The entire process of yoga is just to give yourself. When I say, give yourself, people may not know how to simply give themselves. People need some kind of means to give themselves. Whatever you may give in your life to anybody, you may give money, you may give food, you may give something else, but all that you actually give does not belong to you. When you go, you have to give it back and go. You cannot take a single cell of this body and go.

So whatever you have today with you is something that you have borrowed from this planet. It is not really yours. You can use it, you can enjoy it, but you really cannot own it. You believe you own your house, your clothes, your children, your husband, your wife, even people, you own them these days! But you don’t really own anything. They are here, you can enjoy them, you can use them, when you have to leave it, you have to leave it and go. So nothing really belongs to you. What does not belong to you, you cannot give.

So, there is really no giving. I take and give you something that belongs to somebody else. There is no value to this kind of giving. But you need a means to give. Fundamentally, the only thing you can give is yourself. But you do not know how to give yourself simply. So you give through your money, your food or something else. You are using a thing as a means to give. You are using activity as a means to give yourself. If you are not aware of this, then giving becomes a great problem.

The only thing you can really give is yourself. If you don’t make yourself willing to give yourself, giving becomes a very painful process. When you understand giving as giving only things, then naturally fear will come into you. “If I give away everything, what will happen to me?” It is because of this understanding that we fear giving. People have become stingy and miserly with their love, their joy, simply because they only think in terms of “giving means things.” How many things can you give? “If I give away lots of things tomorrow nothing will be there.” Because of this economy, slowly, we have become less loving, less joyous, and less peaceful.

You can give only yourself through whatever you do. So volunteering is a process of giving yourself. It is an opportunity to give yourself. You can simply sit here, close your eyes and give yourself to the world. It is possible. But that level of awareness is not there in most human beings. Unless there is activity, people don’t know how to give themselves. They need action to give themselves to something, towards something. So volunteering is a tremendous possibility in that direction that you can give yourself, you can really offer yourself through your work.

Normally, whatever little work we have to do, people involve calculations. “How much should I do? Why should I do? What will I get out of this?”

In these calculations, all the beauty of doing is gone. In these calculations, the very process of life has become ugly. Most things that you are doing are things that you have chosen to do actually. In spite of that, in day-to-day activity, to do simple things, we struggle so much because we are unwilling to give. Some have forgotten that we have started this willingly. Whether it is your work, or your marriage, or your family, or whatever, you started all these willingly because you wanted them in your life. But once you started, you forget why you started this, and now we have started giving unwillingly and it has become a painful process.

So volunteering is a way of learning, volunteering is a way of learning to get into a process of just giving. Volunteer means one who is willing. Not just to do this or that. He is simply willing. He is willingness. No spiritual process will happen to any human being unless he becomes willingness.

(Next Inner Engineering Program: October 10 at Powai Contact: 9822100305, gpo.ishafoundation.org) Sadhguru is a spiritual leader www.ishafoundation.org