

# The Power of Enthusiasm

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When you're feeling down, way down, just remember there's nothing so bad it couldn't be worse. In that little story I often tell about the optimist who fell ten stories and at each window bar shouted, "All right, so far."

So let's, let's get enthused a little bit this morning. It's very difficult to speak, unless you're enthused. I came this morning, I didn't feel too good; and then I noticed these clocks aren't the same. And so I was late, according to the clock. But according to my watch, I was on time. So I'm doing better, and I, I hope you'll all continue. I saw one or two come in a little late this morning. So let us have enthusiasm for God's Work, and have the right attitude of cheerfulness, cheerfulness.

Like the lady went to the bank and says, "I want to buy a defense bond." Clerk says, "What denomination?" "Methodist," she says. So let's get going now, in this morning, and this enthusiasm state.

Another, another thing I read in the little book I have, it said that this, there was this donkey that was advertised in the paper. So the man went to the residence, the address which the donkey was advertised, he said, "I came here to see about the donkey." The lady went to the back door, she says, "Father, it's for you."

So there we have it. Let's feel a little enthusiasm for this ser..., this subject, this morning. It's a difficult subject. It's kind of a dry subject. But let us do the best we can with it.

And so, you can be cheerful, enthusiastic, no matter how terrible the conditions are. You can do it by two ways. You can do it through will and determination, or you can do it by the better way of wisdom; feeling, feeling the Presence of God within you. Feeling the wisdom of your Soul; and the natural state of the Soul is cheerful, and it exudes Peace and Bliss. Now those are the two ways you can do it. That optimist I spoke about, he used will and determination. That's good. You don't have to simulate the condition that you feel awful in inside. You can, at least, simulate the condition of enthusiasm, and the Soul's Power will give it to you. Realize that, that we can be enthusiastic even though we do not feel like it

inside. What of it if you don't feel like it? God is still with us. If we can but feel His Presence, we will be enthusiastic; as Master used to say, "Even through the crash of breaking worlds." Let us understand that.

And so, this real enthusiasm comes through zeal – zeal to do God's Work, and to feel His Presence within you. Then you get not a temporary enthusiasm, but a permanent enthusiasm. As Patanjali said, "The object of life," or the goal of everybody, "is to be free from pain permanently." Now, if you can do that, there'll be no, nothing but enthusiasm in your consciousness. This is a fact. It is pain of whatever nature of the body, mind, or Soul that causes us not to be enthusiastic, because in the Soul Consciousness, there is no pain – no duality – nothing, but the Peace and Bliss of God. That's what we must have, if we are to be enthusiastically, so permanently, that's the point.

We want this permanency. We do not want to feel good one week, and then somebody does something to us, and the next week we don't feel good. That isn't real enthusiasm. You have to be able to be enthusiastic through the ups and downs of life; no matter whether the things are coming your way or not. You must be enthusiastic. Why shouldn't you be? This world will pass away, and the things of this world will pass away, but that Presence of God within you, His Great Love and His Bliss, will not pass away. Why not go there? That's a sensible way to approach this subject of attitude toward life and the power of enthusiasm.

Anybody who is enthusiastic, you know has more power than one that is just coming along naturally with the rank and file. {An} Enthusiastic person has something, and the Reality, which he has, is the Presence of God within him in a conscious way. He knows God is with him, and, naturally, if you know God is with you, it's very easy to be enthusiastic. If you don't, it's very difficult. You can do it by will and determination, but it's much easier when you know Truth and feel God's Presence, to be enthusiastic.

And so, enthusiasm to laugh must be well grounded. That's the point. I see, you see people come into this work, especially of ours, and they're so enthusiastic – they're gonna change the whole business. Change it all over. Everything's gonna be different. Watch them – a little while – it peters out. Why: because it wasn't founded on the Presence of God. Natural enthusiasm comes in the beginning. That's natural. But then you have to make it solid – you have to solidify it by knowing the Presence of God within. Then that enthusiasm will last.

Look at the Master. He has a million things on his mind, and founded this organization, and he suffered, and he was persecuted, and he – not knowing business – had to use business methods to carry on. And I have never seen him, never seen a time, when he wasn't enthusiastic. Why: because he had the Presence of God. He could not have done what he did; he could not have gone through what he did; unless he knew God was with him, and felt him; not only had the "idea" of God, but *knew* Him as a Reality within himself.

