

A portrait of Paramahansa Nithyananda, a spiritual leader, smiling and looking upwards. He is wearing an orange shawl with a dark, textured border and has a red tilak on his forehead. The background is dark.

Living Enlightenment

An Introduction

Paramahansa Nithyananda

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Living Enlightenment

– An Introduction

Conflict-free Life

I welcome you all with my love and respect.

Today's subject is Living Enlightenment.

In Vedanta, there are three words: *shravana*, *manana* and *nidhidhyaasana*.

Shravana means listening to the great truths. *Manana* means internalizing the great truths and *nidhidhyaasana* is living them. So today, we will listen to a few truths about enlightenment and try to internalize them. Then naturally, you will be living enlightenment!

What do I mean by the words 'Living Enlightenment'?

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Living enlightenment means living a conflict-free life, living without any conflicts, completely at ease with your body, mind and the surroundings that you experience as the outer world.

People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, how can we be conflict-free in this world filled with conflicts? It is not possible. Only when the whole world is silent, happy and peaceful can I become conflict-free.’

Understand, that is never going to happen. There is no such thing as peace of the whole world. It never existed and can never exist. You will never be able to make the whole world peaceful. All problems are created by people who *try* to make the world peaceful.

Actually, I have seen many times, in the meditation hall, the volunteers who shout ‘Silence! Silence!’ create more noise than the few people who talk! They claim that they are maintaining silence and end up making more noise than the participants!

Similarly, the people who try to create peace only create more problems.

In the last three thousand years, five thousand wars have been fought! Each war as they claim was fought to bring about world peace. Every leader who declared war claimed that he was going to bring peace to the world. But the most important truth was missed by them all. When you start living a conflict-free life, what you experience as the world will become conflict-free. What *you* visualize as the world will be conflict-free.

Imagination Vs Visualization

See, visualization is different from imagination. When you visualize, your heart knows that what you visualize is possible. In imagination, your heart knows very clearly that what you are imagining has nothing to do with your reality.

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Please understand the difference between imagination and visualization. With imagination, when you imagine, your heart knows that you are only imagining. With visualization, suddenly you know there is a real possibility. You think towards it; you work towards it. This is the subtle difference between imagination and visualization. When what you visualize is conflict-free, in tune with what you are inside, then you are living enlightenment; you are bringing peace to the world. Only that is possible. Everything else is impossible.

A small story:

A child was waiting on the seashore to have a bath. His mother asked, ‘Why are you waiting without having a bath?’

He replied, ‘No. Let all the waves settle, then I will have my bath.’

It is not going to happen! You can't wait for the whole world to become happy and peaceful to live enlightenment. If you understand this truth, you will be relieved from your unnecessary efforts of trying to create peace.

Solution for War and Terrorism

People ask me, 'Swamiji, don't you suffer seeing war and terrorism in so many places? What is your solution to eradicate poverty?'

I tell them, if you suffer seeing others' suffering, you will only add more suffering to planet earth. Instead of elevating them to your level, you will go down to their level. Try to bring them to your level. Change their consciousness and their idea about life. If you start thinking about them continuously and get depressed, you will only reach their level. And then we will have one more person who is suffering, that's all! It is not going to help

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in any way. Only when you live enlightenment can you create peace.

So what do I mean by ‘living enlightenment’?

Living Enlightenment means living a conflict-free life in your body, mind, and what you experience as the world. I did not use the word ‘world’. No. I am using the words ‘what *you* experience as the world’. That is the only possibility. Nothing else is possible. If this is done, then you are living enlightenment.

Usually, we all set impossible goals and try to achieve them. Then when we fail, we decide it is really impossible. And once we confirm it is impossible, we stop putting even the little effort that we were putting. After that all we do is blame the world, blame God and everybody. Our whole life ends in blaming others.

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So first fix a practical goal. Realize what is possible and work towards it. When you know that something is possible and start working towards it, even small victories that you achieve will bring tremendous encouragement. They will give you tremendous courage and confidence. You will then start steadily moving towards deeper truths. You will start to achieve and live what I call ‘living enlightenment’.

Techniques to Live Enlightenment

Now let me explain enlightenment in a more detailed manner with practical techniques which you can apply in your life. I said that living a conflict-free life in the body, mind and what you experience as the world, is living enlightenment. That is the truth. Now I will give you techniques to use this as an applied science in your life. I will give you the techniques to make ‘living enlightenment’ an applied science.

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There are four techniques to live enlightenment.

Shakti - Energy to Change

First, changing whatever you can change. You express the energy or *shakti* to change whatever you can change in your life.

Please understand, spirituality is not a *tamasic* acceptance of life. *Tamas* means laziness and laziness is not spirituality. Many times, in India, laziness is taken for spirituality. The Indian civilization once stood for enlightenment; the whole country's infrastructure was built for enlightenment or *jeevan mukti*.

But somehow, in course of time, as Krishna said *Yogo nashta parantapa*: the yoga is lost, the great science is lost. When the science is lost, *tamas* is taken as enlightenment, and laziness becomes spirituality.

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You have the energy to change whatever you can change in your life. People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, is life pre-destined or do we have a free will?’

Life is like a tape-recorder. If you don’t intervene it will go on as pre-programmed. But if you have the will, you can intervene and change things at any point with simple effort. You don’t need to make a strong *sankalpa* (affirmation). Just simple effort will do to get out of so many addictions and mental setups. I am not talking about major addictions like alcohol or smoking. I am talking about simple mental sufferings, the restlessness with which you continuously suffer, the constant irritation that you carry with you.

