

**“Coping with Life’s Troubles” - Swami Smaranananda
Hollywood Temple - 8/13/2017**

(DISCLAIMER: These notes are our best attempt to capture the essence of what was said at this class. There is always a degree of human error involved when taking notes and we have transcribed them to the best of our ability.)

When the service reader doing the announcements and welcome at the 9:30 service asked if anyone was visiting Hollywood Temple for the very first time, Swamiji, sitting at the harmonium (already introduced by Bro Anilananda) raised his hand high with a beaming smile!

COPING WITH LIFE’S TROUBLES

We can blame no one but oneself. Suffering is caused by misuse of free will. Get rid of guilt and inferiority complex. “What did I do last lifetime? Was I a bad person or did something terrible?”
NO!!!

Maybe you are BRAVE!

~Perhaps there was something preventing full realization.

~Some karma between you and God that can be removed by suffering, service and meditation.

~We become closer to God because the suffering is being mitigated.

~Some brave souls take on more karma to get back more quickly. They take on suffering to work out karma.

When you are suffering, don’t accuse yourself. You are being brave. You are not a bad soul, you are a BRAVE soul.

We do not start our search for God with Kriya Yoga. We end our search and journey to God with Kriya Yoga. We have worked out a lot of karma already. Understanding is required to keep us from guilt.

But do not invite suffering and trouble. It happens enough on its own and Master decides how much we can face and when -- then he gives it to us.

“I can work through these challenges.”

Some people are filled with inferiority and shame. Others think “I am a bad person.” Only the ego feels ashamed. Only the ego suffers.

If I don't die for Self, how can I live in God? "I am a BRAVE soul. Let me go on."

DEALING WITH TROUBLES

(realizing this was life changing for Swamiji):

***SUFFERING AND HAPPINESS CAN GO TOGETHER.

Both can be present at the same time. Suffering is thrust upon us by OUTER circumstances over which we have no control. Happiness is manifested WITHIN. Peace has to be manifested within. It cannot be bought. Each of us can manifest it within.

~Through meditation

~No matter what happens I can be joyful within.

~Get in touch with it.

~Peace has nothing to do with external situations or circumstances.

PAIN AND JOY CAN CO-EXIST

Joy is a real miracle. Unconditional joy is irrespective of circumstances. It is never stale. Contact that joy within and face life's troubles.

When Master had troubles he would go Serampore, to Sri Yukteswar's ashram. Our ashram is at the Kutustha. Go within and get relief. Kriya Yoga can save you from the troubles of fear, suffering and pain.

He told the story of Brother Anandamoy pushing Master in wheelchair and praying and wishing he could take on some of Master's pain. Then he brushed against Master and felt tremendous thrill of joy enter his body from Master. Pain and problems were outside, but inside Master was joyful.

Doesn't matter if troubles are financial? physical? emotional? relationship? We can still be joyful. Joy comes from meditation. Swamiji faces serious problems in his work, then it is time for meditation. After meditating the problem is not solved; but now he is no longer in pain and can face the situation with more clarity.

There is an option: Be joyful. Do that. How? Through meditation.

Master's chant:

Life is sweet/Death a dream, Joy is sweet/Sorrow a dream...etc...the dream is TEMPORARY when Thy song flows through me. The dream flows out and away.

What does it mean? It is my responsibility to let God's TUNE to flow through me. With attunement I can face it now. These are Guruji's words; let it flow through us.

Pain is thrust on us through circumstances. We have no control. But JOY can be manufactured.

God is 'poking' us with suffering. ALL EXPERIENCES HAVE ONE PURPOSE: to bring us closer to God.

Joy of meditation pulls us toward God. God is even MORE beautiful. Nature and creation are so beautiful. Pull us toward God.

Frustrations of worldly life push us toward God. Both have the same purpose. Pull us closer to God.

Pain is a gift given to mankind. A warning-if neglect or ignore, could become serious problem later. Take care of it.

Any problem means something needs my attention/more time with God/attitude adjustment. As we scold children to show them the right way, so Divine Mother scolds us with suffering because she loves us so she sends troubles to steer us. Pain and Trouble are Divine Mother's love at work.

Surrender to Guruji. He controls our lives, working out karma in best way to get us back to God. Sometimes we can see the reason for suffering and sometimes not. KNOW that it could be so much worse without Guruji's help.

He told a story of a Guru telling a disciple to come with him, he wanted to show him something beautiful. Disciple was happy to go along. They started climbing. Many ugly bushes and boulders along the way. It was difficult climbing. The disciple was not happy as he went over and around every ugly bush and boulder continuing to climb. He did NOT think it was beautiful. It was hard. Then they reached the top and looked down. Every boulder and bush was in its perfect place. The landscape below was beautiful but when climbing it was So Hard.

Same thing with our Guruji -taking us up the spiritual hill of life. When we get to the top and look back we will say...oh yes that part was hard but I learned something. It was painful at the time. Master is taking us over the boulders and ugly bushes and we will eventually see the beautiful landscape of our lives. We are not alone.

A friend of Swamiji's had a problem in his ear. He went to a specialist. The Dr gave him instructions and told him it will be OK in 2 weeks. The friend asked if the constant sound would vanish? The Dr answered, NO, but you will get used to it and it will not trouble you any more.

moral: GET USED TO IT!

As long as we have a body/and a life there will always be problems but you will be OK in 2 weeks time.

We can not expect a smooth life. A smooth life is not a victorious life.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF LIFE? Not a smooth life...GOD IS THE GOAL!

Don't make issues of little things. There is always something.

5 points:

1. Right attitude. No Guilt. You are a Brave Soul!
2. Happiness (through meditation) can co-exist together with Suffering
3. It is ALL God's work. Pain is a gift. It can be a reminder to do something.
4. Guru is giving help. Hold his hand.
5. Get used to it. There will always be bumps in the road.