



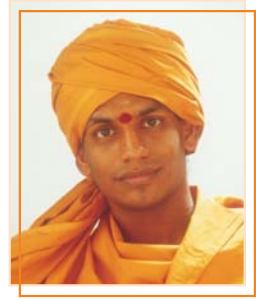
Discovering



Love

PARAMAHAMSA SRI NITHYANANDA SWAMI

*The only way to love
is to risk everything,
give everything
and ask for nothing.*
- Swami Nityananda



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Paramahansa Sri Nithyananda Swamigal is a truly revolutionary spiritual master of our century.

Swamiji embarked upon his spiritual journey at a very young age. He traversed the length and breadth of India on foot, studying with great masters in India and Nepal and practising intense *tapasya* with extraordinary vigour. He experienced the final flowering of consciousness on 1st January, 2000 - the sacred day of his Enlightenment.

With a pragmatic yet compassionate approach to life and spirituality, and an enlightened insight into the core of human nature, Swamiji has reached out to touch millions of hearts across the world.

Swamiji's mission is simple - to awaken the divinity that lies latent in man. To this end, he inaugurated the worldwide movement for meditation - **Dhyana Peetam** - on 1st January, 2003. With its spiritual nervecentre in Bidadi (near Bangalore in India) and over 100 centres around the world, Dhyana Peetam works towards the transformation of humanity through the inner transformation of the individual. Swamiji's divine healing powers and simple, practical meditation techniques help you blossom in every sphere of life - be it physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual.



What is love?

Such a deceptively simple question, but watch how deep it takes you!

What is ordinarily known as Love is no more than the mischief of hormones. It works on the push and pull of greed, fear, anger and jealousy. To love in this manner, to be a victim of the havoc wrought by our hormones and our minds, must be hell indeed!



But most of us can imagine nothing beyond the selfish little loves we give and take all our lives. To understand the true meaning of love, we must first understand the nature of man.

Man is a 'triple entity' of sorts, composed of intellect, emotion and being. The innermost core, the atman or self, is beyond them all.

When the light of the atman floods the intellect, the intellect is showered with energy - and is transformed into Intelligence.

When the atman works through emotion, emotion is purified and expressed as Trust.

When the atman touches the being, the being flowers in Love.

Love is the ultimate blossoming of consciousness. It is the ultimate possibility available to us.



Do we all love in the same way, or are there different kinds of love?

There is only one Love, but its expressions vary from person to person.

Intellectual love is that which is expressed

though the head. Being closely related to the mind, this love is the most corrupt of all. The intellect perceives love as a bargain, as a contract of sorts. It believes strictly in give-and-take. Its attitude is a calculative, "What's in it for me?" This kind of love will always result in expectation, possessiveness, jealousy and violence. This kind of love transforms neither giver nor taker.



Emotional love is expressed through the heart, and so is a more purified expression of love. Here the emphasis is not on Contract, but on Contact. This love trusts and gives without expectation. Whatever problems arise in this love are solved by love itself. This kind of of love transforms the giver immensely.

When love is expressed through the Being, there is neither give nor take; there is just the radiating of love. This love can bring with it no pain and no problems because it is not

dependent on the Other. In fact, it does not even require an object, it is simply a radiance, an overflowing. This kind of love transforms both giver and taker in beautiful ways.

When love radiates through the intelligence, it is rightly called, 'Falling in love'! When it radiates through the emotion, we may term it 'Rising in love'. When it radiates through the being, it results in 'Flying in love'!

And the only kind of love worth the name is the one that can lend you wings.



How is ordinary love different from Divine love? Are they both expressions of the same quest?

I could say there are only two kinds of love – 'Divide' Love and Divine Love!

Ordinary love divides, Divine Love unites.

Ordinary love perceives boundaries, Divine Love recognises no boundaries.

But yes, they are expressions of the same quest. These two kinds of love do not differ in kind, but only in degree. As ordinary love moves from the intellect towards the being, it approaches the quality of Divine Love.



