



# **Spiritual Diary**

## **quotes**

**Swami Venkatesananda**



### Pleasure

One should be willing to sacrifice temporary pleasure in favor of eternal bliss.

### Perfection

The closer to perfection you are, the more you will be able to appreciate nearly everybody.

### Water

The waters of the ocean are the same, whatever be the name given to the ocean at different points on the globe.

### Appropriate Action

One had to observe this in a great master like Swami Sivananda to know where self-respect ends and arrogance begins, where timidity ends and humility begins.

One has to learn the difference between meekness and weakness, when to bend down and when not to, when to fear and when not to.

Both bending down and not bending down can be attributed to arrogance.

Here one sees the beauty of appropriate action - and it needs an awakened intelligence which is sattvic.

### Your Own Life

When yoga speaks of virtue, it merely suggests that you should look at your own life.

Become aware of what you are.

We have too long and too morbidly indulged in 'Thou shalt, thou shalt not'.

Virtue cannot be imposed upon one from outside.

### Your Friend

Who is your friend and who is your enemy?

It is your mind. If your mind is controlled, disciplined and pure, that mind is your friend.

If your mind is impure, undisciplined, violent, full of hatred, attachment and vanity, it is your enemy.

### First Hand

Wisdom consists in being able to see at first hand, intimately, without any mediator.

## Cannibal

It may be unpalatable - truth is often unpalatable - to realize that one who supports a war in which others fight and get killed, is a cannibal.

A cannibal kills other humans in order that he may live.

## The Battlefield

A very simple way to abolish wars is to insist that he who signs the declaration of war shall be the first soldier on the battlefield.

## Mass Acceptance

I am by nature an optimist, but I am realistic enough to be pessimistic when it comes to mass acceptance of any doctrine, thought, or ideology.

## Frennemies

Some people have friends who love them and enemies who hate them.

Some lucky people have friends who love them and enemies who sympathize with them.

Some others have enemies who despise them and friends who dislike and disapprove of them.

## Sorrow

Sorrow is deep ignorance, spiritual ignorance, spiritual blindness, in whose vicious grip we are caught.

## Hunger

Hunger does not arise in the mind, but from a deeper level - the mind merely calls it hunger.

Unless something happens at that deeper level, no change is possible in the hunger-satisfaction pattern.

## My

Family, society, nationality, etc., are all extensions of the "me", and therefore we are concerned about "my" family, society or nationality, and not about human beings in general!

## A Great Gain

I am immediately freed from this wasteful pastime of running other people down.

If that can happen to us, it is already a great gain.

## Accept

The mind has an extraordinary faculty of registering only what it is prepared to accept - or, on the other hand, that which shocks.

## Reality

A teaching only becomes meaningful when one is in the situation that is described - then it is no longer a description, but a reality.

## Understanding

We are committed to either - or. Either I must give vent to my violence, or I must suppress it.

A third possibility involves understanding myself and understanding others.

## Peel Off

If you peel off your feelings, your thought processes, your rationalizations, your philosophies and your opinions, there shines the truth.

## Nature

Fire is not the cause of something bursting into flames - the inflammable nature of the material is the cause.

## Conflict

It is only when I bring something else in that conflict manifests in my life.

## Natural Action

When there is no wish to kill and no wish to protect, when there is no wish to act and no wish to refrain from action, when the ego is completely silent, and action takes place, that action is natural action.

## The Test

When I am the aggressor and you are the oppressed, I can call to my aid sublime philosophy, but when the tables are turned, I must still be able to smile at the marvel of nature.

If you are able to do this, probably you have seen some truth.

## Lovers

As long as you scratch my back and I scratch yours, we will call ourselves lovers.

Equal

Observation and relationship are equally important.

Pollutant

We believe we are different from each other.

That is the pollutant.

Truth

When you are facing the truth, you realize that there is no choice at all.

It is only when you are looking at the shadow, the untruth, the falsehood, that there are different parts, different modes of behavior to choose from.

Life

The bird does not fly with only one wing - it has two wings and in the middle is the bird.

One wing is knowledge, the other is action - in the middle is life!

Love

Love does not want to change - does not fix any conditions.

Open

Only if I am open to what you say, can you teach me.

Teaching

I must be open and at the same time an agency must be there.

The two working together make for the teaching.

Merely

Your life is not merely understanding or merely doing.

Fear

Fear arises only in the darkness known as ignorance.

Do

Disharmony can only be removed in its totality by God's Grace.

In the meantime we can also do something about it.

### Action

Understanding alone is not enough - it is like trying to fly on one wing, which is impossible..

Similarly, action alone is not enough either - understanding is the other wing.

### Wise or Fool

To a wise man and to a fool, there is no choice of action.

The fool acts impulsively; the wise man acts spontaneously.

### Action

You see the tree, the sapling or the shoot.

But the shoot is not an isolated event - it is connected to the tree.

### Honey

From a pot of honey you can only get honey.

### Life

When that which you love the most - life - is seen as a vehicle that drives you to the grave, a profound change takes place.

You learn to live and to love all.

### All-One

You and the other are one.

It is the same fool who hits and who is hit!

The cane is only one.

At one end what happens is called expression and at the other end what happens is called experience.

Therefore, you are not hitting and nobody is hit.

It is the cane which keeps jumping around.

### Worship

Whether the other person recognises or does not recognise what I have done is irrelevant, because what is done is worship of God Himself.

### Motive

When God does something Himself, there is no motive - or no one knows the motive except God Himself.

## Dead

Anything taken for granted, including domestic relationships, is dead.

## Watch

If this is what you want, have it, but watch it and know what you are doing.

## Renunciation

Humanweal, peace and happiness, at both the individual and the collective levels, flow from renunciation and not from acquisition.

These are but words until one experiences them as living truths.

## Discipline

Imposed discipline is imposition, not discipline, and it only gives birth to impostors.

## Surrender

"I have completely surrendered" - which means, "As long as you tell me what I want you to tell me, I'll do everything exactly as you say" - that's a very different kind of surrender.

## Worry

Most of us think that we have freedom of choice.

When we think so, the only truth is that we are in a state of confusion.

We do not do what is right or wrong, the only thing we actually do is worry.

It is the only action we commit unceasingly - worrying.

## Worship

Regard every one of your actions as worship of the Omnipresent God.

## Welfare

With the profit motive out of the way, people promote one another's welfare.

## Worship

Worship Him in and through the temples, churches, synagogues and mosques, but worship Him in your own home too.

## Meditation

True, real meditation is a rare experience.

Even an imperfect attempt will fill you with inexpressible peace and joy.

You must be established in great virtues, like non-violence, truthfulness, and purity, before you can taste the bliss of deep meditation.

## Awareness

It is not possible for us deliberately to perform non-egoistic action, or to live a non-egoistic life.

What is possible however is to be intensely aware within ourselves and to detect the play of the ego from moment to moment.

## Virtue and Wisdom

Virtue and wisdom cannot be separated from life.

## Leap!

Hence, by all means, look before you leap ... take a second look, and a third ... but for heaven's sake, leap!

## The Bright Side

Even with discrimination one has to be careful - it has its light and dark sides.

When the bright side is up, it says, "Spiritual life is more worthy" - but the dark side comes up and it says, "It is difficult".

Strike while the bright side is up.

## Grateful

Thank you very much for giving me this chance.

## Integration

Thinking, feeling and willing - they seem to run in different directions.

Integrate them and you have yoga in action.

## Watchful

But can I live in relation with others all the time, and yet be inwardly watchful always?

## History

The life and death struggles of heroes are dismissed with a few brief sentences in a history book.

Me

When that 'me' goes, everything that divided us has gone.

Joy

I am my sister's and brother's keeper. In their joy lays mine.