This constant irritation has become a habit. See, you don’t need an incident to irritate you; you just wait to jump on people. They don’t need to do anything wrong. They don’t need to commit any mistake. If they just appear in front of you, it is

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enough. They will have your blessing! You are just waiting to pounce on people! You are just boiling right from morning. Even this is an addiction. But all these can be changed. These simple things can be changed right away. All you need is understanding.

You may say, ‘No *Swamiji*. I tried many times but I failed. It is not possible anymore.’

Please understand that previously during all the times when you actually tried to create peace, as long as your effort was there, there was peace. Once peace happened, you forgot to apply your efforts!

When you forgot, when you stopped applying your efforts, the restlessness returned. But then, you don’t remember why and how it returned. You only know that your restlessness returned. Actually, you stopped your efforts, that is why the restlessness returned.

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You may say, ‘No *Swamiji*, yesterday morning I tried to be peaceful. But today I am not peaceful!’

Yesterday morning you tried to be peaceful, but by evening you forgot about being peaceful! You stopped putting your efforts and your restlessness returned. Whenever you put your effort there is a result. When you stop putting the effort, only then the mind goes back. You don’t remember that point. You only remember when you started your efforts and not when you forgot about it. You let your mind wander and become restless.

So, please understand this important truth. Changing whatever you can change is *shakti* (energy). You have the energy to change whatever you can. There are so many things you can change in your life but you do not express the energy for it.

Let me narrate a real incident:

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The other day a person came to me and said, ‘*Swamiji*, I have surrendered myself to you. You have to save me.’

I asked him, ‘What do you mean by surrender? And why do you want me to save you?’

He replied, ‘*Swamiji*, I have a bad habit of going to wrong places. I am not faithful to my wife. Now that I have surrendered to you, you should help me stop this habit.’

I sat and spent some time with him. I told him, ‘This is wrong. Why don’t you think of your wife? You have become insensitive to love. It is disrespectful towards your relationship with your wife.’ After a few words from me, he left.

He returned after a few weeks and said, ‘*Swamiji*, you have not saved me at all! I surrendered myself to you. But I am still doing the same thing!’

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I asked him, ‘What do you mean?’ He told me, ‘No, I surrendered myself to you. But I am still the same old person.’

I asked him, ‘What do you mean? You want me to hide your car keys and tell you not to go anywhere else? You have the independence! See, when you want the independence...freedom to live as you want...I can only give you the knowledge. It is you who needs to apply it in your life.’

Then I told him, ‘What do you mean by using the word ‘surrender’? And what do you mean by saying that I need to save you? If you want that extreme, then sit here itself, and don’t go anywhere!’

Then you will say, ‘No, no! I need freedom. I need freedom.’ Then I have to tell, ‘Alright! Have freedom, have this knowledge also, so that you can lead your life with knowledge.’

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Actually you don't want knowledge. You want freedom. But when something goes wrong, you say, 'No, no! I have surrendered to this God; I have surrendered to that guru; yet nothing has happened!'

You have the freedom to change so many things in your life. Yet, you do not want to change them. You don't want to take up the responsibility. If you have the knowledge, you will use your freedom with intelligence. You will not look to misuse your freedom. You will take up responsibility for your life.

Understand that you are the God who can save you. It is you who is going to lift yourself. If you can't lift yourself then you are your worst enemy. If you can lift yourself, then you are your greatest friend. It is you who needs to do it.

So the first technique of living enlightenment or *jeevan mukti* is to express the energy to change whatever you need to change in your life.

Power of Small Transformations

One more thing, even simple things which you change will make a difference in your life. Please understand, you don't know the power of simple changes which you can make. If you change simple things every day, small things every day, within a year or two, you will see great transformation!

Suddenly, you will see the cumulative effect of those simple changes. Over a period of time they will cause a huge transformation. It is the cumulative effect of a few simple changes. But somehow, we don't respect simple changes. We want instant transformation. But we don't have

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the intensity for that. The only option is to express *shakti*, the energy to change whatever you can.

People usually complain, ‘No *Swamiji*, I want to change but I am not able to quit smoking or drinking. I am not able to change.’

Understand that all these you may or may not be able to change because they have become a part of your system. But there is something which you can change immediately. It is what I call the *cognitive shift*. Changing suddenly is called *cognitive shift*. For this to happen, you need to change your understanding.

Change your understanding about yourself, the world and your life. You don’t need to do anything else. It may appear simple. But when followed, it will cause huge transformation. Then the cognitive shift happens effortlessly.

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See, whenever I use the word ‘*shakti*’, the power to change whatever you can, what I mean is, change the way in which you think. Whenever I tell people to change, they immediately try to quit smoking or alcohol. They start with the wrong perspective. They struggle to quit alcohol or smoking or some strong habit. This is bound to fail.

You need to change your thinking pattern, your understanding first. You have many ideas, many understandings about the world, which many times disturb you and others. Change that first.

Actually, if you just change the way in which you think, your habits will change automatically. Even if they don’t change, it is alright. I am not giving you a license to do whatever you want. No! If you begin to change the way in which you think, your habits will drop automatically.

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You will change automatically. You will see that your whole life has become different. Your understanding, the way in which you think...everything will change. You can reprogram your inner software. You can create more clarity and understanding about everything.

