a state of bliss.

This is how Swami guides and teaches us. This is how Swami advises and takes care of us. He mends and bends us towards perfection.

SWAMI SENDS SILENT MESSAGES AT DARSHAN

Another time, Swami was coming up the aisle at *darshan*. Whenever I am there, a message will come to me from Swami. As He passes through the line, and silently He will send messages to all the people who need a message.

A doctor was sitting next to me. Swami asked the doctor, while looking at me, "Do you want to go to a doctor? Do you want to see a doctor?" That is how Swami asked me. And behind me, there was a lady who was not feeling well. When Swami said, "Go to the doctor, go to the hospital," it applied to so many people there. At that time, I was not well, either.

We should understand that through Swami's statements, and also through His discourses, the doubts of many devotees will be cleared. This is how Swami guides us.

Thank you, everybody, for giving me this wonderful opportunity. (*Applause*) Thank you, Swami! Just "thanks" is not enough; my words are not adequate in the ocean of profundity. We know

only the innocent . . . we know only Your love, nothing other than that. Thank you very much, thank you, everybody. (*Applause*)

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