

CONQUEST OF FEAR

IN A YOGIC WAY



SRI SWAMY SIVANANDA



DEDICATED TO

**ALL THE GREAT, FEARLESS, HEROIC SOULS
LIKE DHRUVA, PRAHLADA, VEERA ABHIMANYU,
ANGADA, ANJANEYA, SAVITRI,
SHIVAJI, RANA PRATAP, RANI LAKSHMIBAI
AND OTHERS OF THEIR BRAVE FRATERNITY.**

**MAY THE READERS FOLLOW THEIR INSPIRING
EXAMPLE AND ATTAIN THAT FREE AND FEARLESS
STATE OF KAIVALYA MOKSHA SAMRAJYA
THROUGH THE SUPREME ADVAITA
BRAHMIC EXPERIENCE**

PUBLISHERS'NOTE

We have great pleasure in presenting the public with this enlarged edition of the booklet “Conquest of Fear”. Its former edition was too concise and inadequate. Hence, the obvious necessity of a more elaborate and detailed treatment of the subject was felt. The present work fulfills that need successfully and in an intensive, and more appreciable form.

The book has been divided into two sections: All about Fear and The Methods to Eradicate Fear. In the first section of the book an elaborate description of the various aspects of fear has been given. It deals with the various causes of fear, its subtle manifestations and workings in different kinds of persons of different temperaments under different circumstances, its after-effects and subconscious impressions etc. The second section deals with the various methods for eradicating fear: the *Pratipakshabhavaha* or the auto-suggestion method of the Raja Yogin, the practice of feeling the presence of God, devotion to God and meditation on the fearless Atman—all of which help to conquer fear.

We are sure that this booklet will be a great help to one and all in enabling them to get over fear-complex and develop the essential virtue—Courage.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

1. BHARTRIHARI ON FEARLESSNESS

भोगे रोगभयं कुले च्युतिभयं वित्ते नृपालाङ्गयं ।
माने दैन्यभयं बले रिपुभयं रूपे जराया भयम् ॥
शास्त्रे वादिभयं गुणे खलभयं काये कृतान्ताङ्गयं ।
सर्वं वस्तु भयान्वितं भुवि नृणां वैराग्यमेवाभयम् ॥

bhoge rogabhayam kule cyutibhayam vitte nrpālādbhayam |
māne dainyabhayam bale ripubhayam rūpe jarāyā bhayam ||
śāstre vādibhayam guṇe khalabhayam kāye kṛtāntādbhayam |
sarvaṁ vastu bhayānviṭaṁ bhuvi nṛṇāṁ vairāgyamevābhayam ||

In enjoyment, there is fear of disease; in social position, there is fear of falling off; in wealth, there is the fear of (hostile) kings; in honour, there is the fear of humiliation; in power, there is the fear of foes; in beauty, there is the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, there is the fear of opponents; in virtue, there is the fear of traducers; in body, there is the fear of death; everything in this world pertaining to men is attended with fear; renunciation alone leads to fearlessness.

(Vairagya-Shatakam)

2. UPANISHADS ON FEARLESSNESS

द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति ॥

dvitīyādvai bhayaṁ bhavati ||

“There is fear from duality.” (Non-duality alone is fearless). (Brih. Up. 1. 4.2).

अभयं वै जनकं प्राप्तोऽसीति होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

abayaṁ vai janakaṁ prāpto.asīti hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ ||

“Yajnavalkya said: O Janaka! You have attained the fearless (Brahman).” (Brih. Up. IV. 2..4).

अभयं वै ब्रह्माभयं हि वै ब्रह्म भवति य एवं वेद ॥

abhayaṁ vai brahmābhayaṁ hi vai brahma bhavati ya evaṁ veda ||

“Brahman is fearless; one who knows this, becomes the fearless Brahman.” (Brih. Up. IV. 4. 25).

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न बिभेति कुतश्चन ॥

yato vāco nivarta[^]nnte aprāpya manasā saha |
ānandaṁ brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kutaścana ||

“Not reaching It, the speech and the mind return back. One who knows this Bliss of Brahman, fears not from anything at all.” (Taitt. Up. II. 9)

3. BE COURAGEOUS, FRIEND

Difficulties, adversities and sorrows
Are Karmic Purgation;
They instil mercy in the heart,
They turn the mind more towards God,
They are blessings in disguise,
They help your evolution,
And strengthen your will and power of endurance,
They make you more wise and dispassionate.

Muster courage and strength,
Nil desperadum Friend!
Draw strength from within,
Move forward courageously,
Look not back,
Be regular in your meditation,
Stand as a witness or Drashta,
Identify with the Immortal Self

You are born for higher things,
A brilliant future is awaiting you,
Apply diligently to Yoga,
Unfold all latent faculties,
Yield not to unmanliness,
Shake off faintheartedness,
Stand up, be bold and cheerful,
Rejoice, enjoy and be blissful.

Thou art not this body,
Thou art immortal Brahman,
Thou art eternal Atman,
Thou art diseaseless Soul,
Thou art blissful Svarupa,
Thou art All-full Chaitanya,
Thou art invincible Lord of lords.

PREFACE

Fear is a great enemy of man. It is the enemy of his progress. It disturbs his peace and harmony. It sucks or saps his vitality and energy. It drains the nervous system of its reserve of energy. It produces weakness.

Fear is of two kinds, viz., natural or rational fear, when there is a threatening situation to endanger life; and unnatural or unusual fear which has no objective reality.

The origin of most neurotic fears can be traced to childhood. The seeds of fear may lie dormant in childhood in the subconscious mind. They sprout forth after some time during some period of crisis or stress.