Dharma - The Law of the Cosmos

Please understand one more truth, *dharma*. *Dharma* is the legal opinion about Existence's way of working! *Dharma* is not a belief system. If you talk to a lawyer, you will have an idea about how the country works. Similarly, if you go to a spiritual person who has experienced the love of the cosmos, and talk to him, relate with him and receive his ideas, you will have an idea of how Existence works!

Whatever I talk is the legal opinion of the cosmos. That is what I call *dharma*. So, internalizing

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dharma is not just believing some facts. Knowing the facts as to how the cosmos works, knowing the facts as to how the laws of nature work, is called *dharma*. Be very clear, if you believe that you did something bad today, and so tomorrow something bad will happen to you, then it is not *dharma*.

Feeling connected to what really happens, internalizing and understanding it is *dharma*. You may not be able to understand with your limited logic today, but when you expand your logic to understand *dharma* your mental setup changes. The cognitive shift happens easily.

One important thing that you need to know is when the cognitive shift happens, when you change your mental setup, the non-mechanical parts of your brain will be awakened.

The mechanical parts of your brain will be active from the moment of your birth just because you

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are a human being. But when you start to understand the cosmic *dharma*, the great truths, the non-mechanical parts of your brain will be awakened. This is called as the second birth, *dvija*, the rebirth. That is why, in the Indian tradition you are called *dvija* (twice born) when you are initiated into spirituality. It means that now you begin to understand the *dharma* of the cosmos. Your thinking becomes new. It is not based on fear or greed like animals.

Animals don't need to think because they don't need to do anything. All they do is function based on fear and greed. If you act based on fear and greed alone, the mechanical parts of your brain are more than enough for you. But to go beyond fear and greed, you need the non-mechanical parts of your brain to be awakened. Awakening the non-mechanical parts of your brain is called as the *kundalini* awakening.

Deeper Secrets of Habits

People usually question me as to how the energy can be awakened by merely changing the understanding. You see, in your day-to-day life if you are trained to feel tired at a particular time, then you will feel tired when that exact moment arrives. You will feel tired even if you have not worked the whole day!

For example, let us say you usually get depressed at around 9:30 am every morning thinking that you have to go to office. Then, you can see that even on Sundays when you don't need to go to office, you will be in a low mood. You will be depressed. Suddenly you will tell yourself, 'Oh it is Sunday today. I don't have to go to office, relax.' But even then, the low mood will not pass. You would still remain in a low mood.

Your mental setup is directly related to your *kundalini* awakening. So when you use the *shakti*

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to change whatever you can change, to change your understanding, you awaken tremendous energy in you.

Patanjali says beautifully that even if you fight with a single habit, any habit, it will release tremendous energy in you. Habit is both energy used unnecessarily and in the wrong direction. When you break a habit, even a simple habit like having a cup of coffee in the morning, you release tremendous energy in your system. That is why in our tradition, we had practices like fasting or keeping vigil throughout the night. It was to break our habits and create a new energy flow.

You may ask, what does habit mean? Living in a mechanical way, without bringing your awareness to this moment is what is called habit. Your whole life consists of only two parts: one is habit, and the other is meditation. Anything that you do without awareness is a habit. Anything, any action that you do with awareness is meditation.

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Even driving is a habit! You may be surprised to hear this. You may wonder how driving can be a habit. Just observe yourself when you drive to your office. You start your car, drive for half an hour to office and only when you reach your office and park your car, you remember that you had been driving! You would have taken at least two to three hundred decisions, like taking right turn, left turn, stopping at the signal, honking etc. But only when you reach the office will you remember that you had been driving.

Your driving has become a habit. Whichever part of your life is not meditation is a habit. That means, till this moment, almost our entire life was a habit - just a habit going on and on!

Just bring in awareness into your habits. Bringing awareness is trying to change whatever you can, *shakti* (energy). Expressing the energy to change whatever you can is what I call the first technique,

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first method. Try to change even simple things if you can change them. Change continuously. This is the first part of enlightenment, the first technique of living enlightenment.

The second technique is to accept whatever cannot be changed.

Now the big question arises, ‘Where is the line, *Swamiji*? What can I change and what can I not change?’

First let me define what acceptance is. Then this question will be answered automatically.

Buddhi - Intelligence to Accept

First, I said, express the *shakti* or energy to change whatever you can change. Now I say, have the *buddhi*, the intelligence to accept that which cannot be changed. Many things in life cannot be changed, like death. *Buddhi* is the intelligence to

accept whatever cannot be changed and relax with it.

Change with Shakti OR Accept with Buddhi?

Now, the big question arises, ‘When a situation arises in my life, how will I know whether to change it using my energy or accept it using my intelligence? What is the scale?’

I will give you a practical scale to measure whether you are struggling, wasting your energy in trying to change things which cannot be changed, or whether you are living smoothly, accepting the things that can’t be changed. This one scale is very important.

Early morning, when you get up from your sleeping state and start moving, when you get up from your deep sleep state and start moving to the waking state, if your transition between the deep sleep

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state and waking state is very smooth, please understand, your life is going very smoothly.

You are accepting whatever needs to be accepted, you are changing only whatever needs to be changed. You are not struggling. If the transition is very disturbing, please understand, now you need to learn more acceptance. You don't need to express energy. Now all you need is acceptance.

