

From Nervousness to Calmness

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Our subject this morning, "From Nervousness to Calmness."

Who isn't nervous here? No hands. Oh, one hand back there. No. Another one. That's good. "From Nervousness to Calmness."

Now this morning most of our time will be discussing what nervousness is, the cause and effects of nervousness, and how to heal nervousness. "Well," you say, "that's funny. The subject is nervousness, from nervousness to calmness. What about calmness?" We do not have to say very much about calmness. Calmness is the natural, inherent quality of each and every one of us, of the soul in every one of us. It's the natural state of us – although sometimes we are nervous. And, therefore, if we remove this rubbish that stands in the way of our exercising our natural state of consciousness, it will come of itself.

You take some person asleep – they may be quite vicious and nervous in outward living – but there they are asleep, calm and peaceful, because it's the natural state. And, if we can remove these exciting causes of nervousness, and the undesirable result of an uncontrolled, turbulent mind, and a burned out nervous system, then calmness will flow naturally. Realize that. And so, don't be taken up too much with calmness itself, except, as I will point out a little later, that it is a definite cure for certain types of nervousness.

Now, our Master has said this, "That nervousness is a state of being, characterized by unrest and depression." And this is due to the fact that the Life Force in the physical nervous system, is not flowing in a harmonious way, and the pranic energy of the astral and mental nervous system, is not flowing harmoniously. You know that the state of nervousness varies from the simple state of the jitters, which sometimes we have, to a real depression, sometimes a nervous breakdown.

And so in the words of our Master, he says this, "Nervousness, though also physical in its manifestation, is primarily of mental origin, a restless mind vibrating through the nerves." Now, if you are nervous, realize that's the cause – especially restlessness of the mind, uncontrolled thought processes. And

because of these uncontrolled thought processes, your nervous system has been over-stimulated, and, therefore, some of the nerves are either very much irritated, or burned out. Sometimes, you see the results of complete nervousness where the nervous system is, as we sometimes say in a slang way, "all shot up." This is a fact, it is burned out, because of this surge, so to speak, of this terrific, terrific voltage of Life Force, which at times is given off – especially in a state of anger – Life Force flows into the nervous system with such a high voltage that the nerves cannot take it, and they become burned out. And there are many other things that happen to the system because of nervousness, and lack of control of the thought processes, which we will not go into at this time. But remember the illustration of anger.

And so, as I have said, this nervousness may be of just a simple state of worry, or even the jitters, to a complete nervous breakdown. And you have seen in the different institutions the result of such happenings. And so, it is surely unbecoming to all of us to allow that to happen when we are children of God, made in His Image. And, as such, we should be anything but nervous – we should be fully calm.

Now, I have said about worry – worry. I have a little story to tell you about worry, because everybody worries, so you all must listen. This, the. . . "Reverend," said a worried woman, "can you do anything for my husband? He's worrying about money." "Yes, indeed," said the Pastor, "I can quickly relieve him of all that." So watch out if you're worrying. Something may come along and try to take it away from you.

So, this state of worry must be done away with. But much worse than that is the state we see in the mental institutions. I had the privilege – oh, not privilege, the duty – of visiting one not too long ago, and although some of the happenings are amusing, still some of them are pathetic. But one or two little happenings that come to my mind – I remember one fellow, he was quite peaceful. He was fully contented. . .and what was he doing? He was walking along the edge of the walk on a little stone, and he was methodically just stepping one foot in front of the other on those stones, perfectly contented.

Another fellow was, he had a great big barrel in front of him – huge barrel. And he was standing there. . .he was a little short fellow, so he just could look in the barrel. And he would reach in the barrel, and take out a little piece of paper. He'd look at it, smile, drop it in again. Then he'd reach in, and take another one. And that went on, perfectly contented.

In a little – on a more humorous side – there were two of those walking around the yard, and one fellow was wheeling a wheelbarrow upside down. The other fellow says, "My good man," he says, "You should turn that over." He says, "You should turn it over, and wheel it the other way." He says, "What do you think I am, crazy? If I do, they'll fill it with bricks." So, be careful. Don't get that way from being too

nervous. So we have to have a little diversion, because no one wants to get absorbed in the subject so that they forget that they really are children of God, and of that Nature, buoyant and happy.

