

Brother Ritananda  
Controlling the Power of Habit  
Lake Shrine Temple  
March 11, 2012

An author once said that knowledge has never entered the head via an open mouth. That is true. Sometimes we need some dialogue to open up our minds to expose it to new ideas but when it comes to knowledge of God, it is absolutely true. We don't know God...experience God...realize God...through the senses and the mind. We experience God through soul intuition. That is why the intuition is awakened when we are able to transcend the mind and all its distractions to achieve that level of inner silence and calmness. It is on the altar of calmness, that the personal aspect of God is revealed through our intuition.

Thousands of years ago, Patangali in the Yoga Sutras wrote the description of how it works. "When pure perception without judicial action of the mind is reached, there follows the gracious peace of the inner self." [ Brother interjected.] Judicial action of the mind means transcendence...no longer thinking. Then the inner peace is established. "In that inner peace perception is unfailingly true."

Reason, mind and discrimination are all very helpful, very powerful but intuition is the direct perception of truth. It is unfailing! Intuition makes no mistakes whereas the senses, the mind, discrimination and good judgement can fail at times. Patangali goes on: "The object of this perception is other than what is learned from sacred books, or by sound inference, since this perception is particular." Intuition reveals to us more than we read in the scriptures or even in the Lessons.

Brother told a story about Thomas Aquinas, a great scholar. He'd nearly finished his Summa. His secretary kept urging him to finish it but he'd had some kind of a spiritual realization...spiritual perception...and was unable to continue his writing and the response to his secretary was "...I cannot, because all that I have written seems like straw to me." After he had the spiritual perception he had doubts, always doubts. That is true...what can the mind can tell us versus what the soul intuition can reveal to us. The soul intuition represents truth and dwarfs anything the mind can understand.

Patangali continues: "The impress on the consciousness springing from this perception supersedes all previous impressions." [ Brother interjected that's what Thomas Aquinas found.] "When this impression ceases, then, since all impressions have ceased, then there arises pure spiritual consciousness, with no seed of separateness left."

In meditation we are first striving to calm the mind through the techniques but when we achieve that inner stillness where we commune with God, that communion leads to oneness. There is no longer even "I am separate, I am intuiting truth." Guruj says that the meditator and the object of meditation become one. Oneness is achieved because God is in that oneness. That's the power of meditation and that is why these teachings, in this awakening age, is a special dispensation because all the scriptures state we are made in the image of God but they don't tell us how to realize that.

The ancient technique of Kriya Yoga was lost in the dark ages. Mankind's consciousness at that time was not refined enough to work with energy and the higher meditation techniques. Now 400 years into the Dwapara Yuga, the ascending age, it is being reintroduced. Meditation is the cornerstone of these Self-Realization Fellowship [SRF] teachings to awaken the intuition, experience truth and transcend all thought.

The topic for this morning's service is: Controlling the Power of Habit. It's a tough subject since we all battle daily with bad habits but it's an important one because it strikes right at the very heart of the very purpose of life. In *The Divine Romance*, Guruji said: "Remember you are sent on earth to strive to destroy the bad tendencies and habits you have brought over from previous lives, and to avoid creating any more in your present incarnation so that you will find God, the purpose of life. Then you can walk out of life saying, 'Lord, my life's purpose is fulfilled and I don't have to come back again unless you want me to come back to serve you.'"

As Christ said: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and ye shall go no more out." So overcoming these habits so that our soul may be express itself and our realization may grow until we reach that point of oneness with God. Fighting the battle to overcome these bad habits is a critical element of that. It is a tough topic! It seems so easy to establish a bad habit but it seems so hard to get out of it. One fellow said that bad habits are like a comfortable bed...easy to get into but hard to get out.

