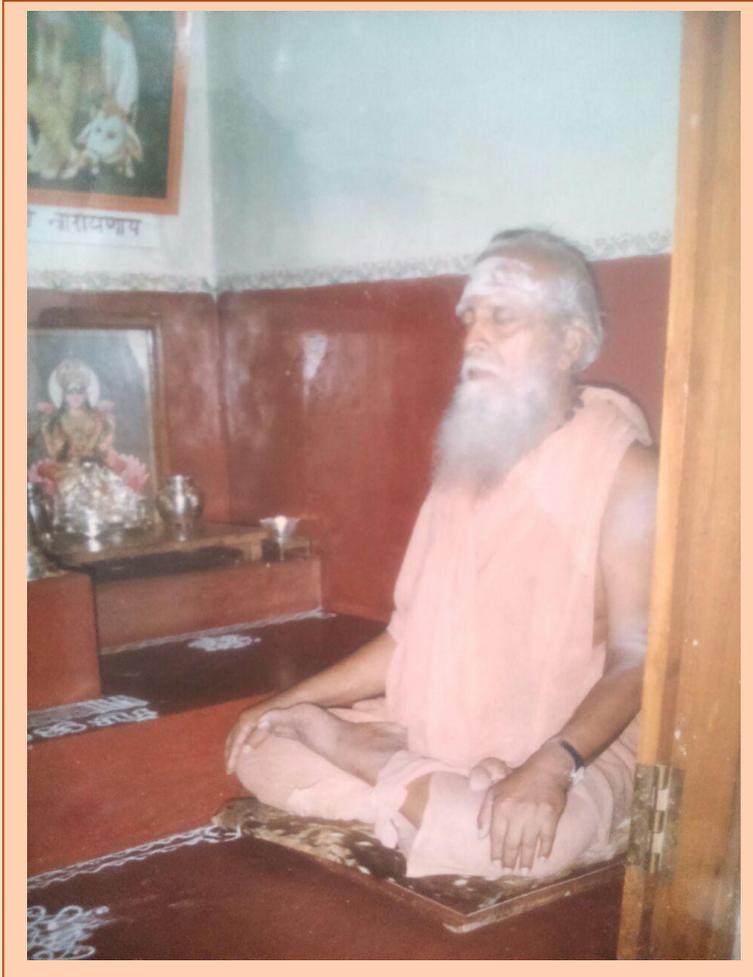


Questions put by some foreigners in Jan'04

*By Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj,
2004, Tiruvannamalai*



Question 1:

I have all these days striving and now removed all the impurities. What is the further thing to be done?

Response of Guruji:

The very fact of your saying that I have now purified myself shows that the basic impurity is still there fully alive. The basic impurity or sin is the belief that 'I' am this BODY-MIND complex; this body is called 'X' or 'Y' [Harry, Dick, etc.] is myself. So long as the conviction that I am an individual with Body, mind senses etc. is not erased, all the other so called impurities – Desire, lust, anger, greed, pride, etc. stem out of that sense of identification with one's body. So, if only the I [ego] which proclaims 'I have purified myself' is eliminated once for all, then we are already in the realm of MOKSHA [liberation] and nothing more requires to be done.

Secondly, by our true nature, WE ARE NEVER IMPURE. We are all the PUREST CONSCIOUSNESS. In a dream of Tom, a millionaire sees himself as a beggar, is he actually a beggar or a millionaire? This waking state is also a second dream where you see yourself as impure or imperfect. So long as I am dreaming and see a tiger and a forest, everything looks real. Only when you woke up you knew it was a dream and neither the forest nor the tiger was real. Similarly the waking state [which is also another dream] looks real. Only when you wake up you will know that it was also a dream, perhaps a longer one.

By constantly meditating and remaining in a searching attitude [do not think with the mind] with the question "WHO AM I", the dream breaks up and you find your real nature. In our real nature, we are eternally pure – all the impurities were non-existent imaginations in the dream called waking state. There are several methods to deal with these impurities – the main source of which is the 'I' which identifies itself with the body.

The word 'I' translated in any language [more so in Sanskrit – as 'AHAM'] is very powerful and creates powerful vibrations when pronounced even mentally. It links you with the Supreme Consciousness, whose dream figure, we all are. So at this stage you shall stick to this word 'I' in one of the following ways:-

