
RESETTING THE MIND SERIES

1. FROM HABITUAL TO AWAKENED LIVING

Swami Suryadevananda

'From Habitual to Awakened Living' is the first in the series, 'Resetting the Mind'.

Let us start by examining habitual living and see if it is possible to live in a better way so that our very lives become the means to lasting peace, joy, inner blossoming and spiritual ascent.

Friends, today let us look at four things: habitual living, or the way of living we're accustomed to; then let's look at the 'I-fabric', or ego. This 'I-fabric', or ego, is the seed of habitual living, it is what sustains habitual living, and it is what is strengthened by habitual living. Let us then turn our attention to the past to see if there are ways and means in the past that can enrich us in the present, and bring these into the present so that we can go from habitual living to awakened living.

Habitual Living

When 'what to do' becomes more important than 'how to be', we become habitual; life reflects habit, as getting more has become a cookie cutting exercise. This brings inner regression, increases problems, worries and dissatisfaction. Our problems have nothing to do with people, conditions or things outside. Our problems are *our* reactions to reality—people, conditions and things just as they are. Friends, let us have a closer look at it. What are our problems? What do we think about? What do we worry about? It's quite simple: one of two things—what I want is not happening, and what I do not want, or prefer, is happening. What I would like to see is not here, and what I would not like to see is here to stay. There's only one little thing in the middle of all of this: that 'I', ... and if it feels that we can dispense with that 'I', it might also dispense with the problem. Now, how does one turn away from one's own reactions, one's own habits, and from one's own self-centeredness, finally?

Dissatisfaction comes from the non-acceptance of things as they are—it is the very seed of worrying which follows. There is a difference between making or doing something better and being dissatisfied with what actually is. Let's go back to what we were talking about earlier. Our problems are centered around what I like, or what I would like, or what I would prefer is not happening; and what I don't like, or don't prefer, is happening. So it seems easy, as we mentioned, to figure out what to do about that 'I' that likes or dislikes. We can deal with things, but do we need to include our likes and dislikes as part of dealing with things or improving upon things? You see something, and it looks like it can be made better or it could be better—simply

do it! ... with all of your attention and all of your heart. My friends, why should a defect in something, or seeing a defect or fault in something, drive my effort to improve it? When I do that, the feeling of dissatisfaction or complaint or fault-finding resides in me, and it seems that I have taken one step backward all the while I am trying to move forward. *Why* should a defect drive my effort to do something good?—instead of just a positive feeling: see it, look at it with *all* of your attention, and make it good. When there are sound feelings to do more or better, there is *no* room at all for dissatisfaction.

When one does not accept things as they are, and 'thinks'—that is the key word: *thinks*—of ways to change what actually is, worrying happens. Look, my friends, let things be as they are! Everything, whether it's this way or that way or crooked, is an opportunity to do something good! What is there to *think* about: what *is* or what might be? Let it unfold—and look at it! If it's OK, move on; and if it's not, do something good. Worrying doesn't *change* a thing. And we always worry about things that *could* be. Well, they may never be. So, worry comes from dissatisfaction, and dissatisfaction comes from the perception of a problem with things. These three are interlinked with each other. One worries because one may not be able to change what *is*; or there may be resistance. We never worry about real or actual situations. When something happens, we deal with it!—it requires a response. If there is a fire or a flat tire, you deal with it! But there's no end to worry. When one worries, thought moves amidst thought without needing a situation. This whole thing becomes a mental operation within our own mind, and the ego-personality assumes selfhood. When I worry, something in me worries about something in me—because there's no situation! It hasn't happened! There's nothing *outside* we can think. We're worrying about something out there but it hasn't happened. So thought, which seems to be me, or my ego-personality, is worrying about a situation—which is also me—and does a sort of splitting within the psyche or the mind and I undergo this whole thing which is absolutely unnecessary.



My problems, dissatisfaction and worries are mine only—mine alone! They're all connected to me: *my* problems, *my* dissatisfaction, *my* worries. And they're all experienced in me. If the effects, which are these three: problems, worries and dissatisfaction, are *in* me, the cause *must* be in me as well! The cause cannot be separated from the effect. The seed itself grows to be a tree. This *whole* operation is happening in me only. The question is, *why* does this happen, and what can I do about it?

