

Learning is Unlearning

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The master bade him to sit. He took a kettle from the table and poured the tea into an already full cup. Startled at the master's behavior, the seeker hurriedly reminded, "but the cup is already full…"

"So are you", said the master unruffled.

Most often we listen to others full of our own ideas and concepts. We listen to ourselves. This inhibits our learning. To learn one must first empty oneself of old concepts and ideas.

Sri Sri Bhagavan says, "All learning is unlearning." When we are stuck to our views what happens is mere `hearing'. Once you have labeled your colleague as injudicious, any suggestions coming from him thereafter will sound irrational. You see his idea through the spectacle of your assumption about him. So is it with all relationships. A husband turns a deaf ear to the agony of the wife, as she is labeled `silly'. The suggestion of a child is most often ignored as being immature.

Lack of listening stems from ones ego which incessantly plays the game "I know better…". Taking security on your knowledge or view, you refuse to accept anything that lies outside your domain of knowledge, lest your ego might break. Not wanting to lose the battle you prolong the argument even if the truth were to stare at your face.

Without an open mind, progress in the material and spiritual planes is but a fantasy. A quick glance at the lives of great men would reveal their tremendous humility. With humility comes listening and learning.

Sri Bhagavan says, "The first step towards listening is to become conscious that one is not listening." To be enlightened is to be liberated from the ego. Listening is natural for an enlightened man as all struggle to prove himself ceases. He does not pollute facts with his assumptions.