

Satsang with Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Arsha Vidya Gurukulam

Nature of Grief¹

Question

Swamiji, what is the nature of grief? Does a wise person feel grief?

Answer

Grief is something that happens when you are placed in a situation where some hurt is involved. Grief comes and goes because situations, accompanied by joy and sorrow, *sukha-duhkha*, come and go. *Sukha-duhkha* are part of the whole. Although they can arise at any time, they do not affect a person who has this knowledge. *Sukha*, of course, is oneself and *duhkha* may come, but it has no hold over the person because there is no confusion any more. Thinking just takes place. The person has no control over thoughts that occur, nor does he or she have any need to control them.

A person who understands the realities simply allows the thoughts to take place. Thoughts come and go automatically. No action is necessary on one's part. Feelings manifest as thoughts and this is the only reality they have. Hunger and thirst also belong to the same order of reality as the mind—empirical reality. A wise person also experiences hunger and thirst, as well as emotions, but he or she knows that, because they have an empirical reality only, hunger and thirst do not affect his or her fullness. Such person knows, “These are all me and I am more than all of them.” Whatever happens, happens. This is the vision.

How is the mind any different from the physical body in this way? Just as the body has to be bathed and fed everyday, just as it has to undergo pain, illness, and everything else it is subject to, so too, the mind. The mind can have its thoughts, but they are nullified for a person who has the vision of the whole.

As the thoughts come, there is nothing to hold them. No one thought stays for very long anyway. A thought is momentary; it comes and goes. But there can be consistency of thought, providing, of course we sustain it. Knowing the nature of realities, the wise do not sustain thoughts of grief

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