Panicky fear is more contagious than typhoid or cholera. The atom bombs cause terrible panicky fear. People leave their houses and move to villages.

Anxiety and worry are the effects of fear. Some sort of fear gets buried in the subconscious mind. So man worries himself. There is continued strain and tension in the mind. If the fear is released or dispelled, he will have peace of mind.

Normal fear is healthy. It paves the way for one's progress. It preserves life. A Headmaster is afraid of the Inspector of Schools. He takes a very keen interest in training the boys. All the boys get success in the examination. An engine-driver of the Railways is afraid of his superior officer. He is very careful in the discharge of his duties. No collision occurs. A physician is afraid of getting a bad reputation. He takes great care of his patient. He makes researches. He saves many lives. He becomes a famous physician also.

Psychologists are of opinion that there cannot be absolute fearlessness and that only determined effort can be made to conquer fear. This is incorrect. Psychologists have no transcendental experience. A perfect sage who has knowledge of Brahman is absolutely fearless. Upanishads declare in a thundering voice, "The knower of the fearless Brahman becomes himself absolutely fearless." (Brihadaranyakopanishad)

There can be fear only where there is duality. How can there be fear for one who experiences non-duality? Such a person is the most courageous of men. The courage of a soldier in the battlefield or of a dacoit is only Tamasic courage. It is not courage at all. It is only brutal ferocity born of hatred or jealousy. That Sattvic courage born of Wisdom of the Self alone is real courage.

As a matter of fact, fear exists to glorify courage. A timid man exists to glorify a courageous man. There will be no value for goodness if badness does not exist. One side of a thing cannot have significance without the existence of the other side. Hence everything in this world has two sides. Dvandvas exist to keep up the flow of the world.

This book throws much light on the causes and characteristics of fear. It suggests efficient remedies for the eradication of fear and cultivating courage and fortitude, and attaining the fearless Brahman or the Absolute.

Swami Sivananda

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ALL ABOUT FEAR

1. RISE UP! O MAN!

Fear is illusory; it cannot live. Courage is eternal, it will not die. Perils, calamities, dangers are the certain lot of every man who is a denizen of this world. Therefore, O Man! Fortify your mind with courage and patience. Fortitude, courage, presence of mind will sustain you through all dangers. Just as a rock on the sea-shore stands firm and the dashing of the waves does not affect it even a bit, even so a man who is endowed with courage is not affected by the dark perilous waves of this Samsara. He stands adamant in all trying conditions and circumstances and comes out victorious.

A man of courage does not tremble in the hour of danger. He is not embarrassed and bewildered. He does not sink down. He is not overwhelmed by despair.. He smiles away all dangers and difficulties, blows the trumpet of triumph and attains victory in the end.

The threatenings of fear are a terror to the heart. Lead a virtuous life. Live in God. Be good. Serve. Love. Give. Meditate. Nothing can frighten you. The Lord of Death will be afraid of you. The terrors, even of death, will be no terror to you.

Terrify not your soul with vain imaginary fears. From fear proceeds misfortune and failure. The fears of a coward expose him to danger. A coward dies many times before his actual death. Be bold. Be cheerful. Allow not your heart to sink down from the phantasy of imaginary fears. Have self-confidence and faith. Thy birthright is courage. You are Nectar's son. You are a child of light. You are an offspring of Immortal Brahman. Claim thy Birthright now. Rise Up! O Man! Roar OM OM OM. You are the lion of Vedanta.

2. WHAT IS FEAR?

The Sanskrit equivalent for fear is "Bhaya". Fear is an emotion or Vritti in the mind that is produced when one's life is in danger on account of external forces or things. Man reacts to the situation with a fear-emotion.

It is characterized by pallor of the face, palpitation of heart, slowing of pulse or stoppage, tremor of limbs, perspiration, expressionless condition of the eyes, passing of urine and faeces unaware, in extreme cases, choking of voice, inability to speak, etc. The body becomes like a log of wood. The mind gets stunned. The functions of the senses are inhibited. In extreme cases one may die of shock. In ordinary cases when the cause of fear is removed, he slowly recovers from the morbid symptoms and comes back to his original state.

3. CAUSE OF FEAR

Ignorance is the cause of fear. Man tasted the “forbidden fruit” and became a slave of lust. He forgot his original, divine nature and was thus caught up in the whirlpool of ignorance. The infinite fearless Brahman became the finite Jiva with fear. Identification of the body or Dehadhyasa is the cause of fear.

Dehadhyasa is another form of ignorance. This physical body is an instrument for man’s sensual enjoyment. If he suffers from any disease he is afraid that he will lose this body which serves him as a vehicle for his enjoyment. He tries his level best to preserve this body. All other causes of fear are traceable to Dehadhyasa.

Feeling of inferiority is another cause of fear.. This negative feeling produces lack of self-reliance or self-confidence in man. He is afraid of those who are superior to him in talents, power, position and efficiency. He feels that he is incapable of doing anything.

Some physical deformity or deficiency, lack of physical and mental efficiency, wrong training in children, are other causes of fear.

There is no other way to get rid of fear than realization of the Self.

4. FEAR AND RAGA

Fear (Bhaya) and Raga (attachment) are modifications or Vrittis in the mind. They are temporary whirlpools or waves. The substance of the mind is nothing but Raga and fear. They are twin-sisters. Hence they are closely related to each other. If you destroy fear and Raga there is neither life nor existence for the mind. The Upanishad declares, “Detachment, faith, fear, Raga, shyness, modesty, shame. etc.,” are only mind.

