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Sri T. Krishnamacharya's informal talks

Love of God, basis of spiritual life

Once a student asked my father, Sri T. Krishnamacharya, to teach him an easy and sure way to realise God. My father replied that it was love of God and constant prayer to Him that would enable a person to realise Him. My father continued:

How does one develop love for God? It is by constant singing of the divine names and His glories that one's heart becomes purified enough to love Him. Initially the spiritual aspirant sings His glory so that love blossoms in the heart but as love and devotion to God take root, he reveals in singing His praise. What was adopted as a means to an end becomes the end in itself. Though this enables a person to progress spiritually, one may wonder what relevance it has to worldly life. The benefit was peace of mind when discrimination and dispassion resulted as a consequence of love of God.

The human mind is the source of all the problems man faces. The mind by nature will not engage in spiritual pursuits. It is swayed by thoughts which arise due to desires. So spiritual practices are advocated with the object of realising peace of mind. Mental discrimination enables a person to understand the transient nature of worldly life which will prod him to seek that which will give him eternal joy. Dispassion is the corollary of discrimination of mind when the devotee eschews worldly desires after understanding their fleeting nature.

It is not as if human beings are unaware of the limitations of worldly life. Problems, suffering, old age and death are facts of life which stare us in the face everyday if we look around us. But it suits us not to face the reality with the misconception that they will not afflict us. This paradox has been pointed out in the Yakshaprasna section of the Mahabharata when Yama, the God of death asked Yudhishtira (the eldest of the Pândava) : "What is the greatest wonder in the world?" Yudhishtira replied that man entertained the misconception that he was immortal even though he confronted death all the time.

Spiritual life is thus the preparation man engages in throughout his worldly life to realise God so that he is not caught unaware when it is time to leave the world.

Collections from my notes. T.K.Sribhashyam

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Invocation of Peace

OM

May He protect us

May He rule over us

May our work be effective

May our studies be of splendid vigour

May we not hate

OM ! Peace ! Peace ! Peace !

As fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, or as the embryo is covered by the womb, similarly, the living entity is covered by different degrees of this lust.

Bhagavad Gita III.38

Ândâl's Thiruppâvai (N° 3)

Excerpts from an exclusive commentary by Sri T.Krishnamacharya

Poem 3 : We should sing the name of the magnanimous, outgrown the world and measured it, with His feet in Trivikrama avatâra;

And ascent to bathe in the name of and for the deity, rain shall pour all over the country, thrice monthly, with no calamity;

Facilitate tall growth of fine paddy crop and other agricultural products;

Carp, to jump amidst the paddy in water flowing abundantly lie aquatic feat;

With spotted bees and insects to roost on lily and other flowers;

And polite benefactor cows to stand still with thick udders to allow milking to fill the vessels plentifully;

And to assign never vanishing generous wealth around the country.

Listen and consider, our damsel.

It is customary to sing this Hymn whenever newly married couple are blessed. Ândâl scrupulously mentions that by following the margali ritual, women not only receive everlasting wealth, they help their country to prosper with regular rains and crops.

In this poem, Ândâl recalls to Lord's Vishnu's magnanimous power referring to His incarnation as dwarf (see Vâmana, Vishnu's incarnation). She stresses the importance of meditation on the Omniscient, all pervasion 'OM' because it transcends form, shape and qualities. She compares the Lord to the spotted bee residing in the lotus of our hearts, with six qualities: knowledge, power, strength, wealth, energy and splendour. They correspond to six fundamental products that the

Earth provides us: cereals, vegetables, fruits, flowers, animals and metals. Just as we are pleased with the bountifulness of these six products, so too, God is pleased with the health and happiness of his devotees.

Cows are metaphorically compared to our spiritual masters. If we prostrate at their feet and discuss the spiritual subjects, like Upanishad, Bhagavad Guitha and the Râmâyana we would achieve everlasting knowledge, like cows provide us plenty of milk.

