Evaluating One’s Spiritual Growth

**SPIRITUALLY | SADHGURU JAGGI VASUDEV**

**Question:** When we are on a spiritual path, how do we know we are moving ahead?

**Sadhguru:** In the initial phase, do not worry about whether you are moving ahead or backwards because your logical judgments will be very misleading. When you sit for your pranayam in the morning, your legs will tell you that you are going backwards, your family will probably also tell you to stop this nonsense. So in the initial phase, do not judge anything. It is always best to start a spiritual process with an unconditional commitment for a certain period of time — just do it with a commitment. Just simply do the practice out of commitment for six months. Nothing needs to happen. No benefit needs to happen to you. Just simply do it. After that, evaluate your life and see how peaceful, joyful and calm you are. What is it doing with you?

Even a man who has reached the peak within himself always takes time to evaluate himself, maybe not in the usual ways, but he does in many other ways. A certain incident happened in Gautama Buddha’s life. On a certain day, everybody came and bowed down to Buddha but one man came and sat on his face. Anandaheerta, Buddha’s closest disciple who adored and worshipped him, got really angry. He said, “Give me permission, and I will teach this man a lesson. How could he spit on your face?” Gautama said, “No,” and thanked that man. He said, “Thank you very much for spitting on my face because this has given me an opportunity to see whether I am still capable of anger or not. I am very happy to know that I am not angry anymore.” The man said, “That is very good. You helped me evaluate myself, and at the same time, you have also given Ananda that opportunity. You evaluated Ananda also, so thank you very much. You have made both of us realise where we are right now.”

Give yourself to a certain period of sincere spiritual practice without expecting anything to happen. Don’t look for miracles to happen. The greatest miracle in life is life itself. The very process of life, that you are sitting here and breathing, is a miracle. If you do not appreciate this miracle, and are looking for some other miracle where some God will extend his hand out of the clouds and do something to you, then you are still very childish. You have not matured into an adult and you still believe in fairy tales. So do not be in a hurry to evaluate your spiritual process; just allow it to sink in.

Generally in this tradition, the normal commitment that was demanded to start any spiritual process was 12 years. You simply say a mantra for 12 years and then look at what is happening with you. Even now, many spiritual sects in India follow this path. A guru gives you a mantra to utter for 12 years, and then you come back to see your progress. But today, people have become so impatient with life. Even if we ask for 12 days of commitment, people become impatient. If you put on a pair of shoes, you are expecting them to be useful. If you change your cloth, you are expecting it to be useful. People are so impatient.

Gautama had his own methods. If anybody came to him, there was absolutely no teaching, no spirituality or anything for two years — you would just hang around. If you could wait for two years, then a certain quality came and something else would happen to you. When he initiated you, it happened in a big way for you. But now, people are struggling to wait, because the modern mind has become impatient. Do not be in a hurry. Just stick to the practice, evaluate yourself periodically and see.

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