

9 CONCENTRATION

1. How has all the knowledge in the world been gained but by the concentration of the powers of the mind? The world is ready to give up its secrets if we only know how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point; that is the secret.
2. The mind takes up various objects, runs into all sorts of things. That is the lower state. There is a higher state of the mind, when it takes up one subject, and excludes all others, of which samadhi is the result.
3. The flow of this continuous control of the mind becomes steady when practised day after day, and the mind obtains the faculty of constant concentration.
4. How are we to know that the mind has become concentrated? Because the idea of time will vanish. The more time passes unnoticed the more concentrated we are. In common life we see that when we are interested in a book we do not note the time at all, and when we leave the book we are often surprised to find how many hours have passed. All time will have the tendency to come and stand in the one present, So the definition is given, when the past and present come and stand in one, the mind is said to be concentrated.
5. Herein is the difference between man and the animals-man has the greater power of concentration. The difference in their power of concentration also constitutes the difference between man and man. Compare the lowest with the highest man. The difference is in the degree of concentration. This is the only difference.
6. Everybody's mind becomes concentrated at times. We all concentrate upon those things we love, and we love those things upon which we concentrate our minds.
7. We should put our mind on things; they should not draw our minds to them. We are usually forced to concentrate. Our minds are forced to become fixed upon different things by an attraction in them which we cannot resist. To control the mind, to place it Just where we want it, requires special training. It cannot be done in any other way. In the study of religion the control of the mind is absolutely necessary. We have to turn the mind back upon itself in this study.
8. Concentration of the powers of the mind is our only instrument to help us see God. If you know one soul your own, you know all souls, past, present and to come. The will concentrates the mind, certain things excite and control this will, such as reason, love, devotion, breathing, etc. The concentrated mind is a lamp that shows us every corner of the soul.
9. Q-How is it that desires rise even after mental concentration is acquired? A. Those are the outcome of previous Samskaras deep-rooted impressions or tendencies. When Buddha was on the point of merging in Samadhi superconsciousness, Mara made his

appearance. There was really no Mara extraneous to the mind; it was only the external reflection of the mind's previous Samskaras.

10. Concentration is the essence of all knowledge; nothing can be done without it. Ninety per cent of thought force is wasted by the ordinary human being, and therefore he is constantly committing blunders; the trained man or mind never makes a mistake.

11. When the mind is concentrated and turned backward on itself, all within us will be our servants, not our masters. . . . The Hindu concentrated on the internal world, upon the unseen realms in the self, and developed the science of Yoga. Yoga is controlling the senses, will, and mind. The benefit of its study is that we learn to control instead of being controlled. Mind seems to be layer on layer. Our real goal is to cross all these intervening strata of our being and find God.

12. This is what Raja-Yoga proposes to teach. The goal of all its teaching is how to concentrate the mind, then, how to discover the innermost recesses of our own minds, then, how to generalise their contents and form our own conclusions from them. It, therefore, never asks the question what our religion is, whether we are Deists, or Atheists, whether Christians, Jews, or Buddhists. We are human beings; that is sufficient. Every human being has the right and the power to seek for religion. Every human being has the right to ask the reason, and to have his question answered by himself, if he only takes the trouble.