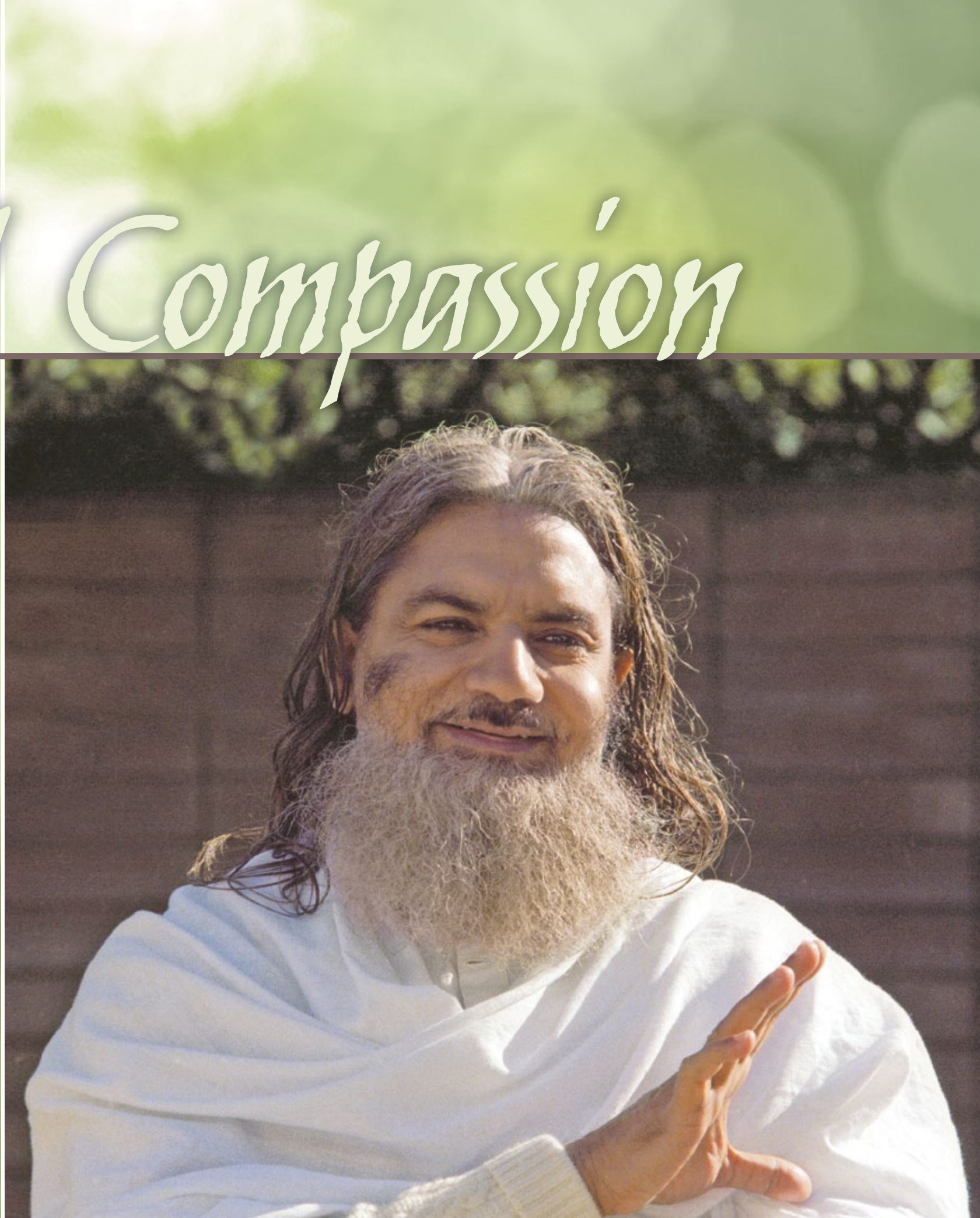


Satsang by Swami Amar Jyoti

Karma and Compassion

The way we perceive is what we create. When you have fear, apprehensions or doubts of any kind, or when you want something in a certain way, you give shape to that creation. Right at that moment of inception you are creating karma.

EVERYONE HAS SPIRIT WITHIN THEM, but all are not spiritual. Potentially you are omnipotent, but which part of your being are you using? You are using only a part in direct proportion to your interests and choices. And because we use our capacity partially, we are under the law of karma. If we were using our total Being we would be free of karmas. Since we are limited our capacity is limited. Therefore pains and pleasures are limited, especially pleasures, because pain just follows pleasure. If you could use your full Being, you would be utilizing your unlimited capacity. You would achieve totality, limitlessness, omnipotence.



When we come back to the truth from our own shifting attitudes, we will find that truth has never changed; the reality was always the same. The law of karma makes us understand the limitations of our ego trips, our perceptions, conceptions, wants, and ways of thinking.

The way we perceive is what we create. When you have fear, apprehensions or doubts of any kind, or when you want something in a certain way, you give shape to that creation. Right at the moment of inception you are creating karma, like it or not, even if you do not mean it. This karma may take time to realize—time and space in between take their own course—but even in that moment you cannot go back; you cannot erase what you have created.

