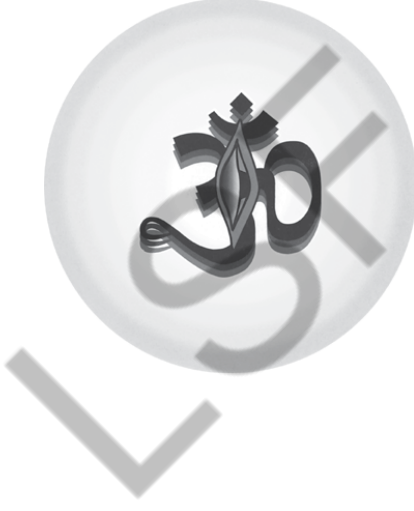
THE DIVINE VISION

A Periodical on Spirituality and Health



LIFE SCIENCES FOUNDATION

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THE DIVINE VISION

Founded by
Dr. O.P. Kohli

(A periodical on Spirituality and Health by Life Sciences Foundation.)

Devoted to enlightening the mankind on spiritual evolution through techniques of meditation: raising one's limited consciousness to expanded consciousness; enabling on to liberate from threefold sufferingsof physical, mental and spiritual ignorance; and offering spiritual healing when medical facilities and medicines fail to respond.

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(The publication of this periodical is based on sea knowledge in Gita, Ramayana, Vedas and other Hindu Holy Scriptures and teachings of our Revered Guruji 'Premavatar Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda')

EDITORIAL

The most useful advice from Dr. O P Kohli is that meditation always pays to be positive in wishes, thought and approach. Attempt is made once again to meditate and concentrate on spiritual power of God when the final stage of the two and a half month long Lok Sabha elections unfolds today as Prime Minister Narender Modi eyes a historic third term.

Meditation is a practice in which an individual uses a technique, such as mindfulness or focusing the mind on a particular object or thought. We meditate the way our saints, sages and mystics have mediated over the centuries that brings life transforming responses.

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman shared a note by Prime Minister Narender Modi written after his meditation session for 45 hours at Vivekanand Rock Memorial in Kanyakumari.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday the 1st of June 2024 concluded a 45 hour (about 2 days) meditation at Vivekanand Rock Memorial in Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari. Prime Minister Modi's meditation began on May 30th and continued till June 1st for nearly 45 hours. He wrote that he felt a boundless flow of energy within himself. All the fervour of the elections was echoing in his heart and mind, he entered into a sadhana and then the heated political debates, counter attacks, voices and words of accusation all vanished into a void and a sense of detachment came to grow within him and his mind became completely detached from the external world.

Meditation became challenging amidst such huge responsibilities, but the land of Kanyakumari and inspiration of Swami Vivekanand made it effortless.

Prime Minister wrote at the end," I am also grateful to God for instilling me with these values from birth which i have cherished and

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tried to live up to. I was also thinking about what Vivekanand must have experienced during his meditation at the very place in Kanyakumari. A part of my meditation was spent in a similar stream of thoughts," He wished people to see Bharat development in a global context. The world of the 21st century is looking towards Bharat with many hopes, and we will need to make several changes to move forward in the global scenario. We also need to change our traditional thinking regarding reforms. Our Reforms should also align with the aspiration of Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047. These thoughts were penned by PM Modi on 1st June between 4:15 PM and 7:00 PM during his return flight from Kanyakumari to Delhi.

After a long-drawn process, the election results for all 543 seats were announced by the Election Commission of India, early morning on the 5th of June 2024 with BJP falling short of magic number that would have given it sole majority in Lok Sabha. Now the party relied on its allies to form the next government on Sunday 9th of June 2024 at 7:15 PM.

Narendra Modi was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India for a historic third consecutive term, along with 76 ministers. Top South Asian leaders were invited to the Oath ceremony. Also, around 8,000 guests attended the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Council of Ministers.

THE DIVINE VISION

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THE INNER WORLD

By: Dr. O.P.Kohli

All desire is a tendency to unite with externals. And this external may be a physical object or a psychological condition. Physical objects constitute the usual attractions of sense, we may say, on the animal level. We should not forget that man has also the animal in him, though kept in check due to social restrictions and one's own egoistic ambitions which temporarily forget the requisitions of the senses. But this, the egoistic level, is often far more weighty than the sensory, at least in a class of people whom we term the intelligentsia, though this weight is outweighed by the sense-urge when the individual is not in the good books of society or is cast out as an unwanted element or is disregarded for some reason. Those who always live in social circumstances and wind round themselves some sort of prestige – you may call it false, if you like – develop an exteriorised self and adore it as the real one. Others who are mostly accustomed to solitary life have a chance of confining themselves to the voices of the within, whether this within is the sense-world or the spiritual.

This is why spiritual seekers, ascetics, hermits and the like have, in the pursuit of the higher ideal of the Spirit, to face the dangers of the downward pulls of sense on being presented with the least opportunity for their manifestation. And this may be due to lack of vigilance – remember, no one can be always vigilant throughout one's life, and there are moments of slackness of watch even in the most powerful aspirants of the religious Ideal – or the excessive impetuosity with which the sense-objects

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reveal their attractive natures. The ego has, generally, no meaning when it is not associated with society to offer it adulations, though, very rarely it can pronounce grand judgments on itself, even when it is alone, seemly by imagination of the extent of its achievements. But the senses do not require social approbation or patting; they are happy even if no one would know them. In fact they hate being known to others. Their essence is a selfishness of the narrowest kind, restricted to the personality or the individuality alone. Animals do not want praise from others; they are satisfied if their senses are satisfied. And the animal man, who is the sensual man, needs no society for his delights. He would rather wish that the society know not his enjoyments.

