

Shopping for God in the Spiritual Supermarket

Valerie Coyle interviews Dadi Janki

Why most people are lost and searching, disillusioned and desperate for solutions.

Valerie Coyle: *The Western world seems inundated with so many different spiritual choices and teachers, and most people seem to be shopping around in the spiritual supermarket and changing aisles all the time. It seems very hard to stay focused on a spiritual path, even if it feels like a true one.*

Dadi Janki: Human beings are attracted towards spirituality at present because they are tired of materialistic life. They have not experienced any happiness through materialism. The more they have chased after materialism, to that extent they have lost themselves; they have forgotten themselves. Their attention has become completely extroverted. It has not been turned within. To search for spirituality means to go within. Because there are so many paths of spirituality, from both the East and the West, people are totally confused about what is right and what is wrong, or what they should select.

This world itself is a world of deception. When people have experienced deception they seek a spiritual path. However, even when they come onto a spiritual path, after some time, they again experience some kind of deception. This is why people move away from religion. They are tired of hearing the word ‘religion’. Their pure feelings of faith in religion have disappeared—whether that be Hindu, Muslim, Christian or whatever. No matter which religion they belong to they have to understand what true spirituality is and go into the depth of that spirituality.

Originally, the religious founders definitely had spiritual power. They lived as messengers of god. They came on this earth whenever there was a need, and played their role within the help of God’s power. Now, because people have become body conscious, they have forgotten their religion, and they have so much conflict within themselves that, even if they use the term ‘religion’, it is only namesake. Hence they do not practise the teachings that were shared by those religious founders; they simply repeat them like parrots. No matter how much they study, inside they are empty; they do not have that spiritual knowledge. In order to experience peace, happiness and power it is necessary to go within, for only then can we realize what true spirituality is. No matter how much someone searches outside, they can never find true spirituality.

Valerie Coyle: *What does spirituality mean to you?*

Dadi Janki: Spirituality means that I should be connected with the Source. For that I need to have the recognition of that Source. Who is He? Where does He reside? In fact God is One. He cannot be different for different religions. He is One for all. If I say that Christ belongs to the Christian religion and someone else to another religion,

then I create conflict. Instead of more spiritual power there will be even more wars and even less love between one another.

Spirituality means to have eternal spiritual love for each other whilst maintaining that incognito, internal connection with God. This is only possible when I become introverted, and when I am able to keep my mind under control through the power of concentration. Today, human beings' minds and sense organs are not under their control. The sense organs cause us to perform very bad actions by coming under the influence of lust, greed and anger. Spirituality means to make my mind free from all these things—to let these desires finish. The consciousness, "I want this, I want that etc," is also extrovert. The more I want the less satisfaction I will receive from that. In fact I will become even more of a beggar. To be spiritual means to be royal, not to have any desires. A jeweller who does business with jewels will not waste his time in trifling matters. So, I have to go deep into myself and search for the treasures that I have within myself. In order to see God, I need to have a divine intellect and divine sight. I cannot see God through these ordinary eyes. I can see this world through these eyes, but I cannot see myself. Whether my eyes are open or not, I should be able to see myself. Otherwise, if I am extroverted, whatever I see externally comes into my mind. Even things I have seen years ago come into my mind.

Spirituality means to open the eye of the mind and, on the basis of that, to realize who I am. When anyone comes here we always teach them three main lessons: "Who am I?" "Who is God?" and "What is the philosophy of karma?" I should understand the philosophy of karma to such an extent that every action I perform is accurate and filled with spirituality. Even if the actions are mundane, they should reveal spirituality. Even the quality of my thinking must be filled with spirituality because the foundation of human life is the quality of our thoughts. If I have the feeling of positivity and of bringing benefit to others, then automatically my thoughts will be filled with those qualities. And if my thoughts are of quality, then my interactions with others will also be of quality. I am a soul; I am connected with the Supreme Soul; He is teaching me, and whatever He is teaching me I am able to share with others.

Valerie Coyle: *Most spiritual teachings do advise us to go within, because the answers are within. But it seems to me that to do this properly requires an enormous leap of faith. To renounce the outer world and especially the ego creates a lot of insecurity. How do you develop the faith to remain introverted? It seems to be a hard thing for people to grasp—having such uncompromising faith—even in yourself?*

Dadi Janki: Originally, there was spirituality within every one of us, but today we have accumulated a lot of rubbish in the form of negative thinking and bad habits. And so, spirituality means to clear away the rubbish and release the power that is in the soul. If you ask the experience of those who are following a spiritual path now, they will be to verify this experience of clearing away the rubbish to expose the beauty within. This does not mean 'blind' faith; you have to use your intellect. First understand, then have faith and then practice.