So, as we come now to the cause of nervousness. The basic cause is, as I have said, due to the lack of the harmonious flow of Life Force within our physical nervous system, and that is caused by a restless mind – uncontrolled thought processes. That's why our Master has said, "Still the lake of the mind." The lake of the mind must be still, and then the reflection of the soul can be seen easily. And so, this is the basic cause of nervousness. Remember that. Uncontrolled thought processes, plus the flow of Life Force through the nerves in an uncontrolled way, which burns them out, or at least irritates them, so that you are jittery, or nervous.

Now there are many contributing causes to nervousness. For instance, as I have said, these un- . . . emotional outbursts. Emotional outbursts of temper, fear – fear is the worst thing – repression, fear especially. Fear just disintegrates the nervous system, so to speak, and the uncontrolled thought processes go on and allow the Life Force to flow in an inharmonious way. Realize that fear is one of the greatest things.

Now another thing which contributes to nervousness is, lack of self-control in health matters. People do not eat properly, and many over-eat, and that leads to nervousness, because of the over-activity of the nerves. Overeating is one contributing cause. Another is under-eating. How many diet here? Go on, now. That's good. Under-eating is just as important. Perhaps, more so, because, you know, the nerves have to be nourished. They have to be nourished. Nervous tissue is a tissue. That's why most fat people are good natured, because the nerves are covered up nicely, and nourished nicely, and so everybody feels good – all fat people.

Now, if you carry it the other way, and the nerves are not nourished, that's not good, and it will lead to nervousness. But the worst cause of nervousness is, that thorn in the flesh. Remember this: an uncontrolled restlessness. People say, "If I can only still those thoughts, then I could do something with this business." And that's right. An uncontrolled mind is the thorn in the flesh. Understand that. And later we will find out how to do away with the thorn in that flesh – how to remove it.

And so, overeating, breaking of health laws, and other things, which we haven't time to go into, too much – like we must be temperate in all things – eating, working – especially working, nowadays. You know the pace is terrific. When I come up here from Encinitas, I spend most of my nervous energy dodging the other fellow, and wondering whether I'm going to get it, or not. These are facts. You cannot

deny it. And so, we must not forget, that the pace of this life is depleting. But, if you feel the Presence of God with you, whether you're on the freeway, or anyway, you can rise above these causes of nervousness. Realize that.

And, also, in sex, we must be moderate, and in all things we must be temperate. And, if we are temperate, Nature is very tolerant. Nature will stand an awful lot. If you have a condition, a heart condition, or a condition in another part of the body, the heart will enlarge, sometimes twice its size – so Nature is very tolerant. And if you try a little bit, try to overcome, and be temperate, and especially, if you'll follow meditation – which I'll come to in a minute – then without question of a doubt these obstructions will be removed. These obstructions, which prevent the Natural Flow of God's Presence within us, and give us the Natural Calmness of our Soul.

Now I have a reference, which the Master gives, which I'd like to give you at this time. He says in his Autobiography [of a Yogi], on page 54, "Outward frailty has a mental origin." Realize that. "Outward frailty has a mental origin. In a vicious circle the habit-bound body thwarts the mind." The mind is the controller, of course, but when the body is in such a state that your nerves are irritated and burned out, and those patterns of thoughts in the mind have formed definite tracks there, it's very difficult to eradicate them, and not to be nervous.

And so, you can see what the Master means here. "If the master allows himself to be commanded by a servant, the latter becomes autocratic. The mind is similarly enslaved by submitting to bodily dictation." So, if you keep on eating and over-eating, and eating and over-eating, naturally there's somethings gonna happen. Why not be moderate? And the wonderful part of it is, if you're moderate in your eating, you can enjoy the food much better.