But the purely social man is the egoistic man who would hide his sense-passions for another ideal which he regards as superior to the merely sensual. Let it be pointed out that this urge of the ego is in no way superior in quality to the sense-urge, though the society is prone to think so. For the sense-urge has physical objects for its target, while the ego has psychological objects for its aim. The ego may manifest itself as the assertion of prominence as a head in the family, as an important person in the community, as a leader of the nation, as an international figure steering the course of large groups of mankind, as a renowned scholar or an advanced Yogi. It is all the same – just so many layers of the ego. Physical objects tie down the senses to their promising shapes and contours, and the psychological conditions of importance, honour, respect, fame, authority and superiority over others confine the ego-sense to their tantalising greatness. The sense and the ego are like the devil and the deep sea, between which the seeking individual is caught, and

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whichever way it moves, its fate is sure to be destruction.

Desires, again, have three degrees: the brute, the rational and the spiritual. The first is the subhuman side of passions that are bent upon having their fill, though the world may go to dogs. Such violent desires of the animal nature, the savage instincts, have no regard for the good of the individual concerned, for their objective is only satisfaction, even if the individual is to die immediately after the satisfaction. These are what we call the immoral natures, so much condemned in the science of ethics and morality, for they have no concern with the welfare of others. Their motto is 'each for himself, and devil take the hindmost'. This is naturally an intolerable attitude, and no one would like the behaviour of such a person. This is not good either for oneself or for others. This is the extreme side of desire.

But there is the higher aspect of desire, which is refined and is necessary as a prophylactic in the evolution of the lower man into the higher. So in the fulfilment of these controlled desires, man achieves a gradual mastery over them, not by utter and downright negation, which is not practicable, but a restrained satisfaction of their demands with the full consciousness that its aim is the final overcoming of all desire, for the devil must have its due when we have not yet seen the face of the Divine. This is also the instruction of the Bhagavad-Gita, which one should be moderate in enjoyment and restraint, activity and self-absorption, wakefulness and sleep, sport and seriousness of conduct, and not goes to extremes either way, for it is not the Yoga way of life. Equanimity, harmony and balanced conduct is Yoga.

The good and the virtuous is just what is essential for a healthy life of body and mind and spirit,

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and inasmuch as there is no universally laid down standard for this mean or the via media of action and conduct, its test has to be a personal sense of freshness and buoyancy of spirit, a feeling of health and joy within, together with a continuous stream of the flow of unforgotten consciousness of the supreme Ideal of life. The highest form of desire is when it is sublimated into a spiritual activity of the universalised consciousness. This is seen in saints and sages of all countries who do not make a distinction between God and the World. Their enjoyments and their sufferings are not theirs, they are of the universe, they have a universal body, for all that they see is the manifestation of God. They eat and rejoice and seem to have the normal enjoyments of a human being, but their minds are lifted above the realm of personality and the mire of the earthward pull. These are the great saviours, the incarnations, the prophets, the messiahs, the masters and the guides of humanity in its spiritual quest. Such men look like anyone else outwardly – they have a body, they have their personal and social lives, they are sometimes householders with large families, they play and talk and laugh and eat and drink and bathe. Yes; but their minds are differently constituted. Sometimes they are seen in silken robes and royal costumes like Janaka, at others they are like insensible idiots like Jadabharata. They may be householders and ritualists like Vasishtha, Yogis and mediators like Jaigishavya and Dattatreya, romantic pleasure-lovers like Saubhari, encyclopaedic writers and teachers of humanity like Vyasa, or unconcerned sages in union with the Supreme Being like Suka. But they have all equal knowledge and the power to create, destroy or transform things at their will (Kartum akartum anyatha va kartum saktah). In the personality of Sri Krishna we have a marvellous

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blend and synthesis of the inscrutable ways in which the divine superman lives and moves in this world. Their lives, their speech, behaviour and action are all super-rational mysteries, and here they are free from the connotation which is applied to the term 'desire' in normal life, for here desire is inseparable from universal existence. It has ceased to be an externalising tendency and is once and for all consumed in the blaze of the light of the Absolute.



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THE CAUSE OF A FLICKERING MIND IN MEDITATION

Dr. O.P.Kohli

Meditation is placed as the seventh stage in the developmental process of yoga practice as expounded by Sage Patanjali. Prior to the level of meditation are the earlier stages known as yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara and dharana. The understanding of a particular stage in this series requires a careful consideration. We are usually accustomed to think of the levels mentioned in yoga culminating in Samadhi as links in a chain, but there is a difference here, and that is very important to remember.

Every link in a chain is independent and is mechanically connected to other links so that if one link is severed from the others, no vital injury is inflicted upon the whole chain. If we vertically hang a chain, the upper links will look like higher levels and the lower ones, the preceding levels. We can very well compare these stages of yoga – yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana – to these links of a chain or, to be clearer, to the various rungs of an upright ladder. The rung that is above is preceded by the rungs that are below, and we understand the connection of one rung with another or one link with another in the chain, but this sort of understanding is irrelevant when we apply ourselves to the levels of yoga.

