

Siddha Marg



GOD DWELLS WITHIN YOU AS YOU.

Baba Muktañanda would say,
“God dwells within you as you.”

Words alone cannot adequately describe, explain, or take us to that deep place. We have to allow ourselves to be taken there. We have to become immersed within, where ānanda, bliss, continually arises, rather than remain in the shallow realms of mind and emotion.

This is the teaching. This is the understanding we must cultivate in our life.

MAHĀMANDALESHWAR SWAMI NITYĀNANDA

The purpose of Siddha Marg is to communicate the teachings of Mahāmandaleshwar Swami Nityānanda as he shares with us the knowledge and practices of the sanātan dharma (universal law). This issue offers extracts from talks given during his 2010 Living Blissfully tour of Australia, infused with wisdom, insight, and guidance for living a blissful life.

Only when we uplift ourselves can we uplift others

MULLUMBIMBY, AUSTRALIA, MAY 19, 2010

With great respect and love I welcome you all to this evening’s *satsaṅg*.

Satsaṅg means the company of truth. We come together and chant and meditate. We allow the mind to become still so that we can understand our true nature, so we can experience the divinity of our true Self.

Baba Muktañanda talked about two philosophies: Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism. The simple difference between the two is that Vedānta teaches us that everything we see is illusory, is transitory, while Śaivism teaches *Na śivam vidyate kvacit*. “Let the mind always be aware there is nothing that is not Consciousness.”

Our modern society likes this teaching that everything is Consciousness. We don’t want to believe that everything we see is transitory. But I believe both experiences are necessary. We must become established in the Vedantic understanding that all of this is transitory in nature, while at the same time being aware that it is nothing but Consciousness.

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If we try to jump straight to the view that everything is Consciousness, without gaining a more complete understanding of the teachings, we can find ourselves fooled by our own mind. Our mind won't have become subtle enough to be established in the experience of oneness.

And of course the mind very easily forgets and wanders off. So we come to satsaṅg to remind ourselves. We return again and again to that space, the awareness that all is Consciousness.

Through steady practice, we become imbued with that experience. This is what Adi Śankara, one of the first sages of Vedānta, calls *aparokṣānubhūti* – an experience seen through one's own eyes rather than through the eyes or mind of another.

Then when someone asks, "What knowledge do you have of oneness, of Consciousness?" our response is not based on a mere concept but on our direct experience.

It seems we go through phases to reach this state of oneness. One moment we sit in that awareness, and in the next the mind doubts, questions, and wanders off. If we are strong, we bring ourselves back to that experience within and remain established in it, not allowing ourselves to separate from it.

To succeed in this endeavor, we must become aware that everything happening in this world is a play of that limitless Consciousness.

If all is going well for us, we are happy with this idea. But the moment things go wrong, we're not so sure. We start doubting, thinking maybe it really isn't a play of Consciousness after all.

It is at such times that we must be even clearer within ourselves. We must recognize that if the previous situation was merely a play of Consciousness, then this also must be that same play. It, too, will soon shift and change. The play will go on.

Last night I ended my talk by saying that the very first thing a seeker should do is to become a noble person, a person of great virtues and qualities.

If we allow ourselves to become uplifted within ourselves, and live a life that is beneficial both for others and for us, we begin to see, know, and experience the oneness of Consciousness.

For that, the mind and heart have to truly expand. We cannot live blissfully with a contracted mind, with contracted awareness. The noble feelings that arise within us must be cultivated. Our thoughts must be uplifting. Only then do we have the capacity to uplift others.

We cannot be down on ourselves and hope to be able to uplift others. However, when we uplift ourselves and dwell in that space, the vibrations of that energy can uplift and bring joy to others.



We are here to witness and enjoy the play of Consciousness

SYDNEY, MAY 23, 2010

I was reading recently about the world being a stage. We all perform a role upon the stage. Before we come onto the stage, there is a green room, where the actors prepare themselves. They embellish themselves with costumes and makeup, and then step out onto the stage.

