

## The Role of Yoga Meditations

Francis describes the tantric path that he teaches, which includes the yoga meditations, as post-enlightenment sadhana. But that doesn't mean that the method of self-enquiry we used on the inward-facing path is no longer relevant after we have had a liberating glimpse of our true nature. That would be a mistake – both approaches are needed.

Another common mistake arises in connection with uncomfortable feelings or non-functional tensions in the body. On the outward-facing, tantric path, we learn that the deeper root of the belief in being a separate entity is stored as knots or tensions in the body. So it's natural to assume that we need to use the tantric methods given in the yoga meditations to dissolve any of those knots and tensions that arise, and therefore that we need to 'sit with the feeling' or do a yoga meditation for forty-five minutes or more in order to achieve this. We have been told that we mustn't do this in order to get rid of the feeling or the tension. So we sit there meditating, and trying not to want to get rid of the feeling. In two clarifying dialogues from a recent satsang, Francis explains why this is the wrong approach and what should be done instead when these feelings or tensions arise.

The first dialogue was with someone who had practical business problems:

*Q: I wake up at 4:00 in the morning with fear in my gut and then there is a cycle of thoughts. I go to the teaching and then 45 minutes or an hour later and I'm fine, I'm light. These fears are coming up from a business perspective, financial security and that area. And you often hear that the fears are there and it's for you to face the fears, and you go ahead and take the action despite the fear being there. I've done that and my confrontations have kind of backfired, and they've just made the situation a little more messy.*

FL: There are two kinds of fear: fundamental fear and derived fear. Fundamental fear is fear of absolute disappearance, fear of death, fear of complete annihilation of consciousness. Liberation liberates us from this fear. Sometimes going there through the sheer power of intelligence, of reason is sufficient. Sometimes there is kind of a knot, a fear on the level of the body which is irrational fear and reason is not sufficient. It seems that what is needed then is some form of courage to allow for this fear to seemingly eat us alive, seemingly destroy us. It's a kind of puja of the body, an offering of the body to the divine, for its destruction, for its annihilation. It's a trip up to the end of fear. When that has happened, the fundamental fear has been eliminated. However, the ripple effects of this liberation have not yet propagated through all areas of intellect and of the body. So it takes time. It's like when a pebble falls in the middle of the pond, it takes time for the waves that are generated by this impact to cover the entire surface of the pond. This liberation trickles down, so to speak, over time to all aspects of the intellect and of the body.

Now answering your question about the fear about the business, about money, about the body, about anything that arises. We have to put this fear in relation with the fear of absolute disappearance. Because, for instance in the case in point, if we are afraid of a possible bad outcome in the business, or we are afraid of bankruptcy and the financial difficult situation that will result from that, we have to ask ourselves 'let's assume that takes place'. How does that compare with dying, with complete disappearance? If liberation has taken place, immediately this fear about bankruptcy will release itself. If you are not liberated, if liberation has not taken place, this fear of bankruptcy will seem justified because if I don't have money I can't pay for the hospital if I am sick, or people are going to abandon me, or I'm going to die alone. And then fear of death, fear of disappearance comes to the foreground, and as long as this issue has not been

resolved through liberation, then all these ancillary fears will seem to be justified and we come back again and again.

If through the path of *jnana*, the power of higher reasoning, the power of intelligence or through an additional aspect of yoga – meaning not solely the intellectual access to the experience of our true nature, but also the knot of the heart has been opened – then we have to deal with this issue if it remains. That's the sadhana that follows the glimpse. We have to put this small fear of business, of health, of relationship, or whatever in relation with our liberation. It doesn't mean we won't have to take steps. We may need to take steps to salvage the business. We may have to fire people, we may have to do this or do that. But we will do this or that as the manager in a matter-of-fact fashion, just taking care of that which has to be taken care of, in the best, loving, intelligent way possible.

*Q: The practices – coming to the now, and even the yoga meditation for the body is what I do in the morning when I wake up at 4:30. I try to just distance myself from what's happening. So I engage in the yoga meditation that you have spoken of from Jean Klein and also Rupert, which is for the body and I understand is for the liberation that is not happening. That is the path that you take forward. That is what you were referring to?*

FL: Yes, but if in the morning, as you wake up, you have this kind of metaphorical 'bad taste' in the body, feeling that things are not correct, fear ... the *wrong* thing to do is to do the yogic meditation, hoping that by doing that, this fear is going to go away. In other words, it doesn't take forty-five minutes of sitting to realise that I have this situation in the body. Forty-five minutes are not needed – I'm going to save you a lot of time! What is needed is to ask the questions 'what is the cause for that, where does it come from?' That doesn't take forty-five minutes, it takes two seconds. ... It comes from the belief to be a human being.

