

Ordinary to Extra-ordinary

Inclusiveness needs no confidence.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is an international spiritual Master, author and authority on yoga, with profound spiritual and cultural insights on health and human values.

When I was in my second Pre-University Course, that is twelfth standard now, I was pretty popular in the college, not for academic excellence though, but because I would ride my motorcycle up the staircase and spend most of the time outside the classroom. Whenever I was in the classroom, I was known for asking questions that would demolish the teacher. So I was popular, not with the teachers but with the opposition group. People believed that I was very confident. I didn't think about those things. I was just doing what I wanted.

One day, a debate came up. This debate was sparked by a great poet in Karnataka, his name was Gokak. The subject was: "To solve the unemployment problem in the country we must close down all the colleges for ten years." You were supposed to speak for or against it. A friend of mine wanted to participate in the debate and asked me about this and that. I was good in writing, so I wrote two pages, gave them to him and said,

About confidence and diffidence... Diffidence is something that lowers the scale of life; the way it could have happened just comes down. Confidence is a scourge, it's a disease. Overly confident people are invariably tyrants on different levels. What we need is neither confidence nor diffidence — awareness, consciousness is what is needed.

"You speak this." He was preparing, preparing, preparing — then he had this confidence problem.

I had a little fan club and they said, "Why don't you go? It's best you go and speak." I was not the debate type. We had debates on the street corners, alright, but all those college debates, these kinds of functions never interested me. I just did everything for the fun of it, never

Once there is a sense of inclusion, awareness and consciousness, this is just natural. Awareness is life. Life is awareness. There is no other way to be. It is only because of exclusion that awareness has to be practiced. People are trying to be aware simply because they have excluded themselves from everything.

went into any kind of competitions. But somehow I got talked into this. I thought okay, what the hell — let me go and say something. So people came up one after another, some were speaking for it, some against it. I was speaking against it. So my time came, there was a bell and I was supposed to speak. It was a ten-minute duration. I just stood there and looked at the people. I had no confidence problem or diffidence problem, but nothing came out.

All my fans were telling me, "Come on, come on. Say it." I didn't know what to say. I stood for a whole five minutes there and not a single word came out of me. After another five minutes, they

rang another bell. It was time for me to just walk down. It was a joy for the teachers and my friends were heartbroken. "Why did you do this? Why didn't you say anything?" I just didn't have a word in my head. It didn't even bother me, I was not ashamed or anything, but I knew some mechanism within me had just collapsed.

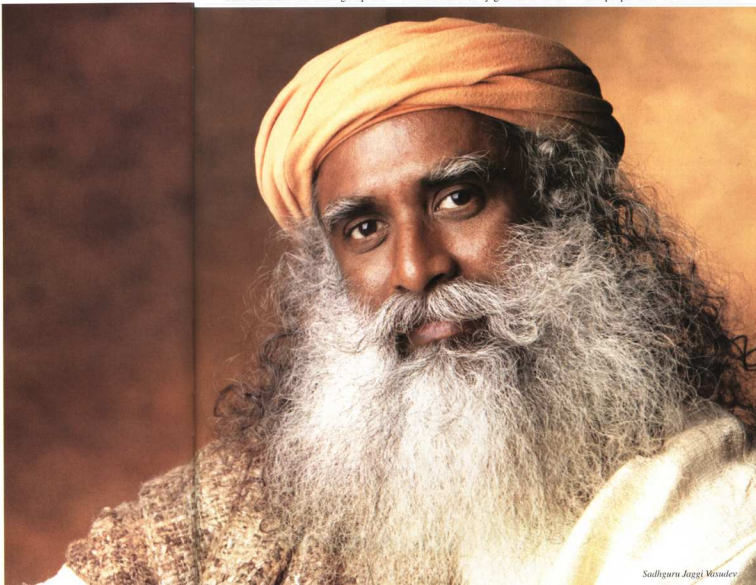
So I spent a little time looking at this. What was it that had happened to me? I was not afraid — I have always been the kind who could go up and

say what I want. I could say horrible things or I could say stupid things and I had no problem with it. But here I had a whole essay that I had written myself and it was quite impressive, but not a word came out. What was it that had made me go blank like this?

