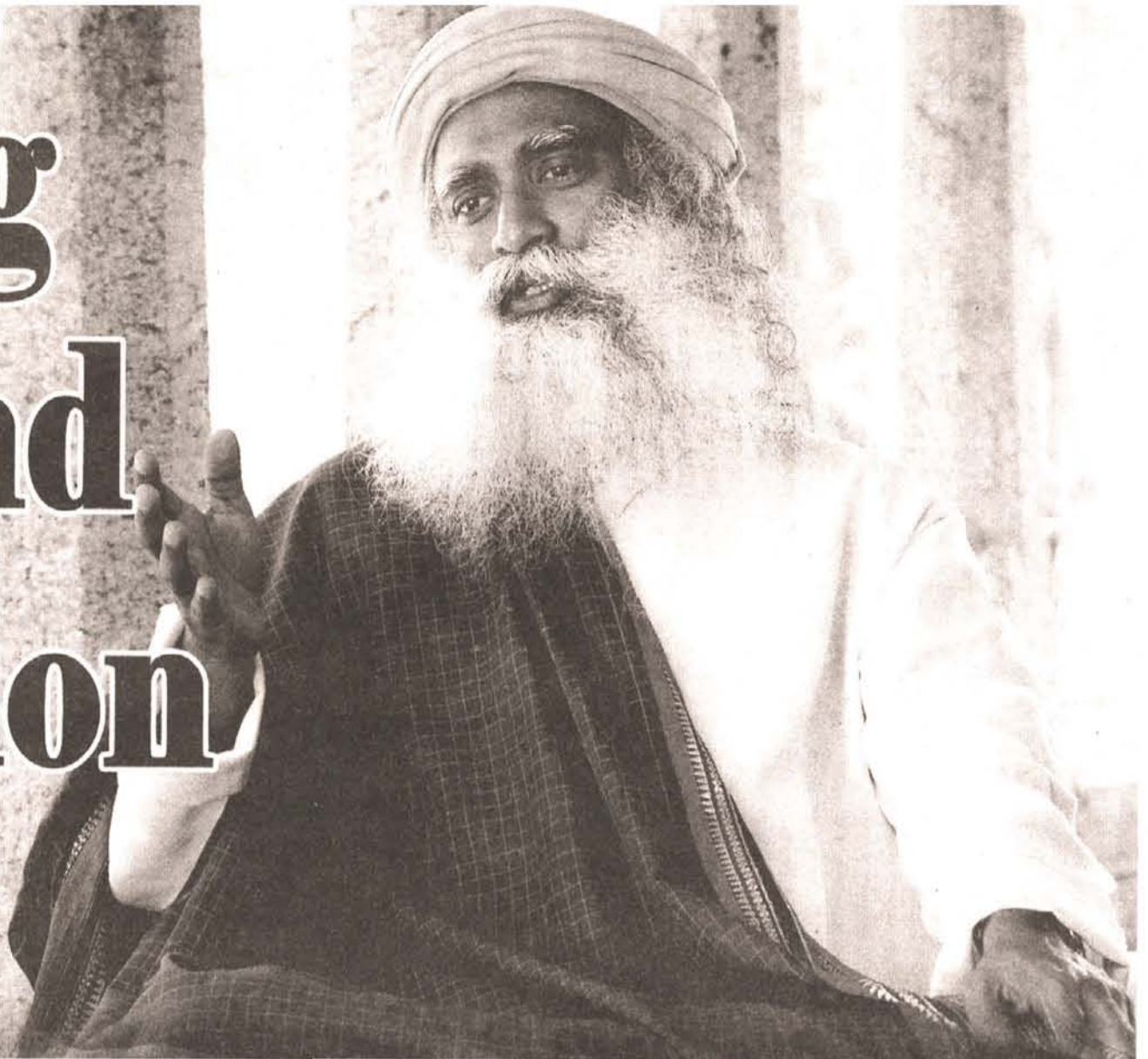


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Rising Beyond Religion



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The moment man became religious should have been the end of all conflict, but unfortunately, everywhere in the world, religion has become the main source of conflict. This has taken the maximum number of lives and caused the maximum amount of pain on the planet for thousands of years. This is only because people believe in something that is not a reality for them. Somebody believes in something, somebody else believes in something else, and naturally conflict cannot be avoided. Today or tomorrow they are going to fight. They may avoid conflict for some time, but some day they will fight. As long as you believe that only your way is right, and somebody else believes his way is right, you are bound to fight.

