The ultimate aim of all paths is to still the mind. Whichever tradition you follow, whether it is Vedanta, the path of devotion, Zen Buddhism, Vipassana, Christianity or Hinduism, at the end of every path you will see that the mind has to quiet down and come to stillness.

The early translators of Eastern philosophies used terms in English that often lost their original depth and substance. I feel that either we should choose the right translations or use the original terms. For example, we do not say, “Let us do union postures.” We say “yoga postures.” The word “surrender” has been used as the translation of the Sanskrit term, sharanagati. In Western culture and history, surrender generally refers to warfare: one leader or army surrendering to another. So when Eastern holy men came in the sixties and seventies and spoke of “surrender to God,” many in the West were resentful. By surrender to God or Guru, we mean sharanagati, which has a totally different meaning. Sharanagati is a sacred, consecrated word that means, “taking refuge in the Supreme.” Shara means refuge or stopping, silencing, relaxing or establishing; gati means motion, something that revolves or moves. Sharanagati is when all the motions of your mind relax, all your karmas, sanskars’ and emotions are stilled and quieted.
Many terms in Sanskrit, such as Brahma, require several sentences to translate into English. And when we say, “Everything is within your Self,” the normal understanding is that there is a cosmic entity that is the Self. That is not the real meaning. Ordinarily, Self is used for ego, the sense of I-ness, an individual. Atma, which has been translated as the Self, is synonymous with Consciousness; it is not an individual. So when we say, “Everything is within your Self,” that Self is unlimited, all-pervading. It is no longer you and me.

Before coming to this indescribable Reality, let us start with the mind. The mind basically has three stages. One we call the subconscious; one is the surface or conscious mind. The third is called superconsciousness, which is the higher mind, supermind or overmind. All these are within the domain of the mind. The superconsciousness transcends our subconscious and surface, day-to-day sensual mind. Still it is not the samamum bonam, the ultimate Reality.

The subconscious and surface mind are like a river: there is the surface water flowing faster and a current beneath flowing slower. These currents may seem like two but it is one river. In the same way, the subconscious and surface mind are one mind. The surface or conscious mind is how we perceive and deal with ordinary reality. The subconscious mind includes whatever thoughts, samskars and karmas we have suppressed or are lying dormant. They are not known to us, as if hidden in a box. When we describe these existed in you. When you succeed in stilling the totality of your mind, then your true Self is revealed. You are fully conscious. This stillness is not outside your mind. You do not transcend the mind and come to superconsciousness. It is the same substance; it has simply quieted.

When you succeed in stilling the totality of your mind, then your true Self is revealed. You are fully conscious. This stillness is not outside your mind. You do not transcend the mind and come to superconsciousness. It is the same substance; it has simply quieted.

When you succeed in stilling the totality of your mind, then your true Self is revealed. You are fully conscious. This stillness is not outside your mind. You do not transcend the mind and come to superconsciousness. It is the same substance; it has simply quieted.

in the terrestrial, netherworld and celestial realms. That shining Being, Svarntar Varanmay, illuminates all the realms, Bhagyo Desnaye Dinakala. There is nothing else we could meditate upon—Dhriya Ye Nala Prachhadayaat.

When you still all the regions of your mind, all of a sudden you will see everything: past, present, future; this world, the galaxy, the universe; rich, poor, good, evil, animals, plants, people. You instantly see that everything is you. This is the Universal Form, Viratvarupa, which Sri Krishna showed to Arjuna at the battle of Kurukshetra.

If you are fighting with your mind, trying to resist your mind, rejecting or angry with your mind, you are trying to reject yourself and thereby you are trying to establish two realities. Try to see this point: when you are trying to get away from your mind, to transcend or reject or suppress or escape it, you are trying to get away from the Reality. The problem is, the very mind you are trying to avoid, if you just quiet it down, the Reality will shine right there. The ultimate aim of all paths is to still the mind. Whichever tradition you follow, whether it is Vedanta, the path of devotion, Zen Buddhism, Vipassana, Christianity or Hinduism, at the end of every path you will see that the mind has to quiet down and come to stillness. When you attain stillness, whatever the outer differences of doctrines, paths and religions, you will find Oneness. When you drop into that quietude, the light shines where you thought it was darkness. Not that you fight with the darkness, resist it or discard it; within that very darkness there is light. If you had unity of thought more than fifty percent of the time, your problems would be over. We will not have to fight with anyone or anything. We are trying to detach ourselves, but from what? If you are trying to detach from something that you feel is unreal, wrong, negative, bad or ignorant, and thereby getting to the right side of the coin, do not forget that both sides are one coin. Apply this to practices: let’s say meditation. With what are you meditating? Are you leaving your mind...
for the time being locked up somewhere in a cupboard and meditating in another compartment of your consciousness? No, it is the same mind with which you are meditating. Trying to meditate by leaving the rest of the mind elsewhere, or suppressing or ignoring it may be one way to slowly dissolve it. The fact is that you can relax and still the very same mind with which you concentrate upon whatever you do. When that happens, your meditation is successful. In that perfect fullness and stillness, your true Self, the Reality, shines right there. All of a sudden you will see that everything is one, the whole cosmos, known and unknown, the manifest and unmanifest. That Being—Asti in Sanskrit—is not you or me anymore. If you get to that stage, you are God, Brahma, Thou Art That.