Today's Bible passage is from the Gospel of St. John 3:19-21. Christ said: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

Guruji, in his commentary says referring to the power of habit. "Men under the influence of bad habits prefer the little pleasure yielded by evil actions to the greater joy of right actions. Habitually restless persons are horrified at the thought of calm meditation. Those accustomed to sex indulgence or gourmandizing shudder at the thought of self-restraint. They erroneously believe that they would be tortured and unhappy if they renounced their bad habits.

"Persons entrenched in bad habits are afraid of change. Just as the owl feels at home in darkness and uncomfortable in daylight, so does the man accustomed to harmful pleasures dislike better ways of living.

"A man of bad habits tends to seek evil company. The worldly person gravitates to materially minded companions. People of meditative, peaceful habits are attracted to similar company and seek to know Christlike saints.

“There is one thing good about bad habits: they seldom keep their promises, and hence are easily found out to be habitual liars and deceivers. The soul can never remain perpetually in bondage to bad habits, for sooner or later the shock of disillusionment with bad habits will awaken the soul’s discrimination and it will free itself.”

Guruji defined evil as any thought, word or action which takes us away from God, which takes us away from the light. In this Bible passage Christ uses the words evil and condemnation. These words are not used a lot in SRF and Guruji once said that he thought that this sinner business is overdone in the West. Many of us grew up in a religion where evil, sinner, unworthy and such are still taught even though we’re coming out of the dark age.

All the scriptures state that we are made in the image of God. It is true that we fight with these bad habits but they are not us. They don’t define us. Guruji says that they are temporary grafts on our soul and that we have to make the effort, through introspection, to identify those grafts and then map out a systematic, scientific, willful, deliberate plan to remove those grafts, to uproot all those bad habits.

At all times we are the soul, made in the image of God. Guruji central theme is always to identify with the soul because that is who we truly are. Do not think of ourselves as sinners, as unworthy, as evil! Evil and condemning are heavy words and that is why Brother chose to address them. The Ten Commandments covers actions that we should avoid; that are condemnable...murder, willfully injuring others, stealing and so forth. Yama, Niyama provides us with the same thing.

Some of the bad habits we struggle with are, seemingly by comparison, so innocent and innocuous and, yet, they do fall under this broad umbrella of evil...any thought or action moves us away from God. Because we have these struggles within, we shouldn’t let it discourage us and make us concentrate on sin and evil. We should live, work and have our identification knowing that we are the soul.

Central to Guruji’s guidance on overcoming habits is to introspect honestly, objectively and dispassionately. We may have a lot of habits that we want to uproot and Guruji says not to concentrate on the bad habit but rather to identify with and concentrate on the opposite good habit or good quality. If we want to be obsessed with anything make it the opposite good habit.

Even if we have these struggles with bad habits we should never think of ourselves as evil, as a sinner nor as unworthy. Everything in these teachings and sadhana -- practicing the presence, prayer, selfless service -- is designed to reintroduce us to the fact that we are the soul...to experience it and transcend fate. As vital as that is, transcend belief and realize through personal experience of God’s presence within and our oneness with Him.

It is important not to become discouraged because until we are established in nirvakalpa samadhi, unbroken communion with God, we are always at risk of falling. We do fall from time to time. Bad habits that we thought we’d overcome for years can sometimes come back and bite us in the back. We will always struggle with that until we have achieved nirvakalpa samadhi and that is okay. Until then, we are

all guilty of the crime of living under the influence of human limitations. As long as we are under the influence of human limitations we will all struggle with bad habits because that's the nature of the beast! That's human nature!

As Mark Twain said: "There's a lot of human nature in people." Although we will struggle we should never identify with the bad habits. We are the soul! If we live, work and have our being from that identification in a very practical way it helps to keep the mind and the energy positive. When we concentrate on a bad habit it is like a magnet that attracts iron filings. We strengthen it and give it life and energy. So concentrate on the opposite good habit.

We have to be aware of even the small, seemingly innocent, innocuous bad habits and work on making sure our choices every day are going towards the truth, the light and the fulfillment of the purpose of life and not influenced by the seemingly innocent habits because they do have power. We hear about 'gateway drugs' and these are gateway habits...even if seemingly small ones.

