

## Death

### Death- a great lie

Osho : The first thing I would like to tell you about death is that there is no bigger lie than death. And yet, death appears to be true. It not only appears to be true but even seems like the cardinal truth of life—it appears as if the whole of life is surrounded by death. Whether we forget about it, or become oblivious to it, everywhere death remains close to us. Death is even closer to us than our shadow....

What I wish to say is that it is essential to see death, to understand it, to recognize it. But this is possible only when we die; one can only see it while dying. Then what is the way now? And if one sees death only while dying, then there is no way to understand it—because at the time of death one will be unconscious.

Yes, there is a way now. We can go through an experiment of entering into death of our own free will. And may I say that meditation or samadhi is nothing else but that. The experience of entering death voluntarily is meditation, samadhi. The phenomenon that will automatically occur one day with the dropping of the body—we can willingly make that happen by creating a distance, inside, between the self and the body. And so, by leaving the body from the inside, we can experience the event of death, we can experience the occurrence of death.

We can experience death today, this evening—because the occurrence of death simply means that our soul and our body will experience, in that journey, the same distinction between the two of them as when the vehicle is left behind and the traveler moves on ahead....

If the shell, the body, and the kernel, the consciousness, separate at this very instant, death is finished. With the creation of that distance, you come to know that the shell and the kernel are two separate things—that you will continue to survive in spite of the breaking of the shell, that there is no question of you breaking, of you disappearing. In that state, even though death will occur, it cannot penetrate inside you—it will occur outside you. It means only that which you are not will die. That which you are will survive.

This is the very meaning of meditation or samadhi: learning how to separate the shell from the kernel. They can be separated because they are separate. They can be known separately because they are separate. That's why I call meditation a voluntary entry into death. And the man who enters death willingly, encounters it and comes to know that, "Death is there, and yet I am still here." ...

In meditation, too, one has to enter slowly within. And gradually, one after another, things begin to drop away. A distance is created with each and every thing, and a moment arrives when it feels as if everything is lying far away at a distance. It will feel as if someone else's corpse is lying on the shore—and yet you exist. The body is lying there and still you exist—separate, totally distinct and different.

Once we experience seeing death face-to-face while alive, we will never have anything to do with death again. Death will keep on coming, but then it will be just like a stopover—it will be like changing clothes, it will be like when we take new horses and ride in new bodies and set out on a new journey, on new paths, into new worlds. But death will never be able to destroy us. This can only be known by encountering death. We will have to know it; we will have to pass through it.

Because we are so very afraid of death, we are not even able to meditate. Many people come to me and say that they are unable to meditate. How shall I tell them that their real problem is something else? Their real problem is the fear of death...and meditation is a process of death. In a state of total meditation we reach the same point a dead man does. The only difference is that the dead man reaches there in an unconscious state, while we reach consciously. This is the only difference. The dead man has no knowledge of what happened, of how the shell broke open and the kernel survived. The meditative seeker knows that the shell and the kernel have become separate.

The fear of death is the basic reason why people cannot go into meditation—there is no other reason. Those who are afraid of death can never enter into samadhi. Samadhi is a voluntary invitation to death. An invitation is given to death: "Come, I am ready to die. I want to know whether or not I will survive after death. And it is better that I know it consciously, because I won't be able to know anything if this event occurs in an unconscious state."

So, the first thing I say to you is that as long as you keep running away from death you will continue to be defeated by it—and the day you stand up and encounter death, that very day death will leave you, but you will remain.

These three days, all my talks will be on the techniques of how you can encounter death. I hope that, these three days, many people will come to know how to die, will be able to die....

Knowing death causes it to dissolve; then suddenly, for the first time, we become connected with life.

That's why I told you that the first thing about meditation is that it is a voluntary entry into death. The second thing I would like to say is that one who enters into death willingly, finds, all of a sudden, entrance into life. Even though he goes in search of death, instead of meeting death he actually finds ultimate life. Even though, for the purpose of his search he enters the mansion of death, he actually ends up in the temple of life. And one who escapes from the mansion of death never reaches the temple of life....

I say both things simultaneously: meditation is entering voluntarily into death, and the one who enters death voluntarily attains to life. That means: one who encounters death ultimately finds that death has disappeared and he is in life's embrace. This looks quite contrary—you go in search of death and come across life—but it is not....

These three days we shall do the meditation of entering into death. And I shall speak to you on many of its dimensions. Tonight we shall do the first day's meditation. Let me explain a few things about it to you....

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**Beloved Osho,**

**For the last week I have known that I have cancer. From that time, except for a few moments of panic and fear, I have felt a deep calmness and relaxation coming into my being.**

**Have I already given up my life, or is this the quietness of acceptance?**

We have given up our lives at the very moment when we were born, because the birth is nothing but a beginning of death. Each moment you will be dying more and more.

It is not that on a certain day, at seventy years old, death comes; it is not an event; it is a process that begins with the birth. It takes seventy years; it is mighty lazy, but it is a process, not an event. And I am emphasizing this fact so that I can make it clear to you that life and death are not two things. They become two if death is an event which ends life. Then they become two; then they become antagonistic, enemies.

When I say that death is a process beginning with birth, I'm saying that life is also a process beginning with the same birth – and these are not two processes. It is one process: it begins with birth, it ends with death.

But life and death are like two wings of a bird, or two hands, or two legs.

Even your brain has two hemispheres, separate, the right hemisphere and the left hemisphere. You can't exist without this dialectics.

Life is a dialectics – and if you understand this, a tremendous acceptance of death naturally comes to you. It is not against you, it is part of you; without it you cannot be alive.

It is just like the background of a blackboard on which you write with white chalk: the blackboard is not against the chalk; it simply gives it emphasis, prominence. Without the blackboard your white writing will disappear. It is like day and night – you see it everywhere, but you go on behaving like blind people. Without the night there is not day.

The deeper you enter into the dialectics ... it is a miraculous experience. Without inaction there is not action; if you cannot relax, you cannot act. The more you can relax, the more perfection will be in your action. They appear to be opposites; they are not. The better you dissolve into sleep in the night, the sharper, the younger you will wake up in the morning. And everywhere in life you will find the same dialectical process.