This stage is called sthita-prajna—sthita meaning pure intelligence, limitless consciousness. There is no separation of Thou and That. The stilled mind is the superb core of your Being. Within the unconsciousness, when quieted and relaxed completely, is Pure Consciousness. You have seen how when you are really fatigued, your eyes do not see clearly; and when you are relaxed and well rested, your eyesight brightens up. In the same way, when your unconsciousness relaxes a little bit, your agitations and restlessness quiet down. This fundamental unity is called Reta Dharma. Break that unity and no matter how many practices you do, they will leave you fragmented and struggling. If you love your God well, where is the struggle? A struggle comes when you are not loving God, or you love God for your own material pursuits.

Then you ask, “Why is God troubling me or not doing things the way I want?” Why should God do what you want? On the contrary, you should do what God wants. This fallacy continues because we do not have insight, so we divide. And when we divide in our thoughts, our practices are divided. That very mind, that negative, resistant mind is the place where you find your consciousness and wisdom—by somehow putting a lollypop in the mouth of your ego and quieting it down. Otherwise this struggle continues, even on the spiritual path.

Seeking should be joyful, longing and loving. It should be a non-resistant pursuit, like a moth diving into a flame. The moth does not think or analyze or debate; it just plunges. This is sharanagati: be still and know, when your mind relaxes completely into your object of concentration, whether it is Krishna, Jesus, Buddha, Brahma, Silence, Consciousness or Light. When you merge into That, there is no thought or reservation or resistance. And in that very darkness the light shines.

Quieting the mind is the most heroic act. This is the purpose of all practices. When you quiet the mind you come to absolute silence where time and space do not exist. You are instantly anywhere and everywhere. Everything is within your Being.

Quieting the mind is the most heroic act. This is the purpose of all practices. When you quiet the mind you come to absolute silence where time and space do not exist. You are instantly anywhere and everywhere. Everything is within your Being, unlimited Brahma. To reach that pure silence you have to go through your mind, and that is where all the horrors come up! We do not want to face our minds, at least not willingly. Therefore the most difficult exercise for anyone is to face one’s own mind. That is where your whole wealth is. If God were outside your mind, you would not need to go through the rest of everything is within your mind. Where there is no mind there is no concept of God. If you cannot face your mind you are avoiding truth and you will not get anywhere. That is where you find your Truth and Reality.

Can you just shut off your mind and get into the Light? If you could you would, but so far no one has done it. If you have spoken untruth and someone tells you, “You are a liar,” accept it humbly. I do not mean to deny the goodness that is there, but it is better to be humble so the ego does not get puffed up. Unless you face your mind you are not going to still it. As long as you are avoiding or suppressing or rejecting it, your mind remains as an entity to disturb you. Guidance, either from within you or from your Master, emerges only when you have become quiet to a proportionate degree. Ultimately when you reach that limitless Being, you will see everything. Then you are established in Cosmic Consciousness. And even if you try to search where your mind has gone, you will not find it. It is like when you bring light into darkness; darkness vanishes.

…There is nothing to reject in God’s kingdom, but you can only see that by attaining stillness. If your mind refuses to be still, choose an object for meditation. The way to God should be very loving and sweet. There is nothing higher or greater than that. The bliss, joy, peace and satisfaction of seeking God, nothing else can give you. Once you attain this quietude, nothing can disturb you. It gives you your own impetus, your inner strength. It is because we hide, defend and are untruthful that we do not want to face our minds. The social norm is courtesy on the surface, looking good. Nobody wants to talk about it. That is the phenomenon we are trapped in, avoiding the Reality underneath. But the real Gurus, the Sutgurus, do not allow you to avoid your mind. Their job is to bring your mind out, to open it up and purify it. Some seekers say, “Accept me as I am.” Well, do you have problems? “Yes.” Then you are not okay. If you live just a happy-go-lucky surface life, you will never be satisfied. So let me repeat one thing: if you want to realize your True Being, your Brahma, your Light, your Consciousness, your God within, you have to go through your mind. You may wish that someone would just go on pampering you and making you feel good and that would be the way to Reality. It is not.

