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## presence: the only thing worth achieving

Man is always absent, but everything else is just present. If you understand this presence, you will understand everything else. It is the only thing worth knowing, worth understanding. We are afraid of ourselves... of our “am-ness.” All the time our attention is on the “other,” not on “am-ness.” And if attention can turn back and remain on “am-ness,” the story changes. In the beginning you will realize that you cannot tolerate it. You cannot tolerate yourself. All the time you escape from yourself – finding things to do. All the time, our attention is on the “other.”

But when this attention is *not* on the other, when it does not *move*, does not go anywhere else, but just remains – *unmoved* – only then do you know who-you-are. Then there is pure “am-ness”; there is pure “being-ness.” I call it *Hona* – I call it God. God is within you. And continuously, each moment the message is coming, but you are not receiving it. Continuously, the message “I am”... “I am”... “I am” is coming, but you never listen. You are busy doing all

- *learn how not to pay attention to the unwanted* •

sorts of things – occupied, unavailable; always absent to receive this message.

You perceive, you listen, you taste, you smell. It means you *are*; it means “am-ness” is there. Right now your focus is not on “am-ness,” it is on the “other.” But when it turns back, when the focus on the other disappears, only then you will be able to listen to the message. In the absence of focus on the other, “am-ness” shines forth. When there is no focus on the “other,” and just “am-ness” is... that is what we call God.

God means “am-ness,” God means “is-ness.” God “is.” Where? Everywhere! Where is He not? Look at the stars and the moon, the mountains and rivers, the birds and animals, the flowers and the trees – they are all saying, “I am.”

But man is avoiding himself and his own existence, which is “am-ness.” If you get stabilized in this “am-ness,” you will know what God means. God means Presence. And this Presence, which you have, which you *are*, has been forgotten. You are not paying any attention to it, and the whole game is only of this attention.

If you give attention to anyone, to anything, it will flower, it will grow, it will expand. If you pay attention to your jealousy, you will become more jealous. If you pay attention to your greed, you will become more greedy. Pay attention to your thoughts and they will start multiplying! Don’t pay attention to your thoughts and they will die. Just don’t pay attention. Can you do that? It is that simple! This much you have to learn: How *not* to pay attention to the unwanted.

Now in this 21-day silence, this is going to happen. There will be thoughts and thoughts and you will be writing to me again and again: “What to do? There are too many thoughts. I have never experienced so many thoughts! From where are they coming?” Just don’t pay them any attention. Here we meditate, and traffic passes on the road above, but we never notice! In the same way, just don’t notice your thoughts; just don’t pay them any attention.

- *remain attentive... but to nothing in particular* •

When you give attention to your girlfriend, she feels happy. When you pay attention to your plant, the plant feels happy. Suppose you have plants in your house, and you do not pay attention to them... see how sad they become! And now it has been scientifically proven that everything needs attention – *everything!* Whatsoever you have in your house, it needs attention and when you give attention to it, it becomes happy. Even inanimate things – for instance, your furniture. If you pay attention to it, if you clean it nicely, if you handle it carefully – then even your furniture feels happy!

But we are not sensitive; that is why we do not notice all this. And the substratum of this universe, of all manifestation, of the whole of existence, is nothing but the energy of this very attention. What do I mean when I say, pay attention to yourself? I mean: Just remain attentive, that's all. Attentive to *nothing in particular* – simply remain attentive! Maybe a dog is barking – the listening will happen; you have not to make any effort and at the same time you have not to close yourself. You just remain attentive, that's all.

A Buddha is one who is attentive. He is just present. He is only Presence, nothing else. And this Presence is a blessing. So pay attention to your Presence – just be present. You know that “you are” – there is a sense of Presence; just remember it. “I am”... just remember and *be*.

But you will see... it is not only difficult, it is very arduous.

So what! It may be arduous, but you *have* to do it. You are a *sannyasin*, you are a seeker, you have chosen this path – now fulfill this longing... this thirst of yours. But how? Just by remembering again and again, again and again, again and again. And when this becomes your *first priority*, you will succeed.

At the moment, everything else is important and this “am-ness” is not at all important. Yet this is the only thing to achieve! For that you have paid one thousand dollars! And next time I will charge ten thousand dollars! ...laughter...

Presence is the real thing.

To become present is the only thing worth achieving.