These stages of yoga which are sometimes translated as rungs in the ladder of practice are metaphorical rungs, not literal rungs. They are not disconnected from one another like rungs in a ladder or links in a mechanically contrived chain. In what sense are we to understand these stages of yoga, then? Here is the essence of the

whole matter.

Generally, novitiates in yoga, or even so-called advanced practitioners who have some knowledge of meditation and the benefits of yoga practice, are likely to imagine that for some years we practise yama and then forget about it, and then take up niyama and then be done with it, then do asana, then that is over, then do pranayama, and so on. They think that there is a set period of months or years, as the case may be, for each particular limb of yoga mentioned, as if the earlier levels are done away with when one seems to be keeping one's foot on the next higher level.

Actually, the lower stages are like the foundation of a building, and when we raise the edifice or the walls or the large structure of a building, we do not do away with the foundation, imagining that it has nothing at all to do with the building. The walls stand on the foundation, and the ceiling stands on the walls. The superstructure of yoga is similarly stationed and founded and stabilised by that which is apparently lower in the sense that it has preceded it. The precedent is not necessarily the lesser. Here is again a small mistake that anyone can commit, thinking that yama is inferior to niyama, niyama is inferior to asana, and asana is inferior to pranayama, and so on. When we come to dhyana we are likely to think that there is no meaning whatsoever in the earlier stages. This is certainly not true.

The analogy that I mentioned just now of the foundation and the walls of a building may not be sufficiently descriptive of this condition. The matter is more serious. It something more important than the foundation of a building because the foundation is a mechanical structure, and here we are concerned with a living process.

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These processes of the levels of yoga are the vital essence of a living, constructive being, and we have to bear in mind what a living being is. The organism called a living being grows into its perfection and maturity with the advance of time by transmuting the potentialities and the powers of the earlier stages into the larger comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of the higher one.

Thus, it is futile to imagine that asana is dissociated from the yamas and niyamas, for instance. Most people who are habituated to an excessive interest in the practice of yoga physical exercises do not even dream that there are things such as the yamas and niyamas they believe that they have nothing to do with them, as if yoga physical exercise is the movement of a bulldozer with no life in it. The body is not a bulldozer consisting of mechanised parts, with no life. Yoga asanas are distinguishable from physical exercises such as sports by their being vitally connected to one's moral existence and unselfishness of attitude. One who is not properly tutored in ethics and morals and who has not sufficiently grown in unselfishness cannot even be benefited by yoga physical exercises. This is something specific we have to mention in regard to yoga practice if we are to consider yoga exercises that appear to be physical as really related to yoga. Otherwise, they would be just like badminton, football or cricket.

The stages of yama and niyama, therefore, are not merely moral and ethical requirements of which people generally say they have plenty. This only is a manner of speaking, as no one can have plenty of these. It is difficult to have even a little of these, honestly speaking. “I am already trying to be good and I have not done any mistake; I

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have not done any harm." It does not mean that one is established in yama. Yama is a different thing altogether. It is a dressing of oneself in a new robe of spiritual radiance, and though no one can hope to be a master of the yamas and niyamas in one life, at least fifty percent or more of mastery is required as one's possession and treasure in order that one may be found to be fit to step into the next stage. Fifty percent may be considered as a pass mark here; it is not enough if it is less, because then you cannot reach the higher stage and you will get a kick from the top.

Now, coming to the point of meditation, which is the seventh stage, we can imagine what an amount of accumulation of inner strength is implied in considering oneself as being prepared for this adventure called meditation: a total dedication of oneself in a spirit of unselfishness, a preventing of oneself from getting retarded in the mire of sensory attractions, a capacity to be undisturbed in one's muscles and one's nerves, and more than all things that are already mentioned, the capacity to fix the mind on one point is required, which is the crux of the whole matter.

The difficulty in fixing the attention of consciousness on any given particular thing is sometimes considered as the result of a lack of sufficient time given to the practice. Many think that the practice has not been conducted for a sufficient number of months or years, and therefore the mind is splitting, jumping and hopping, and it will not concentrate on anything, but the greater reason is something else. It is the unpreparedness at the lower stages, and a sudden eagerness to master the higher without having controlled the lower. This should be considered as a principal reason for the incapacity of the mind to

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concentrate.

Whatever we have been in the stages of yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara and dharana will be taken notice of in the state of meditation. You cannot tell the meditation, "I have finished all these earlier stages. Now why do you worry about all these?" Nothing of the kind is the fact. Meditation as the seventh stage is the culmination of the lower stages. It is the evolution of the earlier, and not the snapping of the connection with the earlier. It is the end which is the evolution of the means, which are the earlier proceeding stages. This is why one who has been weak in the earlier stages cannot be strong in a later stage. Thus, to expect an achievement of a total absorption of consciousness by way of meditational attention would be a futility in the case of a person who has not been sufficiently cautious in the earlier stages. If there has been great error in the judgment of oneself in the preceding stages that error will tell upon one's effort in the higher stage of meditation.

So when a person, a seeker, a sincere sadhaka finds that meditation is not going to be practicable – it is neither possible to sit in one pose for a considerable period of time, nor is it possible to concentrate the mind on anything – this condition should awaken a new dispassionate spirit in oneself. "Why is it that I cannot concentrate? What is wrong with me?" Put this question to your own self: "Why do I have this desire to jump here and there, to move twenty places and walk about in all directions, to talk to this person and that person, to do this and do that, and never have time to sit and concentrate for a moment? What has happened to me? What is wrong with me that I cannot concentrate?" Another

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person cannot be expected to give you an answer to this question. Each one is one's own judge. To thine own self are true. Be true to your own self. If there is something which is not justifiable in the eyes of God, that can be a good reason in preventing the mind from taking even the initial step in meditation. What is it that will not be permitted in the eyes of God? Does anyone know? It is that which will not be permitted by the principle of unselfishness. God is the supreme state of non-self in the sense of abolition of all individuality.

