

Shifting from Compulsion to Clarity

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is an international spiritual master, author and authority on yoga, with profound spiritual and cultural insights on health and human values.

Questioner: There are so many thoughts in my head; often, I'm going in circles over the same issues without arriving at some sort of solution. How to bring clarity into my mind?

Sadhguru: As far as your body is concerned, consciously, you can use it or not use it. If I want to move my hand, I move it; if I don't want to move it, I keep it here. This is conscious action. When I want to speak, I speak; when I don't want to speak, I don't speak. This is true with everything — every action is worthwhile only if it is conscious, that you can do it when you want and you don't do it when you don't want. But look at your thought process and see — it is simply diarrhoeal, just all the time on. So, there cannot be much sense to this, but you are trying to make sense out of it — that is the main problem. If you can make it happen when you want, your thought process is on, when you do not want, it is off, then clarity of perception will arise; you will perceive life in a completely different way. Right now, because an unending process of thought is going on, your perception is hugely hindered. So, perception is not something that you have to do something about. If you want sunlight in your house, you don't have to go and switch on the sunlight; you just have to open your window. That is all that needs to be done right now.

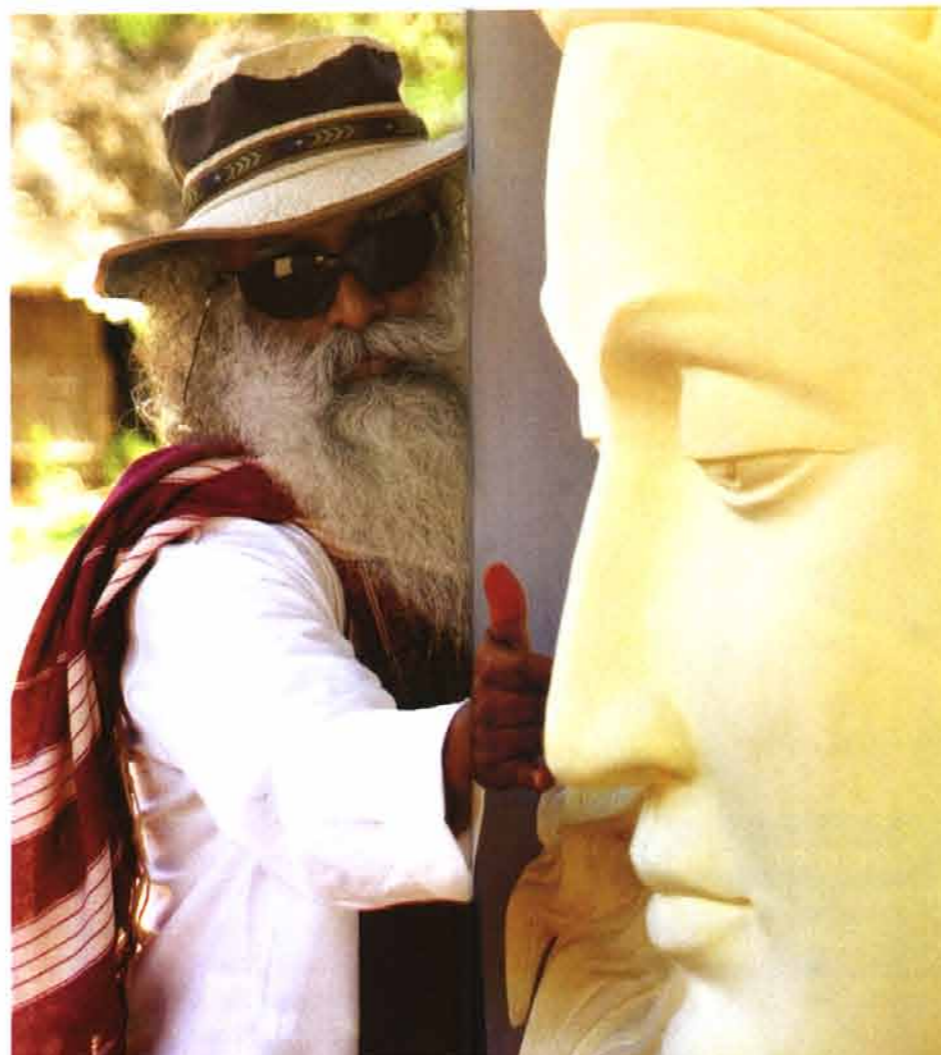
Questioner: I've noticed that positive thoughts or thoughts of satisfaction tend to dissipate and dissolve by themselves, whereas negative thoughts tend to

reinforce themselves by regenerating themselves and going around and around the same negativity. Is it true that positive thoughts don't regenerate themselves like negative thoughts?