When the inner conditioning identifies itself completely with the ego-personality, the cycle of worry feeds on itself. The *inner* world dictates the value of things outside and one's responses to them. At that point, life is completely mechanical or habitual. Though it may seem intelligent, though it may seem like we're making decisions, those decisions are not being made by *what actually is*, but by our attitude towards them. Our world gets smaller and smaller as we look at the inner world more and the outer world less. One's innate wisdom and goodness are eclipsed, and mechanicalness comes to sit in the front seat, ... life becomes more mechanical. *How* we do things, *how* we live, and *who* we are become unimportant. *What* we do—the *what*—reigns, and the *what* becomes supremely important.

The 'I'-fabric

We've gone through habitual living and seen that the hub of it, or the 'I'-fabric or ego, is what needs to be examined or gotten rid of. The content of our problems, worries and dissatisfaction, is *thought*! It is the *stuff* that our problems, worries and dissatisfaction are made of. These thoughts weave themselves into a fabric in which the sense of self gets inextricably identified.

Thought's web is very much like the spider's web. The spider's web is emitted and sustained by the spider; similarly, thought weaves a web *for* itself, *of* itself and *within* itself. This inner world of 'I', my friends, is a false self, because we are *aware* of it. Not only am I aware of *something* that I am dissatisfied with or have a problem with, or worry about, but I am also aware of *that* which worries. Who is *that*? That which is an object can *never* be a subject!



When the fabric of thought starts shaping what one perceives or thinks—that is conditioning. Say someone rubbed you wrong yesterday, and today you happened to see that person coming towards you, the feeling from yesterday starts shaping what you see today, and prompting: "Oh, *that* person is coming!" But see, *that* person's not coming, ... *this* person is coming; and this person may be coming to apologize or make amends, or whatever. But that feeling from yesterday insists: *that* person is coming! So, when something is perceived, these modifications or thought-fabric *tell* you what they are based on—your *previous* feeling towards it. When this happens, the whole mind is not allowed to come into play. The whole mind is the undivided mind, the mind that can see things just as they are; but that little strand, or that feeling from yesterday that is anchored to your personality, ... just that little thought-fabric insists that *this* is *that*!—or *that* is *this*!

Everything in your life today—the state of your body, whether healthy or sick, the state of your fortune—is *entirely* conditioned by the thoughts and feelings you have entertained in the past. By the same token, the conditions of your life tomorrow will be *entirely* conditioned by the thoughts and feelings that you *choose* to entertain from now on. So naturally, one would ask this question: what makes conditioning so powerful? And a to-the-point answer would be: you allow it to be so! The mind has become what it is because of misuse, and it must be set right by proper use. No amount of threatening, coercion, suppression is going to work on the mind at all. If we empower a better way to live that is joy-giving, ... happy, ... purposeful, ... focused, ... that just *gives* you more, it will naturally respond to life, and the old ways will weaken by disuse. The mind is very plastic, my friends. It has become this way, and it can be made a new way! The great masters *found* this better way to live!

From the Past

Sages and saints have gifted us the results of their search for truth, and though the *way* we live as changed, *why* we live has not. Why are we here? What is it to be attained? How do we attain it? *Can* this be done while still undergoing life's experiences, ... and is all of this possible today?

Life is a means for inner purification and an opportunity to realize our true nature. Just like going on a long journey, it is helpful if we have mile markers to know if we're on track. Similarly, stages of life were major milestones for growth and evolution. And upbringing and education are where it first started, and these were imparted on the foundation of inner cultivation. The 'what to do', my friends, was always driven by who we are in our *essential* nature, and therefore *how* to be was clearly seen.

Let us get a little more nitty-gritty and down to brass tacks on the things the ancients knew that would be very helpful to us today. First of all, it was known that there could not be two existences—mine and yours—and others, as each would have its own inner intelligence. On a cosmic level, this would be chaos. If there is *one* infinite, one existence, we cannot be outside that. So we cannot be outside this Absolute, or God. Therefore, the goal of life must be to realize our true nature, or our inseparability from self, or God. For this, there must be a more comprehensive way to live, ... where life and practice work *together* towards inner purification. Because, my friends, it's not enough to know this intellectually and to say, "Aha, it makes sense!" The *actualizing* of this truth is the main focus of this journey we call 'life'.