Thus, there is no question of I-ness or affirmation of the self as opposed to another alienated from the self. Selfishness is that type of psychological operation by which the affirming principal, which is the psyche, distinguishes itself from its environment and opposes reality, as psychoanalysts tell us. The psyche, which is selfish, is opposed to reality outside because it finds that its needs, requirements, desires and passions cannot be fulfilled if it is to follow the norms set by that which we call reality outside.

A spiritual seeker is not a runaway from the lower realities of life. This would be a poor understanding of what spiritual seeking is. He is a person who has conquered the lower realities and not one who has run away as an escapist from social life, from political life, from business life, etc.

In the absorption and transmutation of the lower into the higher, a very important chemical action takes place, that is, when the lower impulses are transmuted into the higher potency of concentration and meditation, they shed their selfishness. The essentiality, the potency and the reality in them alone is propped up and brought to the surface of the higher comprehensiveness. The

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selfishness that is characteristic of the lower level is removed in the absorption of the principles of the lower in the higher. You may be wondering how a lower stage can be freed from selfishness.

This is exactly what the Bhagavad-Gita, for instance, requires us to do. All activity in any level of life is divine ultimately; it is expected to be divine, and becomes a form of virtual worship if it is rid of the selfishness which is likely to infect it. All occupations in life are equally worthy and adorable in the eyes of God provided these levels of activity are considered as degrees of the same Ultimate Reality, meaning thereby degrees of unselfishness and not degrees of selfishness.

In the meditational stage, therefore, we have to bear in mind a well-known factor, namely, that one has to be seated in meditation for a protracted period. One minute, five minutes or ten minutes of sitting every day may not be sufficient because that would be like adding a spoon of sugar into a river, to make it sweet. The twenty-four hours of distracted activity may drown this little effort of a few minutes' meditation. Therefore, it is necessary to see that the effect of meditation is adequately strong to compensate the diversions and distractions of the other hours of the day.

To this end one may have to devote sufficient time; that is true of course, as already mentioned, but the quality of meditation is equally important, if not more important. While the quantity or the number of minutes or hours devoted for the purpose is important, more important is the quality of concentration. A highly intense focusing for even a few minutes may produce a more lasting and beneficial result than a shallow meditation for even ten hours. Therefore, time as well as intensity has to go together.



THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

Dr. O.P.Kohli

The world we live in is mostly utilitarian, for to it utility has been the test of truth. If something is workable and useful, it is also meaningful and therefore real. This is sometimes identified with the pragmatic viewpoint, a purely working hypothesis on the basis of sensibility akin to animal perception. The subhuman instinct seen in animals' functions upon the logic of pure utility – whatever satisfies hunger and sex and guards the instinct for life is real. But in man there is an additional factor: EGO – whatever satisfies it also is real. Satisfaction of these urges is finally a factor of utility, and they have to be real in order that their satisfactions and their counterparts are real.

But, what is meant by being real? Tentatively speaking, for a thing to be real it has to persist in time and space as judged by a centre of experiencing consciousness. Now, this drags the factor of time and space also into the issue of reality. But what is the reason behind this judgment that to be real is to persist in space and time? We have to conclude that this is the only way in which the experiencing consciousness can decide the nature of reality. This position seems to land us in a question that we shall be discussing shortly.

It was realised by some that pure utility cannot always be the test of truth. Perception of mirage water under the notion that it is real water may bring to the mind of the thirsty man a sense of comfort. But, though the comfort may be real, the cause of it is unreal. A lunch served in dream may appease the hungry man in dream. A false news of having won a victory or earned a lottery may bring a satisfaction whose cause is unreal. An untrue

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news of the death of the only son of a mother may even kill her, and while her heart-break is real its cause is unreal. Occurrences of this kind and the usual commonsense view of life have made people hold that truths have to correspond to facts. Beyond utility is correspondence.

Now, the idea that corresponds to fact is the test of truth implies that we are capable of knowing fact, and hence truth. But what is fact? Again, we stumble upon our criterion of persistence in space and time. This sounds almost like a vicious circle from which we cannot escape. Even a phantom can persist in space and time, such as mirage water. There seems to be, in the end, no criterion of knowing truth if we are to rely merely on the utility theory or the correspondence theory of truth.

Thinkers have held that the test of truth, ultimately, is coherence. The parts should organically fit themselves into the whole. Utility and correspondence do not satisfy this test because while they seem to satisfy one part of the knowledge-process, they conflict with the other parts. The process of knowing is a self-related, organic whole in which the parts are mutually consistent with one another. There should be no contradiction within its constitution and it should not be transcended by any other experience. Else, it would not be truth but its opposite.

Facts should not only be satisfying to the senses, mind, intellect and feeling, thus serving the purpose of utility, but also correspond to existent facts. But the existence of the fact should not be merely tentative; it should also have been existent in the past and should continue in the future. The mirage water, for example, does not exist in the future, for when one approaches it; it

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recedes from one's contact and then vanishes at the particular point of difference in the circumstances that caused its appearance. It should also be self-consistent and consistent with the experience of which it forms a part. We say that waking experience is real because we see the same things throughout our life and the objects of waking life have been seen to be workable to our personality as also stand uncontradicted in the past, present and future of our span of life. They satisfy 'me, you and everyone else', at the same time. They are coherent to the practical system of our judgment of truth, viz.; they are not self-discrepant and are true for all persons, at all times and in every way.



