

Shri Shivrudra Balayogi (398-Batgap interview)

**Rick:** Welcome to Buddha at the Gas Pump. My name is Rick Archer. Buddha at the Gas Pump is an ongoing series of interviews with spiritually awakening people or awakened in this case. I've done nearly four hundred of them now and if this is new to you and you'd like to see other ones go to batgap.com and look under the past interviews menu where you'll find all the previous ones organized in several different ways. This show is made possible by the support of appreciative listeners and viewers, so if you appreciate it and feel like supporting it there is a PayPal button on the site. I'm very honored today to have as my guest His Holiness Shri Shivarudra Balayogi, affectionately known as Baba Maharaj. Baba is a self-realized yogi one who has completed the path of yoga and attained union with supreme consciousness. A direct disciple of Shri Shivabalayogi Maharaj, he entered his Guru's service at the age of 19 and was later initiated into sannyas, a monastic life of pure devotion and service. He was placed in charge of the Dehradun ashram in India where he spent 20 years absorbed in intense spiritual practice combining selfless service, devotion to his Guru, and deep meditation. Following the Mahasamadhi, the passing from this world's physical form of his Guru in 1994 Shri Shivarudra Balayogi was initiated into the spiritual practice of tapas in which he meditated for an average of 20 hours a day continually for the next five years, the culmination of this was the attainment of the goal of all spirituality self-realization the permanent union of mind with the supreme peace of infinite pure consciousness. He now travels the world carrying on his Guru's mission of teaching Dhyana meditation, true devotion, and selfless service. Baba Maharaj is the embodiment of gentleness and compassion. His life itself is his teaching devotion, selfless service to humanity and unrelenting effort in striving for spiritual perfection. Shri Babaji offers initiation into the technique of Dhyana meditation which he used to achieve self-realization freely and without obligation. He engages audiences worldwide with his profound spiritual insight drawn from deep personal experience rather than scriptural study, although I imagine there were some scriptural studies also but primarily the emphasis is on personal experience. His teachings are the purest form of the sublime philosophy of self-realization taught by the ancient sages of India. So again welcome Baba. It's an honor to have you on the show.

**Baba:** Thank you, thank you very much. We are also honored.

**Rick:** It's my understanding the word "Bala" means "boy". Is that correct?

**Baba:** In one way that is correct. In another way, it's one of the names of Goddess Parvati that was how my Guru was also named as Shivabala.

**Rick:** I thought maybe it meant that you had been a yogi since you were a boy but now I understand. You know, I think it was back in the 70s or something that I read a book about your Guru and/or saw some pamphlet or something. We didn't have the internet in those days and he was kind of like the Buddha boy who was that young boy these days who just spends long long amounts of time in Samadhi and when you first came to my attention I thought you were him but then I realized of course that, you know, you are his student. Anyway, I've known about him for a long time.

**Baba:** Yes, my Guru when he sat for tapas he was just 14 years old, the strange Divine experience when he was trying to squeeze out juice from a fruit that fruit took shape of a Shiva Lingam, Omkar sound came out and when that Shiva Lingam broke into two pieces he saw a Jangama sage standing in front of him and that Jangama sage initiated him into tapas, 12 years tapas.

**Rick:** What does Jangama mean?

**Baba:** Jangama means an eternal existence real meaning, so in the area where my Guru was born people who adored the Shiva Lingams and who were followers of Shiva worshippers they were known as Jangama sage, who would be concentrating or worshipping and meditating on the eternal existence of the Divinity as Lord Shiva.

**Rick:** As I recall your Guru was extremely bright as a child. He left school at the age of 5 to help support his mother who was a widow and he was from a family of weavers and he excelled in that profession even at such a young age producing about twice as much as other people in the shop.

**Baba:** Yes, he had some inborn qualities of total dedicated courageous approach and disciplined honesty hang on to it. He was like a do-or-die type of boy, so that was when he understood this is the thing we used to hear from his mouth at the age of five he understood that they were poor but he also got educated by his uncle that poverty is not a thing to be ashamed, it's only circumstances, situation, through hard work and honesty one can overcome that was when my Guru decided that I should drop out of the school because even if I graduate one day I'll be earning some money which I can do it now itself, so he got into the job of weaving and he became so focused in his work that when others would work the same thing in one hour he would do it in half an hour, so that much of hard work he put. He was like that by nature. In a moments notice he would be ready to undertake any hard task.

**Rick:** And when you were that age when you were a young boy 5-6 etc. did you have a yearning for God or were you just a regular kid just..

**Baba:** Around the age of 7 was the first that I started having an yearning for God that was when I heard Adi Shankara's Bhaj Govindam song my sister was reciting at home, the first stanza had such an impact sing the glory of Divine remember in your consciousness because when your physical body dies none of your worldly knowledge, wisdom, nothing can come to your rescue, so this had an impact and I became obsessed with the death thought. I wanted to know what is death, what is birth, and how are we connected to God, so what has God to do with these things, so that was how yearning started and after reading a little bit about Adi Shankara I started praying God grant me a Guru who would have liberated himself and who could lead me towards liberation that was how it started for me.

**Rick:** It's kind of reminiscent of Ramana Maharshi also, you know, whose uncle died and then he was like pondering death and what it's all about that kind of gave him his kick-start.

**Baba:** Yeah somewhat like that wanted to know the secret of death who really dies and also another thought came if we are that soul why is that I am not aware in my consciousness what has made me to forget I must know that so this thing made me to go towards spirituality.

**Rick:** How old were you when you met your Guru.

**Baba:** 15 years in 1971 while I was studying in Mysore University. It was also through a Divine experience. In front of my house, there was a Hanuman temple, everyday early morning I used to go and spend a couple of hours, the idols were my best friends, I used to be talking to them in my bhava about the soul and Who am I and when can you appear in front of me. I always dreamt that God would appear to me suddenly one day and take me to his fold that was one day when I was contemplating about the soul, in my ears I heard a voice whispering that Shivabalayogi is your Guru, you will get everything from him, so when I opened my eyes and looked around I didn't see anybody. I was wondering who could have told me this, who is Shivabalayogi, I didn't know anything about him. Over the next two or three days, I went around into different temples of Mysore City with the idea that a person who had whispered into my ears about Shivabalayogi would recognize me, might come again and give me some details about Shivabalayogi. So finally on the third day when I was walking through the streets in the market, I heard the voice whispering again, go to Raghavendra Swamy temple you will find about your Guru. The Saint Ragavendra lived in northern part of Karnataka state of Southern India who was also a great self-realized soul but propogated bhakti marga. He has mutts all over southern part of India. He is very well known in that part.

**Rick:** Lets pause just for a second to define few terms. So mutts are like temples right or ashrams.

**Baba:** yes.

**Rick:** Bhakti marga means the path of devotion, right?

**Baba:** Yes.

**Rick:** So I just want to explain that for anybody who doesn't know those terms. Okay, please continue.

**Baba:** I went to that temple, a priest was narrating the Lord Krishna story, Bhagavata, and I listened to it one hour. So at the end of the story, one old man came and spoke to me why are you here listening to God, have you fought with your parents? Means in the society there was a notion that you go towards God only after retirement, age of 60 and above, not before that, you should be enjoying the world. I said I haven't done anything, but I'm looking for Shivabalayogi. He said Shivabalayogi is my Guru. He has an ashram in Bangalore. Bangalore is about three hours journey by road from Mysore and the place where I was born it was Kolar town in southern part of Karnataka that is also about 90 kilometres from Bangalore, but I had never heard about Shivabalayogi's name. So the saying is that the right moment has to come for you to know your Guru. So then he took me home and gave my Guru's small biography. By watching into the beautiful photographs of my Guru's tapas time photos, I had already fallen in love with him