Fear is a product of ignorance or Avidya. Man forgets his essential, divine nature through Moha or infatuation and identification with the body. He was the all-pervading immortal fearless Soul or Brahman in the beginning. He was the “Santam (Peaceful), Ajaram (decayless), Amritam (immortal), Abhayam (fearless) Brahman.” On account of egoism he became a rebellious child. He separated himself from his Father. He had division of property. He started his own independent living in this earth-plane. He rented a house in the mundane world. He entered the body-house of flesh and bone and became a little timid man, a little Jiva, with all sorts of fears. Thus started his downfall on account of his quarrel with his Almighty Father and owing to his starting a new egoistic living with Raga-Dvesha.

He was bodiless muscle-less, fleshless, boneless, I-less, mine-less, desireless, Vasana-less, when he was one with the Father, when there was a joint family. And so he was absolutely fearless, and ever blissful and peaceful. He had no thought of body, house, property, wife, children, position and prestige. He had no thought of diseases of body and fall from his social status or prestige. He had no thought of enemies, war, riots and of running to any place for safety, security. His original bode was peacefully secure and free from any sort of a danger and

enemies. It was all one Brahman community. There was no Hindu-Muslim trouble there. There was no fear of attacks through bombs or torpedoes. It was an impregnable, invulnerable fortress. It was disease-proof, bomb-proof, earthquake-proof.

In his new, independent egoistic life, he became selfish, crooked, narrow, and mean-minded. He entertained low thoughts. He ever thought of flesh and pleasures of the flesh. He practiced the philosophy of flesh and preached the philosophy of flesh which is synonymous with “Pig-philosophy.” Every day fears multiplied, as he was very much attached to his body, the bodies of wife, children, and to his house, property, etc.

Raga (attachment) is the long-standing associate of fear. Wherever there is Raga, there is fear. Fear and Raga co-exist. Man is attached to his wife. The body of his wife is his greatest pleasure-centre. So there is fear for him, fear of losing her, fear of her death, fear of her running away with another man, fear of her divorcing him, fear of her being displeased with him, etc. As he is attached to his children, house and property, he has fear of losing his house, property and children. He is drowned in sorrow and gets terrible shock if these objects are destroyed or lost. Hence Raga is the cause of fear. If there is no Raga, there is no fear. The first link in the chain of Raga is his attachment to his body. All kinds, of Raga start from this Raga to the physical body.

Lord Krishna says in His Gita: “*Vitaragabhayakrodhah sthitadheer muniruchyate*”. “He who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of stable mind.” Abandon attachment through practice of non-attachment or Vairagya and attachment to the lotus feet of the Lord or fearless Brahman. All fears will vanish.

You are attached to a fountain-pen, walking stick, book, watch, towel, cloth. Fear slowly creeps in. There is fear of losing them. Always entertain the thought “All objects are illusory, perishable and pain-giving.” You will have no attachment. Even if there is attachment, it will be mild. You can drive it away with slight thinking and discrimination.

Give up attachment to this body by identifying yourself with the bodiless, sexless, pure, all-pervading immortal Atman or Brahman. All sorts of fears and attachments will totally disappear. Assert, feel, recognize:

“I am bodiless, immortal Soul or Brahman	OM OM OM
I am sexless, all-pervading Atman	OM OM OM
I am fearless Brahman	OM OM OM
I am full of Vairagya now	OM OM OM
There is no world at all	OM OM OM
I alone exist	OM OM OM
I am Deathless and Blissful	OM OM OM
I am Absolute Brahman	OM OM OM

May you all be free from Fear and Raga! May you all be established in the fearless, (Abhaya, Nirbhaya) Brahman through the practice of courage and meditation on the fearless, immortal Brahman.

5. IMAGINARY FEARS

Every man has some imaginary fear of one kind or another. Maya will never allow anybody to rest peacefully. Man is already agitated by lust, anger, greed, jealousy, pride and hatred. Now fear fans the worldly flame. It pours Ghee to the flame of the three Taapaas. Man jumps now and dances like a monkey. He has no rest even for a second.

The percentage of normal fear will be only five. Imaginary fears will come to ninety per cent.

Imaginary fears cause diseases, deplete all energies in man and produce all sorts of feverish excitement, low vitality, uneasiness, discomfort, disharmony, etc. When there is an epidemic or cholera, or typhoid, fear is the predisposing cause. Man is terribly afraid of cholera, worries himself and imagines that the germs have entered his body. Imagination does serious havoc. He becomes a victim to the actual disease itself!

A student prepares himself day and night for the ensuing examination. He has passed creditably in all the class examinations. But he develops a kind of imaginary fear “examination fear”, as soon as he enters the examination hall, becomes nervous and gets confused. His hands tremble. He is not able to write. He fails in the examination.

I asked a clever lawyer, an M.A., LL.B., who can argue well in the courts to deliver a lecture on “Necessity of Religion”. He ascended the platform. There was a big audience. He developed “stage fear” and got bewildered. His voice was choked. He began to perspire. He stammered something, cut a poor figure on the platform and got down within five minutes.

Ramakrishna was a healthy man. He developed a cough on account of exposure to chill draught of air. It was a case of simple bronchitis or cold in the chest. But it persisted for some weeks. He consulted an assistant surgeon. The doctor said, “It may be a case of T.B.; have sanatorium treatments.”