Sri T.Krishnamacharya's commentary on this poem:

Even though Sri Krishna is Ândâl's beloved God, Vâmana is her most preferred incarnation of Vishnu, because this incarnation is free from war, murder, hatred and dishonesty. Ândâl says that true devotion to God provides everlasting wealth not only to the devotee but also to the land where one lives. Women, by nature, are against destructive agents like war. Compassion is inherent in them. It is also their inherent nature to wish for the welfare of others, just as they give their life to save the life of their own children. So, Ândal stresses the importance of devotion in women because the wealth and welfare of the country depends on them.

There are many ways to reach God, but only the true sound vibration of OM is able to take the devotee beyond the domain of God. The greatness of this sound is that it leads even those who are involved in the good and bad of their daily life. As the Great Lord beyond Sun and Moon has immeasurable qualities, He does not use measuring rods to weigh the good and bad qualities of people down below. He bestows solace to whoever approaches him through OM.

All are not aware of the intricate conditions of vedic rituals and all are not able to follow all the rigorous disciplines that these rituals impose. Moreover, all are not initiated for these rituals. For them Ândâl says that simply singing the name of God is sufficient to reach him. God's name is like gold. Just as we need a little of gold to make jewels, so too singing God's name is like making jewellery out of His Wholeness. It is because we do not even spare time to sing His name, in India, we give god's name, like Râma, Krishna, Govinda etc., so that while calling them we also utter God's name.

Even though we feed any thing and everything to animals, we treat them harshly, yet they provide us plenty of milk and other products for our prosperity, so too God, what ever be our way of devotion, blesses with everlasting wealth.

Vâmana or Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu

- an Indian Mythological Story

This incarnation was undertaken to recover heaven for the gods. Bali, a demon, was a king over the three worlds – heaven, earth and sky. In the form of a Brâman dwarf, Vishnu appears, and asks, as a gift, all he could cross over in three steps. In spite of cautious remarks from his advisers, the demon Bali, true to his principle of not refusing any request for charity, grants the three steps to the dwarf. Immediately, the dwarf becomes a giant, and with one step strides over heaven, and with second on the earth. Not knowing where to put the third step, he asks Bali where to put the third step. Bali, humbly kneels down and asks Vishnu (realising that no one but Vishnu could cover the earth and the heaven in two steps) to place his

third step on his head. Even though Vishnu thrusts Bali into the neither world, Being magnanimous, Vishnu bless Bali with absolution.

The three steps also means getting over the three types of miseries (âdhi bhautika, âdhi daivika and âdhi âtmika). It also symbolises that one should stride over arrogance, contempt and lust for power, if one were to get everlasting happiness.

Vâmana is also called Trivikrama. Incidentally, in yoga there is an asana, Trivikrama Asana, in homage to Lord Trivikrama.

Lead us from darkness into light

Light is a symbol of truth, knowledge and bliss. The light of consciousness shines forth in all living beings. The goal of human life is to wake up to this light from the sleep of ignorance and be blessed

Man lives in three levels of life: physical, mental and spiritual. The physical light helps him in his work and activities, the intellectual light removes ignorance while the spiritual light gives him self-knowledge

Sage Yâjnyavalkya in Bruhadâraryaka Upanishad says that man gets light from the sun, from the moon, by the light of fire or by the light of speech. He further says that where there is no sound, man sees through the light of the Self. All other sources need an external agent where as the Self is self-illuminating, the light of Consciousness.

In the Bhagavad Githa, Sri Krishna describes Brahman as “He is the light of lights, said to be beyond darkness. He is seated in the hearts of all.”

Our life is spent in three stages: waking, dreaming ad deep sleep. In all these stages, some kind of light is present, because there is experience. The Upanishad speak of a fourth state called turiya wherein one can be aware of pure consciousness. We are not aware of this state now, because of the impurities of mind and the ignorance that cover us. As sun is sometimes covered by the clouds, the Self is sometimes covered by ignorance. Through spiritual discipline we can sweep aside that ignorance and see light within us.

Until we wake up to our spiritual heritage and strive to realize it, the world of experience will seem very attractive to us. Only when the baby is tired of the toys his mother gave that he begins to cry loudly for the mother. Similarly, it is only when we realize that there is a vast spiritual treasure within us, and when we become restless to realize it, are we awake to that light.