and after three days I went to return the book to that gentleman. He said Swamiji my Guru was affectionately known, as Swamiji, so he is coming to Mysore City on a public program, you come and meet him. So I was quite thrilled. What a lucky person I am. I have come to know about Swamiji just now and he is coming physically to this town. So on third day I went with him and I met him. At the foothills of Chamundi in Mysore the presiding deity is goddess Parvati Chamundeshwari, at that foothills Swamiji was coming on the invitation of a monk who was living there. So when Swamiji came and got down from the car, I was instantly drawn. It was like a love at sight. I became, it was dumbfounded for me. Something inside told me this is the person you had been waiting for. So for about one or two hours he came inside, people washed his feet and everybody were coming to have his darshan, touch his feet, and take his blessings. I thought if I touch his feet I would be sent out. I just wanted to be watching him, so I came next to him and just stood there, all the time looking, my eyes were so drawn to him. It was totally inexplicable experience. So the person who had accompanied me, he was looking for me, where have you gone, finally when he came in the queue he told come and touch his feet, come and take his blessings. I signaled you please go I will come later, I just want to be watching him, that's all. So finally when my Guru got up I just touched his feet and Swamiji went away. I came home. I spoke to my mother for about two to three hours. I was arguing and trying to convince her. She was trying to get convinced whether I am really into that or momentarily excited that's what she wanted to see whether I am determined. So finally she said stay with me for another three years so by then you will finish your education also. So even after three years if your mind is unwavering and totally concentrated to go to your Guru then I will bless and send you there. So for the next three years I stayed with her and whenever she permitted once in six months I used to go to Bangalore ashram. They used to organize functions on the day of my Guru's birthday and the day of his tapas completion, once in a year like that, so during that function after the homa ceremony he would start giving darshan. He would sit on a tiger skin erected dais and devotees would be allowed to enter into the room and then come out of the room in a queue. I had become so madly drawn to him just to watch. I never spoke to him anything. There was nothing to ask. I used to join the queue, come inside, touch his feet all the time watching him then come out, again join the queue and again come inside the room, so for four or five hours like that it used to go on and on like that, so much I was drawn. Finally in 1974, my mother permitted. She took a promise, once you go I don't want you to come back, you must achieve on this path. If you come back, I won't be able to show my face to relatives, so you must achieve, go. I took her leave and her blessings. My Guru sent me to Dehradun ashram. So I am based there. It's now forty-three years and that's how I joined my Guru finally.

**Rick:** Beautiful story. Thinking back now from your current perspective who or what do you think that voice was that whispered in your ear your Guru's name before you had even met him or heard of him.

**Baba:** That's really a mystery. Some Divine voice, because I didn't get to see any personality. There was nobody there, but all I remember was the name of Shivabalayogi. This was very clear to me, so I knew that one and in fact just one day before I met my Guru physically, Swamiji came in a dream also a dream experience was also very beautiful. It was pitch darkness. I am standing in the queue, somebody comes and takes me inside the room telling Swamiji is waiting for you, why are you in the queue here? So from back door they take me inside. Swamiji is sitting there on a tiger skin. He asked me what do you want. I think by practice of reading Adi

Shankara's teaching jnana, bhakti, vairagya means jnana is the knowledge of the ultimate truth and the bhakti is devotion to that truth so that I can achieve and Vairagya is a detachment to the impermanent universe world, so these are the things I asked him so he blessed me and gave me a mantra. Om Shivaya Shivabalyogendraya parabrahmanaya. He said if you chant this mantra you will come to me very soon. So then when I got up I was already chanting. Another thing also happened in the dream.

**Rick:** Excuse me, oh, that was the dream that you got that mantra?

**Baba:** Yes, yes in the dream I got this mantra. Well after this mantra he gave a stick to me telling you will get everything from this. I tell in the dream I want Swamiji only. Then he takes back that stick. If you want God, this stick is of no use. This can give you only worldly things. So then breaking that he throws it away then the dream ends. I was up early morning when I woke up I was reciting that mantra, Om shivay shivabalyogendraya parabrahmanaya. So that was how some Divine experience has happened which are really inexplicable. To this day I can only say it was Divine grace.

**Rick:** I always find it fascinating the Divine can work in that way and it's, you know, Carl Jung used to talk of synchronicities and how all these little signs and things would show up in the environment that we are synchronous with, you know, some of them taking place or something you were thinking and so on. It just fascinates me how the Divine actually functions to give people hints and even say things to them and give them dreams and all. I always wonder about the mechanics of that.

**Baba:** Yeah, definitely, certain things are very inexplicable, it happens, it happened to me. Though I myself have always tried to understand spirituality in a scientific way exactly as it is the fact I wanted to go to the ultimate truth that was one reason I didn't want to become a big scholar. Though I got introduced to Adi Shankara, Ramana Maharishi and Ramakrishna Paramahansa are the three saint and read a little bit about their teachings but I thought I must experience the truth to myself so that I don't get into imagination in a particular way about the truth, let me see what it is, but certain things have happened. It's so difficult to answer how did it happen in what way, when did I resolve to have such an experience, probably through my previous lives I was doing sadhana and which brought me in this life in contact with my Guru and this Divine experiences that is all I could say.

**Rick:** I'm reminded of Krishna in Gita saying that the mechanics of karma are unfathomable by human intellect, you know.

**Baba:** Yes very true.

**Rick:** You know, these days there is a tendency among many spiritual people to say things like the age of the Guru is over, you know, and you can be your own Guru or Thich Nhat Hanh Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk said the next Buddha will be maybe the Sangha, you know the gathering of people, and in part this sort of attitude I think has arisen because many Gurus who have come from the East and even some who have sprouted up in the West have, you know, misbehaved in various ways and it's kind of given the whole field a bad name so you know what

would you say to people who have that kind of attitude who feel that, you know, the age of the Guru is over you don't need a Guru and so on. Is a Guru an absolute necessity would you say for spiritual realization or can it be that some people actually don't need one.

**Baba:** I'll definitely recommend a Guru-Disciple relationship and that too as I myself dreamt from childhood that the Guru shall be the one who would have liberated himself and who could lead me towards liberation. I have always told when you get such a self-realized Guru who'd come in a human form it's like a bonus for you though the guidance might come from within also from the Divine's grace but to have a human Guru who would be a self-realized soul is one of the rarest of rare things to happen if you are really lucky if you are really blessed to have that one so that was when I met my own Guru I felt I had the chance of serving him for twenty years very closely. I saw him closely how a Jeevan Mukta a self-realized Guru would be, because when I read about Adi Shankara or Ramana Maharshi, Ramakrishna I started dreaming I must meet a Guru of that caliber that is the right thing. I think I was lucky or destined or blessed by the grace of the Divine happen to me. So I would definitely recommend if one is lucky one must dream or pray to God to have such a Guru because like my Guru himself has answer to this having such a Guru means you keep walking on the path you think that you know the path but suddenly you come to a circle from where several roads bifurcate and that is the time you need a Guru to guide you towards the right path. A right Guru, a self-realized Guru would insist upon what you have to do again and again, like many times people come and question me again and again they imagine an instant coffee type of things happening like a miracle should happen, somebody should come, I think I said miracles might happen like in my own case but a self-effort is also very necessary like my Guru used to tell the Divine came and made him to sit for tapas but after that for 12 years it was his effort, his determination, his courage like my Guru used to tell the Divine Shiva came and made me to sit for tapas but afterwards he grinded me into chutney and cut me into pieces by testing, so the eligibility is always tested. At that time, you would need a Guru to guide you onto the right path and keep inspiring you, keep going, if I have achieved you can also do it that way I would definitely recommend a Guru-Disciple relationship.

**Rick:** Of course you grew up in India and at least the more traditional Indian understanding is very clear about the value of a Guru. I guess these days a lot of Indians are trying to reject that and look to the West, but in any case in your family and your upbringing it was a strong sentiment; however, in the West, you know, we really don't have that upbringing so much, so what has been your experience with regard to the contrast between India and the culture there in terms of appreciating a Guru or the need for one and the West in that respect.