*Q: Yes – ultimately, yes.*

FL: Not ultimately – right there. You can verify it right there. That's a two-second meditation. ... The cure is to liberate yourself from the belief in being a person. However, you have to establish the proper diagnosis which is to relate the symptom, the fear, to its origin which is ignorance, which is the belief to be a human being, a human body-mind. And that doesn't take long. Because all you have to do is to ask yourself the question 'would I still be afraid if I didn't believe to be this human body-mind?'. If I was universal consciousness, would I be afraid of what's going to happen in the business? Obviously not, because I'm the one who makes it happen. ... You can contemplate the contractions and symptoms in your body for as long as you want, but if you still believe to be a human being, you're cooked.

Now you can ask me 'what if in the morning, I have this fear, I do what you are telling me to do. I look for it and within two seconds, I know I only have this fear because I believe to be a separate human being'. Then the answer is: look within yourself – what do you really believe to be? If you really believe to be a separate human being, you have to accept the fear, you have to accept the symptoms in the body, you have to learn that whatever you are going to do in this moment in terms of meditation or whatever, is not going to help. The only thing you can do which may help you is to investigate what evidence you have to believe that way. That's all you can do.

Now, if you have already dealt with this question, and at that moment you say 'Oh that was stupid, I don't believe to be a separate human being', then you can ask 'what do I do about the fear in the body?'. Do I stay here for forty-five minutes minus two seconds, keeping the meditation? Hell, no! Because the moment I have dealt with the root cause of the fear, the fear

is going to dissipate on its own. It's just bodily sensations. There might be some present, but the body, in its wisdom, is going to take care of them. ...

So if the yoga meditations are not appropriate for dealing with negative feelings, such as fear, what is their purpose? Francis goes on to explain that their purpose is to investigate the sense of separation at the level of the body:

FL: Let me ask you a question. Is it clear to you regarding the bodily sensations, that we are talking about two very distinct categories of bodily sensations: one is the fear – unpleasant; the other one is the feeling to be separate – not unpleasant at all?

Q: No, then it's not. *The feeling to be separate is not unpleasant at all?*

FL: Yes, whatever evidence we have in this moment, when there is no fear, when there is nothing. What is the experiential evidence that I as awareness am separate? That's the question. And the answer to it is not fear. Fear is not the evidence that I am separate. Fear is *the effect of the belief* that I am separate. That's why I say that the body comes in both as the apparent evidence that I am separate, and also as fear, as the *consequence* of the belief that I am separate. The investigation is only about the first element – evidence that I am separate. The goal of the investigation is not to get rid of the second element, the fear. That's what I have been trying to convey to you. That's why I was saying that if you have fear and sit with your fear for forty-five minutes, it is totally useless.

Just take two seconds at the beginning to see whether this fear is related to the belief that you are separate. And then if you still believe to be separate, investigate what is the evidence that I am separate. Because this investigation may take you on the level of concepts, and then may take you to a different level in the body of bodily sensations that are not unpleasant, but that seem to be so natural that they seem to be evidence that you are this body. Intimate sensations – the sensation to be 'here' and not 'there'. You see the sensation to be here and not there is not unpleasant. Because that's something that has been condoned by society, condoned by culture, condoned all around that. So it seems so natural, it feels homey. It feels comfortable. It feels like 'yeah, yeah'. And somehow, if I try to challenge that, it feels like 'Oh, why would I do that?'. It feels like an aggression, like an intrusion into something that has been settled. So that which feels a little bit unpleasant is precisely this intrusion into looking at it, challenging the evidentiary value of this piece of evidence, that I am separate, that I am this body. And it's a common misunderstanding of the purpose of these yoga meditations.

And then the other aspect of this guided meditation is to enable us somehow artificially, to take our stand as awareness. In other words, through some kind of tantric trick, through this clever means – a slightly artificial means – to temporarily eliminate ignorance, so that the mind and the body are placed in their natural condition, their natural state. Free from ignorance, at least temporarily. Because then both the mind and the body have an organic memory of this natural condition. So by being placed again in this natural condition that they recognise, it's artificial because activities are suspended. Going into the past and into the future is suspended. Hypothetical thought which is necessary in the conduct of daily life, business and practical matters, is also artificially suspended. But then the mind gets used to this freedom, the body gets used to this absence of separation. And then when we go back to the activities of the day, this natural state, the *sahaja samadhi* condition perpetuates itself in the presence of activity in daily life. And the idea is that then, although the perfume of this presence fades away over time,

that eventually it won't fade away. That this background of inner peace will remain present throughout the activities of the day. So that's the second purpose of this meditation.

This meditation is done over time. We give over 45 minutes or 30 minutes to do that. We start by placing ourselves in this contemplative condition where we have nothing else to do than this meditation and this meditation will stick to that which is real. Don't go into the past or into the future or the pursuit of goals. We postpone everything, and therefore we are completely open to the now. Then in the beginning, we will observe the oscillation between letting go of all purpose and then having a goal again, letting go, having a goal. Then we get used to longer moments of being in this somehow artificial state. But then the body and the mind get used to this natural condition in which there is no tension of either the mind or the body. So then, when the body needs to be tense or the mind needs attention, it's OK because the background of peace is still there.