La Bhagavad Githa et le Yoga (3)

- T.K.Sribhashyam

In the Bhagavad Githa, the word *yoga* is not used in any definite technical sense, as in Patanjali's *yoga sutra*. Consequently, there is not one definition of *yoga* but many. Thus, *yoga* is used in the sense of *karma yoga*, or the duty of performance of action and it is distinguished from the *sâmkhya* (view, or the path of knowledge). The word *buddhi yoga* is also used. The word *bhakti yoga* is also used. The primary meaning of *yoga* is the central idea of *yoga* in the Githa. One of the

main teachings of the Githa is that duties should be performed. In *karma yoga*, it is the obligatoriness of the performance of duties that is given high status. But, if such duties are performed from motives of self-interest or gain or pleasure, the performance could not lead to any higher end. Therefore, they should be performed without any motive of gain or pleasure. So, the proper way in which a man should perform his duties is to make himself detached from the desires for the fruits of actions. Sri Krishna says that this is the real art of performing one's duties. It is only in this way that a man can make himself fit for the higher union with God or his own higher self.

Even though the art of performing one's duties cannot be called yoga, it is considered so, because it is the indispensable step towards the attainment of the real *yoga* or union with God.

Surprisingly, *prânâyâma* regarded as indispensable in many yoga systems, is not considered so in the Githa. Reference to *prânâyâma* is mentioned while describing *dhyâna* without attributing any technical importance.

Finally, the expression *samâdhi* is used more in the sense of 'establishing an object in the mind' with the aim of being united with God.

Once man is in touch with his highest, he is in touch with God. He has then a broader and higher vision of man and his place in nature, and so he identifies himself with God and finds that he has no special interest of his own. The low and the high, the sinful and the virtuous are the same in his eyes; he perceives God in all things and all things in God, and it is this state of communion that is the real *yoga* of the Githa. In this state, all inequalities of race, creed, position and virtue and vice, high and low vanish, that this superior realization of universal equality is also called *yoga*. This union with God is called *yoga* and God Himself is called *yogeshwara*. As a result of this union, the *yogin* enjoys supreme bliss and ecstatic joy and is free from the least touch of sorrow or pain; and this absolute freedom is also called *yoga*. (*end*)

Technical Sheet: Pathology and specific pedagogical indications for Yoga

- by Doc. Carpentier Nancy, medical doctor, in collaboration with her teacher Sri T.K.Sribhashyam
- Free hand translation

Sheet No. 3: Diarrhea

Definition

Diarrhea : emission of stool being too liquid, too frequent and too much in quantity over a span of 24 hours

Physiopathology: the physiopathology of diarrheas is in direct relationship to their very etiology. These diarrheas sometimes affect the mucous membrane, but not always.

We differentiate between three major types of diarrheas.

1. Hydroelectrolytic diarrhea:

Diarrhea due to excessive elimination of sodium ions, potassium, chloride, bicarbonate and water.

This type of diarrhea is specific to the small intestines.

2. Diarrhea with acceleration of the transit: The “accelerated” transit decreases the time of contact of the bolus with the mucous membrane and therefore does not give the necessary time for proper absorption of the electrolytes. The latter are eliminated with the water. This diarrhea is mostly due to colics.

3. Alternating diarrhea and constipation:

Prolonged episodes of constipation can be interrupted by abrupt episodes of aqueous diarrhea.

This diarrhea consists of scattered pieces of over digested stool characteristic of constipation. This diarrhea is due to hyper secretion of the mucous membrane showing a colic reaction due to an abnormally long contact with stool. This hyper secretion often goes together with an activation of colic motor function.

Etiology

We will tackle only those causes known for which the yoga teacher can give useful advice to the student, without, however, trying to replace the doctor.

Most frequent causes of digestive diarrhea:

Digestive allergies

Food

Illness of the colon (colitis, diverticulosis, hemorrhagic recto-colitis,...)