I say you are blessed to know – because everybody is going to die, but because it is unknown when, where, people go on living under the illusion that they are going to live forever. They always see others dying. That supports logically their standpoint that "it is always the other who dies. I never die."

You must have seen many people dying, giving you a strong support, a rational background that it is always the other who dies. And when you die you will not know, you will be unconscious – you will miss the opportunity of knowing death.

Those who have known death are unanimous in their opinion that it is the greatest orgasmic experience of life. But people die unconsciously. It is good that there are diseases which are predictable.

**Cancer means that you have known seven days before – or seven months, whatever the time may be – that death is coming closer each moment. These seven days are not allowed to everybody. Cancer seems to be something you must have earned in your past life – because J. Krishnamurti died of cancer, Raman Maharshi died of cancer, Ramkrishna died of cancer. Strange ... three enlightened people who are not mythological, who have lived just now died of cancer. It seems to be something spiritual!**

It certainly has a spiritual dimension ...

I'm not saying that all those who die of cancer are enlightened beings, but they can become enlightened beings more easily than anybody else because others go on living under the illusion that they are going to live; there is no hurry. Meditation can be postponed – tomorrow, the day after tomorrow. What is the hurry? – and there are more urgent things which have to be done today.

Meditation is never urgent because death is never urgent.

For the man who comes to know that cancer is going to strike within seven days, everything in life becomes meaningless. All urgencies disappear. He was thinking of making a beautiful palace; the very idea disappears. He was thinking to fight the next election; the whole idea disappears. He was worried about the third world war; he is no longer worried. It doesn't matter to him. What happens after him does not matter – he has only seven days to live.

If he is little alert in those days he can live seventy years or seven hundred years or the whole eternity – because now meditation becomes a priority, love becomes a priority ... dance rejoicing, experiencing beauty, which were never priorities before ...

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### **Osho: Understanding The Fear Of Death**

If you understand death your life will become intense and total

“Death is always close by. It is almost like your shadow. You may be aware, you may not be aware, but it follows you from the first moment of your life to the very last moment. Death is a process just as life is a process, and they are almost together, like two wheels of a bullock cart. Life cannot exist without death; neither can death exist without life.

#### **Our minds have an insane desire: we want only life and not death**

We don't look at the existential truth, we always cling to our own insane desire. Any desire that goes against nature is insane. And this desire is in almost every living creature, not only human beings. Even the trees are afraid of death, but trees can be forgiven. They are not conscious beings, they are only unconscious — fast asleep.

But you are a little bit awake: you can sense the presence of death. Hence the possibility opens for a deeper understanding, that life and death are all together, two extremes of one energy. Life is the active force and death is the inactive force. Life is the positive electricity and death is the negative electricity, but they cannot be separated.

You are saying, “When I was coming for discourse, my heart was trembling with fear; I felt as if I was going to die.” Those who are aware are aware that death is possible at any moment — the very next moment and you may be gone. This awareness is going to help you to live this moment as deeply as possible, because death can cut your roots without informing you, without any previous intimation that, “I am coming.” It simply comes. You know only when it has happened. But it is not the greatest misery. The greatest misery is that when there was the chance and the opportunity, you did not live — you went on postponing.

#### **Life is an opportunity -death is the end of the rope**

If you understand death your life will become intense and total. But instead of understanding death, you become overwhelmed by it. Hence the heart starts trembling with fear. And fear is not going to help at all, fear is going to cloud your mind even more. Out of fear, there has never been any understanding.

So whenever you feel fear, it is a tremendous opportunity to understand that life is momentary, it is ephemeral, it is made of the same stuff as dreams are made of. How real the dream looks when you are asleep — in fact, more real than your experiences when you are awake. You may have never thought about it, but while you are awake you can doubt: “Perhaps what I am seeing may be just a dream.” I may be a dream, you may be a dream, this whole communion may be happening just as a dream. Soon you will be awake and you will find, “My God! It was just a dream.”

### **Have you ever doubted death?**

There is a possibility when you are awake to suspect, to doubt the reality that surrounds you. But when you are asleep, you cannot even doubt the existence of the dream. It is so real, it is more real than reality. Have you ever doubted any dream, thinking that perhaps what you are seeing is a dream? The moment you doubt, you are awake, and the dream is immediately finished. The dream can remain there only if you are totally asleep, so deep that no doubt, no suspicion, can arise in you.

But to those who have understood both life and death as nothing but two aspects of one reality, the dream and the so-called reality of your waking consciousness are not basically different. Just as in the morning you wake up and the dream life is finished, one day in death you wake up into another reality and all that was real up to then — for seventy years — becomes just a dream. Not even a trace of it is left anywhere in your consciousness.

Death is a constant reminder that, “I can come any moment. Be prepared.” And what is the preparation? The preparation is: live life so totally, so intensely, be so aflame with it that when death comes there is no complaint, there is no grudge. You are absolutely ready because you have lived life so totally, you have known all its mysteries — there is no point in living anymore. Death has come exactly at the right time, when you may have thought to die yourself. I call that death perfect which comes at the moment when you yourself may have thought, “It is enough.”

### **Death – a welcomed guest**

Death comes and you understand that life has been lived totally, so now there is no point to go on breathing and go on waking and sleeping unnecessarily — because nothing new is going to happen. Now everything is past and there is no future. In such a moment, death is a welcome guest. And unless you are ready to welcome death, know well that you have missed life. Those who feel sadness and fear about death are the people who have missed the train. But in our unconsciousness, we are all continuously missing the train. The train is moving every moment, just in front of you, but somehow you go on missing.”

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### **Osho - Death is the Crescendo**

**Osho** - Death is the crescendo, the highest peak that life can attain. In the moment of death much is possible. If you have been preparing and preparing, meditating and waiting, then at the moment of death enlightenment is very easily possible – because death and enlightenment are similar. A master, one who is enlightened, can easily make you enlightened at the moment of death. Even before, whenever it happens, you have to be ready to die.