Let me define this very clearly. It is a very deep, subtle and mystical point. I can say it is a very practical point. Early morning, when you move from deep sleep state to the waking state, after coming to the waking state, you will have either of two kinds of feelings. Sometimes when you come to the waking state, you think, 'Oh God! I could have been sleeping. That was a wonderful state.' Or you may feel, 'Oh God! Such a terrible dream! It was such a torture. I am so glad I have

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woken up.’ Especially after a nightmare, when you come out, you feel, ‘Oh God! It was such a horrible state. I am so happy now!’

If you feel that in both the deep sleep and the waking state, you are completely relaxed and settled, nothing else needs to be done. Just relax, you are in the right zone. You are expressing the right amount of energy, and the right amount of intelligence. You are changing what you can, and you are accepting what you can’t. You are in the right mode.

If you feel more happy and connected in the waking state, and if you feel low in the deep sleep state, you need energy, meaning you need to change a few things.

Sometimes people come and complain to me, ‘*Swamiji*, last night a ghost was sitting on my chest and trying to suffocate me.’

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Understand, no ghost can trouble you. You are actually more powerful than any ghost. Some people have a psychological feeling of being suffocated in deep sleep state. That is what they describe as a ghost sitting on their chest and suffocating them. If you experience suffocation in the deep sleep state and are relieved to be in the waking state, if you are more happy and connected to the waking state and feel disturbed in the deep sleep state, be very clear, you need to change many things in your life. You need to use your energy and not intelligence. You need to change things now.

If you are relaxed in the deep sleep state and the moment you come to the waking state, you feel disturbed or stressed, then understand that you need to use your intelligence. You don't need to change things. You just need to relax and accept whatever cannot be changed.

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Especially in the West, they say ninety percent of the heart attacks occur in the morning hours. They call it Monday morning blues. It happens due to stress and manifests as suffocation when one wakes up. Now one needs to use *buddhi*, intelligence. We don't need to change things. We need to start relaxing.

This is the scale to measure whether you need to work to change things or relax and accept things. Just observe how you feel the moment you wake up every morning. You can find out if you are more relaxed and settled in the deep sleep state, or in the waking state. This is a very practical *sutra* (technique) to recognize whether you need to use more *shakti* - energy or *buddhi* - intelligence. Any seeker in spirituality has a conflict between these two ideas.

Many people after sharing their problems with me ask, 'Swamiji, this is my situation. Should I accept

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this as God's will, or should I fight it out? Tell me *Swamiji*.'

Please understand, I can only give you the technique. You need to find the solution yourself.

Analyze yourself every morning. If you are more stressed in the waking state, it means that you are fighting too much. You need to use your intelligence. Just relax and start accepting things as they are.

If you feel more stressed or suffocated in the state of deep sleep, in the unconscious zone, then you don't need acceptance. You need the fighting spirit. Begin to change things. With this one technique, you can take a decision within twenty four hours whether to fight or accept life as it happens.

And one more thing: I am responsible for what I am talking. I have used this technique not only on

myself, but also on thousands of disciples. It works. This is the method to understand whether to fight with things or accept things as they happen in our life.

Just sleep on a problem at night. Observe how you feel when you wake up the next morning. If you feel suffocated, then it is time to use your energy to fight and change things. If after waking up, you feel stressful, then it is time to relax, to use intelligence.

Understand, your intelligence is more intelligent than you think.

Too Good to Be Ignored

In your life, there are so many things that you cannot change. You need to accept them as they are. Just accepting things will take you beyond them. It can be any problem, any difficulty. By

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accepting it you go beyond it. You can go beyond so many problems by simply accepting them. Even the people who come to fight with you will suddenly lose the spirit of fighting with you when you accept them. They will think, ‘What is the use of fighting with this fellow?’

Understand, if you are too good, you cannot be disrespected. You cannot be ignored. This is the most important *sutra* (technique). Be too good and you cannot be ignored. You can’t be disrespected. The problem is we don’t have the patience to be too good.

So you start complaining, ‘No *Swamiji!* This is *Kali Yuga* (the fourth quarter of Time considered the age of vice). So good people end up suffering and the bad ones live happily.’

Relax! The cosmos is not a sadist. It still runs as per *dharma* (righteousness). There is no *Kali Yuga*. *Kali Yuga* is nothing but your mind. *Kali*

Yuga is nothing but your ego. *Kali Yuga* is nothing but your impatience to look into the truth.

We are actually happy about our suffering in a way because it makes our ego feel good. Our ego feels we are shouldering a lot of problems. That is why we continue to suffer. But we feel guilty about it. So what do we do? We start blaming the whole world. We say that God punishes all good people and allows all bad people to enjoy life.

You are the Fulfillment of the Cosmos

Understand: The cosmos is fulfilling itself through you. You are a miracle of the cosmos; you are not an accident. Constantly we think we are an accident, and that the cosmos is torturing us. No! The cosmos is not sadistic. God does not punish you.

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Some people tell me, ‘No *Swamiji*, you don’t know! God is punishing me!’

Please understand that God has not fallen to the level of punishing *you*, and you have not risen to the level of being punished by God! You continuously abuse the *dharma* (laws of the cosmos).

You may say, ‘No *Swamiji*! You don’t know! It is *Kali Yuga*. *Dharma* is no longer prevalent. This history says, that epic says, the Bhagavata says, that *sutra* says... it is *Kali Yuga*. Life will be like this only!’

Be very clear, there is no such thing as *Kali Yuga*. I tell you, I am responsible for what I am talking. I know what I am talking. There is no such thing as *Kali Yuga*. It is your impatience to look into the truth. If you look a little deep into the truth, you will see that the *dharma* is prevalent everywhere.

