

Torkom Saraydarian on the Agni Yoga Teachings

"In my youth, I went from brotherhood to brotherhood in search of truth. I travelled to many places and studied with many beautiful Teachers. I read thousands of books, but I never found anything that could surpass the Agni Yoga Teaching. It presents the most essential in such a beautiful way—concisely and directly.



You can write a whole book on one sentence from the writings. In one paragraph there are enough seeds to sprout four or five books. You can discuss one paragraph for a year and still not finish it.

"M.M. was thinking of the progress of humanity when He gave His Teaching in such a condensed way. "In your efforts to understand the Agni Yoga Teaching, you collect and coordinate your mental and spiritual powers. The discipline which you put them under makes them labor together in a harmonious way. Your mind will feel like it has been given lots of good nutrients to keep it active and healthy all day. These thoughts are the best food for our mental bodies."

(Talks on Agni, Chapter 9, pp. 92-93)

Agni Yoga and Labor

"In the Agni Yoga literature, labor takes on a deeper meaning than the customary definition of work. When we refer to labor, we mean the use of energy and matter to bring into materialization the Plan of the Hierarchy. Whatever you do physically, emotionally, and mentally to build and materialize the Divine Plan on Earth is considered labor in the esoteric sense."

(Talks on Agni, p. 129)

"In order to be a great labourer for the Plan of the Hierarchy, you need seven virtues. They are: one-pointed persistence, patience, alertness, sense of direction, inclusiveness, compassion, courage and daring."

(Ibid, p. 138)

"When you have built your character with these seven pillars of light and wisdom, you will be ready to begin spiritual labor."

(Ibid., p. 140)

"When I was a boy, we used to carry bags of salt to neighbouring towns. We would put the bags of salt on the backs of donkeys and carry them through the river. We never had a problem because there was very little water in the river when we passed through it. One day we gave a new boy some salt to carry to another town. He put the bags on the back of the donkey and started off.

"When he had not returned at the end of the day, we went to look for him. We eventually found him sitting at the edge of the river, crying. Without noticing that the water had risen considerably, the boy had crossed the river with the loaded donkey and the water had washed away the salt in the bags. The boy was not alert enough to adjust his plan to the existing conditions, and as a result, he lost the salt.

"A labourer for the Hierarchy must be careful not to waste his energy and resources through his stupidity, because he is working for more than just his own well-being; with his stupidity he can destroy part of the Plan. As a labourer for the Hierarchy, there is more to be considered than just yourself; you must consider the scope of the Plan also. As a labourer for the Hierarchy, you have responsibility, and you must be especially careful."

(Ibid., p. 140)

Agni Yoga and Fearlessness

"An Agni Yogi is a person of total fearlessness because Agni Yoga is the yoga of life."

(Talks on Agni, p. 190)

“When I was a boy in Asia, my Teacher told four of us once that we were to meet a great Teacher whom we had heard much about. The others started to tremble, but I said, ‘What’s the matter with you? Why are you afraid?’ “One replied, ‘Are you crazy? He is such a great Teacher!’

“ ‘No, I’m not crazy. I love him and I will be very happy to finally see him. You are the crazy ones to be so afraid!’ When he came, I went up to him and kissed his hand. The other boys trembled at a distance, but I sat right by him. I was not afraid because he and I were one in spirit. He was me and I was him. We had a bond of unity in the spirit. My fearlessness allowed me to penetrate into this mystery without any hesitation. I wonder if the other boys ever learned this truth. Their fear prevented them from experiencing the beauty of this deep reality.

“Fearlessness develops in a person when he gives matter sacrificially and when he gives up matter because it is not contributing to the achievement of his goal....

“When I was a young man, I was travelling through the mountains alone. A thief stopped me and said, ‘Give me your money or you will be killed.’

“ ‘Why are you doing this?’ “He said, ‘I need money.’

“I said, ‘I will give you everything I have, then.’ I started to take off all my clothes. I was joyful. He was so happy because he was going to get a lot of material goods. But then a puzzled expression came over his face as he thought about my action. After a while, he said, ‘You are the most fearless man I have ever met.’

“ ‘What should I be afraid of?’ I asked. ‘You asked me for something and I am giving it to you.’ “Suddenly he got up and said, ‘Here are your things. I am not going to take anything from you.’ You could see that he was stricken with respect for my courage and fearlessness.” (Ibid., pp. 190-191)

“Fearlessness rests in breaking your identification with matter so that when you give, you are not giving anything up. You are merely sharing with others that life which you have been the temporary custodian of for a time. You lose your sense of ‘I and mine’ so that you feel that another’s need is your need. You are one with the life in others.” (Ibid., p. 192)

Joy and Healing

“When I was a child, maybe three years old, we had 30 - 35 very tall black shepherds working for us. They came from Africa. We had 5,000 buffaloes, which they herded. Once a month the shepherds returned to our home from the herds, and on those occasions they played with me in great joy. I became their ‘football.’ I was always waiting for them. When they came, they made a large circle. They would lift me into their hands and throw me up, like a ball, from one man to the next, maybe fifteen times. It was a great joy to fly above their heads.

