

YOGAKSHEMAM *Newsletter*

Bulletin of Yogakshemam (association law 1901)

May 2002

Edition : English website

N° 08

Sri T. Krishnamacharya's informal talks

Two categories of human beings

Among human beings, we generally come across two types - those who spend their time and energy on the spiritual path resorting to acquisition of knowledge, conducting worship and doing service, without however sacrificing the household chores and responsibilities. With the merits so gained, they will lead life of purity and contentment. The other category of people, with materialistic outlook, will fritter away their efforts chasing the vanishing pleasures, not realising that the same, in the long run will result in mental agony, distress and physical discomfort

Their existence in life can be compared to the tortoise which kept floating in a big vessel containing cold water. As the latter is heated from below, it will enjoy the stay there initially because of the warmth. But as the water becomes hot, it will be unable to withstand the temperature and ultimately perish. So too, pleasures may fetch temporary happiness but they will push men into an abyss gradually.

One should endeavour to ascertain the source of such pleasures and realise how their lives are also being buffeted by various agencies. Still one can experience bliss by remaining unperturbed by favourable as well as adverse factors

T.K.Sribhashyam

Homage to the Goddess

OM

Homage to the Goddess ! to the great Goddess !

To the Beneficial One, eternal homage !

To Nature ! To the auspicious One, homage !

All passion contained, we bow before Her.

OM ! Peace ! Peace ! Peace !

- Devi Upanishad I.1

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Text boxes : Excerpts from **Maitri Upanishad**

« In the midst of the sun stands the moon, in the midst of the moon the fire, in the midst of fire, goodness, in the midst of goodness the Eternal »

Maitri Up. VI. 38

Andâl's Thiruppâvai (No 4)

Excerpts from an exclusive commentary by Sri T.Krishnamacharya

Poem 4: Oh! Dear Rain! You are the pupil of my eye and in kindness equal to the benevolent ocean! You who never mock or neglect your goodness of helping mood and kindness; enter the sea, carry water as much as needed, come out as cloud completely filled and ascend in the sky with the colour of Lord Krishna.

Let lightning flash; thunder crack-forth as the Discus (Sudarshana) and dextrogyral conch (a spiral shell turning to right) in the handsome hands of Lord Padmanâbha which give us strength.

Do not wait. Let there be rain, a cloudburst as would arrows from the bow of Saranga (Lord Râma's bow), pour out, to facilitate the enrichment of life on this earth, and for us to have delightful mârgali bath.

Listen and consider our damsel.

Through this poem, the devotee Ândâl alludes to the two-fold blessings the country would have following the *mârgali* bath: the rain and everlasting wealth. She invokes the Lord of Rain, Varuna, to have cloudburst, to facilitate prosperous life on earth and to have delightful *mârgali* bath. She prays to Rain God to be generous so that rivers, ponds and reservoirs would be full of water, yet without creating havoc with too much of rain. Without rain and water, life would be miserable and the chances of observing sacrificial baths would be bleak.

Ândâl depicts Rain God as beloved to her, as dear as the pupil of her eye. She depicts the colour of the cloud to the complexion of Krishna, her beloved; the flash of lightening to the Discus Sudarshana, who gave all the knowledge to Brahma and which is the most powerful weapon of Lord Vishnu. She compares the roar of thunder to the sound of Vishnu's Conch which when blown brings out the *pranava* or

OM and the downpour of rain to the arrows that were discharged from the bow of Sri Râma.

Sri T. Krishnamacharya's commentary:

Even though Sri Ândâl invokes the Rain God, she is in fact invoking her Lord Sri Krishna, the Master of masters, who discusses the divine qualities as a downpour of nectar. She identifies the lightning and thunder to the *pranava* sound that comes out when the Conch with its spiral turning to right, because it is only Sri Krishna who is in the sky. This special conch is used to announce the beginning of prayers in India or the beginning of temple processions.

