

15. Limits And Progress

Jonnalagadda SathyaNarayanamurthy thrilled you so much, since he spoke softly and sweetly in his charming style. He has returned from Russia where there is too much rush, to this quiet place, this Abode of Supreme Peace (*Nilayam of Prasanthi*).

This function is connected with physical ills and their cure and prevention, so I must also confine My remarks to them. Humanity has two varieties of troubles: the physical, due to imbalance between the three humours wind, bile, and phlegm, and the spiritual, due to imbalance of the three qualities (*gunas*) of purity, passion, and inertia (*sathwa*, *rajas*, and *thamas*).

SathyaNarayanamurthy gave some pathetic instances of the sufferings caused by resorting to an indifferent and ignorant doctor. I also agree that it is wise to adjust one's living so intelligently that there is no need to approach any doctor. Illness is due to the neglect of some simple rules of healthy eating and drinking and to the damage caused to the system by evil habits and stupid cravings. People ruin themselves by greed and lust, worry and fear; they fall easy prey to their insatiable thirst for a happy life. They do not know the source and spring of happiness, which lies within themselves; they believe they can get happiness in plenty and in quick time by running after the mirage of fashion or fancy, excitement or entertainment. They think that floating on the roaring, raging torrent of the world will help, but that only gives them unbearable tossing and nausea.

Joy is a subjective feeling; it is not inherent in the objective world. You are the witness, separate from the scene; you are the seer not the seen (the *drashta*, not the *dhrik* or the *drisya*).

Purified inner vision gives unailing health

The screen is the truth (*sathya*) and the images that flit across it are false (*mithya*). When you see the film, you do not see the screen as screen; you forget its existence and think that there is just the picture and nothing else as its base. But the screen is there all the time, and it is only the screen that makes you experience the picture. Narayana (God) is the screen and the objective world (*prakriti*) is the film. When the play is on, the screen is the base and the objective world becomes God all-prevading. The screen is Truth; the story is worldly life (*samsaram*), for it has only some essence (*saaram*).

Surdas, the blind singer, had Krishna Himself as his ardent listener when he sang sitting in front of Him as a cowherd boy humming in appreciation; Surdas took Him to be a cowherd from the surrounding villages, though he sang that all beings are His Forms. One day, Krishna revealed to him that He was the Hero of his heart. Krishna touched his eyes with His divine fingers, and Surdas could see Him! Surdas could hear the self-same strains of the flute coming from Krishna's lips that he was hearing all along whenever he started meditating on the Lord. As a matter of fact, he was only trying all along to put that music into verse. He then declared that he did not care to see other things with the sight vouchsafed to him; he said the inner eyes were enough. The purified inner vision gives lasting joy and, therefore, unailing health.

Vedas and scriptures (*sastras*) prescribe the proper processes for purifying the four instruments of mind, intellect, memory, and ego. Some people dismiss the *Vedas* and *Sastras* as so many shackles on thought and action, but they are "bunds" which regulate the flow of feelings, emotions and instincts along safe channels.

The spiritual aspirant should be careful about food

Coming to the more direct topic of physical ills, I must tell you that you must practise moderation in food, drink, sleep, and exercise. Good food taken in moderate quantities, at regular intervals — that is the prescription. Pure, wholesome (*sathwic*) food promotes self-control and intelligence more than passion-producing (*rajasic*) and impure (*thamasic*) food. So for spiritual aspirants, pure, wholesome food is very necessary.

In one of the jails of this state, there was once a very pure soul devoted to spiritual ideals, carefully practising spiritual discipline. He had advanced very far in meditation and concentration. One day, however, when he sat for meditation, he felt very savage emotions surging up in him and was shocked to find that he could not, in spite of tremendous straggle, suppress the hateful and murderous thoughts that took hold of him. He was rocked in agony, and his guru was also upset at the turn of events. The guru probed into the history of the disciple rather deeply but could not find any valid reason for the tragedy. At last, he found that a certain fanatic murderer had acted as the cook in the jail kitchen the day previous to the calamity, and his hateful homicidal thoughts had pervaded the food he cooked, which the disciple had consumed.

Subtle invisible thought-forms can pass from one person to another by such means. Here, one has to be very careful about food, especially where one is proceeding Godward, through the steep path of *yoga*.

Sleep too should be regulated and moderate; it is as important as work and food. Remember also that dress is primarily for protection against heat and cold, not for vain display even at the cost of health. Virtuous conduct also ensures mental peace, and that in turn saves you from many a physical and mental illness. If you overstep the bounds (*mithi*), you miss your progress (*gathi*).

The habit that rehabilitates the fallen

Above all, do every act as an offering to the Lord, without being elated by success or dejected by defeat; this gives the poise and equanimity needed for sailing through the waters of the ocean of life.

It is the mind that builds up the body, strong and shiny, or wastes it to skin and bone. For the human (*manushya*) to be strong, the mind (*manas*) has to be strong. Live always as the servant of the Lord within you, then you will not be tempted into sin or fall into evil. Get into the habit of living in the light of God. It is the habit that rehabilitates the fallen. Have the attitude of absolute self-surrender (*saranagathi*), or else your destiny will be *shara-gathi* (movement of an arrow). That is why Krishna said, “Let your mind be absorbed in Me (*Manmanaabhaava*)!”

You may ride in a smart car of your own, but you are entrusting daily, without a second thought, the car and yourself and your family to the skill and presence of your chauffeur’s mind. However, when advised to entrust your affairs to the Lord, the power of world-illusion (*mayasakthi*) hesitates and declines! It refuses to surrender to the divine Power (*Mahasakthi*). What are we to say about such absurd conceit! If you have absolute self-surrender, you will be ever content and ever so happy and healthy. Then this hospital can be closed for want of patients; it can well be used for accommodating devotees and giving them lodging!

You are all certain to win

All that you eat, all that you see, all that you hear, and all that you take in through the senses make a dent on your health. There are three types of reactions you usually have from the outer world and three types of people in

whom one or the other predominates: the cotton, which gets soaked in whatever it gets immersed; the stone, which escapes from getting affected; and the butter, which is changed by whatever it comes across, even a little warmth. The “butter” men are moved by instant sympathy, either at another’s joy or grief.

Do not, like some mental patients, be always worrying about some little ailment or another. Have courage, that is the best tonic. Do not give up before you have to. It is not long life that counts; if you live on and on, a time may come when you have to pray to the Lord to take you away, to release you from travail. You may even start blaming Him for ignoring you and blessing other luckier people with death!

By all means, be concerned about success or failure in achieving the real purpose of life. Then you will get as many years as are needed to fulfill that desire. Yearn, yearn, yearn hard, and success is yours. Remember, you are all certain to win; that is why you have been called and have responded to the call to come to Me.

What other task have I than the showering of Grace? By *darshana*, seeing, touching and conversing with Me, you share in that Grace. When that melts and this melts, the two can merge. Treat Me not as one afar but as very close to you. Insist, demand, claim Grace from Me; do not praise, extol, and cringe. Bring your hearts to Me and win My Heart. Not one of you is a stranger to Me. Bring your promises to me and I shall give you My Promise. But first see that your promise is genuine, sincere; see that your heart is pure; that is enough.

Sathya Sai Hospital Prasanthi Nilayam, 1961-10-10

You say, “I have a fever “ But where did you get it from ? Kali? Gaya? It came from within you, not from anywhere outside you. When you have developed jaundice, everything appears yellow. Egoism too is a jaundice, which warps your vision and makes you see things wrong. It is due to inner impurity, inner defects. Get rid of that egoism and all will be Love, Peace, Unity, One.

Sathya Sai Baba