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Om Shri Shivabalayogi Maharajaya Namaha

TRANSCRIPT of CONVERSATION
with
His Holiness Shri Shri Shri Shivabalayogi Maharaj

“New Age Forum” Television Interview Video Tape
Santa Barbara, June 1989

Translation by Shiladitya Singh. “Q” refers to the talk show host Charles Whitt, “SBY” to the response of Shivabalayogi as translated by Singh, and “S” to comments by Singh.
Comments by Swamiji himself are in **bold italics**.
Comments of the transcriber, Tom Palotas, are in brackets [].

Before the program began.

Q Is there a single theme that Swamiji would like to stay with, basically? What’s the most important thing he would like to cover?

SBY The meditation.

The Program

Q Welcome to “New Age Forum.” My name is Charles Whitt.

I want to begin with an apology, an apology for having to use language, words to describe an experience that traditionally just can’t be done in language. So with that apology, let me speak a little bit more. I apologize, Swamiji.

Siddharta, which was the name of the Buddha before enlightenment as a young man, wandered about India. And he saw basically suffering, suffering, nothing but suffering. If there was one universal experience he had in India at the time it was suffering. The suffering of birth, the tears and the death of the mother in lots of cases, the deformation of a child, this is suffering. Disease, the suffering of disease. And then infirmity of old age. And finally the fear and the horror of death. So suffering and how do we get out of it. And that’s the reason that we are hoping we can get out of it in some way, through meditation.

This is the reason we have Swamiji with us. Welcome. Welcome to “New Age Forum.”

Swamiji was at fourteen years old — in this 1949, so that you at least in normal chronological years find out how old he is, but I am sure that he is much older than that. At the age of fourteen he entered into spontaneous samadhi. We’ll find out what samadhi is in just a second. And he spent the next twelve years completing various yogas, various tapas, accumulating different powers. The austerities, and they are just amazing: meditating for twenty-three hours a day for eight years, and then later twelve hours a day for four

years. And then in 1961 at age twenty-six he emerged with extraordinary spiritual powers. He received these through self-realization. We’ll find out what self-realization is too, all of these things are really quite important. And he’s spent the last twenty-seven years guiding people into inner peace. And he is regarded as one of India’s greatest saints.

So, I feel quite kind of profane around a saint, actually. So I hope that I can meditate and feel pure after all this is over.

It is interesting that Swamiji did not want to talk about politics. And the reason he didn’t want to talk about politics is because it is in a fallen state and a good man doesn’t enter it. This is a raging thing in the west and we are all very interested in politics. There’s people in power who make decisions that affect all of our lives, usually for the worse. So he is probably quite wise. Maybe he can let us know how to get out of politics and into goodness.

What is meditation, Swamiji?

SBY Does Swamiji has to demonstrate, or you want an explanation?

Q Again . . . In words first, an explanation of meditation, if you could. But if you would rather demonstrate it, perfect.

SBY Swami says that meditation is to control one’s mind. Through meditation one can get peace of mind, one’s blood pressure comes down. And whatever one does in life he can do it well. Then one comes to know what _____ his mind is. So understanding, everyone can function and work together. “Good work.” And the quality of work will be good.

Q Singh, you are our interpreter. We have a kind of *Rashoman* situation. It’s wonderful talking. We might have some confusion. So if I repeat questions, _____that OK.

S Yes.



Q So meditation . . . you can begin the process of meditation anywhere? If you are a garbage man, if you are a poet, if you are a producer like Skip, with all this electronic stuff? Can you begin anywhere with meditation. Can you focus on any object and begin the process of meditation? Is any object OK? A paper cup, an artificial flower, fruit? [pointing to objects in the studio]

SBY Swami says one doesn't have to see all these things. If one does meditation one can see all these things. It will come on its own.

Q How does the world change for the meditator? From what to what? What is the difference? What happens?

SBY Swami says that if one does meditation, you can get peace of mind. He can do his work well. He can understand others, and also advise others on how to work, can guide them.

Q Are there things that I could be doing wrong in a profession that would change under meditation. Say I was a torturer in South America, and I'm good at my job. And you were a good torturer. This is just the thing, right? Is it possible to reach a higher level of consciousness, of spirituality, by continuing to be a torturer?

SBY Swami says that if one undergoes training in meditation, one can become a good man and he can never go on the wrong path.

Q The wrong path then is anything that detracts from goodness, right?