**Baba:** So far the people that I have come across I would tell 50:50. In fact, there are many people who have appreciated this Guru-Disciple relationship that I have been coming to America since 12-13 years now and have been traveling to several cities. People I have met have been able to appreciate this Guru-Disciple relationship and it was an American devotee Charlie Hopkins who dreamt of bringing me to America. He was my Guru's devotee. In fact, he only introduced Charles Seward Agastya to me, they were all very good friends in old days, so that was how, so he himself recommended that I must write commentary on Guru Gita. Guru Gita is a wonderful scripture which comes in the Skanda Purana of the legendry stories. It is a conversation between Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva explains the qualities of a Guru, a real Guru, self-realized Guru and what should be the qualities of a disciple, all these

things have been explained. So I have written commentary on that fact also. When I wrote that there were some who wrote negative comments on that because in that forward first sentence I wrote was the first time I heard about Guru and Guru's qualities was from my mother as a child who said even if God gets annoyed a Guru can protect you but if Guru gets annoyed no God can protect you. That was the cultural background that we were brought up, but that person was very weary and he commented where does this Guru comes, it is the God who has to be the Almighty and super, but then I tried to explain to him in our culture Guru's place has been given very-very important like Kabir Das has sang Guru gobind dou khade, kaake lagoon pay balihari guru aapne, gobind diyo batay means he tell if suddenly Guru and God both comes in front of me and stands then the mind is confused for a while to whom should I prostrate first but then the mind comes out of the confusion and decides oh my Guru let me prostrate to you first because it is you who told me about God, otherwise I wouldn't have known about God, this is the culture I explained to him then he was happy and he accepted like when I have explained the small groups that practice meditation in America and Europe also they have accepted this fact of Guru Disciple relationship. So I think if we explain to them the culture and the need of this why the Guru is considered such an important factor then they will definitely be able to understand and appreciate.

**Rick:** I alluded briefly a minute ago to some people getting disillusioned with Gurus because many Gurus who have come to the West have been caught misbehaving in various ways. What would you say to people who may have had some experience with a Guru but became disillusioned for that reason what would you say to maybe inspire them or restore their faith and the possibility of being with the genuine Guru or finding one.

**Baba:** One thing I have told them to anybody any seeker your own sincerity is very important. Then you would not compromise for any other teachings and you would not expect any other thing from the Guru. So if you want self-realization, spiritual truths all these things are important and you will not accept if Guru is trying to do some miracle of bringing out a chain or a ring these are not the important things. God is not coming just to give you a ring and a few hundred dollars can make you to fly in the air at 38000 feet, you don't need tapas or God for these things. God or the self-realized Guru comes to give you the highest things of self-realization, so you will also find a right Guru when you are sincere, so that is very important what you need, what you are looking for, like as children after I started yearning for God and read about Adi Shankara and all these things we also came across so many Gurus in India itself who are doing miracles or who would do these type of things but those things never attracted me. I couldn't accept them as Guru. Finally only when I met Shivabalayogi who had done 12 years tapas and who gave the message on the completion of his tapas that humanity have forgotten themselves, they must do sadhana to know themselves, this attracted me towards Shivabalayogi and I understood this is the right Guru, he will not compromise, I also will not compromise for anything else. So if we go like this we will definitely be able to find a right type of Guru and we should not expect any easy methods also so then we will definitely find the right Guru.

**Rick:** Yeah, I can think of a number of stories of seekers who had very strong desire and very ardent faith and it almost didn't matter what Guru they found it was their faith and their desire that carried them through like for instance that story in the Mahabharata about Drona, you know, Arjuna's archery teacher and Ekalavya, he sent him away and Ekalavya just made a little statue

and worshipped that and kind of became the best archer because of his ardent focus and then you told the story in one of your books about that boy who was a buffalo herder.

**Baba:** Yes, Kanakadasa that is the story of Kanakadasa who was a great bhakti poet and self-realized soul who lived about 500 years ago in Karnataka during the Vijayanagara Empire times. So as a child once he had gone out looking after the buffalos so he saw some priests worshipping God, he got attracted to that chants of mantra and then he goes to them he requests them please teach me how to do this worship of God like this, I also want to do, I felt very fascinated by your chants and all. The priests made fun of him you are only a boy looking after buffalo, what can you learn about these things. You do one thing, go and sit under the tree, start repeating buffalo-buffalo-buffalo, you will get it. But that boy was so innocent and his heart was so pure he took the priests words to be a command of a Guru, straight away went and sat under the tree and started repeating buffalo-buffalo-buffalo and the story says he had the vision of Lord Yama coming on a buffalo and initiated him into the mantra of Lord Kesava, one of the forms of Krishna who eventually became a self-realized soul. He was guided to go to another Guru Vyasatirtha of those times who was a self-realized soul. He went and Vyasatirtha admitted him to his monastery. There is another small story that happened in his life Kanakadasa's life where the Guru wanted to teach other students whereas other students who were from an upper-class community, they looked down at this boy that he is only a buffalo boy what can he learn. So one day the Guru wanted to teach them a lesson. He gave bananas to all the students and told them all of you go and you must eat this banana where nobody would be watching you, you must take care of this and then come back and report to me. So this is such an easy thing all the boys thought. They all went and within one hour they came back. They were supposed to come back before sunset but this Kanakadasa had not yet come. Other boys were murmuring today the boy is going to be kicked out of the institution. This small job that the Guru gave to test the intelligence where nobody is watching you, you go and eat the banana, so this thing also he couldn't do. Everybody reported, oh Master, I ate the banana behind the bushes, I ate the banana behind the door, I went on the other side of the mountain and ate, nobody was watching, I can assure you. The Guru smiled and kept quiet. Finally, Kanakadasa came before sunset in the evening. He brought back that banana and kept at the feet of Master saying my Master I am really sorry, I failed, because I tried to eat this banana where I thought nobody would be watching, I went behind the bushes, behind the door, everywhere into the jungle, everywhere Lord Keshava was watching me all the time and I couldn't take out from his eyes then the Master ridiculed, see this is the knowledge and wisdom, the consciousness that has risen to that level that he can see only God everywhere. When God is everywhere how can you eat a thing that nobody is watching, God always watches you from your heart, so that was how that is the faith and knowledge wisdom that comes.

**Rick:** I had a feeling that was going to be the moral of that story, very nice story, so a bit more on the Guru Disciple thing and then I want to talk more about tapas and meditation you teach and everything. There was just a nice example from your own time with your Guru where he sent you to a remote part of the ashram and told you to stay there until he came to get you and then hours went by and you were staying there and he sent a message, okay, you can come now and you stayed because he said you were supposed to stay there till he came to get you and then people would come and say he's getting angry you really better come, you wouldn't move until he finally came to get you and then he said, you know, okay you passed the test.



**Baba:** Yes, yes, I remember this was way back in 1978. I was visiting his Bangalore ashram. For the office work, they had bought a table, this table and chairs were made in prisons by the prisoners who work on this and it was bought by the ashram and it was brought and kept there. So in the evening after darshan was over, my Guru just asked me you go and sit there that is the new office table and chair and see if you like that one. I jokingly said Swamiji please give me a sweet to eat then I will go and sit down some people had brought some coconut sweets just then and offered to him. He said I am telling you to go and sit there and you are asking the sweet, okay I will give this sweet, now you take this sweet go and sit there but on one condition until I come there you should not get up. Okay I said. I went and sat. Every night after his food he would come out again he go around walking into the hall and to the outside compound also, but that day deliberately Swamiji did not come out. He went inside, he ate the food. After he ate the food, all the boys ate. He had instructed to the kitchen boy, do not give him any food there onto the table. Tell him if he comes to the kitchen you will feed him that is no problem and tell him it is time he should go and eat, Swamiji is not going to come out, they came I said no I will have to sit here, because Swamiji has told until he doesn't come here I should not get up. So then they all made fun, they tried, they went, again Swamiji sent word that Swamiji is getting very annoyed. He is shouting and irritated. Don't make these dramas and nonsense things. You should get up and go and eat food and that's enough of you. I said, no, I'm not going to go there. Somehow that day determination came I thought he is going to test me; I said I will not go away. So I sat there everybody slept, it was midnight around early morning 3:30 he started coming so when he came to near me I was just sitting there and he was happy. I made him to sit on the chair and I did aarti to him. He said you have passed the test that determination is needed if this determination is there, you can achieve self-realization that day he told me.

**Rick:** So your Guru attained Mahasamadhi in March of 94 and then as the story goes he initiated you into tapas in November of 94. So that's an interesting thing we should discuss, but first of all does the word tapas mean heat.

**Baba:** No, tapas means burning actually, burning, you cook the food to make it properly cooked. Here in the mind all the acquired habits are there which are all the imaginations, constant thoughts are there, so that prevents the mind to regain its position as a pure consciousness, so by constantly watching through meditation a deeper meditation, so you have to burn all those habits of the mind, so that the mind becomes purified and regains its form as consciousness. That is where the word of tapas has come. Tapana means like the goldsmith puts the gold into the fire and then that is brought into proper shape so that is what the word tapas means.