And so, we must understand this one thing, that is: to get this enthusiasm within us on a permanent basis, we must have tremendous zeal. We must have a determination, through the Love of God, which will not bow down to anything. If you want to feel enthusiasm, get the contact with God. Have that zeal, which is necessary. A discouraged attitude will not win. That attitude of self-pity will not win. You have to rise above that, and you have to have that attitude, no matter what comes, "I'm God's child, and nobody can shake me from that realization."

And, if you meditate, and see the Presence of God, and feel Him; then you can do it. That's why meditation is so important. Because it gives us contact with God; seeing the Presence of God; feeling His Great Love; you cannot help but be enthusiastic. Because you will always have that, no matter what conditions you find yourself in, in this worldly existence. Isn't that the sensible way to go, rather than to try a, try to use our limited powers to be enthusiastic? Get the Presence of God. No one can shake you, because you have Reality and Truth.

And so, as I have said, restlessness is another thing which we must overcome – one minute up; next minute way down. That's no good. That's not right. You must feel the Presence of God in good times, and bad times. And the way to offset that is, when things are going wonderfully well, watch out. Don't get way up, cause it's down you come. But just keep steady. And when you go down, it will not be half so bad, as when you're way up, then down you come. You see it in life, we all see it. But when you feel the Presence of God, up or down makes no difference. As Master used to say, "When Thy song flows through me, then life is sweet and death is sweet." Because you have the reality, you can be enthusiastic, and your attitude toward life will be most wonderful.

Now, we have the attitude of saints, which we, we must realize and emulate. As I have said, our founder, Paramhansa Yogananda, was always enthusiastic, even in, under the worst conditions, and he was persecuted to no end. Of course, it is

not known, but those who were close to him, had known it. And yet, he was always buoyant and enthusiastic.

He said, as you'll read in the Whispers [From Eternity], you know, "I will will, I will work, but guide Thou my reason, will and activity to do the right thing." To do the thing I should do. That's all we have to do. And then, whether we are a failure or a success is secondary, 'cause success lies in the fact that you depend on God to guide you. And depending on Him, you will have that enthusiasm, no matter what comes, no matter what the trial is. That's the only safe way, and that's the only right attitude to take towards this life.

Also, Sri Yukteswarji, was of the same nature as our Master. You know he said, he said, "Life shouldn't be a funeral procession," or, "Religion shouldn't be a funeral procession." Why should it be, when God is Bliss? Our Master said, "God is Bliss." "There's no difference between Bliss Consciousness and God Consciousness." Why should we be down in the mouth all the time? This is not a funeral procession, unless you make it so. And so, Sri Yukteswarji said, he said, or rather we read in the "AY" [Autobiography of a Yogi], Master's words about Sri Yukteswarji. Master says he was "often grave, often grave, but he was never gloomy."<sup>1</sup> That shows the inner poise and character of a saint. He was never gloomy. Then he said, "Remember, that finding God will mean the funeral of all sorrows." Isn't it worth it?

Those who meditate will back me up in the statement; "It is worth it," because it's the funeral of all your troubles. Because, no matter what comes, even the worst, you have to get thrown out of this body. You know that right there is the Presence of God. Right there is the, His face, His Brilliant Light and Consciousness and Love. You will not lose anything. You know that. But you can only know it by Realization. Therefore, Realization is necessary. Realization of your oneness with God is, you are to be enthusiastic, and truly one with Him. You must have that realization. You must know God is there. Not imagine it. You must know through meditation that His Light is there, and His Love is right there, and that you are That. That you can know through Realization. Not in imagination.

How do you think you think? How do I think? How do I do the things I do? Because God's Consciousness is my consciousness; I know there's separation there; I know I don't perhaps always, every moment, feel one with Him –

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 12, Page 134, 1951 Revision

although we all trying very hard to do that. I know the separation there. But I also know that God's Consciousness is my own consciousness. And, if it is, I know that He's watching over me, and knowing that, I fear no evil. Neither does any true follower of Self-Realization – or any true religion – fear anything, when he knows God is with Him.

And so, we can follow these saints. They have set the way, they have pointed the way. And as they never could be disturbed, never could be ruffled, and were always enthusiastic, in spite of all outward conditions, so must we be. And that comes through Realization of your oneness with God.

