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EDITOR'S NOTE I

For several years now, I have had the privilege to visit Ramesh in Mumbai and enjoy his precise, humorous, kind, and patient way of talking to seekers, who come to him from all over the world.

In his teaching, Ramesh has adopted a down-to-earth approach. In his talks, as well as in the present book, he urges his visitors and readers to seriously ponder over what a human being wants most in life. Furthermore, he challenges the spiritual seeker to question what enlightenment can give a person, what he or she didn't have before. And the answer to both questions is simple: it is inner peace. What everyone truly seeks, irrespective of the means one utilizes or the situations one is confronted with, is inner peace in daily life and living.

For that reason, the impact of his teaching is not lost when one walks out of the ‘spiritual door’ to deal with the ‘other real life’ – the teaching and its effects become part of daily living.

From my own experience, Ramesh’s teaching, and the understanding it produced, gave me a new perspective of, and a new attitude towards, daily life and living – not more, not less.

One of the several positive effects I have experienced, has been the tremendous improvement in efficiency in my everyday work. The new perspective that no one is the doer of any deed, diminished the worrying about success and approval which interfered with, and interrupted, the job at hand.

Ramesh makes it clear that the difference between the man of understanding and the ordinary man does not lie in the circumstances of life and living – these vary from person to person – but the attitude towards them.

The reader is invited to test the teaching and experience it for him or her self. If you feel challenged or compelled by the simplicity of Ramesh’s teaching, this book will have served its purpose.

In the present experience of enjoying life and living.

– Chris Andrelang
Munich, July 2006

What am I talking about in this book? I am talking about a very simple problem: What does a human being, reasonably comfortable in life, fully aware that life means living from moment to moment, and never knowing whether the next moment will bring pain or pleasure, want most in life?

Happiness? Of course.

Then one must ask oneself: “Why am I not happy all the time?” It is common sense that one cannot expect not to ever have any kind of pain – physical, psychological or financial. With this understanding then, “Why am I unhappy?”

I would urge you to think about this question seriously. If you did you would come to only one simple conclusion:

“I am not always happy because the ‘other’ will not always do what I want him or her to do. And it is totally impractical to expect the ‘other’ always to do what I want him to do. Therefore, is it impossible for me to be happy?”

The answer to this apparently unsolvable problem was given by the Buddha 2500 years ago: “Events happen, deeds are done, but there is no individual doer of any deed.”

If one was able to accept, totally, that everything is a happening according to God’s Will or the Cosmic Law, then there would be no question of blaming anyone for anything – neither ‘me’ nor the ‘other’. The result sounds fantastic: no burden of guilt and shame for ‘my’ actions, nor any burden of hatred for the ‘other’ for his actions.

The absence of the load of this guilt and shame, pride and arrogance for one’s own actions, and hatred, envy, and malice towards the ‘other’ for his actions is, itself, the presence or existence of happiness.

If one is able to accept, totally, that everything is a happening according to the Cosmic Law, and that how a happening affects whom – for better or for worse – is also according to the Cosmic Law, then it is clear that no one is responsible for the condition one is in, that, in fact, we are all mere instruments, through which life *happens*.

The only difference between the ordinary man and the man

of understanding is that while the ordinary man believes he has done whatever has been done, the man of understanding knows that free will for the individual entity simply does not exist because everything is predetermined. So, how does the so-called man of understanding – someone who has that total understanding – live his daily life?

The man of understanding lives his everyday life in a simple way: he deals with each situation as it arises, with the total awareness that whatever anyone thinks or does, is precisely according to what God wants him to do. He does whatever he thinks he should do in a given situation (motivation plus free will) with the total acceptance that no one does anything, that everything happens precisely according to God's Will or the Cosmic Law, and therefore, no one need be blamed for anything, neither himself nor the 'other'.

The result is two-fold: firstly, he is constantly at peace with himself and in harmony with the 'other'. Secondly, his mind is always pure, totally free from pride and arrogance for his own 'good' actions, free from guilt and shame for his 'bad' actions, and free from hatred towards anyone for the 'other's' actions. Negative responses like anger or fear may arise and disappear in the moment, but they leave no scar on the mind.

He accepts everything that happens – for better or for worse – as God's Will, and blames no one for any happening –

neither himself nor anyone else. Peace and harmony prevail. Enlightenment or total understanding does not mean an easier life. Life may continue to be difficult, but it certainly becomes simpler and more relaxed.

