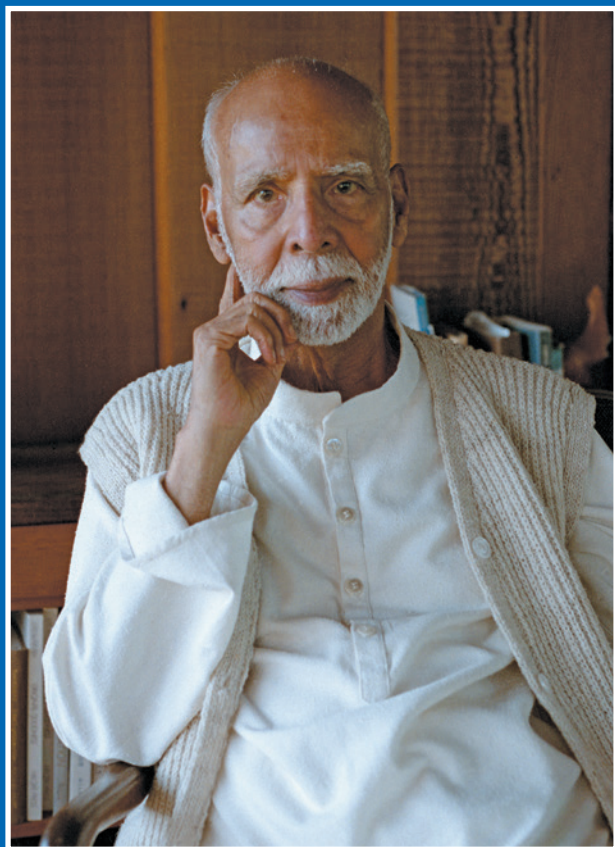


Eknath Easwaran on Meditation & Spiritual Living

# Blue Mountain Journal

FALL 2026



## Going Deeper with the Mantram

## In this Issue

In this issue, Easwaran takes us deeper with the mantram. In our first article, from 1966, he says: “The repetition of the holy name or mantram, called *japam* in Sanskrit, can bring us lasting benefits on the physical, mental, and spiritual levels. But unlike secular disciplines, as the mantram sinks into the deeper levels of consciousness, a wave of joy begins to rise up from the sea of joy that is the Atman.”

You can then find more from Easwaran on the mantram and fear, followed by community stories, Q&A with close students, and passages on the mantram.

Finally, Easwaran shows us how the mantram can carry us through the most difficult times of our lives. “The mantram can be of enormous value at the hour of death. Any remembrance of the holy name is a solace that can help us to undergo the last great change called death with peace and courage in our hearts.”

– The Editorial Team

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to carry on his work.

# The Mystery of the Mantram

Ekhnath Easwaran, from our journal archive

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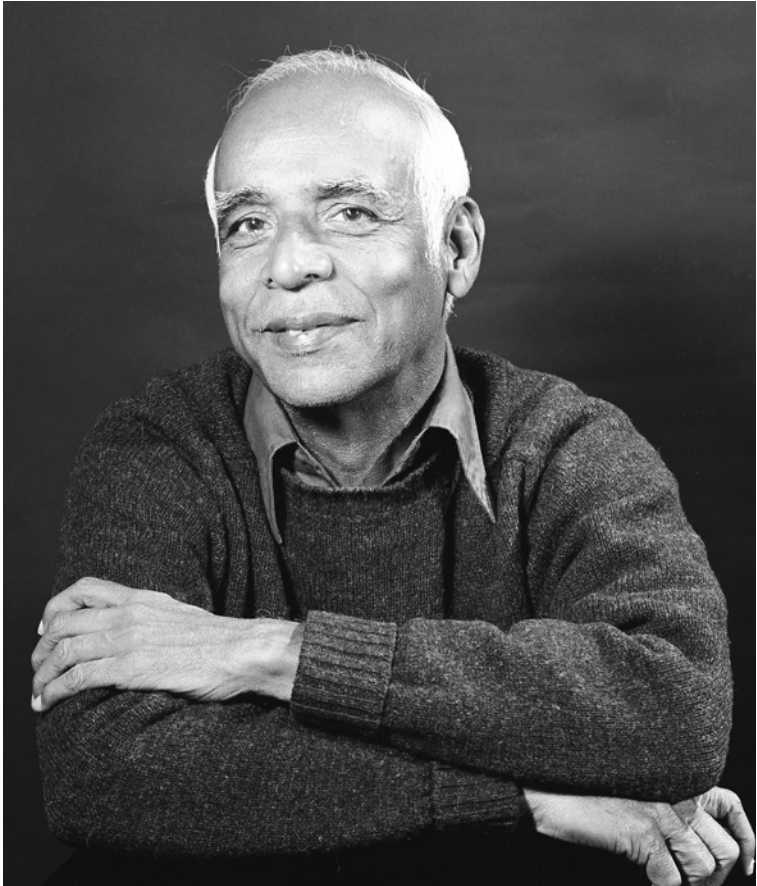
“The mantram becomes one’s staff of life,” declares Mahatma Gandhi, “and carries one through every ordeal. It is repeated not for the sake of repetition, but for the sake of purification, as an aid to effort, for direct guidance from above. It is no empty repetition. For each repetition has a new meaning, carrying you nearer and nearer to God.”

The mantram I have received from my grandmother, with the imprint of her own intense spiritual awareness, is one of the most powerful and one of the most popular in all India:

*Hare Rama Hare Rama*  
*Rama Rama Hare Hare*  
*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna*  
*Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*

This mantram consists of three holy names: *Hare* (the vocative form of *Hari*, pronounced as *Haray*), *Rama*, and *Krishna*.

When I was a child, sleeping on the verandah of our ancestral home in Kerala State in South India, I used to wake up every morning to the chanting of *Hare Rama* by my grandmother as she swept the courtyard with her coconut-fiber broom. Through her benediction it must have sunk deep into my heart, from where it rose to my rescue many years later under the storm and stress of life.



Eknath Easwaran, 1970s

## The Creative Word

What exactly is a mantram? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to refer briefly to the theory of vibration on which the illumined sages say it is based. According to this theory, from the Great Silence there issued the Creative Word. “In the beginning was Brahman, with whom was the Word; and the Word was truly the supreme Brahman.” This significant verse from the Rig Veda has an almost exact parallel in the Gospel According to St. John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

According to this theory, *shabda* or sound is the subtle stuff out of which the phenomenal world has emanated, and every object in it may, therefore, be looked upon as sound of a particular concentration. In other words, this world of *nama* (name) and *rupa* (form) is *shabda* or sound manifesting itself at varying levels of vibration.

Language is only a very small part of *shabda* and consists of words in which the relationship between *nama* and *rupa* may be called arbitrary or accidental. For example, there is no intrinsic or inherent connection between the sound *table* and the object “table.” As contrasted with the words of language, *Om* – or *Aum*, as it should be properly pronounced – is a natural name in which there is an intrinsic and inherent connection between *nama* and *rupa*, between the sound and the substance, between the Word and the Reality it represents.

## A spiritual formula for abiding joy

*Rama* is another perfect natural name that has come down to us through the ages. On the verbal level the word *Rama* means

“he who can fill us with abiding joy”; and on the shabda or spiritual level too it means the same. When we try to describe God as *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Joy), *Rama* may be called a perfect natural name for the third aspect of Absolute Joy. In other words, *Rama* is a spiritual formula for abiding joy bequeathed to humanity by the illumined sages of ancient India.