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ANNUAL FUNCTION

Dr. O.P.Kohli

The 28th Annual Function of Life Sciences Foundation was celebrated on 7th April 2024 and about 300 devotes from far off places attended the function. Learned Bhai Sahib Dr. O P Kohli ji gave blessings to all the devotees and wished them great success and good health.

Dr. O P Kohli explained the concept of karma yoga and also explained the aspects of ways to achieve spiritual progress. He emphasized that every time a good thought surfaces, that is the immediate threshold point, which can change the course of life, to attain the moksha. Enlightenment through meditation and Kriya Yoga energies the cerebral chakras for upliftment of soul on the way to moksha.

Guru ji underlined various ways to attain Moksha, and how to practice Dhyana in daily life. He emphasized on meditation and Kriya Yoga to reach to higher echelons of spirituality. He said, that right thought and resolve for good karmas can lead to development of faith in God, which will ultimately help concentrate all the energies in right direction and meditation.

In the modern context he stated that everything is constantly changing and a bad time in the form of present sufferings will also diminish and mankind will survive by the virtue of right karma done with good intention and purity. Meditation is the sure path of salvation to reach the Sublime. The discourse was followed by meditation, 'Havana' and bhajans.

There was a good arrangement of refreshments and lunch. All the devotees felt good vibrations at Ashram. Everyone present there donated liberally for the objectives of Life Sciences Foundation and assured all kinds of help and support any time.

Guruji blessed all the devotees and extended good vibrations and good wishes to everyone. All devotees departed with a pious mind and Mangal Maitri to all.

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It is worth mentioning here that on this 28th Foundation Day of Life Science Foundation a health and eyes checkup camp was also organized by the Founder Dr. O P Kohli. In the camp a number of eyes specialist, surgeons and doctors from Center for Sight Eye Care Hospital conducted eye testing of about 300 patients with eye problems and made them aware about the symptoms and causes of different eye diseases as well their timely treatment. The camp will go a long way in instilling health consciousness and ensuring preventive measures for several other diseases also. Dr. O P Kohli is highly appreciated for his noble social activities.

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NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING Part 1

Compiled by - Dr MANOJ PABRAI

ANTIOXIDANTS

Antioxidants are certain nutrients, such as vitamins C or E, or carotenoids, which may help protect cells against daily damage. As cells do their job, the way they process oxygen results in a molecule called a free radical. These molecules are unstable. As they regain stability, free radicals damage cells and DNA. Over time, free radical damage can cause problems for tissues and organs in the body, potentially leading to disease. Research suggests that free radical molecules can add to the risk of health issues linked to aging. Some examples are heart disease, age-related macular degeneration, Alzheimer's disease and cancer.

The body's cells can fix or prevent free radical damage, for example, by making antioxidant enzymes. And some antioxidants, such as vitamin C, come from food and drink.

Plant-based foods are the best source of antioxidants. These include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices, and even cocoa. Plants have naturally occurring antioxidants such as carotenoids, flavonoids, isothiocyanates, and phenolic acids.

As a bonus, many foods that have antioxidants also have other benefits. They are often high in fiber, low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and good sources of vitamins and minerals. Artichokes are a good example.

They naturally have the fiber inulin. But artichokes also have plant chemicals called flavonoids and phenolic acids. Those phytonutrients have the potential to help manage free radicals.

Drying, cooking or freezing foods can affect its level of antioxidants. Sometimes cooking allows an antioxidant to be better absorbed. Lycopene in tomatoes is one example.

More lycopene is available in cooked tomatoes than raw ones. And for some foods, such as sweet potatoes, cooked is the only way we could eat them at all.

Add antioxidants to your diet

In addition to cooking, some antioxidants are more available when paired with another nutrient. One example is orange and yellow

vegetables with beta carotene and vitamin E. Cooked with a bit of fat, those antioxidants are more available to the body.

Other foods with carotenes also may offer more nutrients cooked. Examples are carrots, red and green peppers, kale, spinach, and broccoli. Some of their phytochemicals may be better absorbed by the body after being cooked. Other foods have more antioxidants when raw. In jam made of berries, for example, antioxidant levels were lower than in the raw, unprocessed berries.

Fresh or frozen, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries and cranberries are among the top fruit sources of antioxidants. Along with fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds and grains add antioxidants to the diet. Whole grains, nuts and seeds are a source for selenium, vitamin E and antioxidant phytochemicals.

Unsalted nuts and seeds have protein and fats in addition to other phytochemicals. They are a nutrient dense food. Nut and seed oils also may help people balance their healthy fat intake. Walnuts and pecans are some of the top nuts for antioxidant content. Not crazy about nuts? Try sunflower seeds.

And don't forget those grains. When made into flour, buckwheat, millet and barley seem to hold on to their phytochemicals best.

Overall, antioxidants from foods taken in over a long period of time seem to support health. Individual antioxidants taken as supplements have less scientific support.

When it comes to adding antioxidants to the diet, no one food or food group can do it all. The best bet is to get a variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains into the diet.

