

We find ourselves living a passionate life with dispassion, a life filled with desires without expectations, and a life of full engagement in active surrender. This is possible through ongoing devotion and the rise of inner silence.

Our initial spiritual desire continues throughout our journey and transforms gradually from personal to divine. We have gone nowhere, except forward in the realization of our own *Self* – a journey from here to here. We have become love on the move, stillness in action, which is the marriage of stillness and divine ecstasy radiating constantly from within us. Then all of life becomes our *divine beloved* and all we do is a glorious dance unfolding unity everywhere. The journey begins in love, and ends in love.

The Dance of Unity

There is a misconception that enlightenment is about doing nothing. We are told to stop thinking, stop desiring, stop doing. A practical person might get the impression that enlightenment is very impractical. After all, if the journey is about stopping everything, why be born in the first place? The world isn't such a bad place, and in being here we have the

rare opportunity to make it better. So, why renounce the world? The world and we are all one thing anyway, the great cosmic *Self*. So what is there to renounce? A more flexible approach to enlightenment is found in the advice to *serve God* or *Truth*. The Zen Buddhists take a less dramatic approach, boiling it down to *chop wood, carry water*.

In other words, undergo the process of human spiritual transformation while doing something, and then continue doing something according to need. The doing will then be all the better for everyone, including ourselves. This is the fruit of bhakti and karma yoga.

Enlightenment without action is like an egg with no chicken. It is mere potential without expression, which is what we all are *before* enlightenment. Therefore enlightenment without action, without outer expressions, isn't enlightenment at all. Be wary of teachings that promote non-doing. In our heart we will know it is not complete.

There can be no divine union until there is engagement – action. The one who is enlightened will be more active than ever before, because they will be engaged everywhere on every level, visible and

invisible. And all the while they will be doing nothing at all – *stillness in action*. There is that paradox again. Don't mind it. Just keep going in bhakti and practices and you will see for yourself what it is. So when the sages tell us that enlightenment is non-doing, what they mean is *non-doing in doing*.

Bhakti without action is like a car without wheels. The engine may turn and make lots of noise, but the car is going nowhere. It is similar to self-inquiry with limited inner silence, which we call *non-relational*. Lots of movement in the mind, but little traction in stillness. The heart needs objects to love and interact with just as the mind needs abiding inner silence to express itself in ways that are in *relationship* with the truth within us. Take away one side of either equation, and there will be imbalance, which is often expressed in some sort of extremism. When we see an extremist, we can immediately see that the equation is not balanced. This is why integrated multi-pronged paths of practice are much more effective and joyful than obsessive single-pronged approaches.

The path to union is a joining of two dynamics within and around us – a divine romance intimately associated with our bhakti.

Over time, we can readily observe the two poles joining in our neurobiology and emotional and mental functioning:

- **Stillness** – A natural slowdown in metabolism, and rise of a silent inner observer, the witness.
- **Ecstasy** – A radiance occurring in the nervous system, illuminating the whole body, and beyond.

Even as we are becoming untouched by events in time, space and materiality, we are also becoming passionate as we directly experience the ecstatic nature of life within and around us. As our mind comes to be observed as a natural fluctuation in a infinite pool of stillness, our heart comes to be known as an ever-expanding radiation of love. These two dynamics merge within us and radiate outward as stillness in action, ecstatic bliss and outpouring divine love. Our actions are colored accordingly. The result is service to God and Truth, even as we are chopping

the wood and carrying the water of everyday life. It is life lived as spectacular and ordinary at the same time. *Spectacular ordinariness*. It has also been called living in a state of *grace*.

But really, it is only life lived the way it can be lived by all of us, and it will be, because we are all wired for it. It is the destiny of the human race. This is much more than an individual dynamic. It is a dynamic that encompasses all of us. What happens in anyone is happening in everyone. Ultimately we all rise or fall together. Fortunately, we are on the rise. It is the natural course of evolution occurring.

Human spiritual transformation is as natural and inevitable as the lowly caterpillar becoming the beautiful butterfly fluttering away on the breeze. It isn't for a few of us. It is for all of us. It is not something that is done to us. It is something we do for ourselves, because we all contain the seed of enlightenment. This is certain, and it has been proclaimed by the wise since the dawn of humanity.

Actively surrendering each day to our spiritual transformation is to become the divine, which is our essential nature. It is a gradual development. It does not happen in one day. It goes by degrees. First we

surrender to the ideal of becoming more – maybe just to the question, "Who am I, and why am I here?" With this thread of surrender we can be inspired to begin daily practice of deep meditation. Then, with some inner silence coming up, we can surrender to adding spinal breathing pranayama. Then this can lead to other practices, etc. At some point, divine ecstasy rises in us, conducted simultaneously and permanently throughout our body, and then we become sold out to the beautiful ecstatic energies (kundalini) transforming us from within. Total surrender comes step-by-step with our advancing experiences. To have advancing experiences we need to be doing daily practices. So surrender and daily practice go hand in hand. This is why the role of desire becoming devotion to our expanding chosen ideal is discussed throughout the AYP writings. We cultivate direct experience every step along the way, and surrender comes along with it through the natural interconnectedness of the limbs of yoga.

Eventually our experience rises to the level of unshakable inner silence, ecstatic bliss and outpouring divine love. By then we have become that which we have been surrendering to. Total surrender

is enlightenment. It is immutable, beyond all affirmations and strategies of the mind. Total surrender is a heart constantly overflowing.

Now it is time for us to claim our destiny like never before. We can do so simply by allowing our innermost longing for wholeness to find expression in practical spiritual methods that will hasten the purification and opening that is occurring in us in this moment. It is always happening in us. All we need to do is tap into it, and it will accelerate.

With our rising bhakti and willingness to act, it is a joyful dance we are inviting ourselves to. The dance of unity. The more we open and the more we flow from within, the more will unity be expressing in the awareness of everyone. The momentum of spirit is real, as anyone who is engaged on their path knows. It is not fantasy. We can feel it within ourselves in the form of inner silence and ecstatic conductivity, and we can see it occurring in the flow of events in our life.

The more we long for it, and the more we act, the more joyful and unifying the dance becomes.

Our thoughts, feelings and actions will flow naturally from within, and the mystery will dissolve. Life becomes a celebration of divine love, dancing in the *One*...