Many have probably read the book *Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis. The book is a collection of letters written by a senior devil to a junior devil who is being trained in the corruption of souls. In one of his letters the senior devil writes the following: "...doubtless, like all young tempters, you are anxious to be able to report spectacular wickedness (of man). But do remember, the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the Enemy (God). It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light [Brother interjected that this ties in with what Guruji's definition of evil] and out into the Nothing. Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick. Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one-the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts."

Satan is very subtle and works in these subtle ways. Like our resolutions that usually do center around overcoming a bad habit. It's best to only concentrate on one or two for a month, for three months, for six months or for a year but it doesn't mean that we should neglect all the others. We should be aware of them. We should develop this systematic, scientific program of affirmations, prayers and quotes that remind us of the truth to help us overcome the one or two bad habits that we are working on. We need to work on all of them but only concentrate on one or two or otherwise our efforts become diluted. We cannot neglect the small habits because they do have an effect.

Guruji brought out in his commentary that persons erroneously believe that they will be tortured and unhappy if they choose to renounce their bad habits. We know that's the temptation, that's the delusion that maya, Satan, is always dropping into our consciousness. We all feel it and that is one reason it is so hard to overcome bad habits. One of the biggest obstacles in overcoming them is the delusion that we won't be as happy or as comfortable. We want to maintain that comfort and it is true that indulging in bad habits can bring short term pleasure. But ultimately, they prove themselves to be "habitual liars and deceivers" and we find that satisfying those sensual cravings is like fool's gold. They cannot satisfy us. We are spiritual beings in a material world and there is nothing in this world that can fully satisfy us. Only God can do that -- ever existing, ever conscious, ever new joy and unconditional

love!

To renounce bad habits does take self-discipline; it does take self-control and sacrifice but that short term pain of renouncing a bad habit yields the long term gain of ever new bliss. It is worth the investment! These are the truths and we have to remind ourselves daily of them in fighting these battles. "My happiness in life, my ability to fulfill my purpose in life lies in choosing good habits. God reminding habits"

Again, this is a path of balance. We are meant to enjoy wholesome pleasures. We are meant to enjoy simple pleasures but it is always a matter of balance. We are not meant to overindulge or have our happiness dependent on sensual gratifications. It is because of this temptation that we think we will be unhappy or tortured when we renounce our bad habits.

Woody Allen said: "It seems that the world is divided into good and bad people. The good sleep much better but the bad ones seem to enjoy the waking hours much more." Sometimes it does seem that way but ultimately bad habits are sugar-coated poison. They might give us pleasure in the beginning but in the end they lead to disillusionment, discouragement, misery and suffering because the only thing that can satisfy us, the soul, is God. Sometimes we get this message immediately; sometimes years later and sometimes in another lifetime that it was fool's gold; that it wasn't a good decision.

Brother read about a man who learned his lesson immediately. It is a true story. A lady drove to a very popular shopping mall around Christmastime in Omaha, Nebraska. She was unable to find a parking space, so she circled round and round until finally she spotted a man carrying a bunch of packages. She slowly followed him and when he got to his car, she stopped and turned on her signals waiting while the man put his packages in the truck, got in the car, put on his seatbelt and finally backed out. As he does so he is in her way and, in the meantime, a red Corvette coming from the other direction zips into the parking place.

The man gets out of his car and starts heading to the mall. The lady rolls down her window and says: "Young man, I'd been waiting patiently for that parking space for several minutes." The young man was so full of himself, indulging in his bad habit of selfishness and said: "Old lady, you have just learned a very valuable lesson...young and quick!" The lady maintained her poise, rolling up her window, put her car in drive and drove right into the back of his Corvette. Being a fiberglass body, it tore off the back of the Corvette. While he was screaming blood murder, the lady reverses, rolls down her window and while handing him her card with her contact information, says: "Young man, you have just learned a very valuable lesson...old and rich!"

