

Sister Jayanti: 7.6.2020 ONLINE : Keeping Calm in a Crisis.

1st in 21 Masterclasses in New Consciousness series

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW4cA4-2YOY>

Interviewed by Philippa Blackham

Om Shanti and welcome. What was your response to spending lockdown at Mount Abu?

The Head of the Brahma Kumaris, DadiJanki, passed away at the age of 104, on 27th March 2020. So it was a relief I didn't have to think about going and travelling anywhere. I could stay in one place and see how things evolved. I am grateful I was here for her last period, and then her final rites. After that it has been a period of settling so I am grateful to have been here.

These are unprecedented times and on top of that you had the death of someone who you had been very close to throughout your life, as a support and mentor. Did you feel that your practise held up in this double crisis in your life?

Absolutely, if I hadn't had long years of meditation training it would have been very turbulent with me. I have managed better than expected. I have been able to manage myself, emotions and feelings and yet also carry that feeling of her loving presence, now in a subtle form. I am grateful she left in the period of lockdown, which sounds strange. But she wanted to leave peacefully, quietly, without fuss. Knowing who she was as such a giant personality people would have wanted to travel on planes and trains to be there. Due to lockdown, no one could travel, and she could have her wish fulfilled, with no expense, total simplicity and she could leave quietly with just a few around her. Also the period after her departure, still being lockdown, has meant that being in one place means there has been time for reflection on the teachings she left us and the inspirations, not just follow her footsteps but to follow the One Above and come closer and closer to that One. This dual crisis has been one in which both events have supported each other...synchronicity. I am grateful too for staying in one place, as usually I am not, as I travel too much. I have had a chance to reflect and be with others who have been her close companions and that has been a blessing. Otherwise I might have been pulled thinking I was needed somewhere else, but actually the greatest need was to stay here with her close companions.

DadiJanki and yourself have been promoting this idea that we, humanity, need to change, and this will come about through individuals changing and transforming their lives. Even so you must be amazed just how rapidly change has come. If nothing else this whole episode has proved that change is possible?

Incredible! I would not have believed that on a Sunday afternoon, from a studio in London, 50,000 people across the globe would join a programme for several hours on wellbeing, as happened a few days ago. In that I asked if I could speak about God, and the response was 'why not, this is a time when people need to know about God'. I think people are now ready for silence and meditation; ready to understand who is the One Above and what are the steps to connect with The One, so that they can experience spiritual power and connection. This has all happened in 6 weeks! In March we had no idea that in 6 weeks the world would become quiet and still.

There is a huge amount of suffering in the world at the moment. There is also a huge amount of newness pouring in. People are taking the time to reflect and see how their lives are and make changes in the future and many are saying they want to hold on to some of the changes that are taking place. What do you see what is going on in the world from a spiritual perspective and what can we do to anchor this positive change that is coming about.

I think people are more aware of the suffering of others, more so than ever before. It has opened up a spring of compassion in human hearts. We see people in all the services giving their time, energy, love, expertise and helping and serving others, even at the expense of their own health in certain situations. People across the world have been sharing their gratitude to those who are serving in this way on the

frontline. I see there are those who are ready to offer that support and also the ones who are supporting them. Often we see in times of human crisis the best of human nature. I am also seeing that within families there is a greater bonding that has happened. I am hearing also many initiatives with a global outreach, across the world of people coming together, such as Online meditations for the world. We are becoming aware that whatever I can do as an individual there is of course benefit, but if we can do collectively this energy can multiply and amplify and reach others and give hope for the future. I see that at this moment of crisis the question of hope is a very important one. When we have hope for the future, our immunity is boosted, but when we lose hope we succumb to illness and there are dire consequences. I see that people are aware that prayer and meditation are not only keeping the vibrations of hope in our hearts, but also we are able to share these with everyone. We are realising too we are truly a global family. Something starts in one country and spreads across the whole world. The virus doesn't respect any differences or boundaries. We are truly in it together, in the same boat, and are all responsible for what is happening. It is not just me alone. We are also aware of the spiritual bond that links us together as a global family. We have spoken about a global family, but now we are seeing the reality of that. I think this is one thing that people will carry from this pandemic. There has been the realisation we can share a lot together, even when we don't meet physically: we can share our love through our eyes, our kind actions and our vibrations and feelings. So we are learning this new language of love and silence. Also we are realising it is very important to bring God back into the centre of our lives. With this love, care and compassion that comes from The One Above, then we are able to channel that love, care and compassion so that many others can experience this also. I hope many more will become aware of this. Another big lesson has been that we can simplify our needs. We don't need so much food or entertainment. But what we do need is each other and my feeling is that bonding will stay and move more strongly now. We will remember that it is our families that count the most and the love we can give our families is a very powerful foundation for love within the whole of civilisation. It is an opportunity for love and compassion to return to our lives.

