

Restrain the cow in its shed

Welcome everybody to the Satsang!

What about shall we speak today?

Q: Many times you explained that we have to abide in the Self, but sometimes trying to abide in the Self is a very dry experience. Let's say for example I stay in front of the Hanuman, Rama or Sita murti, but love is not felt. And let's say someone whatsapp me and express some kind of human desire, of human love and at that moment my heart opens. It is very mundane, I know I will be disappointed because one day that person changes his mind but I cannot escape from that. Do you understand my question?

Yes I understand, it's a good topic!

I will express it in a different way.

Some people like to cook at home, they like to have homemade cooked food. Maybe some people are not expert cooks, they can just cook something very basic, let's say boiled vegetables...

There is the other option, the other option is just to go to the fast food and have some exciting food, full with very nice ketchup and French fries and all the strong tasty stuff.

Now, the average human being if he has to choose between a homemade bland food, very simple, maybe some boiled broccoli let's say, and a very tasty food from a restaurant that is designed to excite your senses, the average human being would choose the second. That's why these food chains are so much popular and so successful - because they are designed to excite the senses, they are designed to offer something fascinating. Not healthy, not wholesome - this is not their purpose. Their purpose is to do something which sells good.

The same with whatever experience of the senses. If you want to see a movie for example, the movies are designed in such a way to be very, very exciting, to be full of bright colours, and effects, and action and things that excite the brain, so that we are not bored when we see them.

Just to go to the forest and see a peaceful landscape - that is boring for many people!

Or if you want to hear some music, the music that is successful today, the last hundred years maybe, is music that is designed to be exciting, to be catchy, to stick in your brain and not let go. You hear it one time and you cannot let it go, it will resound in your brain again and again. It is not designed to lift you up spiritually, is designed simply to catch you, to be exciting and fascinating.

To simply stay in your room or in a peaceful place and listen to the silence - that is boring for most people!

So they choose the exciting experience. Isn't it like this?

I would like to stay more on the example of the taste, because it's mostly a matter of taste actually. And I would like to keep this example of the homemade food, very simple homemade food against very fascinating food the fast food or the pizzeria, or whatever...

This is what he is speaking about, he speaks about food!

Because the mind, or you can say the attention, it looks for food. The experiences are food for the mind. Just like the bread is food for the body, the experiences are the food for the mind. In fact it is not really the mind, as we said it is the attention, experiences are food for the attention!

So, if you are very much used to exciting experiences, if you have a very simple experience, just sit in your room and meditate and stay in silence, you will feel restless, you will feel bored by this. Even if you sit in this silence, the mind will create, will use its creative power to conjure all kind of situations, all kind of people and scenarios out of itself, in order to find some excitement - because it feels bored!

This excitement can be tasty sometimes, I don't doubt about it! Depending on the taste...

This excitement that the mind creates, which has the power to create anything, it can be tasty! But the question is "Is it beneficial, is it nourishing, is it wholesome?" This is truly the question! We don't deny it's tasty, but the question is "Is it beneficial?"

I will go again to the example of the taste. A small child if you give it boiled broccoli and tasty chips, ten out of ten times it will choose the tasty one. If you give it very nice homemade tomato sauce out of fresh tomatoes from the garden or ketchup, it will choose ketchup. Because it is guided from its senses, it is guided from a desire for excitement.

As the child grows up, slowly, slowly, his perspective changes. He understands that taste is ok, it gives a short lasting joy, but then it simply creates problem in the body, it creates suffering afterwards. It gives a short lasting joy but a long lasting pain.

Then slowly, slowly, the person, as he grows up, he starts to look for more healthy food. He feels this is more a source of joy for him than just a good taste. He understands through his maturity, that this is more a source of joy than just the good taste.

And this happens on the external world, slowly, as we mature in spiritual life. It happens also from the point of view of awareness, because whatever experience the awareness has, it's like food, it's food for the awareness.

So, the awareness slowly understands that some food might be tasty but in the end of the day it just creates pain.

While some other food it can be not so tasty, but it brings nourishment and joy, long lasting joy!

They say a very beautiful example in the Vedas concerning this and this is one of the most amazing practices a spiritual person can do. It is called "to restrain your cow to its shed". To restrain the cow to its own place, to its own home.

What does it mean?

Because if you don't tie the cow, if you don't train the cow to stay in its own place, it will go out, it will make a mess, it will eat everything, it will go to the garden of the neighbour it will eat all his plants, it will go to the next garden it will eat the vegetables, the plants, the fence, it will eat everything - it would eat the house itself if it can.

This is the nature of the cow, it likes to wander around and feed itself from whatever it finds. And although it has in its own shed, its own house, it has the best food, it has the best quality food, yet it will go out just to find other stuff and create trouble, create trouble to her owner, create trouble to the neighbour, create trouble to herself. Everybody will be troubled by this wandering tendency.

So they say, the Sages, "Train the cow to stay inside its own shed, inside its own place."

Slowly the cow understands that there is the best food, the best food it can possibly find. Instead of wandering all over, on all other places, the best food already exists inside its own place, in its very home there is the best food. But you should slowly train her and make her understand this reality.

In other words, the cow is our attention or the awareness. It likes to wander all around looking for food, looking for some adventure maybe, looking for something exciting. But inside its own place, inside its own shed, inside its own home, there is the food of the greatest quality, there is the most nourishing, the most wholesome and, believe me, also the most tasty food!

Training the cow, they say, gradually, gradually to stay inside its own home and appreciate is there already present, without wandering around.

Training the mind and the attention to stay inside the Self, feed itself from the very source, feed itself from the breast of the Divine Mother, feed itself from the Heart.