There are many similarities between the cloud and a spiritual master. The cloud collects vapour from the salty sea, transforms it to nectar like rain, and pours down. The spiritual masters study Veda, Upanishad etc. and present them to the world like the cloud which collects vapour and rains. The spiritual masters propagate God as palatable and most enjoyable downpour with tales and anecdotes without which the Veda and Upanishad would not appeal to common man. Clouds collect here and there, so too the spiritual masters who move from place to place giving divine discourses to elevate our minds to a sublime level. In the prolonged absence of rain, there would be famine. In the continued absence of spiritual masters and their divine discourses, activities and blessings, anarchism would prevail.

The clouds do not expect anything in return, however enormous they may rain, and the benefits ensue to the country as a whole. So too, the spiritual masters who discuss and impart the knowledge of God and of Brahman without expecting any benefit from their disciples.

The Sudarshana Discus

Lord Vishnu holds in his right hand a discus with 1008 spikes, called Sudarshana Chakra, and in his left hand, He holds a Conch called Pânchajanya, having its spiral to the right.

Created from the navel of Vishnu (Padmanâbha), Brahma was playing seated on the Lotus (Padma) emanating from Vishnu's navel. Thinking that Brahma was crying, he asked his consorts, Sri Devi (the Sky) and Bhu Devi (the Earth) to console him. When they refused, Vishnu ordered His Discus Sudarshana to play with the boy. Sudarshana with his 1008 rays taught all the secrets of creation. Brahma used his knowledge to create the universe and became the creator.

Pânchajanya, Vishnu's Conch

Once Vishnu was walking along the banks of river Ganga. He found a conch shell with the spiral turning towards right. Not knowing that it was Vishnu who has holding him, the conch shell prayed Vishnu to protect him. Smilingly, Lord Vishnu breathed the four principles of OM and blessed the Conch shell that whoever blows in the right spiralled conch shell would bring out the pranava sound and that this sound would give peace to the devotees.

Just before the Maha Bhâratha War, Lord Krishna blows from His Pânchajanya creating great fear in all the three worlds. Dhru tarashtra, the Kaurava

king, asked Sanjaya, his minister from where this sound was coming. Sanjaya replied: Oh King! Did you not recognise the sound of Pânchajanya? Did you not recognise Sri Krishna blowing it? It has created fear of death in your children while the same sound is attributing happiness in the Pândava army. Pânchajanya can save or destroy. Your children have still time to be saved.

Why pray?
Claire Sribhashyam

Before we came to exist in the world, God gave us seeds, vegetables, fruits and livestock in plenty to feed us. He gave us a body perfectly compatible with our environment. He gave us the sun to warm us without burning us, lighting us with its light, producing rain and maturing our harvests and our fruits. He created for us the sun, the earth, the moon and the stars but nothing for himself. Aren't we indebted to Him for all that? Shouldn't we thank this benevolent Creator who is our father, our mother, our friend, our philosopher and our master? It won't add anything to his greatness, but will for sure add to our humility, a virtue we should all have.

Doing meditation is an experience similar to the comfort a person shivering of cold experiences approaching a fire. The Lord is forever pure and unaffected by our evils, even though He resides in the universe where evil takes on us because of various disharmonious actions and reactions. The only way we have to get rid of our evils and to get free from the chains of matter is to identify ourselves to the divine being in communion with God. Even in the most improbable situation such a soul doesn't feel afflicted.

**Sri T. Krishnamacharya Endowment Trust International (Regd.),
Bangalore**

Report on its activities in Coovalam, Tamil Nadu

- Construction of a well
- Purchase of an hearing aid for a muslim child of the village
- Medical treatment given in the village in the wake of a fire
- Payment of the total cost of an operation – doctor's fee, hospital stay, medication, etc...
- Purchase of three milking cows for three widows of the village
- Pediatric service for the children of the village during one year

Attentiveness in day-to-day life

Cristina Blanchelande

Excerpts from a lesson by Sri T.K. Sribhashyam on 26th June 2001

To introduce the sixth chapter of the Bhagavad Guita, Krishnamacharya started his teaching to Sribhashyam with a long diversion through ethical considerations of which here follows a small insight:

In the days of Veda, people dressed in a rather homogeneous manner: men dressed in white though for some rituals they used another colour, like the yellow obtained using curcuma. Women on their part wore a limited number of colours

according to their age and following a restricted choice that was common to them. There were however exceptions for very young women who had a relative freedom and could adorn colours like turquoise or other colours. As long as they were part of a household women could not wear white because white was symbol of mourning and dressed the orphan from father or mother, the girl without family support and the husband.

