



Your Choice

Human thought and emotions
 fed by images and impressions of Senses,
 ancestry and Cultural Conundrum. Senses giving half images of all
 that they capture in their web. Seemingly unrelated images and
 ancestral voices of lives forgotten
 Of lives unmentioned in the written
 word of that day or this.

Many lives of times forgotten
 Can twitch and turn or find rhythm
 and dance. Ancestry plays not just
 through genetic seed but much more
 through the Cultural Conundrum

Thoughts are intermingled, emotions
 entwined and lives fused.

Does this make you One big mess
 Or an exotic Magic
 is but
 Your choice

Grace & Blessings

Sadhguru



Dear Readers,

How to describe the nature of the universe in one word? “Five,” could be Sadhguru’s answer – “five” denoting the five fundamental elements that everything in existence, including us human beings, is made of. We felt this is reason enough to take a closer look at how these five elements or *pancha bhutas* function within ourselves. And not only that – in our *Isha Hatha Yoga* series, Sadhguru walks us through “*Bhuta Shuddhi*,” a systematic process to influence the elements to our benefit.

While earth, water, wind, and fire are more or less tangible, “*Akasha*” remains largely obscure, and many suffer from the misconception that it is space, which it is not, as Sadhguru explains in our *Musings* article on this topic. As we progress to the fourth part of our Mahabharat exploration, Sadhguru speaks about “*The Fire Within*,” or in fact three levels of fire in the human system, and how we can evolve from the gross to the subtle.

We have all been through the same phase of life, and yet, once our own children reach adolescence, conflicts between the two generations are bound to erupt. In the article “*Teenagers and Parents*,” Sadhguru analyzes the causes and provides pointers as to how to advance and strengthen these relationships, and raise the potential of adolescence to become a time of expansion.

The speed at which children grow in front of our eyes makes it evident that time is ticking away. However, enmeshed in a constant stream of thoughts, impressions, and activities, who fully realizes the brevity and value of our existence? With the article “*No Time to Waste*,” Sadhguru aims at directing our focus on what is significant.

“*Determination Is Key*” comes as a natural consequence – in life, as in politics and public services. In “*Crafting the New Andhra Pradesh*,” Sadhguru recounts his impressions of the Inner Engineering program he conducted for high-ranking members of the Andhra Pradesh government and administration, including the Chief Minister himself. From crafting a state we go to the humble but nonetheless indispensable task of crafting a tasty onion- and garlic-free meal. Try our super-easy and sumptuous “*Mixed Dal*”!

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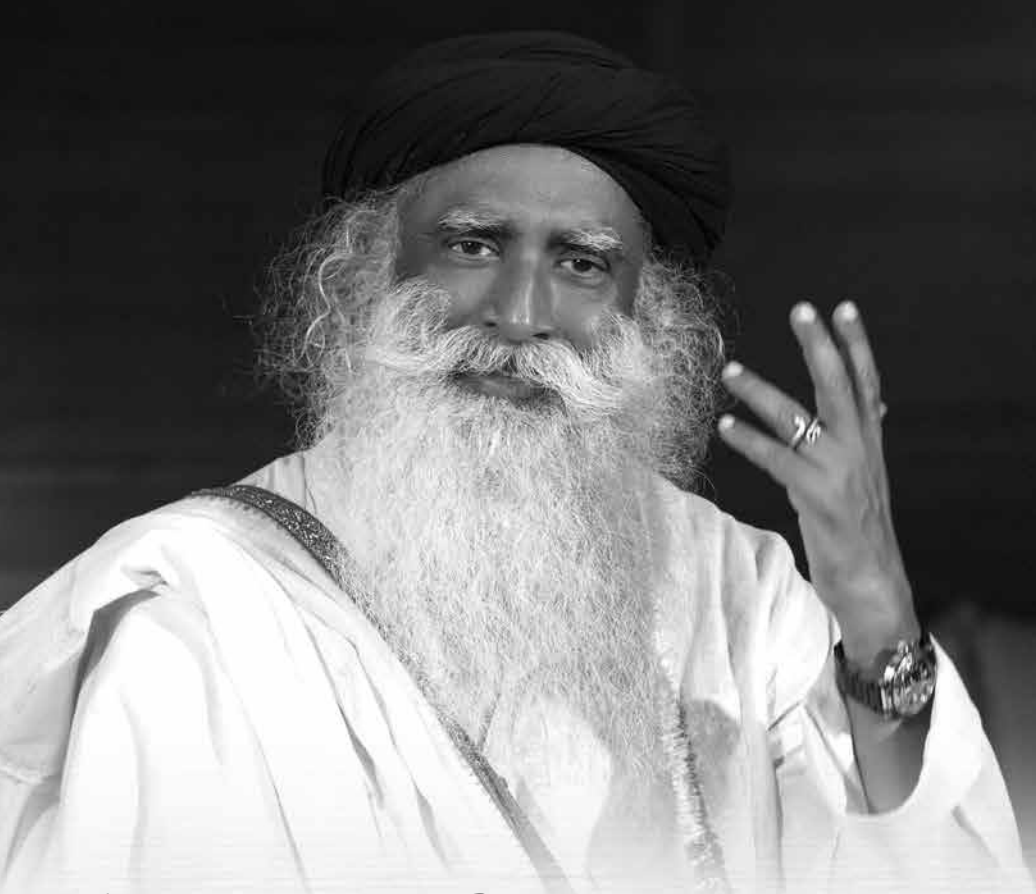
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CONTENTS

Lead Article	
Teenagers and Parents	4
Sadhguru on Bridging the Gap	
Musings	
What Your Judgments Say about You	7
Akasha	8
Sadhguru on the Most Mysterious of the Five Elements	
No Time to Waste	10
Sadhguru on His Approach to Sadhana and Life	
Determination Is Key	12
From Wholeness 1994	
Isha Hatha Yoga	
Part 15: Bhuta Shuddhi –	13
Addressing the Most Elemental Level of Your Life	
Mahabharat	
Part 4: The Fire Within	17
Sadhguru Spot	
Crafting the New Andhra Pradesh	19
Excerpted from Sadhguru Spot of 4 Feb 2015	
Upcoming Programs and Events	
Isha Yoga – Program Highlights	20
Isha Recipe	
This Month: Mixed Dal	21
Zen Speaks	
Danxia Burns the Buddha / Jingqing and the Sound of Raindrops	23



TEENAGERS AND PARENTS

Sadhguru on Bridging the Gap

Questioner: Sadhguru, how should one deal with teenagers?

