Life Will Always Knead You

There are many dimensions to Hathya Yoga. One fundamental aspect is that you are trying to knead your body. If you do not do this, you could end up or you can make a good chapati, how it turns out is not just about the best and the worst, but also depends on how well-knead the flour is. It is not just Hathya Yoga or any yoga that will knead you. Life itself will knead you in so many ways. You could knead yourself either joyously or miserably. You can mature and blossom, or you can get crushed by the process. That is the choice. Hathya Yoga kneads more than just your muscle. It kneads every aspect of who you are, because what you refer to as karma is embedded in every cell in your body and every aspect of your energy. Every individual's energy behaves in a different way, and what kind of memory it is loaded with. As you knead this, you are loosening everything, you are massaging everything up such that it has no power to influence you. You are taking charge of life through the body.

There are other ways to take charge of your life too, though Hathya Yoga may be physically harder, it is a sure path because you know what is working and what is not. If you try to take charge of your life by knead-
ing your mind, you don’t know whether you are going forward or backward. You don’t know whether you are becoming really meaningful or crusty. You may think you are doing well, but people around you may be saying you are no good.

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The mind tells you all kinds of lies—a new one every day. But the body does not have this. It only tells you good things about itself. So, people who don’t trust the mind start off with the body because it is obvious but harder and longer. It is not even right to say that it is harder. It is hard only if you practice on "suspicious" days of the month. If you are doing your exercises every day, sadhana will not be a problem. If you are physically in a good state, it can be an effortless and beautiful way to go.

One meaning of the word ‘hathya’—there are other more scientific meanings—is that you areadamant. When your alarm rings at five in the morning, your body tells you, ‘Shut up and sleep!’ The body has its own compulsions. But you are adamant. You get up and do your Hathya Yoga. This is one aspect of ‘hathya’ because it takes a certain adamantness to break the compulsive nature of your physical body. Do not underestimate the body; it has millions of years of evolutionary history behind it. It has its own tendencies, its own intentions and its own compulsiveness. It won’t give in so easily.

The essence of being human is to move from compulsiveness to consciousness. So, a very compulsive, you say he is like an animal, isn’t it? So in some way, you have transcended a little bit of compulsiveness and you think you are human. But only if you transcend your compulsiveness completely, will you be a fully-fledged human. Otherwise you are not a human being, you are a human becoming!

So Hathya Yoga does not mean just bending and twisting your body. It is about consciously working toward eliminating all compulsive nature, which we have built over a million years of evolution in different ways. Hathya Yoga is a phenomenal path to the ultimate. It is not taking a certain amount of effort but if you break all compulsiveness just by using your body, it is a fantastic thing to do.

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