“It may be a case of T.B.” wrought much havoc in Ramakrishna. It was a wrong suggestion. It produced an imaginary fear in him. He began to worry himself from that moment. His health was pulled down gradually. He actually contracted T.B. or pulmonary tuberculosis. All sorts of germs, viz., pneumoniacus, etc., are in this body. They cannot do any mischief when one is in possession of good health and high vitality. When the vitality comes to a low ebb, they gain the upper hand. Man easily succumbs to their ravages or attacks.

Sri R.S. Bannerjee was sleeping in a room in his friend’s house at Dehra Dun. He and his friends were talking on that night about the mischievous actions done by evil spirits. These thoughts went deep into his subconscious mind. He dreamt that the room in which he was

sleeping was a haunted room and some evil spirit had done some mischief on him. From that day he began to lose his health gradually. This was due to some kind of imaginary fear.

Sri Joshi was a friend of Sri Gupta. Gupta came to the house of Joshi one evening, did not talk to him and suddenly left his house as he had to meet his friend that day at the Railway Station. Joshi thought that Gupta was very much annoyed towards him. Joshi saw Gupta talking seriously with Rajkrishna who was inimical towards him. Joshi now concluded that Gupta had become his enemy. He developed a sort of imaginary fear for Gupta, and thought that he would divulge all his secrets to Rajkrishna.

Some develop imaginary fear that they will lose their job. Some imagine and think, “what will become of my fate if my wife dies now? I have to look after nine children.” Some have imaginary fear “What can I do if my business fails?” What will become of Hinduism if whole of India becomes Pakistan; if communism pervades whole of India? There is no end to such imaginary fears.

Sit for a while. Reflect well. Introspect. All imaginary fears will take to their heels. They will dwindle into an airy nothing. Mind deceives you through imaginary fears. Learn to discriminate, cogitate, reflect and meditate. Cultivate courage. Be a silent witness of the mind’s menagerie. The mind will lurk like a thief. You will feel now that you were duped all these years by this mischievous mind and that fear is a non-entity, a big zero.

6. PHOBIAS

Peculiar, private, irrational and unnatural fears are called phobias. They have no objective reality. There is nothing to frighten people. There is no threatening situation in their environment which should cause fear in them and yet they cannot free themselves from fears and negative feelings. The original word in Greek is “Phobos” meaning fear.

Some are terribly afraid of scorpions. This is scorpion-phobia. Some are afraid of snakes. This is snake-phobia. Some are afraid of rats (rat-phobia). Some are afraid of thunder. Some are afraid of walking in the dark. Some are afraid of seeing great multitude of people (plurophobia). Some Brahmacharins are afraid of seeing a bevy of ladies. Some are afraid to remain alone. Some are afraid to sleep in a room without a lamp. Some are afraid of closed spaces such as tunnels, etc., (claustrophobia). Some are afraid of open spaces (agoraphobia). Though the doctor has definitely said that there is nothing organically wrong with some patients, they still think that they have some heart trouble or kidney disease or liver-complaint. These are all phobias of the body.

Some are afraid of anything and everything (pantaphobia). The Americans are afraid of the Russians (Russo-phobia). The Russians are afraid of the Americans (Americo-phobia). The Frontier people of India are afraid of the tribal people (Tribal-phobia). Phobias are endless.

The causes of phobias are nervousness, stupidity in a mild or intense form and lack of Vichara or enquiry or right thinking and right understanding.

CONQUEST OF FEAR

Phobia is an unnatural form of fear. A normal fear arises when one's life is in danger when some external object such as cobra or a tiger or situation like a riot threatens the existence of the individual. The fear which arises on such occasions is perfectly natural. Man tries to save his own life by either fight or defence.

Develop your will-power. Cultivate courage and fortitude. Develop mental power of endurance, firmness in meeting danger and power of resistance. Meditate on courage. Live in the company of sages and Yogis. Meditate on the fearless Atman. All phobias will disappear.

A person who is unable to move in the company of many people, who hates multitude, who is afraid of seeing many people, should try to move with people slowly, should have adaptability and strength to withstand agitation of mind. Cultivate calmness even amidst many men and women. Brahmacharins should try to avoid woman-phobia. They must be fearless and tranquil even in the midst of ladies. One-sided development is imperfect development. Development should be integral and that is equal mindedness in all conditions and at all places.

One who is afraid of walking in darkness should try to get rid of this defect by taking a light in the beginning and walking in the night, and slowly trying to walk without light also. Fear will vanish in course of time. Fear is a negative force. It cannot stand before the positive virtue, courage.

Abhinivesha or love for earthly life is the main cause of all fears Abhinivesha is clinging to life and body. Attachment to objects causes fear. Attachment to name and fame causes fear. Attachment to money and woman causes fear. Any attachment is the womb of terrible fear. One who possesses, fears. He does not fear who has renounced everything, who perceives the Atman in all.

We are afraid, because we love certain things. Love is the cause of fear. We do not wish to part with certain things. And when anything obstructs our acquiring those objects of love and desire, we are annoyed, we are afraid of that, and we lose the mental balance. Renunciation of everything, and cultivating Brahma-Bhava is the best remedy to overcome all fears.

Sit and introspect. Find out the root of the trouble. If you are not able to do this yourself, get the help of a psychotherapist or a Yogi. The thing that is deeply buried in your subconscious mind should be released or dispelled.

May you all be courageous! May you all be bold and cheerful! May you all radiate courage, strength and peace. May you all inherit courage, the birthright from your Almighty Father, the Fearless, Immortal Brahman!