I realised the problem was that all these friends were boosting me and all this nonsense, so somewhere I had thought I would go there and prove something, that I would say something bombastic and really get them. But at

that moment when I stood there, I just dropped that element within myself completely that I have to do something to impress anybody at any time in my life. And the next opportunity I got after that to impress someone, I never even thought about it, I simply left it.

Three years to graduation and the first and second year, I didn't even go to the examinations, nor did I go to college. I just sat in the garden; I liked the garden. That was when all these people came to me and started



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sharing their problems. Three years I sat there, listening to people's problems. So the first and second year I had not really taken any examinations. When I came to the final year, I had eighteen papers to do. Continuous examinations. Some days I was taking two papers; one in the morning from nine to twelve and again one from two to five. So I sat through all this and I passed. In English Literature, they even declared that I was standing second in the University. I thought probably they couldn't read my handwriting.

College conclusion day came and one of the teachers was struggling to say something, he was mumbling and bumbling. He was going around and around and nobody understood what he was trying to say. The students were all booing him and everybody was bored to death. So I just went up and spoke for about twenty minutes. People were all thrilled. I didn't go there with confidence or diffidence. Something

When we talk about inclusiveness, we are not teaching you a new philosophy. We are talking about falling back into the way life is, just ordinary as it is. It is ordinary but it is magnificent. Special and stupid — What's the point? Especially stupid...

Somewhere in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says, "Hesitation is the worst of sins." Very strange, isn't it? Murder is not the worst sin. Robbery is not the worst sin. Rape is not the worst sin. Hesitation is the worst of sins because in hesitation, you don't live. Krishna is not teaching. Krishna is making an affirmative statement of life. He is saying that anything that is not life is the worst sin, v. "Don't hesitate" does not mean to jump into every pit that you see. Your intelligence is capable of choosing and deciding in a moment whether you need to do something or not.

had to be said, so I just went and said it. When I was trying to impress somebody, it was a total disaster. When I just went there, what had to be said I just said.

Above all, I realised from then on, whatever I face, any kind of situation, any kind of people, I don't have any problem. The moment I sit, I just look at them and I don't even have to think. I just see them as a part of myself, as you would talk to yourself. To talk to yourself, you don't need confidence or diffidence. Only to talk to somebody else, you have this problem. Once you are talking to yourself, you can say anything that you want. There is no difficulty in it;

there is no greatness about it — simply as you talk to yourself. If you just behold everybody as yourself, there is no confidence, no diffidence. What needs to be done, you just do it.

So what is needed is consciousness. Consciousness is not individual, consciousness is always all-inclusive. If you are conscious, everything is included. You neither need confidence nor diffidence. You just function to the fullest limit of your intellectual capability, without any hesitation.

The problems of confidence and diffidence have come because you are such an exclusive character in the world. Most of your exclusiveness, you have created unconsciously. A part of it, you have created consciously because you thought that this is the way to get attention from the world, by trying to be special. Especially in the Western cultures, right from childhood, they are training you that you must be special. Trying to be special is the worst of diseases because once you get this disease, there is no salvation for you. Wherever you go, you have to do something stupid to prove that you are special. Isha Yoga is not about being special. This is about being ordinary.

In the old brochures, we used to say "Isha Yoga - ordinary to extra-ordinary." People thought if they come to the programme, they are going to become very special. After they had come I would tell them, "No, you will become more ordinary than others. Extra-ordinary." [All laugh] When there is no effort to try to make yourself special, you are simply ordinary, you will stand out as extra-ordinary. All-inclusiveness is extra-ordinary. It is just a way of life. When I say inclusion, it is not my philosophy, it is not something that I have made up — this is the way existence is. It is only in inclusiveness existence is functioning. If you are so exclusive, why are you inhaling what I exhale? Try to breathe separately and see; you will be dead. It is only in inclusiveness life is happening.

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