Sadhguru: Every age is a problem. Stone Age was a problem, Iron Age was a problem, Bronze Age was a problem, Computer Age – serious problem. The Middle Ages were a great problem, Modern Age is an immense problem, Teen-age – another problem.

I hope you too were born normally as an infant and slowly grew up, passing the age of 13, 14, 15, which you refer to as teenage. Like infancy, childhood, adulthood, middle age, and old age, adolescence or teenage is just a certain developmental stage. We are trying to segment it, but essentially, this is the journey of a body. Some are suffering infancy problems, some are suffering toddler problems, some are suffering childhood problems, some are suffering teenage problems, some are going through middle age problems, some are going through old

age problems. Looking at it from that perspective, every phase of life is a problem.

If you consider every aspect of life as a problem, death is the only solution. Unconsciously, you start seeking death for yourself and for those around you. You may not be aware of it, but you create an atmosphere in your mind where the only solution is to become free from life. You came here to experience life. Instead of calling it different facets of life, you call it different problems. If you die, you will have funeral problems, because it is not easy to have a dignified funeral in Mumbai City. No more can four people carry you, and your whole family and friends walk behind you with a drum. Even dead, you are stuck in the traffic.

There are various types of situations in your life, and that is all they are – *situations*. Some of them you can handle – some of them you cannot. Whatever

you cannot handle, you call a problem, rather than seeing it is only a situation and trying to equip yourself to handle it. The moment you call it a problem, unpleasantness is a natural consequence.

Your children are growing up and becoming teenagers – that should be a joyful event. But you are distressed about them growing up. Unfortunately, we have eulogized infancy and childhood, which are helpless stages of life. But even so-called spiritual teachers say, “I am still a child.” This is another way of saying “I am retarded.” I do not want to meet an adult who is still a child.

If you eulogize childhood, this helpless phase in life where without someone else’s support we cannot exist, you will remain helpless forever. And that is what happens. “I cannot live without you” – do not mistake this for love. This is not of any great value. It is just like saying, “I cannot walk without a crutch.” “I’m fine the way I am, but still I am willing to include you and involve myself with you” – this is of great value. “I can live without anyone’s attention and I am willing to get absolutely involved with whoever is here right now” – this is of value.

Since you got used to your children being helpless creatures, when they reach the so-called teenage and start standing on their own feet, you do not like it. You want to keep them small. What you need is a toy or a doll to play with, or maybe a dog. A couple was struggling with the decision whether to have children or not. The husband wanted to have children. The wife said it is not necessary – one can get a dog instead. Because they could not settle the debate, they went to a marriage counselor. They said, “We are not able to make up our mind whether to have children or to get a dog. What should we do?” The marriage counselor said, “This is very simple. Do you want to ruin your carpets or your life? You must decide.”

If, like a little child, you say, “*This is how I am,*” you have become like a concrete block. Based on a certain amount of stupid information that has come your way, you have defined how you are. Once you

have formed a concrete block kind of definition of who you are and you meet another concrete block, you know what happens.... When two people come together with great passion and your boundaries are loose, a wonderful union may happen. When two concrete blocks come together with great passion, friction or the breaking of one or both of the concrete blocks will happen.

Once you become like a concrete block, you should not beget more concrete blocks. When you have defined your boundaries absolutely, you are incapable of including another life as a part of yourself. If you ask me, you should not even get married in that case, because two concrete blocks living together may make a house, but it will not make a home.

When children are small, they are helpless and look to you for everything. You think your children are magical because they are helpless. Suppose the baby popped out of you, stood up, and said, “Hey, who the hell are you?” you would not like this baby. But they take 14, 15 years to ask that question. In fact, that is all a teenager is asking, “Okay, who the hell are you?”

If you want to be someone significant to that fresh life, you must not have defined boundaries of who you are. Like when the child was infant and he crawled, you crawled with him. Now when the teenager wants to swing, you must be able to swing with him. If you still want to crawl with him, he is not interested. In the eyes of young and energetic adolescents, parents who think you still need to be crawled around look ridiculous.

Every day, life is changing within you because you are growing rapidly, and the fools around you are not able to grasp that. Usually, grandparents become a little more endearing than parents, because they look at things from a little distance. Teenage means you are slowly getting poisoned by your hormones. Old age means you are being released from that, so they kind of understand. Those of you who are

middle-aged have no clue. Even historically, the Middle Agers represent a confused state of mind.

Do not *deal* with your teenagers – make yourself available for them. Make them responsible for everything. One month, have the courage to hand over your monthly income to them and give them the responsibility to manage the house. You will see, things will change dramatically. From the age of three and a half months, my girl travelled with me in the car. We built the Isha Foundation in a Maruti 800, travelling thousands of miles. In 14 months, I put 135,000 kilometers on that car.

She grew up in the car until she was four years of age. At first, I thought I will never send her to school because we had bonded and she had such wisdom since she has seen the road, she has seen the people, she has been in all kinds of families. I thought I should not mess this up by sending her to a school, but you know children of that age need company. Unless you have a whole cricket team of children at home, keeping one child alone does not work, because they may become too old when they are young, so I put her into school. From then on, she was always in a hostel. But we have kept a very active engagement, thanks to phones.

In earlier years, it was the black phone. The school had only one hour “phone time,” so even if I was somewhere on the highway at that time, I had to find a black phone, and for that one hour, I would be on the phone with her. On her side, children were screaming at her – on my side, people were banging on the booth. Later, she went to college and whatever else she has been pursuing, I would always find the time and speak to her on the phone. We have never really stayed at home. When she comes for a vacation, the next day, we will be travelling somewhere. Apart from that, I have kept up a very active relationship with her, largely on the phone.

I saw there is a certain intelligence in every child. If she was with me, I would leave all my important decisions in her hands. She was only five or six when I started putting people’s problems, Foundation

issues, and administration to her. She would come up with her own whacky solutions, but five times out of ten, it would be something brilliant. I am not trying to project her as a special child – she is normal, but brought up in a special way.

Most people never give that opportunity to a child’s intelligence. I never bought toys for her. If she wanted to play, I took her out for a walk in the jungle. She learned to climb trees and do all kinds of things. Here and there, someone gifted a toy, but she was never interested in them, because there were more exciting things like the snakes or garden lizards I caught for her.

If you really want to do something with your children, you must allow them to expand, because that is all they are trying to do. Not only their body is growing – the potential of the human being is also growing. You must allow them to expand, rather than seeing how to restrict them. If you try to restrict them, you will have huge problems. If you have boys, you will have one kind of problem. If you have girls, you will have another kind of problem.