This applies to choosing to use bad habits that may promise us happiness, pleasure and satisfaction in the short term but in the long term will disappoint. Only by choosing those good habits that lead us toward God, will we eventually receive the ever existing long term happiness.

As Guruji said that there is one good thing about bad habits and that is they seldom keep their promises

and they always prove themselves to be liars and deceivers. We don't want to listen to habitual liars. We all probably know someone who has the habit of habitual lying. After a few experiences we lose our trust and confidence in anything they say and bad habits are the same way.

A father was in the supermarket with his four year old son, Jamal. While in the checkout line, Jamal saw a cheap, plastic water pistol. He started whining and begging for the water gun. His father tried reasoning with him saying: "It's a cheap one and sure to break. We'll find a higher quality one in a toy store." Jamal wasn't open to reason. He continued to whine, moan and complain. His father gave in and bought him the water pistol. When they got home, Jamal opened his door of the car to get out, the water pistol fell on the driveway and shattered. His father said: "See what did I tell you!" Jamal looks at him and said: "You shouldn't listen to me, I'm just a kid!"

It is exactly the same with bad habits. We're tempted to enjoy ourselves .." a little...be happy...you won't regret it, I promise." Again, it's a short term pleasure that ultimately let's us down. Only we are held accountable and responsible for the choices we make, and at the end of our lives, like the man in the red Corvette found out, we may find out that it wasn't the right decision. We can't turn to our bad habits and say "I thought you said this would make me happy." If habits could talk they would say "you shouldn't listen to me, I'm just a bad habit."

We are the makers of our destiny. We alone are responsible for our choices and we are responsible to whom we listen. We can listen to the soul and our conscience or are we going to listen to delusion and bad habits. That's a choice we have on a minute to minute basis and we alone are responsible for it.

We are who we are today and we experience conditions in our lives today as a result of choices and decisions made in the past. Tomorrow will be determined by the choices we make today. We are free up to the point of choice but at that point the choice can control the chooser. We have to be vigilant, very aware of living a conscious life...every decision...where is it leading me...towards the Light, toward God or away from Him.

A good illustration is in the Canadian North wetlands. They say there they have two season -- winter and July. Evidently, July is the only month of the year that the ground thaws and most of the roads are only dirt. During the thaw when cars drive on them they cut very deep ruts in the soil. When August rolls around and it starts to freeze again these deep ruts are still there. They are like slot cars, once in, one can't get out of them. So there are signs all over the Canadian North reading, "Drivers be careful which rut you choose to drive in because you'll be in it for the next twenty miles."

It's the same with our choices. Choices lead to habits and we could be in that rut, become a victim of that habit for twenty days, twenty months or twenty lifetime. It is up to us, through introspection...a minute to minute discipline...where is this leading me -- soul intuition, conscience or bad habits. The key to remember is to fight the battle.

A devotee once lamented to Gurujii: "I am too deeply enmeshed in the stakes to make any spiritual

progress. My bad habits are so strong that I am worn out by my efforts to fight them.” Guruji didn’t console him and say, “Maybe next time.” He said, “Will you be better able to fight them tomorrow than today? Why add today’s mistakes to yesterday’s. You have to turn to God sometime, isn’t it better to do it now. Just give yourself to Him and say, ‘Lord, naughty or good, I am your child. You must take care of me. If you keep trying, you will improve. A saint is a sinner who never gave up.’”

This is key! The best time to deal with a problem is the present. As soon as time passes bad habits just get stronger. We need to fight that battle NOW! Guruji said to say to God, “...naughty or good I am they child. I didn’t ask to be created. Wherever Thou hast placed me, Thou must come! Help me!” Every day, every minute, pray to God and Guru when we have a choice or a decision to make. Ask for Their help! We have to reason, will and act in this partnership but ask for Their help. Jesus says that even if we’re fighting a bad habit until the end of life and we’re not successful in overcoming it but we fight it until the end of life, we are free of that habit in the next life.