**Rick:** Sometimes people translate it as spiritual practice but the way you use the term it is very sort of deep, intense form of spiritual practice that doesn't even begin until a certain stage that we can discuss in a minute, so you don't use the term lightly. Now people were paying attention, I just said that your Guru passed away in March of 94 but then in November of 94 some six months later he initiated you into tapas and which means that he must have appeared to you in some non bodily form, so please explain that to us and describe that experience.

**Baba:** Well, after my Guru passed away, attained Samadhi I had been to his native village Adivarapupeta where he had dropped his body and I saw his body sitting there and then it was

put into Samadhi and then afterwards for awhile I felt void, I was missing him, so when I saw the physical body this is the physical body we served for 20 years. I gave him food, I gave him oil massage, I gave him a bath everything. So I started missing him for a while. Then a little bit depressed I went to Mysore and I went onto the Chamundi Hills. On the Chamundi Hills, there is a place, a cave is there, my Guru used to take us sometimes and sit there for a while peacefully. He used to say this cave was occupied by sage Markandeya in ancient time and he had done tapas there. So I went to that place and I sat in that cave. For about two or three days I was in meditation I think.

**Rick:** Nonstop two or three days?

**Baba:** Yes, probably on the third day I had the vision of my Guru, he appeared in a human form and he told now a time has come that you have to go into tapas you served selflessly without expecting anything for twenty years so a seven year fruits of tapas has come to your mind; if you just do another five years of tapas you will be able to achieve Nirvikalpa Samadhi he said. So at that time I answered I don't intend to do tapas now; I would like to sing bhajans and would serve you that's all I feel like. But Swamiji said I will create circumstances in such a way that you will be forced to come, this time has come now, so then he disappeared. I came back to Deheradun and for two to three months I was simply there. On the tenth day of November I think, we were doing aarti and on the dias his photo was there, so from his photo I saw him coming out, so then I felt that he was holding my hand and he took me to the room next to the hall and he made me sit there on the cot and he touched between eyebrows and just asked me the same thing you have to be watching in between eyebrows you don't have to repeat anything just do not imagine anything and also what I heard is from this room you have to come out as a yogi or your dead body must come out, you must not abandon that was the toughness he always showed while teaching. This much I heard and probably he disappeared and that sent me to a deep meditation so that was how I sat for tapas and continued that.

**Rick:** When you had these visions of him and you had monthly for years was it like a concrete form just as concrete as another human being or was it more sort of ghostly or diaphanous or subtle, you know you could see through it or something like that.

**Baba:** It was as good as you are seeing me now in the human form physical form solidly. He used to appear and then he used to simply disappear after talking to me, because during the tapas time I had lost the idea of time and the days that were happening but he used to tell I am the Divine Guru and this is a full moon day I have manifested, so this is the thing that has to happen now, so that was how I used to come to know today is a full moon day that he has appeared and then he disappeared. Constantly he was guiding me whatever manifestation happens in front of you whether it is good or bad do not react, just watch, that was what he was guiding me all the time.

**Rick:** Now in Yogananda's book, you know Autobiography of a Yogi, he talks about experiences he had with his Guru after his Guru dropped the body and I'm puzzled about, you know, sometimes it's spoken I think you even say that when a liberated being drops the body it's like a drop of water going into the ocean and it's thereafter indistinguishable from the ocean there's no more shred of individuality left and yet you hear all these stories like the ones you're

just telling of your Guru coming to you monthly and Yogananda had stories and there are many many others and some teachers and avatars and so on say that they are going to keep coming back again and again for the sake of their disciples and the Buddhists have the Bodhisattva vow where, you know, the Bodhisattva will come back again and again to help liberate all beings and so that the question boils down to is it possible for a liberated enlightened being to continue to exist in some form on some plane of existence in order to intercede in human affairs or how they completely cease to exist and yet the Divine intelligence which we were talking about before with your dream and the sound you heard and everything the Divine intelligence through its own volition takes a form that people will recognize like you in your case would recognize the form of your Guru so you think it's the second thing latter thing?

**Baba:** Yeah, very true, because the Guru once they drop the body they do not exist in that form somewhere in the space or some dimension. They have become one with the all-pervaded Divinity that is the supreme consciousness of existence, but from that supreme consciousness of existence only when we are invoking or when we would have had a previous resolution such a manifestation in that form happens. Now, I would like to explain this a little bit technically also. First thing is first stage I would like to call the quality to imagine by the mind to be creative. say you fall in love with a person and your mind starts visualizing that form, the more and more that your mind visualizes that form that form starts appearing solidly within your mind. This is the imagination quality, the more the mind becomes concentrated the picture also becomes more and more solid and next stage if you start meditating with that resolution then after some time say about 50% of the mind is gathered then a mental projection happens as if a Guru has come that form will be like the spirit form, a little ghost type of forms that you were mentioning a while ago and the third and final stage when the mind reaches the tapas stage and it becomes 100% concentrated. Before Nirvikalpa Samadhi, it enables the manifestation. Manifestation is the third stage. Manifestation means it will be as physical as this world is. All these three stages are finally recognized as illusion only in spirituality because the self has to merge with that supreme self that is the self-realization so before that if a person has a resolution, say because I had fallen in love with my Guru I think he had set in my consciousness so solidly all the time I was visualizing throughout the twenty years also with total faith whatever he asked me to do without questioning I went on doing, whether he asked me to clean the toilet, work in the kitchen looking after a mentally challenged boy I never questioned why I should be doing this, why not simply meditation in the 20 years. So my mind receded and became concentrated all the time. So with total faith I was serving. So probably that enabled the manifestation of my Guru also after his passing away from this world when the time came, so he had made me to sit for tapas. There was another incident happened in 1978 when I was in Bangalore, it was my birthday, previous evening one small girl had brought me a big chocolate and had given it to me as a birthday gift for next day. Early morning at 3:30 I took that to my Guru's room and I took milk for him in the morning, so then I told today is my birthday, somebody gave this as a gift. Swamiji took that chocolate, he bit into half piece, he took half of the piece and another half that he had bit he gave it to me, you take this, so asked me to eat it then and there itself immediately. So I ate it. After that I gave a small piece of vibhuti, the sacred ash, for him to bless. He asked me why do you need this vibhuti now. I said Swamiji I want to do tapas. I want you to bless and give this to me. So probably to test my faith he asked and made fun of me do you think this ash can make you to sit for tapas idiot. I said I have faith Swamiji, you please bless, I can do that. Then he said look if I bless this vibhuti and give it to you, you might do tapas also, but you may not be able to

achieve complete Nirvikalpa Samadhi, you may get some power, you may get your own following, but you will become egoistic and you will go away from me. Then I said, no, I don't need tapas in that case, because I want to remain at your feet, I want to serve you, that is my basic idea, I don't want to go away then I don't need this tapas. So then Swamiji said when the time is right it will automatically come. Even if you don't want it, you will be forced to go to that one, like that he had said. So after that 78, 16 years later it happened like this manifestation happened, even when I didn't want to go to tapas I was made to go to tapas, so that's how this experience happened to me, that is how I would like to tell, this manifestation happened, but the merger is one single self that is the truth that exists. From that only when you invoke in a particular form or when you have devotion so the same Divine can manifest and give darshan to you in that form. So in my case, it was Shivabalayogi.

**Rick:** So when a person becomes liberated or enlightened in this life while they're still in the body there is that phrase or that word in Vedanta Lasha-Vidya some faint remains of ignorance which supposedly makes it possible for enlightenment to be a living reality and without that you wouldn't be able to distinguish any diversity, wouldn't be able to put a spoon in your mouth because you wouldn't be able to distinguish the spoon from your mouth as I understand that term. So do you agree with that notion and are you saying that when the body drops then Lasha-Vidya drops and there is really nothing left to function in any way, shape or form.