Adding foods with different colours can help meet that goal. A food's colour hints at its antioxidants. Red, orange, yellow, green, and even blue or black fruits and vegetables provide different antioxidants.

Other things in the diet, such as tea, coffee and some fruit juices also have antioxidants. Some dark chocolate may have antioxidants as well, but it depends on the cocoa contents.

And it can be helpful to make sure to get some antioxidants every day. For example, vitamin C isn't stored in the body. So eating food with that vitamin every day can help make sure the body has enough.



NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING Part 2

Compiled by - Dr MANOJ PABRAI

Pros and cons of sugar substitutes, also called artificial sweeteners.

Almost everyone likes a sugary snack. But if you often have foods and drinks with lots of added sugar, the empty calories can add up. Added sugar can play a part in weight gain. It also may raise your risk of serious health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease.

You might try to stay away from table sugar by using less processed sweeteners such as honey and molasses. But these also are forms of added sugar. They add calories to your diet. Some people use products called sugar substitutes, also known as artificial sweeteners. They taste sweet like sugar but have fewer calories. Some have no calories. Many sugar substitutes taste sweeter than sugar. So very little is needed to sweeten foods and drinks. Other sugar substitutes called sugar alcohols are not as sweet as sugar.

Sugar substitutes are in many kinds of foods and drinks labelled sugar-free or diet. That includes soft drinks, candy and baked goods. Some sugar substitutes also are sold on their own in packets or other containers. These can be added to foods or drinks at home.

Government health agencies oversee ingredients that product-makers add to food. These agencies check ingredients, such as sugar substitutes, before foods or drinks that contain them can go on sale. In the United States, for example, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) allows the following sugar substitutes to be used:

- Acesulfame potassium (Sweet One, Sunett).
- Advantame. In India
- Aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal). – In India
- Neotame (Newtame).
- Saccharin (Sweet'N Low).
- Sucralose (Splenda). In India
- Luo han guo (Monk Fruit in the Raw).
- Purified stevia leaf extracts (Truvia, PureVia, others). In India

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The food safety agencies in many countries also suggest how much of a sugar substitute you can safely have each day. This amount is called the acceptable daily intake (ADI). It varies by a person's weight and the type of sugar substitute used.

Acceptable daily intakes aren't the same everywhere. In general, artificial sweeteners are safe in limited amounts for healthy people, including pregnant people. But limit or cut out sugar substitutes:

- If you're living with a rare genetic disease called phenylketonuria. Foods and drinks with aspartame can lead to serious health problems.
- If you have a bowel disease. Using sugar substitutes might make your symptoms flare up.

Dietary guidelines for adults shouldn't give sugar substitutes to children under 2 years old. In general, experts need to do more studies to learn what long-term health effects sugar substitutes might have on children. Most studies have looked at the effects in adults. If you replace added sugar with sugar substitutes, it could lower your risk of getting tooth decay and cavities.

Sugar substitutes also don't raise the level of sugar in the blood. For adults and children with overweight or obesity, sugar substitutes also might help manage weight in the short term. That's because sugar substitutes often are low in calories or have no calories. But it's not clear whether sugar substitutes can help people manage their weight over the long term.

Over time, it's most important to eat a healthy diet and get exercise.

Health agencies have clarified that sugar substitutes do not cause serious health problems. Sugar substitutes also are not linked to a higher risk of cancer in people.

Some research on long-term, daily use of artificial sweeteners suggests a link to a higher risk of stroke, heart disease and death overall. But other things people do, or healthy habits that people don't do, may be the cause of the higher risk than sugar substitutes alone Sugar alcohols, stevia can cause bloating, gas and diarrhoea. The amount of sugar alcohol that

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causes these symptoms varies from person to person. In general, it is safest to take in small amounts of sugar substitutes. And it's best to use sugar substitutes for a short time, or just every once in a while. So try to cut back if you use them a few times a day.

Artificial sweeteners can be a short-term way to help some people lessen their use of sugar and lose or manage weight. In general, sugar substitutes are safe for healthy adults. But be aware of how sugar substitutes affect your food and drink choices. These ingredients may get your taste buds used to sweetness. And that can make drinking enough water a challenge.

Products made with sugar substitutes also may give you the wrong message about processed foods. A snack labelled low sugar or no sugar may not be the most nutritious choice. **Whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables, usually have the best mix of nutrients for the body.**

But artificial sweeteners can help some people enjoy sweetness without excess calories. And if used in moderation, artificial sweeteners can be part of a healthy diet.

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THE SCIENCE OF OILING THE BELLY BUTTON

Compiled by - Dr MANOJ PABRAI

Navel therapy or ***Pechoti Method*** is an age-old practice of detoxifying. Also known as navel oiling or ***nabhi chikitsa,*** it is the practice of the navel to absorb substances such as essential oils via the Pechoti gland located inside the navel. However, there is no scientific evidence backing the same

Oiling the Belly Button is an ancient Ayurvedic practice that involves applying oil to your belly button to restore health and prevent disorders. The belly button is known as the starting point of life. It acts as a bridge between a mother and the developing foetus inside her womb. It's a connection area for 72000 veins that extend to different organs within the body and are directly connected with the brain. The belly button is also considered the centre of the body, representing the source of energy, life and vitality. Applying oil to the belly button has been a ritual in Ayurveda helps to calm and soothes the mind, balance hormone, remove toxins, nourish the organs and supply nutrients to the cells.