In the Gita there’s a quote: “To men who meditate on Me as their Very Own, ever united to Me by incessant worship, I supply their deficiencies and make permanent their gain.” In SRF the word worship is not used much. In this Gita verse “incessant worship” means practicing the presence...having that inner dialogue, praying to God in the time of need. “Lord help me. I am Thy child. I didn’t ask to be created. Wherever Thou hast placed me, Thou must come. Help me.” That’s incessant worship! When we do that, that is, fight that battle until the end of life, then God and Guru “supply our deficiencies and make permanent our gain.”

We need to constantly remind ourselves of that when making the effort to overcome bad habits. It may help to write Guruji’s words down to remind ourselves that right where we are today is the time to fight bad habit as opposed to sometime in the future. The soul, not the ego and our desires, will respond to that. Brother said he read that our egos are like judges.

The following was from a real court case in Kinney, Texas. During his closing argument the district attorney said: “I believe the law is common sensical and I believe this case can be based on common sense.” The defense attorney responded thus: “Your Honor, I am going to object to that. I believe the court will instruct the jury on what the law is and common sense is nowhere in the law.” The judge’s ruling: “Objection sustained.” Our egos will also object to anything that we choose that is truth and right and will take us towards the Light. We have to remind ourselves as to what makes sense...what is in our best interest and what will most quickly get us to that fulfillment of the purpose of life.

The Gita passage today is the 2nd and 3rd sloka. In the very 1st sloka the blind kind says: “On the holy plain of Kurukshetra, when my offspring and the sons of Pandu had gathered together, eager for battle, what did they, O Sanjaya?” My good and bad habits how did they this day on this battle of life?

The 2nd and 3rd sloka reads: Seeing the army of the Pandavas drawn up for battle, King Duryodhana approached Drona and said, “O Teacher, behold this great army of the sons of Panda, held in battle array by the son of Drupada, your talented disciple.”

Guruji in his commentary says: “This passage has a deep esoteric significance. Duryodhana, king of the Kurus, symbolizes material desire...[Brother interjected that the battle of Kurukshetra was a historical battle and then Vyasa took and made it into a perfect allegory of our battle of life and our battle of reclaiming our divine birth right...fulfilling our purpose of life.] ...ruler of all evil tendencies in man. Drona, his teacher, symbolizes Past Habit. The son of Drupada, also a disciple of Drona, stands for the calm Inner Light seen in meditation. Drona, or Past Habit, is the ‘teacher’ of both King Material Desire and the inner light of Intuitive Perception.

“The yogi beginner finds his soldiers of discrimination guided by a desire to be good. As the yogi meditates longer and prays ardently for inner help, he finds that the calm conviction of eternal intuition, the awakening Inner Light (a veteran occult general), will emerge from man’s superconsciousness to be the active guide for the forces of discrimination. This awakening Inner Light of divine perception is the offspring, the disciple or product, of Good Past Habit (Drona--in its good aspect).

“Habits of meditation, whether acquired recently or in the distant past, have the power to bring forth the General of Inner Light -- he who leads the armies of discrimination in the battle against all past bad habits (Drona--in its evil aspect).”

So Guruji brings out here the power of meditation to help us control the power of habit. There is no greater way to awaken intuition and intuition is unfailing as said earlier. Patanjali wrote in the Yoga Sutras that it is unfailing...“it is the direct perception of truth.”

In Divine Romance Guruji wrote: “If you really want to rid yourself of present bad habits and escape those decrees of fate that have caused you so much suffering, you have no greater recourse than meditation. Every time you meditate deeply on God, beneficial changes take place in the patterns of your brain.” He goes on to explain as follows and it ties into the story of the Canadian frozen northland story about the deep ruts most of the year.