**Baba:** Yes, when the body is dropped that is what we recognize as the Videha Mukti after dropping the body you merge finally that is everything happened. Before that when the body is alive it is recognized as Jeevan Mukta, you are liberated while alive, so when people have asked me in my experience I have told a small sattvic ego enables me to live in this body. If that is also given up this body will get dropped because of that like an attachment to my Guru's name, Shivabalayogi that is a sattvic ego for me. So a little bit of consciousness is in touch with the brain that is how this body is alive for some time. Then I am able to travel and share my experiences of knowledge, awareness to others. Once that job is done when I lose all interest even in the name of my Guru also then this body will get dropped then everything ends, there is nothing else to function.

**Rick:** I'm going to pursue this a little bit more because this question has always fascinated me and I'm learning new things from you. If the idea is the soul evolves through millions of lifetimes through higher and higher, more and more complex life forms, you know, up the path of evolution doesn't it seem wasteful for God to evolve souls through so many births over so much time only to have them merge into the absolute and cease to exist. Why wouldn't they retain some small sattvic ego even after the body drops once enlightenment is attained in order to maybe in some subtle form continue to serve and you know like I said earlier sometimes saints say they're going to come back again and again for the sake of their devotees that kind of implies that something is retained and even though they're already enlightened or liberated they're able to take birth again in order to serve.

**Baba:** If a person, if an enlightened soul wants to maintain can do it but it is still not necessary. It is the Divine, it is all-pervaded Divinity which is working this for example my Guru Shivabalayogi, he need not maintain his individuality for the sake of his devotees. He has become one with the Divine, now it is up to the devotees if they have that faith in the name of

their Guru the same Divine can always manifest in the form of Shivabalayogi to anybody, because there is no difference between Shivabalayogi and the Divinity now, so that is how the things will happen. As long as I as a devotee of my Guru maintain that devotion and faith the same Divine can manifest to me as Shivabalayogi anytime, so there is no need of that individuality to be maintained. That will automatically happen from the Divine if the devotee wants. It is not that that self-realized soul wants it. He won't have any such visions or desires left anymore. It is the Divine which will take care of this Universe and to teach the souls who are all there, it is all happening from the Divine, because once you become self-realized individuality has lost even while alive in the body also that individuality as I am doing, there is no such thing that I have a mission or I am sharing the knowledge that idea doesn't come at all. It automatically happens. It is called the automatic Divine activity that Ramana Maharshi refers to this thing, so that is how it will happen, so one need not keep that individual ego when the body gets dropped.

**Rick:** Maybe that's what happened with Jesus also when he appeared to his disciples, you know, some days after his crucifixion, maybe it was just the Divine assuming a form that they could relate to.

**Yogi:** Exactly, because the disciples had that faith in their Guru so the Divine appeared in that form as Jesus.

**Rick:** Yeah it's interesting. I mean I've spoken to a number of people to whom Ramana Maharshi appeared long before they ever had heard of him like there was one woman I interviewed a couple weeks ago who when she was just a teenage girl she had this adamant determination that she needed to know the truth and she sat on her bed and stared at a door for hours and said this is Pamela Wilson and said I want truth to come through that door, she had this determination and then she went to bed finally and she woke up a little while later and this Indian man was sitting on her bed and she threw a pillow at him ....(Laughter)

**Baba:** Wonderful...(Laughter)...

**Rick:** She didn't know who he was and then later on maybe years later she saw a book and in a bookstore with his picture and that was the man that I saw, so it just fascinates me that the Divine works in this very intelligent way, it's, you know, any thought of the absolute being flat, colorless, you know, unintelligent sort of nothingness is blown away by these kinds of stories. I mean it's just this profound intelligence that's running the show it seems.

**Baba:** Yes, because it is the Divine which is the source of intelligence, so the Divine is beyond all this. Divine is not binded by any particular rules or law of the nature. The Divine can work out in anyway he wants.

**Rick:** And I would presume that you would use the term Divine synonymously with God, right?

**Baba:** Yes.

**Rick:** Okay, beautiful.

**Rick:** Incidentally people listening we have about looks like 160 or so people listening to the live stream. If you want to send in a question go to [batgap.com](http://batgap.com), go to the upcoming interviews page and then which is under future interviews or something and then go to the bottom of that page, there's a form you can fill out to send in a question and some people have already sent some in which I'll be asking in a while.

So let's talk about your tapas. You were initiated into tapas in November 94 and you began to practice it and you practiced an average of 20 hours a day for 5 years and as you said your Master said to you either you should come out a yogi or your dead body should come out, put in efforts until the last breath of life. So I'd like to know a little bit about your experience during that time. You mentioned in your book that sometimes it became very painful and uncomfortable and, you know, your head would be on fire and there would be all this discomfort but you just plowed on through and just give us a sense of what that five years was like doing that much intense tapas.

**Baba:** First, I would like to give the idea what tapas and meditation that my Guru said, criteria, when you close the eyes and when you are able to keep the mind quiet and totally focused into single pointedness for at least one hour that is the real meditation he said until then you are trying to meditate. Like this when you are able to keep the mind at least for eight to ten hours in a stretch, one single stretch of sitting then the tapas begins. After that your determination and your ability to forbearance that patience is also very important. These are all put to test, like two different circumstances when my Guru sat for tapas physically in surrounding there were no better or comfortable situations or any such facilities were not there. He was sitting in the mud and then only after some time only devotees built a temple and then he sat there whereas when I sat inside that room there was an attached bathroom also was there so after that eighteen to twenty hours when I get up I could go and pour some water on me to have a bath and then come and sit and there were few of them people serving me looking after me once in 24 hours they used to come and they used to bring some form of food, some liquid food, like Amba Shivranjani was one such who served me very dedicatedly like a mother in those days. She used to come from Delhi and after two years after I sat for tapas she permanently came and settled into the ashram giving up her home totally, she was looking after very dedicatedly. She gave me vegetable soup or some rice and dal in liquid form so that type of thing suited me more than the milk. I used to have all these things. But, however, an eligibility and the patience all these are always tested. Bodies enormous pains do happen and sometimes burning sensation, sometimes once I had fallen and hit my head onto the wall, so a lump had appeared on the head and it was Amba who watched me then Babaji what has happened to you on the head then only I noticed so these type of things also happen, but enormous detachment, Vairagya, when a firm conviction that this world is impermanent and this body is going to die, this is one opportunity, before this body dies that we can know ourselves, we can become aware of ourselves as that immortal soul so that dedicated priority in the mind will always see us to go through and the manifestation of Guru also encouraged always to have the forbearance and keep going, keep going, all these things were happening. Whenever such visions were coming other type of visions were also coming. Sometimes it could be some temptation or sometimes it could be threatening type of things, so all the time my Guru had advised do not react to them, it is the ability that you keep in the consciousness totally quiet, quietness, silence needs to be achieved, so just watch whatever happened. Nothing will happen to you. They might try to come and range your neck but they

won't do it, you should not react, that's all, if you react your tapas will fall, you will go back so this is what because the mind will run away again so this was the basic thing that he taught. It is the reverse journey, like the mind becomes quiet and quiet and concentrates, slowly you lose consciousness of the surroundings and one day the body also, but your own consciousness of existence is always there that is maintained. You do not disappear or you do not become unconscious also that is the most important thing that is gradually attention shifts to your own self instead of its imaginations.

**Rick:** Yeah, in your book you mentioned in Samadhi you do not vanish, your existence is always there, just like you just said, only the thought of I, my, me, God vanishes.

**Baba:** Yes that is the last thought that vanishes is the thought of I that individuality before that it could be very awful because that I do not want to disappear, it wants to maintain its egoistic existence to keep you in this world that's what the thing, but if you remain totally determined and ready to die, anything happens no problem but this I must go, I want that truth of existence only then that I also vanishes the doership everything vanishes then only self exists that effortlessly it is there, but the idea of this is the self will also be not there, simply you exist that is all, and that is supremely peaceful and totally contented.

**Rick:** Did you sleep at all during this period like when you took...

**Baba:** Sometimes yes in those 4-5 hours I used to come out after having some food about an hour I used to rest quietly, so I used to lie down so that the food could be digested and then I used to get up and go back to the meditation. I don't remember of totally sleeping. It was relaxing. I used to lie down.

**Rick:** Did the habit become established for pure awareness to be maintained during sleep if you were sleeping at all and these days this is a little bit tangential question but do you consider witnessing sleep or maintaining pure awareness during sleep to be an important criterion of awakening or not so much.

