

2022 Patanjali Class 23

6/28/22

Sutra I:4B – At other times, the identification is with the modifications.

The completion of sutra 4 coheres the direction Nitya is taking us through Patanjali, and is especially well laid out in the old Notes in Part III, which I highly recommend. We enjoyed a more heterogeneous discussion last night, also very good.

In the mysterious way of serendipitous appearances, I just came across a helpful extract from Nitya's video Gita, as if he was submitting it for the class:

In the external world, there are a number of forces that are not in our hands. You are only one among millions of objects that are flying around in this sea of energy. Your own body and mind are just one fragment of that, so it is a tremendous thing to pull away from the sea of objects.

Now coming to the interior aspect or the inner aspect of our mental life, there you find that you are even more bound than in the external world! In the external world, if a thing is harmful, you can move away from it or you can get it removed from you. It won't come and haunt you unless someone is insisting on putting it to you. But in the mind, what you want to dismiss comes back with greater force again and again to your attention. So, the problem seems to be more binding than problems of the sensory world. You found one bondage at the physical level, now you are finding another bondage at the mental level. Those bondages are coming from registered impressions that are functioning as memories. They are not just a passive presentation of memories but memories that have dynamics, wanting to be relived. There is an affectivity which is impressed on all memories and that affectivity is asking you

to relive them. This is called *vāsanā*. At the second level, the complication goes further and there is a plurality of distraction. You cannot push it away because it is all in your own mind. Another person cannot see it and eradicate it because only you know where the shoe pinches, unless that person is a guru who knows exactly how it works. I suppose it is possible for a guru, because they have undergone all those things at some stage in their life. (XV.intro)

The thread of yoga instruction so far is, “with the restraint of mental modifications, the seer remains in their own essential nature. At other times, the identification is with the modifications.” While this is often taken as pejorative of modifications, it isn’t meant to be. This is the one place where we can have our cake and eat it too. You’re either in a neutral space or in modulations, zeros or ones. Both are delicious.

A neutral ground activated by modulations is who we are in full. We are not trying to do away with sentient activity for all time—only enough to reconnect with the open spaces within us. We re-access the emptiness to enable us to live life to the full. Modulations are inextricably united with of our essential nature.

Deb spoke of the void, where there aren’t any differentiations, but once a certain potential starts to manifest, it produces millions of beings that have needs and hungers. A million different perceptions—pain/pleasure complexes—arise, and we create the world based on them. The reason for restraining the modulations is to recognize the purusha, self-consciousness, so we aren’t drawn totally into horizontal differentiations. In “practicing” yoga, we keep returning to the calm core which is our very beginning.

Paul wondered—perhaps provocatively—if this means our individualized self is an expression of the spiritual self?

Yes. That’s right. Purity is fine, but endless sameness (or

nothingness) could get boring over time. So why not create a universe and infuse it with variegations?

For optimal functioning we need to retain our neutral grounding. Patanjali is reminding us we always have that still space within. It's the missing key we especially need when we're upset. It would be easy to attain, except that most of us have been raised in a society that believes god is pure and somewhere else, which makes you a sinner by definition, a stain on its purity. This is a foundational assumption of many cultures, so we bring its exaggerated negativity into all our undertakings. We imagine we need to erase the modulations to become a rare, perfect being. The misapprehension grips us as firmly as the tiger's claws. It takes a return to our depths through this sort of approach to help us relinquish that compulsion.

Paul still rues his years of conditioning from being raised in a repressive religion, and recalled Susan mentioning in a previous class that there is a solitude that is experienced in something greater than the self. We have negative feelings, so we seek solitude in something beyond them, and naturally believe our true identity exists in some place beyond "here." That's the conditioned idea that causes us to lose the experience of the perfection of the here and now, to put nowness off till later. Our epiphanies resurrect the recurring theme that it does exist in the present, and not just in the rationalizations that we tell ourselves, which are untrue.