Every Master has stated that life is a dream, and all human beings are characters within that dream. In that case, how should one live one's life in this apparently real life? The answer is that life and living mean dealing with each situation as it arises, and the only thing anyone can do – and has actually ever done – is to do precisely what one thinks one should do.



BASIC PRINCIPLES
OF LIFE AND LIVING

One of the ordinary man's biggest problems is the question "Why?" 'Why' questions are fundamentally unanswerable because there is no fundamental reason for 'what-is'. Most responses to the "Why?" are not answers to the question but merely how it is that, that is so. "Why am I standing up? Because I am not sitting down." Most questions pertain to what exists in life: "Why does God create dictators who maltreat their people?" "Why does God create handicapped children?" The only answer can be that the basis of the manifestation and its functioning that is called life is *duality*, in which everything exists together with its interconnected opposite or counterpart, and that this applies to every conceivable thing.

There cannot be daily life without male and female, good and bad, beautiful and ugly. Another fundamental principle of ‘life’ is pleasure one moment, pain the next moment. Yet, without the experience of pain would you ever know what pleasure really is? Pursuing one and avoiding the other means inviting frustration. Not accepting the basic duality of life means *dualism*, always choosing and pursuing one against the other. To set up what one likes against what one does not like is a disease of the mind that leads to constant frustration.

‘Life’ is obviously the middle between birth and death, and ‘living’ is the process. But who does the living? “Me, of course,” one will answer. But is that truly so? There certainly is the body-mind organism, a three-dimensional object, which grows by itself from childhood through to old age and ultimately death – precisely like a growing plant. But there is apparently no ‘me’ to live in the plant. The Source has infused in the living being ‘life’ and an ‘ego’, which is the identification with the body-mind organism as a separate entity. In the human being has been added something more, which distinguishes him from the animal: the ego has been infused with a powerful sense of personal doership and a new factor called ‘intellect’, which keeps the human animal asking questions and demanding answers, mainly “Why?”

Is then a ‘me’ really required for the human body-mind

organism in the natural process from birth to death? The question really boils down to: Is the 'me' really necessary for life and living to happen, or does living happen through the body-mind organism, with the impersonal energy functioning through the organism and producing whatever is supposed to happen according to God's Will or the Cosmic Law?

Is it not a fact of life that everything is a happening through a body-mind organism and not the deed done by an individual entity? Life happens. Whatever we do at any moment is based entirely on two factors, genes and conditioning, over which no individual has ever had any control. It is one's destiny according to God's Will or the Cosmic Law.

The only 'real' answer to all the 'Why' questions is that the one who wants to know does not really exist at all – all there is, is Consciousness. That which asks the question, is really nothing more than a three-dimensional object. And then there is no answer – the problem dissolves.

Life and living means one does whatever one is programmed to do, accepting 'his' action as a happening according to God's Will or the Cosmic Law. And one has to accept the consequences of 'his' or 'her' action as judged by society: good, bad, or indifferent. One's action and society's judgement are both happenings according to God's Will or the Cosmic Law. This is life. This is living. This is the natural order in everyone's life.

Everything, including life itself, happens according to a conceptual Cosmic Law, which applies to the whole universe and for all time – and, therefore, the basis of such a vast and complex law can never be intelligible to the meagre human brain.

What then is the meaning of life? Why should the question arise at all? Is not living, in itself, its own purpose, its own meaning? Only the ordinary man wants more because he is so dissatisfied with his life. His life seems so empty and so monotonous that he looks for something beyond what he is doing. But a man who is living truly richly, who sees things as they are and accepts the ‘what-is’, is not confused and therefore he does not ask what the purpose and meaning of life is. His life is not empty and, therefore, he has no need to find the purpose of life. Such a ‘purpose of life’ can only be mere intellection without any reality.

WHAT IS THE EGO? |

The ordinary man will always refer to himself as ‘me’. Is that ‘me’ the truth or merely a concept, a thought? A concept is that which someone would agree with but could be denied by anyone. The truth is that which no one can deny. ‘God’, for example, is a concept because an atheist is entitled to deny the existence of God. On this basis, the only truth is the impersonal awareness of *being*, of existing. If one’s entire memory is wiped out, what remains is the impersonal awareness. “I am” (I exist) can never be denied by anyone.

