

## Use Your Common Sense

When he comes here in the morning, Pūjya Swāmījī Chidānandajī always pays worshipful homage unto the Lord and then loving adorations to Gurudev. He expresses in a rather formal way our appreciation for Gurudev's blessings, but every once in a while what he saw in Gurudev as a disciple will slip out of him. He will describe the peace and divinity on Gurudev's face. It becomes very personal. We too could describe Swāmījī in the same way, and so they are living proofs to us that the goal we are seeking and the promises of the scriptures are valid.

We thus follow the yoga of our choice, the yoga that we find easiest and most satisfying. But there seems to be a flaw in our approach, because while through our meditation, study and devotion we may have many positive results, most often we don't see a fundamental change in ourselves. There may be some attainment, but at the core—if the idea is to be reborn, become a new person—we don't feel that we have changed at all.

This is where, sooner or later, we have to come to a new understanding about the spiritual life. This new understanding is based upon the truth of the scriptures that we know very well verbally, but somehow it has not registered with us. The truth of the scripture is that we are already what we are seeking, and therefore there is nothing to attain in the normal sense.

But then, the logical question is, if there is nothing to attain because I am already what I am seeking, why am I not like Gurudev or Pūjya Swāmījī? The answer is, as Swāmījī once said, because between you and That there is a mind. What then is our task? Swāmījī has said that the only purpose of the *guru* is destroy the ego, and it is only when the disciple understands this that the relationship will click. Which means that if we want to attain the goal and the mind is what is blocking us, then the mind has to go. We say, no, no, it is the ego that has to go. But try to find an ego separate from your mind.

Does that mean that we can't think anymore if the mind goes? We can think if we want to think, but the whole structure of the mind that we are now building our identity on has to be taken apart bit by bit until our true identity shines forth. It is what is left over. It means an entirely new approach to our life, but one that is very practical; because instead of trying

to attain something that we can never attain in the normal way, we deal with our life just as it is here and now.

What's bothering us right now, what's irritating us, what's worrying us? Look at it. That is what is meant to be tackled. Why are we worried? Why are we angry? Why are we afraid? That is pointing to a part of our mind structure that we are meant to deal with. It is by dealing with what is at hand, with what God brings us every day, that will bring about the fundamental change in our being that all our normal spiritual practices have not been able to accomplish.

Gurudev constantly told us, use your common sense. We all have common sense. We may not be very great at our spiritual practices, but we all have common sense. It is God's gift to us. It is our real tool in the spiritual life.