Once married, the woman's choice was restricted to few colours. Widow she had the possibility to wear two colours. Pure white was forbidden in India; the garment had to have an edging.

The result of all this is that one was able to recognise the family and social situation and the age range of a person thanks to his dress. It was also said that women could concentrate more easily than men. They could thus allow themselves the use of more colours than men as it would dissipate them less than men who lost more easily their capacity to concentrate, thereby breaking certain values.

Strictness in dressing helped individuals to maintain their concentration on a unique value. That rigor depends on what one sees and not what one does as eyes cause dispersal. Sight is the first sense causing dispersal.

The wider the variety of colours the more shall women be dispersed, losing one innate quality they have: mental attentiveness.

What should we say about our civilisation that associates absence of change to death and diversity to life?

"As birds and deers don't take refuge in a burning forest, afflictions never take refuge in the individuals who know Brahman."

Maitri Up. VI.19

Technical Sheet : Pathology and specific pedagogical indications for Yoga

*- by Doc. Carpentier Nancy, medical doctor, in collaboration with her teacher Sri T.K.Sribhashyam
- Free hand translation*

Sheet No. 3: Diarrhea (continuation)

Favorable Asana

Ardha Nâva Asana

Ardha Sethu Bandha Asana

Baddha Kona Asana, with Shîтали

Bhujanga Asana (lift up while breathing out)

Maha Mudra, with Shîтали

Nâva Asana

Parigha Asana

Paschimathana Asana (if possible with breath retention not exceeding 5" after breathing in)

Sarvânga Asana

Shalabha Asana (lift up while breathing out)

Shîrsha Asana

Simha Asana

Suptha Pâda Angushta Asana

Suptha Parvatha Asana

Viparîtha Karani

Favorable Prânâyâma:

Shîтали

Ujjâyi Anuloma (if possible with breath retention not exceeding 5"after breathing in)

Asana to avoid:

It is obvious that infectious diarrhea requires medical treatment. The counter indications only concern the chronic diarrhea condition.

Ardha Matsyendra Asana

Seated Asana with torsion

Dhanura Asana

Jatara Parivriti

Maritchya Asana No. 4 and No. 4

Uthitha Trikona Asana torsion

Viparîtha Shalabha Asana

Prânâyâma to avoid

Kapâlabhâti

Nadi Shodhana in Sama Vrithi

Prânâyâma with retention after breathing out

Therapeutic food measures:

Eat toasted bread, rice and potatoes. The water of cooked rice is constipating. Do not eat raw cereals, only eat them once cooked.

Avoid as much as possible animal proteins (pork-butcher, meat, fish) during the liquid phase of the diarrhea. A fresh hard boiled egg can replace the meat.

Avoid eating raw food. Eat cooked vegetable: mainly carrots, pumpkin, green beans.

Fruit: banana, bilberry.

Drink more water to fend off dehydration. Avoid alcoholic drinks, fruit juices and lemonades.

Reflections on nutrition

Doc. Nancy Carpentier (excerpts from a lesson by Sri T.K. Srihashyam, 1998)

Anna means food in the sense of "what feeds and what is fed". Food feeds our detections senses and our thoughts. One should consider the spiritual value of food to know the Creator. One should always link it to the Creator. The individual relies on food for its existence.

Food is the first element created without which there would not exist other created beings. Food is life and is the universal remedy for all created beings. Beings are born, grow and finally die thanks to food.

The Veda say: " Do not despise food because whoever despises it despises the body, Prâna and the Creator; do not reject food because who rejects it rejects *ap* (water). But the internal light that enables to distinguish between real and unreal is fed by water. Multiply food because it is with the product of the earth that we feed our body, our soul, our ancestors and the Creator."