Do not think restriction is a good way of controlling life. Responsibility will put them on track. As I said, hand over your money to them and tell them to handle it this month – you are on vacation. If you are afraid that they will go and blow it up – if they do, what happens to you will happen to them too. Let them go through it for a month. Of course you can keep some reserve, but let them understand if they blow up the money, there will be no breakfast tomorrow morning. It is better to learn in a protected, caring atmosphere than out on the street.

Above all, drop this idea that your child *belongs* to you. If you think these children belong to you, coming into their teens, they will tell you in their own way, “Goddammit, I don’t belong to you.” That is all they are trying to tell you – which you are not able to digest. Another life does not belong to you. If another life has chosen to be with you, please cherish that. It is a tremendous thing. Whether it is your husband, your wife, or your children –

value the fact that another life has chosen to come through you or be with you. You do not own them in any sense. If you do not get it now, you will get it when you die or they die. You do not own them, but definitely, you should include them.

There are many aspects to teenage – one thing is, your intelligence is being hijacked by your hormones. Suddenly, the whole world looks different. What were just people are suddenly becoming males and females. Suddenly, you are only interested in one half of humanity. It is a huge change. You will see boys do not even look at their mothers directly, because they still cannot take their eyes off certain body parts. You must understand it is new to them and they are trying to come to terms with it.

If you were a good friend and they had problems, they would talk to you. Because most parents are lousy friends, they make other friends, and those

friends give their own whacky advice, since they are also in the same state. It would be best that if your children have a problem, they come to you. But they will not come to you if you think you are the boss. They will not come to you if you think you have ownership over their life. They will not come to you if you are “that horrible father or mother.”

They will come to you if you are a good friend, because when they have problems, it is natural for them to seek a friend. So make sure from an early age that you are their best friend until they reach the age of 18 or 20. You have to earn it. It will not happen because you delivered them. Because you delivered them, you get the title of mother and father – you will not get the title of a friend. This has to be earned by you behaving responsibly every day.

WHAT YOUR JUDGMENTS SAY ABOUT YOU

The following is an excerpt from the 90-day Wholeness program that Sadhguru conducted in 1994 at the Isha Yoga Center.

On the first day, I asked you a question. “Among Buddha, Christ, and Krishna, who is the greatest?” All of you gave your own opinion. Who do you think is the greatest? If you think you are very caring, you will say Buddha is the greatest, because it supports your ego. If you think you are very loving, you will say Jesus is the greatest, because it supports your ego. If you love pleasure and cannot come out of it, you will say Krishna is the greatest, because again, it supports your ego. But Krishna can drop anything at any moment – that is not the case with you.

Your judgments have nothing to do with the other, even if it is an ordinary person. Even if it is your friend, your wife, your husband, or whoever else, your judgments have nothing to do with that person. Your judgments reflect the way you think. When the mind is *on* endlessly,

it keeps making judgments about everyone and about everything in the world.

All dissatisfaction, all bitterness, all negativity comes out of our own limitations, not because of the situation. Realizing this is maturity. Everyone can make judgments, but those who have developed the urge to grow should stop judging. Otherwise, for every small step you take forward, you take 100 steps backward, simply because of your judgments. You may not realize it immediately, but you will experience it after a few days or months.

Please grow out of these judgments about everyone and everything. You have to adopt the attitude, “Let this stupid mind chatter.” Do not give it any importance.





AKASHA

Sadhguru on the Most Mysterious of the Five Elements

Questioner: Namaskaram Sadhguru. One of the five elements or *pancha bhutas* is *akasha*. I am confused as to whether it is space or ether. Can you please elaborate?

Sadhguru: I am glad you are confused, because confusion is a much better state than stupid conclusions. Confusion means you are seeking. It is my intent to keep you confused, because I want you to always be seeking. Akasha is not space. Akasha is ether. The word “ether” is not quite accurate but the closest translation. Ether is not space – ether is a subtle dimension of existence. Space is *kala* or nonexistence. Space is Shi-Va – “that which is not.” Akasha is “that which is.”

Here you are as a human being. There are many levels of grossness and subtleness in the human system. If you have constipation, you have something gross inside you. Above that, there are more refined aspects of the body, like a lungful of air, and above

that, a brain, thoughts and emotions. In the human system, there is water, there is solid material, there is air, there is fire, and there is akasha, which makes all this. Do not try to understand that – know this human system that you are, which is a mini cosmos. If you perceive *this* [yourself] right, you know *that* [which is around you].

In the yogic system, we have always said this, and modern physics has also come to the realization that the design of everything in the universe – from the atomic to the cosmic – is fundamentally the same. Whether it is a human being, a grasshopper, an earthworm, a bird, a snake, or whatever kind of form – everything has the same fundamental design. The difference is only in terms of complexity and sophistication, and how it has evolved into a multitude of forms. Your design is far more sophisticated compared to that of an amoeba, but the fundamentals are the same – only the complexity has increased.

Do not try to observe the cosmos, because you do not have a gallery view of the cosmos. There is no place where you can sit and observe cosmos. In fact, you cannot really observe anything except what happens within you. Even if you take a telescope and look at a star, you can see the star only the way it is projected in your mind. In other words, you can only experience yourself – you are the only doorway through which you can experience anything.

Whether you want to experience the food that you eat, the air that you breathe, the people around you, the world, or the cosmos – you can only experience it the way you are within yourself. If you are very clear, you will see everything the way it is. It is like looking into a mirror that is concave or one that is convex – they will give you different impressions of how you look. Suppose you always look into a distorted mirror – after some time, you will assume that this is how you look.

Similarly, you think the world looks a particular way simply because that is how it is projected in your mind. If you evolve your mind into a more refined surface with absolutely no wavering or distortion, if it becomes a perfectly plain mirror, it will reflect everything the way it is. But since it is a reflection, it is mirror-inverted. You must have the intelligence to correct this image without distorting it.

Most people cannot turn a dosa without making a mess out of it. This is the problem with the mind too. One thing is your mind is wavy. Seeing the world in a wavy mirror makes it look a certain way. The other thing is most people have never attempted to turn it around. They think the way they perceive things right now is how it is. It takes a certain skill to turn the image around without distorting it.

You have two projects. The first one is to flatten the mirror so that it is not distorted anymore. Then, the much bigger task is to flip it around without any distortion. We have not approached that aspect in your life yet. First we have to work on making the mirror absolutely free from distortions – that is project 1. Project 2 is more subtle. Project 1 needs perseverance – project 2 needs enormous skill.

