

One Double-Sided Action

Swami Suryadevananda

It is not just enough to be aware of the activity of the mind – one must be able to act in the light of wisdom in spite of the pull of conditioning and habit. The single, double-sided action of being aware of the situation outside and inside while doing what needs to be done in the light of wisdom is called *vairagya* and *abhyasa* and is the alpha-omega of yoga.

It does no good to say, “I know, but...”—know nothing! What is this ‘but’ if you know better? We use words very loosely and this decreases sincerity and increases confusion. Each time we feel ‘we know’ and do otherwise, the knowing becomes more a concept and so we are less sincere each time we use it.

If you know the road conditions are bad, there is a severe thunderstorm underway and this calls for careful driving but you still drive fast as the roads have less traffic – can you say, ‘I know the conditions are bad...’. Knowing cannot happen unless it is where actions or our responses in life spring from—knowingness has to act or you don’t know.

If you know the speed limit is 55 miles an hour and you drive 70 miles an hour – can you tell the good officer that pulls you over, “Officer, I know but...”? Or, do you feel that your rationale of ‘going the speed of traffic’ is good enough to break the law? When you use justification or rationale—you don’t know.

If you are aware of the inner promptings and at the same time of the realities that present, you should be able to see each situation very clearly—free of any conditioning and for what it is in the moment. If you have this clarity—you should be able to effortlessly and naturally act based on this and not slip into the grip of conditioning or habit—regardless of any rationale.

In yoga, knowing is anchored to ‘being’ and doing results naturally from being as its expression. When doing is not an expression of being—there is a lack of sincerity and deception. You cannot deceive yourself as you know—you can only deceive others or try to deceive others till they know as time is the revealer of truth in all cases.

It comes down to seeing clearly and acting on this clarity and not on any preference—without any interference of reason, rationale or justification. Clarity is the seed of wisdom and when wisdom acts—each action gives rise to more clarity, wisdom, peace and joy.

This empowering of clarity and wisdom is the yoga element or yoga spirit—let’s look into how this can be strengthened by spiritual practices next time.

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