Poverty

Poverty is a curse, not so much to the sufferers, but to you and me - everyone.

Vices

Vices become delectable modes of pleasure.

Harmony

One no longer functions as a crazy individual fighting against the rest of the universe, but works in total harmony with the entire cosmos.

Death

You have only one constant companion - he was born with you: Death.

Life

To live is to be and do.

Time

Time has to be conquered by its own best use.

Self-discipline

Real discipline is self-discipline.

Love

Love is the spontaneous manifestation of the seeing, of the realization of this unity in which we are all knit - whatever our religion, caste, nationality or social status.

Opposites

The "I" creates a motivation, a goal or a reward.

Thus are born the ideas of success and failure, pleasure and pain, and all the rest of the pairs of inseparable opposites.

## Experiencing

When the craving for experience (of pleasure, etc.) ceases, life does not cease. Pure experiencing goes on, for it is part of the very existence.

## Delight

The good man delights in the happiness of others.

## Brother's keeper

"My" happiness cannot be promoted at the expense of yours - your restlessness will soon engulf me.

In this sense, "I am my brother's keeper".

## Repetition

Persistent repetition of a lie has the power to make it appear to be real.

## Alive

Life is not logical - it has to be lived by one who is alive to it, and not to a purpose invented by the brain, which is polluted by all sorts of ideas.

## Ignorance

The "me" is a ghost-like substitute for the ignorance of your identity.

## Cobra

Live in this world as if you were living with a cobra in the same room.

## Knowledge

Knowledge cannot come to an end in the sense that you forget.

As long as your brain functions normally, it stores what has been received.

Knowledge comes to an end only by being assimilated.

## Life

But what must I do in order to digest and assimilate knowledge?

I have to acquire knowledge of life - whether indirectly through study of the scriptures or directly from life - from the scripture known as the world, as life itself.

Wake up

But please also remember that while you are enjoying a sweet dream you are inviting a nightmare, because they both belong to the same family. There is only one way to avoid both of these, and that is that you must wake up.

Nature

What is nature?

It is what makes grass green and milk white.

Awareness

Is it possible for us to become aware of this daydreaming, without disturbing its course?

Silence

Silence is not of speech - silence is of the mind.

Freedom

When in the light of knowledge there is neither seeking nor avoidance, there is freedom.

In that freedom the inner awareness spontaneously functions "in the present".

Pairs

In this clear vision, we see that what we call "the pairs of opposites" are in fact inseparable - our error consists of aspiring to have one of the pair, without the other, because we think they are independent.

Enquiry

The spirit of enquiry is a fire that consumes the enquirer and the enquiring mind, and shines as illumination or knowledge.

See

Unless you see the problem, you sense the danger, the problem is neither real nor urgent to you.

## Faith

One who has never seen burning fire may be told that it is hot. He believes that statement.

But when he draws near a real fire he feels the heat. He now has faith in the truth that fire is hot.

If he comes into direct contact with it he knows.

## Pure Vision

The infant's vision is pure.

Perhaps even the notion that there is an object external to itself has not arisen in it, because its own ego-sense has not been developed.

## Saints

We are familiar with robots, pillars; we are not familiar with human saints.

## Self-reliant

It is more difficult to stand on your feet - be self-reliant than to stand on your head - in the yogi's head-stand.

## Love

It is when we are full of love in all our relationships that we really and truly love God, Who is Omnipresent.

## Problems

There is one serious difficulty, which we experience in life - solutions come at a time when there are no problems, and problems arise at a time when there are no solutions.

## Look within

Get hold of yourself and look within.

This is possible if you are practicing meditation, and have acquired the ability to catch yourself halfway between waking and sleeping.

If you have trained yourself in this, then it is also possible to see a thing happening inside, to see anxiety or anger bubbling up.

And when it is seen, you don't have to react to it.

You don't have to justify it.

## Intrest

If we are not interested in God, He is not interested in us!

## Responsibility

But your life immediately loses one thing, and that is regret.  
Whatever you do, you take full responsibility for.

## Awareness

If I know why I am doing this, then that awareness - which is aware of the contradiction - is free from the contradiction and hypocrisy.

## Education

With the exception of those who deliberately choose to be wicked, the vast majority of people who grope in the darkness of ignorance and whose ignorance confuses them as to their duty, making evil appear as 'necessary in the circumstances', will definitely grow spiritually if more and more people take upon themselves the duty of educating their brethren (especially the younger generation) in the art of right conduct.

## God's Will

Even a dry blade of grass cannot be wafted by the wind except by God's Will.

## Science

We do not deny that science has discovered many laws of nature - that the atom has so many protons and electrons.

But I only beg of you not to forget Him who put them there - I assure you that the scientist did not.

## Maturity

Education is the expression of whatever is best in man, and the spirit of education is the focusing of attention within one's own heart to observe what is thus expressed!

Such observation is itself maturity.

## Enlightenment

Enlightenment has nothing to do with seeing lights and visions, which are at best "encouraging signs of divine Grace" in the words of Gurudev Swami Sivananda.

## Hope-less

If there is no hope at all, one can be extremely active, live a full life.

## Enlightened

You are enlightened: that is, you travel through life, treading softly, without unnecessary weight or burden.

## Spirit

Without spirit it is not spiritual practice, it is mechanical practice.

## Frustration

If there is frustration, and at that very moment you are wise enough to look within and to see this frustration, you immediately see that the frustration is not related to you, but to the hope that was entertained.

Where there is hope there is frustration - the frustration belongs to the hope - life goes on.

## A Landmark

Peace of mind is not your goal, it is a landmark.

## Memory

Memory has its own proper field of activity; but when it is allowed to interfere in life and in relationships, it is destructive.

## Guru and God

One who has really realized God does not know that he has.

One who thinks or feels he has realized God, has not.

Hence, at no stage can we renounce the Guru.

To the devotee, Guru and God are one.

## Consolation

If someone is suffering and you want to help, it is good to tell him that the soul is not suffering, but is full of bliss.

Offer consolation at all levels and ask, "Can I help you?"

Don't just talk philosophy - it is cruelty.

Put yourself in his position.

## Energy

If at the same time there is intellectual cooperation and emotional involvement, there is tremendous energy.

### A Meditation

Never mind, you have slept for years.

What does it matter if you don't make it this morning?

Tomorrow morning you'll start again.

That is a very beautiful form of meditation.

### Constant

Something that is changing from moment to moment seems to be constant - like the flame of a lamp.

The flames of "fire" are being renewed every moment, by fresh fuel being converted into fire, but the single flame appears constant.

Yet it seems a mystery that, remaining constant and doing nothing, that flame has consumed all the oil!

### Relief

Why must I throw it over my shoulders? It has already passed.

I am foolishly imagining that I am carrying this load on my shoulders, and in order to relieve myself of this non-existent burden, I introduce God's Will or Karma.

### Gaze within

It is only because the experiencer, in ignorance, looks outside that the ignorance is perpetuated; when the hero turns his gaze within he is not deluded.

### Continuity

The wisdom, the understanding, the perception, the realization of this truth, is the continuity in this constant change.

### God's Will

In order to dismiss the worry concerning the unborn future, and the brooding concerning the dead past, you use the idea of "God's Will" to drop them.

### Great Truth

All our actions and services, all our charities and austerities, all our prayers and adorations reach God.

If only man recognizes this great truth, then his whole life and all his actions are spiritualized and sublimated.

### Awake and Vigilant

To one who is awake and vigilant, the whole of life can be the Guru.

### Assassination

"Assassination" means nothing more than two Asses facing each other!  
If you are wise, you will make it unnecessary for another to kill you.

### What You Are

Be what you want to be - the content of what you are, in reality, is God.

### Peace

In sleep there is not a trace of harmfulness in your consciousness, only complete peace.