7. DO NOT GENERATE “POOCHANDI” OR “HOWA” SAMSKARAS

Mothers generate “*Poochandi*” Samskaras in the minds of their children. When children cry, when they refuse to take food, or when they do any mischief the mothers frighten them and

say, “*Poochandi* (ghost) has come; Irandu Kannan (two eyed man) has come. He will take you away.” Children get frightened. The *Poochandi-samskaras* get deeply implanted in their subconscious mind, and make them very timid when they reach adolescence.

Mind is like a sensitive plate of a camera. Whatever is exposed to the lens is registered in the sensitive plate behind. Even so whatever is seen or heard is permanently impressed in the sensitive mind-plate.

The minds of children are very impressionable. They are very plastic. Mothers and teachers should be very careful when they deal with children. They should not tell them anything that will frighten them. On the contrary they should tell them stories of chivalrous persons, which will make them bold and courageous. Even during the period of pregnancy, mothers should read inspiring books like Ramayana, Bhagavata, Mahabharata, if they wish to bring forth intelligent and brave children.

Mothers, fathers and teachers should have at least an elementary knowledge of psychology. Then alone can they mould the children properly.

The sage Madalasa sang the following cradle song when she rocked the cradle of her children: “*Suddhosi Buddhosi Niranjanosi Samsara-maya-parivarjitosi*”—“O child! Thou art Pure Consciousness. Thou art stainless. Thou art devoid of Maya and Samsara.” She made all her children sages.

The world is in dire need of women-sages like Madalasa. The destiny of the world and children is in the hands of intelligent mothers.

8. FEAR IN VARIOUS FORMS

Fear is a negative quality or modification in the mind. It is the result or product of ignorance. It manifests when one identifies himself with the body and forgets the immortal Atman, his own real Satchidananda Svarupa. It is the old companion of Aasakti (attachment) or Moha or delusion. Fear, worry and anger deplete all energy of man and bring exhaustion and early death.

No one is absolutely free from some sort of fear. It is only the Jnani or a full-blown Yogi and a Bhakta who is absolutely free from fear. How can fear affect that sage who sees his own Self everywhere? If one can conquer fear, half of his Sadhana is over.

Fear assumes various forms. The Gurkha soldier is not afraid of knife or bullet but he is afraid of scorpions. A hunter is not afraid of tigers in the forest but is afraid of the surgeon's knife. The man of the frontier is not afraid of knife; he can even allow the surgeon to open his intestines, without chloroform, but he is terribly afraid of snakes. Some are afraid of ghosts. The vast majority of persons are afraid of public criticism. Some are afraid of diseases. The most healthy and strong man has got some imaginary fear of some obscure disease.

CONQUEST OF FEAR

The king is afraid of his enemy. The Pandit is afraid of his opponent. A beautiful lady is afraid of old age. A lawyer is afraid of the judge and his clients. The wife is afraid of her husband. The student is afraid of the teacher. The Police Inspector is afraid of the Superintendent. The frog is afraid of the snake. The cobra is afraid of the mongoose.

There are various degrees in fear. They are simple fright, timidity, shyness, alarm, terror and terrible fear. When there is terrible fear, the whole body perspires, urine and faecal matter are ejected involuntarily. The mind becomes like a log of wood. Sometimes shock and immediate collapse take place and the man dies of sudden heart failure. The face becomes pale and the eyes express a peculiar ghastly, listless look.

Parents and teachers should infuse the spirit of courage in their sons and students from the very boyhood. They should ask them to read stories in the '*Mahabharata*' which deal with the chivalrous acts of Bhishma and other persons. Boys have got pliable and elastic minds. They can be manipulated well at this period of life. The Samskaras can be indelibly impressed at this age. Brahmacharya gives tremendous strength and infuses courage.

If you think of the opposite of fear, viz., courage, the negative (fear) will slowly vanish. You will have to develop courage slowly. Have the word-image "OM COURAGE" before the mind. Repeat this Mantra or formula very often. A word is the centre of an idea. An idea is the centre of a mental image. A mental image is the centre of a mental habit. A mental habit is the centre of a trait in man. Have a clear-cut image in the mind of the quality of courage, and this quality will develop. The subconscious mind will do everything for you. The 'will' also will come to your aid. Desire to be courageous, and the 'will' will immediately follow desire.

Give up attachment or this perishable body. Do not identify yourself with this body. This body is like the shell of a coconut. It is like a pillowcase. Constantly think of the Indweller, the immortal Atman. Do Atma Chintana always. Identify yourself with the Atman. Fear will vanish. This is the most powerful method. Move about in the thick forests or dense jungles at nights and wander about in the streets of your place without light and without guide. The Bhakta gets rid of fear and Deha-Adhyasa through total self-surrender.

9. TRIUMPH OVER FEAR

Fear is an instinct common in every man. Fear is universal. It can happen at any place. It can come at any time. Even elements of Nature are subject to Fear. Wind is said to blow through fear of Him. The sun rises fearing Him. Indra, Fire and Death proceed to their respective duties only out of fear. Thus, fear is not uncommon in Devas, too. Equally it prevails amongst beasts, animals, insects and practically every creation of this world.

Fear is generally the result of pain, injury and discomfort. There is a hereditary aspect of this instinct which accounts for its universality and its persistence. Factors of environment and training are also significant. The idea of some external superior power over one's self is the chief cause of fear. Relatively, the mind adopts an entirely different attitude. Vision changes. Glaring perception fails. The mind is not balanced. There is some abnormality of thoughts and

actions. Hysteric and neurasthenic convulsions are all due to one form of fear or other. Impulsion and desire to escape or flee from the dangerous situation are the immediate results.