I find it odd that we picture ourselves as imperfect, when we are products of 13 ½ billion years of evolution, mostly selecting the fittest in some sense, adding layer after layer of complexities, of opportunities for experience both inwardly and outwardly. It isn't as if we have been flawed all along, and are growing toward a final perfection, one that can be sabotaged by our failure to follow directions. There has been perfection at every stage, though it's fair to call it provisional perfection, since we're never at the end of the

unfurling process. We're being encouraged by these gurus to remember how spectacular we really are, and other people are too! On a daily basis. It's like adding a countervailing modulation, two sine waves that can either amplify or nullify each other, but can also harmonize.

Andy is fascinated by something Nitya used to say: the creator is like a worker hidden in the workshop, where creation is not just of an outer world but also of the sense that you have that you are an agent. Here Nitya asks, who is the beneficiary of all of this? The beneficiary is as much a product of this process as the stuff that's created. We are in the darkness of the undifferentiated state, and then boom, we have emerged.

Deb affirmed that the sense of nothingness and creation and being exists every day in our lives. We just need to remember that the deepness is always there, so we don't have to follow particular modulations to the nth degree. We don't have to endlessly follow our thoughts out, taking us far away from the inner quiet. All of the modulations go out and come back, each one brought back home. When you ponder what is this construction for? who does it benefit? you are right there in the moment.

For Andy, "home" is an instant of now. Our regrets, memories—all are fabrications. The past is a complete fabrication. We are recreating it as a vritti. If we could learn to hang out with the present moment, that itself is a stilling of vritti, There is an appreciation of the little point of consciousness at the center of it. It reminded Andy of Narayana Guru's Atmo verse 33, the burning twig being swirled around — knowledge to know itself has become all of this:

Knowledge, to know its own nature here,
has become earth and the other elements;
spiraling up, back and turning round,
like a glowing twig it is ever turning.

Part of the image, I believe, is the glowing after-trail our mind “sees” as left behind by the burning tip, as well as the continuity of all the now-instants. We’ll have more on this later, as this is a very important point, no pun intended. For now, I noted how eagerly Nitya followed neuroscientific and psychological developments, all his life. He would have immediately gotten the import of the revolutionary discovery from brain imaging, around 1999, the year of his death, that an eternity of processing takes place before the lightbulb goes on and we say “I just thought of something!” That mega-intelligence generating the thought is the worker in the workshop, and our conscious awareness, our ‘I’ sense, is the beneficiary of its careful planning, aimed at optimizing our life, by taking into account all our experience and learning, seemingly without effort on our part. We beneficiaries are aware only of the now, but it is a very pregnant now, of long gestation.

Nitya was well aware of how this worked, and didn’t need scientific validation. He always taught that our inner guide was shaping and selecting our world from the infinite welter of input we floated in, to give us opportunities for further development. This is a huge turnaround from thinking we are doing everything from scratch, and we have to make it happen. We think we have to manipulate things to make them work properly, but if we listen with gratitude to the hidden wealth within us, life would flow all the better.

Jan asked if the glowing twig symbolized our witnessing consciousness, musing that the witness is the piece of us that is connected to our deeper core, like the red tip that’s glowing on the stick, giving new insights of connection. She felt it was somehow related with a favorite part of the reading:

From the very outset of human life the apperception of each situation is assessed by an individual as a context of need and

fulfillment. That means individual consciousness is unfurling itself with a plan, a scheme, or protolinguistic vision. (25)

Charles filled us in with Nataraja Guru's terminology of protolanguage meaning pictures; distinguished from metalanguage, meaning words. I think what Nitya was indicating here is intuitive thinking assisting in the unfoldment of who we are. We are immensely blessed to not have to grub for food all day every day, leaving plenty of time to develop ourselves as the muse moves us.

Anita fumed that since we create our world through modulations, why can't she turn them off when she's trying to go to sleep in the middle of the night? Deb commented that the modulations don't want to let go, and we don't want to let go of them, either, implying that *trying* to go to sleep is using modulations to let go of modulations. We have to let them go, to let go.