“One day I had a very bad cold. My mother said, ‘You are not going to leave this room. You must stay in bed and drink all the medicine I give you.’ When my mother was in another room, my little sister came to me and said, ‘The blacks came.’

“ ‘Wow’ I said, and immediately I jumped out of bed and ran to where the shepherds were. When they saw me, the circle formed. I had a fever, and I was very sick. But I was flying in the air. After ten rounds, they sat me down and the fever was gone. My mother said to the shepherds, ‘What did you do? You killed the boy!’

“They said, ‘He is fine. There is nothing wrong.’ I didn’t have any more pain or fever. It had vanished in my extreme joy.

“This happened a second time when I was 36 years old. I had a very bad cold with a high fever. My wife said, ‘Stay in bed.’ Then the postman brought me a letter from my teacher. In the letter it said, ‘We are taking you into a special group for advanced studies.’ After I read that letter, my fever, headache and pain totally disappeared. I got up, dressed, and started to write and organize my papers. “My wife came in and said, ‘Are you crazy?’

“I said, ‘No. Everything is fine. Look at this letter.’ The letter brought me ten tons of joy, and the joy healed me.”
(*Joy and Healing*, pp. 56-57)

Joy

“The first major thing that joy does is to make you successful. Once while I was in the Royal Air Force, I was told to select a sergeant from ten candidates. One of the candidates came into my office and said very coldly, ‘What can I do for you, sir?’

“I said, ‘Go away.’

“Another candidate came to me and said with joy, ‘Good morning. Isn’t it a beautiful day?’

“I said to him, ‘You are going to be the sergeant.’ ”
(*Joy and Healing*, p. 56)

“While in a monastery, the Teacher said to me, ‘You are going to dig a trench here.’ When I asked him how long the trench should be, he said, ‘Just start digging, and I will tell you when to stop.’ The first day I dug ten feet, but the Teacher said, ‘That is not enough; tomorrow dig another ten feet.’ ‘Why did I come to this school?’ I thought. This process continued until I had dug a forty-foot trench—and it still was not enough. ‘What in the world are you going to do with this trench?’ I asked him. ‘If you don’t like it, my son,’ he said, ‘get lost. You came here to learn.’ ‘Yes, sir,’ I said, and continued digging.

“I dug for several weeks. At night my shoulders were so tired from digging they would not work. Then suddenly I remembered something my father said: ‘Do everything as if you were doing it for the Lord.’ I said to myself, ‘I must dig with love!’ The next day before I started I said, ‘Okay, God, this is for You. This is for Your Angel; this is for Your Holy Spirit; this is for Your Martyrs.’ There was so much energy in this joy! When the Teacher came to me and said, ‘I need another four feet,’ I said with enthusiasm, ‘Yes, sir!’ I had found the secret. So he said, ‘You do not need to dig anymore.’ ”
(*The Flame of the Heart*, p. 214)

“In a sacred brotherhood joy was called the messenger of good, and the members of the brotherhood used to sit daily under the trees or on the banks of rivers in great joy and ecstasy. We had a head cook who would also serve the dinner to all the members. His manners, words, and facial expressions used to radiate a deep, solemn joy. One day my Teacher said that the cook had learned the secret of life—to transmit joy to everyone through his every act.”
(*New Dimensions in Healing*, pp. 213-214)

“When I was a very little boy, I noticed that during the most critical times my father would smile, make a joke, and get others to laugh. One day we were riding in a carriage and the horses became very frightened by a car passing by. They had never seen an automobile before. When they heard the noise, they started to jump. I jumped out of the carriage because I thought it was going to turn over. I fell near the wheels, and the carriage ran over one of my toes.

“My father finally got the horses under control and rushed over to me. The first thing he said was that he was glad that the carriage didn’t run over all my toes. He started joking with me and making me laugh, so that I didn’t feel any pain at all. Today I do not have the nail on one of my toes, but I really learned something that day about joy.”
(*Talks on Agni*, pp. 208-209)

Compassion

“I remember a very old Teacher taking me to the mountains for a walk. After a few hours we were passing a dangerous curve in the mountain. He began to talk very enthusiastically, catching my whole attention, until he realized that I had noticed a man lying on the hillside. “ ‘Teacher,’ I said, ‘there is a man there. Maybe he needs help.’