What happens in death? Suddenly you are losing your body, suddenly you are losing your mind. Suddenly you feel you are going away from yourself – all that you believe to be yourself. It is painful, because you feel you are going to be drowned into emptiness. You will be nowhere now, because you were always identified with the body and the mind, and you never knew the beyond; you never knew yourself beyond the body and the mind. You got so fixed and obsessed with the periphery that the center was completely forgotten.

In death you have to encounter this fact: that the body is going, now it cannot be retained any more. The mind is leaving you – now you are no more in control of the mind. The ego is dissolving – you cannot even say ‘I’. You tremble with fear, on the verge of nothingness. You will be no more. But if you have been preparing, if you have been meditating – and preparation means if you have been making all efforts to use death, to use this abyss of nothingness – rather than being pulled into it you have been getting ready to jump into it, it makes a lot of difference.

If you are being pulled into it, grudgingly – you don’t want to go into it and you have been snatched – then it is painful. Much anguish! And the anguish is so intense that you will become unconscious in the moment of death. Then you miss.

But if you are ready to jump there is no anguish. If you accept and welcome it, and there is no complaint – rather, you are happy and celebrating that the moment has come, and now I can jump out of this body which is a limitation, can jump out of this body which is a confinement, can jump out of this ego which has always been a suffering – if you can welcome, then there is no need to become unconscious.

If you can become accepting, welcoming – what Buddhists call *tathata*, to accept it, and not only to accept, because the word accept is not very good, deep down some nonacceptance is hidden in it – no, if you welcome, if it is such a celebration, an ecstasy, if it is a benediction, then you need not become unconscious.

If it is a benediction, you will become perfectly conscious in that moment. Remember these two things: if you reject, if you say no, you will become totally unconscious; if you accept, welcome, and say yes with your full heart, you will become perfectly conscious. Yes to death makes you perfectly conscious; no to death makes you perfectly unconscious – and these are the two ways of dying. A Buddha dies totally accepting. There is no resistance, no fight between him and death. Death is divine; you die fighting.

If a man has been preparing, getting ready, at the moment of death the master can be miraculously helpful. Just a word at the right moment and the flame inside suddenly explodes, you become enlightened – because the moment is such, so intense, you are so concentrated at one point.

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### **Question – What is Death, and what exists after death?**

**Osho** – If you think about what is, you will pervert it. If you think about it, then you will impose your own conceptions on it. 'What is' can be revealed only when there is no conception, no thought, no theory in you; when your mind is totally vacant; when your mind has become an emptiness, a nothingness; when your mind is just a womb, a receiver. When nothing from your mind is imposed, when your mind is naked and empty, only then is 'what is' revealed because there is no one to pervert it – no one to imagine anything, no one to dream anything, no one to project anything.

One must approach reality completely vacant and empty, without any preconceived thoughts, without any prejudices, without any preconceptions of what is to be there. You must go into nowhere, you have to go into nothingness. Only then does your mind become just a receiver, a receptivity. And then, what is is revealed.

Even after that, when you have to assert it, express it, you will not be able to. You won't be able to express what has been known. Language is not adequate, words are not enough. Something so vast, something so multidimensional, something so unimagined, something so unknown, has come over you that you can be struck dumb. The greater the realization, the less the possibility of expressing it.

The truth has never been said. It has been known, it has been lived, but never said. No word, no scripture, has expressed it. They have tried, endeavoured, taken pains to express it, but it has remained unexpressed, unknown. You can come to it only when you do not come with your scriptures; you can come to it only when you do not come with your theologies; you can come to it only when you do not come with your questions. A mute quest is required, not a verbal questioning.

And you can come to it at any moment. When you are under a tree – just sleeping, relaxing, doing nothing – you can come to it. Near a seashore – just sitting, doing nothing – and it can overwhelm you. Under the starry sky – just existing, just being; just present, not doing anything – it can penetrate you.

That is why there are glimpses of it in love. When you are in love, words cease, thinking ceases. When you are in love, something becomes silent in you. Then there is no communication – and still there is a communication. You are silent, but communicating. In your silence, something comes to you and something goes out of you. Religion points toward total silence. One must be silent to hear the creative process: one must be totally silent to know that-which-is. Every moment we are thinking and thinking. This thinking creates a barrier.

If you are listening to me and still thinking within yourself, then there will be no communication. When I am answering you, if you are still creating new questions – comparing what I am saying, thinking about whether it is right or not – then we are poles apart. Then there is no communication. Your thinking has come between us as a barrier, and that barrier cannot be crossed.

If you are just listening – and that is the miracle: to be just listening! – then even this communication that is happening right now between us can become a communication of what is. If you are just here – present, doing nothing then something from my eyes,

from my hands, from the friends who have gathered here, from the whole situation that exists right here, can become an awakening and you can come into contact with what is.

And you ask, "What is death?" One cannot know before dying. How can one know? You can think about it, but that will not be death, that will not be real. One has to die to know death and one has to live to know life. Do not think about death. While life is, live! Know life! And if you know it then you will know death also, because death is pinnacle: the peak of life, the completion of life. So do not ask what death is. It will come, and you will go through it.

But it is possible to go through death and still not know it. We are passing through life and still we have not known it. We are asking, "What is death?" while we are alive. The reverse can also happen: when we are dying we may be asking, "What was life?" A dying person asks what was life and a living person asks what is death!

A living person can come to know life. Know it, be one with it. Absorb it, drink it completely – eat it! Then death comes. When you have known the day, the night comes. When you have known the day's awakening, you will have to know the night's relaxation and sleep. It is there. It is coming, it is hiding somewhere. It will come, but do not ask about it. Know what is here and now. Become a knower, a seer, so that when death comes, you will know it also.

A person who knows life, ultimately knows death also. And when he knows both, he knows that life is not against death nor is death against life. When he knows both, he knows that something unknown has come into being and that something unknown has left. Birth has been a door and death, too, has been a door, Something (the existence) has come in, and something has gone out. Nothing begins, nothing ends. There are births beyond birth and there will be deaths beyond death. There will be births beyond death and there will be deaths beyond birth. The process is endless, the voyage is eternal.