Paul suggested to her that there is a way of negotiating existence that is inhibitory and there's a way where we excel, and the question is how do you differentiate them second by second to keep yourself in that equanimity? For all of us there are thoughts and modulations we can't let go of, losing our balance and walking through life in a state of high anxiety, as opposed to working through things in peace like Nitya did. He asked us for more on what differentiated Nitya's way of working through the world.

Andy recalled Nitya's constant awareness of the context of his thoughts, his physical body, his emotions, how they were emanations coming out of nothing. It allowed him to ride above the waves. I put in that he often slept only a few hours each night. He didn't fight it. If he woke up, he'd do some work, and he always had plenty of projects cooking. It turns out it was common for our ancestors to be up at night for an hour or two, and then go back to sleep. It might be what we should do, rather than fighting being awake.

Surprised, Anita asked how was Nitya not commanded by his modulations? and Deb answered, *we* believe in our individual selves and we believe in this world. Stepping back and remembering the deep stream is mostly an intellectual exercise for us, but for Nitya, it was where he lived. He knew all this came out of the silent Absolute. Where we are stuck on a thought that doesn't let go, he could be a witness witnessing it, without disturbance.

I added that he spent his whole life burning with curiosity and thirsting for learning, listening to the words of wise seers and fellow travelers and buffoons, wandering and contemplating, trying out new ways of being. He gave himself wholly to the most profound gurus for correction and training. None of us come close to his wholesale dedication. Anyway, you could try it for a couple of years, and see what it does.

Andy is amazed that human unfoldment is value centered: the meaningful unfoldment of a program unfurling itself. Or as Deb put it, the plan is unfolding us. Jan admitted that, whatever the plan, she can mess up sometimes. Sure we do. But it can still be part of the plan!

We talked at length about breathing as a way to calm and center ourselves, and Susan said, "if I'm going on a tangent and I think about breathing it's like a bubble bursting and I can go back to the root of the thought."

The key with this is to stop trying to design our life, and go naturally and easily with the flow. If you can calm your breath, you will calm your psyche. It's the same idea with modulations: if we stopped trying to force them to take certain pre-selected shapes we would find what form they would naturally take in unfurling from our core.

This resonated with Anita, who's been under a lot of stress lately. She affirmed she has to walk her own path, the one that's laid before her. She's found she can't force things to be the way

she wants them to be. She'll bravely walk her own path now, knowing there are things that will happen that she has not purposely created, and definitely doesn't want. She's been stumbling over the hurdles, trying to focus on those wise words, that advice. All the same, there's a transactional world that we have to deal with.

I agree. This is psychological advice. We still have to attend to all the bodily demands, the appointments, the reaching out in all directions. We won't be ceasing those modulations! But we can *restrain* them. When we get agitated, we can rein ourselves in to our strong center, and even the maddening details will be less egregious. Keep in mind the I Ching's timeless advice: perseverance furthers.

I wonder if everyone noticed the reference to sat-chit-ananda (or asti-bhati-priyam; creation, knowing and enjoyment) in Nitya's summation:

The so-called external stimuli are the raw material out of which the creative artist—who is very active at the nucleus of consciousness—has to fashion a world of rich and varied forms, each symbolizing a deeply cherished value or fear of the individual. Only a fragment of a physical factor goes into the creation of an otherwise mythical elaboration of names, forms, relationships, values, and meanings. The creator emerges out of the act of creation; the knower emerges out of the act of knowing; the enjoyer emerges out of the constantly changing scenario that is continuously making demands on the person's sensory observation and faculty of judgment to evaluate the passing show. (26)

We contain that creative artist as our Self, and our task is to cease impeding its artistry. We are all those parts rolled up in one.

Jan believes that one of the essentials of getting to that deeper place is cosmic love, which allows you to embrace what you're going through. Knowing that it's an unfolding, an unfurling, and that you are embracing yourself and who you really are in the process, is very loving. She liked how Nitya comes back to that acceptance as an initial stage of getting to a place of loving your uniqueness, and how you are going about your life and bringing that love into the struggles almost as a cosmic mother would. Jan struggles with perfection, at times, and sees this as an antidote.