SBY Swami says that if one's mind is not under control, then only he goes on the wrong path. But if the mind comes under control, then he only uses the intelligence and functions.

Q How do we get our mind under control? Can we have a brief demonstration, or as long as you want? How meditation begins?

SBY You just look at Swamiji. He will demonstrate. [Swamiji straightens his back, closes his eyes, keeps still for a few seconds, and then points to the spot between his eyebrows with his right thumb.] One has to look here, at this spot, yes. [Swamiji continues to meditate for twenty-four seconds.] This is how one should meditate and one should meditate for an hour.

If one meditates one gets a lot of peace and one can see a lot of visions, just like this fruit, or the flowers and fruits. All these visions and experiences come automatically.

Q Automatically. But not after an hour.

S When you are meditating, yes. "One hour." But one should meditate for an hour.

Q If you've never meditated before and you begin this process, can you guarantee that within an hour I'll have visions?

SBY Yes.

Q OK, I'm ready. You see in the West we are addicted to fast things. If it's not manifested very, very quickly — foods, fast cars . . .

SBY Swami says regarding meditation, Swamiji can guarantee anything.

Q We can guarantee this commercial. We'll be right back.

[commercial]

Q Welcome back to "New Age Forum." I just rattle on. I apologize. Kind of verbal diarrhea. But I apologized at the very beginning.

Your name. All of the gurus, all of the Eastern teachers that have come from the sixties up have these very amazing names. Officially you are Shiva Bala Yogi Maharaj. What is the — I know what Shiva means. What does this mean, you name?

SBY "*Shiva, Shankara Bhagavan. Bala, Parvati. Yogi, ham. Maharaj, public, _____, guru.*"

Q Okay.

SS You want me to —?

Q Yes, please. I think I knew that baha was poverty, a vow, is that right?

SS Shiva is Shankara Bhagavan, God Shiva.

Q The Destroyer.

SS And Parvati is "Bala" Goddess, Lord Shiva's consort.

Q Consort?

SS Yeah.

Q Okay.

SS Yogi is Swamiji himself. And — "*maharaj, guru*" maharaj is the guru, the preceptor.

Q The preceptor. So in you, the male and the female, Shiva and his consort are dancing light and goodness and —

SBY [Shilditya translates using the word, "ardhanarishwara."] "*Yes.*" Yes. That in Sanskrit is called *ardhanarishwar*. Mean half man, half woman. So Swamiji personifies this aspect.

Q Swamiji, a simple, a simpler question. How does meditation heal? How do you heal?

SBY Swami says by doing meditation, blood pressure comes down. When blood pressure comes down, one can



have a good health. Then he, through his *tapas shakti*, he blesses the vibhuti, and so “*people _____*”, then he heals the people like that. He blesses the vibhuti by his *tapas shakti* and advises them to take vibhuti for whatever different ailments they are suffering from.

Q Do you know before the meditation begins what is wrong with a person? Do you have this vision?

SBY Yes. Swami can know.

Q So you can actually tailor — There’s not just one meditation? Or is there just one basic kind of meditation, or are there several different kinds of meditation based on who that person is, what kind of help he needs.

SBY Swamiji says the kind of meditation he learned from God, the same type of meditation he teaches.

Q Learned it from God.
All right.

A question about money. I was, I was — One of the things that impressed me right off the bat when I saw the flyer, your flyer, your advertisement for yourself and what you do, is that you charge no money

SBY Swamiji says that one cannot find God, or reach God through money.

Q But, how does he support himself? By friends who provide for his . . .

SBY It comes automatically, the required, whatever is required. People come and just donate. Like you called here Swamiji for this program. Swamiji doesn’t have the . . . anything about money in his mind. He doesn’t think about it. If one is following the path of what’s God, then there is no need to think about all such things. Whatever required comes automatically. “*No trouble.*” [Swamiji chuckles.]

Q Would you say then that the gurus that charge lot of money for their spiritual expertise are on the wrong path? Are they . . .

SBY [Before any translation] “*Business, not yoga.*” Swamiji says that is business. That is not yoga.

Q That’s not yoga. Even though they say that that’s what they’re doing? What are they doing then if they’re asking us for money? I mean in the United States to not charge money is just . . .

SBY [Swamiji is laughing at the expression of bewilderment on the talk host’s face.] The people who do business, they cannot reach God, they cannot . . . To reach God there’s no need to take money.