But in our day-to-day relationships, won't there always be some element of possessiveness, jealousy and so on?

No. If these exist in a relationship, then it is not a relationship of love at all; it is only an ego-fulfilling game masquerading as love.

If you love, you cannot possess – and vice-

versa. One can only possess property. How dare anyone try to possess Being? Even to attempt that is to reduce someone who is Energy to the status of gross matter. It reveals a deep-seated disrespect for the person. Then how can you relate with that person, or expect him/her to relate to you?

No matter how beautifully it is masked, the Being senses this attitude of disrespect. That is why someone who is in a relationship with a possessive person will sooner or later try to break free.

As for jealousy, it is the complete antithesis to Love. Jealousy tries to enforce love, trust and loyalty upon the other. It tries to grab from the other the very gifts that can only be given willingly and with joy. How can jealousy and love possibly co-exist?

Possessiveness and jealousy both arise from the same root cause - fear. The ego is a



coward! It is forever afraid of losing its power over the other person. So it tries to trap the other in a cage. It demands a contract of loyalty, renewable daily. Its whole show of aggression is just so much drama to cover up its deep-seated fear.

Love, on the other hand, knows no fear. It trusts too much to feel fear. Love does not ask questions, it does not demand loyalty. It simply surrenders.



When two people are truly in love, they are not surrendering to each other, they are both simply surrendering to the supreme experience of Love.

The fact that you Love is itself enough guarantee. There is no need for any other security. In truth, Love trusts even if the trust is violated. It knows no other way. To react in any other way would mean destroying the other's happiness, and one

who truly loves can never bear to do that!

Love does not know the language of jealousy and possessiveness. To bring these into a love relationship can be the surest way to kill it.

Be warned!



Without possessiveness, enforced loyalty and such things, won't relationships degenerate into what is known as 'free love' or 'free sex'?

No. On the contrary, the exact opposite happens.

It is the existence of possessiveness which results in free sex. When love is given and received through the intellect, it results in deep dissatisfaction. No matter how hard you repress it, free sex will flourish as long as

people keep looking for a better bargain. Love like this can never aspire towards spirituality or even beauty; it can only result in strategy, exploitation and frustration.

When love is directed through the emotion, one experiences a sense of fulfilment with one partner itself.



There is no longer any need to look outside for any satisfaction. The 'free' of 'free sex' disappears, only the 'sex' remains!

And ultimately, when love becomes an outpouring of the being, the word 'sex' itself disappears. One experiences tremendous satisfaction even without the other.

There is such complete self-sufficiency that there is no longer any need for sex!



How come it is the intellect which controls such a completely 'physical' phenomenon like free sex?

Who says sex is a physical phenomenon? If love or sex were to be expressed only through the body, you would snap out of it almost immediately. It is when it is expressed through the mind that the trouble starts!

In fact, almost 90% of our lovemaking is cerebral. It's true! How many people can climax unless they imagine someone 'better' than the real person before them? That means sex is a purely mental exercise.

If you can climax without a mental game, with just yourself and your partner, you will be free from sex.





Is it necessary for spiritual seekers to give up worldly love?



You need to drop the worldliness, not the love!

What we normally know as ‘worldly love’ is love tainted with anger, possessiveness, jealousy and selfishness. Bring intelligence and compassion into your love.

Cleanse it of the impurities of ignorance and expectation. What remains is true love. With love like this, you can transform even your ‘worldly’ relationships into sacred spiritual exercises.



You were telling us about ‘Love as a Quality’ as against ‘Love as a Quantity.’

When love is given in a calculated manner,

it expresses as a poor, limited quantity, to be safeguarded from all except a select few who can receive it. This kind of love comes with the regular package of expectation, pain and frustration.

But when Love becomes a quality of your being, it will pour forth like sunshine, uncaring of who receives or who reciprocates the love. This kind of love is simply an expression of the blossoming of your being. It spreads equally to all, and embraces all without question and without conditions.



