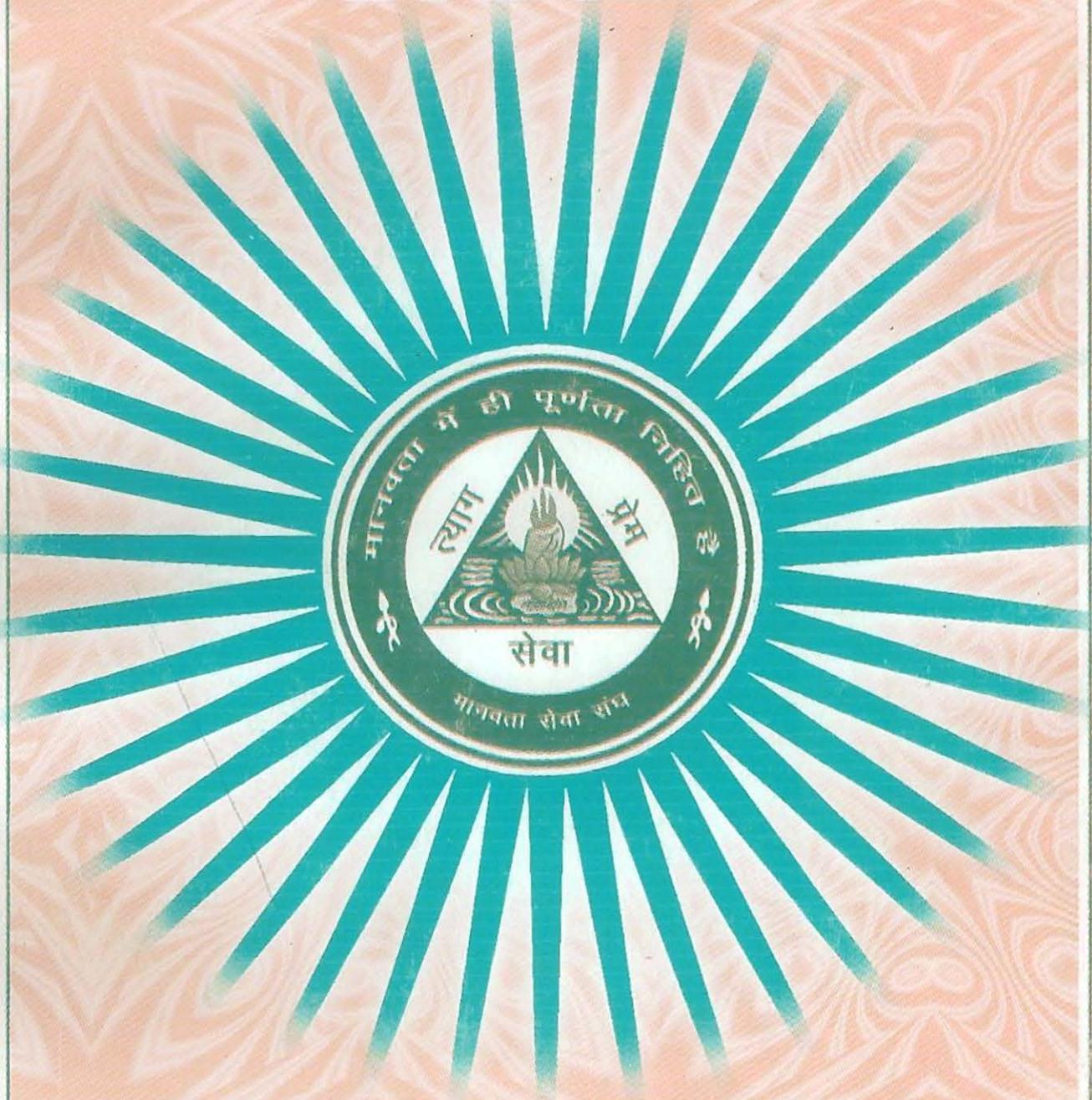


# SADHANA-SPOTLIGHTS BY A SAINT



**MANAV SEVA SANGH  
VRINDAVAN**

**SADHANA – SPOTLIGHTS  
BY A SAINT**

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## PREFACE

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A few years ago, it was my privilege to offer to the English reading public a free rendering in English of selections from some of the illuminating discourses and observations of a saint. (He does not like his name to be displayed in publications; though he freely moves about in the country, on his spiritual mission, and is well known among spiritual seekers). The compilation was published in a book entitled "A Saint's call to Mankind", with a Foreword by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. It was chiefly based on the Hindi publications of his teachings that had appeared by that time, *viz. Sant Samagam, Manav Ki Mang and Jiwan Darshan*; and covered the Saint's utterances on various topics of spiritual interest. The book was very well received by the readers, both in India and abroad.

A number of other publications have since been brought out by *Manav Seva Sangh* (an association of *sadhakas* founded by the said saint). Some of these *viz., Sadhana Tattawa, Chitta Shuddhi, Satsang Aur Sadhana* and *Sadhana Nidhi* contain the saint's discourses relating pointedly to certain fundamental elements of

*sadhana*, clearing the ground and enlightening the path of the aspirant, who is often confused and frustrated by following certain traditional routine without a clear vision of his goal and a proper insight into his own life and propensities.

In this small book, an attempt has been made to summarize and bring together some of the essential thoughts given in the said treatises on this all-important subject of *sadhana* by this profound thinker. The reader is requested to overlook a certain amount of repetition or overlapping which it has been difficult to avoid on account of the universality of the saint's central thought running through diverse ways and contexts. Such repetition may, in fact, help the reader to catch the saint's thought more clearly.

I solicit the reader's indulgence for the shortcomings in my rendering which is like bathing on the shores of the Ganges with the help of a tumbler. Nevertheless it is hoped that the profound and thought-stirring lights thrown on the essence of *sadhana* by the saint will be found of much help by all earnest *sadhakas*. Some of them may find this small hand-book on *sadhana* an useful companion on their path; and some others who can read Hindi may follow up by reading the original works.



There is a classic story. *A king invited the best artists to paint frescoes in his palace. Two painters*