Q Gosh. I wish I’d . . . oh, I was born in the wrong country I think, really. Money. In meditation . . .

SBY [interrupting] Swami says there’s an idea that if one donates, one gives a lot of money, one can come towards God. But it is a fallacy. Swami says that if one wants to reach God one has to do sadhana.

Q Which is?

SBY Practical, training. One has to undergo practical training. And the real guru is he who trains people.

Q Trains people.

SBY Practice. He says the money is not required. And guru can get his food anyway. There’s no need to charge money for that. Just like when Swamiji came and you offered water. Same way. A real guru gets food like that. “*No trouble.*” [Swamiji chuckles.]

[break for first song, “Om Shiva”]

Q Swamiji, in your own personal life, what part do pain and suffering play in your road to enlightenment, if I can ask it that way? Did you suffer?

SBY Swami says that all the pain and suffering which one has to undergo is a test. “God test.” A test from God’s side. So if one passes these tests then one can reach God.

Q What happens if you don’t pass the test? What form does the test take? How does God test you?

SBY Like you are studying at school. So you have to take examinations. How do the teachers, they tested you? Same way.

Q The same way. Well I failed in some of them.

SBY [Before any translation] “*Fail? No tapas fail.*” [Swamiji chuckles]

Q Is there failure in meditation? Is there failure in the life of . . .

SBY Yes.

Q What form did it take in your life? If I can ask.

SBY Swami says that if one does not stick to this path of tapas and if one doesn’t obey to the guru and takes to other paths, then one fails. Then again, guru calls that person, who has deviated from this path of tapas. And again after some time he has to follow this same path. The guru puts him on the same path.

Q I see.

We talk about his guru, who taught him. In America we are used to individualism and doing things ourselves. Is it possible to meditate successfully without . . .

SBY [interrupting] “*No, no, no*”

Q . . . a leader or guru as guide?



SBY Swami says yes, one can meditate. But after some time you'll get into a circle, some sort of circle. And then you won't know how to go beyond that. So that is the time when one requires a guru. Otherwise there is no chance.

Q Getting caught in a circle would be?

SBY It's like coming to a roundabout and there are many roads which lead in various directions. So at that time the guru is required to show you which road leads to God.

Q Alright. As the student of the guru, he is taking care of you. Do you ever experience his humility in failing to point out the right way? Is failure still a part of the guru's life? Is he fallible? Does he make mistakes?

S Guru?

Q Yes.

SBY A true guru will never make a mistake.

Q Never make a mistake. Because he is a manifestation of God. Yes?

SBY Because a true guru follows the orders of God. That's why there is no chance of failure.

Q My goodness, figuratively and literally.

Spiritual materialism. As you begin a path of enlightenment you get, you're filled with a feeling of power and specialness. Is this a real danger, and what kind of meditative precautionary tale can you make about it? What goes wrong in meditation?

SBY If one gets an ego then there are a lot of obstacles, one faces obstacles. the powers and everything. So one should not use the powers. Until one gets the final siddhi one should not use the powers.

Q Could I make a bargain with a guru and say I want a particular kind of power and I will do this and that? Is it possible to bargain with God?

SBY Swami says if you are doing tapas or mediation for that particular purpose, then you will get that only.

Q We're going to take a short breath [sic] to get my breath. A short breath to get my breath! We'll be right back.

[commercial break]

Q Welcome back to Swamiji, a man of light and goodness. If you could just hear what we were saying while the cameras were off. It's amazing. It's entirely another show.

I want to ask two more, two more questions, and then the audience, his friends will get even more questions.

My question has to do with the spirit and the flesh. Is there a conflict that occurs in meditation over spirit and flesh. That's the problem of problems, the spirit and the flesh. Can you pursue goodness and purity in a fleshy way? Can you be a good hedonist and still be spiritual? Can you pursue . . . What can I say? Can you be lusty and still be saved?

SBY Swami says that there is a definite connection between the body and the spirit. So when one meditates the spirit goes up and then at that point [Singh gesturing above his head] it comes out of the body. "*Samadhi*." And goes into samadhi and stabilizes over the head about six inches high. And after some time it re-enters the body. So there is a definite connection between the body and the spirit. "*Atma*." The atma.