There are many stories in the Indian epics in which sages were wronged by someone, knowingly or unknowingly, or were treated outside of etiquette or social norms. In certain extreme situations a sage would curse the person who wronged them. The term “curse” seems strong today but at that time sages were known for giving both blessings and curses. When the wrongdoer heard the curse, knowing that this sage was infallible, they would come to their senses and apologize or repent. The sage would respond, “Once I have pronounced a curse it cannot be taken back.” But sometimes they would give a remedy to reduce the effects of the curse. It was their grace and compassion, *karuna*, to do this.

The law of karma is infallible except for the mercy of the Almighty. Normally you cannot escape the karma you create; either you pay the price, modify it, or you are helped by someone who is capable, an adept. The law of karma is simply action and reaction. In a particular context or limited time span you may not be able to see this: “I did a little wrong; I received more punishment.” “I did so much good; I didn’t receive that kind of recognition.” We judge in a particular situation, forgetting that it is tied up with so many other correlated situations.

If the law of karma was shifting and fluctuating—one thing now and something else tomorrow—it would be incomprehensible to us. If the truth went on shifting its own valuation, how could it be tangible for us? It has to be stable, eternal and changeless. When we come

back to the truth from our own shifting attitudes, we find that truth has never changed. Beyond the law of karma we will see that the reality was always the same. We were experimenting, trying to see things differently, or to serve our own purposes. The law of karma brings us to understand the limitations of our ego trips, our perceptions, conceptions, wants, and ways of thinking.

Anyone’s new discovery, understanding or thought is exhilarating to them—“I have something totally unique to tell you. I’ve never experienced this and I’m sure no one else has either!” Up to a point our interests, expectations, perceptions, wants and desires are not a problem, but when we see these as our whole life and understanding, and isolate any of these as “me,” we create separation, which is a sin. It causes pain, misery and grief. That exclusion or limiting your totality to what you have or want to have is where you are mistaking a part for the whole. And just as we are not using our total being, we also use very little of our brain. Yogis in ancient times said that the human body has 72,000 nerves, visible as well as invisible. We hardly use one third of our nervous system; therefore our power, strength and might are limited. And since we use only part of our power, then our valuations, interests and selfishness are tied up in that part only. Accordingly we live and receive in a limited way.

You have to reach your totality of Being, which you already *are*. That is why holy people and Prophets tell us to be desireless. They simply mean that you are stuck in this minor segment of your being. You could be using the totality of your will but by these small desires you are isolating yourself, limiting yourself, limiting your wisdom. The way you are, the image you create, the way you want others to be, goes on and on, feeding further ignorance, darkness and unconsciousness. Yet even within this thickening of ignorance we still assume we are “okay”—“Whatever I am, accept me.” How can that be accepted? If you want the totality you have to include the minor parts of your being as well. If you are

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When you are fully open you will know abandonment into the Unlimited, a full use of your Being. Then you will see that you are not under the spell of karmas. You will not have to desire anything; it will be at your command.

not accepted in your unconscious behaviors you feel you are rejected. Sages use polite words: detachment, dispassion. When you are fully open you will know abandonment into the Unlimited, a full use of your Being: heart, mind, might, body and soul. Then you will see that you are not under the spell of karmas. You will not have to desire anything; it will be at your command. You will have peace and joy.

When you get stuck with only part of your life, it forms its own valuation. In this, you become so clinging or stubborn that you create habitual resistance for the rest of your being. In this unconsciousness or ignorance we form our interests, desires, ways and patterns, which we have freedom to do, but this partial freedom is still in ignorance; it will only make us suffer. It creates misunderstandings, misconceptions and wrong desires. We feel that it is natural because we are identified with it. Whatever does not fit is not for us. It is an automatic reflex of rejection, resisting the very truth and benevolence that we ultimately need. Many times you do not know what you are doing, but one who truly sees, who witnesses properly, knows. Such beings can forgive but the law of karma takes its own course. You cannot avoid that. When you create karma it is bound to produce results.

Whatever does not fit your pattern, your way of being, your desires or your image is what you reject, whether it is good for you or not. You think, "I'm okay. My partner needs to change." Are you perfect? If not then naturally you have some wrongs too. You cannot say you are imperfect as well as right in everything. Our expectations, therefore, have gone in the wrong direction in many situations when we are demanding or claiming from others. If we just see the portion of our lives known to us, is that not enough to work upon and correct? We avoid our part and expect others—partners, friends, roommates, employers and employees, our government—to improve, as if in no time. If we were to correct even one wrong of ours, how much time would it take? And when we expect others to change overnight so we can be satisfied, are we not asking the

impossible, or at least the improbable? Are we failing to be compassionate or humane?

Everyone needs to have freedom and time and space in which to grow. If I cannot be perfect overnight, neither can my partner. What if someone expects *me* to change? I have to either assume that there is nothing to correct in me, or live with that person's expectations. Compassion is needed because we are not isolated islands. We have to work upon each other but not without working on ourselves. Modifications may be necessary. Sometimes you need to work hard on yourself but other times you need to relax. You cannot meditate the whole day. You have to give time and understanding to others as well. After all, we are all human beings. We may expect certain things from others but it doesn't happen that way. This is not yielding or compromise, just being compassionate. And this is truly releasing. Why should I get angry? If they want to take time, let them take time. There should be compassion between husband and wife, brothers and sisters, roommates, friends, countrymen and even those who are hostile.