Though all religions started as an inward path, over time they have gotten twisted up and have simply become a set of beliefs. Though all religions have taught about the value of a human life, for the sake of the same religion, today you are willing to take each other's lives.

Unfortunately, much pain and conflict has risen in this planet because of this. This basic problem has not been properly addressed. People are always trying to do patch up jobs between one group and the other, but they do not last for long and somewhere conflict will arise - the basis being, people only believe in something, something which is not yet a reality for them. If you come down to reality, it is the same reality for everybody, no matter what reli-

gious background you come from. When you come to belief, each group has their own belief of what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false. You believe in things that you have not seen and experienced. This has become the basis of all conflict.

The basic purpose of yoga has always been to pursue religion as an experience, as an inner experience, not as a belief. Don't start with any belief; start looking inward. Whatever is true, experience it and go further, approach it as a science, not as a belief. In yoga, we just see that fundamentally a human being can grow or reach his Ultimate Nature, God or the Divine, or whatever you would like to call it, by approaching it either through the body, the mind, emotion, or through inner energies. These are the only four realities that you know. Everything else is imagined. Everything else has been taught to you.

These are the four basic ways of yoga. If the body is used for growth, it is *karma yoga*. If the mind or intelligence is used, it is *gnana yoga*. If emotion - love and devotion are used, then it is *bhakti yoga*. If you transform your energies and grow, it is *kriya yoga*. This is just like referring to head, heart, hands and energy. That is what you are; that is what every human being is. Nobody is all head, or all heart, or all hands, or all energy, they are a combination of these four dimensions.

So, if a person has to grow, he needs a combination of these four paths of *bhakti*, *gnana*, *kriya* and *karma*. All the four need to be there

in your life, only then there is growth. Only then there is a possibility of reaching the Ultimate Nature. Otherwise we have groups, and groups, and groups - quarrelling groups everywhere. Spiritually, there is nothing happening. Unless something of true value happens within a person, nothing of tremendous value can be done in the external world. Whatever you do, it is only your quality that you are going to spread. Whether you like it or not, this is the reality. Who you are is what you are going to spread everywhere. If you are concerned about the world, the first thing is that you must be willing to transform yourself.

Yoga is about "I am willing to change myself." This is not about wanting to change the world - you are willing to change. Only when you are willing to change, a change can really happen in this world. But when you say, "I want everybody else to change," only conflict will occur. Only when you are willing to change, there will be transformation. It is this self-transformation that will lead to true well-being for the individual and the society. This is a true revolution.

Sadhguru J. Vasudev is a contemporary mystic rooted as strongly in worldly and pragmatic matters as he is in inner experience and wisdom. Named one of India's 50 most influential people, he has addressed prominent global forums on issues as diverse as socio-economic development, leadership and spirituality. He

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His interviews are featured in The New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg, CNN and CNBC. He is the author of several books, the subject of four books and co-author of the Amazon Bestseller "Midnights with the Mystic". His public talks frequently draw crowds of over 300,000 people.

Founded by Sadhguru, Isha Foundation is a non-religious, non-profit organization with over 200 centers worldwide and over one million volunteers. Isha Foundation offers Inner Engineering Online - a practical approach for inner transformation in a fast paced world. The course designed by Sadhguru presents simple, yet powerful tools for an individual to experience life on a deeper level with more awareness, energy, and productivity. This program is an ideal opportunity for those with time and travel constraints to experience the same profound effects of the traditional Inner Engineering program, which has impacted millions of people over the past 25 years. To learn more, view the free Introductory Talk, or to register visit www.InnerEngineering.com