

cannot escape. Whether you take it as a treasure or a burden, you have a life. You have life. It is yours. That much is clear.

Is there, then, more to life? Yes. Can it be known? Oh, yes. To see into the heart of a subject as profound as life, you must have a very fine medium, a powerful medium, one that can reflect life in all its depth and diversity. That medium is the mind. When it is a golden mind, it perceives a golden life. *A golden mind, a golden life.*



Just as the earth is blessed with a golden sun, you are blessed with a golden mind. At face value, you may find it difficult to accept that your mind is so valuable, particularly when you are aware, when you are acutely aware, of the battle you wage with your mind, the endless conversation you have with it, the constant struggle to pull it back from destructive thoughts and wild fantasies. When you think of its yammering and clamoring and woolgathering and your vain attempts to reason with it, you might feel embarrassed to say that you have a golden mind. Or you might be afraid that it is arrogant even to entertain the idea, "I have a good mind." All this discomfort is mainly due to a simple lack of recognition. Recognition of what? Of the blessedness of the mind, of its essential nature,

which is golden. In the *Kaivalya Upaniṣad*, the Lord says, "I am the golden hue." *Hiraṇ-mayo'ham*. "I am the golden hue."

Now, you may want to know how you can recover your golden mind, how you can reclaim the experience of blessedness of the mind. For a start, just think of gold. Did you know that gold itself can be hammered so thin that sunlight can shine through it? For gold to acquire its purest form, what does it have to go through? Fire. It burns in the fire, and burns in the fire, and burns in the fire. Then finally, the expert artisan recovers gold in its purest form. He must be very careful, though. Melting gold to get rid of the dross so that it can shine with its own luster, unobstructed, is no simple task. It is a complex and amazing process of transformation, one that is often used as a metaphor for yoga.

Let us begin the process of refining an understanding of the New Year's Message by turning to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, one of the holiest books of India. It is a beautiful dialogue between Master and disciple, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. No matter how disheartened Arjuna becomes, Lord Kṛṣṇa perseveres in imparting his teachings, again and again — one chapter, two chapters, three chapters, four chapters. He goes on and on; there are eighteen chapters in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Because of this, Arjuna finally overcomes his despondency and receives the power of the universe to perform his *dharma*, his duty. The *Bhagavad-Gītā* represents the *dharma* of the supreme Self.

In one of its verses, Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals something wondrous about the mind. In chapter 10, the Lord is describing His various manifestations. He says that among all things, He takes the form of what is highest and most great. In verse 22, He says:

*indriyāṇām manaś cāsmi bbūtānām asmi cetanā*

Among the senses, I am the mind.  
I am the Consciousness of all beings.<sup>4</sup>

"Among the senses, I am the mind." When Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "I am the mind," what happens? Doesn't that stop your mind? Doesn't the mind boggle at the thought? Why do you suppose that is? For a moment, look at your own mind. What benefit do you derive from it? What is the purpose of your mind? How do you display your own mind to other people? Are you driven by your own mind or are you the master of your own mind? Do you think of your mind as ordinary or special? Do you realize that your mind shapes your destiny, that your mind is what shapes your life? Minute by minute, thought by thought, do you realize your mind is what shapes your life?

In the Indian scriptures, a human being is considered to have eleven senses. There are the five senses of perception: the powers of hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. There are the five powers of action: the powers of speaking, procreation, excretion, handling, and locomotion. Now the

Lord says, "I am the mind." That, according to the Indian scriptures, is the eleventh sense. Though God is the power behind all our actions, here in this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa declares that the greatest and most divine of all the senses is the mind. The Lord Himself firmly takes His seat in the mind as the eleventh sense. *A golden mind, a golden life.*



The mind can be a vast field of liquid gold, undulating from one shore to another. You can become totally lost in its awesome power. On the other hand, your own mind can be the worst enemy you will ever have. It can lead you into a swamp. It can chase you up a tree. It can get you into a pretty pickle. It can run you ragged. It can send you around the bend. It can lead you to wrack and ruin. It can land you in the doghouse. It can send you to hell in a handbasket. So, the same mind can be friend or foe, gold or dross. And believe it or not, the choice is up to you. It is your choice. You are the one who makes your mind your friend or your enemy. You are the one who puts yourself on the good side or the bad side of the mind. You are the creator of the state of your life.