We normally say that the path towards the Divine has to be traveled alone. But is it possible for two people to travel together, through love?

The path towards the Divine is a deeply

personal one.

Up to a certain distance, you can travel together. It makes the path all the more beautiful when you are sharing it with your beloved!



But after a while, a time will come when you understand that from this point on, each person has to take the step alone. Each individual is unique, and so is each one's path. When this realization happens, the need to travel together will drop of its own accord. The ultimate flight towards the Divine is always utterly alone!



Does love mean accepting the other person as he is, with all his faults and imperfections?

The very words, 'Accepting the other person

as he is, with all his faults...' implies some kind of condemnation, doesn't it?

'Welcoming the other person as he is presented to you' would be more like Love! The whole of Existence is a gift to you from the Divine. Accept it with grace and humility.



Can love also be an ego-fulfilling thing?

Yes – when it arises from the intellect. In fact, most people are either exploiting or getting exploited in a relationship. Ego is the whole basis of what we nowadays call a love-hate relationship. Most 'love' relationships end up this way because your partner will at some point refuse (or be unable) to meet the demands of your ego.

All the complaints you hear from people who





claim to be in love point to a hurt ego: 'She never listens', 'He doesn't respect me', 'She doesn't understand my needs' etc. etc. are nothing but the whimperings of a bruised ego.

Remember this, the ego thrives on conflict. Conflict provides the sense of separateness, the sense of 'Me versus him/ her/ them' in which the ego feels strengthened. When you fall newly in love you become automatically ready to surrender to the beauty of the experience. The ego is forced to take a back seat. But when the love comes from the intellect, it cannot sustain this 'high' for long. As soon as the relationship has become a familiar thing, the ego hits back, creating the situations of conflict necessary for its own survival.

Love-hate relationships are not confined to romantic attachments alone. Parents and

children have a perennial ego tussle, with parents trying to live their lives a second time through their child, and the child's ego trying to rebel against this imposition upon its own freedom.

If you recognise these symptoms in your own relationship, it's time to realise that what you are experiencing is not love. As they say, true love has no opposite. It cannot turn into hatred, no matter what. What you are truly looking for is a better sense of self, which the other person's presence is temporarily fulfilling. Become aware!



How do I know whether the love I'm experiencing is real, or an illusion?

Love is always real, never an illusion. It



remains to be seen only whether you have labeled the wrong emotion as love! Love is that which cannot be destroyed by anything - especially by reality! If it flies out of the window as soon as the honeymoon is over, it wasn't love. If it diminishes because the partner has put on weight or forgets an anniversary, it certainly isn't love. If it continues to trust, even when the partner has been unworthy of trust - that might be love indeed.

How do you know that what you are feeling for someone is truly love? Take this check.

Does the mere presence of the person fill you with joy, with peace, make you feel more centred in yourself?

Do you enjoy sitting silently together, experiencing a communion that goes beyond words?

Do you feel no fear of losing the person, no matter what?

Have challenges and anxieties helped your love to flower more fully?

Above all, does loving this person come naturally to you - as if there were no other way?

This is the essence of love. In fact, Love does not even know the fear that it might all be an illusion. So while you love, love as if it were the only truth. And if a moment comes sometime when you feel that it is an illusion, it simply means that Love is now over and it is time for you to move on.



If there is conflict in a relationship, is it better to keep trying on or to move on?

Good question.

Love is the most dangerous path there is! Only those with great courage dare tread this path. At any bend on this path you have to be prepared for great joy, great pain, great beauty, great struggle, great understanding. Yes, there is bound to be conflict in every relationship, because every individual is unique, and no two personalities fit together so perfectly that no rough edges remain.



If there is conflict, don't sweep it under the carpet out of fear that it will destroy the relationship. On the contrary, ignoring it can do just that.

So allow the conflict. Examine it. See what you can learn from it. Is it stemming from something in yourself that you are secretly unwilling to acknowledge?