Compassion has been practiced by holy ones since ages, but I feel it should be practiced by everyone. How otherwise can we live peacefully together? How else can we enjoy each other's company? How can we have success in marriage or any other relationship without applying compassion, without there being give and take? Life is not one-way traffic. There is always reaction to action, loss and gain. We have to join the head with the heart. Normally the intellect thinks, it does not feel. But when the head and heart are joined, we see things differently, even in the same situation. Compassion is not lethargy or weakness. We all are imperfect. We all have shortcomings to some degree. We need to understand this point because otherwise it is hard to find satisfaction in life. If we do not treat others with compassion and understanding, we will have to realize our mistakes after losing those we love. When we are ungrateful and do not appreciate the things God gives, or we receive through our destiny, we will have to learn that lesson with the next person who comes into



our life, whether it is a guru, a husband, a wife, relative, friend, sibling or co-worker.

We lack compassion and understanding for each other. In any hostile situation with loved ones, friends, bosses and others, our expectations, ingratitude and not getting what we want eventually percolate into pessimism, depression, negativity or suicidal thoughts. Self-condemnation walks in and with it stagnation. To come out of this, the process is quite different: We have to forgive others' shortcomings. You have to try hard to help yourself and others, but there needs to be a point to relax, to modify, to yield, to be compassionate and just allow growth.

These virtues are the same on the spiritual path. The guru knows how to deal with you. There are no equal

rights in the guru disciple relationship. If you are seeking rights, be in politics. You cannot come on a spiritual path and ask for rights. There are no rights. It is all loss! It is all unlearning, humility, unassumingness, non-expectation and yielding. These values of the spiritual path should be our way of living in the world, the way of divine life, new age consciousness. When the spiritual values among realized souls and disciples become the way of life for the majority, it will be the golden age. When humility is a common virtue, when devotion is a way of life, then life will have higher meaning. When forgiveness, letting go and compassion are not only the virtues of holy people but of all, we will understand how well they work.

What Prophets and Enlightened ones impart to us is not just for disciples and devotees; it is for

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everyone. If we have not achieved that wisdom in our collective living, that is our problem, but it is a workable hypothesis for all of us. If you think you can be selfish at home and not selfish when you come to the temple or ashram, you have not understood. If you are truly selfless at the temple you will be selfless everywhere. If you are genuinely devotional here you will be loving everywhere, not only with those in whom you are interested. We blind ourselves to believe that our dear ones are the most special. That is another form of selfishness. We value what we like and what we want.

God does not punish us, nor do gurus. We punish ourselves—by our resistance and incorrigibility, by isolating ourselves. And the more we resist and get negative, the more we tight corner ourselves. You may avoid seeing this but the law of karma is perfect. I think something is wrong with us if we cannot live peacefully together. Our tolerance has diminished to such a degree that we are intolerant in no time. We have become so private and individualistic that we can hardly get help in times of need. If pride or arrogance does not work on the spiritual path, it does not work in everyday life either. Seekers and disciples are supposed to be more humble, more devotional, more understanding and accepting of others. They are supposed to be more dutiful, truthful and honest, not claiming or demanding from others. The gurus are powerful and wise enough to ride over the tide, as they say, but if the gurus stand apart you lose.

According to the Vedas, God and the creation are inseparable. The Vedas also say that God can live without creation but creation cannot live without God. Since the creation has manifested from God or Divine Mother, He or She can live without it because the whole creation is within Him or Her. The whole creation is called *Virat Swarupa* in Sanskrit, the universal form of God. That form is *within* Him. He will never leave it and be somewhere else. If you are separating the Creator and the creation, you are making the first fallacy; truth will not come to you. The sense of separation is ignorance. God can live without manifesting, without creating, but once He creates, it is within Him.

Intellect might ask, "Did God feel lonely and therefore He created?" If He felt lonely, then He would not be God. The word used in Sanskrit is *leela*—play. Because God was so perfectly full in Himself, He said, "Let me create." He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent in such a way that He did not want anything. He said, "Out of me, let me be many." That was the joy of His creation. When God said, "Go and multiply," He meant to multiply *virtue*. He did not mean to create stagnation and miseries as mankind has done. He meant to multiply *dharma*, to not forsake the path of righteousness. These spiritual values need to be imbibed by everyone, not only initiated ones. That is our aim and dream.

When Buddha attained Enlightenment he continued to meditate for forty days under the bodhi tree. So many mysteries of the cosmos were revealed to him; there was no secret unknown to him. Even then, after forty days, Buddha got up, though very weak in body. His compassion compelled him to go forward into the world to teach the Dharma, to show the way to Enlightenment. Spirituality is not a monopoly of the few. It has to permeate into all. Then only can humanity achieve awakened consciousness, life divine. If you invite this wisdom into your life you will be working on yourself rather than expecting from others, and you will see the results. 🌸

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