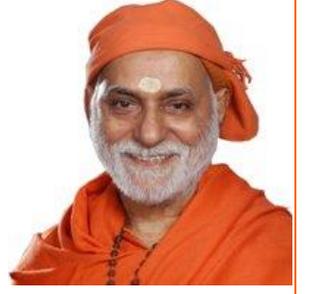


Austerity is Meant to Purify the Mind

prabhāta-raśmiḥ

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Harīh Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.

I shall continue the subject of austerity. The purpose of austerity is always to purify oneself. What is this purity is the next point that you have to consider. I said that purity should be for the whole being. In the being, the biological aggregate called the body is no doubt a factor – gross, visible and external. This body should undergo purity.

Normally the body consists of food – it is *annamaya*, it is in the nature of food. This is how spiritual seekers normally and naturally undergo a kind of a purification in their food intake. The type of food they take will naturally go on changing. What is this change for? I would like you to understand, the change is always beautiful, progressive and something that everyone likes. Bhagavad Geeta describes *saatvik* food in this manner.

rasyāḥ snigdhāḥ sthirāḥ hr̥dyāḥ

(*Bhagavad Geeta* 17.8)

Four adjectives have been used.

rasyāḥ - means very tasty and delicious.

hr̥dyāḥ - not only appealing to the tongue, but also appeasing and harmonious with your mind, while taking and after taking. Things like garlic and also onion, there are some other items also; you will find it produces a smell which is very obnoxious, unless like alcohol, people get used to it and they are happy. If you take garlic, next day when somebody comes near you, he will start smelling your garlic. So there is something called tasty for the tongue, and appealing to the heart and mind, and harmonious with other factors.

So, *rasyāḥ snigdhāḥ sthirāḥ hr̥dyāḥ*

One is *rasyāḥ* – tasty; *sthirāḥ* – it should be substantial; not that you eat a lot, and it is also digested very fast. Such things should be taken that it will have a substantial nourishment value and filling in the stomach. You should not feel hungry very soon after taking food. *sthirāḥ*.

snigdhaḥ - means not things which are extremely hard. It should be soft enough; you must be able to chew it comfortably. Not that it produces difficulty for the tongue and the gum.

rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthirāḥ hr̥dyāḥ

Now this is the type of saatvik food. You tell me now - whether there will be anybody who will not like it. So, if you think that saatvik food means an elimination which makes the food insipid and all that, it is not at all right. Things need not be and should not be over boiled. Whatever vegetable is used - that vegetable should give the distinct taste. Whenever you add condiments etc., they should be of a minimal nature, that they will add to the taste and not subdue the vegetable and its taste. So it requires a lot of attention and sensitiveness to use or to arrive at saatvik food.

Now this is one item. The next is, breathe as much as possible good and nourishing air. Keep the windows of the room where you are staying always open. Actually we are using curtains. They disturb actually, they prevent ventilation, but it has become a fashion. So we must have enough of circulation. If you have to close the door, windows have to be kept open. While lying, never close your nose. You can cover all the other parts of the body, but not the two holes of the nose. So, fresh air is necessary. That is why, wherever we live, we must have greenery, trees, plants, creepers, whatever is possible you must have. That is absolutely necessary.

Then what is the other item? Water is a very big ingredient. Try to have very good water, as pure as possible. These are something very important.

Then you must also take sufficient exercises so that all the organs remain healthy. Exercise from head to foot, we must be able to take. This is one item. This is how we have developed yogasanas, mudras etc. This is one.

Now in the matter of speaking, we must speak in a very saatvik and a sublime manner. The choice of words that you are using should be kept in mind. So never use words which will have a bad effect not only on you, on the other party also.

Then you go to the mind - we must have pure, elevating, and expansional thoughts. Two words if you remember, it is okay - thoughts which are expansional in nature, and elevating in nature. They should not constrict and contaminate you. You are all born as an individual. From the individual, we should grow into the family, and from the family, we should go to the segment called the society. From the society, we must go to the nation, and from the nation we go to the globe, and from the globe you go into the endless space, environment. Thoughts which are progressively of this kind, they alone are considered pure!

Then we go to the intelligence. The intelligence should not be satisfied by thinking about the things and substances of the world. Two particular thoughts and introspection, the intelligence must have. One is the soul different from the body. Always understand that you are not the body but you have a

body. The one who has the body is called the soul. Don't think suddenly that the soul has got eyes, head, legs etc. Not at all! The bulb has a shape and illumination. But the electricity which circulates through it, it does not have it. So be very clear. We soak different types of cloth, putting it into a tank of water. The water permeates all pieces of cloth. The clothes have sizes and colors, but the water does not have. Similarly, in all parts of the body, the soul is permeating, and that itself is not a formful product. So this point that "I have a body, I am not the body, I am the soul, what it is, how it is" this introspection will make you pure, and that is the knowledge level of austerity.

In the same way, you can think of two other factors. "What is this complex world and how is its complexity? How am I to interact with it in a sublimating and enriching manner?" This can be a point of introspection.

Then, of course, God! What or who is this God, who created this world, preserves it, and also dissolves it, who is present everywhere. Especially, in the background of so many contradictions and negativity, we find destruction in the world. So it becomes a great complex question, "Who is this God? Can we call him kind? Can we call him merciful? Is he really good, because all these bad things are seen here? So, why are there good and bad? And how is God still merciful or kind?"

Now, these are the introspections which make you pure and that is the knowledge level of austerity. It is all very simple, when you understand it properly. So, in the food, in the words that you speak, in the thoughts and emotions that you revolve or encourage in the mind, and ultimately the introspection you do with the intelligence, all these will have to be having a note of austerity, purification! This is called austerity.

So the very fact is that I am explaining austerity, it becomes a subject of wisdom, if you want to know what is austerity. I told you in our ashram, we are maximum giving emphasis on knowledge austerity. I don't know how many people understand it. This is a place of austerity, and our austerity level is *jñāna*. I do expect that you will have some questions and enquiries. They are welcome. You should have, and we will see what these questions mean, and what the answers are for them!

Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.



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