It is actually *Satya Yuga* (age of Truth). When you are superficial, you don't notice things too deeply, you feel the world is *Kali Yuga*, and that you are in *Kali Yuga*. So you will attract only that kind of people around you. You will attract that kind of friends around you. You will attract that kind of relationships around you. You will attract that kind of situations around you. You will be living in *Kali Yuga*.

Attracting Right People

Actually in what consciousness you live, you will attract only that kind of people around you. If you observe a little deeply, if you have the patience to look into reality, the truth, suddenly you will see that it is actually *Satya Yuga*. Krishna is still playing. Rama is still living. All the great masters are still alive. It is *Satya Yuga*. *Dharma* still exists.

People ask me, 'What do you mean by this? So much terrorism is going on; so much poverty and

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war is going on! How can you say this is *Satya Yuga*?’

Do you think there was no war when Krishna lived? Do you think there was no poverty during Rama’s time? No! Understand, even during Rama’s time, in some part of the world people lived in *Kali Yuga*. In the same way, even now, some people are living in *Satya Yuga*.

Satya Yuga or *Kali Yuga* is not chronological time. It is the individual’s decision. If you want, you can live in *Satya Yuga* now; if you decide that from today, you will change your mental setup. Then naturally you will attract the right situations and friends in your life.

But you can see in your life, if you are continuously sad, if you are continuously having self-pity, then you will attract the relationships, friends etc who will make life sadder for you. You will see, you

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will continuously attract people who will abuse you, because you feel very comfortable with them. Even if they abuse you, you forget that they abused you and you begin to relate with them again.

You will say, ‘No *Swamiji*, it’s okay. He is a good guy; at heart he is a very good guy.’

I don’t know what they mean by ‘He is very good at heart even though he abused me!’ They have their own technical terms to justify what is going on. You attract abusive relationships and abusive people around you if you are in that mood, if you are in that consciousness.

So please be very clear, the moment you understand that the whole world is functioning as per *dharma*, it is *Satya Yuga*. You will suddenly begin to attract people who are living in *Satya Yuga*. You will create that kind of blissful circle around you. Suddenly you will see you are in *Satya Yuga*!

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To enter into *Satya Yuga*, you don't need to create it. All you need to do is just tune yourself to it, that's all! Make the six feet body, what is inside your skin, as *Satya Yuga*! Suddenly you will see, whatever is outside your skin also will become *Satya Yuga*. Nothing else needs to be done.

You don't need to change the whole world. You don't need to give speeches in every city about *Satya Yuga*. You don't need to say, 'Let the whole world become *Satya Yuga*. Only then will I enter into *Satya Yuga*.' No! Just change your inner space into *Satya Yuga*. Suddenly you will see that you begin to attract those kind of friends. Suddenly those kind of books will reach you, those kind of DVDs will reach you, those kind of websites will reach you, those kind of newspapers will reach you, that kind of things will reach you. And all other things will lose their significance in your life. Suddenly you will lose interest in all other things.

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In my whole life, I have never gone to a cinema theatre even once! People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, how did you manage even in college without watching a single movie?’

I tell them, ‘Somehow, I never felt that was part of my life.’ I am not even an old person, who was young some sixty years ago or long before that. I am just thirty-one! Somehow I was never interested in television or movies. That was never part of my life!

People ask me, ‘It is impossible! Without being influenced by cinema and television, how can somebody be alive!’

Somehow, this is the way I am.

They say, ‘No, you are extraordinary; you are enlightened.’ But even before enlightenment, somehow it was never part of my life.

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So please understand, if you enter into *Satya Yuga*, if you understand that everything happens as per *dharma*, you will realize that the cosmos is not a sadist. You will suddenly begin to attract the right people and the right things around you. Your whole world will change. This is a strong, straight, simple, honest, experiential truth. I am not saying, change your inner space today and after twelve years your surroundings will change. No! I am saying, change now, you will see the results this very instant. I am not proposing any theories to you. I know what I am talking. I am responsible for my words.

See, there are different kinds of people. There will always be critics, sitting and criticizing anything. They will say, ‘No! What is this *Swamiji* talking? He is talking all flowery words and fairy tales. I have experienced everything. I have read about all these things long back. I have heard

enough of all these things. These are not practical truths.’

See, you have heard and read about all these things, but did you ever practice them? No! You have only read about them. You come to conclusions by listening to some stories, some tales. And moreover, there will always be one group of people who will be against anything that you say.

A small story:

In a village, there was a man whom the whole village abused as a fool. Once, an enlightened master was passing by that village.

The man went to the master and said, ‘The entire village makes fun of me. I am a fool. Nobody respects me. Even the small kids throw stones at me and call me a fool. Please make me look intelligent.’

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The master said, ‘Alright. Don’t worry. I will give you a simple technique. Practice it for a week and you will look intelligent. You will be respected by the whole village.’

The person asked in surprise, ‘What? In one week? The whole village will respect me! And that too in a week! Tell me. Even if I have to stand on my head, I will do it.’

The master said, ‘You don’t need to stand on your head. It is not that difficult. Do only one thing: continuously criticize anything you see. Nothing else needs to be done. If someone says, ‘What a beautiful moon!’ you just ask, ‘What is so great about it? There are so many black patches in it!’ When someone says, ‘Beautiful rose!’, you just criticize it by saying, ‘What kind of beauty is this? It has so many thorns.’ Continuously criticize everything. Nothing else needs to be done.