Q So one could — . But that is the basis of yoga. Because the spirit is in the body and since the body so palpably there all the time, or as good ideas aren't, if you're not educated well, let's say, or not really spiritual, the body is none the less there. So you start with what is closest to you. And that's the body. You begin— is that true?

SBY Swami says yes. If one leads a holy life he can progress and evolve on the spiritual path, and he can even see God.

Q I see. If you love, can you do what you will? Can you love and do what you will?

S If you — ?

Q — love, can you do what you will?

S It's a can't — terminology. What do you mean by love?

Q Yes, what do we mean by love. Swamiji knows, and so do his friends here. We want to get some questions. And — sorry, the song. I'm sorry Skip I'm just, truly giddy. There he his.

We have a second song, which actually is a benediction. It's a traditional greeting, kind of a greeting of goodbye for Swamiji. And it's called the e-ra-ti [i.e. *arthi*]. I don't know what that word means, but it's again from our friend Mr. Wood. We'll have that and then the questions form you all.

[song]

Q Welcome back to Swamiji and his wonderful friends. The first question from one of them. Does someone have a simple question? I've been asking all these bizarre ones.

D Swamiji, the word samadhi. You hear it a lot but I don't know the meaning.

SBY Which type of samadhi are you talking about?



- D How many types of samadhi is there?
- SBY Swami says there is one type of samadhi is when you are meditating. A current passes through the body. Then you go into samadhi and you forget about your body. Another samadhi, you are meditating. **“Deep samadhi. Deep samadhi.”** So another samadhi is a deeper samadhi, than the first. And the current passes from the backside of your spine. And you go into samadhi and that samadhi becomes sort of a standard samadhi. Then there is another deeper samadhi, and that is the last samadhi. In that the soul comes out of your body. And . . . **“six inch . . .”** stabilizes about six inches over the head. And then you can get the sakshatkar of God.
- Then there is another kind of samadhi in which one, in meditation, one gets experiences, and one gets a lot of happiness and forgets about his body. That is another kind of samadhi . . . due to the experiences.
- D Could you personally put somebody in samadhi without them being in meditation?
- SBY Swamiji says yes. That’s why Swamiji has come here, and this is Swamiji’s duty.
- D Is Swamiji always in samadhi, that highest samadhi?
- SBY Swamiji can get into both states: higher samadhi as well as another state, a mundane state. So if you want to see Swamiji practically demonstrating, then you’ll sit in the meditation classes. Then you can observe and come to know. **“Blessings.”**
- D I’d like to ask Swamiji if it’s necessary for us to reach enlightenment, self-realization, if we need to complete the tapas? Or is that a particular path that one is on?
- SBY Swami says to get samadhi, one has to do meditation. But if you follow the line of devotion [*bhakti*], then you can do any other thing. If you pray then you can get a lot of devotion. But you cannot get samadhi.
- D Swamiji tells me to meditate one hour daily. I have meditated. I meditate one hour daily, but I find since Swamiji is now here I can’t meditate. My sense is so busy [the devotee is a tour organizer and host]. Can you reach samadhi by just being very . . . keeping each daily for an hour meditation. Can you reach that state through that hour, or do you need to continue longer periods?
- SBY Swami says if you meditate for an hour daily, then your mind will come under control. And then one day you will get samadhi and then you won’t be aware as to how long you’ve been sitting in meditation.
- D And this could be many lifetimes that I would have to go through before I’d reach this state?
- SBY If you practice daily then in this lifetime only you can reach.
- Q I could meditate just on that scarf, it’s so wonderful. The colors are so beautiful.
- D I wanted to ask about tapas. Could you speak on fasting as tapas. Is fasting tapas?
- SBY Swami says tapas is not fasting. Tapas means you have to practice.
- D In Sriman Tapaswiji Maharaj’s autobiography [sic], he would often stand with his arm extended for a long time, or he would never sleep. Are those tapas?
- SBY Swami says that was not tapas. That is hatha yoga, to gain powers.
- D I see.
- When Tapaswiji Maharaj visited you, do you have any stories to share with us about him, or is that not appropriate?
- SBY When Tapaswiji visited Swamiji, that time Swamiji was undergoing a lot of difficulty. Many times when he visited Swamiji didn’t open his eyes because he was in samadhi. And Tapaswiji told Swamiji’s mother that he desires to speak to Swamiji. Then when Swamiji’s mother informed Swamiji about Tapaswiji’s desire to speak to him, then Swamiji informed one of the revenue officers. His name is Ganga Narsimha Murthy. He informed Tapaswiji. So one day he came and spoke to Swamiji. Then when Tapswiji came and met Swamiji, and then he helped Swamiji. At that time Swamiji was not eating anything. Then he advised Swamiji, he told Swamiji that if you don’t eat anything then within fifteen days your body will perish. Then he forced Swamiji to have milk. That’s why . . . and he ordered Swamiji’s mother that she should see that Swamiji has milk. That’s how he helped Swamiji. A lot of ways he helped Swamiji in tapas also.
- Q This man was Swamiji’s guru, who visited him, yes?
- D No. Swamiji was Tapaswiji Maharaj’s guru.
- Q I see.
- SBY Swamiji says that Tapaswiji was Swamiji’s guru and Swamiji was Tapaswiji’s guru.
- D I stand corrected.
- SBY He imparted his knowledge to Swamiji and he gained knowledge from Swamiji. So one is the other’s guru and *shishya*.
- D If I want to do tapas, other than the one hour, are there any other requirements?
- SBY Swami says there is no any other requirement to do tapas. What you have to do is that you should