Now, perhaps, due to past karma, one finds himself lacking in enthusiasm. This is a common trait – even bordering on cynicism. You know, it's very easy to be cynical – and that's due to past karmic conditions. You have built that up within yourself. But it is a sin to be cynical. It is a sin to put that on someone else, to burden them, with your cynicism. Rise above it. There's no need of it. Because, not only do you make them feel mean, but you yourself are in a deplorable condition. Rise above this cynicism, even though it's, it's natural with you. It is natural with many people, but you can, by the Grace of God – through His Power – you can rise above anything. And what is a little cynicism compared to God's Great Love? And no matter what your troubles are; no matter what your failures are; no matter what your habits are; realize that you need one thing; I need one thing; and that one thing is God – nothing else.

I read in the paper how they're gonna do this, and how they're gonna do that. They're gonna have this treaty, and they're gonna have that treaty, and they're gonna have a wonderful time doing nothing. They need one thing, nations need one thing – and that one thing is God. Isn't that true? Analyze the situation in the world. Look at the troubles in the East, Near East, and Far East. What's the trouble? They need one thing. They don't need more treaties, and such things. They need to change the hearts of men so that God can get in there; so that they can feel His Presence. That's what the world needs. You can't get around any other way. You can make all the treaties in the world. You can, the Master said, "You can scrap all the battleships, and airplanes, and everything, and then they'll still fight with their hands," unless they feel the Presence of God.

And so, to be enthusiastic, and have the right attitude toward God, and through all conditions, we need His Presence. We need to be one with Him. So let us understand that, and realize that.

Now, one or two helpful hints is this, or are these few points: that get out of this small way of living. That's the worst thing. Analyze yourself. Get out of the small way of living – discussing the faults of others, which is a natural condition for all of us. I think that's the human nature in us. Get out of that, and turn toward the larger things of...if you are going to clear up the faults of others, first, clear them up within yourself. Master used to say, when we'd come to him – "So-and-so has done this to me. He's the meanest thing in the world." He'd say, "Change yourself." Every time he's say it. And I found, and others found, when we changed ourselves, that they changed. Things changed.

And so, these are helpful hints, if you wanna find the Presence of God, and be enthusiastic, and have the right attitude toward life. As long as you follow those negative things, you will not have the right attitude toward life. You cannot, because you are engrossed in those small things of life. Why not search out God? The big thing of life! Why not be engrossed in those larger things of life; the finding of Him; and to see Him in every other human being as yourself? That's the thing. Now, you can do that somewhat by will and determination, but to do it, fully. You have to feel the Presence of God. You have to have Him. Then you can see Him in others, and then you can be enthusiastic, and you can overlook the little things of life, and take up with the bigger things of life.

These are a few hints that I have put down here. And start with yourself. Start with yourself, to change, and you'll be surprised how the others change. But we always think, "Oh, the other one's wrong. We're all right." Oh sure, they're wrong. We must start with ourselves. Change ourselves – then we will see.

And be sincere with others. Be sincere. Don't say, "Oh, how are ya?" And a nice big smile behind, "I wish I could kill him." "That's," Master used to call that, "galvanized smiles." You cannot have those. Because why? The Soul of the other person knows. If you do not like him – be grave. But don't smile – "How do ya do," and thinking you'll do something terrible to him. So we must be sincere. We must realize this. So, right attitude toward life is important thing.

Little story now I have here for you, I hope you like it. It, it points out the right attitude it seems to me. This Tom and Mabel were gonna be married. Tom and Mabel – and they're out walking, which is natural, and talking things over. And Tom says, "Mabel," he says, "I got to tell you something. I got to tell you something before we are married." Mabel got pale – you know – she says, "What is it Tom?" He says, "Well," he says, "I'm a somnambulist." "Oh," Mabel says,

"Oh, that's nothing, I'm a Congregationalist. We go to your church one Sunday and my church the next Sunday." So that's the right attitude, isn't it, to have?

So let us be cheerful. The Soul is naturally cheerful. It is naturally cheerful. And, if we just remove the inhibitions, then we will be cheerful, too. You take young people, young people, they've come over, so to speak, from the other side, being with God, and you know how enthusiastic they are – brilliant – until they get mixed up in this Drama of Life. Then a lot of the enthusiasm goes. But it shows that the Soul is naturally enthusiastic – naturally cheerful – because that's the Soul's nature, and God is Bliss. God is Joy. How could He be anything else but Enthusiastic, and Cheerful, and Blissful? Let us realize that.

And so, the doctor's son says, the advantage of being a doctor's son is that you get medicine for nothing. The minister's son says the advantage of being a minister's son is you get good for nothing.