Paul thought that was a beautiful way to put it. He harkened back to the concept of perfection, which paradoxically can lead us away from loving acceptance. He finds he is always coming up short when he tries for it, and he related a story about it. One of his sons was obsessed with perfection when he was starting kindergarten. He wanted to draw a picture of himself riding a bike. He kept drawing the wheels, but couldn't get them round enough to meet his expectations, so he erased them over and over. Pretty soon he erased holes right through the paper, which ruined his project. It brought them an aha! moment about accepting imperfections, and now they share a motto: I'm not going to use an eraser any more. Paul knows that even if his effort falls short of some ideal of perfection, there's a cosmic reason, and it's okay. He just needs to keep his eyes open and learn what there is to learn.

For me, cosmic love is the best protolanguage of all; something we know deep in our core. Poets extol it. E.E. Cummings did a fine job with this one:

love is the every only god

who spoke this earth so glad and big
even a thing all small and sad
man, may his mighty briefness dig

for love beginning means return
seas who could sing so deep and strong

one querying wave will whitely yearn
from each last shore and home come young

so truly perfectly the skies
by merciful love whispered were,
completes its brightness with your eyes

any illimitable star

Part II

Nitya nails modulations perfectly in a page from *That Alone*. He mentions Buddhism, but the idea of a threefold instant is widely recognized in India. This is from verse 86, page 607. First the verse:

The body and all similar things have no being one in
another,
and become untrue for that reason; another part,
remaining without setting from day to day,
once again, as the true form, attains perfection.

The *Ksanaka Vijnana Vada* of the Buddhists asks if you look at the burning flame of a candle, is the physical reality of the flame of this moment the same as its physical reality of a couple of moments before and a couple of moments after? After all, the flame is a transformation of wax into heat, carbon dioxide and water vapor. In this process the wax burned in one moment is not the same as the wax burned in the next, so physically the flame is

made up of different components from moment to moment. Nonetheless in the whole event of the burning of the candle you can't draw any lines of separation. It is a continuous process, so we treat it as one.

The Buddhists say it is not one flame of a candle, it is a flame series. In each moment there is the birth of a flame, the presence of a flame, and the death of a flame. They divvy it up as the first third of the moment the flame is being born, the second third it is shining, and the third third it is going out. It is a series event.

All of us are serial in that same sense. But Narayana Guru says that if we look at things this way we are relegating them to *anya*, to the 'other', and then they have no truth. In the second part of the verse he says that if something does not become totally extinct, it has existence. That is, through childhood, adolescence, youth, and middle and old age, Socrates continues to exist, day after day, without disappearing. In this process the ground, the substance, persists, while the modes and modulations vary and change. The modulating part of it is *anritam*, but the substance is *ritam*. Here the Guru uses the term *polinnitunnu*, which means when you turn to that aspect of yourself there is perfection.

As a seeker, when you look at your daily activities, at how you feel fulfilled or dissatisfied, at how you are depressed one day and encouraged on another, you doubt the value of your life. You need to remember this is at the level of modulations. If each day you can find a deeper level, if you can get established in the firm ground of your beingness, then you stop worrying about the modulations. You know there is a pure being which goes on and on. Your status then is of a witness, not a doer. You are a knower, but not in the sense of one who gathers information.

* * *

Charles sent this after class:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dissociation_of_sensibility

We're packing for a move to a smaller house we haven't seen the inside of yet.

A situation fraught with indeterminacy. A train of thought obscure but taking shape has been occupying my mind.

I'd consider it a favor if you'd allow me to voice some of what's coming to mind.

As an individual, I have been isolated, alienated or lacking in empathy and ability to resonate with the people I grew up among, and subsequently with other people generally. Social phobia is a psychological way to describe it.

Dissociation of sensibility

Narayana Guru And Nataraja Guru.