“ ‘Well, you are not listening to my words, and you are interested in a fool who has fallen there.’

“‘But...’

"I jumped down the hill, and seeing that the man was almost dying, I managed to pull him up to the road and carry him on my back for almost half a mile to a fountain where I thought he could find rest.

"When we were close to the fountain, he jumped off my back and began to dance. With great surprise I looked at my Teacher who was silently following me.

"Well,' he said, 'You passed the test of compassion.'"
(*The Flame of the Heart*, p. 118)

Inspiration

"One day when I was twelve, a nurse who loved me very much asked my mother for permission to take me to a meeting. My mother let me go. There I was given a book which I read over and over again. I loved it so much. In that book, the nurse had underlined a sentence. At first I thought the book had been used, but she was quick to explain that she had done it for emphasis. She wanted me to really think about the idea given there. It was, 'If a man did something, you can do it also.'

"What a challenge this gave to my young mind, and what hope also. It gave me a great inspiration to think that I could do as well as Michelangelo and Beethoven. Maybe I could even do better than they did. Who knows? What thrilled me was I had the rest of my life before me and that I could do great things in the days granted to me. What a marvellous source of inspiration and hope those few words have been to me throughout my life."
(*Talks on Agni*, p. 97)

The Gift

"My most thrilling gift was one I received when I was nine years old. It was night. We had eaten dinner and the cake, and I had received the presents from my sisters, which were mostly clothing, when Mother turned to Father and said, 'Take him to the garden for awhile.' My Father said, 'Okay. Come, let's go.' I thought they were preparing a surprise in the room for my return. Daddy took my hand and began to walk toward the stable. After a few steps, with great joy I began to cry. 'Why are you crying?' my father asked. 'I know I have a horse.' 'What if it is not a horse?' 'I even know exactly which horse it is,' I said. My father opened the door of the stable, and there, in the light of an old gas lantern, I saw the shining body of a black horse.

"I jumped up and hugged my father around the neck and felt so much love for him. Then, turning to the horse, I said, 'Your name is Blacky.' The horse shook his mane and whinnied. How I wanted to ride! Father said, 'Not at night; wait until morning. The horse is tired and needs rest.' I examined and touched almost every part of the horse. He was so gorgeous that I kissed him. Upon returning, I did not go to the room where my mother and sisters were singing. Instead, I went to my bedroom and tried hard to sleep deeply in order to be with my horse. All that night I rode my horse in my dreams. He was magnificent."
(*Other Worlds*, pp. 419-420)

Sensitivity

"While in a monastery, I learned to develop keen sensitivity toward my teacher. I knew exactly when he needed a cup of water, when he needed a pencil and paper, when he wanted to go to the garden or eat something. From his voice, facial expression and subtle behaviour, I truly knew what he wanted. I was so sensitive that sometimes I could almost hear his thoughts and did things for him before he could ask.

"The eyes of my teacher had a special language, which I learned. Certain looks meant to behave; other looks meant, 'Be careful,' 'Be wakeful,' or 'You can do it, if you dare' and 'Stop,' 'Give a chance,' 'I am disappointed, but I still have hope'; and so on. Due to my development of sensitivity, I was promoted at a young age."
(*The Psychology of Cooperation and Group Consciousness*, pp. 17-18)

Gracefulness

“My mother used to tell my sisters, ‘There is no perfume as precious as the gracefulness of a woman.’ I will always remember my mother’s gracefulness. My family was very wealthy at one time. My mother kept her gracefulness and refinement even when we lost everything. I never heard a dirty word from her mouth. The worst she did was to keep silent, with a smile.”
(Ibid., pp. 108-109)

Helping Others and Karma

“From childhood I had a tendency or urge to help people. I remember once spending half a day to bring medicine to an elderly woman. Another time, I spent one whole day bringing down a cat which had climbed to the highest branch of a big tree and was very frightened. I used to help neighbours in any way I could. In school I used to help children not only from my class, but also from lower and higher classes.

“Once my mother said to me, ‘You are always doing good for others.’ I think that doing good saved me from many karmic debts and serious dangers which I passed through without the slightest scratch. I remember once being carried away by the tides of a river, and someone jumped in and saved me. A great bear once came out of the forest and slept next to me without hurting me. One time I was accidentally locked in the furnace of a locomotive engine, and someone happened to open the door through curiosity and found me there. I walked away from many car accidents without being hurt. I assume that doing good for others is the best way to pay our karmic debts and increase our savings.”

(The Flame of The Heart, p. 114)