

On Laziness and Subconscious Drives

You say that you still enjoy your job and work hard at it. The ‘laziness’ only shows up at home. Quite so. The job satisfies your wish to have part of your life as an independent working woman. As against this, the kitchen represents the job of the housewife, the stay-at-home little woman – an image you dislike?

No, I’m not being nasty. I am suggesting that, like so many people, you are allowing your life to be run by images: the independent woman image, the devoted wife image, the (negative) housewife image.

Gopalda [Sri Krishna Prem] and I observed that, when making such suggestions to a woman, she would blandly tell us we had missed the point, unless one hit the point fair and square, when she would blandly say, ‘Of course. I knew it all the time.’ A man, on the other hand, would say we had missed the point, but volunteer what the point was which we had missed. Particularly when guessing by letter, the point is hard to hit. So I must rely on your good will and your ability to look even harder at yourself than I may seem to.

So I don’t think you are suffering so much from laziness as such, as you are from a withdrawal of interest from a particular role. I admit that laziness is a problem. And I find that it is often related to the (somewhat) infantile desire not to be burdened with the responsibilities of being a mature person. In fact, I have often thought that the ‘successful’ person in worldly terms has succeeded in reproducing the seemingly delightful state of the infant who lies helplessly while the household serves him – everything runs round him.

It seems to me that the answer to both the image problem and the laziness problem may lie in the same place. One's aim or motivation must not be to live in a state of self-satisfied euphoria as the result of realizing a dream of being successful, independent, admired, efficient, or anything else. What has to be done has to be done either for its own sake, for the sake of inner growth, or just for Thakur [the Higher Power]. One of the differences one finds, almost necessarily, in trying to follow the latter line is that one has to stop taking 'spontaneity' as one's guide. What seems to be bothering you over the kitchen work is that you no longer feel a 'spontaneous' interest in it, and because that is absent you give way to 'laziness'. You must just do it – for the person you love, or for Thakur (it's the same thing). The so-called spontaneity really comes from an unconscious drive. Now you have to provide the drive consciously. What you must not do is to do it grudgingly.