Before we go any further, my friends, a couple of cursory notes on the last line. It was said, the sages laid out that the goal of life is God-realization, or purification of one's mind, one's self, so that one's true nature can be seen directly. Now, one may or may not have that as their own goal. That doesn't matter; but what is important is to find a way right now to live without hurt or hurting. Can we find a way by which the mind responds to life *naturally*, ... smoothly, ...

efficiently, ... joyfully, ... and without all this chaos? That, my friends, lies on the path of that lofty goal. For this, the sages laid out stages of life: upbringing and education were imparted on the foundation of inner cultivation. Before they learnt *what* to do—their vocation or their trade, or whatever they would be doing—they learnt how *to be*, and how to interact with one another, not just from a moral standpoint or an ethical standpoint, but closer to their inner nature, because this was not something they were doing to conform to some standard. They were taught: if *this* is the goal, then *actualizing* of the goal is why we do things—and why we do things has that potential of discovery. Then, experiences for family and career came along, and these allow one to grow further *if* one keeps cultivation in mind. See, my friends, it's difficult to fight one another if you realize that the reason for things is self-improvement, self-unfoldment, ... because you will always find an opportunity. And if *that* is lost sight of, then the littlest things will be reasons to quarrel or not get along. Having gone through the necessary experiences, one finds a way to live while being *inwardly freer*, which allows more attention towards pursuit of the truth. When there is sufficient inner purity and momentum, it then becomes natural to pursue realization of the truth with all one's being. Now, these four stages are not *solid*, watertight compartments that are dictated—this by this year, that by that year—because not only is each person different, but their conditions are different, ... their nature is different. But there was a general flow that the sages understood was helpful for a life right from its formative years of upbringing, education, the *experiences* of home and family and career, and then towards the pursuit of the truth which was flowing without resistance, or without losing its way.

The most important of all the four stages, my friends, was the bridge: upbringing and education. There are laws of the mind just like there are laws in nature. Before you give something, ... say, a position or instrument to somebody, ... it would be useful to know how to use that. Before a knife is placed in someone's hands, it's useful for them to understand that the blade end cuts, and with the handle one can do things. Similarly, the *mind* has its own laws. And it is in those early years where the sages learnt about their minds, their own self, so later they didn't succumb to temptations and weaknesses. They had self-control *naturally*—not by suppression, but by understanding, ... and this lead to a flowering of natural goodness. Natural or innate goodness is not goodness that is put on. It is just *there*, my friends. Just like a rose is fragrant without *doing* anything and the sun is luminous and warm without *doing* anything. Why? Because that is its nature. We, too, have goodness within us that could be unfolded and should be unfolded. If natural goodness is lost in the early, formative years of upbringing and education, the *outer* comes to harness the inner, and that can never be good. What do we mean by this? Today you see an emphasis on the *what* and on the *outer*. "Aha! There's a good opportunity. Let me take advantage!" "There's a sale. Let me take advantage of the sale! Let me pick up the items that I need or as *many* as I can get!" But we may not consider the others. And by doing so, taking care of our personal interest becomes *natural*. The *outer* governs the inner.

"I see an opportunity, I bring my talents out to harness the opportunity." But this way of thinking and functioning and living was quite different when the sages were brought up in their system. They looked for the inner, their core values, ... their natural goodness responded to the outer. If something was seen, they inquired within, "Do I need it, or do I not need it?" And so, they were never carried away by desire or had need to reclaim themselves or reset their minds as is our need, which we have started or embarked upon today. And so, their guidance, their lessons, are critically important today. The great masters knew that if the *how to be* is not cultivated, the *how to do* will *always* be an expression of self-centeredness—and this could never be good for society or the individual.

To the Present

The system of the sages is now long gone, but its principles are solid, ... sound—not rooted in a particular time or on social customs. When principles are beyond time, the means are beyond time as well—and they will work today just as they did in days gone by. Let us have a look at how we can make this work for us today.