## The power of the Word

Let us now turn to an illuminating exposition in the annals of Islam on the power of the Word to evoke Reality:

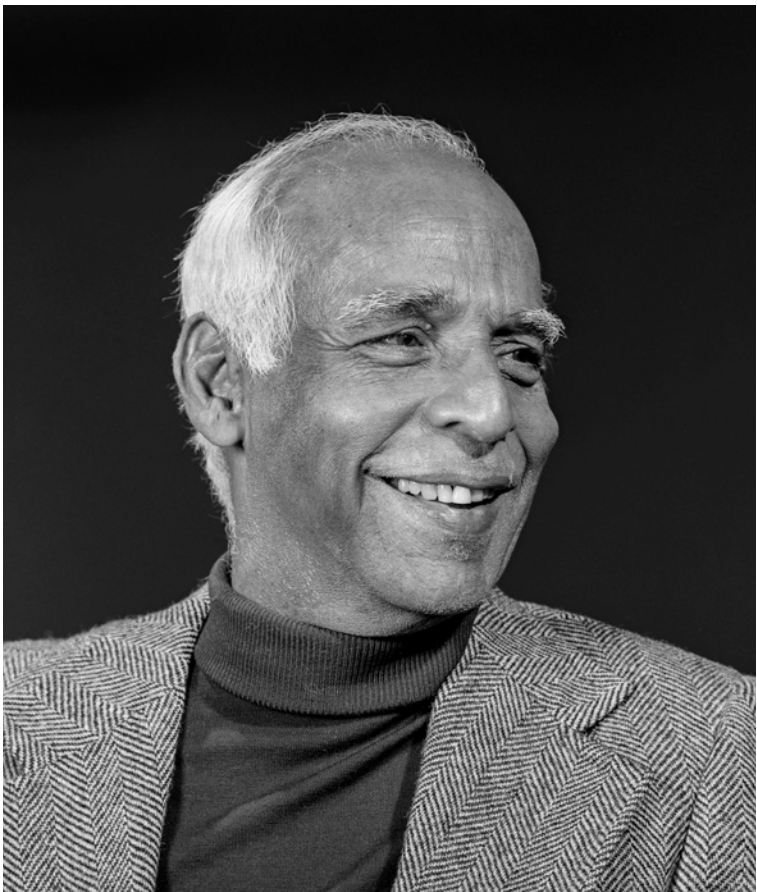
The shaykh took my hand and led me into the convent. I sat down in the portico, and the shaykh picked up a book and began to read. As is the way of scholars, I could not help wondering what the book was.

The shaykh perceived my thoughts. “Abu Sa’id,” he said, “all the hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets were sent to preach one word. They bade the people say *Allah* and devote themselves to Him. Those who heard this word by the ear alone let it go out by the other ear; but those who heard it with their souls imprinted it on their souls and repeated it until it penetrated their hearts and souls, and their whole beings became this word. They were made independent of the pronunciation of the word; they were released from the sound of the letters. Having understood the spiritual meaning of this word, they became so absorbed in it that they were no more conscious of their own nonexistence.

## Lasting benefits

The repetition of the holy name or mantram, called *japam* in Sanskrit, can bring us lasting benefits on the physical, mental, and spiritual levels. But unlike secular disciplines, as the mantram sinks into the deeper levels of consciousness, a wave of joy begins to rise up from the sea of joy that is the Atman. After years of patient practice, we come to hear the mantram in our dreams, in our sleep, in the song of the nightingale or the murmur of the brook that babbles by. 🌸

*Listen to Easwaran chanting the mantram he received from his grandmother at: <https://www.bmcm.org/easwaran-mantram>.*



Eknath Easwaran, 1970s

# Changing Fear into Fearlessness

Ekknath Easwaran, from *Strength in the Storm*

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It has been said that anyone who wants a peaceful life has chosen the wrong time to be born. The last hundred years have seen incessant turbulence, change, and danger. Around the world, people are living with a deep anxiety about the future.

In such situations it is only natural to ask now and then, “Why was I born into times like these?” The answer I would give is that we have been born to be of help to others. Desperate times are a sign of a more desperate need. To make our full contribution, we need to train the mind to be at peace and then radiate that peace to those around us.

Very few of us really know what peace of mind is, the phrase has become so hackneyed. To think peace of mind comes by using chemical aids or moving to a quiet cabin on the seashore is to deny the very understanding of the word mind. In order to have peace of mind, thinking should be under control rather than at the mercy of fear and anger.

## I was not brave

I was never a very angry person, but as a boy I was known for my fear. My cousins and classmates were brave, but I was not. I would never get into a fight, not out of noble motives but out of fear.

I can tell quite a few stories here at my own expense. In our village there was a particular street I had to take in order

to get to school each day. (In a village, you often can't just go around the block.) And on that street lived a number of much older boys whose goal in life was to terrify boys who were smaller. Every morning and every afternoon, they would be lounging around waiting for someone to taunt.

We didn't all draw their attention. Some of my cousins, who were small like me, loved nothing better than a good fight. They were never bothered. But I made an attractive target.

I have to say my tormentors could be creative. Even in those days, for example, my hair was rather sparse, and that provided material for all kinds of jokes and jibes. I would go down the street with my heart pounding and one of them would call out derisively, "Caw, caw!" and make signs with their hands like a crow's nest. (A crow's nest is rather flimsy. If you look at one, you can see the crow inside.)

That really bothered me, so finally I went and told my mother. "Never mind them," she said. "You're a nice-looking boy. Why should you care what they call you?"

That didn't make me feel any better, so I went to my granny. "Son," she said, "there are two ways to deal with this. One is that I can help you deal with it yourself. The other is, I can do it for you." "Granny," I said, "I like the second way better."

Granny was a woman of action and completely fearless. She went and told those boys something that almost made them leave town, and after that I never had trouble walking down that lane again.

Unfortunately, I couldn't take my granny to college. At age sixteen I began the long journey of learning how to deal with such problems on my own.

## Selfless service

I took heart from the example of another fearful boy who had made himself fearless and showed all India how to throw off fear. By the time I went to college, Mahatma Gandhi had taken center stage in India, and he made his life an open book. Everyone in India knew that as a child he had been subject to all kinds of fears. Even as a young man, he confessed, he was afraid to go out at night without his wife.

And he was terrified of public speaking! Early in his law career he had to plead an open-and-shut case where all he had to say was, “Your honor, the accused owes my client fifty rupees and he won’t pay.” He stood up, opened his mouth, and couldn’t get out a word. Finally he had to hand the case over to a colleague and rush out of court humiliated.

That is the man who went to South Africa as a timid, untrained clerk and got drawn into selfless service. By the time he returned to India, twenty years later, all that fear had vanished. Against overwhelming odds and brutal opposition, he had led a completely nonviolent campaign against racial legislation in South Africa and won. In India, he could stand against the greatest empire the world had seen and say, “Do your worst. I will not retaliate, but I will never retreat.”

Through selfless service and the mantram, Gandhi changed his fear into fearlessness, anger into compassion, hatred into love.

## A beacon for our times

Today we would ask, “What kind of therapy did he undergo? What workshops did he attend?” But Gandhi never set out

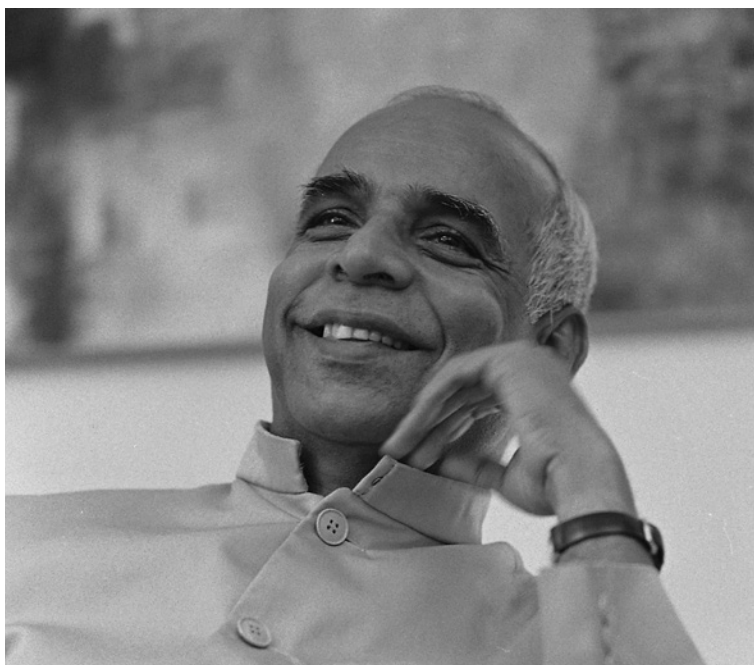
to make himself fearless. He simply began trying to serve those around him, spending less and less time on indulging himself and more on helping others. And the primary skill he used to support himself in these efforts was repetition of the mantram. Effort and the mantram together changed fear into fearlessness, anger into compassion, hatred into love.

That transformation is the reason I consider Gandhi a beacon for our times. “I have learnt through bitter experience,” he said, “the one supreme lesson to conserve my anger, and as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmuted into a power which can move the world.” And he added, “I have not the slightest doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith.” That is what the mantram can do.

## The mechanics of the mind

To see how the mantram deals with fear, it helps to look again at the mechanics of the mind. Fear is a frantic flickering of attention: the mind is being whipped like a flame in the wind. Whatever the provocation, what handicaps us at such times is not so much an external threat as this inability to concentrate, this incapacity to hold our attention steady. And the practical application is that as attention becomes steady again, fear *has* to subside.

Flickering attention is a sure sign of a divided mind. Division is tension. Division is friction. Division is ineffectiveness. Division is futility. And a mind divided cannot stand. Most of us have a mind that is divided; that is why it sometimes cannot stand under the impact of life.