What happened to that when you woke up?

### Thought

What is thought of is not the truth; it is a thought.

### Natural Growth

Any growth which is natural, and therefore valid, is imperceptible.

### Light or Dark

Whether I face light or face darkness is left to me.

### Choice

Whether I will turn towards light or turn towards darkness is not predictable.

The choice is there for me to be either a fool or a wise man.

That is all the choice; the rest is choiceless.

### Light

If the "I" has turned towards the light at one stage, then the spirit of wisdom makes the choice; the light makes the choice.

### Misery

Misery is not so hard to bear as the desire to push it away!

### Hoard

Hoarded wealth is a curse.

### Soul-struggle

We see even in the wickedness of other people, their own inner soul-struggle to find the light, the truth, God.

### Free

Respecting this freedom, even He does not interfere.

### Miracles

We do not appreciate all the miracles in daily life - we are too busy looking for miracle-makers with extraordinary powers.

### Projecting

The baby is gazing at you without projecting a single thought of what you are.

### Mental

The whole life is only mental modification.

### Pain

Pain is inherent in life.

There is no need to search for some more.

### Belief

Belief takes away the pain of not knowing what it is, and the keenness to know what it is.

Belief dangerously "saves" us from the difficulty of discovering the truth about ourselves.

Use belief as a springboard, not as a coffin-lid!

### Integrity and Sincerity

Integrity and sincerity are not technical skills that can be acquired; they are spiritual qualities that manifest themselves when the covering veils are removed.

### Gifts

Simplicity, goodness, integrity, sincerity and other divine qualities are gifts of God - they cannot be acquired.

## Oneness

If I know I am a human being, and if I know you are a human being, then there is total identity, total oneness.

Nothing in the world will disturb this knowledge.

## Immortal

The love that is directed towards Him becomes immortal, and the lover that is thus linked to the immortal is also immortalized.

## Recognize

If we recognize that an unhealthy life-style is endangering our life, then it will drop away.

If we recognize that the psychological barriers we erect within ourselves, with an external polished behavior for the public and an internal nature hidden even from ourselves, are a danger to our peace of mind and happiness, they will drop away.

In the same way too, we will know that the religious and national barriers that we have put up, in the false hope of ensuring our security and prosperity, do in fact promote their opposite.

Then these too will drop away from our consciousness.

## Problems

Desires and feelings are thoughts too.

They create endless problems in our lives.

## Ego

When you discover that the ego which motivates this action does not exist, that pure action takes place not because 'I want', not because 'I don't want'.

If this 'I' which says 'I do' is seen to be non-existent, then your problem is solved.

Then what is called God's Will will prevail.

## Humility

You are extremely humble for you see that the lowliest person in the world is you in another form.

## Dharma

Dharma is a power, a force, a Shakti that bears, upholds, uplifts, preserves, sustains, protects and exalts.

## Blind

Some animals can see even in dense darkness, but some human beings are blind, although there is light and they have eyes.

## Ignorance

A man who is ignorant may find the truth one day, but the man who thinks he knows everything is far from God.

## Goal

The goal of the body is the grave or the crematorium.

But the goal of the soul is God or perfection.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect."

In our endeavor to reach this perfection, we serve humanity.

This is culture, this is religion.

## Work

Why should we pray for food from God, our Parent? Work for it!

Why should we pray for prosperity? Work for it.

Why should we pray for health? Live a clean life.

## Fear

"I" is immediately afraid of "you".

That fear generates conflict, violence, hatred.

## Meditation

Meditation is the direct immediate observation of the arising of the "I", the ego, without a mediator.

## Bees

Study all the scriptures as a bee collects nectar from the different flowers, and makes sweet honey.

But beware - do not manufacture poison.

The bee does not do it.

## A yogi

I may pretend that whatever I am and do in my life, as long as I sit and meditate for half an hour every morning, I can call myself a yogi.

## Disease

There are a number of cults that claim that, when you meditate, all disease will go.

Impossible. And what for?

## Discipline

Self-discipline is the antidote to selfishness.

Only he who is unselfish can be disciplined.

## Look Within

We don't want to look within because even an occasional glimpse is so horrifying that we would rather busy ourselves by 'saving' someone else.

## Happiness

A beautiful Sanskrit verse describes the following sequence:

"Knowledge (education) gives rise to right conduct (gentleness, humility and so on); right conduct generates the requisite qualification; the qualified and skilful earn wealth; wealth is righteously utilised, and happiness follows."

## Hypnose

You really are the cosmic being, but you have hypnotized yourself into a self-limited personality.

Therefore the yoga of meditation is not self-hypnotization, but self-dehypnotization.

## Compel

God compels us, at a certain stage, to love Him as He loves us.

It does not depend upon our will to yield or not to yield; it depends upon God.

## Meditation

Even if meditation leads nowhere else, at least it does not cause the destruction of all those living things and the intoxication of the body.

## Wholeness

Whatever I may practice, if I am not sincere in the sense of wholesouled dedication and an integrated approach, yoga is not possible.

Yoga is integration, wholeness.

## Energy

It is the emotional assent that provides the energy for what we do.

## What God Is

In order to find out what God is, you must first of all know what sort of person you are, who you are - not the body, not the living being, the flesh and bones, but the inner-spiritual entity.

God is not so different from this inner spiritual entity.

But whereas your spiritual or psychological personality is subject to ignorance and therefore egoism, God is not.

## Renunciation

Renunciation is of its offspring - egoism and mineness.

## Acceptance

The whole-souled acceptance and emotional participation in what you are doing is tremendously important.

## Yoga

Be happy, smile, but be deadly earnest, sincere and serious.

This combination of sincere earnestness, with great joviality and cheerfulness, is also yoga.

## Mind

The mind which creates happiness will also create unhappiness.

## Scale

The "I" is the measure with which we measure all else.

If the weighing scale is not set properly, it will only give us a wrong reading!

Know thy self!

## Success

There is no such thing as failure really - there is only failure to do, not failure to achieve.

Success is always there. So long as one does anything, success follows.

To succeed is "to come after".

## Unselfish and Divine

Fire does not look for a hot water bottle; confirmation of warmth is not necessary.

The heart in which love shines, which is aware of itself without being aware of the other, with no necessity for that love to flow towards another in a dualistic relationship, that heart is unselfish and divine.

## Action and ambition

It is necessary to distinguish ambition from action.

Action is natural, inherent in life; just as "eating" (and therefore hunger) is natural to all living beings.

But ambition is not natural, even as "craving for chocolate" is not natural.

## the real doer

When we assume the paramount importance of ambition, we are either blind to its destructiveness, or accept it as the inevitable price one pays for progress.

## Smile

You can promote the others' happiness by just a kindly smile and a loving look.

## Love and Happiness

Love and happiness can only be given out.

## Living

Living does not involve struggle, contrary to popular misconception.

The simplest form of "living" is joyous and blissful.

Life is intelligent, wise and alert enough to avoid pain and unhappiness instantly.

## Pursuit

It is the pursuit that makes pleasure pleasurable - and the inevitable reaction, painful.

## The Real Doer

This feverish activity, with its selfish motivation, keeps the individual so intensely occupied that he has neither the time nor the energy nor the motivation to examine the whole position and ask, "Am I the real doer of these actions?"

## Want

"I do this" seems to be incomplete, and therefore the individual adds, "because I want that".

## Concepts

When the experience touches the individual who is busy with his selfish and goal-motivated activity, the individual classifies these experiences into desirable and undesirable.

Two more motivations are added to his busy-ness - the seeking of the desirable experiences and the avoidance of the undesirable.

He is unable to see that these experiences come and go in utter disregard of his wishes!