meditate. And after some time you get into samadhi. So once you attain samadhi then the tapas automatically starts.

D The first question I have is concerning meditation. And at this point in my meditation I focus my attention on the space between my eyebrows, and I can feel energy rising up the spine. So basically it completes a circuit that either comes up through to this point [gesturing over his head], over the head in here. Is there more instruction that I need on the technique of meditation?

SBY Swami says that what you are experiencing is the passing of currents. And when you have this experience you should not be scared. And while meditating you should not move your eyeballs or eyelids. So if you keep your eyeballs and eyelids still, you'll get concentration and get . . . attain samadhi.

D There are a few other things I would like to ask. These aren't questions. I'm asking for grace.

SBY Swami says if you meditate well then Swamiji will bless you so that you'll progress faster.

D The best path is through meditation.

Q God helps those who help themselves. There's no short cuts, or something like that. Kind of like you are your own blessing, right? In some sense, when you're working towards it. You can't ask for something you haven't already earned.

S Effort?

Q Yes.

S The more the effort the more the blessings.

D Swami, what I would like to know is, since I have made a conscious choice to chose the path of God. And I don't really know what that means yet. I have experienced a lot of body pain, a lot of body suffering. Is that necessary, and why is that?

SBY Swami says if you have bodily pains then you should tell your guru. He'll remove your body pains or whatever afflictions you have.

D Another question is — Often times I get confused, often times I question myself, I doubt what it is I'm supposed to be doing in the world. I go through this a lot. And could you help me with that? I think it's a matter of not trusting myself, but I'm not sure.

SBY Swami is saying that you can do whatever you feel like. But you should meditate for an hour daily so that you will gain understanding as to what you have to do. And you'll come to know what your path is.

D This morning when I was thinking about what question I was going to ask, instantly the answers came. It's like what am I going to ask this person. And what I basically understood that it comes down to just living fully in the moment. Is life really that simple?

SBY Swami says you should put your mind in whatever work you are doing. And you should meditate for an hour daily so that you'll come to know what you have to do tomorrow. You'll come to understand.

Q I think we have time for probably one more question, maybe two very short ones. He probably already knows the answers to these anyway — true, maybe.

D Swami Maharaj, in the lives of great saints we hear that they have done twelve years of tapas in order to reach their God-realization. What is the significance of the twelve years and is it always necessary to complete a cycle of twelve years?

SBY Swami says this is the symbol of God.

D Swami, we thank you for your pure graciousness in adorning us with your presence in the United States. We would like to ask you what is the message you wish to give to all the American people?

SBY Swamiji says that — Swamiji's blessings to the American public, and then to be relieved of tension.

Q Wonderful. Thank you. I was supposed to be doing this, but he did it for me. It's amazing. Thank you Swamiji. Quite an amazing man. Thank you for coming, very wonderful.

There are sponsors. Paradise Found for our background music. Santa Barbara Futon for the ___ cushions. [Swamiji is handing out and throwing fruit as prashad.] Oh, wonderful. **"Prashad."** Thank you very much. Pebble Pain decorating. ___ Lumber and Seven Day Discount Nursery. And just remember that the love you get is equal to the love you make. I think that's the Beatles song but I don't know. It's appropriate today. Thank you for joining us. See you next week.

[the end]