Akasha is a subtle dimension of physical manifestation. You cannot see the air in this hall – but still it is there, and it is very much a part of your life. In that sense, your life is spread all over. There are gross elements in the body, and there are subtler elements in this body. In other words, life is always from a hardcore crudeness to many subtleties. The wider you spread your wings, the more subtlety you will have in your life.

Without akasha, you cannot exist here. Without the air in this hall, you cannot exist here. You cannot see the air, but it is more vital than your hair – though more money is spent on haircare in the world than on brain care. You see where our values lie. Without hair, you can still live. Without ears, you can still live. Without nose, you can still live. Most of the time, you are not even conscious whether the air exists or not, but without it, you cannot live for a moment. Likewise, without akasha, you cannot live for a moment.

There is a temple in Karnataka, southern India, which is dedicated to Annapoorneshwari. At the rear part of the temple, there is an inscription in Hale Kannada – an ancient form of the language, which is over 3000 years old – about how to design an airplane. It says how you can construct it, but also that if you fly such a machine, it will disturb the ether. They say if you disturb akasha, human beings will not live peacefully. Once akasha is disturbed, psychological disturbances become enormous. We can see this in the world today.

Like earth, water, air, and fire, akasha is one aspect of the five elements. Elements are not empty space but a kind of substance. Do not mistake akasha for empty space.





NO TIME TO WASTE

Sadhguru on His Approach to Sadhana and Life

Questioner: Namaskaram, Sadhguru. You said that when we do our Shambhavi, we should do it as if it is the last thing we'll ever do. But often when I do my practices, I am kind of distracted. Could you give me some advice?

Sadhguru: The nature and the process of creation are such that when we are born, we are designated to die one day. But the moment you get educated, you are in a constant rush. You are flooded with so much information that you overlook a fundamental information in your body which reminds you that you are mortal. Every beat of your heart tells you, "You may die." Cardiac problems are the main cause of death in the world, accounting for over 30% of all deaths. Over 150,000 people die every day worldwide. That means over 150,000 hearts will stop beating today. Some will be given shocks in an effort to kick-start them again, but they will fail. Some will die peacefully.

Right now, all our hearts are beating, but there is no guarantee that they will still be beating in the next moment. Those who died today did not think that they have to die today. They wanted to live too. They had plans. They thought they would go somewhere tomorrow. But suddenly, the heart stopped. If you pay a little attention to the nature of your life, you will see it is very fragile. In all kinds of situations, young people, old people, all kinds of people pass away. You and I are still here. Let's enjoy the life process, but let's also see that we are mortal.

If you know you are mortal, you must do everything in your life – not just Shambhavi – like it is the last thing you do. Look at it like it is the last thing you do without crying about it, without being emotional about it. Simply remind yourself every moment. Learn to live with death because it is a part of your existence. If you do not consciously live with it, when it comes in front of you once in a way and threatens you, you will freak out. If you were

conscious every moment, the value of being alive would be sky-high.

Doing Shambhavi like it is the last thing in your life does not mean you kill yourself doing it. It simply means that the value of life rises in your understanding. If you do not find great value to your life, what is the point in getting up in the morning at the right time, not eating right away, and doing all this yoga? You just want to eat, drink, and sleep. Only if you have realized the value of your existence, you want to do something that takes you to your ultimate possibility.

Some time ago, I visited some of my old college friends. They had started a small community with three or four of them gathering every morning. When I came there at around 8:30 or 8:45, they were all sitting there with whisky glasses – a meditation center of their own. I looked at it, but I did not want to comment on it. I had not seen them for so many years – what was there for me to say? I just said hello and made normal conversation. Suddenly, they started picking on me, saying, “You guys, you think you are on the spiritual path, but you don’t even have the courage to drink coffee in the morning. We drink *whisky*” – the superior spiritual path.

I tried to ignore it but they would not leave it. Then I told them, “You have chosen to drink whisky – all the best. We have chosen to drink something else in the morning. What I drink is sustainable until the last day of my life. What you drink, you may be forced to give up at some point, or the last day may come too soon, which is not my wish. It is not a question of courage – it is a question of choice. Different people choose to drink different things in the morning. If this is what you have chosen to drink, that is up to you.”

Whatever you do, only if you realize the value of your existence, you will put your everything into it. Otherwise, you will do everything without involvement. In many places, even in big temples, they do *pooja* like that. They want it to be over and see how much money is on the plate. If even so-called worship is done in an ugly manner, where is

the question of them doing simple things well, like breathing, eating, walking, and responding to what is around them?

The essential reason for lack of involvement is you have not realized the value of your existence. Otherwise, naturally you would put your best into everything you do. Only to the extent that you are involved will life offer you its juice. Cash in the bank may take you around the world, but to experience life’s juice, the only currency is involvement. No involvement, no juice. If you refuse to drink the juice of life, why are you alive?

Every piece of life is here to experience life. The only way to know and experience life is through involvement. If you do not get involved because you do not like the people who are here, and you wait for some ideal people to get involved with, you will see how many problems you will have with those “ideal” people. When you meet God, maybe you can show more involvement, but until then, at least practice involvement with the people who are here now. It does not matter whether the situation is to your liking or not, whether you approve of it or not.

Involvement does not mean you have to do what everyone is doing. Involvement simply means you do not ignore anything. It does not mean you have to do a particular thing – it is the way you are. If you get involved, every moment of your life will be a new opening. Tomorrow morning’s Shambhavi will be a fantastic experience. But having a fantastic experience with Shambhavi is not important. What is important is that every day, it opens up new terrain for you. If you do Shambhavi because it is nice for you, you make it into some kind of a drug. The purpose is not pleasure but to open up new terrain on a daily basis.



WHY DETERMINATION IS KEY

The following is an excerpt from the 90-day Wholeness program that Sadhguru conducted in 1994 at the Isha Yoga Center.

Whether you want to set up a business, run an industry, compete in athletics, or do anything else in life, if you are slack, you will not make it big. Even simple physical achievements need some commitment and grit. To conquer your own consciousness, to go beyond yourself, needs a tremendous amount of grit – or tremendous love. You must have one of the two. Without both, there will be no growth.