Whatever experience we find outside, externally, it is all coming out from the Heart. It's all an evolution that comes out of the Heart, passes through the mind and then becomes an external experience. Whatever it is, its source is the Heart!

So, if you learn to eat from the source, if you learn to drink from the source, there will be perfect nourishment, pure and in great abundance.

To train the mind to stay inside the Self is one of the greatest practices, one of the most important practices. To slowly understand that you cannot find something better wherever you may wander outside. Everything is there present in perfection, it cannot possibly be better. Inside your very Self, in the source of the awareness. In other words, to turn the mind inwards.

You said in the beginning "It appears to be dry". Who says so?

It is the mind that says so! Is the little child that says so, says "Mom, I don't like the broccoli, give me some McDonald's! It's too dry the broccoli..." Isn't it like this?

So you can either wait for the child to grow up through the passage of time or you can slowly explain to it, educate it, train it with authority that there is no better place for you to go then right here, inside yourself.

Here there is also food constantly flowing, from the Heart constantly flows the food, constantly flows the Love, constantly flows the very essence of Life. Learn to feed yourself from that, learn to feed the mind from that, learn to feed your attention from that.

As we said, the keyword, that the sages say, is "gradually". If you try to push it too much, the mind will revolt, it will run out. It is not really possible to do it straight-away, it needs to be done gradually.

Gradually means also daily, but slowly, slowly... You can start by doing it in your meditation. If you cannot do it for one full hour in the meditation, do it for half an hour, do it for fifteen minutes, do it for five minutes, as much as you can.

The mind gets trained, it learns! When it learns how to taste and feed itself from your very being, it will not want anything else afterwards.

In the very same way that many of us we just eat homemade food, we never go to the restaurant to eat outside.

Does anybody forces us to do so? Nobody forces us! We choose to do so, out of clear understanding and a kind of maturity.

In the same way when you appreciate the purity, the benevolence and the nourishment of the food that flows from inside, you don't want any other food! And going to that stage we may go gradually - slowly, but steadily.

Tie the cow to its shed, train the cow to stay inside its home, in a soft way, you don't need to take the stick, it's not necessary.

One of the main difficulties to do so is very simply a habit. The cow has been habitualized to go all over. If you tie her she will complain very much, she will try to break free - it is just a habit! The mind has been habitualized to wander around - just a habit! There is no meaning to it, it's just a habit, just an addiction!

It does have the power to wander all over, it can travel all over the Universe as it pleases, but it has misused this power.

So slowly, slowly as the mind matures it stays more inside its own natural space. It nourishes itself from the divine source and it is supremely pleased to do so! It is for the first time fully satisfied!

In fact it is so satisfied that it actually dissolves. So great is the satisfaction that it fully dissolves into it, it merges into it and disappears into it. And this is what we call Samadhi.

So, Samadhi may sound a very high word to you, may sound like the highest achievement of Yoga. Yes, maybe it is! But it's nothing else than the cow staying inside its shed, inside its home, and feeding itself from the great source.

Is nothing else than the mind turning inwards and feeding itself from its very source, and staying there in natural contentment...not forceful contentment, natural contentment.

This is called Samadhi. This is all about it.

You can go through a very technical procedure to reach there and some techniques they help, like Pranayama, etc. All this helps! But remember what is the purpose! The purpose is to keep the mind inside. Let it feed from your own Being, let the attention feed from its own source, let you be fed from your own Self.

Like you have heard, some people they are vegetarian, some people are fruitarian, and some people are breatharian. We should be Self-arian! Feed ourselves only from the Self.

So you should treat the mind in the same way you treat a small child. You should train it, and if it really wants to have some ketchup with chips you can give it sometimes, no problem! At the same time you give it something that is nourishing. Just like treating a small child, you cannot force it straight away! You can give it something that is tasty and exciting to it, the child will grow up and by itself it will understand, by itself it will give up the addiction of running after tasty and exciting experiences. It will understand intuitively that many times behind this excitement there is pain waiting. It will understand that when you go forcefully up you will have to fall forcefully down. It will understand that you cannot possibly have anything external in your life without paying for this. So something may appear very beautiful, but then the bill will arrive...and you will have to pay it.

So there comes a moment that the mind understands “Why bother? Why take all this trouble? Why seek for something that is somehow exciting for a moment but will cost me much more later? No, I will just stay at home. I will just stay at my home where everything is provided in perfect abundance! I will drink from the nectar of my own Being and I will become intoxicated by it without having a hangover! I will eat from the ambrosia that is always inside of me without having to pay any bill, without any after effect, without any side effect.”

And if there is some after effect, that is just bliss! Because this is the most nourishing food we can possibly have and when you nourish yourself correctly you will be healthy! When you nourish the mind correctly the mind will be healthy!

When you nourish your body with some unhealthy junk food the body will be unhealthy, it may have some taste but it will be unhealthy and will be sickly later on.

The same for the mind, nourish it correctly and there is no better nourishment than your own Being. If you nourish the mind from the great Source, the mind will be healthy, will be joyful naturally, because this is its nature. If it takes good food it will be healthy and joyful and peaceful.

So, let the cow stay inside her shed, inside her home!

Train slowly the cow or the child of your mind to appreciate the food that is in such great abundance inside of you. Train it to eat from this, train it to remember, train it to eat from the hands of God, train it to eat from the inexhaustible spring, train it to eat exclusively from the Great Source. There is nothing else that it needs!

And the more it tastes from this, the more it wants to come back, the more it wants to taste from that, the more it slowly gives up other junk food, or junk experiences or junk imagination, whatever...

So, train the mind in this way! Let the cow stay inside its shed!

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti!