

## 26. The journey of life depends on inborn desires

People are immersed in many activities and engaged in various undertakings. This is a well-known fact. They are so many in number that sometimes one may feel that the span of twenty-four hours is too short for daily activity. Drinking, eating, reading, walking, sitting, and also hating, dreaming, boasting, praising, weeping, laughing, moping, hoping—all types of activities go on without end. They fill up the span of life. These activities are all intimately attached to the mind. This makes life a mere collection of inborn desires (*samskaras*), which make an impact on character and personality.

There are two types of activities, good and bad. The effect of both on the life of a person has to be considered. The acts of a child during that tender age fade away like the writing of that child on slate. When the events of one's own childhood are thus consigned to oblivion, how can the events of the past life be retained in memory?

Leaving this point aside, it would be wrong to infer that only remembered events have shaped character. The acts and activities that have transpired and that have been thrust back into forgetfulness by subsequent events have left a trace of their consequences in the mind. The residue is there. When you try to bring back to memory at bedtime the events of the day, not everything that happened, from the insignificant to the significant, will answer the summons. Those that are meaningful, that are deeply embedded inside—only these can be recalled.

When such is the case with the happenings of a single day, when we forget all events that are not associated with joy or pain, what shall be said of the events of last week or month or years? Most events turn hazy, recede, and disappear. Only the chief events are registered clearly and remain; these few are the inborn desires (*samskaras*).

Performing innumerable deeds, gathering vast experience and knowledge, learning a wide variety of lessons from a wide variety of activities, one retains as capital only a mere four or five of them, strong, deep-rooted, vital.