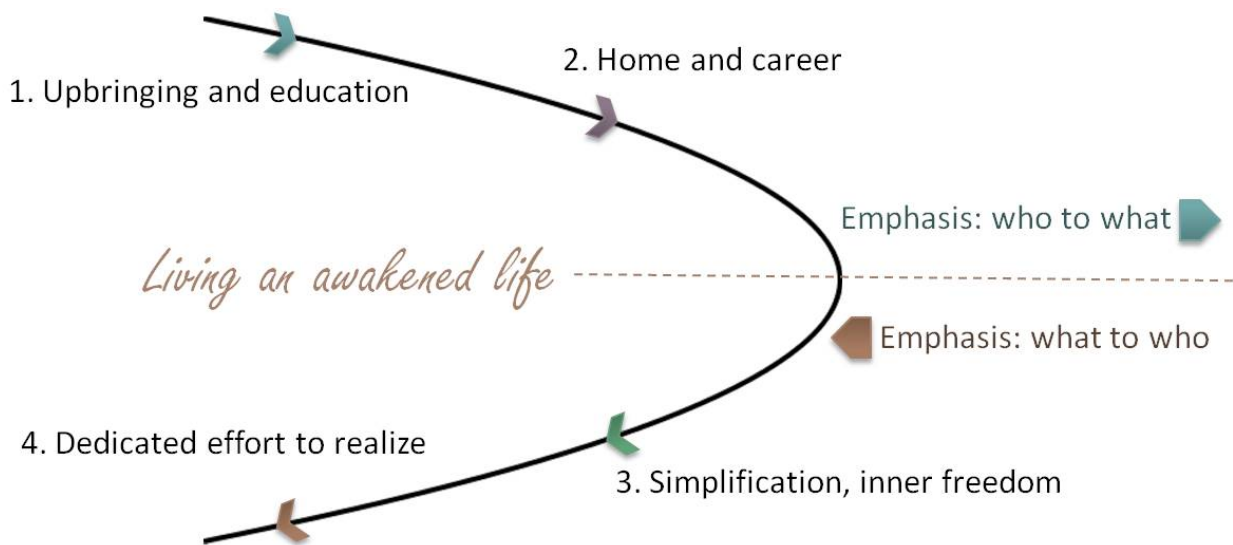
The most important thing is wanting to change—not wanting to change *things*, but wanting to change ourselves. My friends, we started today by looking at our problems, our dissatisfaction and our worries, and we saw that they were all centered in the 'I': *my* problems, *my* dissatisfaction, *my* worries. Rather than dealing with the external *every time* it occurs—which is a never-ending battle, as you and I know, and damage-control at best—why not get to the *root* of it, the 'I' that would rather have things one way and not another way. Can we find a way to live without that 'I'? Can life still go on, along with my work and family and everything else, without that 'I'? Is that 'I' so critical that it cannot be dispensed with? And if it *can* be, what is the *means*? So, to want to change *fundamentally* is critical. And we have to each come to that juncture on our own.



Wanting to change—not this or that, but change in such a fundamental way that one is ready to shed the real causes of all our ills of life, just as eagerly as a snake is to shed its slough. See, my friends, the snake does not begin till the old skin begins to prick at it a little bit. But, *waiting to hurt is optional*, though the newly forming delicate skin is right beneath. It then finds a way to resolve it. Can I deal with both these skins: the inner and the outer, sort of in a live-and-let-live way? When the inner and outer are found to be untenable, it gets enthusiastic about shedding its old and goes *directly* into action.

It is *essential* to have a definite aim or purpose in life, ... this is what is needed, my friends. It is *this* purpose that guides all of our actions—not just the *what to do*, but the *how to do* and *how to be*. And it's up to each one of us to determine how high we set the threshold of this definite aim or purpose. In upbringing, ... education, ... home, ... career, ... and family life—all these are good, but they're in time process. There should be a *quest* for simplification: you cannot simplify life, it is what it is—you can and must simplify yourself. Can I find a way to live, after having gone through the experiences, where I am inwardly free?—and when I feel that inward freedom, can I, with that, pursue the truth so that experience can be my fulfillment?

Now we come down a little bit more to brass tacks—and this, and the next three slides, my friends, are going to be important. Because we've started together on this journey of finding a way to live that is beyond the mundane, ... beyond mechanical living, ... beyond habitual living, ... and awakened living—we ask, can one live without hurt, and without hurting? That is our focus in these sessions. Without an upbringing and education based on inner cultivation, we get off to a sort of wobbly start because the emphasis is on the 'what'. Then, opportunities and situations are needed, ... sought after, ... to harness talent and goodness—whereas it should be the other way around! The inner goodness looks for ways to bring this about, ... it looks for ways to be useful to others, and society also, aside from taking care of one's own interests. This loosens the heart of its selfishness.