When I met the Master I thought, "Well, here it comes." When he suggested a discipline in this, "Here it comes. No more eating, no more enjoying." But I found that you can enjoy it much more. I'm not just saying this. You can enjoy the food much more when you feel God with you – when you feel that He's enjoying the food through you – then you will enjoy it far more than you can imagine, and you will not be attached to whatever you're eating – a nice curry, and so forth. It's all right to have the nice curry. But why not feel the enjoyment in the Soul, in God's Presence within? Then there'll be no attachment to the curry, and there'll be more customers for the café. So, I have to be careful about that, and realize that God is so wonderful.

Master told me one time, he said, "You know God is so human." And I can see the words of wisdom of the Master. He's so human in little things, if you just consider Him. He doesn't say anything. That's the worst of it. If He'd say, "Now listen to me," but He doesn't. He keeps quiet. But, if you try to please Him, the most wonderful thing, you will find Him right there, consciously with you in every action, even in the simple actions of eating, and enjoying things of this worldly existence. "God is most wonderful," says the Master.

Now, one other cause of nervousness, which we must not forget, is environment. You know nervousness is very contagious, and, if you mix with people who are jittery, and who are crabby, so to speak, and who do not have the right view of life – fault-finding, and all such things – if you mix with them, in a little while you'll be doing the same thing. This is a fact. Environment is a great cause of nervousness, if you mix with the wrong people. Mixing with people like we have here with us, and as I see, the majority of Self-Realization Fellowship members, when you mix with them, they do not contribute to nervousness – they contribute to your peace of mind, because every one of them – and I think I can say that every one of them has the heart quality developed, otherwise, they wouldn't be following this path – and that heart quality is contributory to Peace and Harmony.

And so remember, environment, although it is an important factor in nervousness and has to be considered, realize it works the other way too, on the side of good. That's why Master said, "Company is one of the greatest things in overcoming nervousness, because the company you keep contributes to your peace and calmness, if it is the right company."

So now, the effects of nervousness there must be considered just a little bit. . . Nervousness results in an uncontrolled, racing mind. I've heard a lot about peace of mind. Many writers have written about it. Peace of mind is simply freedom from an uncontrolled racing mind – freedom from the turmoil of that mind. But that will not satisfy us. We must not only be free from the turmoil, we must substitute the positive aspect of calmness, and that comes not just by peace of mind, that comes by positive action of meditation, and uniting the Soul with God's Presence within.

And so the cause of nervousness, or the effects of nervousness, first, is the uncontrolled racing mind in turmoil. So many people are in turmoil. Even people with lots of worldly goods and money, if they would give everything they had, if they could escape that turmoil of a racing mind. And so, that's one of the greatest causes, or the results, of nervousness to remember – is your mind will not be free from that great turmoil, until you substitute the positive calmness for it.

And so another effect of nervousness is irritated and burned out nerves. These two things, remember, first, is with the mind; second, is with the instruments of the mind: the nervous system. And with those irritated and burned out nerves, how can there be harmony in life? How can there be natural living with an uncontrolled mind, and a burned out nervous system, or an irritated nervous system? There cannot be. That's the result of nervousness. We cannot afford to let this business go on. We cannot afford to be nervous. We must be what we truly are – calm, children of God. We must be able, under all conditions, as Master says, “To remain unshaken through the crash of breaking worlds.”

I remember one man – friend of mine – and we were talking, he used to come to the office. One time I said to him, I said, “A little mouse ran across the floor.” He turned white, completely white, I'm telling you. And I said, “What's the matter, Mr. Jones?” – same Mr. Jones I've spoken of before. . . different Mr. Jones, same name – I said, “What's the matter with you?” He says, “You know, every time I think of a mouse, even, I get that way.” Imagine. These are facts. Uncontrolled thought processes – uncontrolled. A mouse. You know, about that long. In the desert there are big long ones, and they have a tail that long, it seems, with a little brush on the end. But it's still a mouse, and I'll bet you, if I spoke about that mouse the same Mr. Jones, would feel the same way. Uncontrolled thought processes. Remember that.

