

To Be Boundary-less, Become Conscious

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

A group of anaesthesiologists that visited the ashram recently asked me if yoga could be incorporated into modern medicine to alleviate pain. I told them it certainly could, but first, it is important to understand the role of pain in our lives.

When I was in Russia recently, an acute toothache necessitated an emergency tooth extraction. Since I had a programme in two hours, I could not drive to a clinic in Moscow. And so, much against the dentist's wishes, the extraction took place without any anaesthesia or painkillers. It was excruciatingly painful, but soon afterwards, the pain abated. And I had a good laugh because I am not someone who will allow a painful tooth to rule my life!

I relate this not to prove personal heroism, nor to advocate painful dentistry, but to demonstrate that pain

is not the same as suffering. As soon as the word 'surgery' is mentioned, most people's pain multiplies a hundredfold and becomes suffering, because the mind comes into play. Pain is actually an integral survival tool. But most people imagine the worst. That is one sure way to multiply pain.

Yoga enables you to arrive at a state where you see things as they are, not magnified by your own fear and anxiety. Yes, there is pain. That is the nature of the body. The question is, do you want to multiply it, or simply see it for what it is? If you stop the multiplication exercise, the volume of antibiotics and painkillers consumed could come down drastically.

Most people still believe that yoga is about bodily contortions. They do not realise that anything that leads you from untruth to truth, from entanglement to freedom, is yoga. You can

breathe and become a yogi. You can walk and become a yogi. You can be on a surgery table and become a yogi. You can sit doing nothing and become a yogi. Yoga is not about any particular activity. It is about obliterating the boundaries of one's individuality – boundaries that separate you from the universe.

That separation is the root of all human suffering. Most people have no clue why they are suffering – because they experience life in terms of 'me' versus 'the universe'. This means they are in constant conflict with creation, forgetting that they are just a small product of creation itself. This kind of competition with the universe creates deep suffering.

Right now, most individuals are dealing with rudimentary evolutionary problems that make them set up boundaries unconsciously. Your



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fundamental boundary right now is the human body. You include one more person and say, "This is my family." You include ten more people and say, "This is my community." You include a billion and say, "This is my nation." But boundaries are still there because of the residue of biological evolution on the human psyche. When you become conscious, you become completely free of these territorial compulsions.

You are the universe, and the universe is you – this is yoga. Once this happens, you arrive at such a state of ease within yourself that people think something superhuman has been achieved. But this is simply how a human being should be. The pain in your body will not vanish. But you have come to an infinitely more valuable state: *you can now determine the nature of your experience.* You have effectively reached the end of suffering.

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