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The man agreed and religiously followed it. After a few days the master returned to the village, after his pilgrimage. He saw this man seated under a big neem tree. The whole village was sitting at his feet, listening! When the master arrived, he looked in his direction.

The master said, ‘I want to talk to you.’ The man replied, ‘I will see you after the discourse.’

After everybody left, the man fell at the master’s feet and said, ‘O, master! Your idea has really worked miracles. I started abusing everything. I criticized anything and everything. After a few days, people started to think that I am very intelligent. Now I am very much respected in this village!’

It takes only this much! To appear intelligent, all you need to do is constantly abuse everything around you. Nothing else needs to be done. There are people who become famous by merely

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criticizing everything. They cannot create even a simple thing but they can destroy anything by constantly criticizing it.

Sometimes, when people criticize me, the people around me react in irritation, ‘*Swamiji*, this person has criticized you. Please punish him. He has disrespected you.’

I tell them, ‘He does not need any punishment. He is already in hell! No punishment is required. The state of consciousness in which he is residing is the worst punishment. He doesn’t need a separate hell!’

Understand, he doesn’t need a separate hell! He doesn’t need a separate punishment. He is already in hell! Please understand, you are not that intelligent to have two minds: one mind to measure others, and one mind to live with yourself. When you constantly abuse others, you are living with

the same mind within you also. So you will be unconsciously abusing yourself too. You will be constantly criticizing yourself too. Anybody who is criticizing others continuously, will be continuously torturing himself also. This is a basic law.

You may say, ‘No *Swamiji*, I criticize only others, not myself. When it comes to me, when I commit the same mistakes, I will change my mental setup.’

Same Scale to Judge Yourself and Others

Please understand, you are not that intelligent to have two minds: one to measure others, and another to measure yourself. You judge yourself in the same manner as how you judge others.

We might think, ‘No! When others do that mistake, I will criticize. When I do the same mistake, I will

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not criticize myself.’ Just observe your life. When you constantly criticize others, whether you want it or not, you will carry that same mental setup. You will continuously be judging yourself and suffering with guilt and inferiority complex.

Anybody who accepts himself will accept everybody. Anybody who is judging and criticizing himself will continuously judge and criticize others.

So whenever people bring me this kind of news, ‘He has criticized you, he has disrespected you, he should be punished... tell something *Swamiji*.’ I tell them, ‘Relax! We don’t need to punish him. He is in that state of consciousness already. He is suffering. He is having enough punishment.’

Please understand, you don’t do negative things and then reach hell. You do negative things because you are already in hell!

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People who are continuously criticizing have one big problem - they create enmity. They are never productive. I have seen many of this kind. They are such lazy people who don't do anything else except criticize. They live in *Kali Yuga*. That is the worst state to be in.

If you understand that *dharma* is still alive, that the cosmos functions as per *dharma*, then you are in *Satya Yuga*. Cosmos has not changed its way because time has passed. No! When you understand that, suddenly you will see, your inner space will become *Satya Yuga*. You will start attracting friends and things, everything around you of the same energy, the same consciousness as *Satya Yuga*.

Understand, the first technique is expressing the *shakti* (energy) to change whatever you need to change.

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The second is expressing the *buddhi* (intelligence) to accept whatever you cannot change.

The third is an important thing: *yukti*.

Yukti - Clarity

Yukti means clarity: clarity that however much you change or accept, this whole thing is one more dream! Understand, I am giving you the ultimate teaching of *Vedanta*. I can say, the ultimate truth in simple words is: whether you accept things or change things, however much you change, however much you accept things, the whole of Existence is an eternally changing dream! There is no scale. The whole thing is a changing dream.

Now I am putting the whole thing in one line: you don't need to struggle at all. This is, I can say, the ultimate truth, what you call *Zen* or *advaita* (science of non-duality), the ultimate truth.

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Whatever you may change, the whole thing is a constantly changing dream.

If you understand this truth that however much you change, the whole thing is a constantly changing dream, suddenly you will see that you are unclutched. You will be disconnected from the unwanted cluster of thoughts in your mind about life. You will experience a tremendous relaxation inside.

People ask me, 'If everything is a changing dream, then can I do whatever I want to do?'

When you internalize this great truth that everything is a changing dream, you will not be able to do whatever you want to do! You will only do whatever the Cosmos wants you to do. You will not be able to do whatever you want, because the moment you understand this truth, tremendous inner healing will start happening. The struggle or

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the suffering will come to an end. One glimpse: whatever is happening is a changing dream, it is constantly changing, your ideas are changing, your ideas about changing are changing, your ideas about transformation are changing, your ideas about problems are changing...the whole thing changes!

Sometimes people ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, twelve years ago, I started my spiritual practice. I thought all my struggles will end. But now, even after twelve years of spiritual practices I have struggles.’

You may have struggles, but understand they are not the same struggles. They are different struggles, more subtle struggles! The transformation in your struggles shows you clearly that some transformation has happened in you. Twelve years ago you might have been fighting with something; now after twelve years you will be fighting with something else.

When your opponent has changed, be very clear, it means that you have changed. Your opponent cannot change without you changing. When your opponent changes, it means that transformation has happened in you.

Now your fight is happening at a different level, on a different plane. Twelve years before what your desire was, what your fear was, what you defined as transformation, what you defined as liberation, everything changes. Even your concept about liberation constantly changes! The more you expand, the more the idea also changes.