Sadhguru: If you ask me, there are no positive thoughts and no negative thoughts; there are just thoughts. It all depends on which side of the boundary you are on. What is positive for you may be very negative for somebody else or for another form of life. What is negative for you may be very positive for them. Positive and negative is just our idea. If your thought was conscious, you would generate that kind of thought which is beneficial for you. And whatever is beneficial for you, you would naturally label as positive. What is not beneficial for you, you call negative. This is all coming from your instinct of survival. Whatever enhances your way of life, you call positive. Whatever dissipates that, you call negative. A thought is just a thought. By itself, it is neither positive nor negative. I am not interested in what is positive and what is negative. I am only interested in what works for us right now. My way of looking at life is what works and what does not work.

As your physical action is conscious, as your speech is conscious, your thought and emotion also should be conscious. If your thought process was a conscious process, would you create joy or misery for yourself? You would create joy.

Questioner: Yes, definitely. Does the conscious thought spring out of presence or a certain silence?



Sadhguru: These are all your thoughts. [Laughs] If your thought was taking instructions from you and would be doing what you want, would you create joy for you or misery for you? It's as simple as that. Don't complicate it with presence, present moment, silence and all that — no. The problem is the noise inside your head has become a continuous flow, so now you are seeking silence; otherwise, what's wrong with the sound? If sound was created consciously, we would make music out of it. Because sound is unconscious, it has become noise. So, the difference is just between making everything that you are into a conscious process or a compulsive process. If you are trying to sift and see what is positive and negative; that's just waste of time. It is best if your thought process becomes conscious. Right now, it is compulsive.

Questioner: So, if it's compulsive, nothing gets created because compulsion means unconsciousness and then the different segments of what I'm doing are contrary.

Sadhguru: There is no coherence. Isn't that very clear in the very way people are operating right now? There is no coherence in their action because it's compulsive. People are asking me to comment about the economic situation. Right now, the world's economic system is such that it is all about more, more and more. There is only one planet to get food from, there is only one planet to manufacture everything out of, so if this economy works, we are damned; if it doesn't work, you are anyway depressed. So, obviously there is no coherence in human action because it is compulsive. Humanity is right now

in a compulsive state of activity, not in a conscious state of activity, because the thought is compulsive. It is a very cruel thing to say when the economic meltdown is happening, but this is the time to look at it.

See, for example the fact that Obama got elected... It's the wisest thing America has done in a long time. Not because he is black. Yes, socially that is also a great thing, but at a moment of crisis like this, you could not have asked for a better leadership. If you look at this, in the last 50 years, this level of intellect and this level of integrity have never made its way to become a leader of a nation — that's a fact. But we could not see that simply because we couldn't see beyond the colour of the skin. That's perception. How your perceptions can get clouded and how the whole life process can get limited simply because you cannot see beyond certain things.... Because you have all kinds of notions and these notions will not allow us to perceive life just the way it is.

Questioner: So many times, seekers talk about their resistance, "I'm resisting this moment; I'm resisting what's happening." I'm not saying "yes" to this moment in a full way. Why do we go into resistance — is it out of fear? What would be the full "yes" that would just allow all the energy of the universe to flow through me? In other words, why am I not sitting here enlightened?

Sadhguru: [Laughs] Because of all these notions it doesn't happen. Too many ideas — enlightenment, awakening, all these things.... If you think about that which is not in your experience, obviously you are bound to be off the track. If you want to go somewhere, you must see where you are right now and what is the next step, the next step and the next step — this is the only way you will go somewhere. If you are not willing to start from where you are, you will not make any journey, you will just hallucinate. That is all that is happening with people — too much talk about

God, about heaven, about enlightenment, about nirvana, about mukti. You are only talking about it, you are only thinking about it; you will never get there. If you want to go somewhere, wherever your destination may be, whether your destination is the next street or the moon, you can only start your journey from where you are right now. If you don't get this one point, you will never start a journey, you will only talk it out for the rest of your life.

In yoga we say, "Man is ill only because he does not know how to be still." Your mental activity is diarrhoeal, non-stop. In this state, you will not know anything. Whatever you think is only a psychological process, it is not an existential process. You can think whatever you want; it need not have anything to do with reality at all. In this culture, we did not attach too much importance to thoughts. I really don't care what you think because we can make you think whatever we want. If we just give a certain kind of input, you will think in a certain way. The way you think right now is essentially determined by social influence upon you; it is not existential. So, what is a psychological process cannot become an existential process. What happens in your mind is your dream; it has nothing to do with reality. If you cannot run the world the way you want it, at least run your dream the way you want it. If you run your dream the way you want it, of course you will be very pleasant and wonderful. My dream is totally in my control. My world, largely I manage, but never 100 percent; but my dream is totally in my control. The problem with you is, your dream has gone out of control; not the world — the dream. What happens in your mind is not in your control. That is why your happiness and your unhappiness are constantly fluctuating in compulsive reaction to what is happening around you. If you run your dream the way you want it, it will be a pleasant dream, I'm sure — I trust you on that.

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