Eknath Easwaran, 1970s

The mind can be compared to a huge highway with traffic racing along twenty-four hours a day. The problem is that thoughts don't know how to drive. They stop here and there, weave in and out of traffic, and race out of control, an utter danger to everyone around.

### How to solve the problem of fear

This is what most of us call thinking. And the practical problem is that if a thought creeps up alongside us in the next lane, we get distracted. It steals our attention. We see the license plate, FEAR, and we start trembling. We keep glancing over, get

jittery, and abruptly find ourselves darting over into its lane. The next thing we know, Fear has a tow hook on our bumper and is dragging us wherever it likes.

This gives a practical clue to how to solve the problem of fear. If you learn to keep your attention steady, a negative emotion like fear can wave, honk, do anything it likes to distract you into its lane and get its tow hook on you; you won't react. Eventually it will have to go away, because you scarcely know it is there. Like a concentrated driver that cruises along smoothly in one lane, you cannot be distracted from your purpose.

## The mantram has the power

Having a calm, steady mind is like driving a long distance in a powerful car on cruise control. You select the carpool lane and drive smoothly to your destination without any difficulty, danger, or delay – no compulsive darting into other people's lanes, no U-turns in the face of traffic, no being totaled and towed away.

And the mantram can help us get where we want to go. The mantram has the power to transform negative forces in the mind into positive ones. There is nothing magical about this; the mantram simply takes advantage of the fact that when the mind is in the grip of negative emotions like fear and anger, thoughts are always racing. In positive states like love and compassion, consciousness is calm. So whenever the mind starts to race in fear or anger, repeating the mantram simply touches the brake.

Whenever a negative emotion starts to rise – a wisp of anxiety or fear, a rush of anger – if you can immediately start

repeating your mantram in your mind, that gives the mind something to hold on to. If you can continue to hold on to the mantram at such times, the energy in that emotion is transformed, very much the way the energy of a rushing river is transformed into electricity. That is the secret of the mantram's power.

## Repeating the mantram with full attention

Hold on to the mantram when fear or anger arises – it will steady your mind. Then you are free to respond to life's challenges as you choose.

Today, after years of practice, I can assure you on the basis of my own experience that when you are repeating the mantram with full attention, no fear can enter and oppress you. The mantram will be cruising the highways of consciousness like a traffic officer on a Harley Davidson. That is the surest way of preventing the mind from wandering into strange byways where nothing but what is unpleasant waits for us.

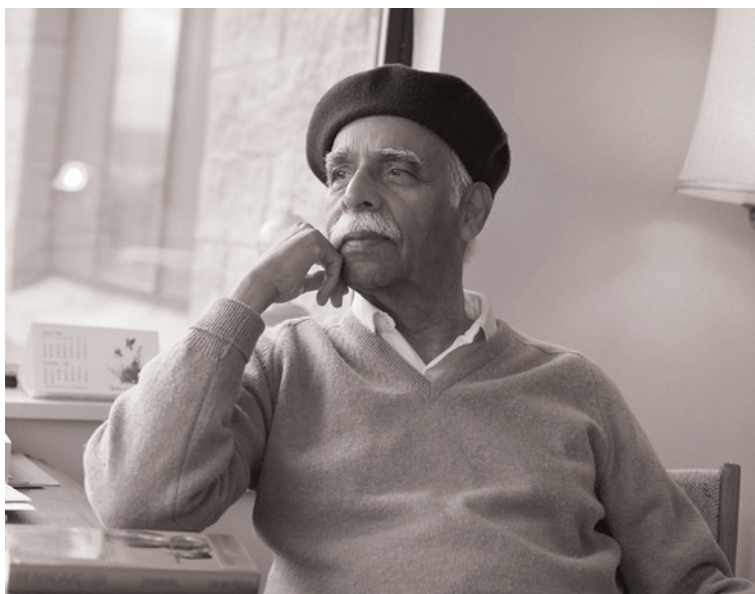
The mantram is particularly precious for children dealing with fear, because it is so simple it can be practiced at any age. The other day at the hospital, for example, I saw a small child being given an injection. The wailing wrung my heart. That's why I take every opportunity to tell mothers to teach their children to repeat the mantram at the earliest possible age. When they go to the dentist, when they feel threatened, when they hurt themselves or have nightmares, the mantram is of immense help.

## Freedom to meet life's challenges

In the depths of consciousness, even the bravest among us lives in a world of fear – the result of deep evolutionary conditioning that tells us we are separate and alone in a hostile world. We are protected from this awareness by a merciful amnesia that allows us to function outside the jungle, but deep in consciousness these fears are always present, manifesting themselves whenever we let our minds get agitated by events around us.

We could make a catalog of these fears, but they all stem from one fatal superstition: the belief that we are merely physical creatures, separate from the rest of life. A fragment cannot help feeling constantly alienated and alone, desperate for protection, always anxious that what it has will be taken away. Whatever face such people present to others and themselves, those who are acutely aware of their own separateness – their family, their community, their country, their race – are, beneath appearances, fragile and insecure. Their primary responses to life are to fight or to run away.

With the mantram, this sense of being separate and threatened by those around you gradually falls away. You will feel at home wherever you are, whoever you are with. You have a third alternative, beyond the conditioned reactions of fight and flight: the freedom to meet life's challenges with the response you choose. 🌸



Eknath Easwaran, 1980s

## A Tip from Easwaran

From *Passage Meditation*

In the midst of any powerful emotion like fear or anger, you may find it difficult to hold on to the mantram if it is a long one. In such emergencies I suggest you repeat a shortened form based on the most potent word: *Rama* if you use *Hare Rama, Hare Rama* or *Jesus* if you use the Jesus Prayer. When you are greatly agitated, it will be easier to stay with this kernel word.

# Community Story

## Lord, please help, *Rama, Rama, Rama*

When our middle son was in college, he tried snowboarding for the first time on a spring break trip. On the last run of the day, he took a jump and landed hard on his back. That afternoon we got a call that Ski Patrol had brought him down the mountain and he was on his way to the local ER. An hour later I was on the phone with a neurosurgeon.

The good news was that our son was miraculously not paralyzed, although he had come within a hairsbreadth. The difficult news – he was scheduled for an eight-hour surgery early the next morning and immobilized in a brace until then. For a kid generally upbeat and almost always undaunted, my son's voice wavered when he spoke to me on the phone, although he tried to reassure me that he was okay.

After I got the call I was just reeling. All the terrible possibilities were swirling in my mind. My very injured kid was three states away. I needed to get steady enough to focus on logistics so I could get to him as quickly as possible. I reached out and grabbed the mantram and wrapped it around and around my mind as I threw clothes in a suitcase and called the airlines. "Lord please help, *Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama.*"

On the long flight, navigating the airports, and then a dark snowy car ride through the mountains, I kept the mantram going as much as I could, silently repeating. Instead of spinning out I was able to stay mostly calm. The mantram was holding me up and mustering my strength for whatever was to come.

The next morning, I sat on the gurney holding his feet and his dad put his hands on his head, both of us praying over him for his safety and well-being during the surgery. I was so grateful that day that our son too had his mantram, and that we had used it enough with the kids when they were little that it was available when he needed it most. His dad began to quietly sing the mantram, filling the room with sacred calm. As they wheeled our son into surgery, I told him to take his mantram with him and he nodded. It meant so much to be able to offer that reminder to him. “Sweetie, repeat your mantram, hold onto your mantram. You will be okay.”

The surgery was successful and he made a full recovery. In the days and weeks following we faced new challenges as he moved from ICU to home, and repeating the mantram continued to be a source of healing and steadiness for all of us.

– A passage meditator

# Community Story

## The mantram will protect me

I was scraping the ice off my car windshield when this heavy pressure in my chest wouldn't go away. The pre-vaccine pandemic was in full swing. It was a heart attack and the mantram raced through my mind.

At the hospital, they stabilized my heart, but I was to remain hospitalized for tests and procedures. I calmed down a bit and the mantram slowed to a reasonable pace. However, without COVID test results, I had to stay in a makeshift COVID room. It was noisy. I was freezing and triple masked. They monitored me manually, every half hour all night long. Negative images of the future flowed into my mind. I allowed panic to engulf me.

Yet the mantram remained. When fear arose, I clung to it harder, with strength and resolve. At some point, my mind calmed. The mantram finally outran the panic. Gratitude replaced fear.

Easwaran tells us to repeat the mantram as often as possible. I learned that night how important that is. Yes, it came to me in my time of need, but more was needed. I resolved to wedge it into every possible moment. Perhaps then, when panic and fear invite themselves in, they will not stand a chance. The mantram will protect me.