The author suggested our mind is a green room in which we can prepare ourselves. We can ask ourselves, “What thoughts and feelings am I going to carry with me as I go onto the stage of this world?”

An actor takes a long time to prepare the lines he or she is going to say on stage in front of everyone. In the same way, I believe that our childhood, our education, and everything that happens prepare us to go onto the stage of our life.

Often as I travel now, I find that so many people – children, youth, adults – seem bewildered and lost about what is happening in life. We need to realize we are all affected by our actions and the actions of others. Some may think one unwise action doesn’t really matter, but it

is the combination of all actions performed by everyone on the planet that makes a difference.

A few days ago we travelled to outback Barraba in a little rented bus, all fifteen of us, then on to Sydney. It was a delightful journey. Nobody was what I sometimes call a “drop of lemon.”

If you’ve ever made cheese or paneer at home, you know that a drop of lemon is what you use to begin curdling the milk.

If fourteen out of fifteen people are milk, and there is one lemon, well, we know what can happen.

But what if the lemon in the human doesn’t realize it is he or she who is the lemon? What if that person thinks, “I am milk, and these fourteen are lemons”?

None of us thinks we might be the cause of a disturbance. It is invariably someone else. It takes a great effort on our part to see clearly, accept, and realize that a shift must take place.

If everybody runs the opposite way when you arrive, it might be time to start contemplating whether you are the lemon. If, on the other hand, people come to you like ants to honey, well, maybe you are milk.

What we are and what we make of ourselves is up to each one of us. It is a process that begins when we enter this world.

I am amazed sometimes by the fact that even a one- or two-year-old child can have an attitude, a personality. I think, “Whoa! What is this child going to be like when he is fifteen or twenty and can really show us his personality?”

There is no need to see all this as anything other than a great play of Consciousness. In a sense, it is a cosmic joke created by Consciousness within itself, and comprising the full spectrum of life's many colors.

That's how the stage is set on which the actors play. Some actors have a major role, while others have a smaller or minor role. And so life goes on.

As Baba Muktānanda always reminded us, each individual must learn to become a witness. We must be able to observe everyone at play, including ourselves. At the same time, we must avoid the trap of becoming so absorbed in the play that we forget we are simply here to witness and enjoy.

If we are to live blissfully – which is the theme of this tour – our perspective must be in alignment. There is no need to see all this as anything other than a great play of Consciousness. In a sense, it is a cosmic joke created by Consciousness within itself, and comprising the full spectrum of life's many colors.

If I am to live blissfully, I cannot be a lemon one day and a chili another. What is needed is the unchanging purity of fresh milk – and not the homogenized, pasteurized kind, either.

If we acquire this understanding and look at what actually happens within, we are able to see when we are playing a role, as well as how and why we are playing it. We can see whether we are playing it well, with skill and focus. We can see if we are playing in a way that love and joy are being shared, and so that whatever the situation, we are able to help others to experience light and inner peace.



Living the principles of nonviolence and truthfulness

SYDNEY, MAY 24, 2010

We have come to satsaṅg thinking about living blissfully. How do I live blissfully? How do I live in bliss most of the time, or all of the time? How can I keep my mind from going in another direction or getting caught up in some other situation?

Inherent within each one of us are all the qualities, both positive and negative. That is why we occasionally experience being someone we don't want to be.

In the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa talks to Arjuna about the twenty-six divine qualities that exist within all human beings.

Let's look at some of these qualities and how to develop them in the course of living.

Kṛṣṇa lists the qualities: nonviolence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, tranquility, aversion to fault-finding, mercy toward all living entities, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, determination....

Ahiṃsā has three elements. It is not only avoidance of physical violence, but avoidance of violent words and violent thoughts and feelings.

The very first quality of which he speaks is *ahiṃsā*, nonviolence. It's a word we hear quite often connected with people, such as Mahātmā Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., who pursued their goals through nonviolent means.

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Take the example of speech. Sometimes we say something unwise that we immediately regret.

