

SEEKING SOLACE A SHOT OF HOPE THE SPEAKING TREE

Outlive The Crisis

There is nothing we cannot face and overcome, including the pandemic, says SWAMI BHOOMANANDA TIRTHA, founder, Narayanashrama Tapovanam, answering readers' queries

How to remain fit mentally and physically in tough times?

— *Parth Mishra, Kashipur*

Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha:

Our personality has an inert external part comprising matter and energy called the body, and an inner part constituting the mind, intelligence, and ego. Only when activated by the inner personality will the body become functional.

To make the body fit, take food that will nourish it. Supplement it with exercises that will activate joints and muscles. As far as the mind is concerned, negative emotions must be avoided, and positive ones cultivated. Human life is meant for qualitative enrichment. *Our mind has the power to assimilate any kind of impact the world causes. Such assimilation enriches us. Cry when necessary but get enriched in the process.*

To preserve humanity is not our own need, it is more a need of Nature and Providence.

To harness our inner resources, we have some time-tested mental formulae, for example, the *Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra*, which is said to relieve us from untimely death and fear of death.

There is nothing that we cannot face and outlive. This pandemic too.

How to handle the grief of losing a family member?

— *Bhaskar Kewalramani, Delhi*

Knowledge is our greatest power. Doubts arise when knowledge is imperfect. This applies to grief too. Enquire into it and you will find clarity and strength. This was what happened on the Kurukshetra battlefield. Seeing close relatives on both sides, his grandfather and teacher commanding the opposite camp, Arjun was overcome with grief. Krishna made Arjun introspect over this. All human interactions produce *sukha*, happiness, or *dukha*, grief. Both are transitory. Knowing this, drop your preference for *sukha* and prejudice to *dukha*. You cannot eliminate grief, nor perpetuate happiness. Be harmonious with both. When harmony endures, nothing will dislodge you. You will experience blissfulness.

In the event of death in one's family, view it as a death in any other family. Let the mind expand to understand it not as applicable to the individual family but the larger society.

We do not invite death, but when it comes, the mind is traumatised. Allow the sorrow to run its course. Try to assimilate the impact. None has progressed in life by smiles and laughter alone. Grief has a role in one's evolution and brings poise. Our shastras enjoin *viveka*, discrimination, as a prerequisite to attaining peace.

Our mind has the potential to assimilate any impact of Nature. Realise this and help the mind in its effort.

How to be comfortable with ones' own self?

— *Cyril Joseph, Bengaluru*

Self is the presence that animates the body. It is denoted by the 'I' feeling in us. This feeling never ceases.

Our body, mind, intelligence, and ego change constantly. The world too. The only changeless presence is the 'I,' the substratum for all these. If 'I' were to change, we will lose identity.

Life is an interaction between you and the world's objects. For all the changeful objects, there is a 'subject.' That is the 'I,' which remains a witness to all changes in the world and yourself. You are already the 'I.' You must realise its inherent changelessness and unaffectedness. For that, introspect until the difference between the *object world* and the *subject witness* 'I' becomes clear. Our trouble is ignorance and delusion. Bring in the light of wisdom; you will become inseparable from the Self.

Mind is given to thinking. To help refine it, sit alone in a place for twenty minutes. Close the doors and windows. Look within. Simply observe the mind processes. Never follow them or get involved in them. It will make your mind lighter and stable. Whatever torments you will dissolve. You will feel joyous and contented. Knowledge and peace will dawn.





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