



HOW TO BRING SPIRITUALITY INTO FAMILY LIFE

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**Swami Veda
Bharati**

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by Swami Veda Bharati

This is a transcription of a talk given by Swami Veda Bharati on 22nd February 2013 at the Nurturing Spirituality in the Family Conference.

Bring your mind to your asana where you are sitting.
Turn inwards.
Relax your forehead.
Feel the flow and the touch of your breath in your nostrils, with your personal mantra.
Breathing slowly, gently, smoothly.
No break in your breathing cycle, no break in your mantra cycle.
Observe how the mind, mantra and breath are flowing together as a single stream.
Without breaking the stream of consciousness gently open your eyes.
May God and Guru bless us all.

I plan to keep it short. I will not cover everything that I am bubbling with. You can do your own research, and more than research, your own contemplations.

There are two books by Swami Rama on the subject that are available: [Love and Family Life](#) and [Let the Bud of Life Bloom: A Guide to Raising Healthy and Happy Children](#).

Whatever you do in life,
Whatever actions you undertake,
Whatever gestures you make,
Whatever words you speak,
Whatever glances you throw,
Whatever thoughts you think,
Whatever emotions you feel,
Establish each one's connection with the cosmic scheme.
That is called – sacrament; living sacredly. That alone is a lifelong sadhana.

This universe is an ocean, a multilayer ocean of energies. Some energies the scientists deal with. Some energies the spiritual seekers experience and find. And many mysteries in the scientific field cannot be resolved without

understanding these intangible energies called 'atindriya' – the ones beyond senses.

One universal energy is 'samashti chitta' – the universal mind.

Just one of many in the multilayer ocean of energies called the universe -as there are streams and currents, waves, ripples, and bubbles in the ocean at each layer, at each level, so in this universal mind there are streams and currents.

The yogis experience these streams, currents, waves, ripples, bubbles.

When we are in harmony with these energies we have a happy, peaceful and fulfilled life. So learn to connect every event of your individual mind. Learn to connect every event of your individual mind with this universal mind, with this 'samashti chitta'. Only then you will understand the mysteries of life and the purpose of life.

These currents, these streams, in this energy field of the universe are the pathways that our times take. Our past, present, and future. These streams and energies cross each other, they merge with each other, they separate from each other. The mergers of certain streams occur because of the special karmic forces inherent in them.

We are participants in this universal energy,
By our actions.
By our actions called thoughts.
By our actions called? Thoughts.
By our actions called words.
By our actions called movement.

We give certain impelling direction to these currents, these streams, in the universal mind energy field. Please understand this principle if you want the meaning of life. These are called karmic forces. Where these energies impelled by these karmic forces meet each other, they are the confluences of many lives, confluences of currents. What are those confluences in this energy, confluences of currents called? They are called the family. Now understand this. What family is. The currents that have met, also separate, and go their way, with new karmic forces. So what you make of the family is up to you.

Where is the family made? What is the core? The central point?

It is the consciousness of the fetus. That is where the mother energy, the father energy, and the energy of this soul are meeting together. And yet we pay no attention to the training of the fetus.

Now please understand that these confluences, called the fetuses, are the ones where these energies meet.

Now, from here I can take many directions to this argument. To make life sacred is to live understanding that this entire universe is what we call a 'yagna'. The word 'yoga' has become very popular, but actually they are twin words that have been used in Indian spirituality - 'yoga' and 'yagna' - The inner union and the sacraments of life.

The essence of 'yagna' is 'na mama' - not mine. That everything I am doing is an offering in a sacred fire. When I am feeding a child I am performing a yagna. I am putting an offering into that prana fire. When I am eating, also I am performing the same yagna. Without understanding the word yagna, you will not understand the applied spirituality.

So, that is where all the sacraments come from. Understanding the karmic principles and living with the mental attitude of 'namah', not mine.

There is a tradition in a few, very rare, families in India, where one child of the family is given to an ashram or a temple and is raised to take care of the spiritual needs of the people. There are still some families that do that. Rare ones. Less in North India. More in the East and in the South. Or if an astrologer predicts that a child will not live long, they give the child to a Guru. Because if you live for others you will live. It's a nice trick on fate, and on karmic processes.