How to do Instructions:

1. **Choose oil:** Choose high-quality Ayurvedic oil suitable for your body type. Traditionally Almond oil, coconut oil, Olive oil or mustard oil is used. Almond oil is good for moisturising and strengthening the nervous system coconut oil is popular due to its pleasant taste and antibacterial and antifungal properties. It's cooling oil. Olive oil is used to strengthen bones and joints. Mustard oil is used for circulation and reduces mucus.

2. **Apply Oil to the Belly Button:** Place 2 to 3 drops of the oil on your belly button and massage it gently. Use circular motions and apply slight pressure.

3. **Massage Clockwise and Anti-Clockwise:** After applying oil, massage the navel area in clockwise and anti-clockwise directions. This is believed to stimulate the digestive system and balance energy.

4. **Next Day:** Rub your stomach clockwise 60 times with Navel oil or sesame oil as soon as wake up in the morning. This is an ideal ritual for circulation from head to toe and fingers and provides concentration and clarity of mind.

Health benefits of oiling the belly button include:

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- Calms mind and Reduces stress: By massaging oils onto the belly button, it is believed that calms mind and reduces stress and anxiety.

- Improves skin health: The belly button is connected to many important blood vessels, and massaging oil on this area helps improve blood circulation to the skin, providing essential nutrients and promoting skin health. This can help improve the appearance of the skin and prevent skin disorders such as acne, eczema, and psoriasis. Ideal oil is coconut, almond and neem oil

- Relieves joint pain: Applying oil near the belly button can also help relieve joint pain. This is because the belly button is connected to several important veins and arteries that supply blood to the joints. Massaging oils such as olive oil, mustard oil or castor oil onto the belly button can help improve circulation and reduce joint pain and inflammation.

- Soothes Dry Eyes and Improves Eyesight: Applying oil on the belly button can also help to soothe dry eyes and improve vision. This is because the belly button is connected to the channel of the eyes. Massaging oils such as Almond or Mustard oil onto the belly button can help moisten the veins of the eye channel and remove toxins from the eyes.

- Relieves abdominal pain: Massaging oil near the belly button can help relieve abdominal pain caused by various factors, such as indigestion, menstrual cramps, and constipation. The belly button is the centre of the body, and massaging oil in this area helps stimulate blood flow to the abdominal area, promoting healing and relieving pain.

- Boosts immunity: Another benefit of applying oil near the belly button is that it can help boost immunity. The belly button is home to several important veins and arteries, and massaging oils onto this area can help improve circulation and boost the immune system. Oils such as sesame or Mustard oil are particularly effective in boosting immunity.

- Improves digestion: One of the main benefits of applying oil near the belly button is that it can help promote digestion. The belly button is the centre of the body, and massaging oils onto this area can help stimulate the digestive system. Applying oils such as olive

oil, Sesame oil or mustard oil can help improve digestion, reduce bloating, and relieve constipation.

- Relieves menstrual cramps: Applying oil near the belly button can also help relieve menstrual cramps. The belly button is connected to the uterus through the umbilical cord. Massaging oils such as sesame oil or castor oil onto the belly button can help increase blood flow to the uterus and reduce pain and discomfort associated with menstrual cramps.

- Enhances fertility: Massaging oils on the belly button can also help improve fertility. The belly button is connected to the reproductive organs through the umbilical cord, and massaging oils such as sesame oil or castor oil onto the belly button can help increase blood flow to the reproductive organs, leading to improved fertility.

- Alleviates insomnia: It can help improve insomnia and promote restful sleep. This is because massaging the belly button stimulates the production of hormones that promote relaxation and improve sleep.

- Treats respiratory disorders: The belly button is connected to the lungs, and massaging oil on this area helps promote the release of mucus and reduce inflammation in the respiratory system. This can help improve symptoms of respiratory disorders such as coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath.

- Promotes hair growth: Applying oil near the belly button can also help promote hair growth. Massaging oils such as coconut oil or olive oil on the belly button can help improve circulation and nourish the hair.



QUESTIONS OF DEVOTEES

Answered by: Bhai Sahib

Q.1 What spiritual order do devotees of Life Sciences Foundation belong to?

Ans. Devotees of 'Life Sciences Foundation' belong to the 'SWAMI' Spiritual Order, fully recognized in ancient times by Adi Shankaracharya. It has 10 branches, and we belong to 'GIRI' branch, which means mountain.

Our revered Guruji Sri Sri Paramhansa Yogananda was initiated by Swami Yukteshwar Giri who himself was initiated by Sri Sri Lahiri Mahasaya who in turn was initiated by Mahavtar Babaji.

We, the devotees, have been initiated by Swamis' and Rishis' of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India, which was founded by our Guruji. Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda.

Q. 2 Do offering prayers to various Gods and visiting religious places bring us nearer to God Realization?

Ans. God Realization or Self Realization means the union of the soul with the Spirit or God.

Visits to temples and travel to religious places give us an opportunity to concentrate on our mission of God Realization without usual distraction at home.

It is essential to understand that we should not be lost in the externals of religion in dogmas and forms of worship. The purpose of pujas, rites etc. is simply to inspire the devotees to seek God within by scientific meditation techniques. Otherwise, such outer forms of worship do not carry us far on our spiritual journey.

Q. 3 If every thought and action implicate us with the wheel of Karma, how do we escape this and get liberation?

Ans. The world seems to be going round and round like a merry-go-round on the wheel of Karma in this materialistic world. Since all

our thoughts and actions are meant for selfish material gains.

