How to Cultivate Awareness in Life

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Everybody is making choices, but choices made in unawareness are compulsions. Let us say you get angry right now. It is your choice actually, to be angry. Somehow, you need to handle the situation, but the choice is made in such unawareness that it is a compulsion; it is happening compulsively on a different level. So you are living by choice, but choices are made without awareness—unconscious choices. Now the whole thing is to shift into making conscious choices.

Even a simple act, like when you wake up in the morning, the unconscious choice is that you do not want to wake up. When the sun rises, you want to pull the sheet up a little higher over your face. Do you see this? This is the unconscious choice. Your physical body wants to remain in the bed for some more time. For so many reasons, it does not want to get up. There are so many aspects of life, so many limitations in your experience of life, that in many ways, unconsciously, you are not really looking forward to the day. Let us say tomorrow, you have planned to go on a picnic. Do you see, tomorrow you will wake up on that day? Consciously, you have decided the previous day; you are excited. You are looking forward to tomorrow. It is a joyful experience. Otherwise, unconsciously, you try to pull the sheet higher up over your face because this light is not something you are looking forward to, because with light comes today's stock prices; with light comes today's problems; with light comes the whole world into your life. So you are trying unconsciously to screen yourself from that. But now, we make a con-

scious choice to wake up. Even after you wake up, the unconscious choice is that you want to drink a cup of coffee; the body feels comfortable with that. But now you can make a conscious choice. "No, I'll have a cold water bath and do my yogasanas." Why asetic paths were set is simply because of this; you start doing things that are naturally not comfortable for you. Once you start doing such activity that is uncomfortable for you, you do it, but you do not like it. If you have to do something that you do not like, you can only do it consciously; there is no other way to do it. Yes? Things that you like, you can do compulsively, but things that you do not like, you can only do con-

sciously. That is why the asetic path. You start doing everything conscientiously. There is no other way to be. Now slowly, you are practicing how to be conscious in various situations in your life.

When you are hungry, the natural urge is to grab food and eat. Now you make a conscious choice, I am very hungry, but I am not eating. To stay away from food, there is no other choice except embracing the whole thing about it. To go and eat, you do not need consciousness, you can simply go and grab it when you are hungry. These simple things are set up in life so that you start doing things more conscientiously.

So, like this, you are cultivating awareness into dif-

ferent aspects of life. Maybe initially your awareness is only for half-an-hour a day, but gradually you are bringing awareness into your whole life. The idea of cultivating awareness is so that it slowly seeps into your life. One thing does it, it enhances the quality of your life, but that is not everything. The main aspect is that if you can maintain awareness in various kinds of situations in life, only then will you ever become capable of being aware at that moment when you have to start with the body. Otherwise, that never arises in your life.