Know what is, do not ask what will be. How can you know it? You can only think about it and create theories. Theories are important, meaningless. Feelings are potent, meaningful, so while you are alive, feel life. Then you will become capable of feeling death when you die.

It is as blissful to know death as to know life. It is as blissful to awaken in the morning as it is to go into deep sleep at night. Both are blissful. But you must know them while they are happening; you cannot know them beforehand. And if you ask someone, then what you know is second-hand – not a first hand knowledge, not a felt knowledge, not a realized knowledge, not a knowledge that has penetrated your ultimate being, that has come to you through your innermost core. The real knowledge always comes through seeing, through knowing firsthand.

First know life; do not ask what death is. Know life, and by knowing life you will come to know death also. What you are transcends both. You are neither life nor death. You have been living, you will be dying – your being transcends both. Do not identify yourself with life. If you identify yourself with life then you will think of death as your enemy. Know life and then you know that you are beyond – unidentified, someone who has come to life. And you will know death too – as a door going back, returning to the source. Life comes, death comes, but the source remains beyond both.

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***I have understood that the witness is pure consciousness, unaffected by the body and mind it takes temporary residence in. So, first: how do personality and conditioning persist from one life to another? And second: does not that which makes us unique individuals have a continuum?***

Maneesha, first you have to understand that you have not only this body of flesh and bones and blood, not only this brain which is part of the body. Behind the brain you have a mind — that mind is abstract — and behind the body you have an astral body. The word 'astral' comes from stars; it means a light.... Instead of flesh or bones, only a body made of light. This body of light, the astral body, has the mind in it.

When you die, your physical body and your physical mind are left behind. But the astral body travels with you, with the mind, with all the remembrances of the past life and the body, remembering all the scars and the wounds that have happened to the physical body. This abstract phenomenon travels with you; hiding within it is your ultimate, existential center.

Until you know the center, you will have to travel continuously from one body to another body. You have been traveling already for thousands of lives, gathering more and more memories in your astral mind, more and more memories in your astral body. Although your center is unaffected, it is surrounded by the astral body, and the astral body goes on from womb to womb, from grave to grave. That is your individuality; it has a continuum.

But the continuum comes to an end when you become a buddha.

When you penetrate deeply to the center, you are also cutting the astral body apart, making a way through the mind, beyond the mind, through the astral body and beyond the astral body, to the center of your being. Once you have reached to the center of your being, the continuum of your individuality stops. Now begins the universal existence.

You will not enter into another womb again, and you will not be burnt on another funeral pyre again. Now you will be one with the whole.

Of course, everything has a cost. You will have to drop your long-cherished love of individuality. Millions of years you have loved your individuality, but your individuality at the final stage is a hindrance.

Now take a jump out of the continuum and become one with the whole. You will disappear just like a dewdrop in the ocean. But it is the ultimate bliss; it is the most profound ecstasy to become the oceanic, to become the cosmic. You will never repent that you have lost your individuality.

What was in your individuality?

Have you ever thought?

Your individuality was a light prison, which carried you from one womb, passing through the grave, to another womb, and repeating the same things again and again and again.

That's why in the East they call it the life and death cycle. To jump out of this cycle is the whole purpose of meditation — to come out of this continuum, which has been just a deep anguish, anxiety and angst, and to disappear into the blue sky.

This disappearance is not your death. This disappearance makes you one with the whole.

And to be one with the whole is the greatest joy, the greatest blissfulness. Nothing is more significant, more full of splendor, more majestic. Here all the buddhas have disappeared in the ultimate eternity of existence. It is freedom from individuality, freedom from yourself.

You have known freedom from others, but you don't recognize that you are still a slave of your own individuality. It is a cage... it may be golden.

Open the cage and fly across the sun into the blue sky and disappear, without leaving any footprints, any trace behind.

This Gautam the Buddha used to call anatta, no self, no mind, no you, no I. This in fact can be said in another way....

I have told you about Kabir, one of the great mystics of India. When he was young he became enlightened, and he wrote a small poem, in which comes the line: The drop has disappeared in the ocean.

When he was dying, he called his son Kamaal and told him to change that line. Kamaal said, "It is so beautiful — the dewdrop has disappeared in the ocean. Why are you changing it? And what is the substitute?"

Kabir said, "These are my last breaths; don't argue, simply do what I am saying. You write instead: The ocean has disappeared in the dewdrop. That was my first impression, this is my last impression." And he closed his eyes.

But both the impressions are beautiful. In the beginning, of course, you will see the dewdrop is disappearing in the ocean. But finally you will realize the ocean has disappeared in the dewdrop.

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### **Life is an opportunity**

Whatever is worth achieving in life can be achieved only during the lifetime. But many people go on waiting until after death. Many people think that how can truth, the divine, liberation be achieved while still being in the body, in life, in the world. However, what cannot be attained during life cannot be attained ever.

Life is an opportunity to achieve, whether you spend it in collecting pebbles or in attaining to the divine. Life is a completely neutral opportunity. Life does not tell you what to achieve. If you collect pebbles, accumulate worthless things, or waste your life in increasing and inflating your ego, life will not prevent you from doing so. Or you may dedicate your life to attaining the truth, the self and the ultimate depths of life; then too life will not object in your doing so.

Life is merely a neutral opportunity – you may use it the way you like. But many people have made arrangements to deceive themselves. They think, “Life is for worldly pleasures.” They have created such divisions: “Life is for *bhoga*, indulgence.” But then only death remains for yoga, union with the divine. But death is not an opportunity. Let this be understood properly. Death is an end of all opportunity.

What is the meaning of death? Its meaning is that now there is no more opportunity left. Life is an opportunity, death is the end of the opportunity. So nothing can be achieved through death, because for achieving anything there should be a span of opportunity.

