Why do many youth assume that yoga is not for them?

‘UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN MECHANISM PERFECTLY TO MAKE BETTER USE OF IT’

Q: Whenever I speak to my friends about meditation or yoga, they say, ‘Oh no, that’s for old people, we don’t need this. We aren’t interested in it.’ Why are meditation and yoga perceived as something for the old and not for the young generation?

Sadhguru: Maybe because that is the kind of people they have met. They saw only yogis who fell out of the calendars printed in Sivakasi (a town in Tamil Nadu). They think yoga means you are not interested in life. I am doing everything possible to change this perception.

As a young person, let us say, you learn something physical like how to ride a dirt bike, skydive, fly a helicopter, or ski. What you may take three years or five years to learn, I will do it in three months – at this age. Would you like to do that at an early age or when you are dying?

Students: At an early age.

Sadhguru: Then you must do yoga!

I got into yoga for all the wrong reasons. But that is the beauty of life – even for the wrong reasons, if you do the right thing, it works.

When I was just eleven or twelve years of age, we would go to our grandfather’s ancestral home for the summer vacation. There was a well in the back yard, which was about eight feet in diameter, 150 feet in depth. In summer, the water would generally be at least 60-70 feet below the ground level.

One of the sports for us young boys was to jump into this well and climb up. When you jump, you have to do it properly. Otherwise your brains will become a smear on the wall. And to come up, there were no steps or footholds. You had to climb up just holding the rock.

I was not very heavy, but despite that, my nails would bleed, not from injury, but just from the sheer pressure of hanging onto the rock with just two or three fingers like claws. But I would do that, and I was very proud that I was good at it.

One day, a man, who was over 70 years of age, was simply standing there and silently watching us. We ignored him because, for us, 70 means he was as good as dead. Then, without a word, this man just walked to the well and jumped in.

I thought he was finished, but he came up faster than me. I did not like it. Then I asked, “How?” He said, “Come, do yoga.”

I like a puppy, I followed him because I found him so superhuman that he could do things that no young man could do.

I got into yoga for all the wrong reasons. But it does not matter how you get in, from which door you enter, as long as you do the right things, it works.

If you have a cellphone or any gadget, the more you know about it, the better you can use it. That is what engineering is about, to know more about everything so that you can make and use it better. Why is that not true with this human mechanism? The more you know about this, the better you can use it. This is what yoga is about.

Of all the gadgets that you find on this planet, the human mechanism is the most sophisticated gadget. Why is it that you have not paid attention to see all the intricacies of what this is? This means that you have not read the user’s manual, but you want to blunder into the world. This is why even education, which is the simplest process of all, is becoming stressful. If you want to create something in the world, you will see so many more challenges.

If you know perfectly well how to use this human mechanism, then we say you are self-realised. ‘Self-realised’ does not mean you went to heaven. It means you know this human mechanism perfectly well. This is all I know in my life – I know this piece of life from its origin to its ultimate. People think I know everything that is their problem. I know only this.

- Ranked among the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the ‘Padma Vibhushan’, India’s highest annual civilian award, by the government of India in 2017, for exceptional and distinguished service.