This fear has to be conquered. Freedom from fear can be achieved by liberation from the objects of fear. Re-educating the mind, bringing forth the power of the spirit, dealing with practical affairs, diligently putting into practice the knowledge that one possesses, are all essential factors to overcome fear. It must be felt that there is no object which is to be afraid of or to be feared.

In all cases, it must be distinctly understood that seeing and hearing alone does not produce the sensation of fear. A child is not afraid of its father or mother usually. But when the father puts on a strange countenance, or howls in an unnatural way the child becomes frightened. This gets firmly rooted in the mind. This develops as a hereditary weakness in later life also. This memory is scarcely washed off even after growth. So children should not be frightened.

Here fear should not be confused with startle. School boys, when they see their master's head at the corner of a street, flee away. This does not mean fear. This is due to an instinct in everybody to escape from the sight of the master. On the other hand, if the master takes a cane in his hand, the child suffers some sort of infliction and imagines impending injury. Consequently he fears his master.

But how to conquer fear? Whenever a child is afraid of something, we first tell him that there is nothing to be feared thus denying the object of fear. Denial is the first step in the procedure. Subsequently we explain to the child the actual thing, the Truth. We thus convince him that it was only his fancy which created the sensation in him. We positively affirm and assert what is true. Similarly, even as we grow, we must develop constantly the knowledge that there is nothing in the universe to cause fear. The subconscious mind, which is first startled by an unusual sight or incoherent voice, should be kept assured that all such things are false, the Truth behind them being well acquainted with the normal sense and knowledge. When fear is completely removed, nothing can hurt us.

People in well-lit cities and urban areas are still afraid to move in darkness. They imagine something untoward to happen causing pain, injury or discomfort. At the same time, how many sages and Sannyasins roam about in the dark over hills and dales in the dead of night and live in caves, the abode of beasts, insects and wasps. Dhruva Bhagat made penance in the midst of wild beasts. Dhruva, before he attained Youth, entered the forest and did great Tapas. Bharata played with cubs.

Mere re-educating the mind will not strengthen courage. Putting the knowledge into practice on every occasion is quite essential. At every auditorium we find people advocating that what men are afraid of as snakes are but ropes. But they fail to experience such stamina. On the other hand, they mildly submit. This is due to lack of training. This is not what is required. Well-developed knowledge coupled with practice can alone relieve men from fear. The idea may be paradoxical to assume that "there is nothing to fear because nothing can hurt us though the converse is equally true."

Denying fear, one can overcome the object of fear itself. You should not have any dualism in mind. You must always develop cosmic love and universal brotherhood. When there is love and brotherhood, there is no enmity. There is no superiority of power. There is no pleasure or pain. Ultimately there is no fear. Of course, this is the stage. The final stage is feeling oneness of all. All are Brahman. All merge in Brahman. There is Brahman alone pervading throughout the universe. There is no second thing of supremacy in the world. There is no second thing in His creation at all. This knowledge entirely uproots fear and brings one into eternal peace. Fear does not emanate from one's own Self. This is the secret of it. Knowledge of Brahman, the eternal Truth, totally annihilates fear.

The Truth is to be pronounced and meditated upon. Recitation of Upanishads, Srutis, Vedas and hymns produces vibrations. These vibrations remove all inflections. Many incurable diseases causing fear of death in the minds of the sufferers are cured by these vibrations alone. Thirujnana Sambandhar, a Tamil saint, cured a Jain king of Madura of his incurable disease. Thirunavukkarasu Swamigal, another Tamil saint, was cured of his stomach disorder only through such vibrations. Sakkubai was released time and often from various difficulties through her sincere devotion to Lord Krishna. They all felt one with Him. Again, Thirunavukkarasu Swamigal was shut up in a lime kiln to be burnt to death. He felt oneness with God. His mind was not in the least affected. His physical body, too, was not affected by the object of fear of death.

Drowning waves of fear may at times rush down upon us. We may lose mental balance for a while. We may be over-sensitive and agitated. A chain of evil happenings appear before us one after another in quick succession. Memory of the past gallops with winged speed. Imagination soars and we picture disaster after disaster awaiting us. Yet, under all these circumstances, we must lay our fullest faith in God, take refuge in Him and fully believe that He alone can deliver us.

Overcoming in this way will not suffice. This must be brought into practice. We must first face only those which we are afraid of. If a man is afraid of facing an audience, it must be the first and foremost duty he should do until he is free from stage fear and nervousness. If one trembles to approach his superior or any other person who, he thinks, is endowed with superior powers, that must be taken up as his first duty everyday till he gains sufficient moral strength. If someone is horrified at a sight in the dark, instantaneously he must run over to the spot and realize that the object which caused him fear is nothing but one of his daily handlings.

Worse than in waking, many undergo drastic, alarming abnormality in sleep. This is all due to loading the mind with stray thoughts while retiring. One should never go to bed in a state of worry or fear. Nor with a heavy heart. Nor when he broods over an impending evil. Before retiring, everyone must evacuate all such thoughts and meditate upon God till he is released from them. He must have perfect peace in mind and soul. If he is unable to meditate upon God, let him loudly recite some hymn or poem till he sinks in the bed. He is sure to have peaceful, deep sleep.

METHODS TO ERADICATE FEAR

If we meditate upon statements of Truth our inner eye of wisdom opens, we are gifted with right understanding, and we know the Truth. This is worship of God. This is adoration to the Lord. It is this which liberates us from bondage.

Working mentally and practicing physically and at all times, dwelling spiritually upon divine thoughts and remaining in a higher stratum of mind we not only overcome fear but merge in Brahman.