**Baba:** It is. Even a dream could occur even now also because the dream gets produced by the brain but that is simply watched as a witness without feeling any involvement into that dream it doesn't appear that I am there, a picture appears, a vague picture appears and then it's over, you are simply watching as a witness.

**Rick:** When you were doing tapas in that room were you just sitting on a cot and were you sitting without back support or were you sort of leaning against something or I know that's a sort of a superficial question I'm just trying to picture your situation..

**Baba:** In those days I sat without any back support. I was sitting on a cot.

**Rick:** Interesting. I mean I couldn't picture myself. I've done some long meditation things but usually it's you know an hour and then break it up and do some asanas and then another hour like that being able to sit for I've never sat for six or seven or eight hours or anything. I'm wondering if among your students has anyone been able to do anything even closely resembling what you

did even for a day or two or are they all just able to go a couple of hours before having to take a break.

**Baba:** A few of them have said that they are able to sit for six hours, five to six hours they have been practicing.

**Rick:** Because it seems like, you know, if people try to emulate what you did everyone's going to be discouraged, because nobody could measure up to that kind of routine.

**Baba:** Yeah, it would be very difficult. It requires a bit practice. Even in those years of my service to Swamiji he used to come to Dehradun ashram for two to three months in a year and the rest of the year I used to be there after attending to morning chores of the ashram, taking care of cleaning and doing some puja, so then I used to prepare a couple of chapatis and then retire, in the backyard used to be lot of bushes and mango trees were there. I used to go and sit under the tree and practice six to seven hours of meditation sitting and after that I used to come out then I used to feel hungry, eat those couple of chapattis, then come back to ashram so like that also for a long-long time I practiced these things and before coming to Dehradun ashram also for four years on the Chamundi Hills there is another cave called Nagar Teertha which the priest of the temple had shown me, so there I used to go, many times I used to tell my mother I'm going to classes and I used to go on to the hill and quietly meditate there whole day seven to eight hours and then used to come down, sometimes like this I practiced, so a long time practice is definitely necessary.

**Rick:** There's a saying these days, you know, so many people sit so much at their jobs or they sit in front of their computers, they don't get much physical activity and there's a saying which is sitting is the new smoking, what they mean by that is that just sitting a lot without exercise can really be bad for your body, the way smoking is bad and I'm just wondering why Yogi's like yourself managed to stay so healthy with so much sitting without any physical activity.

**Baba:** I agree if you are sitting for a long time without proper exercises the body parts can get affected. So I've been practicing yoga exercises. Even in those five years also when I came out for four five hours so after some food and some rest or sometimes before taking food I used to do some exercise and a couple of people who were looking after used to massage my legs and hands very much, so that was how I could keep my body, like my own Guru his body could not be looked after during his tapas, so when he sat his legs and hands didn't grow properly and his hands had become totally joined like this and even after lot of massage after 12 years tapas it came out but his fingers totally remained joined. He could never straighten it, so that type of any deformity or trouble problem can occur if it is not taken care properly.

**Rick:** Okay, good, now let's switch and talk about the actual mechanics of the meditation that you practiced and that you teach, Jangama Dhyana. I guess one question is why don't you explain the mechanics of it briefly and then I'll have some questions for you about it.

**Baba:** In this you can sit in any comfortable posture, I ask people to keep the back and neck straight, keeping the eyes closed you have to concentrate your mind and sight in between eyebrows and just keep watching there without repeating any mantra or name, no need, and also



we ask do not imagine anything, so these two things watching and do not imagine are very important. Throughout the duration of meditation do not open your eyes. If you set half an hour, one hour, two hours in that period do not open your eyes is also important. So now watching technology mind has two aspects thinking and watching, these two are different aspects of the mind. If the mind is totally preoccupied into thinking, it cannot watch 100% properly. If it is watching, means observing, if you achieve that watching 100% then your mind automatically stops thinking. When you close the eyes hundreds and thousands of thoughts arise thoughts and visions, watching them mind has a tendency to analyze this is good, this is bad, why not this and gets involved, one thought goes another thought is absorbed by analyzing. So instead of analyzing you are taught just to watch, watch in between eyebrows, do not think whether those thoughts are good or bad, what, don't try to know what it is. Then all the thoughts get disappeared and the pure consciousness happens. This is the basic technique I try to teach.

**Rick:** As you know, of course, there are many different kinds of meditation, using mantras, aphorisms, breath control, this is a question that Clifford actually sent in, body feeling, lights visions, attention to different parts of the body, sounds, would you say that different types of meditation are better for different people or would you say that there are qualitative differences between different kinds of meditations, some are more effective than others, here's a question that just came in from a guy named Faisal in Lebanon. He said, I get a headache and feel anger when I try to do the third eye meditation, yet when I rest my mind in the heart center I go into deep meditation easily, why am I experiencing such a difference between the two locations. So would you say that for Faisal maybe it's better to do that kind of meditation.

**Baba:** Not like that. If you watch gently, politely in between eyebrows, do not rush, sometimes we have a tendency to rush and force it upon. If thousands of thoughts are coming it could be awful and torturous. At that time, people try to force it upon. Do not force, gently and politely, maybe you are straining unnecessarily. If you simply watch in between eyebrows even if it is not possible in between eyebrows immediately because the eyeballs move in parallel they don't come into one direction easily, it takes some time, steadily you watch, skillfully keep watching the front portion then slowly it will come, then it will not be straining at all, so you should not rush, because all methods are equally respectful. There are two things, in this method which was practiced in ancient India also, this was the technique obtained by my Guru from the Divine manifestation that's why we would like to teach this is like directly getting recruited as an officer, means in this you are giving the mind to become quiet on its own without any external anchor. If you go on watching mind becomes quiet, quiet, and one day when it is 100% concentrated it would easily go introvert and merges with the self without getting stuck anywhere else whereas so many methods are all there, they can serve like preliminary round exercise of focusing first. You first practice the concentration of the mind, like a chant of a mantra or you concentrate on the breath or any body part. If you imagine that then the mind can become concentrated, but it is likely to get stuck there also, to make it to go introvert you have to give up that practice and become quiet that is important, just like if you have read Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life, Mother Kali always appeared. He did tapas as a devotee of Kali visualizing Kali then when Totapuri came and wanted to teach him Nirvikalpa Samadhi then he said I am able to withdraw the mind from everything but Mother Kali is always there then getting annoyed it is said that story says he pierced in between eyebrows with a glass piece and that was when Ramakrishna went into Nirvikalpa Samadhi. So that is how the idea of all these methods are to

practice that concentration first and then it has to go introvert, but in this method it can directly go introvert because there is no anchor that you are giving, simply using the eyeballs you are trying to bring the mind concentrated and very soon you will realize the mind is trying to watch itself if it can give up all the thoughts and visions that it is holding through the watching process then automatically it starts watching itself. Its attention goes onto itself, just now the mind is preoccupied with its imaginations, just like if you are watching a movie your mind gets sucked into that consciousness, everything that is happening in the movie appears as if it's happening to you, you get involved, say a yogi comes and wakens you up, come on you are just watching a movie nothing is happening to you, you are perfectly alright. Then your conscious come back and you will realize you are simply watching that, nothing was happening to you. In the same way, mind is becoming happy, unhappy, fearful, confused everything due to its own imaginations. When all these imaginations go away then its attention goes to itself that is how the awareness of the self occurs eventually and the mind goes into Samadhi.

**Rick:** So in this meditation you teach, your eyes are closed, right? And you are actually physically with your eyes closed trying to kind of direct your gaze your eyeballs, if your eyes were open people would see your eyeballs kind of going up kind of cross-eyed up to this area and so explain once more why is that useful, why does it work, you're not actually seeing anything, because your eyes are closed, so how is it that directing the eyeballs upward and to the center actually helps draw the mind within?