- (i) You know 'I AM' i.e. you are i.e. you exist. Just live in the feeling of "amness" [your being]. Do not use your mind and think 'I am'. A small child just born has no vocabulary. So, it cannot think in words. It happily lives in the consciousness or awareness of its mere 'existence'. It knows "I AM" – it is a direct knowledge and is not a knowledge acquired through the medium of the body, senses or mind. Similarly you focus your conscious attention on 'I AM'. Do not add 'I am a man', 'I am 46 years old', 'I am Harry, Tom or Dick', 'I am an Engineer', etc. etc. DO NOT qualify that 'amness'. Remain in the awareness of 'I AM'. This is only a different version of "Who am I" recommended by Bhagawan Ramana.
- (ii) Enquire 'Who am I'? Do not supply any reply yourself like 'I am not the body, I am consciousness, etc.' Do not also repeat 'Who am I'. Simply remain attentive and be with the quest in the enquiring attitude of 'Who am I'. Remain in the expectant attitude. You will never get the answer. The 'I' i.e. you, the questioning individual will disappear along with the question. The real 'I' – The Supreme Infinite Consciousness alone will remain. That is God realisation. The Individuality which was the cause of all sorrows, sufferings, tension, anxiety disappears.
- (iii) The third method is that while walking, talking, at all times you go on focussing attention on 'I' 'I' 'I'.

'I' is the most potent word which links you with the highest Supreme Consciousness. It is a common factor in all the three methods. You may follow whatever suits you.

The second method of enquiring 'Who am I' is meant for those who are spiritually mature. That is the question of 'WHO AM I' can arise sincerely only in him who is convinced that he

is not the BODY-MIND COMPLEX but something else. Otherwise when you sit with the enquiry, your mind will laugh at you and come up with a comment “Why man, don't you know that since birth you have been called Harry. Ask your parents or wife. Why this sudden doubt! Are you mad or what?”

Even though ‘WHO AM I’ enquiry can be done for 1 or 2 hours daily, strictly speaking, it is for all 24 hours and for all 365 days in a year. Supposing while travelling in a bus, you dozed off for half an hour and when you woke up, you were unable to remember who you are, will you rack your brain only for 1 hour and cease to bother about it. YOU WILL NOT REST TILL YOU RECOLLECT WHO YOU ARE. So is the case here.

Have the conviction based on the teachings of scriptures and great masters that you are eternally Pure, your link with Supreme Reality has been forgotten; you are the integral part of the TOTALITY OF THE INFINITE CONSCIOUSNESS. The moment you start linking with ‘I’ by the aforesaid methods, the Highest Supreme consciousness pulls you toward itself while you push yourself with the Practice.

If we are sincere, we have to reach the goal in a trice. It is a Quantum Leap into an untrodden realm.

We never do any Sadhana. We do not choose the goal. We are chosen and all Sadhana is got done by the Totality. It is the mind which gives us the illusion of individuality. The Zero Watt bulb is unhappy that it is fated to be far less brilliant than 60W, 200W and 1000w bulbs. The day it knows that it is not an individual and one undivided electricity with infinite capacity in habits all the bulbs which are conditioned to different Wattage, it is Enlightenment.

Question 2:

SWAMIJI, when I was in U.S.A, I wanted much to be in ARUNACHALA [TIRUVANNAMALAI] I came. I was a nun in a convent for a number of years but my mind did not allow me to adjust to those surroundings. So I left. Arunachala helped me a lot in quietening my mind. Now I feel like going back to my country and take up Sannyasa. What shall I do?

Response of Guruji:

It is the mind which plays. When you are in Arunachala, it wants you to do elsewhere. When you go elsewhere, it will prompt you to come to ARUNACHALA or somewhere else. Do not accept the tyranny of the mind.

If you decide your goal and cling to it with a crocodile grip and with prayers to Ramana to supplement it [pray to him for 11 days] you will get guidance.

Becoming a Sannyasi is not mere donning of a special robe. It is really colouring the mind, body, all cells and the entire being in the colour of the Self i.e. remaining as the Self or Supreme Being in practical life. Whether you go to a convent or to your home in U.S.A., whether you become a nun or a Doctor or an Engineer, you are taking your mind with you, with all its conditioning and pre-determined proclivities. One should be a Sannyasi at heart by eliminating the ego [I] by relinquishing the identification with the body in the sheer knowledge that "I am not a doer at all. My body, senses and mind are activated to do various actions by the Supreme Consciousness using them as its tools or instruments." So you should behave in the world as if you are only a witness to all happenings and events.

It looks easier to control the mind in a convent where there is no opportunity for temptations. The moment you come into contact with the outside world, all the temptations will assail you with re-doubled vigour. One should practise to remain in the Self and it does not matter whether you are among multitude or in solitude.

If you dislike to remain in the East, you can't take the East and throw it in the ocean. The more you go on moving towards the West, East will recede automatically.

Wherever you may be, HOLD TIGHT to GOD or Self. Soak yourself night and day in thoughts of God at all times – walking, talking, eating, etc. Your indecisions regarding preference to places and calling and all problems relating to the world will all disappear in due course.

Do not swim either with the current or against it. Just float. Allow it to take you wherever it will. LORD, THY WILL BE DONE, NOT MINE.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE SRI RAMANAYA

Note: All the capital words / emphasis / sentences are as written by Swamiji. No editing has been done in order to retain the original form of the letter.

* * HARI OM * *

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