But we have divided: we say life is for indulgence. But when life will be exhausted, then?... then yoga. We have created all these stories that you utter into the ears of the dying person at the time of death – when he will not even be able to hear. When living persons do not listen, how would a dead or dying person hear a *gayatri mantra*, or recite the name of the divine, or the chant “Rama, Rama”?

The person could not hear the *gayatri mantra* his whole life, and even if he heard he did not listen, and even if he heard he did not grasp.... That person at the time of death – when all the senses will be failing; when the eyes won’t see, the ears won’t hear, the hands won’t touch; when life is disappearing back into its source – will he be able to hear *gayatri*? No, he will not be able to hear.

But then why do people go on uttering such things into his ears? There is a secret in it. That dying person is unable to hear anything, but the living ones who are uttering it for him remain under the assurance that at the time of their death somebody will utter it for them – and the goal will be achieved. So they have invented stories of this sort.

These dishonest people have invented stories. They say, one person was dying and he had a son named Narayana, one of the names for god, and he shouted aloud “Narayana” to call him. Hearing this, the god Narayana, who is in heaven, was tricked. He thought that he was being remembered. The dying man was calling his son, perhaps to advise the son in his last moments as to how to do black-marketing or how to keep double accounts! But due to god Narayana’s misunderstanding the dying man went to heaven. He himself was surprised as to how he arrived there. But his utterance of the name of Narayana at the time of his death had managed the miracle. No, things cannot be managed so cheaply. And a Narayana, who can be so easily deceived, will also be only a bogus Narayana.

Deceptions don’t work in real life; it is another matter that you may console your mind with such ideas.

Death is the end of opportunity. Understand this meaning properly. Death is not yet another opportunity for doing something. Death is the end of all opportunities; you won’t be able to do anything. There simply is no way of doing anything in death. Doing means life, so whatsoever is to be done, it has to be done during life.

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### **Only Life Goes Beyond Death – Osho**

LIFE is an opportunity. You can use it, you can misuse it, or you can simply waste it. It depends on you. Except you, nobody is going to be responsible. Responsibility is of the individual.

Once you realize this then you start becoming alert, aware. Then you start living in a totally different way. Then, in fact, for the first time you become alive.

Otherwise, people live in a sort of dream – half-asleep, half-awake... just somewhere in between consciousness and unconsciousness. That life is not really a life. You exist – but you don’t live.

Existence is given to you. Existence is a gift. Life has to be earned. When existence turns upon itself, it becomes life. Existence has been given by the whole; you have not done anything for it.

It is simply there, a given fact. When existence becomes life... the moment you start existing in a conscious way, immediately existence becomes life. Existence lived consciously is life.

Life is a great challenge, an adventure into the unknown, an adventure into oneself, and adventure into that which is. If you live an unconscious life, if you simply exist, you will always remain afraid of death. Death will always be just somewhere near the corner, hanging around you. Only life goes beyond death.

Existence comes, disappears. It is given to you, taken away. It is a wave in the ocean... arises, falls back, disappears.

But life is eternal. Once you have it, you have it forever. Life knows no death. Life is not afraid of death. Once you know what life is, death disappears. If you are still afraid of death, know well – you have not known life yet.

Death exists only in the ignorance – in the ignorance of what life is. One goes on living. One goes on moving from one moment to another, from one action to another, completely unaware what one is doing, why one is doing, why one is drifting from this point to that point. If you become a little meditative, many times in a day you will catch hold of yourself completely drifting unconscious.

The whole effort of religion is to make you aware of your existence. Existence plus awareness is life eternal – what Jesus calls life in abundance, what Jesus calls the kingdom of god.

That kingdom of god is within you. You have already the seed within you. You just have to allow it to sprout. You have to allow it to come in the sunlit world of the sky, to become free, to move in freedom, to move higher and higher, to touch the very infinity. It is possible to soar high – but the basic thing is awareness.

Shortly before Carl Jung died, he said in an interview, 'We need more understanding of human nature, because the only real danger that exists is man himself. He is the great danger and we are pitifully unaware of it. We know nothing of man.'

One fallacy continues and that fallacy is that because you are, you think you know who you are. You feel that you are, but you don't know who you are. Just a confused feeling, a mixed feeling, a shadowy feeling that you are, is not enough. It should become crystal-clear. It should become an unwavering light within you. Only then one knows what man is.

In Sanskrit, for 'man' we have the word 'purusha'. That word is tremendously beautiful. It is difficult to translate it because it has three meanings. It can be pronounced with three different emphases.

The word is purusha. It can be pronounced as pur u sha. Then it means 'the dawn in the city... he who is filled with light'.

It can be pronounced as puru sha. Then it means 'filled with wisdom and eternal happiness... a citizen of heaven'.

It can be pronounced as pu rusha. Then it means 'whose passions are purified and who has become deathless'.

There are many possibilities within you, layer upon layer. The first layer is of the body. If you get identified with the body, you are getting identified with the temporal, the momentary. Then there is bound to be fear of death.

The body is a flux, like a river – continuously changing, moving. It has nothing of the eternal in it. Each moment the body is changing. In fact, the body is dying every moment. It is not that after seventy years suddenly one day you die. The body dies every day. Death continues for seventy years; it is a process.

Death is not an event; it is a long process. By and by, by and by, the body comes to a point where it cannot hold itself. It disintegrates. If you are identified with the body, of course the fear will be constantly there that death is approaching. You can live, but you can live only in fear. And what type of life is possible when one's foundations are constantly shaking? and one is sitting on a volcano and death is possible any moment? And only one thing is certain – that death is coming – and everything else is uncertain. How can one live? How can one celebrate? How can one dance and sing and be? Impossible. The death won't allow it. The death is too much and too close.

Then there is a second layer within you: that of the mind – which is even more temporal and more fleeting than the body. Mind is also continuously disintegrating. Mind is the inner part of the body and the body is the outer part of the mind. These are not two things. Mind and body is not a right expression. The right expression is mind-body. You are psychosomatic. Not that the body

exists and the mind exists. The body is the gross mind, and the mind is the subtle body... aspects of the same coin – one outer, the second inner.