Or someone goes to Swami Rama and says, my astrologer has predicted that tomorrow I am going to die. He said no, tomorrow you will take vows of Sannyasa. Called him over and gave him the vows of Sannyasa.

What is the mystery behind these acts of yagna? These acts of sacraments? These acts of sacrifice? The word 'sacrifice' means making sacred.

Then there is the possessive way of living. The other way, as I said, is the way of possessive life. 'My' son. 'My' daughter. 'My' house. 'My' family. 'My' future.

You want to understand these words, understand how these cosmic currents that I have described are flowing and how their confluences have occurred.

To appreciate and recognize these confluences special rituals have been developed, in all parts of the world. Nowadays, in the modern life, there is a negligent attitude towards ritual. "Oh, that's only a ritual." Because you perform your rituals only with the body. Ritual is when you pray with the whole body. With all the limbs of your body. When you pray with all the senses. There is something of smell and something of sight. Something blooming, something blazing, something flowing and a sense that in the moment of that ritual, in the moment of that sacrament, in that yagna moment, these energies are more alive and awake and you take an immersion into them.

I find in the modern world for example, even before people start planning for a child – the planning they should do, they don't do.

The spiritual planning. What is the spiritual place of this child in this confluence of energies called the family? Nobody thinks about that. When they start planning, they think of the name. They think of the room. They think of the crib or the cradle. In the traditions of India, nobody ever, well, nowadays I don't know what the traditions of India are, because so much of India right in front of my eyes, has vanished in the last 50 years, in the last 80 years. It's no longer there.

But I still speak of India because it is from the essences of the tradition that I draw my inspiration and my information. In that tradition nobody thinks of giving a name to a child until quite a little time after the birth. Because the consciousness of the fetus at present is in a boat. In a boat, in a stream between two shores. Those who are standing on this shore, they are only thinking of someone arriving. They are not thinking of someone who has departed from the other shore. Where has he or she departed from? Nobody thinks of that.

This consciousness of a fetus is half linked to the past life and half to what is to come. In fact, that fetus is hardly aware of what is to come.

He is aware of the loud sounds that the mother hears. He is aware of the emotions that the mother is feeling. And feels those emotions because his body and mind and prana are so intricately and deeply linked with the mother's body, mind and prana. With that umbilical cord, you're not only feeding or nourishing the body of the child, you are also sending your prana there;

By every thought
By every thought
By every emotion
By every emotion
By every movement you make,
you are educating that fetus.

But it's not your child yet. The consciousness, this unit of consciousness is still in a boat, mid stream, crossing over.

Even when the child has come out of the birth channel, he or she is not yet yours. The samskaras of the past are still very strong.

Don't start claiming them too early. So nobody in India ever buys, well, no again, I am talking of old India, I don't know what's happening nowadays. Nobody in India ever buys clothes for a child until after he or she is born.

Because we know that we cannot yet claim the child. That soul is not ours yet. These processes have stations; these stations are called sacraments, samskaras. These are performed in many cultures.

I am so deeply impressed by the culture of spiritual Africa, for example, to which hardly anybody pays attention. There are a few books now about the way in which the children are welcomed into the world and the way in which they are planned to be brought into the world.

But I want to tell you something. You will not like it. What you read in English and French is diluted soup. Diluted juice. 10 parts real juice and 90 parts water. To learn about spirituality you need to go to the other languages. Korean poetry cannot be translated into English. Chinese poetry cannot be translated into English. Sanskrit poetry cannot be translated into English; people read it in English. That is why the mantra recitations in the rituals here – they cannot be translated.

So you have these stations, before you plan for, when you plan for a child, what do you plan spiritually? I was a householder, married man, Mrs. Arya is here. To welcome a son in my life, my Master gave me a special Shri Vidya practice which I had to do for 40 days in the attic of my house in USA. That is called planning for a child. You don't do any planning. My mother did three years of Gayatri. Good for her, because then I never had to go to school. I was teaching from the Vedas at the age of nine. And my mother did all the Gayatri and it was done. So the preparations you make before birth, before conception, the sacraments you have during pregnancy.