Tumor

Ulcer of the small intestine, Crohn’s disease

Gastritis

Coeliaque disease

Pancreatitis

Diarrhea due to fermentation

Most frequent causes of extra-digestive diarrhea:

Endocrinological : i.e. hyperthyroidism, diabetes

Disease of the immune system

Psychosomatic (ex: stress)

Infectious diarrhea

Bacterial

Viral

Parasitic

Iatrogenic diarrhea (examples) :

Surgical resection of the ileum

Medicinal diarrhea: laxative, anti-inflammatory, antibiotic, hypoglycemic

Infectious and iatrogenic diarrheas are treated exclusively by medical body. Extra-

digestive diarrheas will be studied with a view to yoga in a specification sheet

corresponding with the pathology. All indications of the technical sheet N° 3 for yoga practice apply to digestive diarrheas.

Principal symptoms:

Too frequent emission of stool with a pressing need to defecate, so much so it can go to incontinence of the anal sphincter. The stool is more liquid, less shaped, even watery and sometimes faded. An analysis of a stool sample helps in precisely establishing the cause of the diarrhea.

Treatment

Nutritional measures and food hygiene

Rehydration liquid if needed

Medical prescription to stop the diarrhea

Surgery for extreme cases and depending on the etiology (to be continued)

It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Bhagavad Gita, XVIII.47

Devotion and the Christian religion (3)

– Isabelle OTT, Pastor, President of the Synodal Council

Spirituality in the Orthodox religion

In the homes of the faithful, an icon is always placed in an elevated position and, at the critical moment of prayer, it guides the eye upwards to the Supreme Being who is all we need, at the same time turning a neutral dwelling into a "domestic church". Visitors entering the home bow to the icon, commune with God's look and then greet the master of the house. The small light kept burning in front of the icon translates the movement of the spirit – a fire which is continually in a state of prayer and in the presence of the invisible. This is the liturgical dimension of spiritual life.

Mary's place in the Orthodox Church is somewhere between the role assigned to her in Catholic worship and that in the Protestant religion. In Orthodox iconography, Mary never appears without her Son. Almost all the hymns mention her, always with reference to what God has worked through her with the Holy Ghost. Among Roman Catholics, the tendency is to regard Mary as a divine being in her own right, while Protestants tend to ignore her altogether ...

Orthodox Christians believe that we do **not just worship with our minds and souls but also with our bodies**. By bowing low and making numerous signs of the cross, kissing icons, lighting candles, singing, kneeling and standing (sometimes for hours on end), Orthodox believers are trying to draw closer to God with the whole of their being and to offer themselves body, soul and mind as a "living sacrifice of praise".

Spirituality and the Roman Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church has sometimes been called the Church of the Eucharist, because in the Catholic tradition, communion with God is through the privileged channel of the Eucharist, as the most substantive manifestation of God's presence. Sunday services put the Eucharist at the heart of God's worship in the Mass. Eucharist piety also finds its expression in the tradition of the daily Mass and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, kept in reserve as a viaticum for those who are ill and for the adoration of the faithful.

Roman Catholic spirituality places the believer's whole life under the sign of the **Church's maternal solicitude**. The Church itself stands for God's wish to show pity and forgiveness to sinners. If God is the Father of believers, the Church is their Mother. As the place of God's presence and communication, the Church is home to both the visible and the invisible, the tangible and the ideal. It is the consecrated space where believers can come closer to God who is brought nearer through all the tangible reality of the Church: the sacraments, the priesthood, visual representations and the saints. Thus God sets aside the places and times when he in his mercy creates opportunities for meetings that are regularly attended by Roman Catholic believers (to be continued).

Svastha, the health – eating rules

Dr Golpalakrishna Rao, Bangalore (ayurvedic medicine practitioner)

For the achievement of the four purposes of life (dharma, artha, kâma and moksha), the food given to the body must give metabolic strength and mental balance. It is not sufficient to eat only for the pleasure of the taste in mouth or the pleasure of the social circle. As the body undergoes changes according to the seasons and the place where one lives, food must match the place and the season so that the ingested food builds cells harmoniously. As the digestion of food depends on digesting capacity, some factors must be taken in account in order to avoid physiological disorders that would cause physiological impairments or mental diseases. Ayurveda recommends to apply simple rules so that our food is a health benefactor and not a cause of disease.