So there are people who are identified with the body. These are the materialists. They cannot live. Desperately they try, of course, but they cannot live. A materialist only pretends that he is living; he cannot live. His life cannot be very deep; it can only be superficial, shallow – because he is trying to live through the body which is continuously dying. He is living in a house which is on fire. He is trying to rest in a house which is on fire. How can you rest? How can you love?

The materialist can have only sex, cannot love. Because sex is temporal; love is something of the eternal. He can make hit-and-run contacts with people but he cannot relate. He is constantly running, because he is identified with the body. The body is never at rest; it is a continuous movement.

At the most he can have sex – a temporal, a momentary thing; nothing deeper, nothing of the soul, nothing of the innermost core. Beings remain far away; bodies meet and mingle and separate again. The materialist is the most idiotic person, because he is trying to live through death. That is the stupidity.

Then another type of person is the idealist – one who is identified with the mind, with ideas, ideologies, ideals. He lives in a very ephemeral world – not in any way better than the materialist. Of course, more ego-fulfilling, because he can condemn the materialist.

He talks about god, he talks about the soul, he talks about religion and great things. He talks about the other world – but that is all mere talk. He lives in the mind: continuously thinking, brooding, playing with ideas and words. He creates utopias of the mind, great beautiful dreams – but he is also wasting the opportunity. Because the opportunity is here and now, and he always thinks of somewhere else.

The word 'utopia' is beautiful. It means 'that which never comes'. He thinks of something which never comes, which cannot come. He lives somewhere else. He exists here and lives somewhere else. He lives in a dichotomy, in a dualism. With great tension he exists. The politicians, the revolutionaries, the so-called theologians, the priests, they all live a life identified with the mind.

And real life is beyond both body and mind. You are in the body, you are in the mind, but you are neither. The body is your outer shell, the mind is your inner shell, but you are beyond both.

This insight is the beginning of real life. How to start this insight? That's what meditation is all about.

Start witnessing. Walking on the street, become a witness. Watch the body walking... and you, from the innermost core, are just watching, witnessing, observing. Suddenly you will have a sense of freedom. Suddenly you will see that the body is walking, you are not walking.

Sometimes the body is healthy, sometimes the body is ill. Watch, just watch, and suddenly you will have a sense of a totally different quality of being. You are not the body. The body is ill, of course, but you are not ill. The body is healthy, but it has nothing to do with you. You are a witness, a watcher on the hills... far beyond. Of course, tethered to the body, but not identified with the body; rooted in the body, but always beyond and transcending.

The first meditation is to separate yourself from the body. And by and by, when you become more acute in your observation of the body, start observing the thoughts that continuously go on within your mind. But first watch the body, because it is gross, can be observed more easily, will not need much awareness. Once you become attuned, then start watching the mind.

Whatever can be watched becomes separate from you. Whatever you can witness, you are not it. You are the witnessing consciousness. The witnessed is the object; you are the subjectivity. The body, and the mind also, remain far away when you become a witness. Suddenly you are there – with no body and no mind... a pure consciousness, just simple sheer purity, an innocence, a mirror.

In this innocence, for the first time you know who you are. In this purity, for the first time existence becomes life. For the first time you are. Before it, you were simply asleep, dreaming; now you are. And when you are, then there is no death. Then you know that you will be witnessing your death also. One who has become capable of witnessing life has become capable of witnessing death. Because death is not the end of life; it is the very culmination of it. It is the very pinnacle of it. Life comes to its peak in death. Because you are afraid, you miss. Otherwise death is the greatest orgasm there is.

You have known the small orgasm of sex. In sex also, a small, a little death happens. Some life energy is released from your body – you feel orgasmic, unburdened, relaxed, just think of death. The whole energy that you have is released. Death is the greatest orgasm.

In sexual orgasm just a small, minute part of your energy is relaxed. Then too you feel so beautiful. Then too you feel so relaxed and you fall in deep sleep, all tensions dissolved. You become a harmony. Think of death as the whole life released. From every pore of your body, the whole life released back to the whole. It is the greatest orgasm there is. Yes, death is the greatest orgasm.

But people go on missing it because of fear. The same happens with sexual orgasm. Many people go on missing it. They cannot have any orgasm because of the fear. They cannot move totally in it.

Remember this; people who are afraid of death will be afraid of sex also.

You can watch this happening in this country. This country has remained afraid of sex, and this country is very much afraid of death also. You cannot find more cowards anywhere. You cannot find more cowardly people anywhere. What has happened? Those people who are afraid of death will become afraid of sex also, because a small death happens in sex. Those people who become afraid of sex, cling too much to life. They become miserly. Misers miss sexual orgasms and then they miss the great orgasm, the fulfillment of the whole life.

Once you know what death is, you will receive it with great celebration. You will welcome it. It is the fulfillment of your whole life's effort. It is the fruition of your whole life's effort. The journey ends. One comes back home.

But in death you don't die. Just the energy that was given to you through the body and through the mind is released, goes back to the world. You return back home.

If you don't die rightly, you will be born again. Now let me explain it to you. If you don't die rightly, if you don't achieve the total orgasm that death is, you will be born again, because you missed and you have to be given another opportunity.

God is very patient with you. He goes on giving you more opportunities. He has compassion. If you have missed this life, he will give you another. If you have failed this time, for another session you will be sent back to the world. Unless you fulfill the goal, you will be sent back again and again. That is the meaning of the theory of rebirth.

The Christian god is a little miserly. He gives only one life. That creates much tension. Just one life? No time even to err, no time to go astray. That creates very deep inner tension. In the East we have created the concept of a more compassionate god who goes on giving. You have missed this one? Take another. And in a way it is very sensible. There is no god personified as such who gives life to you. It is in fact you.

Have you watched sometimes? In the night you go to sleep. Just watch. When you fall asleep, when you are falling asleep, just watch the last thought, the last desire, the last fragment in your mind. And then when in the morning you feel awake, don't open the eyes; just again watch. The last fragment will be the first fragment again.