Anna brings us strength, happiness, brilliance and *ojas*, the spiritual strength within us. Only food allows the build-up of various cellular tissues of which sperm and ovum, thereby giving us breeding capacity. Only food that does not impede any fundamental function of the individual is worth eating. Only that food allows the production of *ojas*. That food gives Enlightenment. It is Brahman.

The concept of devotion in the Christian religion (4)

Isabelle OTT, Pastor, President of the Synodal Council

Spirituality in the Catholic religion

In Roman Catholic worship, **visual representations** are indispensable. The idea, for instance, that the Church could be invisible is as contradictory as an incarnation which is not of flesh and blood. In a nutshell, believers are trained to look for significance in the signs offered to their eyes. The mediation of things that are visible is intended to stimulate the faith which sees what is invisible.

The place of Mary, the mother of God, in Roman Catholic spirituality is also rooted in the doctrine of incarnation. God came down to earth, God is among men through his son, Jesus Christ. By praising the mother of Jesus, Roman Catholic believers want to highlight the conditions of this incarnation, hence the development of the whole complex of Marian worship and the dogmas concerning the figure of Mary herself.

For Catholic Christians, **prayers** readily pass via intermediaries who help them to come closer to God and to overcome the obstacles to their prayers being answered. This involves the intercession of saints, the intercession of the Church, and above all, the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the most powerful of the mediators. God seems to be a great monarch, or even a severe judge, for whom the intercession of his Son is not enough.

In the life of Roman Catholic Christians, **spiritual guidance** is one way of living in God's presence. The spiritual mentor, in the shape of a priest or monk, helps his parishioners or monks to find the meaning of their struggles and their religious experiences, so that they can discover the presence of God, not only in prayer but also in their lives.

Roman Catholics have developed a rich **monastic tradition**. According to the rule of St Benedict, the genuine search for God constitutes the very essence of monasticism. Communities of men and women go into isolation in order to find the silence to pray and live in communion with God. They are signs of transcendence among us mortals. Monks and nuns strive as a community to increase and ceaselessly develop their understanding and experience of the presence of Christ among us as the supreme, fundamental reality of their lives. They take the three traditional vows of chastity, obedience and poverty. They remain chaste in order to be able to freely focus their whole being and all their love on God, and, in God, to love each of their brothers and sisters. Their vow of obedience means that they have relinquished responsibility for the spiritual direction of their lives and their community to their prior or prioress. Lastly, if they donate all their worldly goods to the community, they free themselves from all material ties and concerns, because they no longer have anything of their own.

Svastha, the health – Sleep

Dr Golpalakrishna Rao, Bangalore (Āyurvedic medicine practitioner)

Charaka says that when the mind is exhausted and the exhausted sense organs detract from their objects, the man sleeps. (Sutra Sthāna XXI.35). He says that happiness, corpulence, strength, potency, intellect and life are the benefits of sleep, while misery, emaciation, weakness, impotency, loss of intellectual activity and death are the cause of sleeplessness. Sleep is also caused by a preponderance of Thamas, by excess of Kapha, by physical exertion, fatigue of sense organs and the mind, by traumatism, medication or the consequences of certain diseases.

As we keep our senses, mind and intellect alert during the day, night is considered the best time to sleep. Moreover, during the night, the plants, animals and birds are in a peaceful state, which is conducive to man's peaceful state of sleep. The physiological function of night sleep is to combat diseases, provide health and longevity because of its constructive power of body tissues.

The duration of sleep depends on one's habit and psycho-morphological profile, yet one should take into consideration the seasonal exigencies. For example, the winter night sleep should be longer than the summer one. Similarly, while the summer day sleep is advisable, the winter day sleep should be avoided. When professional activity obliges one to keep awake in the night, one can sleep in the daytime. According to Āyurveda, in such a case, it is advisable to sleep in the daytime, without a heavy meal, but with a liquid food like a soup. Even in such cases, night sleep should be respected as far as possible, because, while the daytime sleep would not help in the construction of tissues, it is surrounded by environmental excitations.

