Dealing with debilitating disease

BY SACHGURU

Questioner: I have been suffering from an incurable disease for the last few years. Why did this happen to me? Is it because of my bad karma?

Sadhguru: Whether it is stone, earth, plant, animal or the human body, the physical world always follows the law of cause and effect. Generally, we are limited to seeing only the effect or the outcome; we do not have the capability of seeing the cause of the outcome. The cause and effect phenomenon has always been at work. It is not that you got the disease because you did something in some other birth. From the day we were born, what we ate, what we read, what we did, in what kind of environment we lived, what kind of people we were in contact with, all these factors together shaped us into the kind of people we now are. Karma means action. We get a disease either knowingly or unknowingly. Not knowing is also a karma. If understanding is karma, not understanding is also karma. If we understand something, there is benefit, and if we do not understand something, there is suffering. Both are karma. We can look at it this way: if you got this disease five years ago, then some five or six years ago there must have been some kind of karma performed knowingly or unknowingly. There is no reason why we should destroy our lives now based on that. But, what we are doing now, what karma we are doing at this moment, is very important. What we did in the past may have been in unawareseness but at this moment if you have some awareness you will carry out any karma that will lead to suffering. This needs to be understood: karma is not some kind of reward and punishment system. Karma is just action and consequence. For example, if you want to drive with your eyes closed you know what the consequence will be. So for every action there is consequence and action need not just be physical; action is also on the mental, emotional, physical and energy level. Every action is recorded and an impression of this action is retained.

Because of these actions or these accumulated actions, which we call karma, you tend to develop certain tendencies. These tendencies can either lead you to health and wellbeing or ill-health and other kinds of situations in life. They are not the decisive factors, but they tend to take you in a certain direction. You can always steer yourself the way you want. That is the ability of human consciousness where you can go beyond the mass of accumulated impressions and still do what you want.

What we are going to do with our life today and tomorrow is more important for us, not past karma. We cannot change what has already happened. We can bring in some self awareness by looking at what has already happened, and learn from it. We cannot change it but we can do something about what is happening now. We can also do something about what is going to happen in the future if we focus our attention and energy. This is a big problem in our country: we do not change what is before us, we do not do what is in our hands, but we keep telling God what He should do. Doesn't God know? Leave Him alone and let Him do his work on his own. You do your work properly.

(Sadhguru is a prominent spiritual leader, www.ishafoundation.org)