Before the words come out of our mouth, an inner process has already happened: thought-forms that are driven by various impressions and feelings have taken shape as potential words. Energy is moving on the subtle level, and at some point is released as speech. It all happens in an instant.

Recognizing that somehow we have said something we didn't intend, we cry out, "No, no, I didn't mean to say that! I know I just said it, but I didn't mean it."

But if we explore what happened deep within, we will observe that the ponderings and contemplations of our mind were already present at that level, at the place from where the words arose.

To stop violence, we must work from that level. We must be aware of what is happening there. Otherwise unwise speech can arise, followed by unhelpful actions.

Many aspects of life influence the creation of thought-forms. This includes what we see and hear – television, the Internet, newspapers, and magazines. It includes what we drink and eat, and of course the company we keep. Each impression plants a seed inside us.

Generally, we might think of ourselves as a very good person. But then unexpectedly we behave in a different way. We think to ourselves, "I am usually a very good person. I'm always milk. I'm rarely lemon."

So the question arises, how did this happen; from where did the quality of lemon come? The answer is that it exists within our own being. Somewhere within it is there.

So we practice *sādhana*. We seek the experience "I am Consciousness, I am Truth." At the same time, a great deal of what exists within us must be undone. Only then can we come to the understanding and realization "I am Consciousness, I am Truth."

The second quality named by Kṛṣṇa is *satyaṃ*, truthfulness.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* (17.15) gives a threefold definition of what constitutes truthful speech. It must be *satyaṃ*, truthful. It must be *priyaṃ*, sweet to listen to, not upsetting the listener. And it must be *hitam*, beneficial.

Somebody might say to another, "I'm going to tell you the truth and I don't care what happens or how you feel about it." That is not the influence of *ahiṃsā*. Such speech has the resonance of violence.

A story comes to mind of a king who had a rare cockatoo for whom he had much love. His love was so great that one day he announced to everyone at court, "If anyone ever tells me my cockatoo has died, I will throw that person in prison."

Of course, like the king, none of us ever wants to hear that the one we love has died.

However, one day that is what befell the cockatoo.

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Immediately, the courtiers were faced with the question of who should tell the king.

Unable to agree, they decided to seek the advice of the wisest of the ministers, the prime minister.

After listening to their account, the prime minister said, “Okay, I’ll take care of it. Don’t worry.”

When the king was out walking next morning, the prime minister approached him and remarked, “Sire, your cockatoo won’t eat.”

“No matter,” replied the king. “He’s probably not hungry.”

“And he won’t say anything,” continued the prime minister.

“No matter,” responded the king. “Perhaps he’s not in the right mood.”

“And he is sleeping upside down, with his legs in the air.”

The king paused. “Why didn’t you just tell me he’s dead?”

“Sire,” replied the prime minister, “you said that, not I. I simply informed you that he’s not eating, not talking, and sleeping upside down.”

We can see that the prime minister succeeded in unfolding the truth in a way the king could hear it. His speech remained truthful. And it was also sweet, and beneficial because the king was able to find out that his cockatoo had died.

Sometimes we consider ourselves spiritual people, and we think, “I’m always going to tell the truth the way it is.”

But then we go to a sage, and he tells us, “You are Truth.”

We say, “What? What do you mean by that?”

So he has to tell us the truth gradually over time. If he tells us, “You are a lemon,” we say, “I don’t like you. I’m going to find a teacher who tells me I am milk.”

That’s how the human mind is. It takes time to digest and understand that which is being taught to us.

So therefore the *Gītā* says, “Be nonviolent. Speak the truth so that it is beneficial and sweet to hear. And don’t get angry, even if someone is not kind to you.”



Just be who you are

MELBOURNE, MAY 26, 2010

Everybody knows what milk is? Some of you aren't nodding yes. So that means you might know soy milk or rice milk. But we are talking about cow's milk.

Imagine that we as individuals are milk. The nature of milk before it is homogenized is that it's full of cream. It's full of natural sweetness. If you've ever drunk raw milk, it's sweet in itself. It doesn't need sugar. Just by itself, it carries the sweetness of the cow, and what the cow has eaten.