In one of the Upanishads, there is the story of Nachiketa, who was supposed to be the first spiritual seeker. When Nachiketa was a small boy, his father took a vow to give away everything he had as a *dana* to the Rishis and Brahmins. This was a device that was created in the tradition to in turn attain spiritual realization. Nachiketa's father gave away all the sick cows, all the useless property, everything that he did not want or that was in some way a burden to him, and he made a big show about it. But he kept everything that was valuable to him. Nachiketa saw that his father was not being sincere about his offering, that he was playing tricks. Nachiketa was just a small boy, but he had a tremendous maturity.

He told his father, "If you are not ready to give away everything, you should not have taken the vow. Once you have taken the vow, you better fulfill it. Tell me to whom you are going to give me!" The father got mad. You know, fathers always get mad when you point out their shortcomings. He said, "I am going to give you to Yama." Yama is the Lord of Death. The boy took it seriously. He prepared himself and went to Yama's place.

Yama had gone to make house calls. For three days, the boy waited without food and water at Yama's doorstep. After three days, Yama came back and saw this little boy totally famished and tired, but absolutely determined. Without searching for food

or anything, he sat there and waited. Moved by the boy's determination, Yama said, "Since you have been waiting for three days, I will grant you three boons, three *varams*. What do you want?"

The first thing the boy said was, "My father is extremely greedy. He wants material possessions right now. Bless him with all the material possessions that he wants. Make him a king. Let him have everything." "Okay, granted." Nachiketa's second wish was, "I want to know what kind of karmas, what kind of *yagnas* and *yagas* I have to do to attain spiritual realization." Yama told him what he has to do. Then the boy asked him, "What is the secret of death? What happens after death?" Yama said, "Ask me anything you want – a kingdom, riches, all the pleasures in the world – I will give them to you. But take this question back." Nachiketa says, "What will I do with all this? All these things are transient and meaningless. They just *seem* to be there – they are not the reality. All these riches would only be a trap for me. I want you to answer this question."

Still, Yama tried to avoid this question. He said, "Even the Devas, the gods, do not know the answer to this question. I cannot give it to you." The boy said, "Especially if even the gods do not know it, if only you know, you must give me the answer." Yama again went on his home visits – for months on end. He wanted to get rid of the boy somehow. But Nachiketa stuck around for many, many months. They say, finally, on Yama's doorstep, he attained full enlightenment. He got the answers for everything that he had to know in existence, and he dissolved himself.

He was the first seeker, and he is a great example of determination. For such a person, there is no path. There is nowhere to go. The end is right here.



In this series, Sadhguru discusses various aspects that can significantly impact the quality of your yogic practice and our life.

Part 15:

BHUTA SHUDDHI

Addressing the Most Elemental Level of Your Life

Every yogic practice, whatever kind it may be, is essentially drawn from the process of *bhuta shuddhi*. If you do an asana, surya namaskar, surya kriya, pranayama or a kriya, in a way, you are doing bhuta shuddhi. In other words, you address life in its most fundamental form, which are the five elements. You can address life just as body. You can address life as *prana* or life energy. You can address life on the cellular level. You can even address life on the atomic level. Or you can address life on the elemental level, which is most fundamental. Yoga is an attempt towards that.

It is these five elements that make up this body, this planet, this solar system, and the universe. Each of these five elements has its own individual nature, and all of them are capable of absorbing and

retaining information. The whole system of bhuta shuddhi has evolved from the knowledge that the five elements can take in and hold information. If information is properly put into anything, it also creates an intention. Depending upon what kind of information you hold about something, you naturally develop a certain intention towards that something. Once you have an intention, you start moving in that direction.

It is this basis that gives bhuta shuddhi its effectiveness and its ability to transform a human being in miraculous ways. The process that we do here now is a simple form of bhuta shuddhi. Probably never before have so many women been initiated into bhuta shuddhi at once. The normal process of bhuta shuddhi always used to be male-

oriented, not female-oriented. Generally, women have been kept out of it because in the female body, the play of the five elements is different than in the male body. In a woman's body, fire and water are the most important elements. It is in the nature of the feminine system to alternate between fire and water.

To accommodate this difference, we have made a small adaptation of the practice for men and women. The intention behind bhuta shuddhi is that slowly, over a period of time, the elements within you should take instructions from you. Once you have the ability to make the elements within yourself function the way you want them to, it is not far away to impact the elements around you.

Often unconsciously, unknowingly, unintentionally, human beings are doing some kind of bhuta shuddhi. To give an example – there are political leaders who, if they enter a space, change the atmosphere around them by their sheer presence. There are many people – not only spiritual ones – who, when they walk into a room, change the atmosphere there in an instant. This is a certain amount of bhuta shuddhi, performed unconsciously. If you can do it consciously, it is far more result-oriented. There are other aspects of energy that one can influence and thereby change the atmosphere, but this does not impact other people as profoundly as when the elements rearrange themselves because of a certain presence of energy and intention.

The idea of practicing bhuta shuddhi is to rearrange the way the elements function within you. You want to change the intention with which they function within you. If the elements within you function in the same way as they function in the earth or a tree, it is not useful to you. In the human system, the elements function in a particular way. We want them to function that way and to transform themselves into higher and higher possibilities.

In fact, in every individual, the elements function in a unique manner. The traditional medical systems in the East have always identified these individual differences. In this sense, these systems are designer

medication. There is no common prescription for everyone. Unless the doctor is able to look at each individual and identify what is needed for this particular person, the treatment does not work as well as it should.

The diagnosis is not based on the disease or ailment that one has but on how each individual's system is constructed. The diagnosis is not about the ailment – it is always about the individual. The treatment is according to how this particular body, this particular human mechanism functions, and how it is arranged within itself – not based on the symptoms of a certain ailment. In other words, in Eastern systems, the treatment is never symptomatic, whereas the allopathic system is 100% about symptomatic treatment. If five of you have the same symptoms, all five of you will be given the same medicine. But in Siddha and Ayurveda, if five of you have the same symptoms, you will be given different types of medicine because the medication is for your particular system, not for the ailment.

When you chant the Bhuta Shuddhi mantra and take the elements – earth, water, air, and fire – into yourself, you try to influence how they function within you. It is important to be deeply focused towards that. You try to impart a certain amount of your consciousness on the elements that you take in – they should enter you with a certain memory. If you take in this tiny ball of earth, the earth dimension of your body and this tiny piece of earth naturally communicate. Today, science is getting very close to this, and in the yogic system, it is a well-established fact that the elements communicate with each other and integrate themselves.