My Guru, Bābā Mukṭānanda, says:

It is the grace of the mind that is far more important than anybody else's grace. You may enjoy the grace of

all the other people that you know; but if you do not enjoy the grace of the mind, then other people's grace will not help you at all. You have to win the grace of the mind.<sup>5</sup>

Isn't that great? You have to win the grace of your own mind. *A golden mind, a golden life.* Here Bābā is revealing the power of your mind. He is beckoning you to have a real grasp over the mind. He is saying something so vital here: you have to win the grace of your own mind.

Take the example of gold. A huge chunk of gold ore is valuable even in its crude state. However, its value increases in the hands of an expert. Then it can be used to make ornaments. In fact, in medicine they use gold to cure diseases. In recent times, gold is used in technology. For gold to achieve its potential, the process of smelting and refining is crucial. There is an enormous difference between crude ore and twenty-four-karat gold.

Now, pay attention to this. The mind also needs to be purified in order to recover its own luster. To win the grace of your own mind, you have to *do* something. It is something very important — you must practice austerities. The Sanskrit word for *austerity* is *tapas*, and *tapas* means "heating, burning." Now, this does not refer to physical torture, nor does it refer to mental torture. It is not something like "no pain, no gain." *Tapas* refers to something very different.

What austerities, what *tapas*, can you perform to win the grace of the mind? How can you truly purify the mind? What tools do you need to discover your golden mind? What will make a golden mind possible?



The answer can be found in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Listen carefully. These words carry our golden guidance for the brilliant year of 1999. In the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa tells us:

*manah-prasādaḥ sāmyatvaṁ māunam ātma-vinigrabhaḥ  
bhāva-saṁsuddhir ity etat tapo mānasam ucyate*

Peace of mind, gentleness, silence, self-restraint, and purity of being: these are called austerities of the mind.<sup>6</sup>

What luminous, golden nuggets of wisdom. Today we will look at them very briefly. Then we will have the rest of the year to study them more closely, so that our minds and our lives may become as golden as a field in the first rays of morning.

The first austerity of the mind is *manah-prasāda*, peace of mind, tranquility of the mind. Or, as Bābā says, “the grace of the mind.” The grace of the mind is possible only if you are able to fully understand what it means to make peace with God. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the mind.” What an exalted awareness to have. Within your own mind, God exists. It is awesome: within your own mind, the supreme light exists. So by making

peace with your own mind, you are actually establishing an unshakable relationship with the supreme benefactor. You are making peace with God.

Everyone seems to understand that before you die, you have to make your peace with God. However, in the yogic tradition, you do not wait till your last rites. You make peace with your own mind on a daily basis. Yoga understands the power that the mind has over you. It is your mind that decides whether or not to follow your resolutions. It chooses whether or not to listen to others. It exercises its options all the time. It opts to bamboozle you or to seek the light. The mind is extremely powerful. It can sway you to such an extent, to such an extreme, that any return seems impossible. Haven't you heard people say, “He is a goner”? Therefore, you have to make peace with your own mind. Now, my dear ones. Listen. I mean *now*. Can you hear me? Now.

A mind of gold creates a golden life. A golden mind sustains a golden life. There are many great techniques to bring serenity to the mind. It is good to experiment with them and find what works best for you. See when and how your mind is able to become calm. Learn to recreate that environment. Learn to expand the calm state of consciousness. Learn to carry that experience into your day-to-day activities.

For example, everything in nature can evoke peace of mind. It is very helpful to focus the mind on the vast blue

sky, a beautiful stream, a golden sunrise. We are talking about *manah-prasāda* — tranquility of the mind, calmness of the mind, serenity of the mind, the grace of the mind. And we are looking at some of the tools, some of the techniques, to bring serenity to the mind. Listening to wise counsel can make you peaceful. Another person's wisdom can expand the tranquility of your mind. All the spiritual disciplines — such as meditation, chanting the mantra, contemplation — can be considered austerities of the mind.

Bābā used to take great delight in telling everyone that these spiritual disciplines were not for attaining God, because God is already attained. The practices exist just to purify the mind. For example, when you chant the mantra, you soon notice that your mind is becoming calmer. When tranquility of mind spreads through your being, you also experience a very deep connection to the Truth, to your deepest love, to your own God within. And with this comes bliss beyond measure. *Manah-prasāda*, an austerity that leads to bliss.

In the beginning, I said this is an initiation. As you sit with the Message and contemplate its different aspects, we will also be practicing what we are speaking about. Right now, we will chant the mantra *Om*, the primordial sound. Let the sound spread tranquility throughout your being. *Om*.<sup>7</sup> *A golden mind, a golden life.*

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OF THE  
HEART

*A collection of talks on spiritual life  
by*

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