

Living Well, Dying Well

BY SADHGURU

The very basis of a spiritual longing comes from within you not because you think of God, for thinking of God will not make you spiritual. People only think of how to live better. If God comes and blesses them they will want more money, more property, more health, more of everything. Only when you think about death, when you see you will also die one day, do these questions come up: What is this about? Where will I go? What will happen to me? This wanting to know will come naturally to you.

In yoga, it is not just about life, when we talk about living well, we are actually also talking about dying well. It is very important that you die well. Dying gracefully, joyfully, is very important. It is the final thing that you get to do in your life; shouldn't you do it gracefully and wonderfully?

We have a vanaprastha ashram at the Isha Yoga Centre where people come to retire and die gracefully. When we say a spiritual possibility, when we say a spiritual space, there is also room to die. It is a means to live, but it is also a means to die because living and dying are not different. Right now I can say you are living or I can say you are dying. The process of dying is actually on – one day it will be complete. It is just that there is so much

negativity attached to the word death. But death is very much a part of life. One who does not know how to die, one who is not willing to die, cannot live.

If you are afraid of death, you will only avoid life, you cannot avoid death. And it is not that only beyond a certain age you should look at death; every day of your life you need to be aware that you are mortal. This is one aspect of Shoonya meditation. During the meditation everything that you consider as 'self' will become nothing; it is as if you die. Again, when you open your eyes, it is all there. If you practice this consciously twice a day everyday when the time to actually die comes



it will no longer be a big issue.

The process that you refer to as life is something that can be constantly improved upon. It is a project that will never be over; that is the beauty of it. Not everybody lives the same quality life.

Even if you live here for a thousand years and do everything that you wish there will still be that something more, something better, that could be done. This is the way of life. But death is perfect and absolute when it happens; death does not need anybody's assistance. You don't have to think about it, you don't have to reflect upon it. But mortality, the limited nature of life is something that needs to

be reflected upon. So always the first training for a spiritual aspirant is to go and sit in the cremation grounds. You are just like a miracle happening; you drop from somewhere, and one day you are gone. Busy in between, but you are like a bubble: when the bubble is on, it is so real; one prick – gone.

If you look at this life right now: inhalation, exhalation – if the next inhalation does not happen, that's it... That is how fragile this life is. People always think death is something that happens to somebody else; it's not so, it will happen to you and me.

If you remind yourself everyday that you will also die, naturally you will move towards knowing higher dimensions of perception. If you are aware of the mortal nature of your life is there time then to get angry with somebody, is there time to quarrel with somebody, is there time to do anything stupid? Once you come to terms with death and you are conscious that you will die, you will want to make every moment of your life as beautiful as possible. Only people who believe they are immortal can fight, and fight to death. Those who are constantly aware of the mortal and fragile nature of existence don't want to miss a single moment; they will naturally be aware. They can't take anything for granted; they will live very purposefully. This is a simple way of becoming aware.

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