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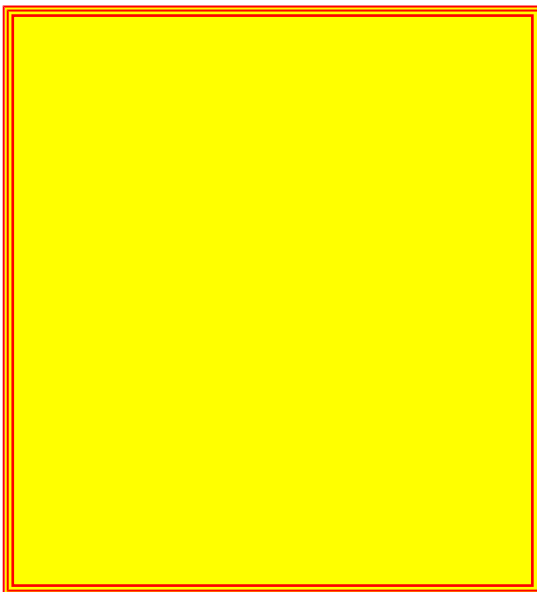
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The Real Source of Happiness is Within You - Interview with Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev

Jayesh Patel

Quote Sidebar: 'This life for me is an endeavor to help people experience and express their divinity.'

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev is an enlightened spiritual master, a yogi and mystic from South India. He is also an international speaker, author and peace advocate whose work transcends religious boundaries. An eloquent spokesperson, Sadhguru has profound spiritual and cultural insights on health and human values. The conduit for his work is Isha Foundation, an international non-profit organization dedicated to inner transformation as the basis for a prosperous global community.



Sadhguru travels to the US to teach a form of yoga suited for this age and simple enough to integrate into one's daily life. His teachings are offered as a spiritual science for hundreds of thousands of initiates around the world. His life is an offering to improve the human condition for all people.

I had the good fortune of meeting Sadhguru last year and found that he has great wisdom to impart to all people who want to live a healthy and joyous life. In this interview with him, I hope to share a glimpse of what Sadhguru offers humanity through his life and work.

Jayesh Patel: What are you trying to share with people through the Isha Yoga program you offer?

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev: If you look at people's lives, if you look at yourself, you will see that every single action that you perform in your life-whether you're trying to educate yourself to make money, raise a family, begin a career, whatever you may be doing in your life-fundamentally you're doing it because you think it's going to make you happy. It's just that one person thinks so much education is happiness, another person thinks that much money is happiness, somebody else thinks so much pleasure is happiness, for another power is happiness. But with every single action, consciously or unconsciously, people are trying to be happy. So one way, in this level of living, in this dimension of existence, happiness is the goal of everything that man is doing.

But if you look at life, we have done so much in this world for our happiness. But all we have ended up with is creating more and more comfort and convenience-but not happiness. For example, if you consider-one hundred years ago, what queens and kings could not dream, today an average citizen has. But we cannot say in a hundred year's time, we are much happier than what we were. In the process of trying to be happy, we are destroying the world; but still it is not happy.

So fundamentally, whatever you call peace or happiness is a certain state within you. State

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does not mean just a state of mind-your energy, your body, your mind, or how you keep it-that only then you can be happy. Whenever you are happy, the real source of happiness is within you. It bubbles up. It is just that you are looking for an external stimulus to make you happy.

So Isha Yoga is a way of creating one way of understanding that happiness or peace or whatever you're looking for follows from the fact that every experience has a certain chemical basis. For example, you lose your peace, you go to the doctor; he gives you a pill. It's a dose of chemical; he gives you a little bit of peace. Or in other words, peace is a certain kind of chemistry. Similarly, happiness is, love is, fear is, hatred is, suffering is, misery is-everything that you go through is a certain kind of chemistry.

With proper practice of yoga, you are creating the right kind of chemistry where you are naturally peaceful, naturally joyous, naturally loving within you. It is not because of somebody or something. It is simply-that's the way you are. In other words, once you become like this, your peace and happiness is not at stake with every single action that you perform in your life. So whatever you do, you can do in total freedom, because it's an expression of your peace and joy. Not seeking of peace and joy in life.

Once it is like this, life is definitely effortless. And who wouldn't like to go through life effortlessly? Or, in other words, if you really get into a state of yoga then you can play with life whichever way you want, but life cannot do anything to you. Life cannot scar you or wound you. One can live absolutely stress-free-which is effortlessness.

So what I see is-it is just that people do not know that such a possibility is there within themselves. And if they come to know, I am sure everybody in the world desires to be in that state. It is just that right now we are making an effort to make them aware that this is possible within themselves.

Quote Sidebar: 'Fundamentally, I don't come from any particular spiritual tradition as such. It is from inner experience that I come.'

JP: What spiritual traditions does the Isha Yoga program draw from?

SJV: Fundamentally, I don't come from any particular tradition as such. It is from inner experience that I come. But, if I look at it now, I'm a part of every tradition in the world. Because, whatever the traditions have become over a period of time, that's different. When I look at the source of all traditions, all traditions have started the way I have started. It cannot be any different.

Whether it is this religion, or that religion, or Tao, or Zen, or yoga, whatever-it all comes from the same source of an inner experience-when a person experiences the unity with himself. So, in a way, I belong to all traditions, while I don't belong to any because the presentation is unique.

What you call a tradition is a certain way to presenting. The reason Gautama Buddha choose to teach in a particular way, the reason Jesus chose to teach in a different way, and somebody else in a different way-is simply because of the kinds of situations around them. What was most understandable for the people around them, accordingly they proceeded. Depending on the quality of minds around them-the level of receptivity available to them, accordingly they chose their teachings. Even now it's the same thing, so we are presenting it in a certain way, as it will be most appealing to the modern mind.

JP: I understand that your programs are as appropriate for the average person simply seeking health and happiness in their everyday life as they are for the intense spiritual seeker. How so?

SJV: If you ask me, you cannot really separate these two things. People are seeking well-being, people want health, people want to be peaceful, but they have a confused mind. How will health happen? How will peace happen? How will happiness happen to them? They think they can buy it from the outside; it's a very wrong notion. So, if you're really seeking well-being, whether peace or happiness or health, you need to dig into yourself, to go deeper into yourself, which is a spiritual process.

Now, this question comes up because there is so much misconception about what is spiritual. We are posing spirituality versus a materialistic way of life. There is no such distinction. If you live here, your body, which is material; and who you are within you, is a spirit. So, can you separate these two things in living? You have to live here as body-spirit. So there is no such distinction as to this is spirituality; this is materialistic. It is just that, if you're enslaved to a materialistic way of life, then we will say, to find a little release from it, you can focus on the inward. But, with or without focusing on the inward, on the inner situation, there is no well-being in life. It's only a struggle.

So definitely, Isha Yoga focuses on health, well-being, natural living, and all these things. But, if a person can be truly peaceful and happy in this world, irrespective of what's happening around him, I consider that person a spiritual person. How deep he's gotten is questionable, but he's started being spiritual, because he's happy by his own nature.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev will conduct a free public talk at the Kerr Cultural Center on Jan. 9 from 7-9Pm. For information, call 623-580-9616 or visit www.ishafoundation.org.

Next month: Jayesh Patel interviews Sadhguru about his work in India to revitalize the rural society.

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