When you take in the water, this water communicates with the water dimension within you. It is important to put a little bit of your consciousness into the elements. When you utter the mantra and say, “*Yogishwara*,” it means “one who has broken his boundaries.” A yogi is one who has achieved a certain union with existence. He has obliterated the boundaries of his individual self. You are calling for *Yogishwara* because this is the nature

of life. For what you consume, what you eat, what you breathe, and what you drink to integrate itself into your system, you have to achieve a union with it in some way.

Otherwise, this little piece of earth that you take in can get into conflict with the rest of your system. Many times, it may have happened to you that you ate a certain type of food, and it knocked you out for the day. If you cannot break the barrier and integrate this food as a part of yourself, it will naturally work against you. During the bhuta shuddhi process, you are calling for Yogishwara, the Boundless One, because when you take something in and the boundaries are strong, the little thing that you take in could be your death. This is how traditional poisons work. When you take this kind of poison, it stays in the body but never becomes part of the body. It will create havoc in the system because it will never integrate itself.

Then you call, “AUM *Sadhguruve*.” “Sadhguru” means “one who comes from within.” There is an intelligence within that allows whatever integrates into the system to function as a human form. *Sadhguru* stands for the intelligence that guides you from within. Some remnants of different stages of evolution are still present in our system. You know, there is a reptilian brain, and your DNA is only 1.2% away from that of a chimpanzee. When a small deviation happens in the functioning of the fundamental intelligence within you, it causes complete havoc in your life. It may manifest in many different ways – not necessarily physically. That is why we call for the intelligence within us to function well, towards the goal that we seek.

Subsequently, you call *Bhuteshwaraya*, “one who has mastery over the elements.” We are calling him or that dimension. How well we integrate the elements into the system determines what kind of human beings we become. This is the technology of creating a new creature altogether – not the kind of creature who causes pain and suffering to himself and everyone around him, but the kind of creature who is 100% in tune with the life process. Once one is absolutely in tune with the



life process, a certain ease will come. It is only because a total ease is not there in people that we have to torture them with systems of meditation, that we have to make them sit still.

If everyone was at absolute ease with the life process within oneself, there would be no need for any meditation. There would be no need to sit with eyes closed. When the eyes are open, when they are engaged with life, there are different levels of dis-ease. To settle that, you make people sit with eyes closed. But if you integrate these five dimensions properly and they function absolutely in tune with the inner intelligence that is the source of creation within you, there would be no need for any kind of meditative process. We are far away from that, but if people could always be at ease with everything, there would be no need to sit and meditate. Sitting still and meditating has a phenomenal benefit, but at the same time, if the only way you can be still is by keeping the physical self still and bereft of activity, it is fine, but it is an inefficient way of functioning in life.

If you could be intensely engaged with everything and yet be absolutely still within you, that would be a more efficient and life-oriented way of being still. If your stillness is not life-oriented, obviously it will become death-oriented. If stillness becomes death-oriented, there will be peace, but there will be no life. In that context, establishing a certain level of bhuta shuddhi or purification of the five elements before you go into deeper dimensions of meditateness will give you the capability to sit still for some time, and when you come out, you can be dynamically active without getting entangled with the world around you. Not developing this capability, that you can be absolutely still within you and yet be very active in the world is, for want of a better word, a certain disability. If to be still, you have to sit still – you cannot move, you cannot act, you cannot be involved, you can only be withdrawn – it is a wonderful state, but still there are better ways to be.

Bhuta shuddhi should not happen like an exercise but with absolute involvement, like a love affair. These five elements coming together and producing


something so complex, so fantastic is a tremendous love affair. Your bhuta shuddhi should happen with a sense of devotion and love. Your mind, your emotions, your energy, your physical body – everything should be involved in this. Without this involvement, you still may get certain physical benefits, but you will not know the full depth and dimension of the process. If you give yourself totally to it, this simple process can change the fundamentals of your life.

Excerpted from a talk by Sadhguru at the Isha Hatha Yoga School.

For dates and details of hatha yoga programs, visit www.ishahathayoga.com.

The Hatha Yoga Teacher Training program is an opportunity to be trained in classical hatha yoga devised by Sadhguru. Upcoming dates: 31 July to 25 December 2015 at the Isha Yoga Center in India.

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Mahabharat

PART 4: THE FIRE WITHIN

In the fourth part of our Mahabharat series, Sadhguru speaks about the different kinds of fires in human life, and the possibility of transforming them.

It is a part of the tradition that if you want to create the right kind of atmosphere, the first thing you do is light a lamp. How many of you light a lamp every day? If you light a lamp and simply sit there – you don't have to believe in any God or gods – does it make a difference? The moment you light a lamp, around the flame, a certain etheric sphere naturally occurs. Where there is an etheric sphere, communication is better. Before you talk to God, you want to create the right kind of ambience, a certain amount of etheric sphere. Without that, it is as if you are talking to a wall.

If you have ever sat around a camp fire, you may have noticed stories told around the camp fire always have the maximum impact. The storytellers of yore knew this. These are simple ways to create a situation where you are at the best of your receptivity – both for the story and for the atmosphere. If you meditate enough, etheric content builds up around you.

Fire is of different kinds. Life is fire. It is the fire of the sun which facilitates life on the planet. *Agni* means fire. Fire can manifest in the human system

as *jatharagni*. If you are hungry, it is because of the *jatharagni*, the fire of the belly and the fire of the groin. Only if your hunger is satisfied, the groin fire will burn. One who has not eaten is not bothered about sexuality. If you transform the *jatharagni*, it can become *chittagni*. You became intellectually sharp. You lose interest in sexuality and food, because your intellectual fire is on.

This *chittagni* can be transformed into *bhutagni*. *Bhutagni* is the elemental fire. A yogi is on elemental fire. You have heard of yogis being buried for some time – no breath, no heartbeat – or of yogis consuming mercury or venom. These things are only to show off that they are yogis, because if they were not, they would be dead if they did something like this. Unless your *bhutagni* is *on*, you cannot play with the elements. There is also something called *sarvagni* – we will not go into this now. Of the other three dimensions, everyone has *jatharagni* to some extent.

If *chittagni* arises, your intellect is like fire – it lights up your space. Even in comic books, if the character



gets an idea, it is often depicted as a light bulb, because when the intellectual fire is *on*, suddenly there is light. You can even create heat out of it. If your elemental fire is *on*, it is of a different nature – a cool fire. Once the elemental fire is on within you, you have mastery over the life process. You will choose how to be born, how to live, how to die, or not to die.

