



purnā vīdyā
AN AWAKENING

Psychological Growth & Spiritual Seeking



Purna Vidya Foundation

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Excerpts from Purna Vidya – Heritage Books by Ammaji



"A human adult is responsible for taking only as much as it needs. That is why annam na nindyaat – food is not to be wasted – is a Vedic mandate."

- Ammaji

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Psychological Growth and Spiritual Seeking



A human being is subject to the natural process of change. Like any other living organism, a human being goes through a process of growth in the early years of life and decline in the later years. Along with physical growth, a human being also matures psychologically. Psychological growth is attained by mastering cognitive abilities and being in synchrony with the expectations of the society in which he or she lives. These cognitive skills include various intellectual functions such as, the capacity to think logically and in abstract terms, to learn language and speech, to read and comprehend and so on. Being in synchrony with social expectations involves relating to individuals and dealing effectively with their feelings and needs, as well as one's own.

With physical growth and life experiences, one also matures emotionally as each stage of life brings with it new situations demanding new sets of adapting skills from oneself. Within the biological matrix of the human species, each one develops a personality and style that is uniquely one's own. One's emotional maturity is thus affected by one's own natural endowments, as well as by the environment which provides life experiences.

Role of Values

Personal values play an important role in influencing emotional maturity. Every individual has personal values that reflect his likes and dislikes, goals and priorities and sense of right and wrong. These factors influence the manner in which he or she relates to others. One's personal values may or may not be in consonance with the universal values. The extent to which one's personal values are in harmony with universal values reflects the extent to which one is an ethical individual. Living an ethical life involves consideration and caring for others. This, in turn, creates a sense of responsibility in oneself, and provides a degree of consistency between one's thoughts and actions. Both personal values and ethical living create an inner sense of cohesiveness. An individual, who has such an inner sense of cohesiveness, feels relatively secure and is confident in dealing with others. Thus, one who is well integrated carries within himself an emotional maturity.

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Spiritual Quest

Besides having an awareness of the world, and of one's physical and emotional needs, a human being is endowed with a capacity for self awareness. Self-awareness is an awareness of oneself as an individual. Therefore, everyone has a judgement about oneself as to who one is. Many questions like, where does one come from, and where is one going, stem from this self-awareness. But these questions are not seriously pursued by anyone except those few who have that special urge.

When these questions are further examined, one comes to appreciate the inner struggle to be free from sorrow, a sense of limitation and inner conflict. A life committed to finding this freedom is spiritual and such a person is a spiritual seeker.

In the vision of the Vedas, there is one whole and no one is separate from it. In order to help the person, discover oneself to be the whole, the Vedic culture provides a meaningful way of life. A life in conformity with the universal values becomes an important part of this meaningful living. The emotional maturity, for a person living such a way of life, should happen naturally as one becomes sensitive to oneself and everything else in the world.

The Vedic religion, in the form of its teaching tradition, addresses this fundamental quest. In its vision, an individual does not need to become different, as in his essential form he is already free from any sense of limitation. The Vedas see one's quest as being born of ignorance of one's own essential nature. They alter the direction of one's search for freedom from an act of becoming, to one of being. By functioning as a mirror, the teaching tradition of the Vedic culture helps one gain the knowledge of oneself as being full and complete. One does not need to become free when one discovers that one is already free.

For a human being, this knowledge of the nature of his essential self ends his spiritual quest. Discovering his own fullness, he is in total harmony with the whole creation. In the Vedic vision, he has fulfilled his goal as a human being. This fulfilment is also called God-realization because the Lord is not looked upon as a distant being, apart from the world and oneself. He is the whole, non-separate from oneself and to discover him is to discover oneself. Until this discovery is made, the Lord is invoked in worship, prayers and various forms of meditation. In so >>> completed. doing, one establishes a bond between oneself and the Lord.

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