If you were thinking of money when you were falling asleep, exactly the same thought will be the first thought in the morning. You will be thinking of money again – because that thought remained in your mind, waited for you to come back to it. If you were thinking of sex, in the morning you will be thinking of sex. Whatever.... If you were thinking of god and you prayed and that was your last thing in the night, first thing in the morning you will find a prayer arising in you.

The last thought in the night is the first thought in the morning. The last thought of this life will be the first thought of another life. The last thought when you are dying this time will become the first seed of your next life.

But when a buddha dies, a man who has attained, he simply dies with no thought. He enjoys the orgasm. It is so fulfilling, it is so totally fulfilling that there is no need to come back. He disappears into the cosmos. There is no need to be embodied again.

In the East we have been watching the death experience of people. How you die reflects your whole life, how you lived. If I can see just your death, I can write your whole biography – because in that one moment your whole life becomes condensed. In that one moment, like a lightning, you show everything.

A miserly person will die with clenched fists – still holding and clinging, still trying not to die, still trying not to relax. A loving person will die with open fists – sharing... even sharing his death as he shared his life. You can see everything written on the face – whether this man has lived his life fully alert, aware. If he has, then on his face there will be a light shining; around his body there will be an aura. You come close to him and you will feel silent – not sad, but silent. It even happens that if a person has died blissfully in a total orgasm you will feel suddenly happy near him.

It happened in my childhood. A very saintly person in my village died. I had a certain attachment towards him. He was a priest in a small temple, a very poor man, and whenever I would pass – and I used to pass at least twice a day; when going to the school near the temple, I would pass – he would call me and he would always give me some fruit, some sweet.

When he died, I was the only child who went to see him. The whole town gathered. Suddenly I could not believe what happened – I started laughing. My father was there; he tried to stop me because he felt embarrassed. A death is not a time to laugh. He tried to shut me up. He told me again and again, ‘You keep quiet!’

But I have never felt that urge again. Since then I have never felt it; never before had I ever felt it – to laugh so loudly, as if something beautiful has happened. And I could not hold myself. I laughed loudly, everybody was angry, I was sent back, and my father told me, ‘Never again are you to be allowed in any serious situation! Because of you, even I was feeling very embarrassed. Why were you laughing? What was happening there? What is there in death to laugh about? Everybody was crying and weeping and you were laughing.’

And I told him, ‘Something happened. That old man released something and it was tremendously beautiful. He died an orgasmic death.’ Not exactly these words, but I told him that I felt he was very happy dying, very blissful dying, and I wanted to participate in his laughter. He was laughing, his energy was laughing.

I was thought mad. How can a man die laughing? Since then I have been watching many deaths, but I have not seen that type of death again.

When you die, you release your energy and with that energy your whole life’s experience.

Whatever you have been – sad, happy, loving, angry, passionate, compassionate – whatever you have been, that energy carries the vibrations of your whole life. Whenever a saint is dying, just being near him is a great gift; just to be showered with his energy is a great inspiration. You will be put in a totally different dimension. You will be drugged by his energy, you will feel drunk.

Death can be a total fulfilment, but that is possible only if life has been lived.

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### **Question – Beloved Osho, I have heard that your Sannyasins Celebrate Death.**

**Osho** – Paul, you have heard rightly! My sannyasins celebrate everything. Celebration is the foundation of my sannyas — not renunciation but rejoicing; rejoicing in all the beauties, all the joys, all that life offers, because this whole life is a gift of God.

The old religions have taught you to renounce life. They are all life negative; their whole approach is pessimistic. They are all against life and its joys. To me, life and God are synonymous. In fact, life is a far better word than God itself, because God is only a philosophical term, while life is real, existential. The word “God” exists only in scriptures; it is a word, a mere word. Life is within you and without you — in the trees, in the clouds, in the stars. This whole existence is a dance of life.

I teach love for life. I teach the art of living your life totally, of being drunk with the divine THROUGH life. I am not an escapist. All your old religions have been teaching you escapism — they were all in a certain sense hip. The word “hippie” has to be understood. It simply means one who escapes from the battle of life, who shows his hips...! All your old religions are hippie! They have shown their hips. They could not accept the challenge of life, they could not confront and encounter life. They were cowards; they escaped to the mountains, to the monasteries.

But even if you escape to the mountains and to the monasteries, how can you leave yourself behind? You are part of life. Life pulsates in your blood, life breathes in you, life is your very being! Where can you escape? And all those efforts to escape, considered correctly, are suicidal. Your monks, your nuns, your mahatmas, your so-called saints, were all suicidal people; they were trying gradual suicide. Not only were they suicidal, they were cowards too — cowards because they could not even commit suicide in a single blow. They were committing suicide gradually, in installments; by and by, slowly they were dying. And we have respected these unhealthy people, these unwholesome people, these insane people. They were against God because they were against life.

I am in tremendous love with life, hence I teach celebration. Everything has to be celebrated, everything has to be lived, loved. To me nothing is mundane and nothing is sacred. To me all is sacred, from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest rung. It is the same ladder: from the body to the soul, from the physical to the spiritual, from sex to SAMADHI — everything is divine!

An old neo-sannyasin told an actor playing Hamlet that he himself had once played the part. “What was your interpretation of the role?” asked the actor. “Did Hamlet really make love to Ophelia?” “I don’t know if Hamlet did,” replied the sannyasin, “but I certainly did!”

Celebration has to be total, only then can you be multidimensionally rich. And to be multidimensionally rich is the only thing we can offer to God. If there is a God, and someday you have to face him, he will ask you only one question: “Have you lived your life totally or not?” — because this opportunity is given to you to live, not to renounce.

Paul, my sannyasins celebrate death too, because to me death is not the end of life but the very crescendo of life, the very climax. It is the ultimate of life. If you have lived rightly, if you have lived moment to moment totally, if you have squeezed out the whole juice of life, your death will be the ultimate orgasm. The sexual orgasm is nothing compared to the orgasm that death brings, but it brings it only to the person who knows the art of being total. The sexual orgasm is a very faint thing compared to the orgasm that death brings. What happens in sexual orgasm? For a moment you forget that you are a body, for a moment two lovers become merged into one unity, into one organic union. For a moment they are not separate entities; they have melted into each other like two clouds which have become one.