Nataraja Guru was born in Mysore state and his earliest language was Kannada. He learned Malayalam later and this made him a kind of outsider. Plus he grew up in a family that valued English for social and political reasons. He was a detribalized Victorian Indian.

He told me that Narayana Guru wouldn't learn English and wouldn't wear a shirt, one of the first things he told me.

Narayana Guru was one of the common people in a sense - although he was hyperexceptional beyond measure and description, he was not a detribalized person. When he began to reach out to others after his mystical realizations he spoke to the broadest public in heart language, protolanguage, simple religious language. So although his later works were elaborate and complex and aimed at an elite audience, his intention was that there not be a dissociation of sensibility. He wanted to keep it in the family, while

transmitting globally.

I'm thinking of my own experience of Atmopadesha satakam through translation and commentary ,wherein there is not only cognitive difficulty but a big dissociation of sensibility ,as compared to what I hope would be the experience of Malayalam speaking children learning it by heart and continue to chant it as a daily practice lifelong.

Then ,it seems to me this would address the problem of dissociation of sensibility which has bedeviled India as an effect of the English language medium on spiritual,philosophical education and discourse,particularly in Kerala.

Taking Gita classes from Scott and Atmo classes from Nancy,I have been impressed that most of my classmates are Indians whose intuitive emotional grasp of the key words is surely more profound than mine .

While at the same time they speak English fluently.

They have a role in the international global diffusion of Indian culture

happening in the last hundred years and ongoing.

Ive been involved in what Hesse called the journey to the East

.There is a complementary journey to the west .

It's late ,I'm tired,this move is driving me mad,thanks for listening.

I appreciate the contribution you two as teachers have made in my life.

Part III

From the Old Notes, 1/5/9 (These are actually for Sutra I:5):

We begin to dive into the “meaty” part of the study with a preliminary division, after which the five types of modification

will be examined one by one. Nitya explains the division in a couple of ways. The easy or spontaneous modulations are the simple registration of sensory input, while the labored ones are efforts of volition associated with action. In other words, afferent and efferent impulses, or incoming and outgoing. He also likens the difference to that between looking and seeing, again referencing passive and active aspects of modulation. Lastly he adds a vertical element, the witness, the minimally modulated state of ease that dispassionately observes the turmoil of the active subject.

We must remember that there is no right or wrong in this division, only what is. Many spiritual theories emphasize the easy (New Age) or the difficult (Semitic) paths. In Yoga, both have their place, and can be very helpful to temper each other's extremes. The class talked about this at length. When your life is well-adjusted it has an ease that is a ratification of its harmonious functioning. On the other hand, hard struggles are necessary to break free of conditioning, and to attain complex achievements. Gandhi didn't lead India out of serfdom by quietly contemplating his navel, but by using his contemplative insights to energize an intelligent action program that was supremely complex and strenuous.

It remains a surpassing paradox that examining the blocks to samadhi allows us to wean ourselves away from them, as Nitya puts it here. Simply attending to the "groovy" side of life often produces a saccharine superficiality, behind which thinly veiled egoistic forces run rampant. By facing the darkness we allow the light to shine ever more brightly.

Susan gave an example of a favorite Medieval Italian painting of hers, showing the Angel Gabriel whispering in Mary's ear that she has been impregnated by God. Contrary to our expectations, Mary is not amused. The painting depicts a thousand words' worth of struggling with doubt, humiliation, even violation.

Her carefully laid plans and sense of propriety have just been wiped out. Giving birth to a “savior” is not all fun and games. This struck me as the beautiful symbol it must have been intended to be once upon a time. Each of us goes about our life with a set of programs, duties, plans, but if we are blessed enough to be touched by the divine, it impregnates us with a tiny seed that begins to grow within us, mostly out of our awareness, but with a swelling sense of something supremely important going on. After a suitable gestation period, a new life bursts forth in all its radiance. When we first hear the call of spirit, the word of the guru, our superficial self is likely to rebel, to resent its loss of ego autonomy, but that too will pass.