A Limitless Continuum

I always tell people that the experience of enlightenment is the ultimate, but not the final. There is a big difference between the two. Enlightenment is ultimate, because all your ideas about enlightenment, body and mind will disappear.

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That does not mean that everything is over. No.

You will be constantly exploding into a different space. You may think, ‘Oh, God! This is the ultimate experience that I can bear, I can’t bear more than this.’ But understand it does not end there. Every moment you will experience the same feeling -~~What~~ that the moment is too much to bear! That is what I call enlightenment.

It is a limitless continuum. It will be continuously and constantly exploding. What you think as the ultimate will be happening in you now. After a few moments, what you think as the ultimate at that moment will be happening in you. What you think as the ultimate will happen every moment! It is a limitless continuum. The whole thing is changing continuously. It means that your idea about enlightenment, your idea about desire, your idea about greed, your idea about yourself changes continuously. Your idea about *jeeva* (self),

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ishwara (God), *jagat* (world), all the three will constantly be changing. That is what I call enlightenment.

People think enlightenment is like retirement. They ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, what should I plan to do after enlightenment?’ I tell them, ‘That plan Existence will do. You can’t do!’

As long as you are planning to do, you will never get enlightened. Enlightenment is the last decision you can make. After that, you cannot make any decisions. All decisions will be made by someone else. People think enlightenment is like a retirement plan. No, it is a constant happening. You will realize that everything, whether you change or accept, is just eternally changing.

Clarity to realize that whatever you call as reality is a changing dream is what I call *yukti*. There are so many wonderful truths which can be

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revealed inside you when you realize that everything is a changing dream. Your whole world is nothing but what you experience in your *mana shareera* (mental body). For example, what is your world now? Whatever you see, whatever waves are created because of the seeing and listening inside you, this is what your world is right now.

Now, you see me talking. Each one of you is responding differently in your inner space to what you are seeing and what you are listening. That is what each one's world is.

I can see each one respond in a different way to what I am talking. For example, one person is thinking, 'If everything is changing, then why should I work? Why not lie down?'

Clarity Leads to Dropping Laziness

Please understand, if by remembering this truth you think you can just lie down, try it. You will not be able to lie down for more than a few days. Try it! How many days can you sleep?

We always have a fear, 'If I understand these great spiritual truths, I may become a dropout from society. I may not go to work. I may not take care of my family. Who will pay my bills? Who will take care of my car and apartment?

People have this big problem, this big fear. Understand, if you think that this will make you lazy, just simply try to lie down and relax with these ideas. How many days can you just be lying down? How many days do you think you will sleep? Not for more than a few days! Your innate energy will not let you lie down as lazy.

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These truths can only remove unnecessary restlessness from you. They can never make you lazy. When you assimilate these great truths, only the unnecessary restlessness which is now a part of you will be removed. The necessary energy or activeness will never be removed. You will be active and alive. You will continue to take care of your car, your house, your family, your relationships, your bank balance, everything. Only thing, your depression and irritation will be missing!

But sometimes you miss the depression! It was there for a long time with you. So you feel lonely without it! Actually, after some time, you feel very connected and settled with the depression and irritation! If at all by mistake, you attend a *satsang* (spiritual gathering) or meditation program and the depression and irritation are not there for a few days, you feel something is lacking in your life!

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You think, ‘What happened? Things are so silent and smooth since today morning. How is this possible? Oh, I went to the *satsang* yesterday! That’s why things are so peaceful. Alright, this effect will last for two or three days. Afterwards I will become normal. I will become alright.’ And you wait for depression and irritation to reappear. You calculate and decide that it will come back in a few days’ time. You don’t trust this effect to last long or to become a part of your being.

Understand this one truth that whatever is, is just changing; whatever you think as reality is just changing. This clarity will save you from many sufferings. Tremendous inner healing will happen this moment in you. For example, assume that in your dream a tiger is chasing you, or a snake is chasing you, or you are being imprisoned, or you have lost your near and dear ones. You suddenly wake up from your sleep. Imagine what kind of relief you will feel! You will say, ‘Oh God! It is all

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a dream!’ How relieved you will feel! That feeling of intense relief or relaxation or inner healing can happen in you this very moment. Understand, in whatever you are going through now, if somebody suddenly tells you, or you realize that it is just a dream, what will happen? You will feel, ‘Oh God! What tremendous relief, what tremendous inner healing!’

Understand, you don’t need somebody even to tell you that it is a dream. You yourself can remember; you yourself can recollect; you yourself can raise yourself with the understanding, with the clarity that whatever is happening around you is just one more dream. Whatever you think as reality is just one more dream.

So the third technique is *yukti* - clarity or understanding. You can constantly remember that the whole thing is a dream. For example, let us say you are dreaming that you made money and

are buying a huge house. After completion of the house, you are continuously wiping and cleaning it. It is already clean, but even then you are cleaning and wiping it with such a passion. Suddenly at that time you wake up from your dream. What will happen?

It is the same thing that you are doing now. When you wake up suddenly, nothing remains! Remembering this truth again and again is what I call the third technique, *yukti* - understanding.

Bhakti - Devotion

The fourth, important and ultimate technique is *bhakti* (devotion) towards the eternal and unchanging energy. You can call it God, or guru, or Divine; any name you can use for it. Feeling a strong connection towards that unchanging energy is *bhakti* - devotion.