A physiological healthy sleep is when, on waking up, one has the feeling of freshness of sense organs, a relaxed mind and a stimulating intellect.

Purgation, emesis, fear, anxiety, anger, smoking, drinking, use of drugs, exercise, bloodletting, fasting, uncomfortable bed, excessive sexual activities, over work and old age are the cause of loss of sleep.

Massage, anointing, shower, meat or vegetable soup, meat of marshy and aquatic animals, rice, milk, mental relaxation, pleasant music, cooling paste on the eyes, head and face, comfortable bed, agreeable room and contemplation induce sleep even when the natural sleep is disturbed by some factors.

While it is not advisable to sleep immediately after taking food, in some diseases (like the diseases of the heart), it is advisable to sleep in the daytime before taking the food.

Those who are exhausted, who follow evacuative therapy, who travel very frequently, who are injured, children, women during menstrual periods, people suffering from thirst, diarrhoea, colic pain, dyspnoea should observe a short day sleep in all the seasons. Those who suffer from anger, grief and fear should also observe a short day sleep.

Contemplation and Meditation is one of the best remedies to maintain the equilibrium between the waking state and the sleep state and they avoid the consequences of the dream on the sleep state.

The Prince of Five Weapons

Indian tale

In one of the past lives of Gautama, he was the son of the queen of Brahmadatta of Varanasi. The astrologers predicted that the boy will be full of goodness, will rule over the country, shall become famous and renowned for his skill with the five weapons and shall be admired all over India. The royal couple named him The Prince of Five Weapons, sword, spear, bow, battle-axe and shield.

After his education in a far off city, the boy received the Five Weapons from his teacher. Bidding a respectful farewell to the teacher, he left for Varanasi.

On his way he came to a forest inhabited by the Demon with the Matted Hair. At the entrance of the forest, the villagers cautioned the prince that the Demon would kill anybody he sees and tried to persuade him not to enter the forest. Fearless as a lion, he entered the forest. When he reached the mid-forest, the Demon showed himself. He made himself very tall, his head took the size of a pagoda, his eyes as big as saucers and he had two tusks and all over knobs and bulbs with the face of a hawk.

“Where are you going?” he shouted. “Stop! You’ll make a meal for me!” The prince said “Demon, I come here trusting in myself. I advise you to be careful how you come near me.” So saying, the prince started shooting arrows, hurling the weapons one by one. All his weapons got stuck in demon’s hair. The prince, without losing courage, approached the demon and gave him blows with his fist, his feet and even with his head. He too got stuck in the demon’s hair. Yet he felt no fear.

The Demon thought to himself: “Here’s is a lion of a man! A noble man! In all my life, I never saw such a fearless man. Why is it that he does not fear?” He was powerless to eat the man but asked him: “Why is it, young man, that you are not frightened to death ?” The prince replied: “Why should I fear? In one life, a man can die but once. Besides in my belly is a thunderbolt. So, even if you eat me, you will never be able to digest it. This will tear you, will kill you. So we shall both perish.” The prince naturally was thinking of his knowledge.

The Demon thought: “This young man speaks the truth. There is no pleasure in eating the flesh of a man of fearlessness. I will let him go.” So he let go the prince. The prince said: “Demon, I will go, as you say. You were born a Demon, cruel, blood-bidding, devourer of the fresh and gore of other, because you acted wickedly in your former lives. If you still go on doing wickedly you will go from darkness to darkness. Taking the life of creatures causes birth, as an animal, or in the body of a demon or, if one is reborn as a man, it makes his life short.” The prince continued explaining him the disadvantages of five kinds of wickedness and the advantages of virtue. The prince succeeded in establishing the value of virtues in the Demon, made him worship the deity of the forest. Convinced of the change of the demon, the prince left for his homeland, assuring the people on the way of the freedom from the Demon. He became a king and ruled righteously, being admired by all. He passed away according to his deeds.

