



Vigilance

To be able to be vigilant in life, amidst people, conditions and things requires the need felt to do this and the ability. Let us look at both of these.

Need: Unless we clearly see that our reactions are our problems – the need will not register within as something must happen. So, take a brief inner pause each time you feel the balance shift within - till you see reaction trying to surge. Let situations be what they are – why should the inner climate get upset and what have you to do with it? If you are observing, you are not upset as you are the observer of this ‘upset mood’. This may involve a slight slowing down in your responses but it is necessary till you see that things happening and how I react are two different things. Things will always happen but are the inner reactions necessary? Can these be avoided so events and conditions can unfold as they may without disturbing the inner balance? Can this happen while fully engaged in life? When you come to feel that there must be a way to go beyond slipping to reaction’s tug – you are ready to acquire the ability to go beyond them.

Ability: Distractions are not much of a problem if you don’t want to be distracted – we have practical experience of this in our lives. This is why we put ‘need felt to be vigilant’ before ability.

Reduce the distractions you allow in all environments yourself by these simple rules for living that can prevent the slip by increasing vigilance.

1. Have a plan for your activities which includes spiritual practice. This does not make you mechanical but insures you do what you, yourself have decided support your priorities and aspiration.

2. Do everything in its time and place wholeheartedly as all action has the same real (*inner*) value. Working more may make you some more money than doing your chores but you may lose ground inwardly by thinking *businessy*, competitively and for your personal advantage without considering the consequences to others. But, if you see each work as an opportunity to gather all the rays of the mind – you will give each task the fullest attention and find a way to do things without the interference of thought or conditioning.

3. Do one thing at one time. When you eat, just eat, and; when you take a walk, just walk. Your mind (and this includes your feelings) has to also do what your body is doing. Gradually, you will feel that there is no separation between mind, feelings and body as they integrate in action. Your actions are already in the field of awareness, take it one step further by brining any rise and fall of thought into awareness.

4. When an action is over, it's over – do not let the mind ruminate on what has been done. If you have been vigilant, you would be giving each action your best and there is no room for regrets.

5. Do not plan much – just what is necessary and when it is necessary. Over planning stirs the mind into a frenzy for something that may not even happen and creates a vicious cycle that feeds on itself. Planning is like seasoning food – just what is needed to bring out the taste of the fresh ingredients.

6. Do not expect anything at all. Learn to do what needs to be done with all your being and let the chips fall as they may. If your wisdom felt something should be done and you did it wholeheartedly – what is there to expect?

7. Anchor your sense of satisfaction with seeing clearly and doing wholeheartedly – not with how things turn out as many factors condition outcome but you are in charge of your clarity in discerning and your actions.

Let us look take this one step further next time.

Swami Suryadevananda

8 March 2014