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A subsequent questioner asked whether it is helpful to use the yoga meditations as method of removing tensions in order to discover what it is like to perceive the world in the absence of any tension. Francis explained why this would also be a mistake:

FL: Everything in this process, in this business of the yoga that is based on duration and repetition is part of the lower path, the path of the individual, the path of the *jiva*. We should only seek that which is direct, the path of the energy in which the release is from the very beginning of the intention, not at the end of a process. We have to understand that as Shiva, we don't need time. When we take our stand as awareness, the letting go is a decision we make as awareness, and is immediate. Once we have made this decision, we remain in this condition of letting go up until, through the sheer power of our will and of our freedom, we decide again to choose ignorance, in which case, we contract again. But the most important thing at a certain level of maturity is to be acutely aware of our identification. If you ask the question, 'at this moment, am I in ignorance or not?', then the answer is 'what do I believe to be in this moment?'. Then the release will be immediate. And that applies to everything. If I don't believe to be a separate entity, there is nothing I have to do.

It's much more direct because then, at that moment, I understand that at that moment letting go is not a question of time. Letting go is an immediate decision in that moment that comes from our freedom because 'letting go' is simply letting go of ignorance. The sage Ksemaraja says 'in the moment one liberates oneself. In the moment, instantaneously, one binds oneself'. In other words, it doesn't take time, it's instantaneous. In one single moment, one falls back into bondage. And all of that is the exercise of our freedom as awareness. So when we understand this thing, in the moment, in one moment, that's the end of all these processes that take time. We have to know that in the moment when we liberate ourselves, when we let go, we are in our natural condition. From that moment on, we remain in this natural condition up until we choose to revert to ignorance.

*Q: And this natural condition could include bodily sensations?*

FL: It includes bodily sensations and thought. At that moment, the body and the mind are, through their own mechanism, evolving back to harmony. So we don't have to micro-manage this evolution back to harmony. We don't have to pay attention to anything. We are released. That's it. We have released the belief to be a separate person. We have released the belief to be here and not there. We are in not-knowing about what we are, both intellectually – let's put it

this way – intellectually we don't know *what* we are any longer, and physically, we don't know *where* we are. It is this double-unknowing. Intellectually I don't know what I am, and physically I don't know where I am. From any condition of ignorance we are in, we can instantaneously go to this not-knowing. And what we have to understand is that we stay there up until we decide otherwise. ...

The obstacle to understanding what I'm saying is due to the fact that we have a wrong picture of what liberation means, because the picture we have is the picture of a pleasurable state, of something that is positive, of something that we don't have yet and that is going to come to us as a positive thing. Whereas in fact it's like freedom. Freedom is not something that we don't have yet. It's something that we have now that we don't need. And that which we have now which we don't need is the jail cell. The prisoner in the jail cell is already free. He doesn't need to acquire something else – he needs to get rid of the jail cell. So it's the same idea. We don't need to acquire something: we just need to get rid of ignorance. That's all. ...

*Q: And then always these tensions respond. Then the point is not to see these tensions as answers to my questions? Although they are responses?*

FL: Oh. The tension appears as a bodily sensation. The question is 'what am I?'. And if the answer is 'I am this bodily sensation', then you have to ask: 'Oh, then is it somebody else who is perceiving them?'. And if the answer is 'no, it's me that is perceiving them, but I am the bodily sensation. At the time of perceiving, the perceiver and the perceived are one.' Fine. But then I perceive the sounds, I perceive the world. So in this argument according to which I am that which I am perceiving, then I am not just the bodily sensation, but I am also the world that I perceive. The problem is either I have to be nothing *[that is]* perceived, or I have to be everything that I perceive. That which doesn't make sense is to be only some things I am perceiving. In ignorance, I am something but not everything. In wisdom, we are everything. ...

That's a misunderstanding about the yoga. The belief that the yoga is about changing the perceptions, whereas it is really about changing our understanding of what they mean, our perspective. And then to allow for this change of perspective to trickle down, to follow its course on the level of the body and of the mind, and for the consequences of this change of perspective to unfold. But we don't make them unfold. All we do is to change the perspective and then everything happens on its own.

*Q: I think I made a mistake of reversing the process because somehow I correlated the releasing of these tensions to the changes of perspective.*

FL: Yes the change of perspective is the most important thing, and then we have to allow for the consequences to flow from that on the body. That's the direct path. We don't start from the body and from the mind and go into awareness. We start from awareness to allow for this glimpse to liberate the body and the mind from the residues of ignorance.

[Francis Lucille, webinar 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021: *Time is an Appearance in Eternal Reality*]

## Contemplation

*Don't be busy with fear; be busy with your true nature. Be interested in knowing what you are, in being with what you are, in falling in love with and abiding in your own presence.*

[Francis Lucille: *Truth, Love, Beauty*]