

Sonoma Ashram Foundation



Fullness
overflowing

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Aghoreshwar Bhagwan Ramji

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What comes to us
in our imagination
will come to us
in reality, too.

Aughar Vani, Avadhuta's wisdom

Retreat to the Ashram



Restore balance to your life and start or solidify your spiritual practice. Follow a daily routine of meditation, yoga, organic gardening and *seva*, selfless service. Learn to bring the sacred into cooking and eating, as well as experience the joys of silence and meaningful conversation. Be in the presence of Babaji and see the teachings of Aghor Yoga in action. Please call or email to reserve accommodations.

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Thus spoke Aghoreshwar

When we as humans learn how to live, we learn what we have to do very naturally. And when we learn what to do, then we know everything. But if we do not learn how to live, and keep it all only to the extent of speaking or philosophizing about it, and we do not bring it into action, then our minds remain very unstable, so unstable that we keep wandering day and night. We wander in our sleep and while awake, we wander while sitting and when we get up. We wander while wandering too. We never become stable, nor does that great creative energy waiting at our door enter.



Two Things to Remember



During Friday evening satsang at Sonoma Ashram May 6, 2011 (ongoing every Friday at 7 pm), Baba Harihar Ramji said:

Looking at how we as human beings engage in the world, how we invest our time and resources, we are always searching for some kind of fulfillment and happiness through our efforts, actions and interactions. We do derive happiness but it's short lived. It gets old and we begin to look for it somewhere else, in something more.

Sometimes we experience happiness from the instant gratification we receive through appreciation or acknowledgement. But that is

also short lived. We do a good deed and someone says, "Oh, that's nice. Thank you." For a moment we feel a little good, but it gets old.

So we go on like this looking for these short lived moments of happiness. If we are truly searching, why not search for happiness that's everlasting?

I remember Baba, my teacher, saying, "Oh human, if you want to live a peaceful happy life, remember two things: (1) Forget the good that you have done to the other and forget the harm that the other has done to you, and (2) Remember God and remember death."

Forget the good that you have done to the other and forget the harm that the other has done to you

When we do a good deed, unconsciously some kind of expectation finds a place in our hearts and minds. We want to be acknowledged or appreciated even though we may not admit it. Unfilled expectations become the seeds of our unhappiness.

If any deed we do for the other is conditional, if we're expecting something in return, true happiness will elude us. Can we do a good deed and totally leave it alone? This happens only when we come from a place of appreciation and contentment, a place of

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overflowing and feeling blessed. The pot is overflowing. Water doesn't care where it goes, it just overflows.

There is an old saying, "A tree does not eat its own fruit. A river does not drink its own water. It's for the welfare of others that the blessed beings have taken birth." A tree doesn't say, "I will only give fruit to the good people." A river doesn't say, "I will give water only if you are good." Its dharma is to flow, to give. The day we set out to do unconditional good deeds, we sow the seeds of our happiness.

Similarly, when we keep thinking about the harm the other has done to us, our minds may not be at ease until we deliver something even worse to them, or do something to get even. The joy or relief we experience afterwards doesn't bring us any solace in the long run. More short lived gratifications, and eventually we start feeling guilty. If we

look into it deeply, again there is some kind of expectation from the one we feel has harmed us. The more our attention is on the other, the further we get from our true selves, and the more miserable we become. We create a story around our being good and the other bad, or our being right and the other wrong. So much effort goes into proving that.

How do we save ourselves from doing this? How do we reclaim ourselves? We find our way back to our core when we look deeply at what we are devoted to. Once our attention shifts to something higher and unchanging, it becomes easier to return home to our true self.

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Remember God and death

One definition of God is, "that which is beyond mind, unchanging, eternal and ever-present." Hope, trust and inspiration blossom in our hearts when we turn towards that presence. We reclaim ourselves. As long as we seek instant gratification from the world which is constantly changing, and from those around us who have their own limitations, true happiness will elude us and we'll remain in this predicament.

That divine presence is like silence. No matter where we are, silence is always there. Sound is in the foreground and usually our attention goes to the noise, be it outer noise or inner noise. But without silence, sound wouldn't exist. Without the divine, nothing could exist.

Disappointment, expectation, happiness and sorrow come from a feeling of separation. When we pull back to that inner silence and taste the stillness in our hearts, separation dissolves into a sense of wholeness. Whatever is inside is outside too. This is a divine experience. This is the presence of God.

Remembering God doesn't make our problems vanish, but at least we get a break from them. Mind will flow. It's a habit, but we don't feel dragged by it. We don't feel totally helpless, hopeless or desperate. Even in this momentary communion, we receive help.

Remembering death also plays a great role in our search for happiness. Death is not something to fear. It keeps us ever aware of the bigger picture. Whenever we are caught in the small picture, we feel trapped. Regardless of the story we are living, it all ends with the death of the body. This is certain for everyone who is born.

Remembering death also reminds us how precious time is. We never know when the flame of life will be snuffed out by a small gust of wind. Why waste this precious time feeling trapped by our expectations and hurts? If we keep our goal high, if we keep remembering God and death, then all these little hooks will have no hold on us.



If we have truly set out to look for happiness, everlasting happiness, this little prescription is very helpful. It is appropriate for this day and age. Although it requires some effort, it's practical and it's doable. **OM TAT SAT**

Story of the Cow-Dung Beetle



Once, a cow-dung beetle invited his friend Black Bee for dinner and served him little balls of cow-dung. Accustomed to flower nectar, Black Bee said, "Dear brother, surely my brain will explode if I eat this food of yours! My family never ate this food nor does it suit my daily life. Please come to my place for dinner sometime." Black Bee left.

The cow-dung beetle went to Black Bee's home in the beautiful fragrant valley of flowers. Black Bee said, "Look my brother, all these beautiful flowers are blooming. Just sit on one and feast on its nectar."



So they both started feasting. After a while Black Bee asked, "How does it taste to you?" The cow-dung beetle replied, "Oh, it tastes

the same. Before I left my house, I put a dung-ball in my mouth for fear of not getting food I'm accustomed to." Black Bee asked him to put aside his dung-ball for a while.

Hesitatingly he spit it out and began to feast on nectar. He loved this new food! He became so enchanted that the flower petals embraced him. A gardener came the next morning, plucked that flower and took it to the temple as an offering. The resident of a hole under the cow-dung droppings found his way to the most sacred spot on the altar.



Friends! Like that beetle, we carry our ego and attachments wherever we go. We remain satisfied with temporary gratifications, confusing them for true happiness and bliss, and miss out on the opportunity of realizing our full potential as human beings.