In Mahabharat, you will face three kinds of people. There are people who are burning with immense jatharagni – wanting to eat, wanting to possess, wanting to copulate, wanting to conquer. Some others have phenomenal chittagni. Their intellect is such that they are able to see things that ordinary people would only see 1000 years later. There are other people who have bhutagni, which means they have complete mastery over their life – when to be born, how to be born, how to live, when to die. Even the choice of life and death is in their hands. When you meet these three types of people, don't judge them. All of them have a role to play.

I would like you to make use of this opportunity and see if, along with the story, you can transform your jatharagni into chittagni, your chittagni into bhutagni. We will do a basic form of *bhuta shuddhi* that can bring a certain amount of bhutagni into you. The beauty of having bhutagni or an elemental

fire in you is, you don't have to light a lamp, you don't have to do a *yagna* or a *homa*, you don't have to worship, you don't have to enter a temple. I am not saying you *should* not – I am saying you *need* not, because once the elemental fire is *on*, you are existence itself.

You will see Krishna moving and playing between these three aspects. When he wants to be jatharagni, he is all-out jatharagni – he eats, fights, and loves like no one else. When he wants to be chittagni, he is it totally – a visionary beyond compare. When he wants to be bhutagni, he is it absolutely. He plays all the three fields. I want you to touch all the three fields at least a little bit.

In the spiritual traditions in India, yogis who are striving to completely master their jatharagni and chittagni and become pure bhutagnis always maintain their own personal fire, which is generally known as *dhuni*. What is around the fire is more significant than the fire itself. The fire happens because of the burning of a substance which is essentially earth – that is not what we are interested in. There is a two-inch sphere around the flame which is powerful on an etheric level.



To be continued



CRAFTING THE NEW ANDHRA PRADESH

Excerpted from Sadhguru Spot of 4 Feb 2015

Just back from Hyderabad where we conducted a three-day Inner Engineering program for the new Andhra Pradesh administration. It is probably the first time – not just in this country, but anywhere for that matter – that a whole administration, including the Chief Minister is making an attempt to turn inward. Three hundred people attended, including cabinet ministers, IAS, IPS, IFS officers, mayors, and their families. I don't think this has ever happened anywhere else. And though it started with much skepticism, by the last day, they were absolutely involved – laughing, singing, and dancing. A government that dances is good.

In the CM's words, this is a turning point and foundation for the 2029 vision of making Andhra the best and the happiest state. It is truly fantastic that the political leaders we are beginning to have are not just concerned about what is considered their duty, but are really looking at how to create wellbeing for the people. This is a landmark step and I want to make sure this bears one hundred percent results for the administration and for the people. There is much aspiration because this is a new state, and I hope all of those who have been with us stand up for this. The people of Andhra Pradesh should not be disappointed.

The commitment and vision with which this new state is being approached is quite phenomenal. I want to congratulate everyone for taking this step. It was very pleasant to see a Chief Minister so committed, and so sharp on everything. I have not

even seen corporate leaders coming to decisions that quickly and clearly. It was inspiring to see political leadership and bureaucracy on their toes, wanting to do things – I have wanted to witness this for a long time.

A very marked change has happened in the central government as well, and I am sure we will make a difference in the coming years. The main thing this country has been losing out on in the last sixty years is lack of leadership. What we need is not one leader, but layers of leadership – people who are looking beyond their own wellbeing. For those in Andhra Pradesh, you have a unique and historical opportunity to craft a new state. This does not mean cutting geography into pieces – it means the possibility to touch and transform the lives of five crore people. If you are able to touch these lives, you will know a certain fulfillment that most people will not know. If you can do the right things, you can make a big difference.

When it comes to your administration and doing your work, you can get advice and training from so many people. But when it comes to your inner wellbeing, we want to see that we are there to support you in every way to make it happen. The making of a prosperous and above all joyful Andhra Pradesh is a sacred duty for all of us. Let us make it happen.

Love & Blessings,
Sadhguru

Program & Event Highlights

Date	Program	Place	Contact
8–28 Mar 2015	Yoga Marga	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
26–29 Mar 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org
28–29 Mar 2015	Ayur Sanjeevini	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
1–7 Apr 2015	Ayur Sampoorna	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
4–5 Apr 2015	Ayur Sanjeevini	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
8–12 Apr 2015	Ayur Rasayana Intensive	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
9–12 Apr 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org
11–12 Apr 2015	Ayur Sanjeevini	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
13–17 Apr 2015	Sunetra Eye Program	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	0422–2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
23–26 Apr 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org
14–17 May 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org
28–31 May 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org
4–7 Jun 2015	Inner Engineering Retreat	Isha Yoga Center, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 ieretreat@ishafoundation.org

These programs are conducted in English, unless indicated otherwise. Current at the time of print, however subject to change. For full program schedules and updates, please visit our website: www.ishafoundation.org.

Isha Recipes



MIXED DAL

(Serves 3–4)

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	<i>Urad dal</i> (split black gram)	A few	Curry leaves
1/2 cup	<i>Bengal gram dal</i> (split chickpeas)	1/2 Tsp.	Sugar or 1 Tsp. jaggery
1/2 cup	<i>Toor dal</i> (split pigeon peas)		Salt to taste
1/2 cup	<i>Masoor dal</i> (split red lentils)	1 Tsp.	Ghee
1 Tsp.	Cumin (<i>jeera</i>)	1 1/2 Tsp.	Oil
1/2 Tsp.	Turmeric powder	1/2 Tsp.	Mustard seeds
1 Tsp.	Chili powder		Fresh Coriander leaves (for garnish)
1 Tsp.	Coriander (<i>dhania</i>) powder		
4	Tomatoes		
2	Bajji chilies (medium-sized, light green chili peppers)		

PREPARATION

1. Cut the tomatoes into cubes. Thinly slice the bajji chilies. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a *kadai* (heavy pan) and add the cumin to splutter.
3. Add curry leaves and bajji chili slices. Sauté for a minute. Add the cut tomatoes and sauté for another minute.
4. Add the spice powders, sugar, and salt. Sauté for minute.
5. Add the ghee and all the dals. Sauté for another few minutes.
6. Add 4 cups of water and pressure cook the dal until it becomes mushy.
7. Take 1/2 Tsp. of oil; add the mustard seeds. After they splutter, pour the oil and mustard seeds on the dal.
8. Garnish the dal with fresh coriander leaves.
9. Serve with roti.

Note: You can add spinach/*palak* or any other greens to the dal before step 6 and pressure cook it along with the dal.