Guruji continues: “Each of your habits creates a specific groove or pathway in your brain. These patterns make you behave in a certain way, often against your wish. Your life follows those grooves that you, yourself, have created in your brain. In that sense, you are not a free person. You are more or less a victim of the habits you have formed. Depending upon how set those patterns are, to that degree you are a puppet. You can neutralize the dictates of those bad habits. How? By creating brain patterns of opposite good habits. You can completely erase the grooves of bad habits by meditation; there is no other way.”

Kriya Yoga burns up the seeds of karma and it erases these samskaras, grooves, of bad habits. But it is not enough to just meditate. This is a path of balance. We need devotional meditation plus right activity. Guruji said in his commentary that “you can completely erase the grooves of bad habits by meditation; there is no other way” however, you can’t cultivate good habits without good company...environment.



We can't free ourselves of bad habits without good environment. Right activity includes environments that support our spiritual aspirations, environments that don't tempt us to indulge in those bad habits and that's is a conscious choice that we have to make.

Meditation works on so many levels. Every time we meditate beneficial changes are taking place in our brains. Vibrations are being uplifted every time we meditate...every time we make a spiritual effort. Not only that, in meditation, on that altar of perfect peace, we do experience some aspect of God's presence. It usually starts as peace but it can be love, joy, wisdom, truth and so forth. Once we've had that experience, we have a comparison and once we have that comparison there is nothing in this world that is more beautiful. Everything else is heavy or gross compared to God.

Once we have that comparison it is easier to say "no" to a bad habit it help us understand how these mechanisms work...the grooves, the samskaras. In the Lessons Guruji told a story titled: The Priest who Jumped into a Well. This Hindu priest was a very rigid, narrow-minded, dogmatic person. That is how he had been trained and that is how he trained his disciples. So he hammered them every day to follow him implicitly, without question. He filled their minds with images of peace and urged all to follow him blindly. Although he was a dogmatic fellow, he, however, did attract a congregation of a couple of hundred followers.

Guruji wrote: "Nevertheless, he somehow managed to hold a crowd of followers chiefly by the lavish distribution of sweet meats, which helped some the more knowledgable of his congregation to stomach his oratory." Guruji explained that for the most part his congregation consisted of dogma hardened mentalities and that he was really the proud leader of a band of idiots who did nothing but agree with him.

One day his students asked: "Honored priest, will you please show us the true way to pray and the absolutely certain method of contacting God?" The priest replied: All right, my children, follow me to the temple and sit around me and after that do exactly as I do." All his followers shouted: "Heaven bless our great teacher priest. We solemnly swear to do exactly as you do until doomsday if you will only teach us." So the priest took them all into the temple and he sat down in the middle of the temple. All of his disciples surrounded him and he braced up saying: "Sit upright." The two hundred devout followers chorused: "Sit upright."

He was not expecting that so he started looking around and then the two hundred started looking around. In disgust, the priest closed his eyes and prayed: 'O Spirit, benign Lord of the Universe, bless us with the knowledge that will make us obey our master implicitly.'" All two hundred repeated these words in unison and before the priest could continue his prayer he felt a tickle in his throat and he coughed. All the disciples coughed, too. The absurdity of this was making him angry but before he could say anything he coughed again and sneezed, too. All two hundred disciples coughed and sneezed. Finally he couldn't take it anymore and said, "Quiet you fools. Don't cough, and don't imitate me." But his well trained disciples happily shouted back: "Quiet you fools. Don't cough, and don't imitate me."

This was too much for the priest and he stood up and commanded: "This lunacy must stop!" The two hundred stood up and demanded: "This lunacy must stop!"

Then he really lost his poise and the dignity of his position. Overcome by emotion, he forcefully swung his palm with a resounding slap on the cheek of one of his thoughtless group. Two hundred disciples at once followed suit, slapping one another, and their master, until their cheeks grew hot and fiery red. With his face burning with countless slaps, the priest rushed out of the temple crying, "Water! Water!" And of course the disciples followed him shouting, "Water! Water!" slapping one another all the while.

