

Spiritual Instructions

Allow the light of reason to remove the dark confusions of your mind. Be thoughtful. Develop the art of reflection. Do not drift along with the thoughts and sentiments of the mind; be a witness to them, and finally assert your mastery over them!

See how the tiny waves of desires assume gigantic proportions when they are not withdrawn in their initial stages. Practice vigilance. Be watchful over the movements of the mind.

Learn to differentiate between the *satwic* state of placidity and harmony and the *rajasic* and *tamasic* states of confusion and stupor. See how your mind tends to degenerate into *rajas* and *tamas*. Control this tendency by the art of spiritual enquiry, meditation and devotion.

When a good karma begins to fructify, there arises a certain degree of *sattwa* in your mind. The bliss of the Self reflects in that *satwic* state of mind. But due to ignorance, you develop the idea that happiness is due to an external object or condition.

Your mind is colored with the idea that objects are wonderful. This coloring becomes intensified as *sattwa* gives way to *rajas*, which externalizes the mind. If you were to develop the habit of remembering God whenever there is an occasion for joyousness, you would not allow your mind to stoop to the level of *rajas*.

The perception of joy during the *satwic* state of mind becomes a matter of craving when *rajas* takes over the mental atmosphere. Instead of experiencing the illuminating form of joy, one begins to develop a degrading sense of dependence upon the objects of the world. Driven by ignorance, the *rajasic* state of mind soon turns into a *tamasic* state. A person develops craving for the objects of the world.

Keep a constant watch over your mind. When adversity comes, your mind comes under the power of *rajas*. However, by the force of your egoistic reactions, *rajas* is replaced by *tamas* (inertia). Any negative situation is never as bad initially as your negative mentation turns it into eventually. If you check the development of *tamas* (inertia), and patiently strive to turn the *rajasic* state of mind into a *satwic* state by calm resignation to the Divine Self within, you will triumph over your miseries in a short time. Further, you will gain immense willpower as a result of triumphing over your negative circumstances.

The heroism of an aspirant lies in the art of removing *tamas*, channelizing *rajas*, and intensifying *sattwa*. If you let your mind be bathed in the gentle light of *sattwa* for a long time, you will resolve all the complexes of your mind. You will enjoy increasing contentment, peace, and balance of mind.

With the predomination of *sattwa*, you will develop the art of transcending the triad of seer, seen and sight, which constitutes the experience of the world, and you will abide on the Self.

By Swami Jyotirmayananda