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*were working in the same hall on opposite walls, with a curtain between them, so that neither of them could see what the other was doing. One of them created a marvellous picture which evoked the admiration of every on-looker. The other artist had not painted anything at all. He had spent all his time polishing the wall—had polished it so perfectly that when the curtain was removed, the picture of the other painter was reflected in a way that made it appear even more beautiful than the original.*

Even so, a mind wholly purified—the ego polished off, so to say—mirrors *Yoga, Gnana and Love*.

It is this lesson that the Swami would appear to want to drive into our minds and hearts by constantly dinning into our ears the *sadhaka's* first and last responsibility of discarding once for all, all that is non-true and non-essential and of hunting out every trace of impurity from one's mind. True *sadhana* blazes up spontaneously in a purified mind. Unless the mind is purified, more accumulation of knowledge of the scriptures is but a burden; worship, a soulless routine or an escape; religion only a smoke, not fire; even service, an inflation of the ego !

JAIPUR

MADAN MOHAN VARMA

July 1, 1967

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## Chapter I

# THE BASES OF SADHANA

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Every human being has a natural, inherent quest for peace, freedom and love. Natural, inherent want is only for what is obtainable.

On account of ignorance man seeks peace, freedom and love in external things (which include one's body), individuals and circumstances. He learns from actual experience, in the light of *viveka* (true intelligence), that these are ephemeral in their very nature. They may be of use as tools of *sadhana* (spiritual practice) but they do not constitute LIFE, in which are to be found peace, freedom and love.

When man learns this lesson from experience, through the light of *viveka*, there awakens in him a quest or longing for Life Eternal ; on the awakening of which he starts his pilgrimage on the path. Such a one—awake to his goal and not asleep in the lap of *Prakriti* (Nature)—is called a *sadhaka*, though the human body is given for *sadhana*, and in that broader sense man, *ipso facto*, is a *sadhaka*.

The most important thing for such awakened, purposeful *sadhaka* is to detach himself from the infatuation of the ephemeral, *i.e.* to take a firm decision to renounce all that is non-true. By such firm resolve all clingings resulting from age-long habits would drop away like dry clay; and the quest of the *sadhaka* would be set ablaze. Such pure quest and longing always find their fulfilment in the Eternal.

Even after a firm resolve to renounce the non-true, however, for some time the *sanskaras* (impressions) of the past may linger, and confront the *sadhaka* with temptation or fear through memory. The *sadhaka* should look upon these as past *sanskaras* emerging from the subconscious recesses of the mind only to clear out. If he simply non-cooperates with them, they would be starved out. They are not fresh *karmas* calling for counteraction, but mere shadows of the past—a sort of a diary of what has passed off.

A *sadhaka*, thus, is a man who has learnt from his experience, in the light of *viveka*, that to look out for Life in external things, the body, individuals, outer circumstances etc. is a will-o'-the-wisp. These can at best be of use as instruments of *sadhana* for

attaining true Life. From this point of view, the world and the body may be likened to a Training School and training apparatus for realization of true life. But man is not the body, at any rate; and all his (so-called) relationships with the world pertain to the body.

Every human being has an innate tendency to *do*, to *know* and to *believe*. To act according to Divine Law is *dharma*, duty; and the performance of duty with a pure heart, being prompted by an inner sense of unity and directed to service of fellow-beings, washes off attachment to action and destroys the sense of doership. Thereby, after every action, his mind relaxes in the Eternal. This is spontaneously followed by a burning quest of Reality, which devours all other attachments and leads to self-realization. Or, to one on the path of devotion, one's faiths dissipated in the many fuse into a single-pointed faith in the One, and the *sadhaka* becomes one with the *Sadhya*, the Goal, the Beloved.

The quintessence of *sadhana* is deep, unshakable and ever-fresh yearning for the realization of one's *Sadhya*.

The *Sadhya* is that which is omnipresent, immutable and eternal. It is, therefore, attainable in the living present to the true *sadhaka*; and after realizing it there is nothing more for him to achieve. In reality, the *Sadhya* is One, while the *sadhakas* are many, and the approaches of *sadhana* are also many, according to the tastes, capacity, *sanskaras* etc. of the *sadhakas*. The *Sadhya* is the Ocean, of which the different *sadhanas* are the waves. The differences in the paths of *sadhana* are also due to the differences in the *asadhana* (lapses from spiritual discipline) of different *sadhakas*, which each *sadhaka* has to renounce. For, the renunciation of *asadhana* is the base of true *sadhana*. Without the eradication of *asadhana*, the soil is not ready for true *sadhana* to flourish.

The main obstacle which keeps one away from *sadhana* is *aviveka* (lack of discrimination). Indifference to *viveka* makes one identify oneself with one's body, which is the root cause of selfishness, hatred, jealousy etc. dividing man from man. It breeds desire and such is the nature of desire that the fulfilment of one desire is followed by the emergence of another, and so on, a vicious

circle. The *sadhaka* must beware of this foe in the guise of a friend—desire—and keep his gaze fixed on the goal.

Another obstacle is the delusion that agreeable things or circumstances are essential for our successful advance to the goal. Let the *sadhaka* know once for all that no set of things and circumstances can be perfect, by their very nature; and that, whatever things and circumstances are given to one by Providence are *the* ones that are most conducive to his progress on the path, if one he *makes the best use* of them. Therefore, the *sadhaka* should not fret over this tools, but should make the best use of the same. Providence is never niggardly in giving more, and all that is wanted, to one who makes good use of what is given to him.

To run after what is not possible to achieve is an obstacle to *sadhana*. So also, to cogitate over what has passed; and to develop attachment with things, personalities and surroundings, which are ever-changing and bound to vanish. The *sadhaka* must beware of being lured by any fleeting pleasures appearing in *asadhana*. Desire is the mother of fear.

Assumed relationships and attachments demand *service* of those with whom we have established relationships and attachments. To accept relationships and not to redeem them by service is to forge chains that bind, and hamper *sadhana*.

Any happiness or gain which is born of the unhappiness of another is bound to end in suffering and sorrow, and is detrimental to the enjoyer of such temporary pleasure or gain. This is the immutable law of Providence.