Harassed by all this, the individual, imprisoned in the shell, invents concepts of happiness and unhappiness, damnation and redemption, God and Satan, heaven and hell, and believes that all of them exist in truth.

## Charity

Charity destroys greed and reminds us that we have created nothing and own nothing.

## Motivation

If the heat of motivation has been turned off, there is a lot of time, energy and incentive to examine the nature of action.

## Light

Light hurts the owl's eyes.

So we, who are accustomed to darkness, find it hard to face the light.

## Yoga

If you are totally dedicated to wisdom - philosophy, and if you directly understand the mind or directly become aware of it, then you are practising yoga.

## Love

You love your friend, child, wife, Master, etc.

But, you should become aware of it as love - this awareness is division.

Then this love should be sublimated into devotion to the divine presence in all of them.

## Primary Devotion

Primary devotion arises only by the Grace of God or the Holy Ones.

Devotion in which division is absent is not for the mind or the ego-sense to "achieve".

Primary devotion is also called supreme love, total self-surrender or total absorption.

Self-surrender is liberation, whoever or whatever one surrenders to.

When the "self" is surrendered, what is, is God.

## Permanency

The permanent values invented by man are his creatures and therefore share their creator's character - impermanency.

## Permanent Realities

There are permanent realities which are not man's invention and which do not care to be discovered by man.

## Imperceptible Truth

Somewhere between mad materialism and sleepy spirituality is the path of wisdom, the path of yoga.

On account of its subtlety, it cannot be pointed out as 'This is it'.

It can only be described as the Middle Path.

It is not broad, like the huge middle class in society.

It is the finest centre, the middle, the imperceptible truth.

## Recognition

It is only now that there are millions of people who call themselves Buddhists, millions of people who call themselves Christians, millions of people who call themselves Hindus.

But, how many people recognized that Buddha was enlightened, how many people recognized that Jesus was Jesus Christ, how many people recognizes that Krishna was an incarnation of God? Very few.

If there were half a dozen fanatic devotees, there were also a dozen fanatic critics.

During their own lifetimes they were not recognized as they are recognized now.

## Happiness

You don't get hung up on past unhappiness or happiness.

You don't get hung up on the future happiness or unhappiness.

You're just left with the present happiness or the present unhappiness.

Then you are quite happy!

## Vigilance

Aware of the thorn, of the venomous snake, one is constantly on guard, one-pointedly, this above all!

Vigilance until the last breath!

## Cobra

When you see that the lovely tail and the dreadful mouth both belong to the same cobra, you do not touch the tail and you are not bitten by its mouth.

## Cobra

Facing the cobra, one does not stay motionless, but one does everything one has to do - except one will not step on it.

## Expectation

The second third of life's misery is expectation.

You are expecting another spell of happiness to come.

That expectation is more excitement, more tension.

If it doesn't come you are miserable.

If it comes and it is not up to your expectations, you are miserable again.

What must you do?

Drop the expectation and let life take over.

## Faith

Even the anxiety to get rid of anxiety should go.

This is possible if the mind realizes that the great wisdom and power, which created you and me and the whole universe is surely capable of maintaining it.

This is not blind faith, but faith, born of an inward vision.

## Endless Enquiry

Can one ask oneself, "Have I looked at the problem from all possible angles to ensure that all foresee-able factors have been taken care of?"

This enquiry is endless, unfathomable and pathless.

### Do not cling

You take the fullest advantage of every spell of happiness that comes your way, but you don't cling to it. If it goes, it goes.

Therefore you are safe from the terrible distress that formerly possessed you when happiness left you.

### Perversion

We don't mind extremes of emotion, but we don't like calm, tranquil life.

We have reached such a state of perversion that we value those things.

### Acceptance

One does not "accept", as accepting leads to justification and defending.

### Clinging

Can we live without clinging and kicking?

### Responsibility

I followed Swami Sivananda implicitly, and I am glad to have done so.

No doubt, He asked me to do things, and I did them because I knew it was right to do them.

The responsibility was mine all the time.

### Violence

The Guru cannot see for the disciple, the Guru cannot force the disciple to see, nor even persuade him to see, for all this is violence.

### Prayer

The immature man prays for worldly success, prosperity and happiness, without realizing that these and the pursuit of pleasure were the real causes of his unhappiness!

### Justifications

We must stop "examining" our emotions, looking for explanations - justifications, and blaming others or ourselves for our actions.

Thought obstructs spontaneous activity!

## Me

It does not take two to make a quarrel, but only one, and that one is "me".  
If "I" will not quarrel, no one can make me quarrel, no one can quarrel with me.

At once there is peace, harmony, health and happiness in me, and in my relationship with others.

## Imitation

Problems only arise when someone wants to imitate someone else.  
I want to imitate you, only because I have not discovered what I am.

## Discovery

When one discovers one's inherent inner nature, it becomes natural for one to become good.

It needs no persuasion, no imposition, and no enforcement from outside.

## Love or Hate

If I love someone, whatever he does is all right.  
But if I hate someone, I don't mind if he is killed.  
These two constantly lead me into some kind of mess or other.

## Balance

Balance is to match my effort with the challenge in front of me.

## Clouding

When I don't imagine anything, I see the world as it is, the circumstances as they are, and not as I hoped they might have been, nor as I fear they are, but just as they are.

I see the circumstances just as they are, without the calculating intellect, and without the emotional heart clouding the whole thing.

## Pause

When harmony does not prevail, it is good to stop, pause and re-examine the situation.

## Hurt

So, even this disharmony has to be discovered and seen for what it is.  
Then it hurts - it will hurt if - and only if - we are sensitive, sincere and serious about our own discovery.

If we are, then we stop blaming others for what exists in us.

### Protector

Once I taste this inner peace and harmony, health and happiness, I see that they are all one, and that it is its own protector.

### Hope

But, as long as that hope is there, there is no hope of attaining anything.

### Death

Death is not a respecter of persons, but it is in love with all.

### Death

When you realize that death puts an end to all this, you live without being torn between these concepts of good and evil, right and wrong.

### Angles

I do not want to see only from one angle, one side.

I want to go round, and see what it looks like from the front, from behind and from all sides.

Then I will never be shocked.

### Experience

It is the understanding that everyone is free to free himself from ignorance with the help of knowledge - experience, and that if my experience is real to me, yours is equally real to you.

### Now

Why not, right from now, observe within myself this bud bursting with eagerness to blossom?

### Present

We blame our present conditions on a remote past, ignoring the immediate cause - which may be the same as the remote cause.

The problem is inside me; the problem is me, not what I did years ago.

It is more profitable therefore that we should look within immediately, now, and discover the present cause of the present conflict or unhappiness, without relating it to past Karma or commitment.

## Now

We do not suffer because of some unknown sin we committed in the distant past, but because of the state of our being just now

## Tendency

The most dreadful sequel of the past is the repetitive tendency which past action leaves in our mind.

This is the reason why our life runs round in circles.

## Mind

The mind can only comprehend that which it can compare with something that is already known.

## Help

It is a terrible sin to give up something that you love.

Smoke until it burns your lips and burns your lungs, because until you decide not to take up the next cigarette, nobody on earth can help you.

## Free

Is there any problem in our life that cannot ultimately be traced to this single thing - selfishness?

If I give that away, I am free.

## Nuisance

We have been told that, if we suffer in this world, we will go to heaven and enjoy there.

We have been conditioned to think that in order to enjoy afterwards we must suffer now.

The suffering is therefore directly related to some pleasure later on.

We cannot abandon the idea of pleasure altogether.

Let it go, I don't want it either here or hereafter, neither physical nor spiritual.

I don't want this at all; it is a nuisance.

## Expectation

If I go to the teacher, I must go symbolically holding a flower in my hand.

"It is the flower of my heart that I offer at Your Feet."