1° Eat only when you are hungry. A meal eaten when one is not hungry won't be digested and will induce as a consequence ingestion diseases. A meal eaten when one is too hungry will be burnt inducing malnutrition diseases.

2° Take meals at fixed hours. The body has a rhythm of digestive functions (like circadian cycles) and eating must respect that rhythm. Eating outside digestive times doesn't allow a good digestion.

3° Don't eat for the pleasure of taste when you are not hungry. Any food taken when you have reached satiety won't be digested and will cause indigestion diseases.

4° Don't fill up the stomach. It is necessary to leave some empty space in the stomach to allow a good digestive action.

5° During meals avoid any confrontational conversation. Don't criticize or make unpleasant observations when children are fed. Following the same idea, after any meal read, listen to or see pleasant subjects and not subjects that can evoke fear, anxiety, confusion,...

6° Avoid eating always the same food. Also avoid to always eat food with strong taste.

7° After each meal, it is necessary to rinse the mouth, to brush teeth with a slightly bitter toothpaste and gargle with lukewarm water.

After each meal, walk a hundred steps avoiding sport, sunbath or any activity requiring intense physical effort.

Sri T. K. Srinivasan, the eldest son of Sri T. Krishnamacharya

- T.K.Sribhashyam

On the occasion of the release of a book in India, I would like to introduce to the readers of Yogakshemam Newsletter, my eldest brother Sri T. K. Srinivasan.

Shata Dushani or "hundred criticisms" is a philosophical critical analysis on Advaita philosophy (the philosophy of non-dualism) to prove the realistic superiority

of Vishishtâdvaita. Sri Vedanta Desika, Sri Râmânuja's most ardent follower, is the author of Shata Dushani.

Sri T. Srinivasan has written an explanatory note on each of the 'hundred criticisms'. This masterpiece was published in August 2001 under the sponsorship of many traditional Hindu monasteries of South India, including those of Advaita. His work, entirely in Sanskrit language (including the page numbers), is already sold-out!

Sri T. K. Srinivasan, affectionately called Anna, the eldest brother, was born in Mysore in 1935. Our father, Sri T. Krishnamacharya, initiated him in Veda and Vedic studies at the age of five. His Vedic studies under my father as well as Yoga studies continued until 1967. At the same time, he obtained a bachelor's degree in Law from the Mysore University. He started teaching Yoga in 1955 and abruptly stopped in 1967 when he realised that Yoga was taught to earn money!

In 1957, he took part in the scientific investigations conducted by a team of American Cardiologists and along with my father; he showed them the possibility of voluntary cardiac arrest through Prânâyâma.

In 1967, he left home and joined monastic life staying in traditional monasteries to obtain specialisation in Vedic studies, related to rituals and in Mimâmsa philosophy. Incidentally, Mimâmsa was one of the favourite subjects of my father.

From the eighties, he was invited by the traditional monasteries to teach the art and science of open debates as well as Mimâmsa to their students. As an authority on Mimâmsa, he obtained the status of a University Graded Professor, a situation that he still holds. From the nineties, he is invited by all the traditional monasteries to train their teachers in ex-tempo debates on philosophical subjects.

He is fluent in all the south Indian languages as well as English. He is unmarried and lives a real celibate life. He lives on two pairs of traditional clothing, a pair of sandals, prayer material, books and a small radio-transistor. He eats once a day, very often in the monasteries and very rarely in the families. He travels all over south India by train, by road trucks or buses which ever is readily available.

He distributes his entire earnings (both the university graded salary as well as the emoluments from the monasteries) to the children of the villages either for their studies or for their living. In fact, he has dedicated the entire proceeds of his book to the children of the monasteries of south India.

He is an astrologer, a refined cook and looks after all his daily routines by himself. In spite of his very orthodox way of life and work, he is very open-minded. He is always update with sports, political and economic events of the world. He has read European philosophers extensively.

As his youngest brother, I regret his abrupt interruption of yoga teaching, as his knowledge of yoga, in all its branches – physical, philosophical, medical and tantrik – surpasses that of any of my father's disciples or may be, of all his disciples put together.

Is it his philosophical and religious life, is it his sincere charitable nature or is it his very simple comfortless way of life that his own family, near and dear, neglects him, while the entire Indian Sanskrit institutions respect him?