You have given us so much in that answer for us to think about. You have talked about the care of frontline workers. The one word that emerges for me is kindness...we are seeing a pandemic of kindness, and it appears to be opening the heart of humanity in this beautiful and profound way. The other aspect that is so important is the sense of 'me and my actions, having a consequence on others'. So I need to wash my hands not just to protect myself but I am thinking of other people and their needs. I am seeing this experience being repeated across the world and we are coming together as a global family.

Back to 'keeping calm in a crisis'. When do we just keep calm, as a right response as a spiritual and when do we respond to the call for action, to getting involved and doing things, and being out there and active.

It is not so much either, or. But a question of sequence. When we walk to a destination we have to put one foot in front of the other and you will surely get to your destination. So first I have to go within my mind, and stop the fear and confusion in the mind...negative thoughts, of blame and complain. When I come back to the inner being, that I truly am, that space that is within, I find silence, peace and calm. Then from this space of calm I understand more clearly what my responsibilities are. Who am I responsible for...my immediate family and colleagues, but beyond that my community, the globe. When I understand the sequence of what I need to be doing then I can start to move into action. If I am anxious, confused, or fearful I cannot even look after myself, let alone my family or beyond. I don't have the capacity. Finding calm within allows me to develop my capacity to grow and I can make use of that inner power and the qualities I have and maximise my potential in the best way possible. Calm is the starting point. I cannot begin in a state of a whirlwind. If I am afraid and I speak to my children, spouse etc I will need their support, I cannot give them support. But if I have stilled my fears by understanding it is not the end of the world, there is still time, if I understand what I need to do. So instead of generating a sense of fear around me, I am able to stay calm and not be afraid, be positive and approach my family with that awareness. Then I can spread calm. If I am afraid I am infecting others with fear. In a state of calm and deciding what, how and when I need to do, I am sharing this with those around me, through vibrations and that is moving out into the world. Then others who are like minded begin to do the same.

Can I rewind one step before that....Many peoples reality right now, is that they are experiencing a situation that has got them to a place the furthest they can be from calm. I am seeing mental health issues rising and domestic violence going up hugely. We are seeing what was weak before, breaking apart. People's normal distractions are no longer there for them, and they are faced with themselves. Someone who is living in a small flat, who has lost their job, who maybe has someone at home who is not happy and taking it out on everyone around them. Can you give us a practical first step we can take, when we feel we have become our problems, and that we cannot get out of the hole that we are in. What is the first thing to do to get to that place of calm you are talking about?

Yes, I agree and aware of the issues and situations that are arising. What I simply need to do is ask myself the question: Who am I? This may seem philosophical. But I cannot solve problems on the horizontal level. I have to find another way to approach this huge crisis. I need to step up above. I want to use the term 'observer'. We need to bring ourselves out of the situation. Years ago a social worker told me that if she was 'inside' a situation with a family, she had to bring herself out of the situation and be an observer and look 'in the window'. With this detachment she could make more sense of what was going on, and she was more able to reenter the scene and help the individuals involved.

My suggestion is to try a little of the same technique. Physically I am here but what I can do is raise my consciousness up above, and see what is going on across the globe, and in my own family. From the vantage spot of being up above and seeing what is going on I can see much more what is going on. Second step....to stay calm and continue that observation. Third Step.... Can I come back into that situation with the calm I experienced from up above. So try this experiment. Step Up above, seeing what is happening, feel calm...bring back this calm into the frame. Even just a moment of calm will bring a huge amount of energy to bring back into your life of actions. When we engage with this calm inside, it will allow a different attitude, more meaning and also more laughter at ourselves, and helps others to smile too.

These are practical steps each one of us can take. This is a time when the usual places people would go to for support, such as places of worship, or theatres, restaurants too, places where we would cheer ourselves up, are all closed. We are all locked in to our own experience and this is making many realise the importance of understanding what is going on inside their own mind and that the support we need through these times comes through maintaining and managing our internal world. This then brings us to the importance of establishing a regular practise that can provide a wealth of feeling and experience that we can draw on at times of need. Can you say a little about a practice of meditation that helps develop that over time.