But it is only for a single moment, then they are again separate. Hence all sexual orgasms bring in their wake a kind of depression, because you fall from the height. You reached a crescendo, and for only a fragment of a moment you remained on the peak and then the peak disappeared. And when you fall from that height, you fall into the depth of depression. This is one of the contradictions of sex: it gives you the greatest pleasure and also the greatest agony. It gives you ecstasy and agony — both. And each time you reach an orgasmic state, you know that soon it will disappear. Then there is disillusionment, disappointment.

Death gives you the ultimate in orgasmic joy: the body is left behind forever and your being becomes one with the whole. It is immeasurable. If to become one with a single person gives you so much joy, just think how much joy will happen in becoming one with the infinite! But it does not happen to everybody who dies, because the people who have not lived rightly cannot die rightly either. The people who have lived in deep unconsciousness will die in deep unconsciousness. Death will give you only that which you have lived all your life; it is the essence of your whole life.

If your life was of meditateness, awareness, witnessing, then you will be able to witness death too. If your whole life you remained cool, centered in different situations, death will give you the ultimate challenge, the ultimate test. And if you can remain centered, calm and cool and watching, then you will not die an unconscious death, your death will bring you to the ultimate peak of consciousness. And then, certainly, it HAS to be celebrated. So whenever one of my sannyasins dies, we celebrate, we dance, we sing. We give him a good farewell.

A midget had died and left a widow. Friends came to pay their condolences and look at the body lying in an upstairs room of the house. After one friend came down he was asked by the widow whether he had shut the door of the room where the body lay. “No,” said the visitor, “I didn’t think it was necessary.” “Then I’d better go upstairs and shut it,” replied the widow. “The cat has had him downstairs twice already. You know, my cat is a neo-sannyasin and he wants to celebrate the occasion!”

Little Pierino goes camping with his parents. A little while after, at the end of a day doing many things, they bed down for the evening. Pierino cries, “Mummy, I can’t sleep. There is a dead ant on my belly!” “Shhh, Pierino,” says his mother, “be a good boy, just go to sleep — it is nothing to worry about.” After a few minutes Pierino’s voice is heard again, “Mummy, Mummy, I can’t go to sleep — I’ve got a dead ant on my belly!” “Pierino,” scolds his mother, “come on now, don’t tell me that a small dead ant stops you from sleeping!” “Well,” replies Pierino, “it is not the dead ant really, it is all his orange sannyasin friends that have come to celebrate his death!”

Yes, Paul, my sannyasins celebrate death because they celebrate life. And death is not against life; it does not end life, it only brings life to a beautiful peak. Life continues even after death. It was there before birth, it is going to continue after death. Life is not confined to the small space that exists between birth and death; on the contrary, births and deaths are small episodes in the eternity of life.

We celebrate everything. Celebration is our way to receive all the gifts from God. Life is his gift, death is his gift; the body is his gift, the soul is his gift. We celebrate everything. We love the body, we love the soul. We are materialist spiritualists. Nothing like this has ever happened in the world. This is a new experiment, a new beginning, and it has a great future.

In the past there have been materialists who denied the soul, and there have been spiritualists who denied the body. Both were agreed on one point: that only one can be accepted, either the body or the soul. They were either/or people. They were not ready to accept the whole as it is; they were choosers.

My sannyasins live in choiceless awareness. We are not choosers; we simply accept whatsoever is the case. The materialists — the Charvakas in India and the Epicureans in Greece — denied the soul. They said, “There is no soul. The soul is just imagination. The soul is illusion.” And the spiritualists — Shankaracharya in India and Berkeley in Europe — these people said that matter is illusory, maya. The body does not exist really, it is only your imagination. It is a dream, made of the same stuff as dreams are made of; you are a soul. But both are agreeing on one point: that they cannot accept reality as it is, they have to choose.

It is as if one electrician chooses the positive pole and another electrician chooses the negative pole, and each denies the other pole. There will be no electricity, no light in the world. That’s what has happened: the spiritualist has not been able to transform the world, the materialist has failed also — because the world exists with polar opposites. Without polarity there is no world at all. The day is needed as much as the night; the body is needed as much as the soul; the world is needed as much as God. There can be no circumference without a center and there can be no center without a circumference. This is a simple fact.

My sannyas is the acceptance of that which is. We are not choosers. Who are we to choose? And what difference is our choice going to make? You can choose whatsoever you like, but whatsoever you don’t like is going to remain there. Just by not choosing it, it is not going to disappear. And because you have not chosen it, you will remain half, lopsided. The East has remained lopsided because of so-called spirituality. It has remained poor, unscientific — without any technology, without industry. It has become lousy, lazy, lethargic; it has lost all joy in existence because “this is all a dream, why bother about it?”

It is hungry, ill, poor, but “this is all illusion. You are simply dreaming that you are poor, you are not really poor. You are simply dreaming that you are starving, you are not starving.”

And the West has chosen materialism, so there is great technology, beautiful houses, better roads, better cars, better airplanes, but man is very empty and meaningless. Without spirituality there is no center; man falls apart. The Western man is half; the Eastern man is half. My effort here is to create the whole man. To me the whole man is the only holy man. The East and the West have to meet; they have to become complementaries, not antagonists.

But this is possible only if we change the whole philosophical background. Hence I teach a very contradictory philosophy. Spiritual materialism is the name that I give to my philosophy. I want you to be materialists and spiritualists simultaneously, in a balanced way. I would love society to have all the facilities, all the comforts and conveniences that science and technology can provide, and I would also love people to have a great awareness inside them so that they can enjoy whatsoever science provides. I would like everybody to be a buddha, but at the same time I would also like the world to become more and more comfortable, more and more loving, more and more beautiful.

We can transform this world into a paradise, but then we have to stop choosing. We have simply to accept the whole as it is, with all its contradictions. Those contradictions are contradictions only because of our logical obsession; otherwise they are complementaries. Life and death — both are beautiful.

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