

BY HIS HOLINESS SWAMI ISA



Education for Total Consciousness

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Translated from the original in Malayalam

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Chapter 2:

The Student

Normally, we approach the student with pre-conceived ideas. We believe that students are imperfect, and education is supposed to be the process that transforms the imperfection. Transformation, the systematic change from one form and quality to another form and quality, is supposed to be the ultimate goal of this process.

But the student needs not just transformation. He needs the light to realize his inherent virtue of perfection. Education is the period during which the student puts in all his efforts to achieve this light. Proper thought, emotion and action are essential to reach his goal.

The student is neither an imperfect entity nor an embodiment of grief. However, he is not able to identify his own perfection and inherent peace. The student must reach high to attain this knowledge. This should be the primary thought and emotion of the student, and only then he will become a true student.

What is learnt by heart without knowing its meaning cannot be applied in real life, like a donkey carrying a sack of sugar without getting a taste of it. What we call 'education' should not have a similar fate.

Education turns into a dreadful experience to the student who feels it a burden to be carried on the shoulders. Today's student behaves like a weak and exhausted person who cannot exercise any control over his thoughts, and reacts impulsively.

Undigested food puts the body, mind, intellect and the individual as a whole into trouble; similarly, studying lessons without digesting them brings only grief. Learning is not mere show. It is a journey towards perfection.

Today, the prescribed topics in the syllabus are not taught in a comprehensive manner. Fragments of knowledge are picked up from here and there, and imparted to students. The student loses interest in learning by this imperfect mode of teaching. Many elements that are complementary to the topics taught are totally ignored and the student finds it difficult to understand the lesson. Then naturally his attention turns to things that can be easily understood, and he fails to concentrate on his studies.