– A passage meditator

# Community Story

## Turning anger into compassion

I was staying with family, and I'd just found out something that made me both angry and worried. It was a situation where there was very little in practical terms that I could do to help. Now it was late, the house was dark, everyone was asleep. I had meditated and that had calmed me down, but I was still wide awake with my heart pounding.

I switched over to my mantram. I had to get up early the next morning, but the mantram had helped in the past, and if I could drive it down deep enough it would help me now. So, on and on I went in the dark, hanging on to my mantram for well over an hour, maybe two, until finally I must have fallen asleep.

In the morning I felt oddly refreshed – still tired, but mentally much clearer and more able to look at the problem from all sides. Now I could see that the only way forward was to stay calm, drop any expectations of how I thought people should run their lives, and be kind and supportive to all concerned.

Months later, I can see that compassion still is the only way forward in that situation. It was the mantram that got me there.

– A passage meditator



Shanti Meditation Hall, Ramagiri Ashram

## A Prayer for Meditation

*A free rendering of an Invocation to an Upanishad  
by Eknath Easwaran*

May I open my eyes in the morning  
with the holy name on my lips.

May I see God everywhere and in everyone.

May I never hurt anyone and may I  
never be afraid of anyone.

May I be inspired to choose persuasive words,  
loving language, creative and positive thoughts,  
to carry peace and good will throughout the world.

May my meditation deepen, so I can  
draw upon the source of all life.

May I fall asleep at night  
with the holy name on my lips, to heal my wounds  
and prepare me for another day of service.

# Questions and Answers on the Mantram

Ekknath Easwaran, selections from *Passage Meditation*

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## How can we get established in the mantram in the way you describe?

Ramdas advises, “Have the mantram constantly in your mind.”

That is the first and last instruction where japam or repetition of the mantram is concerned.

Make use of every spare moment to repeat your mantram. A million opportunities can be discovered during the course of a single day, and of course when you are falling asleep at night. There may come a time when you cannot sleep and find it almost impossible to go on repeating the holy name hour after hour. The mind gets tired. At such times, I used to ask Sri Krishna in my heart to make it a joy for me to recite his name. As a result, now it is not a discipline; I do it with all the joy of indiscipline. I have no limits now, no restraints. I do it all the time, which is what going beyond all disciplines means. But you have to struggle with disciplines for a long, long time before this kind of spiritual freedom comes.

In my own practice, for example, I found that gradually – over a long, long period, not immediately – the period of japam will go on increasing, particularly when deepening meditation means you don’t need so much sleep at night, so that you lie awake resting your body in bed and resting your mind through japam.

Gradually, those hours of conscious sovereignty over the mind will bring increasing freedom in your thoughts and feelings, in your very life. That's the motivation for repeating the mantram.

### **When a powerful emotion like anger is sweeping me away, what should I do?**

If you can, it is very helpful to go out for a fast walk around the block or up and down the hall, repeating the mantram to yourself the whole way. Once your mind has quieted down, you can reflect with some detachment on how painful the long-term consequences of our anger are likely to be for everyone, including yourself. That's a kind of first aid.

But it is helpful to remember that of itself, a strong urge is not something negative. It is power rising, which the mantram can transform for positive use. Anger is one of the most destructive emotions on earth, but the mantram can turn even this fearful power into compassion, as we can see in the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

### **Can we use the mantram to prevent the agitation in the first place?**

It is not so much preventing as minimizing the movement of the mind. Encased as we are in a physical body, it is not possible for many of us to completely still the mind in the face of provocation. In most people, when there is agitation, the mind moves back and forth, up and down, like a hammock. It goes on swinging and we rather enjoy that swinging in a negative way. When we practice meditation, repeat the mantram, and observe



Ramagiri Ashram

the allied disciplines, what happens is that the hammock swings less and less. After a lot of practice, we arrive at the state where, if someone does or says something unkind, there is only a slight swinging of the mind and we are able to stabilize it. But we should always expect a little movement.

**When I'm upset I find it really hard to keep the mantram going, and I can't always leave the office, for instance, for a fast walk. Do you have any other suggestions?**

Keep a notebook at home and at work, and if you find your mind getting agitated, keep writing the mantram with concentration for one or two pages. You will find that the manual activity helps to focus and steady your mind.

## Can I give my mantram to family members and friends? I'd so like them to feel the benefit.

I follow the example of a great South Indian mystic, Ramanuja, whose teacher told him, “Don’t reveal your mantram to anybody. They will gain the benefit, but you will lose it all.”

Ramanuja went straight to the temple tower and called, “Listen to me, everybody who can hear! I want all of you to be happy, even if it means I will be miserable all my life.” Of course, his teacher was highly pleased. So share your mantram with anybody who asks for it; I will take the responsibility.

## When I began using the mantram, I felt a very strong connection with it. But as time has gone on, it's harder and harder to use it.

The mantram can't help working if you go on repeating it faithfully. Don't wait until you feel upset to use it. You can repeat the mantram anytime, and the more you repeat it, even if you feel it's not working, the more likely it will be there when you need to draw on it in a crisis.

It is amazing how many opportunities you can find during the day, no matter how busy you may be. You may find it helpful to keep a notebook in your room or at your place of work, so you can write the mantram whenever you get a minute or two. If you commute, use the time for the mantram. Irritation, exasperation, frustration, boredom, the desire to keep the tongue moving, are all hammers you can use to drive the mantram deep into the mind, so it can work and heal in the depths of the unconscious.

## You said the mantram can help us when we're in pain. Could you say more about that?

I find the mantram helpful everywhere, even in mundane trials. My dentist and dental assistant think I am a stoic, but they are wrong; I simply know how to use my mantram. I am quite sensitive to pain, but as soon as I get into the dental chair I say, "Don't try to tell me who won the baseball game or who is going to get an Academy Award. Just turn the music off and let me repeat my mantram."

I close my eyes and start to repeat *Rama, Rama, Rama*, and within minutes my attention is absorbed. It is not that the drill no longer hurts, but there is no fear of it in my mind; and it is fear that makes pain hard to bear. When fear of pain goes, suffering becomes manageable. And that is what the mantram can do. Whether it is a headache, a stomachache, or serious injury, the mantram always helps.

I want to add that I am not against any reasonable pain-killer in the hands of a skilled physician, but whether you have chemical aid or not, repeat the mantram. Not only will it help you manage pain yourself, but the experience will drive the mantram deeper into your consciousness. The next time you need it, the mantram will work from an even deeper level.

## Why does the Bhagavad Gita call the mantram a purifier?

Meditation helps the mantram, and the mantram helps meditation. Both work together in the mind to resolve old conditioning so that we can shape our consciousness around a new ideal of our own choosing. That is what purification means. In practice, it means simply the reduction of self-will, a large part of which is simply dwelling on oneself to the exclusion of those around us.

This is very much an internal process. For the transformation of consciousness to be complete, we have to put these new ideals into practice in daily living. So it is very important, right from the beginning, to give your very best not only to meditation, but to the repetition of the mantram and all the other disciplines which apply the power of meditation to daily living.

If, after your meditation, you go off to dwell on yourself and try to avoid people or challenges around you, your consciousness may have been elevated a little in your morning meditation, but it will take the shape of loneliness and separateness during the rest of the day. This is the time to repeat the mantram and be with people, to keep your senses and mind from wandering, to work harmoniously with others and give your complete concentration to the job at hand. In all these ways you are keeping consciousness from reassuming its old, painfully rigid forms.

Once I went for a swim at the home of a friend who had an Olympic-sized pool. Floating around in this pool was some kind of gadget that I couldn't quite figure out, so I asked my host, "What is that for?"



BMCN offices at Ramagiri Ashram

He said, “That’s a pool sweep. It keeps on chugging around, removing impurities from the pool wherever it finds them.”

I couldn’t help teasing him: “You’re very careful about keeping this pool clean and pure, but wouldn’t you like to purify the pool inside, too?”

He looked blank. I used his language: “*Rama* is an effective pool sweep for the mind; it can float about and remove impurities wherever it finds them, twenty-four hours a day.”

So whenever you have a tendency to think about yourself – how much you can get, how much you can grab, or how unfairly life is treating you – don’t talk about it, don’t analyze it; go for a walk repeating the mantram. This is one of the easiest methods of dealing with thinking about yourself. You will gradually find that the mantram will slowly reduce the level of self-will. After many years, the mantram combined with meditation will bring the mind to a stillness. When the mind is still, there is no self-will. When there is no self-will, the mind is still.

### Is it all right to repeat my mantram for other people? Does it help them?

When you get established in your mantram, according to our saints, you can even allocate your japam to a person in need. It’s a wonderful gift usually possessed by saints, but all of us can aim at that. When somebody close to you is in need, you can say to yourself, “I’m repeating this mantram for that person’s benefit.” It is a kind of repetition of the mantram by proxy. The person is not able to do it, so you are doing it for them. In that way you can allocate your repetition of the mantram to that person, not only when you are with that person but at other times also.