Yet, is this impersonal awareness of *being* the same as the ‘me’, which is also referred to as the ego? When one says, “I am afraid,” who says it? Who is that entity, that thought, which says “I am afraid?” For instance, when a thought makes the

statement, *I am jealous*, that thought, for the time being, considers itself permanent because the thought has recognised a similar feeling which it has had before. What one has had before as an experience is given permanence and continuity through recognition of what is taking place now. In other words, thought has continuity because thought is the response of the bundle of memories which constitute tradition, knowledge, experience – conditioning. The whole bundle is the ego: violence, ignorance, ambition, and greed; it has pain, despair, and so on.

The ego invents time as a means of escape – “I will practice, I will meditate” – hoping, gradually, to escape from the prison. Or, it seeks expansion through identification with God, with a concept, with an ideal, with a formula. All escapes from daily living, including television and other forms of entertainment, are actually an effort to get away from the identification of the ‘me’ as the doer and experiencer. When one says that the purpose of life is to be happy, to find God, then, surely, that desire to find God is an escape from life, from a life that is devoid of peace and harmony. Change of environment may produce a temporary relaxation but the sense of doership, greed, and envy rears its head very quickly. While watching a movie, for instance, all that happens is that the ‘me’ gets identified with a character in the movie, and suffers his experience.

In other words, it has become a slave to a space and a time of its own. But, as long as there is an ego, there can be no freedom.

The point is that as long as there is an ego, the observer, the thinker, the doer, whatever he seems to be doing, will necessarily be within the prison walls of the 'me' and the 'other'.

What, then, is the role of the 'me' in daily living? The ego is a creation of the Source or Consciousness to function as an individual entity and create a relationship between the 'me' and the 'other' as the basis of daily living. Consciousness is present in the body-mind organism every split-second, in one form or the other: identified consciousness as the ego in the waking state and the dream state, and impersonal consciousness in the deep sleep state. It is the impersonal energy or consciousness, which produces both the doing and the experiencing in the human organism. In other words, the ego is consciousness: impersonal consciousness, identified with the body-mind organism (and a name) as a separate entity with a sense of personal doership. The animal has an ego-identification with the body as a separate entity – but without the sense of personal doership. But even the man of understanding, with total ultimate understanding, responds when someone calls his name. Therefore, there is, clearly, an acceptance of himself as a separate entity. Then, where is the difference between the man of understanding's ego and the ordinary man's ego? The difference

lies entirely in the fact that the ordinary man's ego is full of the sense of personal doership, whereas in the man of understanding's ego, the sense of doership has been totally destroyed.

The real problem is whether it is possible to live fully, completely in this world, doing one's job, doing everything efficiently, *in spite* of the ego. Now, is there a method to get rid of the ego? Methods belong to time and, therefore, will not do, whoever the Master. So, if there is no method, no system, no Master, what can be done?

It is an interesting point that it is the ego *itself* asking this question: "Is it possible for me to live life with a sense of fulfilment, not restricted to this prison of the relationship with the inevitable 'other'?" And, it is the ego which has to arrive at the only solution to this problem. It is the ego that has to find out what actually constitutes the 'prison walls' and if it is supposed to happen, according to its destiny, God's Will, or the Cosmic Law, the ego will, at some point of time, realise, with tremendous intensity, that it is its sense of personal doership, which is the cause of its 'imprisonment', bondage.

Even without the doership, the ego will necessarily continue to be the operational element in daily living, even though it will not be the overall functional element which, in all body-mind organisms, is the impersonal consciousness. The ego will

continue to have free will to do whatever is necessary in a situation, though, of course, it will have no control over what happens as actual action; thereafter, the ego will have to accept the decision of society in regard to the action as good or bad, reward or punishment. The reward from society will mean pleasure, and punishment will mean pain, from moment to moment. And this, indeed, will constitute the daily living of the ego's body-mind organism.

But, the fact would remain that, while the pleasure would necessarily be enjoyed and the pain suffered by the individual entity, the ego, having totally accepted that it is not the doer in either case, will be free of both pride and guilt. The absence of both pride and guilt would mean the presence of peace and harmony for the ego.

The total realisation that the 'me', the ego, can never be the doer of any deed leads to enlightenment.