Food for the soul

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**

Meditation is the journey from movement to stillness, from sound to silence. The need is present in every human being to meditate because it is a natural tendency of human life to look for a joy that doesn’t diminish, a love that doesn’t distort or turn into negative emotions.

Is meditation foreign to us? Absolutely not. This is because you have been in meditation for a couple of months before your birth. You were in your mother’s womb doing nothing. You didn’t even have to chew your food, it was fed directly into your belly and you were there happily floating in the fluid, turning and kicking, sometimes here and something there, but most of the time happily floating there. That is meditation or absolute comfort. You did nothing, everything was done for you. So there is a natural tendency in every human being, in every soul, to crave for that state when you are in absolute comfort. And getting back to that state which you have had a taste of, just before entering the hustle bustle of this world is very natural because in this universe everything is cyclic, everything wants to go back to its source. When the autumn season comes, the leaves fall and go back to the soil and nature has its own way to recycle them.

The natural tendency to recycle all that we have collected in day to day life as impressions, getting rid of them and getting back to the original state that we were in when we dawned on this planet is what meditation is. Becoming fresh again, alive again is what mediation is. Getting back to that serenity which is your original nature is meditation. Absolute joy and happiness is meditation. Pleasure minus excitement is meditation. A thrill without anxiety is meditation. A love without hatred or any of its opposite values is meditation.

Meditation is food for the soul. When you are hungry, spontaneously you go to eat something. If you are thirsty you want to drink some water. In the same way, the soul yearns for meditation and this tendency is in everyone. That is why I say, there is not a single individual on this planet who is not a seeker. It’s just that they don’t recognize it. The problem is that we try to look for that food where it is not available. It is like going to a grocery shop when you want to fill gas in your car. You keep going round and round the grocery store saying, ‘I want gas for my car.’ It won’t work because you need to go to the petrol station. So, that right direction needs to be found. Meditation happens in transition. Actually meditation happens, you can’t do it. You can only create a congenial atmosphere for it to happen.

Meditation is uplifting the energy and mind and spreading it out. Whenever you have been happy, that happiness has been associated with a sense of expansion. And whenever you have felt miserable, that has been associated with a sense of shrinking or contraction. There is something in you which expands when you are happy and contracts when you are unhappy. But we never pay attention to what is contracting and expanding. We only keep our attention outside. We have not paid attention to the reason. One of the sages of the past, ***Gaudapadacharya***, said, ‘There is something in you that is expanding that is worth knowing.’ Even a glimpse of this consciousness, this energy inside you can make the smile on your face so strong that nothing whatsoever can take it away from you. Nobody can make you miserable; nobody can take away the joy from your life. Life assumes another dimension suddenly; just a glimpse of this, an idea about that something inside us that is expanding. You don’t have to leave things here and go. Just being amidst all the noise and still recognizing that beauty, that thing that’s so beautiful, so wonderful, so fascinating, right here and now is meditation. The peak, the most supreme type of prayer is meditation. All powers are hidden within the Self and everything will manifest when you connect to your consciousness. [www.artofliving.org](http://www.artofliving.org) (703 words)