Speaking of children, Nancy put the situation very clearly and simply. When we are young we all know the state of the neutral witness perfectly well, so when we get carried away our parent or caretaker can hug us or chide us or whatever, and quickly redirect our attention back to our native neutrality. We return to it as a matter of course, even on our own sometimes. She wanted us to know we aren't speaking of some obscure state here, but of our natural ground, something very familiar. We can re-access it any time by stopping our headlong plunge into modulations.

Nancy's idea incidentally reminds us of the value of a wise teacher. When we are embroiled in the thick of action it is not easy to find our way back to neutrality on our own. That's what 'coloration' means: that we tint our environment with our state of mind, but we have a tough time realizing we're doing it. Everything looks perfectly clear to us because the tint is in us. Dick Cheney and Charles Manson and all those crazy people firmly believe they are perfectly sane. An outside observer, especially one who knows us well, a guru, can help turn us back to our witnessing state that is the source of true clarity. If we trust them as we once trusted our parents, we will listen when they tell us we are going wrong. Which brings us back to the original

message: we have to admit we are off the mark before we can get back on the mark. We must examine the chains to learn how to free ourselves. Even if we've already done a lot of that in the past.

Scotty wondered aloud if there wasn't a way to burn karma wholesale, all at once. Yes, lots of people get impatient with the seemingly plodding pace of Vedanta. We are being weaned away, not yanked away, from our foibles. Many paths that promise quick results are a snare and a delusion. But many are fine. Chanting, painting, dancing, worshipping, all those kinds of things provide surcease from sorrow, though often temporary. When the chanting is over, are you still the same? Between the bursts of artistic expression, who and where are you? Yoga is especially suited to those who prize the intellect highly, but it also imparts permanent psychic upgrades, so it is well suited to serious seekers of lasting value. The idea is that once you recognize a detrimental state, it loses its grip on you. The next time it comes along you will say Aha! I'm not submitting to you this time! So this way is indeed deliberate, but sure. Slow and steady wins the race. There is a cumulative aspect here that Advaita Vedanta denies and transcends, but which has its place as a valuable adjunct nonetheless. Talk about paradox!

Our egos are clever to co-opt virtually every spiritual path, turning it from a technique for liberation into a conditioned habitual program. Or worse, a smug buffer for our complacency. The artist must walk the razor's edge between a new vision and its repetition as a commercial entity. Curiously, even the striving for newness can become habitual. It's how our brains have evolved. Habits are useful to free our attention to keep an eye on the underbrush, where lurks the tiger. An unfortunate side effect is that spiritual aliveness quickly dulls down to a formula if we don't intentionally challenge ourselves with contradictory information. The Patanjali Yoga class is replete with challenging contradictions

that can shake us out of our stupor if we so desire. It is a powerful call to come awake once again.

Part IV

Swati wrote: How does one enter that transition space of no modification between modifications? Does focus on witnessing modifications allow the witnessing of the micro space between? opening it up further?

I replied:

Dear Swati,

This is a wonderful series of questions. My short answer is, Yes. I'll add that we are always in both spaces, so "entering" is not necessary. Witnessing allows intuitive perception of the perennial, unmodified basis of our being.

To my amazement and pleasure, Nitya's introduction to Gita XV addresses this in depth, as though he again wants to participate directly in our Patanjali class. I thought I'd work on it before writing you back, and found it deals in an unusual fashion precisely with your topic. I'm not done proofing the whole chapter, but I'll send you the introduction, which will help, and surely generate more questions or comments. Since it's of general interest, I'll make it Part IV of our Class 23 Notes, also:

Bhagavad Gītā

By Guru Nitya Chaitanya Yati

CHAPTER 15 – Puruṣottama Yoga

The Unitive Approach to the Paramount Person

Between us and the world there is a continuous relationship. For the external world that we know through our senses, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the object or objects that are presented to our senses and the transformation that is happening in the sensory system. It is a bipolar relationship, where there is an oscillation or going forth and coming back of the consciousness between what is recognized as an object and what is experienced as one's own person, the subject. In other words, it is a subject-object relationship. We have already explained on a previous occasion that when there is such frequent motion of consciousness between the subject and the object, you almost do not see that there is any movement in that consciousness. There is only the possibility of the emphasis being put either on the object or on the subject. When the emphasis is put on the object, the experience is "this is," and when the emphasis is on the subject, the experience is "I am." But in most cases, they are so fused that a verbal observation, "I see this, I am experiencing this," is not taking place, and so there is an identity of what is objectively perceived and subjectively understood. This is at the wakeful, or the *jāgrat* level. In that, the mind which is perceiving is so entangled, tied up, glued, riveted to what is physically perceived, that everything else is excluded from the vision of that understanding. Thus, the hold of the specific on the mind is very strong. It is as if we are glued to what we are seeing, just like when we watch a movie on the screen. Although it is a myth, a false fabrication of ideas presented through colors that are shown on a screen, our concentration on each item makes us believe that the thing was there at that time and nothing else was presented. That is a very primary experience of our mind. This is called bondage. What kind of bondage is that? Bondage to the world of stimuli. The responsive mind and the stimulant world become interconnected. One is hooked on to the other, glued on to the other.

Animals respond at an instinctive level, as they do not have much of a forethought or an afterthought, or a recall of the past to ruminate over, or a design for the future. Instead, they respond instinctively to what is being presented. They do not experience the bondage as much as a person who wants to free himself from this influence under which he comes. This bondage is experienced only when we try not to get carried away by what is sensory or what is happening from moment to moment. This happens when we try to withdraw ourselves from the world of objects and sit for meditation, for instance, or want to concentrate on one particular subject. But these bombardments from various objects are happening to our senses continuously, and thus we find it difficult to concentrate on any one thing. So people complain, "I cannot concentrate, my mind is drifting." If the senses are allowed to have their own say and the mind does not want to go to anything else other than the stimuli brought by the senses, that problem is not there. That problem only exists because we are not purely sensory beings. We have reasoning, rationality, subjective abstractions. We want to get away from that which is physically presented and go into the mind alone without the senses. This is what makes man a *Homo sapiens*, and therefore, this problem is felt very much by man. So that is the second level. The second level is where you loosen yourself from the external stimuli and want to be with the perceiving self instead of the world of objects.

Another kind of programming is going on with the perceiving self. In the external world, there are a number of forces that are not in our hands. You are only one among millions of objects that are flying around in this sea of energy. Your own body and mind are just one fragment of that, so it is a tremendous thing to pull away from the sea of objects.

Now coming to the interior aspect or the inner aspect of our mental life, there you find that you are even more bound than in the external world! In the external world, if a thing is harmful, you can move away from it or you can get it removed from you. It won't come and haunt you unless someone is insisting on putting it to you. But in the mind, what you want to dismiss comes back with greater force again and again to your attention, so the problem seems to be more binding than problems of the sensory world. You found one bondage at the physical level; now you are finding another bondage at the mental level. Those bondages are coming from registered impressions that are functioning as memories. They are not just a passive presentation of memories but memories that have dynamics, wanting to be relived. There is an affectivity which is impressed on all memories and that affectivity is asking you to relive them. This is called *vāsanā*. At the second level, the complication goes further and there is a plurality of distraction. You cannot push it away because it is all in your own mind. Another person cannot see it and eradicate it because only you know where the shoe pinches, unless that person is a guru who knows exactly how it works. I suppose it is possible for a guru, because they have undergone all those things at some stage in their life. This is the second world.