Lack of faith is another obstacle in *sadhana*. A fundamental obstacle to *sadhana* is that our lives do not bear the stamp of what we know, *i.e.* the gulf between knowledge and conduct.

Above all, one should always remember that he is a *sadhaka* first and *sadhaka* last. Thereby one would not develop attachment with external things which are but instruments of *sadhana*; and with his gaze fixed on this *Sadhya*, the attainment of the *Sadhya* becomes easy and certain for him. We create obstacles and difficulties by not breaking off our false attachment with external things.

A *sadhaka* should have spontaneous taste in his *sadhana*. It is when he undertakes a *sadhana*

which is not in accordance with his inclination, capacity or circumstances that he does not enjoy his *sadhana*. Just as one medicine does not suit every patient, one course of *sadhana* does not suit every aspirant. Though the *Sadhya* is ultimately one, the *sadhanas* are many; for true *sadhana* emerges from the core of the *sadhaka* himself, according to his background. The differences in *sadhana* are thus due to individual differences. Not all are equipped with the same resources for *sadhana*; but everyone who makes right use of whatever resources are allotted to him reaches the common destination and attains the common goal. The Divine makes no distinction between a penny and a million, so long as one offers the whole of whatever one has at its altar.

The *sadhaka* comes to know the *sadhana* appropriate to him when he gives up *a-sadhana*. *A-sadhana* is due to a *a-viveka*, and is rooted out with the axe of *viveka*. He only can be a genuine *sadhaka* who is dissatisfied with his faults and vices and longs to end them. The true *sadhaka* is he who is restless to remove his impurities. One who is conscious of his impurities but puts up with them under the lure of pleasures of the senses is not a very good *sadhaka*, for he prolongs his agony. Nor one who, instead of making right use of the

instruments of *sadhana* allotted to him, cogitate for what he does not have.

*Sadhana* becomes a burden to one who resorts to it before one's want for the *Sadhya* is truly awakened, *i.e.* in a fit of passing emotion or in mere imitation of a tradition. To a thirsty man, the drinking of water is never a hard job.

*Sadhana* done in expectation of pleasure or profit is *asadhana* in the garb of *sadhana*. Seeking of pleasures or profit for oneself is the creator of all distortions and distractions of the mind; to seek to give happiness to others is conducive to all *sadhanas*. All true *sadhanas* are based on service without expectation of reward—which is the essence of Duty—and terminate in Love. Discharge of duty, aspiration and faith are the outer aspects of *sadhana*; desireless love of the Supreme is its inner force. Genuine aspiration is the beginning of *sadhana*. The urge for *sadhana* is inherent in man, but it is covered up by desires born of *aviveka*. *Sadhana* turns despair into hope, want into fulfilment, dependence on external things into freedom and darkness into light. Such is the significance of *sadhana*. Through whatever *sadhana*, suiting an individual, the goal is realized, the *sadhaka* discovers the goal as being One

Indivisible ..... whose attributes or aspects are *Yoga*, *Gyana*-and Love.

A bundle of two contradictory urges—quest for Truth and desire for the ephemeral—constitutes the false “I” of man. The bondage of the latter does not let the former bloom. The fleeting pleasure of the fulfilment of a desire, alternating with the pain of non-fulfilment, keeps one tantalized and slave to a vicious circle, feeding the ego. It also makes one dependent on time, place things, personalities; and thereby the problem of one’s life, which is a question of the present, poses itself as problem of the future. The greed of pleasure naturally gives birth to fear of pain, and hence one remains caught in greed and fear: the opposite of peace.

Only on the destruction of the ego one unites with the essence of *sadhana*. When the *sadhaka*, overwhelmed by his helplessness, becomes utterly discontent with his condition, he surrenders himself to the Supreme. The Supreme devours the ego of the *sadhaka*, so to say, and unites him with Himself.

Discharge of duty, quest for Truth and self-surrender are sure means for the destruction of the false “I”.