## I have a close friend who is dying. Can I use my mantram to help her?

People who are seriously ill, perhaps in their last days, can benefit from the mantram greatly. If they cannot repeat it, hold their hand and keep repeating your mantram silently for them. Some part of your awareness will reach them. You will see for yourself how comforted they will become because of the depth from which you are able to repeat the holy name.

There is no need to talk at such times. Just being together and repeating the mantram, especially if the person is responsive to us, can help a great deal to calm the turbulence that overtakes the mind at the onset of death. What occupies our consciousness at the moment of death is of the utmost importance. That is why in India some great scripture like the Bhagavad Gita is usually read aloud while a person is dying, so that something of its message will be with that person in his final moments.

Very much the same thing is done in other great religions. Even more effective in this critical transition is for the dying person to repeat the mantram over and over in the mind. The mantram is always a powerful ally, and if we can cling to it at the time of death, we will already have focused a good deal of our consciousness on the Lord.

I have complete confidence that the Lord will always come to my rescue when I call on him from the depths of my heart. That is why I recommend the mantram with such certitude, because I know without doubt it can be relied upon in times of distress. This is the advice many great mystics have given us: to call upon the Lord, by whatever name we use, to help us overcome our enemy, death.

## What can we do now to prepare for the time when we are dying?

If we begin now to repeat the mantram, and repeat it whenever we get an opportunity, it will be there when we need it even in the turmoil of the body's final hours. According to Swami Ramdas, when you go on repeating the mantram that your teacher has given you, you'll feel the presence of the teacher always with you. That's why the mantram is said to be the bond between the teacher and the student. When you become established in your mantram, the mantram is your real guru, because the mantram is God.

Even though our repetition may seem mechanical to begin with, if we practice meditation earnestly and support our meditation with a program of spiritual living, the mantram will enable us to go deeper and deeper into our consciousness. Practice is the important thing, and sustained enthusiasm.

Life is so short, and this discovery so urgent and so arduous, that none of us can afford to waste a day in not doing our best to move closer to the goal. Please take advantage of every opportunity to repeat the mantram, to train your senses, to keep on transforming your passions.

And please be regular about your meditation. Don't lose a single day; don't waste a moment doing selfish things. All this time can be utilized for discovering the Self and going beyond death here on this earth. 🌸

## Community Story

### The mantram for my husband and myself

When my late husband, a fellow meditator, contracted severe pneumonia, we feared for his life. He survived, but as a long-term sufferer of lung disease, the scarring left him severely disabled from most activities he loved. After three weeks in the hospital, he made the decision to come home on hospice and to shed his body as soon as he could manage to do so.

He was so pleased with his decision and could not wait to “go home” and meet Easwaran. While he was delighted, I was plunged into thinking about my impending loss and grief. My dilemma was how to support him and still be OK myself.

My mantram came to my rescue as I turned inward for courage, strength, and love to share with him and me. The mantram also helped me detach from my desires, self-pity, and other negative emotions regarding my future without him. I just kept putting my trust in the Lord, using the mantram for my husband and for myself.

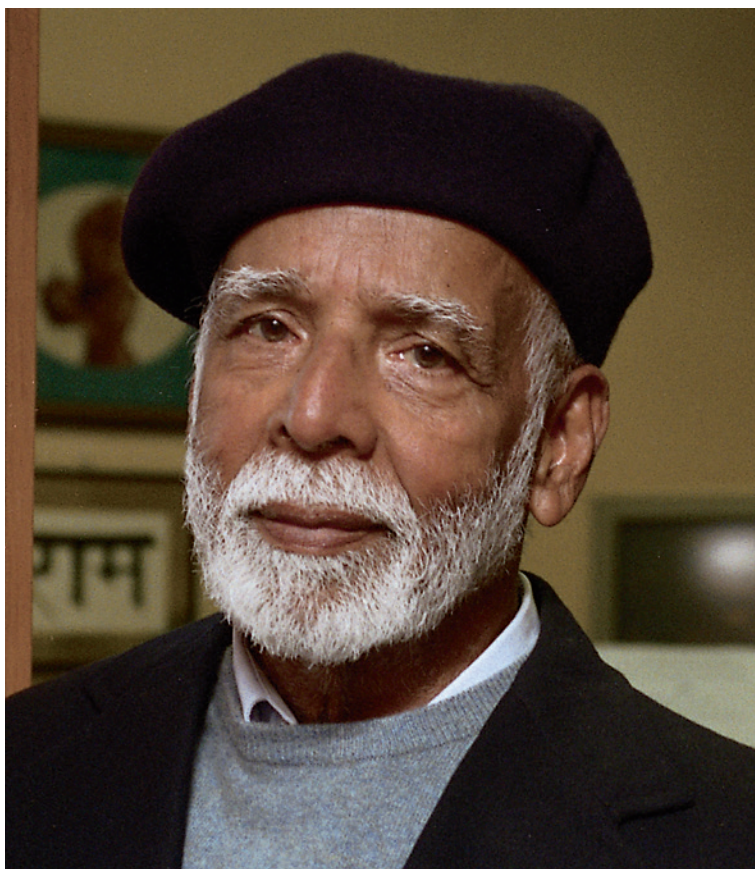
I felt that we were living out his last days with our mantrams going 24/7. My husband continued to recite his mantram until a few hours before he shed his body, three days after his decision. He was surrounded by people who loved him, and I kept reciting the mantram for him.

The mantram still gives me peace each and every day. *Rama Rama Rama.*

– A passage meditator



Memorial Rock at Ramagiri Ashram



Eknath Easwaran, 1990s

# The Mantram at the Time of Death

Eknath Easwaran, from *The Mantram Handbook*

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Throughout our village, my grandmother was looked up to as a source of great strength; so when death was approaching, people used to send for her to sit beside them and comfort them in their last hours. Sometimes she would insist that I accompany her, even when I was still a child. As I sat by the side of the dying while my grandmother held their hand, the sorrow and the agony I witnessed used to torture me. In those days, I didn't understand why she took me to these terrible scenes, but their impact on my consciousness was profound. The question began to haunt me, "Is this going to happen to me too? Is there no way I can go beyond death?"

Every morning my grandmother used to go to our ancestral temple for worship. On her return, she would stick behind my ear a flower offered to the Lord in worship and bless me with these simple words: "May you be like Markandeya!" Markandeya was a boy in the Hindu scriptures whose heart was filled even from childhood with love for God. When death came to claim him in his sixteenth year, he sat down in deep meditation on God, one of whose names in Sanskrit is *Mrityunjaya*, the Conqueror of Death. Realizing in the depths of his consciousness his unity with the Lord, Markandeya passed beyond the sway of death.

This is a story familiar to every Hindu boy, so when I heard my grandmother tell me every morning "May you be

like Markandeya,” it sank very deep into me. By this constant reminder and by taking me to those scenes of grief beside the dying, she made me aware of death and gave me the intense desire to go beyond it. More than that, she showed me that death could be transcended in this very life.

## The real significance of death

Everyone will agree that some day the body must grow old, decay, and drop away, but not many will face the fact that it will happen to them. The proof is that if a person really believes he will die, he will do something about it. If I may say so, very few understand the real significance of death. Those who realize that the purpose of death is to go beyond death can use death itself to do this. When we know fully that we are not this changing body but the changeless Self who dwells in the body, we conquer death here and now.

We hear a great deal about death these days; everywhere we look there are books and seminars on dying. This is a change for the better, because until recently death has been a forbidden topic in our society. When we draw a curtain around death, hiding it away out of sight in hospitals and rest homes, our lives can become shallow.

But talking about death is only a first step. These books and seminars are intended to help us to accept death, but they do not show us how to go beyond it. Talking about death can be a real service if it enables people to shed the body more peacefully or more courageously, but the mantram can do this for us far more effectively than any intellectual discussion.