And having offered myself at His Feet, I stand there not expecting a thing, knowing that expectation itself is the parent of all unhappiness, of all misery.

## Divinity

The pattern of development is not something imported from outside, it is already there.

Divinity is not something which I can get from outside.

It has merely to unfold.

## Unfoldment

The flower unfolds beautifully and subtly, because the fullness or the developed state of perfection was already inherent it did not have to call for perfection.

Even in the bud stage, perfection was there already.

Therefore the unfoldment has to happen - there can be no hurry in development, no haste in unfoldment - it has to happen.

## I or They

We are caught in "either - or."

Either I must do it or God must do it.

This is an artificial choice.

Either "I" must do it or "they" must do it.

Why not both?

Why not do my part of it.

## Personality

When God made you, He put something into this personality of yours that He did not put anywhere else in the world.

## Adversity

In countries where there is the concept of competition, the concept that prosperity means one must promote someone else's adversity.

## Violence

I see that when it comes to this matter of development, of life itself, when I am working with other people, there is this spirit of competition, there is this spirit of desire to shine better than somebody else, there is this desire to dominate others.

Therefore, there is the seed of violence.

## Uncovering

I do not know what I am; I do not know whether I am a vicious or a good person.

It is only in my encounter with you, when I come to deal with you, when I bring myself to work with you, and when we are all engaged in this business of development, that I discover myself - "discover" in the sense of "uncovering".

## The Cover

Self-development is like the unfolding of the spirit that is already there. But I am not able to discover that spirit all at once, because the spirit is covered.

When I turn to look within, I am merely seeing that cover.

The "cover" of craving for pleasure, craving for domination, for superiority - all of which is violence.

I need to be able to look at this clearly, look at it closely, turn it around, and see how it works, so as to handle it successfully.

## Clairvoyance

It is only when there is no disorderly feeling and thinking, no commotion, that I can see clearly.

This clear-seeing is what is really called "clairvoyance".

## Either Or

"Either - or" - either we rush or we go to sleep.

Neither of these is true.

## Courage

Let us have the truth, even if the heavens should fall.

One must have the courage to discover the truth within one's own nature, without merely assuming what it is like.

## Neither

I should not be ashamed of the undivine thoughts in me, nor should I assume "I am all God".

## Nature

You cannot beat a flower into blossoming.

## Resignation

When the thorn is in one's foot, one does not resignedly say, "This is not my business, leave it to God."

## Ask

The asking itself is the answer.

## Light

Light illumines, it is not concerned with, nor is it responsible for what we do with or in that illumination.

## Worries

Diversity does not cease to be by merely raising another thought called unity, another thought called omnipresence, another thought called infinity.

It only adds to our worries.

## Rectify

If I am not able to see God in this man, it is not because this Omnipresent God suddenly disappeared from that particular spot.

There is something wrong in me so that I cannot read the fine print.

It is not because the fine print is not clear, but because my eyesight is not good.

Therefore I must rectify that, instead of trying to manipulate the outside world.

## Guru

We cannot do without the Guru on the spiritual path.

We cannot do even without the material objects like food, clothes, and shelter.

These are like the crutches with which the lame man walks.

We cannot renounce them all of a sudden.

We must develop inner strength, dispassion to a high degree, before we can be content with chance alms, the shade of a tree, or near nudity.

## Ego

It is the ego that says, "I am egoless."

## Life

But life is not something that stands in front of you - life is in motion.

## Blind

What we usually do with all the great masters is to follow all the convenient examples - what suits me, I follow.

But I cannot do what is uncomfortable for me.

And therefore, when he does what does not suit me, I say, "Oh, He was so great. He was God almighty; he can do that, but I cannot; I can only do this."

I put Him on a pedestal and worship Him - and what is comfortable, nice, and pleasant, I blindly copy.

That won't do.

## Imitation

This is not what I am here for; not to imitate, but to find myself.

What am I here for in this world?

What is my unique role to play in this world?

That each one has to discover - then that itself acts, enriching one's life.

## Awake or Asleep

If you are inwardly awake, life itself teaches you, everything around you becomes your teacher.

If you are inwardly asleep, then God almighty, standing in front of you, is of no use to you.

## Criticism

Therefore, one who seeks enlightenment or freedom from limitation must expose himself to these different facets, to the teachings of different Masters, different Gurus, so that there is a comprehensive understanding of this truth. It is immediately clear that one who thus exposes himself to several masters is freed from one of the greatest scourges we find among ourselves - criticism.

"My guru is superior to yours."

## Discipleship

It is my openness, my discipleship, and my eagerness to learn that matters.

Once this realization is there, the whole path is clear.

## Realization

If I go to him as a disciple, one who wants to learn, an embodiment of discipline, then first: I must realize that I am ignorant.

Second: that this ignorance is dreadful, that it is the cause of all my sorrow and unhappiness.

Third: that this light will help to dispel the darkness of ignorance.

## Perfection

We should feel that we are nothing - zero.  
This zero is full, perfect, complete.

## Continuity

The only unchanging factor in this universe is constant change; it is continuous, the continuity itself is unchanging.

## Prayer

I have a rather simple prayer.

"God, give me enough health to be able to serve, to work, and enough pain not to forget you."

## Vacuum

There is this vacuum, this emptiness that draws all these problems to itself - and therefore I must become aware of this emptiness.

I or the personality is the emptiness that invites all the problems.

If there were no vacuum, the air would not rush in.

## Cheat

If I want to maintain my dignity in spite of the fact that I am a fool, running after pleasure, I will invent a theory, a doctrine, in order to cover my own wickedness.

Now I am not only a wicked man, but also a cheat!

## Ever Flowing Stream

When we really and sincerely pray, we see the whole life in a completely different light - that there is immortality without any metaphysical connotation.

And then birth, death, old age, pain, and what is called suffering, are all seen as part of the ever-flowing stream, ever changing and yet never changing.

All our prayer is meant to awaken ourselves to this truth.

## This Self

Is it possible to be free of selfishness and thus become directly aware of what this self means?

What is this self? We have completely neglected this quest, and instead have been busy building up relationships, family, properties, endlessly multiplying our problems - then struggling to escape from them, and thus creating more.

## Emptiness

Our concepts have poured into this emptiness - this is our mistake. We keep the emptiness in its glorious state and try to rid ourselves of our problems, but the emptiness is still there and will attract something else.

## Enlightenment

So long as my life is based upon what this emptiness and its contents dictate, it will run in cycles.

That's all, the limit that you and I can reach.

The question must arise one of these days, "Who is it that is aware of this emptiness?"

Then there is what is called enlightenment.

Such an enlightened life is divine life.

## Death and Rebirth

You're tottering, you're not quite steady, and suddenly you fall flat on the ground, lie down for a few minutes, and get up - that's called death and what is known as rebirth.

## Scapegoat

When we ask someone else to make up our mind, we are literally looking for a scapegoat.

## Spanking

There is a Tamil saying, "Even your brothers do not help you as much as a few good spankings will help you."

## Sleep

If I am anxious to have peace of mind, I am like the person who is preoccupied with the need for falling asleep and repeats, "I must sleep, I must sleep."

He will not sleep!

Possibly, if I stop telling myself, "I must sleep," I will fall asleep immediately.

## Realization

When I wheel round and face the sun, I see only the sun, the light, and not myself.

That is God-realization, self-realization, whatever you want to call it.

That is perfection where there is no shadow and where truth alone shines!

### Changing the Reality

If it is part of human nature, it is absurd even to think of changing the reality. In that case, I must accept exactly the same behavior from the other man, and everything will become all right!

### Unfoldment

If, for example, a man has a long nose and he goes on rubbing it until it becomes the desired length, it may take six million years!

The doctor could have done it in a few minutes!

That is the beauty of natural evolution, unfoldment.

