



REFLECTIONS ON SILA

Sila - simplification of one's life, the first rule of Sadhana, the spiritual journey.

It is always a good idea to let go of all the clutter in one's life. Donating clothes and items to charity that you no longer use.

Letting go of relationships that are not healthy and mutually beneficial. Swami calls this 'removing the dead wood.' She is not suggesting that the end of a relationship diminishes either person. She constantly reminds us that once a decision has been made; we need to have the 'courage of our convictions.' There is no point in looking back. If the lesson has not been learnt karma dictates that we will get another opportunity to work through a similar problem in the future.

But physical and emotional simplification are really only a prelude to spiritual Sila which entails simplification of the mind.

What do I mean by spirituality? Spirituality transcends the ordinary; and yet, paradoxically, it can be found only in the ordinary. Spirituality is beyond us, and yet it is everything we do. It is extraordinary and yet extraordinarily simple.

Simple. The word is important, for 'beyond the ordinary' is not meant to suggest something complicated, difficult or self-consciously 'special.' Nothing is so simple (or so out of the ordinary for most of us) than attending to the present, to focus on this day. Attending to the present – to the sacredness present in the ordinary. This is Sila.

'Agi quod agis.' Do what you are doing!

Sila is the practice that can heal woundedness and pull fractured selves together into some kind of whole. It necessarily involves both brain and heart, thought and emotion, vision and feeling – but each in its proper role. Each acting in a way that fits into the larger whole.

Swami constantly reminds us to see things in their proper perspective – 'contemplate, discriminate, meditate.' To do this it is important to pay attention to yourself.

Again and again Swami reminds us to not judge others. Judgement of others is the opposite of Sila. To judge others results in the mind shifting away from its personal lesson – making its experience someone else's responsibility.

If you lose touch with Sila it is simple to regain it. Remember to return to your breath. Focus on your breath. Your breath will always lead you back to the present moment.

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