Reaching Enlightenment has been likened to “walking barefoot on the razor’s edge,” but it does not have to be difficult. If you have courage and one-pointed loving devotion to the goal, you will reach. Those who see their mind, face it, deal with it and make it pure and simple, reach the earliest. It is a very straightforward way. Different names for God, different doctrines and different paths are allowed. But the way is always through your own mind. When Krishna gave Arjuna the blessing of Divya-chakshu, divine vision, awakening his third eye, Arjuna was able to see His universal form. Arjuna was awestruck and spontaneously asked Krishna, “What is all this?” He thought Krishna was his uncle, yet in that divine vision he saw Krishna’s Universal Form, beyond all his thoughts and conceptions. When Krishna resumed...
When you meditate and achieve stillness of mind, the Light shines right there. Whichever aspect or form of God you choose will appear. Practices help, but beyond practices your mind has to come to stillness.

Therefore Jesus said: “The Kingdom of God is within you.” The Vedic sages said: Tat Tvam Asi, “Thou art That.” Try to see the unity of thinking. Be here as thy Father in heaven is. Do not think: I’m here; my Father in heaven is there. When you divide that way, you are missing the Reality. It is through your mind that you reach, so do not avoid it. Face it, reflect upon it, see the good, the bad, your weaknesses and strengths, your desires and accomplishments. Ask yourself what further you desire. How much time you take is up to you. You could finish in one day; you could take fifty years. It depends upon how you loiter in your mind.

Some are mad after the goal. They quiet the mind repeating until we come out of that arena. Karma also affects your practices. They can make you helpless, weak or vulnerable. The counter-effect is to create willpower and new actions that support your practices. In other words: change your lifestyle or your valuation. It is commonly known that one of the most important aspects to bringing your health back, to boosting your immune system, is to change your lifestyle. This is what I mean by changing your valuation: change your situation so that your practices are not hampered. Your surroundings, the company you keep, your job, your family and other relationships should all be reorganized to support your practices. This will bring health of mind.

Wrong living has created our ills today: pollution, immune system deficiencies, mental problems, diseases and crimes. These are increasing in every nation. It is all due to wrong education and a wrong understanding of life itself. If we think only of the necessities of daily life, we are misunderstanding totally. We could live more joyfully, lovingly, harmoniously, cooperatively and peacefully. If you have the courage to reorganize your practice, to make practices an integral part of your daily life, this will solve many of your problems. The solution is very simple. You have the instrument with you, the laboratory of your mind. Very honestly see your mind, whatever it is. You will see why you are not able to reach Enlightenment, to have God’s vision. Daily when you sit in practices, morning and evening or any other time, try to relax your mind under all conditions. See any desires and thoughts that come up and allow them to subside.

A quiet mind gives us peace and wisdom. We do care for peace, but we try to attain it by acquiring or accomplishing things. The reality is quite to the contrary. A relaxed mind while singing or playing an instrument will create celestial music. A quieted mind while cooking will bring out better dishes. A relaxed mind in a managerial job will do justice to all, and will not dominate or exploit others. A quieted and relaxed mind will behave sweetly and lovingly, not deceiving or betraying others. A peaceful, relaxed mind will behave sweetly and lovingly, not deceiving or betraying others. A peaceful, relaxed mind behaves sweetly and lovingly, not deceiving or betraying others. A quieter mind sees the solution right there, how should you act and what you should do.

When you meditate and achieve stillness of mind, the Light shines right there. Whichever aspect or form of God you choose will appear. Practices help, but beyond practices your mind has to come to stillness.

1 Samkara are patterns in the mind that carry on from birth to birth.
2 Rta, the Sanskrit spelling, is pronounced as Reeta.

© 2012 by Truth Consciousness. Teaching from the basis of eternal Truth, the message of Swami Amar Jyoti’s Satsangs (Sanskrit: communion with Truth) is one of deep spiritual unity. His way is not to expose a particular creed but to impart a spiritual way of life. During his work for four decades (1960-2000), he awakened and uplifted countless souls around the world to God Consciousness, disseminating the timeless Truth underlying all traditions and faiths. Swami Amar Jyoti is the author of several books. These and over 700 audio Wisdom Teachings illuminating the classical path for modern times are available. This Satsang is edited from Mind’s Eye: 31 Satsangs given in July 1996 at Sacred Mountain Ashram. A catalog of the live recordings of Satsangs and Retreats by Swami Amar Jyoti is available at truthconsciousness.org, or call 503-773-8814 for a free copy by mail. Please see page 53 of this issue for further information.