We must, we must learn, and we can, to control the thought, and then the burned out nerves will have a chance to recuperate. The one blessing is, that nature and God will heal everything – even nervous tissue, they find out. They find out when the nerve is severed, that it sends out chutes to go along, it will join up, and give you the nervous impulse just the same. And so, we must remove these causes of uncontrolled mind, and burned, and irritated nerves.

Now, remember this, that we have only one nervous system, and it's very highly specialized. It can be repaired, it can repair itself. But no ordinary electrician can repair it; therefore, we must protect it. We cannot afford not to take care of it, and that's what I'll come to next, is how, how to heal the nervous system. This is a very important point. I'll try to make it short – how to heal the various nervous systems.

First, let us remember this one thing, that the physical nervous system, the astral, and mental nervous systems are all interrelated. Understand that. Aren't they all from the one Consciousness of God? Aren't they all from His Consciousness and Cosmic Energy? Every nervous system is related to the other. They're all related. Therefore, when I give you these certain things about the different nervous systems, things which will heal them, do not forget that one point – that they're all related, and that healing one will not finish the job. It will help, but, finally, we must go to the Source of all healing, which I'll come to in a few minutes.

First, now, the physical nervous system. Physical nervous system is healed, all nervous systems are healed, by those things which nourish them. Remember the illustration of the fat lady? The physical nervous system will be healed by proper food. But, nevertheless, if the astral and mental nervous system are in a turmoil, that will not be enough. But still, the physical nervous system needs right food, and that right food will heal the physical nervous system.

Now what, what are those proper foods? I'm not going to go into the whole list of them, but the first thing is milk is a very good nerve food, especially goat's milk. Milk is very necessary for nourishing the physical nervous system.

Then we come to that most wonderful food – most wonderful food, every time I hear it I nearly die – cottage cheese. Cottage cheese is the most wonderful food. But, every time I think of eating it with those little granules in it – but still it is. Realize that, that it is the most wonderful food: cottage cheese.

Then we have on others, lettuce. Lettuce is good. I can eat one kind and enjoy it. The rest I don't like them very much, because they don't like me. So we will not go into the kinds of lettuce. Lettuce is a very good food for the nerves – lettuce.

Almonds, almonds is very good, and finally, lime. Drinks made with lime. Master used to make a drink made with limes and sugar – plenty of sugar, you know, and water, of course – and on the hot days, we used to sit and drink that. I imagine it was good for my nervous system, but I also enjoyed what he told me while we were drinking, and the things he told me I have never forgotten. So those are perhaps the main things – foods that are necessary for healing the physical nervous system.

The other thing is controlled physical action. You know, if you're on the run all the time, rushing here and there, and you eat, you do not give nature a chance to digest your food properly. Those things interfere with the physical nervous system. Therefore, stop them – be moderate, obey the health laws of eating and also moderation. So much for the physical nervous system. Remember those few things, and remember, most of all, best of all, cottage cheese. That's the best one.

Now we come to the astral nervous system. Astral nervous system is healed with what? Self-control. Self-control heals the astral nervous system, and, therefore, the different practices of Self-Realization Fellowship yoga, wherein the Life Force is controlled – realize that – Life Force and consciousness go together. If you can control the Life Force, the consciousness will follow along. And Life Force, or self-control, means the food for the astral nervous system depends on the control of Life Force, and that is accomplished by the different techniques of Self-Realization Fellowship.

Just to give you a quick illustration of the highest technique of concentration, as you watch the breath, what happens? Heart slows down, breath slows down, Life Force is controlled. Instead of the heart pumping away, and the breath pumping away, Life Force is controlled, and that allows the astral nerves, which are just behind the physical nerves, it allows them to cool down. Just like an electric wire gets hot from too much energy, so the nerves get overburdened with heat. It allows them to cool down, and to regenerate themselves.

So self-control is the food for the astral nervous system. It is this fact that the overloaded nerves, by control of the Life Force, nerves are given a chance to cool down, and recuperate, and that, in turn, remember – I have to keep saying this because it is so important – that, in turn, affects the physical nervous system, because the astral nervous system is just behind the physical nervous system.