So, as there was a wise upbringing and education, naturally it transitioned into home and career. I call it 'home and career' and not the 'householder' path, because home is a little bit more involved. It includes things that one would like to have, and relationships, and also a career to fit in with these. But still, in these, ... the upbringing and education and home and career, the emphasis is from the 'who' to the 'what'. "I would like to have this experience, or go through this," ... and it's still a little bit of the 'I', and this is natural, my friends, because that

momentum needs to be understood; but there is an understanding of this 'I' that would like to have this home and this family and this career and this promotion, or whatever. Then one begins looking: "Can it not be done in a better way?" ... whereas the 'what' can become a way to cultivate the 'who'. "Can I not do things without losing myself? Can I not do things with increasing my goodness? Can I not live in such a way to unfold beauty in myself?" But all this takes time, ... it takes maturing. So we go from upbringing and education for an urge to experience home, career, and everything that comes with it; but the emphasis is still from the 'I' to the 'what'. And gradually, that gets turned around; and this is what the sages learnt in the earlier years—*how* to turn the racing car around and come back home, and not get lost in what we call the 'race of life'. So, the emphasis shifts from the 'who' to 'what'—turning around from the 'what' to 'who'. "Can I find a better way of doing things all the while I'm still dealing with home, career, enjoying things, etc.?" So the sages found a simpler way, and this led to simplification of themselves, which naturally reflected in their lifestyle, ... and it brought about an inner freedom. It is *critical*, my friends, to have psychological freedom so that one can dedicate effort towards realization of the truth, or the self—or you can just call it higher pursuits. But without being psychologically free, one cannot free oneself physically because that would just be suppression, ... that would just be denial, ... and the mind would bounce right back to its old grooves. So it takes living in wisdom to be able to enter the third stage of simplification, which brings inner freedom and psychological freedom—and that *naturally* reflects in a simpler life, without *trying* to make life simple cosmetically. And then comes a natural urge to know the truth, because one *has* the leisure, ... one *has* the freedom, ... and one is intrinsically simple and one's life reflects that also.

Friends, just talking about these doesn't do much. There must be some tangible take-hold: something we can do right now—today itself!—to start bringing these into life. So, for this, let's take a look at the sage's system, which is gone, but let's look at those essentials towards inner growth that we can reflect in our lives today, and *how* to do this—and this is the challenge before us!

So what have we actually lost?

1. The foundation of self-knowledge, which started out with upbringing and education: the foundation of self-knowledge. Now, these are things that we are going to have to bring into our life so we can guide it in an awakened, purposeful manner.
2. *How* to live without hurting oneself or others?—that is, without the ego. Is the 'I' so very necessary in life beyond just an identity? "Well, my name is Swami So-and-so," ... or John, Bob, Jill, or whatever it is. But beyond that, ... where it makes me feel different from you, ... the sense of identity that makes me stand up apart from you and vie and compete with you, and

either hurt or protect myself. Can I live without hurting myself or others and without this ego? *Can that name just be a nametag?* Can I live *through* that in common with you, ... one with you?

3. How to do what needs to be done *because* it needs to be done? The outer should never harness the inner, ... and opportunity should never harness talent. Goodness inside, and talent, should *look for a way* to fulfill itself. That's fulfillment!—when we *look* for things to do, not because it's in our best interest, not because it's an opportunity, not because it's worth it, but because it's a good thing! I see a glass bottle on the road, pick it up. Why? It's the right thing to do! So can we do what needs to be done *because it needs to be done*? No big fanfare, ... no big halo, ... nothing like that! *It's just a good thing to do!*

4. How to go through life's experiences while getting closer to our true self, ... so that self-knowledge can go beyond intellectual into actualization. Is there a way to live where *life itself* can be a process of unfolding the divinity within?

5. Not getting stuck at the second stage by habitual living—the stage of experiences we called 'home and career'. Can we move without getting stuck there, in 'more and better', which is cookie-cutting by any definition, my friends, and cookie-cutting must lead to regression and stagnation.

6. The ability to transition towards psychological disentanglement without altering the external much, *at least initially*. Can I, or can one, right where one is, *as* they go through experiences, *be free of them*, ... by understanding them? When you've experienced status and power and success and affluence, or whatever it is, ... position, ... acclaim, ... through any of these, can we move through them, understanding them, without beginning to like them so much that we stay there and demand more? Can we move through them without getting addicted to them, ... without getting fixated on them? When that happens, there's psychological disentanglement. We've *had* experiences, but *now*, these factors—call it success, name/fame, recognition, or whatever—are *not* what draws us, ... are not what pulls us! We learn how to do things because they need to be done, and we learn the joys of simplification. One's aspiration for the higher gains momentum; and the *new inner—freer inner*—adjusts the outer naturally.