It may happen now, or centuries later, but it has to happen eventually.

### Masquerade

Even other qualities like arrogance, self-conceit and anger, when veiled by hypocrisy, can create the illusion of virtues!

They masquerade as self-respect, righteous indignation and dignified bearing.

### Ready

First, I must prepare myself; I must be ready to burst into flame.

Then I must go to a Guru.

By merely looking at Him, I may attain enlightenment.

### Patience

The Guru may have to instruct me once, twice, thrice.

Usually the Holy Men restrict themselves to three attempts.

My Guru would go up to ten - He had infinite patience.

If you still would not listen, He would not throw you out, but offer you some tea or coffee.

### Take That

What do I see first, once I turn my attention inward to see which is my fundamental nature?

I don't see which is my nature - I see that I am greedy, that I am very irritable, that I am proud and interested in prestige.

These things come up when I look directly into myself.

So can I say that this is my nature, that I am a moody person?

I can see rather clearly that I am easily upset, easily annoyed.

Can I take that as my nature?

## Pretending

Why is it that we always have to be told what our duty is?

It is because the attention is elsewhere.

I am not discovering my nature, but I am more interested in covering up my nature, and pretending that I am something else.

I am looking at someone else, and comparing myself with him.

This is another wretched pastime, because it always misleads me.

## Duty

Your duty is your nature, and you cannot violate your nature.

It is natural for a bird to fly, but not for me.

If I jump off a balcony, nature asserts itself, not my imagined ability to fly.

Nature triumphs all the time.

Therefore, can I discover that nature?

It has to be discovered now, every day.

It is then that what my duty is, becomes clear.

## My Attention Within

I am constantly looking outwards, thinking, "What shall I gain from all this?"

Duty is not something that I can learn from somebody else.

It can only be discovered by observing one's own nature.

The spontaneous expression of that nature is one's duty.

In that there is no "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not".

This does not arise at all.

Once I turn my attention within, to see what my fundamental nature is, what do I see first?

## Sincerity

I am a man, and as long as there is life, as long as there is consciousness, I know that I am a man, not a woman or a dog.

Can I also say, in the same way, that I am irritated all the time?

Few of us can say that.

## Monopoly

Every religion declares that God is one, that humanity is one, yet each one declares that it alone has the monopoly of this truth.

How can religion unite man by dividing it, by carving out a slice of its own, and then proclaiming the other slices to be untruths or half-truths?

## Love

Love does not exercise control nor impose its authority.

Love is freedom, but this freedom is the freedom of the spirit, which asserts this freedom in humility, unselfishness and pure love - not in revolts, revolutions and violence.

## Freedom

Freedom is basically a spiritual quality.

Man demands freedom because his spirit is free - ever free - never bound.

Freedom is a quality of the spirit; it is not the result of a reaction.

## Consolation

We discover the truth, only if we have the courage to say, "I can hear but I cannot understand."

We hear, but we do not understand the truth; we think, yet we do not understand the truth.

We console ourselves that we "know".

## Walls

We need to remind ourselves constantly that, though walls make the house, we do not live in the walls, we live in the space which was there even before the walls went up.

## Truly Humble and Virtuous

What is mind without moods, thoughts, feelings?

When this enquiry is pursued, meditation happens.

When this enquiry is pursued the seeker becomes truly humble and also truly virtuous.

Such a seeker is the most noble citizen in the world, an asset beyond value.

He is neither an escapist nor a selfish man.

## Life and Death

Life has become a problem only because we have tried to isolate it from death, treating death itself as a problem.

When we see that death is not a problem, but an inevitable component of life, then life is not a problem either.

Life and death are inseparable.

## Prejudices

It is in the darkness of ignorance that prejudices thrive and cover the mind, thus creating the illusion that you are different from me.

## Receive and Give

You may say that there is no difference between kindness and cruelty, except that kindness will beget kindness and cruelty will beget cruelty.

Are you prepared to treat what you receive in the same spirit in which you give?

## Ignore

It will not do to ignore violence, to turn our face from it, and to pretend that we have eradicated it.

It is there, in each one of us, in as much as we take sides, approve or disapprove, judge and advise.

## I am happiness

Even the striving to be happy is the surest proof of unhappiness.

In this striving, when one grabs moments of happiness, the grabbing destroys the happiness and the striving, which is unhappiness, alone remains.

When all these are dropped, then happiness is.

It can never be caught - I can never seek happiness - I can never be happy.

I am happiness.

## The Quest

The quest itself is, the questioning intelligence is, the questioner is, was and will be, till dissolved in self-knowledge - when the quest ceases.

## Good Will

God creates work - man creates worry.

God creates challenges - man creates problems.

Good will is truly God's Will.

## The Martian

Maybe, when the "lander on Mars" scans in the direction of the earth, he does not see it at all, and decides it does not exist or at best sees it as a particle of dust which, if magnified a million times, resembles a rounded anthill, with individual ants creeping over it.

## An I-dea

Perhaps the first pronoun "I" is nothing but the abbreviation of the full word "Idea".

The first person pronoun "I" may itself be nothing more than an idea.

## "I"-thought

How did man create this space around himself in the first place?

Surely by thinking that he is independent of and separate from the rest of the universe.

This thought itself is space.

This thought (which is the "I"-thought) generates other thoughts in order to assume and to establish a relationship between the individual and the rest of the universe.

These thoughts pollute that inner space.

## Ego

The ego asserts itself and assumes an importance it does not possess.

The ego thinks that it supports life and that it is indispensable, and that without it, life cannot go on in this world.

## Pursuit

I am unhappy all the time because I am pursuing something.

I am pursuing a goal that is fleeting, impermanent.

What is permanent?

The pursuer of all these goals, the experiencer of all these experiences, the knowledge that forever knows remains as knowledge.

It doesn't pursue any goals thereafter, it is ever there, not static, not asleep, but awake, wide-awake, undivided, uncontaminated.

## Time

We have all done this; somebody insults you and you get angry and upset and you are miserable for a couple of days.

Even that is not necessary - the whole incident lasted only ten minutes.

So, why did you have to hold onto it?

But the mind keeps chewing it over: "He should not have done that. This should not happen to me."

The trouble happened long ago, but chewing it again, you are perpetuating the unhappiness.

Time washed it away immediately.

## Happiness

One good thing about the factor of time in our lives is that it seems to take everything away.

If there is a little happiness, time washes it away.

Unhappiness won't last as long as you don't hold it back, wishing it weren't there.

## Pleasure and Pain

The human being can only appreciate a certain amount of pain and a certain amount of pleasure; beyond that, both of them are exactly the same experience.

We suffer a dreadful illusion that the more pleasure, the better. It is not true. One becomes unconscious with pain and swoons with pleasure - they are exactly the same.

In the same way, people cry out of pleasure and cry out of pain - the tears are the same.

So neither the body, nor the external object, determines the definition of pain or pleasure, happiness or unhappiness.

## S-o-r-r-o-w

A holy Man came to a very simple and beautiful understanding - sorrow is 's-o-r-r-o-w', nothing more than the word.

If the word were not there, and if the mind that gave value to that word were not there, where would sorrow be?

This Holy Man discovered that "as you think, so you become".

It means this: I am thinking of sorrow and at that moment I experience sorrow.

## Memory

If you try to remember something that happened ten years ago, you will never be able to remember it as it was, without some imagination distorting it.

Memory is never pure; it is invariably distorted by hope.

Hope interferes with the purity of memory, and in the same way all our hopes are invariably built on memory.

Take the memory away and there are no hopes.

## Truth

The effort to create order is disorder.

The mind that sees this truth, not as an idea but as truth, is alert.

The alert mind itself is order, virtue.