You may not follow nowadays all of the attitudes from the times that these sacraments were developed. But you take the essence and learn of the sacraments of different cultures. Do not reject them as mere rituals because as I have explained, ritual means praying with all your senses. Ritual means praying with your whole body. Some recitation with the mouth. Some movement of the hand. How your eyes are fixed, how you are seated.

I have seen this sense of the sacred in many cultures. I watch the facial expression of the people when they receive Prasad among the Hindus. I've seen the same expression in the Catholics and the Greek Orthodox when they are receiving the sacrament. I've seen the same expression of face. I watch. And I say, the spirit is present. At that moment, the spirit, the Holy Spirit descends into you.

The Jewish rituals; the Yajno paveeta the sacred thread ceremony of India; the Bar Mitzva, the day a child is introduced to the Scriptures. Dr. Shirin Venkat, please tell about 'Navjot' in the Zoroastrian community.

Dr. Shirin: "Navjot is done for both girls and boys. And it's usually done at the same age as the 'Upanayana.' It is an induction into the religious

tradition of Zarathustra. It's also lighting a new lamp within you to bring you into the Zarathustrian faith, and we are taught the prayers. And we are given 'gomutra' to purify ourselves. We are supposed to prepare a few days before, when we receive our Navjot. And it is done just like Yagna, in front of a fire and offering sandalwood and sour curd to the fire."

So Navjot is like the Bar Mitzva, like the sacred thread ceremony, introducing the child to the sacred responsibility, to open the scriptures.

Now, for a community of meditators who are above the idea of confinement to specific religions, you can learn something from each culture.

You can learn from Bar Mitzva.

You can learn from Navjot.

You can learn from the sacred thread ceremony.

You can learn from the purificatory ordeals that a child has to go through to be made worthy of receiving the sacred lore in the cultures of Africa. Or of New Zealand.

But you cannot do them as rituals. They must be internalized.

There must come a sense of the feeling of the sacred. Yes, indeed. Let the spirit descend. That is, let that confluence of a family event, such as a wedding, such as a conception, such as a sacred thread, such as Bar Mitzva, such as Baptism, such as Navjot.

It's not two people uniting. It's not father and mother bringing the child to be baptized. There is a secret presence. And you forget that secret presence. And that is the presence of the total field of the universal consciousness. Call it GOD. Don't call it GOD.

We have here a Chinese Buddhist Monk who is waiting also for receiving Swami vows. He can tell us about the Buddhist tradition. How the purification of the child's spirit...

What I am saying to you: please take the essence, take the spirit, and make your life sacred and make your family sacred.

When the ancient Greeks sat down to eat they took out little bits of food, "This is unto Apollo"; "This is unto Zeus". So also those who are brought up in the orthodox traditions, they take out a little bit of the food, place it as a 'bali' offering for the beings. I have seen in India, at least that was so 60, 70 years ago when I was living in this country, a father will take the child for a walk with some sugar. Finding an ants' nest, he teaches the child to feed the ants. That is called 'bali'. There are five daily sacraments - pancha maha yagnas.

Sometime, someday I'll tell you about it. Well, I will be in silence, but every now and then I will teach on a computer screen.

As I told you, in the beginning of this session I am not going to give you everything I am bubbling with. But I have given you the essence. Think about it, discuss it. And see how to implement it. How to make your life sacred. And how to make the family a sacred event. And understand every thought you think, every thought you think, every emotion you feel, every emotion you feel, every glance, every movement of the finger, the clothing you wear, the clothing you wear, the food you prepare. Connect it to the cosmic reality as an experience; as a personal experience.

When we have special feasts for the monks, for the sadhus here, they recite the 15th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita before eating. And I've looked at that chapter, because I recite it also by heart.

अहंवैश्वानरोभूत्वाप्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १५- १४ ॥

The Lord says: I become the *Vaishvanaro*, the universal fire, dwelling in the living beings, living in the bodies of all the living beings, *praninam deha masritah*. I, *Vaishvanaro*, become the universal fire dwelling in the bodies of all the living beings, and joined by the forces of prana and apana, I take the nourishment and digest it for their continuity. How many of you eat that way?

That the divine fire is eating, and you are making it an offering.

So I wish you success in your deliberations and your internalizing how your perceptions of life will change, and how you will internalize and become a walking, sacred fire.

God Bless you All.

Thank you.