Now we go into something else where there is neither the objective world nor the subjective world. It is as if suddenly everything is effaced, but then you are incapacitated. You cannot use your mind; you cannot use your intellect. Even if you watch how the *vāsanās* come up, there is no explanation why the rotation of memory is such that at the least expected time or occasion, a strong urge comes up and something which you thought you had overcome a long time ago suddenly presents itself. On closer observation you can see that the time and space which we think we know is not exactly the time and space of the wakeful world where the

segmentation is clear cut. There are shadows of the future which may have been brought into the present, and there are lingering shadows of the past that do not leave even when we are removed in time and space from that particular event. For instance, a guilt feeling haunts you long after the whole situation has vanished from public scrutiny. There is no way for someone else to detect it, but in your mind, it can wax stronger. Similarly, when a hidden desire like an ambition generated by greed or revenge comes, it does not leave by merely pushing it away. Sooner or later, you find that you are working yourself into its clutches, something which is making you behave in a certain way. You can see this in the life of martyrs. Even when people are not thinking of killing a certain person for a certain cause, the person is already haunted by the feeling that he is going to be a martyr, and his thoughts and behaviors are all happening with constant interaction with the external world, that he finally becomes a martyr. He is happening to his martyrdom. This is where the mind is interacting with the external world and a whirlpool is created in the world.

In the Samkhyan philosophy, they have meditations where there is movement of the parallelogram of forces. From your mind you throw a pebble, so to say, into the world of matter and it causes a wave, and that wave is made to grow bigger and bigger and then circle until it becomes a tidal wave. When you come to this third aspect, where you are cut off from the subjective and the objective, there you can know the effect of that through your physical and your mental world, whenever the impact of that is happening to you, either in the wakeful or in the dream as a result of a certain happening in the unconscious. All these put together still make up only a part of the personal life that we call the psychic life.

Yesterday, I said that Western psychologists have an idea of the self as the ego, but they do not have an idea of the self as

conceived as the *ātman* in the Upanishads. Now, coming to this *ātman*, the mechanism that is conceived by the Upanishads and which is now repeated in the Bhagavad Gita, of how Īśvara—God—Brahman—the Universal Self is connected with a universal unconscious, a universal mind, and a universal matter; and how the same becomes a modified function in group life, group mind, and group programs; and becomes again particularized and made unique—personal—in the function of the individual unconscious, the individual subjectivity, and the individual physical constitution. That is the theme which is dealt with in the fifteenth chapter of the Gita, called Puruṣottama Yoga.

We have here a great secret open to us. It is a secret that one has to receive as a revelation, so to say, by working upon this world through a harmonious understanding of nature, working out through our relationship with social life, and working at a still higher level by lifting the consciousness out of all the modifications that can disturb it through urges, motivations, etc., making it very, very quiet through a process of yoga, and then allowing that consciousness to be enveloped and diffused in harmony with what comes as grace. The grace part of it may look very superstitious, but there is no other way of going beyond these hurdles. It is the same grace which is coming to you in getting over your urges and motivations, getting yourself socially harmonized, and getting yourself in empathy with your physical nature and the nature of the external world. Thus the whole thing is what may be called a *pratiprasava*, a reversed regression, in the same manner in which it was a progressive projection, through which we have come to what we are.

Thus, when a lucidity is established between a projected world and the original source from which that evolutionary projection took place, then in the same way we go back with a certain ease. What

we call *bhakti* and *samādhi* and states of *sāadhanās* are all streams between these two extreme points: the bondage of the riveting of our interest with a physical, particular object, and becoming a participant in a superior consciousness which cannot be likened to what we call consciousness in our wakeful or dream experiences. The quality of that changes us by even pacifying the physical disturbances that we experience. So, in this getting back to ourselves, not only our mind changes but the very thing with which the mind was precipitated, that also changes, where there is no mind. What we call mindlessness is not anything we experience when the mind is in its disturbed state. This return is the main theme.

Here there is a reference to the *kṣara* and the *akṣara*. Between the *kṣara* world and the *akṣara* world, we live everything that is individually possible. Then there is reference to the *puruṣottama*. Unless that also becomes part of the whole deal, you cannot say we have understood Brahman, or there is what we call *brahma bhuya*, *brahma sparśa* or nirvaṇa. This is what I have to say as an introduction to this chapter.