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## Sayings of Paramahansa Yogananda



“Sir, what should I do to find God?” a student asked. The Master said:

“During every little period of leisure, plunge your mind into the infinite thought of Him. Talk to Him intimately; He is the nearest of the near, the dearest of the dear. Love Him as a miser loves money, as an ardent man loves his sweetheart, as a drowning person loves breath. When you yearn for God with intensity, He will come to you.”



A student complained to the Master that he could find no work. The Guru\* said:

“Do not hold that destructive thought. As a part of the universe, you have an essential place in it. If necessary, shake up the world to find your work! Don’t give up and you will succeed.”

\* See glossary.



“I wish I had faith, Master,” a man said. Paramahansaji replied:

“Faith has to be cultivated, or rather uncovered within us. It is there but has to be brought out. If you watch your life you will see the innumerable ways in which God works through it; your faith will thus be strengthened. Few people look for His hidden hand. Most men consider the course of events as natural and inevitable. They little know what radical changes are possible through prayer!”



A certain disciple took offense at any mention of her faults. One day Paramahansaji said:

“Why should you object to being corrected? Is that not what I am here for? My guru often censured me in front of others. I didn’t resent it because I knew Sri Yukteswarji was trying to banish my ignorance. I am not sensitive about criticism now; no diseased spots remain in me to be hurt by anyone’s touches.

“That is why I tell you plainly about your defects. If you do not heal the sore places in your mind, you will wince every time that others rub them.”



The Master said to a group of disciples:

“The Lord has arranged for us this visit to the earth, but most of us become undesirable guests by considering certain things here as our very own. Forgetting the temporary nature of our stay, we form various attachments: ‘my home,’ ‘my work,’ ‘my money,’ ‘my family.’

“But when our earth-visa expires, all human ties vanish. We are forced to leave behind us all we had thought we possessed. The only One who accompanies us everywhere is our Eternal Relative, God.

“Realize *now* that you are the soul and not the body. Why wait for Death rudely to instruct you?”

• • •

The Master had found it necessary to scold a disciple about a serious error. Later he said with a sigh:

“I wish to influence others only by love. I just wilt when I am forced to train them in other ways.”

• • •

An arrogant intellectual, discussing complicated philosophical problems, sought to confuse the Master. Paramahansaji said, smiling:

“Truth is never afraid of questions.”

• • •

“I am too deeply enmeshed in mistakes to make any spiritual progress,” a student confided sadly to

Paramahansaji. "My bad habits are so strong that I am worn out by my efforts to fight them."

"Shall you be better able to fight them tomorrow than today?" the Master asked. "Why add today's mistakes to yesterday's? You have to turn to God some time, so 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 on trying, you will improve. 'A saint is a sinner who never gave up.'"

• • •

"In the absence of inward joy, men turn to evil," the Master said. "Meditation on the God of Bliss permeates us with goodness."

• • •

"Body, mind, and soul are interrelated," the Master said. "You have a duty to the body—keeping it fit; a duty to the mind—developing its powers; and a duty to the soul—daily meditation on the Source of your being. If you fulfill your duty to the soul, body and mind will benefit, too; but if you neglect the soul, eventually body and mind also will suffer."

• • •

"Everything in creation has individuality," the Master said. "The Lord never repeats Himself.

Similarly, in man's divine search there are infinite variations of approach and expression. The romance of each devotee with God is unique."

• • •

"Does your training help students to be at peace with themselves?" a visitor inquired. Paramahansaji answered:

"Yes, but that is not my central teaching. It is best to be at peace with God."

• • •

A visitor to the hermitage expressed doubt about man's immortality. The Master said:

"Try to realize you are a divine traveler. You are here for only a little while, then depart for a dissimilar and fascinating world.\* Do not limit your thought to one brief life and one small earth. Remember the vastness of the Spirit that dwells within you."

• • •

"Man and Nature are indissolubly linked and bound in a common fate," the Master said. "The forces of Nature work together to serve man—the sun, the earth, the wind, the rain aid in producing his food. Man guides Nature, though usually

\* See *astral worlds* in glossary.