So, there isn't any sense of suppression, ... or jagged edges, or sudden stops, or forcing. These were the important lessons or important factors that have been lost: a foundation of self-knowledge, ... knowing how to live without hurting oneself or others, ... knowing how to do what needs to be done *because* it needs to be done, ... doing things in a way that unfolds the true being, or true self, or true divine nature, or just say goodness, innate goodness, ... not getting stuck at the second stage which is basically the stage of experience through this world, but *learning through it* so one can be psychologically free, and then moving towards the truth.

Can we bring to our life these major factors and points? These are the things that will reset the mind and make it healthy. *How* to do it is the challenge before us.

The means must reflect the aim—not only in good measure, but in full measure, my friends. So the take-home today... we're going to talk more on life. What can we take from this, and how can we actualize those ingredients that are missing? How can we bring those into our life? We'll get into spiritual practice and things of that nature which will help us a little bit later as we go along. But today we are concerned with the transition from mundane, or routine or mechanical living, or habitual living, to an awakened life.

1. The first thing is: do one thing at one time with *all* of your heart, your mind, your soul, and your body. Consider no work better than the other. Every work is an opportunity to gather the rays of the mind if we do it with *all* of our heart. And also, my friends, this removes selectiveness from our mind, because our mind would rather do what it wants than be cleaning something or doing some chore. We would rather do something even holy or spiritual, or whatever you call it. But when we learn to do *everything*: sweeping the floor, taking out the garbage—everything—with all of our heart and being, we begin to see the ego rise up: "I would rather be doing this," ... yet we continue to do what we were doing with all of our heart and being, ... the momentum of the ego starts weakening and we begin to reclaim ourselves in gaining the inner strength to channel the energy without being bullied by the ego. A very simple principle, my friends, but it does *wonders* in bringing about this reset. And every time we come together, we're going to talk about a few things and towards the end we are going to have these take-homes, which are *actual* things that we can and should practice *now*—here and now!—not waiting for tomorrow, or not needing any equipment, as such.

2. Include thought in the field of observation. The *outer*, my friends, is not seen in the outer!—including what you are looking at now. *The means must reflect the aim*, ... is being seen inside *you*. The optical nerves are reflecting it within yourself, ... the mind is looking *within itself*! Well, thoughts are rising and falling within that same mind-space. Why shouldn't it be possible to include thought in the field of observation. Now, this does not happen easily if you're distracted. And this is why that first principle, *one thing at one time with all your heart and soul*, is important. It is there that we build focus and concentration. Then, anything else that rises—when you do everything with all of your heart, and your heart's in it—when these thoughts rise, they are pale because you're doing everything wholeheartedly, and you can recognize them. And you begin gradually to include thought in the field of observation. What happens as a result? *When thought is included as the observable*, these impulses don't burst out and go into life! Usually people say, "Well, I didn't know *why* I said it, or *why* I did it, and I'm sorry!" Well, that's a good thing. There's no harm in that, and it's a normal thing to correct ourselves. But as we include thought in the field of observation *completely*, there will be fewer and fewer of

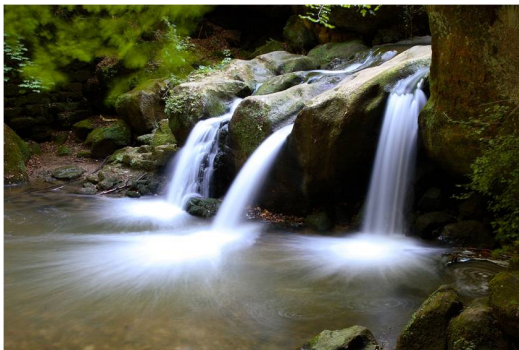
those opportunities—not because we suppress it and try to be politically correct, or socially astute, but because *observable thought* is an object, and an object cannot act, ... it needs to be subject. So it lacks the subject-impulse, hence these *urges*: anger and fear and *all of these* begin to lose their steam! And all these, my friends, were important lessons that the sages learned in their system. Well, that system is gone, but I'm sure that each one can think for himself as to how we can bring this about in our life today. And we're going to get more and more focused as we go along. Towards the end we'll have an actual layout, ... an actual program, ... of what we can do, say, in a week or seven days, to help get a good start in resetting of the mind; because you cannot *reset* the mind. (some were able to, ... are able to, ... but it is not as easy.)