The priest, being able to think of no other way of escape, jumped into a well to cool his burning cheeks. His two hundred dogma-drugged disciples jumped into the well on top of him. The priest had truly kept his promise, for they all "went to heaven" together.

There really is a deep meaning to the story. Guruji wrote: "Understand the influence of the imitative subconscious mind that tortures man with so many bad habits. Subconscious habits, like the two hundred idiots in the story, blindly imitate the priest of one's wrong judgment. If by mistake you choose the wrong action, your invisible subconscious mind imitates the wrong action chosen by the conscious mind and keeps on suggesting that you repeat it until the wrong actions grows into a bad habit. Your subconscious mind is the blind imitator of your conscious mind. If your conscious mind becomes dogmatic and unreasonable like the priest in this story, then your subconscious mind will do likewise."

We have this conscious minds and it serves a purpose. We have a subconscious mind reminding us of the things we've done in the past or we'd begin each day as a baby but we have to make the choice to provide it with good, uplifting programming, so to speak, and not bad programming.

"A dogmatic subconscious mind, in turn, will strengthen the dogmatic tendencies of the conscious mind, bounding it everywhere until it loses control of its discriminative powers." A wise conscious mind builds a wise subconscious mind, which in turn will influence positively and strengthen an already wise conscious mind. So it is either a vicious cycle leading down or a beneficial cycle which leads us up towards our goal depending how we program or train the conscious thoughts we harbor.

Guruji goes on: "Our story especially illustrates that one should be ever watchful in training his conscious mind, for the subconscious imitator within is always ready to form either strong good or strong bad habits through the medium of the conscious mind, and to turn back and influence it with good or bad habits. The subconscious mind is the automatic mind that repeats our acquired conscious experiences lest we forget. Without it we would have to start out every day like babies. And yet the subconscious memory-mind may be your worst enemy for it will stimulate your conscious mind to repeat, parrotlike, against your will, your worst habits. Good habits ensure easy performance of good actions, while bad habits compel you to do evil against your wishes. So be careful what you chose to do consciously, for unless your will is very strong, that is what you may have to do repeatedly, and compellingly through the habit-influencing power of the subconscious mind."

So we see how important our choices are, even with the seemingly innocuous and innocent indulges. Again, we are meant to enjoy wholesome pleasures. It is always a balance and the question we should ask ourselves is does it lead us towards God or away from God. Be loyal to that which will give us true happiness.

Steve Allen, an entertainer, years ago said: "I'm loyal to a fault. I have a great many faults and I'm loyal to every one of them." Out of habit we are loyal to our bad habits but as yogis we are at least conscious, aware and we have to be loyal to that which is truth...to divine love, to God, to our souls. That is why Guruji always says, "live, work, and have our being" in that identification..we are the soul. Then we will make better decisions. Meditation erases those samskaras and gives us that comparison. It helps us cultivate the calmness necessary to awaken that intuition and intuition will guide us unfailingly towards the light.

To overcome a bad habit it is good to use an affirmation, prayer or some quote that will help us understand the truths that we've been talking about and then in time of need, take that affirmation and pound away until the temptation of indulging that bad habit passes. It like hammering a nail on the head.

Lastly, pray to God and Guru to help us every day. Those who pray incessantly, practice the presence and meditate daily is what is meant by incessant worship. Again, Lord Krishna said: "To men who meditate on Me as their Very Own, ever united to Me by incessant worship, I supply their deficiencies and make permanent their gain."

Brother closed with the following quote of Guruji's: "Never let life beat you down. Beat life! If you have a strong will you can overcome all difficulties. Affirm, even in the midst of trials: 'Danger and I were born together, and I am more dangerous than danger!' This is a truth you should always remember; apply it and you will see that it works. Don't behave like a cringing mortal being. You are a child of God!"