Similarly, each of us as individuals has that sweetness and richness, that creaminess, within us.

At the same time, as the scriptures tell us, we also carry *saṃskāras*, or *vāsanās*, impressions that continually arise. Not all of these are as sweet as pure cream; some are like drops of lemon.

Either way, a wise person doesn't react. If it is a lemon drop – for example, an outburst by someone – the wise person simply lets it go, understanding that something just needed a “pew.”

But a person not so wise gets caught up and experiences the lemon drop curdling the milk. It is as though he experiences the separation of whey, of cream, of this or that, and is shattered within himself. Not only is he shattered, but he may be tempted to take the lemon juice and say to others, “Hey, let's share some of this.”

The yoga scriptures remind us that there is no need to become caught in all that. Let the purity of the milk remain.

The essential nature of every individual is peaceful and blissful. Yet various impressions keep arising, and if we have not developed subtle awareness, we react.

Take the example of learning to ride a horse. The instructor helps us sit on the horse and says, “Hold the reins loosely and let the horse trot or gallop, whatever you wish. If it goes a little too fast, pull the reins gently and the horse will slow down and stop.”

We have to remember that it is we, as individuals, who hold the reins. The *Upaniśads* say that the individual consciousness, or Self (*ātman*), dwells within us, seated upon a chariot pulled by five horses. The chariot is our physical body, and the horses are our five senses, which are always running outward. The mind is the reins, which control the senses and let them know how far they can go. But it is the intellect (*buddhi*) that has the central role of charioteer and makes all the important decisions.

This is why it so important to focus on the intellect, increasing our awareness of the charioteer who makes the decisions.

As life unfolds, some of us find that our horses seem to go any which way. Much of our energy is consumed in the struggle.

Yesterday somebody shared with me, “You know, I'm almost sixty and I'm still confused about my life, about what to do.”

The very first goal seekers must have is for their upliftment. If we are clear about this, fully embracing the realization “My first goal is to uplift myself,” we are in a position to ask, “What are the tools I can use? What practices will help to keep them sharp?”

This is an educated man with a good business, but in his own mind, there is still confusion.

If the intellect is weak, we find ourselves unable to determine the right way to move forward. No matter what our stage of life, we are still asking, “What must I do?”

The scriptures tell us the very first goal seekers must have is for their upliftment. If we are clear about this, fully embracing the realization “My first goal is to uplift myself,” we are in a position to ask, “What are the tools I can use? What practices will help to keep them sharp?”

At the beginning of commercial flights, there is always a message about attaching oxygen masks in the event of an emergency. The advice is always the same: “Please put on your own oxygen mask first, before helping children and the elderly with theirs.”

It’s a great teaching. We must first put on our own oxygen mask of upliftment before we can uplift others.

Before going anywhere, including visiting a sage, people prepare themselves for who they will be. They put on the mask of self-identity, covering fears, apprehensions and limitations that might otherwise surface.

But the sage tells us, “Just be who you are.”

It takes strength, courage, knowledge, and understanding to come to that place within ourselves, and stand on the ground of who we are.





ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
द्वन्द्वातीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्वधीसाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥

I BOW TO THE SADGURU, WHO IS THE BLISS OF BRAHMAN AND THE BESTOWER OF THE HIGHEST JOY. HE IS ABSOLUTE. HE IS KNOWLEDGE PERSONIFIED. HE IS BEYOND DUALITY, ALL PERVASIVE LIKE THE SKY, AND IS THE OBJECT OF THOU ART THAT.

HE IS ONE. HE IS ETERNAL. HE IS PURE. HE IS STEADY. HE IS THE WITNESS OF ALL THOUGHTS. HE IS BEYOND ALL MODIFICATIONS (OF MIND AND BODY) AND IS FREE FROM THE (INFLUENCE OF THE) THREE GUNAS.

- GURU GĪTĀ, VERSE 89