Our Guruji, Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, had always advised, through his religious discourses and spiritual literature, that the only way to escape this cycle of 'birth and death' is the use of 'Power of Discrimination'. It is the power which helps us to live this life by those ideals that draw us towards God and not the material pathways.

When time and again, by meditation and by constant spiritual efforts, we remind ourselves that we are not mortal beings but immortal souls, we gradually break apart the chains that have long bound us to the limited consciousness of flesh.

Once we begin to remove these fetters of limited body consciousness, we have glimpses of ourselves as soul made in the image of God and are liberated.

Q. 4 If God, within us, is directly approachable, why do we need Gurus to realize Him?

Ans. The purpose of Guru, The divine teacher, is to help lift us out of ourselves. He helps us to cast off the lower self, the ego, which is the first step on the road towards God and is extremely difficult to go further unless guided by the enlightened one.

To throw off the consciousness and limitations of the body requires strict discipline and lot of patience, and the Guru helps in gradually raising our standard and making us realize that we are not this body but have been created in the immortal image of God.

Once blessings of Guru and grace of God remove the darkness of ignorance, devotees have to tread the path to liberation on their own. God is within and is approachable provided we are worthy, and our receptivity has been raised to the level required for such revelation.

Q. 5 Which Yoga technique is superior for early communion with God?

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Ans. Raja Yoga teaches the scientific way to commune with God. It is superior yet simple in approach. It simply teaches us to concentrate on one thing at a time by taking away all thoughts / objects of distraction. The principle is to still all restless thoughts so that the mind becomes clear, calm lake in which you can see the objects of your concentration perfectly reflected.

After attaining the state of concentration one is ready for meditation, in which the object of concentration is God. In meditation, when mind becomes absorbed in that One, you begin to feel an expansion of consciousness, which leads to His Blissful consciousness, full of love and joy. Under this state you are freed from body identification and feel like remaining in that Divine Ecstasy forever.

Q. 6 How do prayers help in physical healing?

Ans. Thought is the most potent force in this world. Out of the thought of God has emerged all this creation.

Our thought and consciousnesses are a part of the Divine intelligence and consciousness. When we are praying to God for healing others or ourselves it is the tremendous force of God's healing power, which is at work. We can manifest this healing power in greater and effective way as our faith and love for God grows deeper and stronger.

It is certain that if particular healing is ultimately for the highest good, cosmic law and even the Will of God can be influenced by the power of prayers. However, even after earnest prayers, the decision to heal or not to heal remains as per higher wisdom of God and we should surrender and accept the outcome as he alone knows the best for future.

Without a guru the average devotee cannot find God. It requires 25% devoted practice of meditation techniques; 25% blessings of the guru; and 50% grace of God. If you remain steadfast in your efforts to the end, He will appear before you.

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NEWS AND EVENTS

VISIT TO JATOLI SHIV TEMPLE SOLAN (HP)

A group of devotees led by members of LSF visited the Jatoli Shiv Temple at Solan under guidance of Guruji Dr. O P Kohli, who visited this temple for the first time while it was under construction.

The grand temple of Lord Shiva is perched on the scenic hilltop of Solan, with a beautiful view all around. The temple gets its name from 'Jata' (Tresses), which further signifies the long Jatas of Lord Shiva. The temple is located 8 kms from Solan on Rajgarh road. Jatoli Shiv Temple is one of the popular holy destinations of Solan which attracts a large number of pilgrims from all corners of the country. On Sundays and Monday's large gatherings are often seen at this shrine.

Solan is conveniently accessible by road, train and nearest Airport is Chandigarh and Shimla. From Delhi it is a 6-hour journey by road, as four Laning of road with flyovers has opened. Solan is also reachable by Kalka Shatabdi and a stunning toy train enjoyable journey of 2 hours and forty minutes from Kalka. A taxi from Kalka is also handy for quick covering to Jatoli temple, right up to the temple.

There are many stories and legends associated with this temple one of it says that Lord Shiva visited this place and stayed for the night. The artistic and architectural marvel in Dravidian style cannot be ignored by anyone who visits here. This is the largest temple of Lord Shiva in the Asian belt.

Jatoli Shiv Temple is one of the famous holy destinations of Solan and is only 8kms from the city.

It is one of the oldest temples of Lord Shiv where an ancient Lingam of Saphatik stone is worshipped since long. It is believed that the temple was once a resting place of Lord Shiva.

The temple is made in typical Southern – Dravidian style

architecture and is made of three consecutive pyramids. On the first pyramid, one can see the image of Lord Ganesha while on second pyramid there is a sculpture of Shesh Naag. Jatoli Shiv Temple holds the tag of being one of the highest temples in Asia. It took 39 years to complete the construction of the temple, started by Swami Krishnanand Paramhans.

On the northeast corner of the temple, there is a water tank called 'Jal Kund' which is considered as pious as the holy river Ganga. The water of this tank is said to have some medicinal qualities that can treat skin diseases. There is a cave inside the temple where Swami Krishnanand Paramhansa Ji resided and meditated. This ancient temple is famous for its annual fair, which is conducted during the festival of Mahashivratri. Several devotees gather in the temple to offer prayers and they are served tea and prasad all the time.

He who created us yearns for our love. He wants us to give it spontaneously, without His asking. We shall never be happy until we give it.



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There is no profit motive for the authors, the printers, the editor and the publisher.

The spiritual knowledge in the periodical and other activities of LSF will lead many from darkness to light.

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