“Whence all speech turn back with the mind without reaching; he who knows the bliss of Brahman fears not at any time—is not afraid of anything”.—Brahmananda Valli—4.9.

METHODS TO ERADICATE FEAR

1. VICTORY OVER FEAR (Pratipaksha-Bhavana-Method)

As you think, so you become. As you think, so you develop. As is your ideal, so gradually your life will become. This is so, because there is a great transforming power in thought.

Take, then, the life of perfect men like Bhishma and think of their deeds and their life and ideals. Your life will be filled by purity, courage, etc. You will become a noble, perfect man. The thought will transform you into its own likeness. Man becomes like what he worships. Man becomes like what he thinks. This is indeed true.

Sit with closed eyes in the early morning. Meditate on courage, the opposite of fear, for half an hour. Think of the advantages of courage and the disadvantages of fear. Practice the virtue during the day. Feel that you actually possess courage to an enormous degree. Manifest it in your daily life. In some weeks or months fear will be replaced by courage. Repeat the formula “Om courage” mentally, daily several times.

Meditate and assert:

“I am all courage	OM OM OM
I am an embodiment of courage	OM OM OM
I am like Bhishma	OM OM OM
I am a great hero	OM OM OM
My will is very powerful	OM OM OM
I am not afraid of anything	OM OM OM
I am bold and chivalrous	OM OM OM
Courage is my birthright	OM OM OM

It is very difficult to attack fear directly. It is very strong. You are a victim to this negative trait in hundreds of lives. It has taken deep root. Put the seeds of courage in your heart. Allow it to grow. Fear will die by itself. The positive always overcomes the negative. This is an immutable psychological law. This is the Pratipaksha-Bhavana-method of RajaYogins. Try this method again and again. You are bound to succeed.

May you attain triumph over fear by cultivating courage through the Pratipaksha-Bhavana-method or the method of thinking on the opposite!

2. FEELING THE PRESENCE OF GOD

God is all-pervading. He is always with you. He is in you, around you. He is not far to seek. He cannot be, perceived through the physical eye. Your sense of touch cannot help you. He has to be realized through the inner eye of wisdom.

Modern civilization has enslaved people to such an extent that they are incapable of any original expression, thought or deed. They do not care to think of their routine actions—how their activities progress, what they are running after or what goal they are marching towards. Inventions, innovations and contrivances have eased men from their labour and human skill. The conservation of energy in this direction has only created laziness in them. More sensual desires and perceptions have begun to sway them. Lost in the ever-pouring luxuries of life, the true mission is once for all forgotten. People do not think wherefrom their daily requirements come, who the unfailing and non-stopping supplier is, where His abode rests, how to have His Darshan, what to request of Him and how to revere Him. No amount of study and research in physical geography, vegetable kingdom, various industrial technologies, physiology and other sciences will solve these problems nor even give a clue to the solution. This scientific knowledge is subject to various hypotheses, axioms and data which are by themselves under controversies. This knowledge will in no way aid one to arrive at the source. The source is really beyond all these conceptions. Its abode cannot be located by running the finger over a coloured map. The Dweller and His abode can be seen only through the inner eye and right understanding. Concentration, Meditation and Sublime Thoughts are the pathways to this abode.

Most people feel themselves unable to stay their mind upon God and meditate upon divine thoughts. This is all due to want of training. Realization is always through practice. Practice comes out of proper training. Proper training requires consultation of learned men. This is “Initiation in the right path.”

In all ages you meet with such great personalities who are always ready to help you but who may not advertise themselves as such. It is left to you to find out such men, to choose your own GURU to obey him implicitly, to serve him with all sincerity and earnestness and express your thirst for knowledge. Vain discussions and intentional test-questions must be strictly avoided. You must be regular in your lessons and practice.

There are again persons who say that they are unable to meet even a single man of such qualities, for their Guru. Though it is firmly held that no perfection can be attained in any line

without a Guru, it may well be asserted that God is near and dear to you as He is to everybody. Sincere and earnest attempt will have its own fruits. It is not on this plea the concentration and meditation have to be cast off.

Because a man does not understand the film language, does he refrain from visiting films? He avails himself of every opportunity to accompany his friend who is able to interpret and who is already in the groove. If not he makes fresh acquaintance while in the queue to procure tickets. Even this if he is unable to get he pushes himself anyway and tries his best to decipher the whole film racking his brain. He makes earnest efforts to improve his knowledge in this line by purchasing synopsis, bulletins and magazines. He is restless until he acquires some knowledge. At no stage does he stop and put an end to this quest of knowledge. In due course every actor or actress lives at the tip of his tongue. He becomes profusely enlightened in this art. He speaks hours and hours about the talents of various film-stars. What are all these due to? Is he not training himself earnestly, honestly, sincerely and virtuously in the particular line? Did he wait for a Guru? What a pity it is that a man indulges so much in trivial things discarding the vital mission of life?

It is quite common for people to complain that when they begin to think upon God, their mind wanders here and there and their thoughts become engaged with mundane affairs. This is again due to lack of training and want of definite will-power. True. It is very difficult, extremely difficult to fix the mind at first instance upon God. An entirely different, superior and higher stratum of mind is needed for this practice. This has to be well developed.

The mind is full of lust. It is always restless. It traverses through all spheres—good or bad. It has to be wound up by the triple cord of devotion, concentration and meditation. It must always be kept under control.