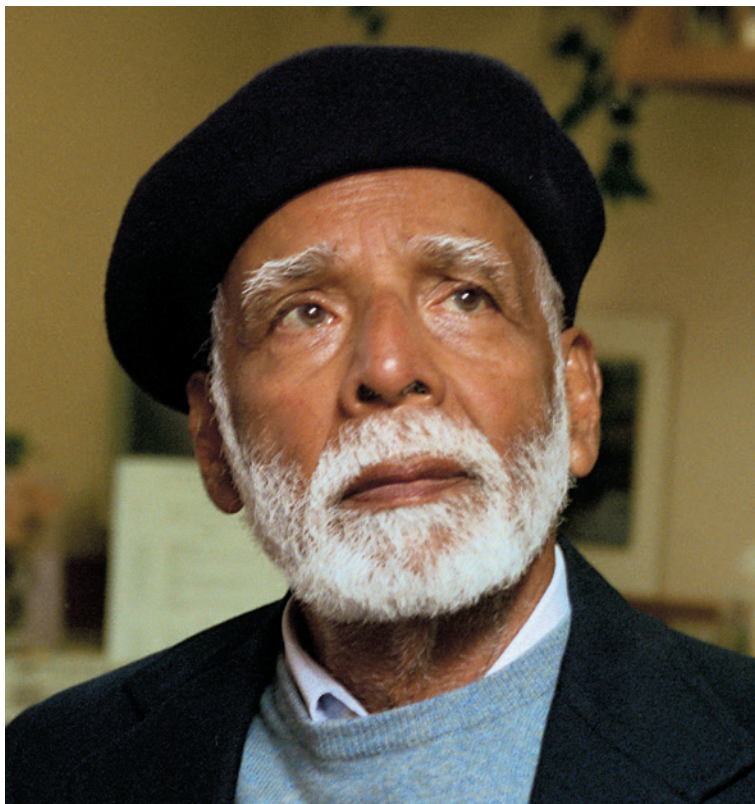
## Be prepared at all times

In India, as in other traditions, it is the custom to sing the mantram beside a dying person. This helps to console the family, as well as the person who is about to die. But it is even more effective for the person who is dying to repeat the mantram silently, in the mind. The mantram can replace fear and confusion with the calm atmosphere so important at this great transition.

All the mystics tell us to live each moment as if it were our last, and the man or woman who repeats the mantram regularly and with real devotion is actually preparing for this. The person who has become established in the mantram, who has made the mantram an integral part of his or her consciousness, is prepared for death at all times. Mahatma Gandhi, explaining this state, said once that it would be easier for his life to stop than for his mantram *Rama* to cease reverberating in his consciousness. And this is indeed how it came to pass: when his body was pierced by the assassin's bullets, Gandhi blessed his attacker with folded hands and fell with *Rama* on his lips and in his heart.

## Years of discipline

If we are able to repeat the mantram at the moment of death, the great mystics tell us, we merge into God just as a bursting bubble becomes one with the sea. This is not just a Hindu idea; we find it in all the other great religions too. I remember a friend once confiding in me how comforting he found it as a child when one of his teachers, a very loving nun, told him that he would go straight to heaven if he were saying the Hail Mary



Eknath Easwaran, 1990s

at the moment he died. We tend to forget as adults that children can often be deeply troubled by questions about death, and this boy found himself more responsive than ever to the beautiful Hail Mary because it eased his fears and gave him some sense of control over his destiny.

This idea that the mantram can be our salvation at the moment of death is not as simplistic as it may seem at first. It's not as if we can lead as selfish and sensate a life as we please

until the very last second and then say the holy name and attain salvation. It is not possible to say the mantram with all our heart at the moment of death unless we have been repeating it for a long time before. An English disciple once asked his spiritual teacher, Sri Ramana Maharshi, why he couldn't just throw himself under a train repeating the mantram and attain salvation without all those years of discipline. Sri Ramana Maharshi's penetrating answer was that his last thought would not be the mantram; it would be the "I" thought.

## The process of death

The process of death as described by the great mystics may throw some light on why this is so. Dying, they tell us, is a more complicated process than we ordinarily think. It is not sudden; it is a gradual withdrawal of consciousness from the body into the Self. First, consciousness is withdrawn from the senses to the mind. The senses shut down, and outer awareness of the body and of our surroundings is gone. We still have ears, but we hear nothing because consciousness has been withdrawn; we still have eyes, but there is nothing outside that we see. Yet even though we can no longer see or hear, there is still consciousness in the mind, with all its desires and regrets, all its conflicts and hopes and fears. As long as we have these selfish desires, conflicts, and reservations, they will remain in the mind at a deep level, where all desires and conflicts merge in the "I" thought at the time of death.

This process is strikingly parallel to what happens in deep meditation. When we are concentrating deeply, we will not hear the planes in the sky or the cars on the road, because we

have withdrawn consciousness from the senses. The crucial difference is that in meditation this is a voluntary withdrawal, whereas in death it is involuntary. In meditation, however, we go even further: we deliberately seek to withdraw consciousness not only from the senses, but from the mind as well. This is what stilling the mind means.

## The mantram must have sunk very, very deep

To withdraw consciousness from the senses into the mind is not too hard, but it is very difficult to withdraw consciousness at will from the mind into the Self, into the core of purity and perfection which is at the very center of our being. Yet as long as the mind has not been stilled through the practice of meditation and the repetition of the mantram, consciousness will remain in the mind at the moment of death. We will still be identified with the ego, and our last thought will be *I, I, I*.

To repeat the mantram at this stage is impossible if we have only been saying it on the surface level of consciousness, for there is no surface level any longer. To be able to repeat the mantram at the actual moment of death, the mantram must have sunk very, very deep into the mind – so deep that instead of our last thought being *I, I, I*, the last thought will be of God, whose symbol is the mantram.

## Cultivate detachment

This has tremendous practical significance. If we have been living for ourselves, our last thought will be of ourselves, and there will be no way to avoid the suffering of ego-identification when the body is wrenched away. Abruptly, everything that

we hold dear will be snatched away from us: our possessions, our cherished plans for the future, our loved ones, and even our body and the miscellaneous collection of likes and dislikes, habits and opinions that we are pleased to call our personality.

Unless we have worked long and hard to cultivate detachment from all this – in other words, unless we have been trying to lead the spiritual life – the pain of this separation will be terrible. But if we have been repeating the mantram with sincerity and enthusiasm until it has become an integral part of our consciousness, even in life we can always be completely mindful of the deathless, changeless reality we call God. Then, when the body is shed, our individual consciousness will merge in the Lord, who is our real and deepest Self.

In other words, even in life, the person who has realized the indivisible unity of life has already died to all that was separate in him, all that was selfish in her, to come to life in the Lord. This is why Saint Francis says, “It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.” This death of the ego is the purpose of all the disciplines of the spiritual life.

Even in little things, whenever we are very patient or cheerfully do something we dislike, a little of our selfishness and self-will has died. Little by little we surrender everything – not under duress, but entirely by free choice, until we no longer need to hang on to anything outside us for support. Then, once we are established in this state of unity, we are established in it forever. This is what Jesus means when he offers us life everlasting: our constant awareness of the unity of life, our constant awareness of God, is not interrupted even when the physical body dies.



Eknath Easwaran, 1990s

## Don't hold on

My grandmother, who was not intellectually oriented, had a rather different but very vivid way of getting this point across. I remember once asking her why death should involve so much suffering. She didn't answer directly; she just told me to go sit in a big wooden chair there in our ancestral home. "You hold on to this chair as hard as you can," she said. "I'm going to try to pull you out." I held on to the chair with all my might, and she began to pull. She was a strong woman, and when she started to pull I thought my arms were going to come off, but I held on for all I was worth. Finally, despite all my resistance, she wrenched me out of the chair. "That hurt, Granny," I said. "Let's try it again," she replied, "but this time don't hold on." I didn't, and

there was no struggle, no pain; she raised me effortlessly and gracefully into her arms.

It was a very eloquent answer. Death is going to take our body anyway, no matter what we do, and the more we try to hang on to the body with all its desires and fears, the more we are going to suffer when death wrenches these things away. On the other hand, when we overcome identification with the body and ego through meditation and the repetition of the mantram, we know from direct spiritual experience that the body is not us, but only a jacket which we have been wearing all these years. Then, when the jacket has become worn and can no longer serve us, we do not cry because it has gone the way of all jackets; we simply take it off, hang it up carefully, and go home.

## Our last thought

Perhaps it would not be out of place here to mention reincarnation, as it is interpreted in Eastern mysticism. The Hindu and Buddhist scriptures tell us that when consciousness is consolidated at the moment of death, our last thought will encompass our entire life. At that instant, all the desires of our lifetime are consolidated in one deep, driving desire, which determines our destiny. It is this desire which impels us to take a body again, so that our desires may be satisfied.

According to this presentation, we are reborn into a context that is ideally suited for us to work on our weak points. If our last thoughts are of ourselves, we will be reborn into a family and environment just right for showing us that by living for ourselves we can never find fulfillment. But if we have learned to live not for ourselves but for others, then when we die we no

longer have any personal desires to fulfill, and we merge quietly and peacefully into God. We have already been united with him in our lifetime, and when it falls away, the body no more disturbs this unity than a falling leaf disturbs the tree.