And then we come to, finally, the mental nervous system. The mental nervous system. What is that healed with? What's the food for the mental nervous system? Huh? Calmness. With a racing uncontrolled mind, when you turn your attention within through the practice of Self-Realization Fellowship yoga, and perhaps you see at the Spiritual Eye the Light of the Infinite, and with it comes the Great Calmness. Do you think the turmoil of the racing mind can stay? No. Peace and Calmness will be yours, and the uncontrolled thought processes are a thing of the past. Harmony will reign. Inharmony must go, if you bring the Calmness of the Spirit into your mental nervous system.

And so, calmness is the food for the healing of the mental nervous system, when the waves of the mind are still. That's why Master said always, "Still the waves of the mind." Still the waves of the mind. The lake of the mind must be still. Then what happens? Calmness flows naturally. That's why I haven't dwelled too much this morning on calmness. It isn't necessary to emphasize it. I must emphasize those things which we must do away with, as I have been doing. Then calmness will come of itself.

And so, as you practice the different techniques of Self-Realization yoga, which means Union with God, you will, without doubt, be more and more united to Spirit. And when you are united to God, you cannot act in an inharmonious way. The nervous system, all of them – physical, astral, and mental – will be nourished by that which we all need, is the Presence of God within us.

And so, finally, the greatest nerve tonic is what? The conscious contact with God. Never mind the physical nervous system, except obey the simple laws of which I have said – eat the physical vital foods, and those other things which nourish the physical nervous system. Practice your Self-Realization Fellowship techniques. Control the Life Force. But greatest of all, get that God contact.

What good is all this stuff unless you know and make God your own? So what good is it? It will not satisfy you. The Soul will not be satisfied, even though through yoga it sees the Light of Spirit. Even though through yoga it feels the Love of God throughout its being. The devotee will not be satisfied until there is complete Union with God, until the practice of yoga is followed by full surrender to God - then His Grace comes. You may see the Light of the Infinite. You may hear the Cosmic Sound – it gives you great solace. You may feel God is with you. But until you know He's with you, until you realize that you are one with Him, and that His Consciousness is your consciousness; until you do that, you will not be satisfied, and that comes when you fully surrender to God, after doing your best to feed the different nervous systems.

And so, God is Calmness. God is Bliss. God is everything. And, if you can just make Him your own; if you can realize that life is not worth living unless you take God with you in every action – and I mean it – not just listen to my words. Do it. Do it through meditation. God has sent you the way. God has sent you the channel of the Master. He has given you the way. He has made it simple to you through yoga, to get union with the Holy Vibration, the Word of God. Having that, then you are fit to receive the Grace of God. Receiving the Grace of God, then you will fully surrender to Him. Having Him, being one with Him, then no inharmony of any nervous system can remain – for God is Peace and Bliss.

And so, no matter what your position is in life, do one thing – work only to please God. This is a very important point. I don't care what you do. Work – whatever you do – to please God. Regularly meditate – work to please God. And the Master said one time, he said, "I used to work to try to please people. Now," he says, "I work only to please God." How simple it is. How can God escape you, if everything you do, from the lifting of a book, to anything, you do to please Him. Calmness must be yours, and calmness is the greatest nerve tonic of anything.

And, finally, I'll close by one reference from our Bible. From Isaiah, 35th Chapter, 10th Verse – and this is what happens when through just wanting God, loving God – listen, He gives us everything: our dear ones; everything we have; the ability to stand up here and talk to you, and for you to listen. Why is that so? Because of God. And so, our first allegiance must be with Him. And, if we realize that, and contact Him, feel His Presence, and then this is what happens.

In Isaiah, the 35th Chapter, the 10th Verse, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion. . ." Where is Zion? Zion is right within us. It is the Temple of God within, in each and every one of us. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

That's the promise of God. Nervousness is nothing. In the Presence of God it doesn't make a difference. If you want to be rid of nervousness, know God. Realize Him. Having Him, you will have all things.