Hatha Yoga – Revolution in Evolution

BY SADHGURU, ISHA FOUNDATION

Sadhguru: There are many dimensions to hatha yoga. One fundamental aspect is that you are trying to knead the body. If you have ever baked bread, how it turns out is not just about the heat and the oven, it also depends on how well-kneaded the flour is. It is not just hatha yoga or asanas that knead you. Life itself will knead you in so many ways. You can mature and blossom, or you can get crushed by the process. That is the choice.

Hatha yoga kneads every aspect of who you are, because what you refer to as karma is embedded in every cell in your body and every aspect of your energy. Every individual’s energy behaves in a different way, according to what kind of memory it is loaded with. As you knead this, you are loosening everything, you are mashing everything up such that it has no power to influence you. You are taking charge of life through the body.

There are other ways to take charge of your life too but though hatha yoga may be physically harder, it is a sure path because you know what is working and what is not. If you try to take charge of your life by kneading your mind, you don’t know whether you are going forward or backward. The mind tells you all kinds of lies – a new one every day. But the body does not lie. That is the good thing about it.

Hatha yoga does not mean just bending and twisting your body. One meaning of the word “hatha” is that you are adamant. When your alarm rings at five in the morning, your body tells you, “Shut up and sleep!” The body has its own compulsions. But you are adamant. You get up and do your hatha yoga. This is one aspect of hatha because it takes a certain adamance to break the compulsive nature of your physical body. The body has millions of years of evolutionary history behind it. It has its own tendencies, intentions and compulsiveness.

But the essence of being human is to move from compulsiveness to consciousness. If somebody is very compulsive, you say he is like an animal, isn’t it? So in some way, you have transcended a little bit of compulsiveness and you think you are human. But only if you transcend your compulsiveness completely will you be a full-fledged human. Hatha yoga is about consciously working towards eliminating all compulsive nature.

Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic and visionary. An author, poet, and internationally renowned speaker, Sadhguru’s wit and piercing logic provoke and widen our perception of life. Sadhguru has been conferred the ‘Padma Vibhushan’ by the Government of India in 2017, the highest civilian award of the year, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service. To know more, visit ishe.sadhguru.org