I think

I was alone before you came, and now I think I am with you, but it is not true.  
If my heart stops now and I collapse, you will not be with me, no matter who you are.

My fate will be exactly what it was before you came into my life.

Existence

I am looking for happiness - how do I know that such a thing exists?  
If you ask this question seriously, only one thing exists and that is the questioner.

The hoper of the hopes exists; the rememberer of the memories exists.  
That is all.

I think

There is a state in which there is no thinking as such - I think.

Nature

Nature is complex in her simplicity.  
She loves those who try to understand her.

Headaches

We do not know what happiness means - we only know what sorrow means.  
Happiness is, according to our limited experience, the period in between two sorrows; the time when we are not miserable.

Between two headaches there is a head - waiting for the next headache!

Vigilance

When the thorn is in one's foot, one does not resignedly say, "This is not my business; leave it to God."

One does not "accept", as accepting leads to justifying and defending.

Facing the cobra one does not stay motionless, but does everything one has to do - except one does not step on it!

Similarly with a thorn in the foot.

Aware of the thorn, of the venomous snake, one is constantly on guard, one-pointedly.

This above all - vigilance till the last breath.

## Breathing

Perhaps "breathing" was intended more to bring about relaxation of the nerves and calming the mind, than just ventilating the lungs.

## Desire

It is when the mind has a mental image of a past experience of pleasure projected onto an object, that the link is established - the desire arises. Otherwise there is no craving in the heart of man if this process is cut somewhere.

## Calmness

We all enjoy a calm mind in sleep, but since we are unaware of that calmness, it is of no use to us.

The yogi tries deliberately to reproduce, create this calmness, while he is awake.

## Worship

What is devotion? It is motion in depth within me. There should be no externalization.

The opposite of emotion is devotion or depth; the fountain which sees the truth, which loves the truth, which loves God deep within, not only here but everywhere, deep within.

When I reach the depth of the image, I suddenly realize that in the depth of all beings, including this being, there is God.

How shall I worship Him? In any manner I like.

## Integral

The karma yogi is able to jump six feet, the bhakti yogi seven feet, the jnana yogi eight feet.

Where will they land? All of them down the well!

Unless we achieve integral perfection, there is no perfection.

## I Me

This "I" was originally the infinite.

Probably the letter "I" actually stood for the whole word 'infinite', but we use the word "I" to refer to the finite, to the absurdly little thing, a dot, a point.

This littleness must go - this "me" must go, must disappear.

## Civilization

A man wearing simple sandals walks gently; the same man wearing fashionable shoes has a different gait.

When we talk of civilization, we imply a greater accumulation of, or intimate association with the machine.

Yet does the machine civilize us, evoke civilized behavior in us? Perhaps not.

## Yoga

Yoga is integration of our own personality, which prevents countless physical and mental maladies; of our individuality within society, which ensures social welfare, harmony and national prosperity; of the soul with God, which is enlightenment or salvation.

It is not a religion or a cult - rightly understood: it is the core of all religions. Religious conversion loses all meaning; yoga strengthens and vitalizes one's faith in one's own religion.

It promotes true understanding in each practitioner who is eager to concede to others the same religious freedom that he wishes to enjoy.

Step by step yoga leads us to the pinnacle of perfection, total freedom from every type of limitation and bondage.

## The Prize

Yoga is life - the whole of our life must be transformed into divine; that is divine life.

To live in tune with the infinite, to let divinity radiate through every one of our thoughts, words and deeds - that is yoga.

That is the price we should be prepared to pay, to win the priceless prize of self-realization.

## Merry-goes-round

We are living in a strange world and yet not so strange, for it has always been so.

For those who have made an honest study of the legend called history and the history called legend, it would appear that the problem has remained the same - the struggle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness.

The former triumph and their triumph turns them (or their descendants) into the latter.

So the world merry-goes-round.

## Liberation

One who would like to tread this spiritual path must be eternally vigilant; he should not relax that vigilance even for a single moment.

As long as there is an "I" capable of being vigilant and therefore of being non-vigilant, one should be vigilant.

This eternal vigilance itself is enlightenment, liberation.

I think now it is easy to see how and why a person who is eternally vigilant must inevitably enjoy his life here and now.

## Control

We fall down because we attempt to excel.

We want to excel to have control over you, to dominate you, to mould you.

It is here that we have gone wrong.

## Clairvoyance

Clairvoyance means, in French, "clear sight" - that's all.

My sight is clear, it is not confused, and therefore I am able to look within, see the mind clearly.

It becomes transparent.

There one discovers what one is.

## H-a-p-p-i-n-e-s-s

Happiness is nothing but 'h-a-p-p-i-n-e-s-s', the word and the corresponding concept that seems to arise in the mind.

Once the concept has arisen in the mind, the mind itself experiences the same concept.

What is it that gives rise to that concept?

When you directly enquire into this, you come face to face, not with sorrow, not with happiness, but with the content of these, which is the same - the spirit of the mind.

## Resurrection

Remember that crucifixion must precede resurrection.

Resurrection is a divine act, not a human achievement.

## Life

Life is something that happens between two deaths.

Happiness is something that happens between two sorrows.

I was unhappy yesterday, and while I say that I am happy today, there is the sneaking suspicion that this may not be so tomorrow.

The valley between two hills of sorrow is envisaged to be happiness.

The wish to enjoy the delight, the bliss - to capture and hold it - that becomes sorrow!

## Pretend

Whatever you are trying to hold onto is dead.

You are left with just the effort of holding on!

That effort is pain and sorrow.

Unfortunately, since we do not want to recognize this truth, we do not see it as such.

We pretend to ourselves that we know what happiness means.

## Invent

The mind is not trained to live in truth.

Freedom from sorrow is a negative concept.

We want something positive, so we invent bliss.

Having invented it, we go looking for it, we want to experience it.

The periods in between the peaks of pain in life are regarded by the foolish mind as bliss, which is in fact non-existent.

## Vigilant

If I know that when I stick my finger into this power point, it might electrocute me or give me a painful shock, I will not do it at all.

That is the person of eternal vigilance.

One who realizes that a certain action is foolish and causes unhappiness will not do it.

He is vigilant - eternally vigilant and happy now.

## Work

We must learn to distinguish between being active and restless.

Work and worry are also two different things.

God created work, man created worry.

## Power

The rose by just being the rose attracts everybody.

We have a beehive at the ashram.

I don't even tell the bees where the roses are blossoming, they know.

That flower, by just being what it is, has such tremendous power over all those bees.

## Advice

When advice is very easily given, it merely adds vice.

## Conform

If you scratch my back, I purr, and if you squeeze my tail, I jump on you.

It doesn't seem to make any sense at all.

One who is intent on discovering his identity does not react, and the problem does not arise in his heart: "Must I conform or must I non-conform?"

## Pure Heart

It seems that God, having created all beings in the universe, suddenly finds himself homeless.

It seems that God said, "I have created man. He is my own child, so I must not be too far away from him, but he must not grab me - unless his heart is pure.

So, what must I do? Where must I dwell?"

"I will dwell in his heart, very close to him, and yet he will never look into his own heart - unless it is pure."

## Change

Why must I feel that it is too late to change now?

Why must I be shy - ashamed of confessing that I have been wrong, that I have messed up my own and other people's lives?

If that is true, let us face it.

Whatever be my chronological age, if I have not started on the quest of self-discovery, I am an unborn baby.

If I don't know what I am, how do I know I exist?

## Labor

Gurudev Swami Sivananda constantly warned that without desirelessness, egolessness and (on the positive side), seeing God in all, mere activity is but labor, so much energy wasted.

## Experiment

Spiritual life should result in our expressing our essential, divine, spiritual nature, in all our thoughts, words and deeds.

This demands keen discrimination, intelligent dispassion and firm determination.

