

The Purpose of Life.

Some people believe that it is not possible to know the 'Purpose of Life', or indeed doubt that there is any purpose or meaning to our existence; but to others the quest for the Meaning of Life is the greatest of pursuits. It is certainly the only real ambition that the author has had in his life; to know the Truth of our existence here, to understand the nature of the Ultimate Reality, to attain enlightenment – whatever words one may choose the path to be followed is the same.

So it comes as a bit of a surprise to discover that the answers were all written down many thousands of years ago and are available at your local library!

Inevitably, it cannot satisfy us to read the answer in a book, as such profound truths can only be grasped beyond the limitations of the mind. When one glimpses the true nature of our lives here on Earth and realises that philosophers, sages, saints and the founders of all the great religions have spoken of the same thing, it seems that organised religions have sought to obscure the truth from humanity rather than trying to spread enlightenment. Perhaps this is necessary as revealing subtle mysteries to people who are not earnestly seeking might be akin to 'casting one's pearls before swine'.

In many cultures and religions there is a tradition of those who 'know' coaching a seeker of truth until they are ready to receive initiation into the deeper mysteries. But the problem has always been to find a true 'Master' who really has and can deliver the awakening of the 'garden of flowers' within the ardent pupil for them to grasp the truth directly.

We live in extraordinary times when all knowledge, that was previously considered 'esoteric' and only to be revealed to one prepared for initiation, is available in books or on-line. For example, if you are interested in the cult of Goddess-worship through the mystical diagram known as Shri Chakra there is more than enough information on several websites to satisfy you. Unfortunately no amount of reading or experimenting will result in your experiencing the complete absorption in the Divine Nature which is its object. This knowledge

really does have to be passed on from one who has it to another who desires it and is ready to receive it.

The Ugly Ducklings.

Many seekers have felt themselves to be 'outsiders', feeling uncomfortable in the society of 'normal' people, finding little or no satisfaction in materialism or limited human relationships as others seem to. When they finally meet like-minded people it can be a great relief to discover that there is nothing wrong with them but, on the contrary, they are on the evolutionary cutting-edge of humanity in seeking for something higher.

Concept of the Divine

To understand the purpose of our lives it is necessary to take on board some fundamental concepts. These can be verified by personal experience once one has achieved inner awakening. The first major concept that one must be willing to contemplate is that of a Supreme Spirit which creates and maintains this Universe.

When people say that they do (or don't) believe in God, they will have some concept of God that they do, or don't, believe in – an old man with a long white beard up in the sky or perhaps something more subtle. Until we experience it directly, it can only be a concept. In the meantime we must be open to the idea that there is a 'Higher Being' with which we must harmonise our lives and get connected to in order to know it directly.

The first step is to realise that we are the Spirit – that our essence is consciousness and that the body along with the mind, emotions, memories, human identity, etc. are all temporary, impermanent and illusory. When we rise to the level where we understand this at first hand it is a short step to become aware of the All-pervading Consciousness and realise the identity of our own consciousness with this infinite and eternal Universal Consciousness.

This leads one to a perception of every human being – indeed every living and non-living entity – as imbued with the Supreme Spirit. The fact is that it is the Universal Consciousness that is seeing through our eyes – however in normal

circumstances we are not aware of this but identify with the body and consider ourselves individuals.

Creation.

No-one can say where the Supreme Spirit, whose nature is Consciousness, Bliss and Love, came from – there could simply be nothing. However this Supreme Consciousness does exist and most cultures contain the reports of people - mystics, yogis and sages - who were able to commune directly with this Higher Power.

What follows is one explanation for the Creation of this Universe:-

Before anything material existed the perfect tranquillity of the Supreme Spirit was disturbed by a glimmer of desire – the desire to become aware of Itself. This desire gave rise to the Creation of Matter (presumably as the Big Bang) which is initially ruled by physical laws and instinct but is driven by the pure evolutionary desire to raise the level of awareness.

Ultimately human beings evolved, some of whom had a burning desire to understand the nature of Reality. Humans have the ability to introspect and become aware of being pure consciousness and bliss. In doing this they fulfil the Purpose of Existence by becoming identified with their individual Spirit and realising that it is a small part of the Supreme Consciousness which, through the individual awareness, is becoming aware of Itself.

Humans are at the pinnacle of Creation as, alone among the animals (as far as we know), they have the ability to achieve this awareness. In the history of the world, very few individuals have fulfilled this role completely, but it seems that the time has arrived for us to get this experience in larger numbers, in a collective way, and rediscover our true nature as Spirit. We understand the truth that we are really all one.

Reincarnation and Karma.

The idea that we evolve by going through a series of lifetimes in which we (slowly!) learn the lessons needed to develop into a higher state of awareness, is not a new one. It has been a fundamental part of many philosophies and religions – Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism to name a few and is said to have

been part of Christ's teachings until it was removed in the fifth century AD. Whether perfect individuality is maintained from one lifetime to the next or we emerge from and re-enter a 'pool of consciousness' is a matter open to discussion.

Connected with reincarnation is the concept of Karma – the idea that we are forced to repeat situations until we learn to behave in an enlightened manner. Even if we do not subscribe directly to the idea of Karma, most of us believe that the situations in which we find ourselves are of our own creation through the choices we make and things we have done in the past.

These concepts help us to take responsibility for our own lives and put our present situation into perspective. Ultimately we will want to fulfil the Purpose of Life as this is the only desire which, being pure, does not bind us to the endlessly spinning wheel of existence but gives us joy and liberation.

Being a natural process all the mechanisms required to rise to higher levels of awareness are built into us and are awaiting the right time to manifest. Through Sahaja Yoga it is possible to have profound experiences, culminating in the ultimate state of awareness, while leading normal lives in society. The pathways have been created and the only limitation is the strength of our desire to extricate ourselves from the hankerings of the mundane world and enter the beautiful and liberating realm of Spirit.

'The ultimate purpose of life is to achieve happiness and joy. But there is no happiness and joy in gathering all these material things. The greatest joy is in being one with the Divine.'

H.S.H.Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. Meta Modern Era, ch.8, World Peace.

Having achieved this state of one-ness, the desire to pass this experience on to others arises, and our lives take on another purpose where we can enjoy action, as well as blissful meditation and contemplation, in helping to point our fellow human beings along the path to true happiness.