## Like an immense school

The mystics of Hinduism and Buddhism have a very expressive way of presenting this. They tell us that this world is like an immense school, where we have all been enrolled in order to learn that all life is one. This is the supreme goal of life, and our only reason for being here on earth is to discover this unity for ourselves. When we do this, the Lord says, “Very good; you’ve graduated. Now you don’t have to go to school any more.” But if at the end of our life we still have not made this discovery, the Lord tells us very compassionately, “I think you’d better come back next semester and work a little harder.”

I have heard that W. C. Fields wanted his epitaph to read, “On the whole, I’d rather be in Philadelphia.” If that was his last wish, he may well be there now, disguised as someone else. In other words, whatever context we find ourselves in in this life, this is a choice which we have made ourselves.

And the very positive aspect of this concept of reincarnation is that it places the responsibility for our spiritual evolution squarely on our own shoulders. We cannot complain that our society has molded us, that our parents have influenced us, and then sit back and say, “There is nothing I can do to change myself.” There is everything that we can do. We got ourselves into the situation we are in, and we can get ourselves out once we begin to make the right choices in life.

## Peace and courage in our hearts

In this way of looking at things, none of us is lost. We are all working towards the discovery of the unity of life, however long it may take. Our present life is a fresh opportunity to move closer to the supreme goal, and the choice is entirely ours whether or not we make the best use of this opportunity. This is a very practical, positive conclusion, and in fact reincarnation does such a good job of explaining the human condition that it is very difficult to question it, even intellectually.

But I always emphasize that when it comes to making wise choices in life, it makes not the slightest difference whether we believe in reincarnation or not. No matter how many lives we believe in, death poses the same challenge to us all. It is possible to believe in a thousand lifetimes and still lead a selfish life, and it is possible to believe in only one lifetime and still learn to become established in the mantram and realize for ourselves the supreme goal of life.

Whether or not we believe in reincarnation, whether or not we even believe that life has a goal, the mantram can be of enormous value at the hour of death. Any remembrance of the holy name is a solace that can help us to undergo the last great change called death with peace and courage in our hearts. 🌸

# Setu Prayer

*Eknath Easwaran*

Dear Lord, please fill my heart  
with love and devotion for you  
and burn out all seeds of selfish desire  
and sense craving in my mind.

Grant that I may be carried by you  
from this life to the next without suffering  
and be born in a holy family  
with my heart overflowing  
with love and devotion for you  
from earliest childhood onwards.

*Listen to Christine Easwaran reading Easwaran's Setu Prayer  
at: <https://www.bmcm.org/inspiration/passages/setu-prayer/>.*



Christine Easwaran (1921–2022), Easwaran's wife and BMCM Life Trustee.

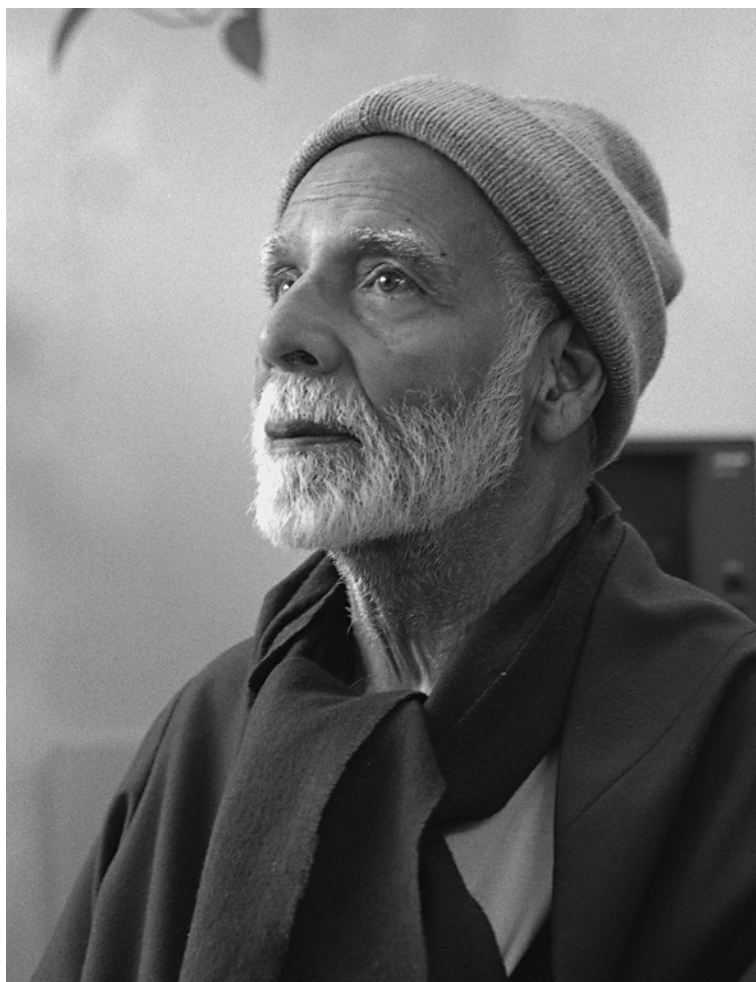
# The Last Stages of Sadhana

Ekknath Easwaran, from *Essence of the Upanishads*

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In the last stages of sadhana, we are trying to keep consciousness in a continuous, unbroken channel. The morning and evening periods of meditation set the standard; then we try to extend these periods of one-pointed attention through the rest of the day. While we are working at something, we give the job our complete attention. And the minute the job is over, we start the mantram. Attention must become one smooth-flowing stream from morning to night and through the night until morning again. In a sense, it is like taking two ends of consciousness and trying to bring them together into a closed circle, so that there is no leakage of *prana* [vitality] at all.

At the beginning of sadhana, this may not seem like much of an achievement. We have hold of about ten degrees of the circle, so we have no idea of what it means to close the other three hundred fifty degrees. But as the ends of the circle get closer, it is like trying to close floodgates against a powerful river. The smaller the opening across a river, the faster the water flows through. It is the same in consciousness. All the thoughts that could not get our attention while we were meditating or repeating the mantram, all twenty-four hours' worth of them, are just waiting to rush in if we give them an opening.



Eknath Easwaran, 1990s

## The fight is on

Last to be closed are the hours of nighttime. As you begin to wake up inside, it is only natural to find yourself wakeful for hours while you lie in bed at night. These are terribly critical times, for there is very little to do to keep the mind engaged. To keep attention from wandering, all you have to hang on to is the mantram. And the fight is on.

At this stage, concentration is really deep. For five, ten, fifteen minutes you stand inside a kind of magic circle: your mind is absorbed in the mantram, so no other thought can come in. But then you become aware of all kinds of other thoughts outside, skulking around trying to tempt you out. As long as you cling to the mantram, all that these fierce distractions can do is dance around and try to tempt you out. Anyone can get drawn outside by all this hullabaloo; and once you get outside, your *samskaras* [conditioning] will beat you up. They cannot finish you off, but they will pummel all the prana out of you, rob you of your security, and run away, leaving you with a sinking heart.

But on the other hand, there is no need to feel panicky when seductive distractions come; they are an essential part of the drama. If there were no villain, the play could not be acted. All you can do is cling to the mantram and not let your mind even flicker to these thoughts. Grit your teeth and let them caper all they like. Eventually, if you do not give them an audience, they will get tired and go away. Even in sleep this struggle goes on. Then it is like shadow-boxing in a world of shadows. You are deep in the unconscious, which is terra

incognita for the will. Yet you have to learn to wake up even in the unconscious; the whole of the mind must be flooded with light. This usually happens in stages. When you are sunk in sleep, part of you is awake with a little will, and that part tries to repeat the mantram. Sometimes you cannot even remember it. There is something you are supposed to be doing, but you cannot think what it is; or if you remember the *Ra-*, you cannot remember the *-ma*.

