Towards a Stress-Free Life

When I first came to the United States, wherever I went, I heard people talking about stress management. We manage our families, our money, our property, our businesses—what we manage whatever is valuable to us. Why would anybody manage stress? It took me a while to understand that people have made a conclusion that stress is a part of life. Stress is not a part of life. It is not your lifestyle, your work, your family or the situations in which you exist which cause stress to you; it is your inability to manage your system—your body, your mind, your emotions and your energy. The cause is your lack of understanding of how this system functions, your inability to use the system the way it should be used.

People can be stressful in any kind of situation. It is not about this job or that job; it is not about one kind of situation or the other. People are capable of being stressful for just about anything. What can you do about it? You do not need to do anything about stress; stress is like friction in a machine. There is friction in the machine because there is no proper movement of the parts of the machine, or there is not enough lubrication. The less friction you have, the more efficient the machine becomes.

Now we are not looking at how to manage stress, we are not looking at how to keep it under the surface. I am talking about how not to create it, because stress is your creation. If you start this simple process of Isha Yoga, you will find within six weeks, there is a considerable drop in your pulse rate, in your heart beat, in the way your system functions—because your whole system is functioning at a certain ease. When the very nature of your existence has become ease, you are restful all the time. Then there is no such thing as stress. Restfulness is the basis of all activity. You can be most effective in your life only when everything is at complete ease within yourself. If your ability to act becomes effortless, then naturally there is no such thing as stress.

If your body and mind took instructions from you, would you create stress for yourself or bliss for yourself? You need to look at the fundamental mechanics of life, at why your body and mind are not doing what you want. Isha Yoga is the technology to do this. If you do a process of yoga, it needs to be in its full depth and dimension, not just the physicality of it as it is generally practiced today. People are practicing yoga just as a physical thing, or a mental thing. It is neither physical nor mental; it has got something to do with the core of your life. If you are not involved in the yoga that you do, if it has not been transmitted to you, it has just been taught to you, if it is a bundle of instructions, not an initiation—if that is so, you are using yoga like a car instead of the airplane that it is. Suppose I gave you an airplane and you did not know what it was, you knew only automobiles. There are these two ugly things that are hitting your buildings and your lampposts, so you chop off the wings and you drive around and you are happy. Likewise, you are happy your backache is gone; your thyroid problem is fixed but that is very limited, because a man who knows what it means to fly, when he sees an airplane with chopped off wings, he will cry.

So right now when I see the yoga that is going on all over on a large scale, it is very tragic. Yoga is not a solution for your stress—there is no need for stress. Yoga is the removal of the problem. You do not create stress anymore, that’s all. If you do not create stress, then why do you need a solution for it? Stress is your making; it is not the situation which is making stress. So if you get a little deeper access to the experience of life within you, you will distinctly know this and you will drop it. This is the essence of Isha Yoga.