Try to get alone for a few minutes every day. If you cannot afford this, utilize every scrap of leisure you presume to enjoy. Select a lonely place, a river bank, the top of a mount, the open terrace of your house, a sea shore, a simple pleasant meadow, a corner in a temple, church or mosque or a private room. Purge all your wavering thoughts. This will be quite easy in any of the above localities as all the senses will be drawn by the exquisite, beauty of the spot or landscape or by the deep silence pervading all-round. If necessary, burn incense or scented sticks, which will always keep you alert.

There are two distinctive ways for worship of God. One, the “All-pervading Nature” and the other “Here and here alone”. If one is to sit down and contemplate on the omnipresence of God, i.e., presence in the sun, in the moon, in the stars, in anything and everything he comes across, perhaps he might become lost in immensity. On the other hand one may localize the presence of God at the initial stage which he may develop later into the former method.

Having steadied the mind either by gazing at a particular spot, or the picture of any form of God or Guru or tuning the ears to the murmur of the river or receding waves of the sea, utter slowly in a low tone the statement “GOD IS NOW HERE” or “GOD IS IN THIS ROOM”. First repeat “G-O-D I-S N-O-W H-E-R-E” in a deep meditative way. Then relax for a while and

again repeat. Do this untiringly till you are immersed in your statement. Now you realize the presence of God.

Do not stop with this. This is not the ultimate aim. Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute are the supreme things to be aimed at. After experiencing “GOD IS NOW HERE” repeat “HIS PRESENCE FILLS ME FROM HEAD TO FOOT”. By repeated utterances realize His existence in you. In the same way practice “HIS PRESENCE IS JOY”, “HIS PRESENCE IS LOVE” and “HIS PRESENCE IS PEACE”. Whenever your mind attempts to wander, repeat these statements loudly until it comes round. Morning hours are most suitable. This practice will free you from fear and fill you with courage, joy and peace.

If this is practiced untiringly a sense of supreme joy, Cosmic love and Eternal Peace will reign over you. What to speak of the radiance of such a realized Yogi? How glorious will he shine in the world.

May all know this easy way for the realization of God! May all practice this with definiteness and self-will. May all share His blessings. May all be free from worldly ties and sensual agonies. May the All-merciful Lord encumber them with help and relieve them from the struggle of *Samsara*!

3. DEVOTION TO GOD ERADICATES ALL FEARS

God bestows perfect security on His devotees and removes all sorts of fears. He transforms the sense of insecurity and fear into one of confidence and faith. He saves him from panic and despair.

Mira was tormented by her husband in a variety of ways but Lord Krishna protected her and removed all her fears. The cup of poison was changed into nectar. Cobra was changed into Saligrama and a garland of flowers. She was shut in a cage where there was a hungry tiger. The tiger did not eat her but kissed the feet of Mira. This was all due to grace of Lord Krishna.

Lord Hari removed all the fears of Prahlada. Prahlada also was tormented by his cruel father. Prahlada was thrown into the sea. He was trampled under the feet of the elephant. He was rolled down from the top of a hill. He was thrown into the fire. But he was saved by Lord Hari. Lord Vishnu removed all his fears.

A devotee sees only the Lord in all names and forms. He beholds Lord Hari everywhere. How can there be fear, then, for him?

Take refuge in Lord, in His name and grace. All fears will vanish completely. He will bestow strength, fortitude, courage, presence of mind, etc., in you.

Abandon desires, Raga-Dvesha, and all sorts of worldly attachment. Pray and meditate:

Lord Hari! I am Thine

Ram Ram Ram

O Lord Hari! All is Thine	Ram Ram Ram
Thy will be done	Ram Ram Ram
Fill my heart with courage	Ram Ram Ram
Shower Thy grace on me	Ram Ram Ram
Let my mind be attached to Thy lotus feet	Ram Ram Ram
Let me feel Thy presence, everywhere	Ram Ram Ram
Let me behold Thee in all forms	Ram Ram Ram
Reveal Thy form to me	Ram Ram Ram
Guide me, protect me	Ram Ram Ram
Pahi Mam. Raksha Mam	Ram Ram Ram

4. MEDITATION ON ATMAN (The Method of Jnanis)

Meditation on the fearless Atman removes all sorts of fears in toto. A sage beholds the immortal fearless Self only everywhere. How can there be fear for him then? There is fear only where there is duality. If one feels that there is a second object besides himself, at once fear is generated. He is afraid of the other man. Separation, duality, perception of objects are all due to Avidya or ignorance.

Start the anti-current from today. Deny the body, and identify yourself with the all-pervading, immortal, fearless Atman. Entire denial of the body cannot come in a day or a week. Constantly think of the Atman. Gradually you will become fearless. You will have to fight against the Samskaras of Anadikala (beginningless time). The more you think of Atman, the more courageous you will become. By constant hammering only can you entirely drive the nail into the wall or a plank. Even so, by constant and protracted thinking on Atman alone you can become absolutely fearless.

Meditate. Assert. Recognize. Realize:

I am fearless, all-pervading Atman	OM OM OM
I am not afraid of anything	OM OM OM
Courage is my birthright	OM OM OM
I behold the one Atman everywhere Everything is my own Self	OM OM OM
Who is to be afraid of whom?	OM OM OM
There is no duality for me	OM OM OM
I see the non-dual essence only	OM OM OM
My will is very powerful now	OM OM OM
My power is irresistible	OM OM OM
I have no enemy	OM OM OM
Enemy, tiger, cobra, are my own Self They cannot do harm to me	OM OM OM
I love them as my own Self	OM OM OM

A Jivanmukta or a sage hates none, fears none. May you all be established in that Supreme Non-dual Fearless Brahman.