## Delicious agony

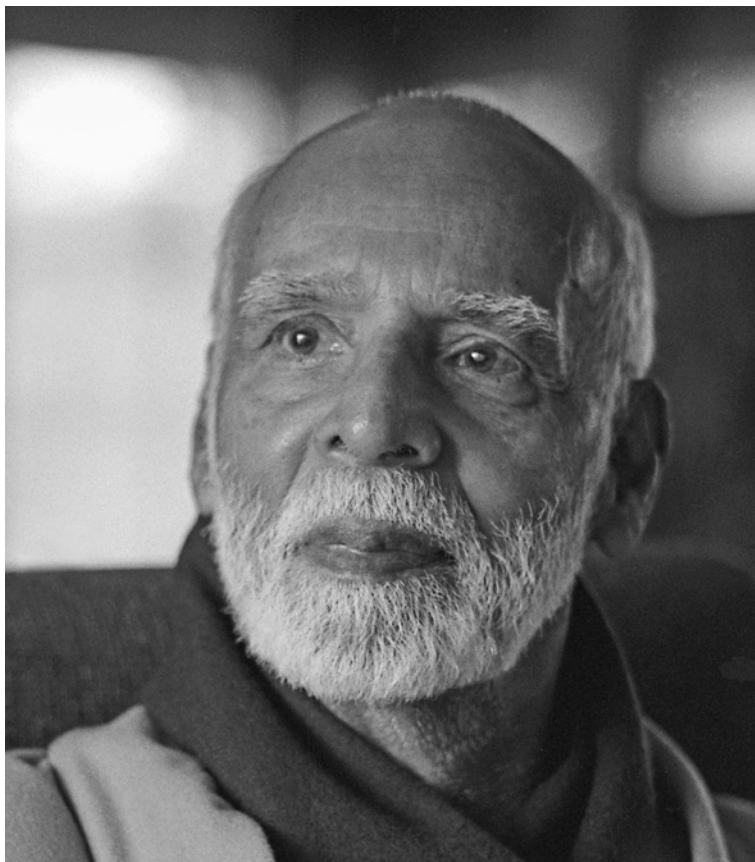
If all this seems agonizing, it is the most delicious agony in sadhana. Words cannot describe these experiences. They are so far beyond the realm of everyday thought and sensation that in both East and West, aspirants fall back here on poetry and the language of a lover to his or her Beloved. In these last stages, the Sufis say, all veils but one have fallen from the object of our desire. We can make out the eyes of the Beloved, the hair, the smile, but nothing clearly, and all other desires are consumed in the overwhelming longing to tear that last veil aside.

Every day there is this delightful pain of separation, this impatient patience. You expect the veil to fall that very evening, yet you are prepared to wait another day more. Mystics everywhere speak this way, and scholars just throw up their hands and leave. They want rational talk and all they get is contradiction. It is not that mystics are inadequate when it comes to logic; the inadequacy is in language. Give them a language that embraces opposites, that transcends the senses; then they will express all this. Otherwise words have to fail.

## The curtain rises

All sorts of signs come now that the end of your years of searching is very near. It is like waiting for the curtain to go up on a play for which you have been waiting a hundred years. You are seated in the front row, the theater is full; now the lights are dimmed and everyone falls still in breathless anticipation. Behind the curtain you can see tantalizing glimpses: props being adjusted, the last-minute movements of stagehands, a ripple of the heavy draperies as someone brushes by. Every morning in meditation, every evening as you fall asleep, it is as if the whole universe is waiting for the play to begin at last.

And finally, just when you do not expect it, the curtain rises and you are lifted out of time into the unitive state, beyond change, beyond death. 🌸



Eknath Easwaran, 1990s

## Even with Your Last Breath

*Meera*

Even with your last breath  
Repeat the name of the Lord,  
Whose abode stands high like a date palm,  
Loaded with luscious fruits.

Do not depend on your own  
Skill and strength to reach the top.

Let the Holy Name be your ladder and your rope.  
Thus supported you can neither  
Fall nor fail to reach the top.

Make this house of flesh and blood  
A temple of the Lord.  
This is Meera's secret to share with you.

## Think on His Name

*Tukaram*

Whilst thou art busy at work,

Think on His name:

Then shall evil be vanquished,

And grief shall be turned into peace:

To this at the end thou must come,

When thy last breath faileth,

And home, children, wealth, are forgotten:

For long thou canst put Him off,

Thou canst live thy life as thou wilt,

But at last thy barque shall be sucked

to the whirlpool:

Break the snares from thee now,

Do now what thou some day must do:

At the end thou hast one defense,

One only,

Trust in His name.

By this alone thou canst find salvation,

But by this alone:

Then trust in Him now.

# The Power of the Holy Name

*Meera*

If you want to know the power  
Of the holy name of Rama,  
Spend your time with lovers of God.

To repeat the name constantly  
May be hard and bitter at first,  
But don't stop until it becomes sweet  
Like the luscious mango to the taste.

When the time comes for the body  
To be shed, the name of Rama  
Will take you safely through death's door.  
So keep singing *Rama, Rama*  
In your mind, and the Lord of Love  
Will take you safely from this shore  
Of death to immortality.

# How Great Is His Name!

*Swami Ramdas*

If you would have peace,  
Seek it in His name.  
If you want to see God,  
Chant His holy name.  
If you wish for freedom and joy,  
Find it in His name.  
If you aspire for life eternal,  
On your tongue have His name.  
Name is your path,  
Name is your goal;  
Name is the means,  
Name is the end.  
Name is the Truth,  
Name is God.

## Easwaran's Eight-Point Program of Passage Meditation

1. **Meditation on a Passage** Silent repetition in the mind of memorized inspirational passages from the world's great religions. Practiced for half an hour each morning.
2. **Repetition of a Mantram** Silent repetition in the mind of a holy name or a hallowed phrase from one of the world's great religions. Practiced whenever possible, day or night.
3. **Slowing Down** Setting priorities and reducing the stress and friction caused by hurry.
4. **One-Pointed Attention** Giving full concentration to the matter at hand.
5. **Training the Senses** Overcoming conditioned habits and learning to enjoy what is beneficial.
6. **Putting Others First** Gaining freedom from selfishness and separateness; finding joy in helping others.
7. **Spiritual Fellowship** Spending time regularly with others who are practicing passage meditation for mutual inspiration and support.
8. **Spiritual Reading** Drawing inspiration from writings by and about the world's great spiritual figures and from the scriptures of all religions.

## About Eknath Easwaran

Eknath Easwaran (1910–1999) is the originator of passage meditation and the author of more than 30 books on spiritual living.

Easwaran was a professor of English literature at a leading Indian university when he came to the United States in 1959 on the Fulbright exchange program. A gifted teacher, he moved from education for degrees to education for living, and gave talks on meditation and spiritual living for 40 years.

In 1961 he founded the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, a nonprofit organization that publishes his books and video and audio recordings of his talks, and offers retreats and other programs.

Easwaran lived what he taught, giving him lasting appeal as a spiritual teacher and author of deep insight and warmth.



## Further Resources for Learning to Meditate and Deepening Your Practice

From the BMCM Programs team

### Introductory Webinars

A chance to try out passage meditation.

[www.bmcm.org/programs/introductory-webinar/](http://www.bmcm.org/programs/introductory-webinar/)

### Introductory Weekend Retreats

Everything you need to get your passage meditation practice started.

[www.bmcm.org/programs/introductory-weekend-online/](http://www.bmcm.org/programs/introductory-weekend-online/)

### *Passage Meditation – A Complete Spiritual Practice*

Easwaran's classic manual, available in print and as an ebook and audiobook.



An online retreat

**BMCM Satsang Live** Our twice-weekly online satsang, open to everyone. Find more at [www.bmcm.org/community/bmcm-satsang-live/](http://www.bmcm.org/community/bmcm-satsang-live/).

**BMCM eSatsang** Our weekly write-in study of Easwaran's books and journals for dedicated passage meditators. See [www.bmcm.org/community/esatsang](http://www.bmcm.org/community/esatsang).

## 2026 Retreats, Webinars, and Workshops

Our online retreats and programs have become the training ground for those of us who yearn to join Easwaran in making the spiritual renaissance a reality. In the retreats, you will experience turning to your practice, to Easwaran and his teachings, and to a strong spiritual schedule. The retreats combine contemplative activities with practicum times in which you apply your practice directly to your own unique home environment.

### Introductory Online Weekend Retreat:

November 13–15

### Returnee Online Workshop:

October 3

### Returnee Weekend Online Retreat:

November 6–8

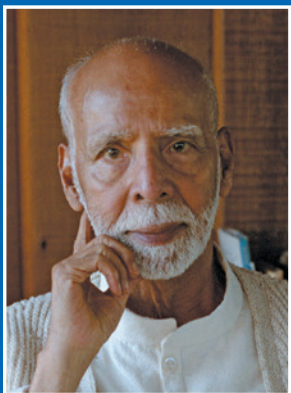
### Setu Online Retreat:

September 25–29

### Weeklong Online Retreat:

October 16–20

For more information about upcoming events, including fees and financial aid, visit our website at [www.bmcm.org/programs](http://www.bmcm.org/programs). We'd love to have you join us!



Whenever a negative emotion starts to rise – a wisp of anxiety or fear, a rush of anger – if you can immediately start repeating your mantram in your mind, that gives the mind something to hold on to. If you can continue to hold on to the mantram at such times, the energy in that emotion is transformed, very much the way the energy of a rushing river is transformed into electricity. That is the secret of the mantram's power.

– Eknath Easwaran

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