**Baba:** Even if it is difficult to go upward also is not necessary, in the same level you bring both eyeballs. We call it as the vanishing point. If you write a drawing of a road, you go on road and then it comes to the vanishing point that is called, the same way when both eyeballs come then the vision is lost then the mind comes 100%, it holds. The eyes are strongest of the sensory organs. It can withdraw and hold the mind very strongly without any external anchor. There is no other imagination, no other thought, no other holding, simply eyes are watching and eyes are not watching any particular form also, you are just watching in between eyebrows, but no form, no name, nothing is given, so thus you are watching and not watching anything actually. That is when the mind comes back, because mind is made up of consciousness and energy, both are inseparable. This is the Shiva and Shakti concept that has been told in ancient times. Shiva means your existence in thoughtlessness state, nischishtit is the Sanskrit word used. Like in Hinduism, when the body dies it is known as shava, means it won't move anymore, it is finished, but Shiva appears to be inert but it is not inert, it is supreme consciousness, that is the concept. So when mind gathers, its attention goes introvert, just now its attention was towards its imagination. Consciousness means wherever you apply your consciousness you become aware of it. When I am talking, if all of you apply your mind onto me your consciousness onto me then you will become aware of what I am trying to talk and convey. In the same way, just now that consciousness has become mind and is preoccupied with its own imagination. When it imagines its attention also is onto the imagination. So that imagination has to be finished. When that finishes then the attention is onto itself, the mind watches itself that is when you will realize mind is nothing but the consciousness and consciousness is nothing but you yourself. It is all the same. From the self, consciousness has sprouted. From the consciousness, mind has sprouted and the imaginations all have sprouted. Simply you have to take it back to the self like this by quietening.

**Rick:** I am sure you're aware that in Gita chapter 6 verse 13, there is thing about fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose and Shankara's commentary was if fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose were actually literally meant there the mind would be left with the nose but without God. So I'm not questioning whether your meditation technique draws the awareness within, obviously it does, I'm just trying to understand the mechanics, because if your eyes are closed what difference does it make what direction your eyes are pointing in, they can't see anything whether they're pointing this way or this way, they just don't see it if they're closed.

**Baba:** No, because if the eyeballs are constantly moving it gives a jerk to the mind and keeps the mind into spinning, the mind cannot stop. This eyeballs constantly moving and wavering is one of the basic reason for the mind's inability to go into Samadhi, even Patanjali has said this, so the idea is to hold the eyeballs into onepointedness, if possible to the center in between eyebrows, slowly you bring, as you go on simply, when you are watching then the eyeballs also steadily stop into one point. There you don't have any imagination of that point what it is it is neither the tip of the nose nor the in-between eyebrows, no imagination, you simply hold on to that, then you are watching. When you are watching, you will see slowly all the thoughts disappear, all the visions disappear one by one, they all go, get evaporated, they are all the acquired habits of the mind. Sometimes I tell jokingly, it is a garbage of the mind is being thrown out, you just keep watching, don't think what it is then this thing happens, the mind becomes totally silent, when it is silent its attention all turns to itself, that's when you become aware, that's when the stability to the mind comes. Eventually, when this mind hundred percent comes here it lifts the body consciousness also upwards. The body consciousness generally known as Kundalini. This Kundalini is nothing but another part of the mind. It is also consciousness, because of which you have obtained yourself as the body consciousness, when this is also lifted, compared to the Kundalini, mind is much more stronger. A seeker is always advised to control the mind first. Then it automatically lifts the body consciousness on its own. They both become one then gets delinked from the brains clutches that is when a seeker can feel as if he is here for a while. You see this place has been explained as thousand petals, sahasrara kamala, means it is only a symbolically worded thing. There is no thousand petals lotus is not there actually, but if the mind is here means it is now totally purified and the blossomed like a lotus and is ready to go to Samadhi. That is the idea of this practice that will what happen. Then you lose location and samadhi starts up occurring to you automatically, that is the usefulness of this method of meditation.

**Rick:** There is a term that's in vogue these days, called spiritual bypassing, and what is meant by that term is that sometimes people can achieve some sort of awakening and yet a lot of things haven't been worked out yet, a lot of kleshas or sanskaras or something, and it ends up causing trouble in their behavior. So I gather from what you just said that what your teaching is kind of like a Master switchboard and if you can enliven or awaken that it will automatically take care of the other things. For instance, some might say well you really need to focus on the heart to develop the heart and if you're just focusing here you might develop this level without developing the heart, so there would be a spiritual bypassing, but I think you're saying that this will pull all the others along like you pull one leg of a table and all the other legs are going to come along.

**Baba:** Exactly, because this will happen only when the mind is totally purified. All vasanas, all acquired habits everything disappear then mind becomes totally purified. So there is no bypassing has to happen, it will happen once it is purified then the body consciousness also gets lifted, only then that will start merging into the self when Samadhi comes that is when the self realization will be total and complete effortlessly once for all this consciousness abandoning all its cravings it will go and settle into the self and remains there totally contented giving you a self-realization, so that is why this has been practiced in ancient rigvedic era also, this is one of the highest methods that is recommended. This is totally useful. See, even if you want to see at the heart it is no problem for a while, but you have to understand you see you cannot bring the eyeballs downwards like this to see the heart, you have to close the eyes, and you have to imagine as if you are concentrating onto the heart that is when the mind becomes purified and has to go introvert so that is what has to happen eventually then only total purification must happen for the Samadhi to occur so then only the abnormal behaviors would not happen, one would be able to observe and then only a person can be a good teacher also will be able to present what really happens.

**Rick:** You use the word imagination a lot and how we need to come out of imagination. Here's a question that came in from Lalita in Albuquerque in New Mexico. She asked it is easy to get stuck in the imagination of our personal stories. How do we let go of our attachment to our stories and how important is it that we do so?

**Baba:** Just by watching them, do not try to analyze, let go the thing is very important, because you have to realize simply by imagining you cannot achieve anything. So you have to let go, the past is not going to come back, it is over, past is meant so that you just learn a lesson, you don't repeat them. More than that you should not allow the mind to go into a complete brooding and you can plan for your future but need not be anxious. So thus you can keep the mind into the present. Present is always a purified state and which will be totally at peace and enjoyable. So like this you can overcome from all those stories, you must have a firm conviction, they are all imagination, it really does not exist. The past does not exist, it is over. Future also does not exist, until it does not come to the present there is no evidence. Both are simply in your memory and imaginations. If you realize this, you will be able to give up easily and make the mind go introvert.

**Rick:** Here's a question that came in from Cornell in Kingston Jamaica which is in the Caribbean. He said I have only encountered you through a computer screen and I doubt I will ever be with you in person because of physical distance. Can the Guru-Devotee relationship truly exist even when the devotee never gets to be with the Guru in person.

**Baba:** It is possible if you develop total faith and cultivate that then you will be able to feel the Guru within you then you will see the guidance also comes to you constantly, the grace will descend depending on your faith. That is why faith is important. My Guru always said you can lose anything but do not lose faith. I also jokingly tell you can become annoyed with me but do not throw away the photo that you buy that is your faith, do not allow that faith to be disturbed. So in present-day world, there are so many things there to be in touch. You can write an email to me directly which I will deal with. If you go to our website the spiritual questions email address is there, you can always write and app is also developed as Shri Babaji in which I have given this

technique and there is a time capsule also you can set for 10 minutes, 20 minutes. In the beginning, I have told the technique and after that time wake up sloka prayer is also told. So like that you can be in touch with me always and you will feel my presence within you. Finally, it is your total faith that is needed.

**Rick:** Your determination and the strength that you had to do the kind of tapas you did are extraordinary and, you know, you're a monk; I'm wondering if you advocate celibacy to your students in order to somehow culture greater strength and make the practice more effective or don't you comment on that.

**Baba:** It is recommended though we do not insist upon, but the celibacy is important. If you want to devote that much of time if you need to, what you want to become is important. If you simply want to practice one hour of meditation or one or two and then live a stress-free life it is alright, but if you want to become a self-realized soul then you will have to go that much, like for example if you want to become a college teacher you will have to prepare yourself that much, but if you want to become the president of United States you will have to prepare that much that much of dedication, that much of time, everything will have to be given. So finally it is for you what you want to become. I wanted self-realization that's why I totally dedicated into this life that's why we could achieve.

**Rick:** I think maybe you might want to not use that president analogy for the next four years or so it doesn't quite hold up with reality... here is an interesting question from Geddes in Bristol which I believe is in the UK. He or she said I'm addicted to seeing different clairvoyance, psychics, mediums and tarot card readers for guidance in life even if they're supposed to be the best in the world they often confuse me even more yet I still go back to them, how can I stop being dependent on their readings even though I meditate I still can't find clear answers on how to make right decisions in life and not make mistakes. Sometimes I avoid making any big what changes in life because I'm afraid of making a mistake which may cause me suffering, perhaps it's better to make a mistake rather than take no action and stay in limbo. So the question he has is about seeing clairvoyance and mediums and so on and how can, you know how to be more self-sufficient I guess in terms of making the right decisions in life.