It is only in an intimate relationship that you

discover yourself. Your partner is like a foil reflecting your true nature. After all, who else dares point out your worst flaws with so much clarity!

So examine the nature of your conflict. Also remember, in every relationship, there is a time to stay together and a time to move on. What kind of love do you share? Are you really, truly, surely in love? Do you relate deeply with each other, being to being?

Don't look for reasons and arguments, don't intellectualise the process - simply turn the question inwards with complete honesty and trust. The answer will arise on its own.

If your answer is Yes, then understand that the issues of conflict are mere ripples on the surface of your relationship. These are just situations created by the ego to counter the sense of 'no-self', of surrender, that comes with love. Work around these situations with



love and care.

If the answer you are hearing is No, then maybe it is time to move on. To remain in a relationship where there is no true relationship of being to being is a sacrilege, unfair to you both. Love, for you, may be elsewhere. Don't search for it; just be open to the possibility.



In the meantime, don't let the conflict destroy the relationship, destroy you both. Nobody deserves that. Accept that this is not the person for you, and move away without resentment or bitterness. Don't destroy your own capacity for loving.

To become bitter will only cause you more suffering, and destroy your faith in Love itself. And that is the most dangerous thing that can happen to anyone.



Why do love and pain always go together?

All these questions point in the same direction. As long as there is a calculation, love is bound to result in pain.

What we don't realize is that we usually turn to another person to make up for some lack, some incompleteness that we perceive in ourselves. As long as that person 'completes' us by bolstering our ego, the relationship is one of 'love'. But a time comes when the other person can no longer nurture and sustain our ego. When the ego is deprived of its support, the suppressed feelings of inadequacy, insecurity and fear are unleashed again.

Be clear: relationships do not cause pain, they only bring out the repressed pain that is already in you. And as long as you look



to an external source to complete and fulfil you, this will continue to happen.

Try to be self-sufficient, centred in your own being. Try to focus on what you can give in a relationship, rather than what you can get out of it. The first lesson of love is, not to ask for love. In one way or the other, we are all begging for attention, begging for love. When you are yourself a beggar for love, how can you give love to the other?



Don't worry about whether your love is returned or not. Love is not a bargain, it is a gift. When love is an outpouring of one's being, it does not wait for the 'right person', or the right place or time. It does not even care about whether the love is reciprocated or not. You are so full of love that you feel compelled to share the experience, like a raincloud needs to share its rain, or a flower its fragrance. This kind of love blesses both the one who gives and the one who takes.

It is only when both partners move from the 'asking' polarity to the 'giving' polarity of love that you can move beyond pain.



To fall in love with a master is also a kind of 'falling'?

Yes and no.

Ordinary 'falling in love' is an obsession with form. With the master, this is only a preliminary step towards moving beyond form.

Normally, when you fall in love, , you 'fall' in a lot of ways: possessiveness, jealousy, domination and anger are sure to follow. Lovers play subtle games of hide-and-seek with each other. Though each needs the other to make them feel complete, the ego



also resents the power of the other over itself. This resentment expresses itself as covert physical or psychological violence on the other.

With the master, the same love and the same fear exist - but there are no halfway points. You have to fall completely - fall from the head and fall from the heart! The master offers total love and demands total surrender. Love and surrender both mean the sure death of the ego.



When you come to the master, you cannot play the games of deceit and domination that are so essential to keep your ego alive. This is the ultimate test for your ego; there is no running away. You have to choose, once and for all, between love and fear.

If you welcome the master into your being with total love and trust, the flame of the master's presence can simply burn your ego

and transform your being. In the master's hands, you experience a new birth.

That's why falling in love with the master always results in a tremendous upward surge. You may fall in love with me - but I will never let you stay fallen. I will ensure that you rise in love instead!





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*Love
is
Everywhere!*





*“When I say, surrender in love, I don’t mean
surrender to your partner. I mean, surrender to
the divine experience that is Love!”*



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