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Understand, there are four techniques to live enlightenment.

One is *shakti* – expressing the energy to change whatever you can.

Next is *buddhi* – expressing the intelligence to accept whatever you need not change.

The third is *yukti* – the understanding that whatever you call as reality, however much you change it, is one more dream, a changing dream.

The fourth one is *bhakti* – the strong ‘feeling of connection’ with the unchanging One, with the unchanging reality or eternal Truth. When you feel strongly connected to the unchanging reality, you will experience a feeling of deep security. It can bring a tremendous feeling of security in you. Let me explain how it can bring the feeling of tremendous security in you.

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If you think that you are worthy of whatever you have and whatever you are enjoying, you will never fear that it will be taken away from you. You will experience a deep relaxation. You will have the clarity that even if you die this moment, you will take birth in the same kind of ambience again. You will be born and raised in a space where you have all the necessary things available. If you have this clarity, all these things you have now like wealth, intelligence etc, will never be taken away from you.

But if you think that everything you have with you now has just happened to you, like your wealth, your intelligence, then you will live in constant fear that any moment it can be taken away from you.

You will not enjoy what you have. For example, when you sit in the car, you will have a thought: 'Who knows when an accident may happen? Who knows, not only the car, even my life may be taken

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away from me?’ When you think like this, even when you have everything, you will not be able to enjoy them. Instead relax, settle into the feeling of connection to the unchanging One. This feeling of connection happens in different dimensions. It can happen in different aspects of your relationship with the unchanging energy or God. If you feel connected to the form (meaning deity or Master), you are experiencing one aspect of the relationship. If you feel connected to the formless energy, you are experiencing a different aspect of the relationship. Different people feel connected in different ways.

Formless OR With Form?

People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, which is the best way? Feeling connected to the formless or feeling connected to the form?’

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There is no such thing as the best. How it happens in your life is the best for you. People who can't afford to feel connected to the living form can connect with the formless energy. An egoistic person can't afford to feel connected through the form; it hurts him. It is very easy to feel connected to some empty sky. You can continue to do whatever you want and put the blame on the empty sky! There is nobody to question you. But you can't play that game with me, a living form. I will question you immediately. I will tell you, 'Hey, you are playing your game and blaming me!' When you feel connected to the form, you will need to go through immediate transformation. So people who can afford this, let them feel connected to the form.

People whose egos cannot afford this transformation, those who don't have that kind of mental setup, let them at least be connected to the formless.

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It all depends on the mental setup and the person; it depends on the way in which he is living. Anyway, if you feel connected to the unchanging reality, when that devotion starts happening in you, suddenly you will see a tremendous feeling of security happening around you.

Please understand, what I am telling you now is a technique; start developing it. It is possible! The technique is to feel a deep devotion to the unchanging One. Then the tremendous secure feeling will start happening in you.

Once this happens, you will know that you are qualified for whatever happens around you in your life. Even if you die this moment, you will again take birth in a space where all these things are provided for you again, where all these things are around you again, where all these things are guaranteed for you. Only with this devotion can

you overcome the fear of death. Till then, you can never overcome death fear.

Devotion is a straight method to overcome the fear of death. Otherwise you will always fear death. You will think, ‘What will happen when I die? My apartment will be taken away. Who knows where I will take birth again? I may be born in a slum! I don’t know how long it will take for me to build an apartment...’

Essence of Living Enlightenment

Now, let me give you the essence of whatever I am proposing.

First, living enlightenment is living a ‘conflict-free life’. Living conflict-free in your mind, body and the outer space which you experience as the world, is what I call living enlightenment. This is the definition of living enlightenment.

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Second, the techniques to live enlightenment. There are four methods:

First, express the *shakti* or energy to change whatever you can, whatever you need to change.

Second: Use your *buddhi* or intelligence to accept whatever you need not change.

Third: Cultivate the *yukti* or the understanding that however much you change, the whole world is one more changing dream. Whatever you think as reality is one more changing dream.

Fourth and the ultimate technique: Develop *bhakti*, the strong feeling of connection with the unchanging reality. Actually if you understand that whatever you experience is a changing dream, suddenly and automatically, your whole consciousness will flow towards that unchanging reality. That is what I call *bhakti*.

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You don't need to create *bhakti*. Just remember that all these things are a dream. Your whole consciousness will start flowing towards that something which does not change. That is what I call *bhakti*.

When you live all these four things, you are living enlightenment - *jeevan mukti*. You are living enlightenment. Please understand, this is the essence of living enlightenment. Practice all these four techniques. Even if it is a simple beginning, there is nothing wrong. Just start! All great achievements had simple beginnings. Whether it is a five thousand mile journey or a ten thousand mile journey, it starts with a single step.

I bless you all:

Let you all achieve, live and radiate living enlightenment!

Living Enlightenment

An Introduction

"There is an extraordinary potential hidden inside every human being. If it is awakened it will take you to a much higher plane of consciousness - beyond the limitations of the human body-mind. Experience this superconsciousness, actualize your ultimate potential. This is the only aim of human life – to enjoy the ultimate luxury of living enlightenment."

- Paramahansa Nithyananda,

About Author

Paramahansa Nithyananda is a living enlightened Master of the 21st century. His teachings include meditation, yoga and service for the purpose of realizing one's ultimate potential - of transforming from human to divine. Nithyananda Mission stands to spread the message of eternal bliss - nithya ananda - throughout the world and thus bring about an enlightened humanity.



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