By writing the explanatory notes on Shata Dushani, Sri T. Srinivasan has certainly materialized our dear father's wish: establishing the values of Vishishtâdvaita.

Chandra, the Moon

The name Chandra derives from the root chand to shine, to rejoice, to be delighted. So moon stands for fullness, purity, beauty, and joy. In India, Chandra is an uncle to young and old.

In mythology the moon is said to rise from the churned ocean of milk. It showers nectar and nourishes the potency of medicinal herbs. So it is also called oshadhîsha. Chandra is depicted as the Lord of the 27 stars. As Chandra showed partiality to one star, Rohini, he was cursed by the father of the stars, Daksha. This accounts for the waxing and waning of the moon. The curse, however, becomes a blessing. Shiva gives refuge to the humiliated moon and wears the crescent moon in his matted locks. So Shiva is called Chandramauli. More over, the digit of the moon obtained an important status, the chandra kala or the lunar measurement of time. The period of waxing and waning moons became a month.

Sri T. Krishnamacharya Endowment Trust International (Regd.), Bangalore *Report on its activities*

Activities paid by interests of the fund of the Trust:

In the province of Karnataka, under the control of the Education Ministry:

1999, 2000 and 2001: Distribution of 15 scholarships to the best students in Sanskrit of the province of Karnataka, worth between 750 and 500 Rupees, depending on their result.

1999, 2000 and 2001: Each year, distribution of 10 scholarships to the best candidates of various subjects, worth between 1500 and 750 Rupees, depending on their result.

November 2001: donation of a computer to make it possible for the Mysore Sanskrit College to have a web site and email addresses as well as to have access to all international institutions looking for information on different Sanskrit subjects.

January 2002: organization of a literary debate in Sanskrit in Mysore, open to all students of Sanskrit colleges in Karnataka. The three best candidates will receive a prize worth between 1000 and 500 Rupees.

In Bangalore: Take over of costs of Ayurvedic consultations and care in the villages surrounding Bangalore.

Activities paid by donations with a specific aim, by the students of Yogakshemam.

In Kovalam, a village near Chennai

Construction of a well for drinking water; donation of 10 cows to widows of fishermen.

2001: Take over of consultation fees, paediatric treatments and treatments in general medicine; taking over of fees for an ophthalmologic treatment of a child, including a possible surgical intervention; take over of the cost of a hearing aid for a child.

Opening of a 5th class in the public school of the village and permanent take over of the salary of one teacher.

In Bangalore

1999, 2000 and 2001: Taking over of costs of paediatric and Ayurvedic consultations and care in the villages surrounding Bangalore.

By decision of the authorities the Trust is exempted from paying taxes. Its activities have received coverage in the local media.

Sri T. Narasimhan, accountant of the Trust

The page of Srimathi T. Namagiriammal
(Wife of Sri T. Krishnamacharya)

Chappâti or indian bread

Ingredients:

150g of water at room temperature (lukewarm),
2 soup spoons of peanut or sesame oil,
250g of whole wheat flour, half whole wheat flour or white flour,
1 teaspoon of salt

Mix the water, the salt and the oil in a salad bowl. Add the flour. Knead the pastry for 10 minutes, until it becomes smooth and compact. Cover up with a humid cloth and let rest for 30 minutes or more at room temperature.

Coat with flour a counter, divide the pastry in 4 cm diameter balls (ten or so balls). Spread them with a roll to obtain thin cakes of 15 cm diameter. Lay the cakes separately on a clean cloth.

Heat a pan on a medium hot stove. Bake the chappâti without oil, turn them around several times. Once the chappâti is baked, spread a few drops of oil or ghee (see *Yogakshemam Newsletter N° 5*) on one side of the chappâti. Cover the bottom of a basket with a cloth and put the chappâti in the basket. Cover with a lid.

It accompanies a meal. You can eat it sweetened.

It doesn't contain any yeast nor leaven. That's the reason why it is very digestible. It doesn't cause any flatulence or intestinal bloating.

It is fortifying and gives strength.

It is a way to eat baked wheat that is easily absorbed.