This demands an ability to make sacrifices, a daring spirit of adventure, and a willingness to make the necessary psycho-spiritual experiments, which might cost us not only the pleasures of this worldly life, but our life itself.

## Share

Consider that you are only the trustee of the wealth that has been entrusted to you by God.

You are certainly not going to take it away with you when you leave this world, so why make yourself and others miserable by hoarding it?

Put yourself in the other man's position, sincerely and truly.

What would you expect? Compassion?

Be compassionate - turn accursed wealth into a great blessing - share with all.

## Intelligence

Ordinary human beings weep with the sorrowful, and laugh with the joyous. But the yogi knows that whether those experiences seem to be pleasant or unpleasant, the content of those experiences is the same pure experiencing that arises in the one undivided, indivisible Intelligence.

The yogi behaves in exactly the same way as you and I do, seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, tasting etc.

But he knows that all these actions or expressions of his own senses, of the mind, of the intellect, arise in that Intelligence.

## Truth

There are many methods of meditation, but the one unalterable law is that, if we are sincere in our approach to our practice, we must arrive at the truth that the God, who dwells in our hearts, dwells in all.

## Awareness

Basically, the philosophy of yoga does not indulge in injunction and prohibition, but promotes awareness.

That is the key word - awareness.

## Harmony

Harmonizing our relationship with one another is also yoga.

Harmonizing our relationship with cosmic forces is also yoga, bhakti yoga.

## Witchcraft

If I am devoted to God, if I repeat His Name with every breath, if I am good and do good, how can witchcraft touch me at all?

If I am devoted to God in this manner, then the harm that someone may direct towards me will only rebound on that someone.

## Worry

I say I am worried, but if I try to find out who "I" is, what this "worry" is, the problem is gone.

## Pairs

In fact everything you wish to have comes along with everything you wish to avoid.

You cannot possibly break up these pairs and have them singly.

## Precipice

All preconceived notions of what is right and wrong, good and evil, righteous and unrighteous, all these dualities are the creation of the ego, which is the creation of Maya.

These may be approved by society - you have a sort of stupid satisfaction, because your conduct is approved by people and you are respected by them.

When you look within yourself, you must be able to see this vanity - you must see the uselessness of this kind of life.

It is then that you arrive at the precipice - this is all you can get to, the only point you can reach.

## Suicide

Only that mind can be still which has arrived at its own - it has committed suicide as it were.

Just as the ocean can become absolutely calm, without any waves at all, and yet still be there, only its modification as waves and currents having ceased, even so intelligence will be there without the modifications known as thoughts, ideas, concepts and actions.

## Humility

If I am able to face the truth that there is no security in this changing world, from that springs all the virtues.

I do not assume that people are the same today as they were yesterday, so I approach them humbly.

## Awakeners

What is the purpose of life? Is there any purpose or do we merely exist until we die? What is my relation with you? What is the meaning of "pleasure and pain"?

Often these questions do not arise in man's mind until he is rudely shaken by shock, failure or calamity. The normal man is far too busy with the struggle for existence to find time for such thoughts about life.

He is content to exist; he hardly ever lives. Even miseries fail to waken him; he only changes his tactics, blaming his neighbors and sometimes himself, and endeavors to find happiness by other methods.

There is total darkness around him, and even the way out is completely forgotten.

At such times the Almighty Lord grants us great spiritual awakeners, who come and live with us.

## Finite Instruments

If we try to reach out to the infinite with finite instruments, we have trouble, mess, confusion, sin and headaches.

It is here that we are caught.

## Living Substance

Food outside the body decays, but the same food eaten, digested and assimilated, becomes body, becomes "me", becomes living substance.

## The Battle

The need for self-realization is in the battle of life.

I am the creator of this battle.

I am the battle.

## Observation

Saint Francis looked at this man and said, "If you have not learned so far, I cannot teach you any more. If you have not had the power of observation, then saying a few words is not going to be of any use to you."

## State of Yoga

In the case of most of us the of yoga happens and we do not taste it, we do not enjoy it, and therefore we are not established in it.

The yogi consciously and deliberately moves towards it.

One cannot consciously and deliberately bring on the state of yoga, it has to happen; but you can consciously and deliberately move towards it, so that you have an indirect experience of it, in the penultimate state, and in the state afterwards, when you return to what is called normal consciousness.

In other words, when you want to fall asleep, you arrange the pillows properly, you switch off the lights, you lie down and you observe yourself falling asleep.

As long as you are observing, you are not going to sleep.

When you have fallen asleep, you stop observing; a couple of minutes before you are destined to sleep, the observation is switched off.

So, if you have learned to enjoy that state of sleep, to enjoy that state of yoga, then you cherish it, you value it, and then it is possible for you to be established in it.

## Peace

Just like the tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, try to taste that peace. Spend half an hour or an hour in meditation, then you get up and come out, making sure every now and then that that peace is still there, that you have not dropped it anywhere.

If I do not drop that which I have in my pocket, it's bound to be there.

When in this fashion, you constantly repeat that taste, that experience of the inner peace, then you are established in it.

## Communion

It is when man aspires to rule another that conflict arises, and his own personality is split into numerous fragments.

For such a person it is almost impossible to experience Holy Communion.

To be holy one has to achieve "wholeness".

To achieve wholeness means the resolution of all conflicts, all duality.

In fact, this is communion - hence communion is holy.

## A Prayer

Unless we are good and we do good, and thus align ourselves with the world order, an expectation is arrogance and foolishness.

When he comes again, may he not find us on the side of evil!

Such should be our active prayer day and night, especially on this auspicious occasion, the Holy Christmas when we remember His incarnation.

## Life

Life is not born; it does not undergo any change.

The differences we see are assumed and not real, but they give rise to different attitudes, approaches, forms of behavior and different experiences, which we call good and evil, pleasure and pain, hell and heaven.

Life is beyond all these. Life is God.

## Karma Yoga

Karma yoga is the touchstone for the truth of meditation, and meditation will necessarily obliterate the distinctions that are created by the mind.

Karma yoga is when meditation and life fuse into one.

## Change

Everything is bound to change; there is change from day to day.

Once I see the truth there is no fear.

## Im-mortal

Mortal life is a straw caught in a gale, and yet its immortal essence is the space unaffected by the gale.

Mortal life is bounded by life and death, but the immortal is unborn and deathless.

A glimpse of the immortal makes you fearless, and realization that all life is mortal makes you equally fearless.

## Unique

A rose is a rose, because it is a rose.

It is unique in God's creation even as you are.

A rose smells as sweet as a rose, because it does not want to become a lotus or jasmine.

## Hurt

A real and radical change will not happen in my life till I develop an inner sensibility to such an extent that the past habits really hurt, that every manifestation of selfishness or egoism hurts.

## Normal

There is no "normal" person in this world; and, of course, each man is "normal" to his own nature!

The psychologist's "sword" of "abnormality" has ruined the life of many, stifling talents and compelling the psychologist-disapproved characteristics to commit suicide.

Abnormality rarely exists in nature, but abounds in the psychiatrist's clinic, created and confirmed by him. Self-understanding will promote self-culture and self-realization.

One need not fit into another's jacket, but one must be true to one's own self and grow in the image of God - that which one essentially is.

Jealousy, envy and imitation are a waste of time and lead to psychological suicide.

## Division

The first person pronoun "I" may itself be nothing more than an idea.

However, as soon as this idea arises, it creates you, the other person, the second person, the he, she, and it, the third person. From this division flows an interminable stream of worry, anxiety, fear and hate.

How does one put an end to this? By realizing that you are the stream. The moment you realize that, the menace has ceased.

## Census

Control of the senses - the census?

## Can't help

The sun shines, not because it wants to warm your back.

It shines because it is one of those things the sun cannot help.