Navarathna: the nine jewels of the Solar system

Catherine Galéa

On their visit to India European women are struck by the beauty of the jewels worn by Indian women. Entering a jewelry store in Bangalore, my sight was attracted to a superb medallion made of nine different precious stones.

I mentioned it to Srimathi Alamelu, one of Sri T. K. Sribhashyam's three sisters. She told me that Indian women who wore that jewel did it less for its perfect aesthetic than for its spiritual meaning.

The nine stones must respect very precise proportions and be positioned according to a definite order: the ruby, the diamond, the topaz, the emerald, the pearl, the coral, the garnet, the sapphire and the tiger's eye. The name of that jewel is Navarathna, that simply means "the nine jewels". Each stone corresponds to a planet of our solar system which, according to the tradition, has a great influence on our family life. Indian women wear Navarathna to protect their family's harmony and to protect their matrimony, on earth and in the after-life. In many temples there is an altar dedicated to the nine planets to which husband and wife traditionally make offerings.

Should I wish to wear such a jewel, I should not consider it as a simple adornment.

Yâjnyavalkya Yoga

Impressions on Sri T.K. Sribhashyam's lessons in Nice

Mireille Hervé

Yoga Yâjnyavalkya is a very old manuscript, antecedent to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. It is little known though it is of great value to whom practices yoga.

Sri T.K. Sribhashyam gave us a very big present revealing us Master Yâjnyavalkya's teaching. Sri T.K. Sribhashyam learnt Master Yâjnyavalkya's teaching from his father Sri T. Krishnamacharya.

It is that teaching that Sri T. K. Sribhashyam has been imparting to his students since he teaches Yoga, respecting faithfully a tradition perpetuated until today from generation to generation.

Yâjnyavalkya explains that there are two possible paths in yoga. One is Nivartaka that is only for persons leading a solitary life. The second one, Pravartaka, concerns people who have a family and social life and is the one that interests us.

Fundamental aspects are that Yâjnyavalkya gives very specific guidances on the practice of yoga and that any practice must be adapted according to the age, the sex, the ranking in the society and the family situation of the person practicing.

The person who practices has duties to accomplish and rules of behavior to respect. They are the 10 Yama and the 10 Niyama. The teaching describes the technique and the effects of 8 Asana. It also describes the Prânâyâmas with the concentrations on the vital points. Yâjnyavalkya explains the roles of the different vital points and the actions of the Prânâyâmas on the person, on his mind and on his family circle. Concentration on vital points is fundamental and must be practiced with precision. Indeed Yâjnyavalkya teaches how to meditate, what type of dhyâna to

practice and on which vital point to concentrate in function of the individual characteristics of the person who practices.

The respect of those rules is essential and indicates us the way to apply Yoga in a household.

That teaching we received within Yogakshemam is part of the teaching given by Sri T. Krishnamacharya to Sri T. K. Sribhashyam following Indian tradition. The rarity and the quality of such a teaching constitutes an incredible wealth and opens great possibilities in his practice of yoga to the person practicing. However our daily life cannot be separated from our spiritual search and relating to that, one of the 10 niyama tells us to be happy at every moment.

The page of Srimathi T. Namagiriammal
(Wife of Sri T. Krishnamacharya)

Jîrigé rotti or cumin bread

Ingredients:

150g rice cream
3 teaspoons of cumin grains
4 soupspoons sesame or peanut oil
50 g grated coconut
1 bunch of coriander or parsley leaves (chopped)
Salt to taste
100 g lukewarm water to make the doe

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. With lukewarm water knead to a firm doe. Cover with a humid cloth and let rest for 30 minutes or more at room temperature.

Spread few drops of oil on a flat plate. With the doe make balls of 4 cm diameter and flatten them to the size of a pancake, called rotti.

Warm up a pan on medium heat. Put the rotti in the hot pan, cover it for one or two minutes. Turn the rotti once. When cooked, put in a plate and cover to keep hot. If the pan is big enough, you can make several rottis at the same time.

Put some drops of lemon before serving. You can also spread a little butter on every rotti.

Accompaniment: tomato sauce, basil sauce or cucumber and tomato salad.