We've got to keep this enthusiasm up. Can't let it drag with a subject like this. So let's, let's feel a little buoyant. I came feeling not so good. Not sick or anything. You know, you get that way. That's our nature. And I felt worse when I saw, or heard the music stop, and I wasn't into it. But soon as we meditated, it is true, soon as we meditated, I felt the Peace and Bliss of God, and who cares when He's with us. That's the most wonderful thing – God's Presence. I tell you, just to encourage you. Because I'm glad the Master encouraged me, and through his grace, we can realize how close, and how near God is. Having that, we will surely be enthusiastic.

And so, understanding God is the key to enthusiasm. And how ya gonna understand it: through meditation. And therefore, meditation is the key to developing your enthusiasm and your right attitude toward life. And true and permanent, true and permanent enthusiasm comes when you are anchored in God, no other way. Why? Because the Soul's natural makeup is due to the Natural Gift of God's Love in the heart is to be buoyant, cheerful. That's the Natural, our Natural state. But due to the attachment to worldly things and these things of life, we have lost that. We have once more to regain it. How: by meditation.

Meditation means concentration on God. It's a very simple answer. And, if you regularly – beginning today, those of you who've been slipping a little bit – begin today, and make up your mind you're going to meditate every day, even if a little; and, if you happen to miss – which you shouldn't do – make it up the next

day; meditate twice as long. And you will find if you just do that, follow meditation, the right meditation – which many of you know, and all of you can know if you will, follow that, and that contact with God – is what changes you. That contact with God will make you enthusiastic, and will make you cheerful, because God is Cheerful, and He is Blissful, and He has all things. He has All Power. Why shouldn't we know Him? Having that, we, too, can have All Power. And when you know the Presence of God, and you contact Him, and there is Union through Yoga with God, then your will becomes His Will; and that will, is sufficient to give you all the power you need to be enthusiastic, in spite of anything.

That's why meditation is so important. Meditation means concentration on God, and the heart's Natural Love then will come out. It is in the heart of each one of us; it's God's Gift to us. You know how, sometimes, you feel very buoyant – comes out of nowhere? That's the heart's Natural Love. But due to our way of living, we keep it blocked off. We have to remove those blocks – those inhibitions – so that God's Love will flow naturally. And that's what we can be, and what we should be, and that's our heritage. And remember one thing Sri Yukteswarji said. It is very important. "One cannot advance one step toward heaven without the natural love of the heart." Realize that. Why: because God is Love. Love is the feeling aspect of the Holy Vibration. Love is the feeling aspect of the Word. That's why it is necessary for us to feel the Love of God in our hearts, and then we'll be enthusiastic, and we will also feel it in other's hearts. Knowing that, feeling that, we will treat them as we should treat them, as children of God.

And so, finally, finally, realize, as I have said, meditation is the requisite, the key requisite to being enthusiastic, and cheerful, and joyful. Meditation will give you that contact with God. And so, when you have God contact, you will know that you are never alone. That's the most wonderful thing. Everybody may turn against you. You may not have a friend in the world, but you have God always, and you are never alone. And what confidence that gives you. What enthusiasm for His Presence. What enthusiasm to live such a life that others will follow you and you will set a good example. That's the greatest thing that the Presence of God will do.

God doesn't say a word. He's silent. Why not be like He is by being a great instrument of God's Power. You may not have to say a word even. But, by being one with Him, His Power flows through you, and you help all those with whom you come in contact. In fact, you help all human beings, because this

Dream is made up of all human beings. And when you open up a channel for God to flow through your example, you help everybody that ever has been born, and will be born. You understand that? Because this is God's Dream, and when you open up a channel through which He can flow, you're helping to offset this Cosmic Dream, which is delusion and sin. Sin is nothing but separateness from God. Realize it.

Don't think that you've done this – you've done that. The only thing that you have ever done, or I have ever done, is to forget my oneness with God, or your oneness, with God. The greatest sin, or sin, is separateness from God. Understand that. What offsets separateness? What takes it away? Meditation – contact with God. That's the answer to the subject this morning of right attitude and enthusiasm. "The Power of Enthusiasm" comes when you remove the separation which exists between you and God by meditation. That's the most wonderful thing.

And so, having finally, having this enthusiasm, having this contact with God, what can you do? This is your duty, my duty, in this world in which we find ourselves, is to be a channel of God to flow through. And you can do that; you can give God to others, when you have Him – and not until. Realize that. And, if you have Him, having that enthusiasm and cheerfulness, then you can give it to others. Then your life is worthwhile. Then God says, "Well done, good and faithful servant."