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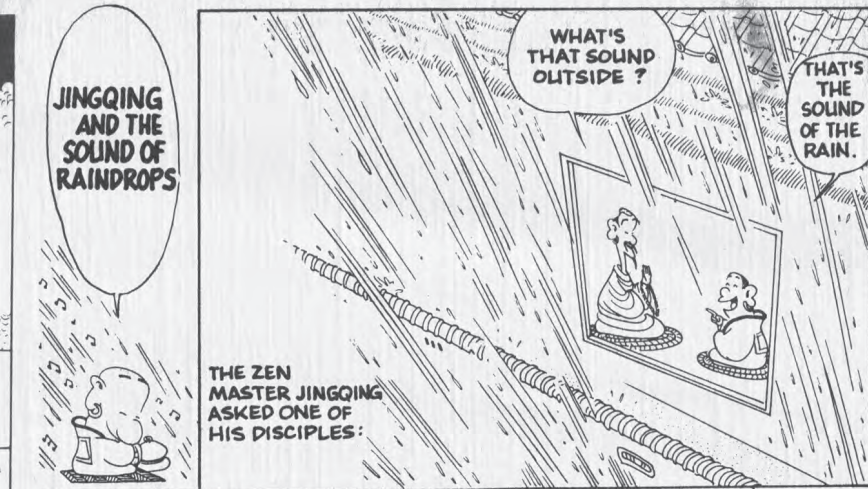
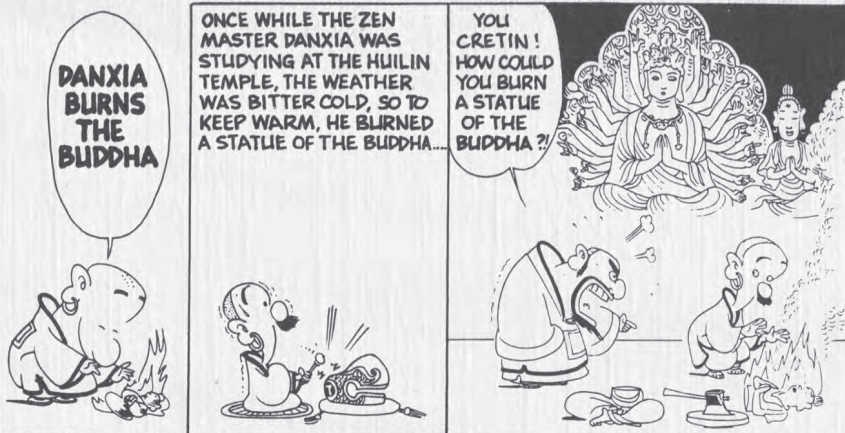
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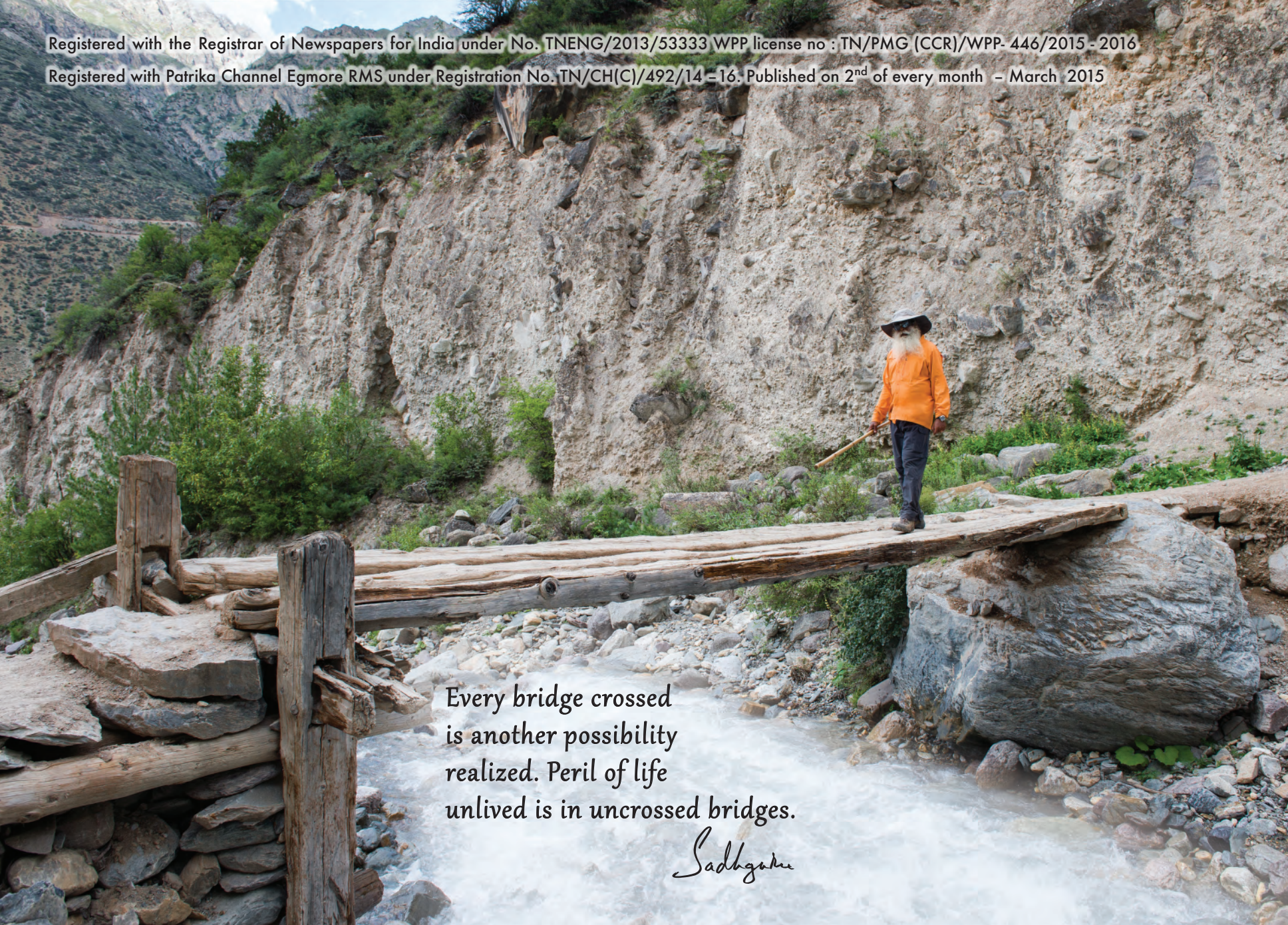
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Every bridge crossed
is another possibility
realized. Peril of life
unlived is in uncrossed bridges.

Sadhguru