You are right. If today I build up a practice because I need it, but if you continue after the crisis the practice will stand us in good stead. If we are haphazard with anything we lose the momentum and ability to master whatever skill or game we are learning.. Whether it is cooking ,driving, computer skills. Whether it takes a short or long time. It is the same thing with our thoughts. Maybe now is a critical point when maybe many are now taking the opportunity of lockdown to explore and see what is going on within their mind. We haven't realised that we are the masters of our thoughts. When I come to the understanding of my spiritual identity as a being of light, radiating from within the forehead. In meditation I remind and remember this. In the awareness of being the light that I am, although I can see thoughts come to me from here and there, now I can learn to create thought in a beautiful, uplifting, fruitful and noble way. This is meditation. I am thinking about the original state and qualities of the soul and I am allowing myself to experience these natural qualities of love, truth and peace, that lie within. These are available in every human being. I just need to practise and sit and reflect and allow this to rise. Initially it requires this focus. Let me sit for 5 or 10 mins and as I enjoy I can do this for longer. Let me be the generator and creator of thought., not just react to life. If I can learn to do this, this is the practice that will always help me, in crisis and in normal life. At a time of crisis if I am practising I can help others find solutions to problems. At a time of calm and peace if I can keep track of my mind, I can uplift myself and I can move forward fast on the spiritual journey and help others to do the same also. So we need to continue to do this every day. Know that meditation is not just emptying the mind, which is very difficult, but is generating pure thoughts about the eternal self.

Yes, this is true as everything can be taken away from us but we will always be left with our thoughts. They are our constant companions. The take up for meditation courses during lockdown has expanded from maybe 10 to over a 1000 so many are taking up this opportunity now. It feels that within this suffering and pandemic and the thoughts that come with that is the emergence of something very new and beautiful. Some sort of alchemy at work. A new normal is emerging. Could you say something about transforming this new experiences into nuggets of gold, and how they can carry us through these difficult times. In China the word for crisis is the same as for opportunity.

It is a good idea to make a list of everything I can be grateful for, on the external level. Food, roof over my head etc. And then reflect on the subtle things, such as being surrounded by love. Although this is a very strange situation that we haven't been in before there are things to be grateful for and things could be worse. Even if my worst fears have been realised, and I'm in the deep end of the scenario, then let me ask the question what am I learning at the moment and what is my anchor at this moment. To be come aware of these things is very significant. It is important to understand the meaning.

For example, if I get a flat tyre, how do I respond. Grateful for it happening in the street, rather than when I am travelling on the motorway at high speed. When we are grateful we can be positive, loving and kind towards others. When I am ungrateful and hating what is going on, then things will get worse. If I allow gratitude and compassion emerge I will be able to do something of value and meaning for myself and for others. If we carry this with us out of the crisis there will be much benefit. Now is a transition period. It is a coming together of the highly negative and an awakening of kindness and hope and the feeling of all being in the same boat. The whole of humanity is on course where we could work cooperatively and together, instead of getting into conflict with each other. The next step of evolution needs to be that our goodness comes out and is expressed meaningfully. The virus has come as the tip of the iceberg, but darkness has been with us for a long time. We have realised how mechanical our lives had become. Now is the time to see that it is everyone together to cooperate and create a better world for each other.

Crisis, means medically, that critical point when we either get better or decease. This being a global crisis...What is your prognosis for the global patient? Is it going to recover and get well or is it going to get worse and die? How do you see the future unfolding.

What are your thoughts on the prognosis for the global patient....will it recover or is it going to get worse and die?

I see that this is the beginning of a period of great challenge. I think a few more challenges too, maybe the economic crisis is coming and this may make me stop in my tracks and think about life in a deeper way. Beyond that I see an awakening, a new understanding and a new consciousness and this is going to be the 'new norm'. When our own highest potential is being expressed, the beauty of the human spirit is going to flourish and a new era waiting for us. So a little time of darkness, to make us change that which isn't changed yet, and then beyond the dawn, in which the most exquisite qualities of humanity being expressed.

This is a beautiful vision to hold in our thoughts and hearts...and that from this emergency will come a new emergence.....Could you now lead us on a meditation to help those who are feeling in a dark place right now, to find calm and cope with the crisis that is going on and a few thoughts to help us experience some of these qualities you have been speaking about.

Sister Jayanti led a meditation commentary.

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