**Baba:** You see, spirituality teaches you to learn to face the moment. People are always afraid to face the results. If you are ready to face the results as it come, for this my Guru said try to live like a soldier when the soldier goes to battlefield he knows either he will do it or he will die, both are equally acceptable. That's why he is never confused. This life is also like that, you have a desire, you put an effort, you try, as the result comes simply accept it. If it has not happened today, it will happen tomorrow, you try again and try again, like this if you go you don't need tarot reader, you don't need any other things, you just need your own confidence that is what is needed. If you practice meditation, meditation will give you more confidence in yourself and belief in yourself that you can do it and it will also help you to face the moment as it happens totally peacefully then life will be more peaceful instead of getting confused like this.

**Rick:** Do people sometimes come to you with personal questions such as should I get married, should I go to college, should I get this job and do you actually answer such questions or do you just tell them to meditate and they'll know the right thing to do themselves.

**Baba:** We generally advocate them to meditate and the decision will have to be yours. We can help you to arrive at a decision, but never get confused, you ponder over your own mind what you want to do and do like that. Once you have done, accept the responsibility and go learn adjustment and management that will help you to be stabilized in life always. Those who can adjust and manage will always be happy. This is what is my advice to everybody.

**Rick:** I have a question that actually relates to the one we are just discussing. You mentioned in your book “in many legends you will read of people or even demons performing tapas in which their minds become concentrated to the maximum then God has to come and give them whatever they ask” so my question is how does one balance asking God for what you want with surrendering to whatever God wants. You've probably never heard of the Rolling Stones, the musical group, and they had a song in which they said you can't always get what you want but you get what you need. So on one hand, you know, you could have this adamant determination to get a certain thing but it may not be in your best interest, on the other hand you could be totally passive and not, you know, desire anything, as let God just, you know, give me whatever I need but then you might be too passive and not taking dynamic action. So how do you find a balance between surrender to God and determination to achieve something that you desire.

**Baba:** See one example my Guru used to give if you ask God you will end up asking a small chocolate, you allow God to give you, God wants to give you supermarket itself, so if you surrender to the Divine what is needed what you are looking for is peace, happiness and contentment, ask God to give you these things, that will only keep you always happy, not that things that you want because everything is impermanent in this world. You start imagining your happiness is in a chocolate or is in a property, is in a dollar, but that may not be the thing which will give you happiness. Happiness is when you have contentment, when you have peace within yourself, ask for these things and practice meditation to achieve these things then you will have everything.

**Rick:** Sounds like what Jesus said, seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all else should be added unto thee. I'm sure you've heard that phrase.

**Baba:** Yes.

**Rick:** These days there are a lot of spiritual teachers around, many of whom I've interviewed, I have interviewed 400 people and you say do not be in a hurry to become a Guru yourself and I would say in the case of many people I know in the Zen tradition after your realization you're supposed to wait ten years before taking on a teaching function and yet many of these people seem to be really helpful to others, they don't necessarily claim to be an ultimate final teacher or anything like that but, you know, when we go to school we have a teacher in the second grade who wouldn't be qualified to teach college courses but they're helpful to us in the second grade you know. So what do you think about all these literally hundreds of people these days, many of them Westerners who are teaching satsangs and functioning as spiritual teachers, what do you feel about their activity.

**Baba:** They can be helpful for those people who are in the kindergarten, who are learners to a certain extent that might be helpful definitely, but if a person wants to become self-realized, the

teacher whatever would have achieved depending on that only such a teacher would try to create an awareness, so what people want it depends on that, so if you are happy with a small learning well then these teachers also can be helpful, at least to motivate others, we don't rule out completely. I have spoken what my Guru told us to become a better disciple first, don't be in a rush to become Guru, means the important idea through that you do not think that you have become 100% perfect, so as long as you don't have that ego it's no problem you want to teach whatever you know a little bit.

**Rick:** I would say many of the people I referred to I would define them as self-realized as I understand it and I think they would, but most of them would also say I'm still a work in progress that and so I guess a question I could ask you is are there stages of self-realization and you could actually be self-realized and yet still undergo further refinement or development of some sort and is there a stage at which no further development is possible you've reached the pinnacle.

**Baba:** Either you are not realized or you have become realized, it is as simple as like this for me. Once you are realized that is done you have come to know of that thing after knowing which you don't have to know anything else that is self-realization once that has happened.

**Rick:** So you became self-realized in 1999 as I understand it and that's almost about eighteen years ago now. Do you feel that in these past 18 years there has been any further growth, progress, learning, refinement any of that or has it really been just sort of a static state that you achieved and that's it.

**Baba:** Yeah, it's the same what I was eighteen years ago, what was achieved it is the same. There is contentment, total peace, and that awareness, the same continues.

**Rick:** Okay, well let me see, I think I've pretty much asked most of the questions that came in or else we just covered them anyway. Are there any sort of final words that you would like to say to people, perhaps something we neglected to discuss or some thoughts you would like to leave people with.

**Baba:** We as humanity have tremendously advanced through science and technology, but unfortunately have forgotten spirituality that is why there are still conflicts amongst human beings, there is dissatisfaction, there is no peace. We all talk of peace but do not practice peace, so we need to take spirituality also along with science and technology, because through spirituality teaches the mind to be cultured and through that we can utilize the discoveries and inventions that we are making without creating harm to this earth or to humanity, to others, towards fellow beings, towards other creatures also we need to be more responsible, so thus it is important to practice spirituality that's what I would advocate whereas we have respect for all subjects whether it is science or technology, everything can be useful if you practice spirituality that's what I would like to advise.

**Rick:** Do you feel that if there were enough of an upsurge in spirituality in the world that all these terrible problems of global warming and famine and war and all these other things would kind of melt away. Do you feel like all those are really symptoms of a lack of proper spiritual development.

**Baba:** Yes, I feel that human beings can become more mature, better, because I have never liked to call anybody as bad or wrong, only some are mature, some are not mature through spirituality humanity can become more mature to consider about each other to love and honor each other, to respect the things that we have been given, so that's why I would advocate spirituality.

**Rick:** All right, well, thank you so much Babaji I really appreciate it, the time we spent together. Bruce said probably we need to take a few breaks but we didn't take any breaks, you just kept going..

**Baba:** Yeah, you made me very comfortable and it was very interesting. Your questions were also very interesting giving me an opportunity to share my experience and thank you for that thank you to batgap for giving this opportunity to me.

**Rick:** Yeah, thank you.

**Baba:** We feel much honored.

**Rick:** We're recording this on May 1st 2017, and you're in the US now, and you're going to be touring around, so people who are listening to this now I'll have a link to your website on my website and they can go there and see what your tour schedule is and you know maybe they'll be able to connect with you in some city and if someone's listening to this few years from now or something then go to the website anyway and see what the tour schedule will be. I presume you'll be doing this for a while, hopefully I will too.

**Baba:** Definitely, certainly.

**Rick:** Maybe we'll do another one of these days.

**Baba:** Very interesting talking to you.

**Rick:** Likewise, it's really an honor and I really enjoyed talking to you. Let me make just a couple of general wrap-up points. I've been conducting an interview with Shivarudra Balayogi as most of you know by now if you've been listening to it and I continue to do these interviews once a week and if you would like to be notified of future ones or check out past ones go to batgap.com and look at the menus there and there's also an audio podcast you can sign up for. There's at a glance menu if you go to that you'll see everything summarized that is available on the site. I think that's about it for now, and there's a donate button on the site which I appreciate people clicking if they can it helps to make this whole thing possible. So again thank you very much sir and it's really been a pleasure and an honor to speak with you and have a wonderful tour in the US and give my love to Clifford and Agastya and everyone else there.

**Baba:** They are all here, they are conveying their love to you.

**Rick:** Good.



**Baba:** Thank you so much, my love and blessings. All the best to batgap. You have been doing a wonderful job of creating this awareness, helping people to know about spirituality so much, wonderful. All the best to your efforts. Thank you very much.