3. Evaluate *everything* afresh, ... each time. It doesn't matter if that person hurt me yesterday. When that person comes toward me today, it is not *that* person, it is *this* person that is coming towards me. Therefore, I respond to what is actually happening and not to memory. By this, my friends, we start dismantling the memory mechanism, or how we feel about things. So each one of these will look like very simple principles, *but they will give you a lot of mileage!* In evaluating everything fresh each time, do a 'take-2' if you have to! ... remind yourself if you have to!—"Okay, fresh look!"... and evaluate it anew. Don't allow memory to interfere—not by suppressing memory, but by taking an *active interest* in what is *actually* happening, ... each time, like it was the first time!

4. Now, this fourth one is probably the most important: separating thought from action. Do not let situations initiate action!—that is, do not let thought initiate action! You see something that needs to be done, do it! Learn to act on its own merit, not because it serves some interest. New interests, my friends, will get taken care of just the same, ... will get taken care of as a by-product. Why are we so concerned and afraid or focused on our interests? When you do good things, you'll be taken care of automatically. You do good Sooner or later it's going to get noticed. Let actual situations initiate action, ... not thought, ... not these impulses. These impulses are all about *my* interests, ... what's in it for *me*—those kinds of things. Whether you're in work or with the family and something needs to be done, do it with all of your heart and all of your being! While you're doing it, don't second guess and turn around and look at thought—"Are they going to like it? Is it working out all right?" Never doubt, my friends! Let the actual situation sustain the action, ... the actual *involvement* keep you going, ... actual *love for action* keep you going—not thought. You have to keep thought out of it in the middle, too, which is while you're actually doing it. And lastly, *when* it ends, it ends!... psychologically, too. That means, *when* it ends, I'm not thinking about it, ... and if my mind is now *facing, wholeheartedly*, what is in front of it, next, it would not be happening. So here is a simple acronym for you, my friends: BDA—*before, during, and after*. Separate thought from action: BDA. Thought is the medium through which the ego acts. But with the feeling of subjecthood arising, or assuming selfhood, ... thought becomes powerless!

So, take an *interest*, an *active* interest, and do things in a sort of *alive* manner—and then have these four principles, which are: one thing at one time, with all of your heart; include thought in the field of observation. This is a little difficult, and for some of this, practices of yoga are useful and come in very handy, especially japa yoga, and we'll talk about that next time. To reiterate: evaluate everything fresh each time. Remind yourself: "Fresh look!" Separate thought from action: BDA—*before, during, and after*. So these simple principles will help take us into an *awakened* life. An awakened life is a life where we're awake, ... where *habit* is not living life! As regards those aspects such as including thought in the field of observation, and developing concentration, the spiritual practices are *critical*.

In future sessions we are going to take-up a little bit of the Yoga of Sivananda. Swami Sivananda called it the 'Yoga of Little', where we cultivate the body with asanas and pranayama, learn to do things and cultivate action by karma yoga, which is the means to eradicate We will also talk about true devotion (not emotion), cultivating the heart and mind, and cultivating wisdom that is beyond academic, ... *living* wisdom. Does it sound like a lot? My friends, there are some new facets to cultivate. These will lead to new ways of dealing with the *same* issues, right where they are, ... to deal with life, ... because when *how* you see things changes, *what* you see also changes. We will look at these things. It's really not as much as it seems. Why not *stay* with it and find out?



Every cell has the ability to unfold galaxies as its own,
Everything has unlimited potential—
If we will only cooperate and participate in its
actualizing experience.
There is some work to be done, but not all the work.
We are *eternally* partnered with the infinite,
and all the infinite can do
is what each blessed cell can do—
As there is none other.

Some closing thoughts, my friends:



The doorway to change is in the heart and its door has two keys: what we think, and how we feel about things.

Everyone has been given these two keys, but we have other keys, too, and there are many rooms. Different rooms open depending on the key used.

There are no shortcuts, and by the same token, struggle is optional.

Fate and destiny are the effects of our choices and a bright, healthy, and joyful future is our birthright!

Thank you for joining me today. For more information, kindly visit suryadevananda.org.