Suppose I am explaining something to you. If you are intellectual, you will start to analyse what I am saying through your intellect. Then nothing I explain will sit in your intellect. In fact what you need to do is put aside all the other information that

you have accumulated, make your intellect quiet, and then you will be able to absorb. You can have faith only when you can understand what you have heard.

Valerie Coyle: *Personally, I feel that a lot of the times I sit on the fence. On one side is faith and trust, and on the other is ego and control. The obstacle for me is the underlying fear that if that I don't at least attempt to control my world, nothing will happen to me. Maybe I won't even exist!*

Dadi Janki: Firstly, I would like to clarify what it means to have trust. You don't have to trust me to have trust. You don't have to trust me or what I say. You trust in something after making yourself understand. If your intellect agrees with it, then you trust. We don't use the method used by gurus and others that you have to follow what we say. God has given us this understanding. Previously you had the intellect but you did not know how to use it in order to understand and judge what is right and what is wrong. Now, you received that understanding to judge properly.

The difference between animals and human beings is that animals do not have an intellect. Human beings have an intellect, so can ask, "What is right?" "What is wrong?" "What is good?" and "What is bad?" "What is sin?" and "What is charity?" However, we have lost the power of decision-making because the intellect has become so weak. We continue to commit sins (negative and violent actions) and we do not perform any acts of charity. Through understanding, we receive the ability to discern the difference between right and wrong.

Previously, we used to suppress our conscience because we were under the influence of other people, opinions and the world. Now our conscience opens up, and we develop the power to perform good actions. If for example, I know what is right, but don't have the strength to do it, then I connect the yoga of my intellect with the Source and take the power from God, and then I can do it.

First of all, I have to understand who I am and what my relationship with God is. Then, I practically establish that relationship, and receive power. On the basis of this experience, I have the faith that this is God and this is soul. At that point, I understand what I should be doing. Then all my thoughts and actions will be accurate, and I will thank God for giving me such good thoughts. This is what is called 'having faith'.

For example, if I am born a Hindu, and I believe in all the teachings of Hinduism, then I continue to move forward. Now, suppose somebody else speaks to me about another religion or culture. I will not start thinking that I can't leave my Hinduism behind because I can't survive without it. I will just incorporate the new information. It is the same with education. When you study, you learn more and more new things. And, when you learn something better, then automatically you will leave behind whatever is past. You will not have questions, "How can I survive without it?" "How can I give up that teacher?" or "How can I leave those books?"

If I have no ego, I can survive without these because I know that I am receiving something better that is for my own progress.

Valerie Coyle: *So then why do we all resist?*

Dadi Janki: Fear, Ego comes because of fear. We have been taking support from it for a long time. Many people have this obstacle. If I give up what I was doing before, if I have any loss, then what? God has given us an open opportunity to learn. He says you learn until the last breath of your life. Myself, I had gurus before starting to practise Raja Yoga. They used to frighten me by saying, “If you leave me something will happen” because they wanted me to be their follower. I would answer, “Thank you for all you have taught me, but please now give me blessings so that I can move forward in my life”. But I needed courage to do that.

Because there is no end to spirituality, the more you go into its depth, the further you can go. And to that extent, you experience happiness.

Valerie Coyle: *I think that most people have ego as their guru. It is the ego that tells most of us what to do.*

Dadi Janki: Because ego has filled the soul over a long period of time, it has gone deep inside. Ego of my own body, my religion, my education, my culture, my nationality has gone deep inside me. So, now I have to bring that ego out of myself. I have to become free from ego. Then I am able to experience what reality is. The soul cannot do anything without a body. But what has happened is that being in the body, we have allowed all the bodily things to affect us: culture, religion, education, etc. In reality, the soul is truth, love and bliss. We have to cleanse the soul in order to finish the ego. Because of ego, we also have greed, anger, jealousy and attachment. If someone is jealous he can never make his mind peaceful no matter how much meditation he does. Meditation means to remove all the rubbish and cleanse the soul. No matter how much people may criticize or insult me, I don't have to be affected by that. I have to adopt truth and I have to move along that path. I know that God is truth, but now I have to experience and realise how God is truth.

Dadi Janki is the Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

Valerie Coyle was editor of Southern Crossings Magazine published in Australia.