## Chapter II

# PURIFICATION OF THE MIND

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Self-purification, that is to say purification of the mind, is an essential prerequisite for self-realization. Indeed, a pure mind is a mirror through which Pure Consciousness shines. It is the impurity of the mind that blocks the fountain of Life. An impure mind revels in servility as if it were freedom, in stupor as if it were wakefulness, in death as if it were life. Only a mind that is pure and still can mirror Reality.

Impurities of the mind are innumerable. However, let us first understand the fundamental source of all impurities of the mind—the basic error, the original sin, so to say. This consists in our mistaking the body and various other objects, the circumstances and environments, the states and modes of the mind, as constituting LIFE; whereas all these are given to us as tools of *sadhana* for the realization of true life. More succinctly put, it is the identification of ourselves with the body that

is at the root of our spiritual ignorance and the consequent whirlpool of sorrow and death.

Let us reflect over it. This basic error breeds an endless progeny of *sankalpas* and *vikalpas*—projections and distractions of the mind, thoughts and desires—that just do not let us pause and relax in our true being, the source and the goal of our lives, the Eternal. To be ensnared in this net of appearances, is to be caught in the vicious circle of desire, the round of pain and pleasure, pleasure and pain. The feeling of fulfilment of a desire is like a will-o'-the-wisp. Desire is born of a feeling of non-fulfilment, and the moment we feel satisfied by the so called fulfilment of a desire, another desire for something else appears, leaving the same residue of non-fulfilment and of craving. It is obvious, therefore, that *sankalpas* (projections and pursuits of the mind)—whose birth and momentary fulfilment are both marked by renewed heartache—can by their very nature not fulfil our true want, for they are at best symptomatic of an underlying desire which their play may suppress for a while but cannot redeem.

We should, therefore, turn our minds away from such deceptive appearances, causing desire

that are unquenchable, towards the Life which is there before the rise of desires as well as after their play is over—Immutable, and Eternal. Once we turn our backs to all that is *born* and dies, all that is in a continuous process of change—in perpetual flux—there will be born within us a yearning for that Life Eternal, which is Truth, Beauty, Love. This yearning will devour all false desires; and the remembrance of the Source will erase from our minds all impurities caused by false identification.

Some *sadhakas* curse the mind, as if it were the cause of all evil. The mind in itself is not to blame. When the *sadhaka* is kindled by genuine aspiration, he will find the mind to be a willing co-operator. It is an instrument, not the doer. It is a record-plate so to say, of our silly vagaries. Poor thing, it itself gets no peace from us as long as we pursue the mirage of desire. At any rate, purification of the mind is not so hard as it may seem, because all impurities of the mind are extraneous deposits on the mind, and not its real nature. The aspirant has only to renounce, or non-cooperate with, what is not its own nature, but what is imposed on his mind from outside and is indeed on infection. The moment we allowed the mind to

be just itself, it would stand purified, whereby the aspirant would find fulfilment. The meditator would attain *samadhi*; the yogi would become one with yoga; the *jignyasu* (the seeker for wisdom) would attain self-realization; the devotee would find his Beloved once for all, inseparate and inseparable.

All *sadhanas* bear the best fruit in the soil of a pure mind. Any *sadhana* done by force with an impure mind only causes false pride. The mind cannot be purified by suppression. Thank God, however, that the mind can never be impure in its entirety. Were it so, the question of purification of the mind could not have arisen. The impurity observed in the mind lurks only in a part thereof. The other part of the mind which perceives this impurity mirrors the light of *viveka* (discrimination) and imparts the power to remove the impurity. In fact, the very awareness of impurity of the mind as impurity marks the beginning of the *sadhana* for the purification of the mind. The very urge to purify the mind releases the power to purify it.

Having indicated the root cause of the malady and its fundamental remedy, let us consider some

of the major symptoms and effects of the disease—impurity of the mind—that the *sadhaka* has to grapple with and to obtain relief from.

First and foremost, one has to extricate oneself from the whirling round and increasing chain of *sankalpas* and *vikalpas* with which one finds oneself virtually strangled. The *sadhaka* should begin by renouncing all non-essential, impure and evil *sankalpas*; and fulfilling essential, pure and beneficial *sankalpas*; with a pure heart, with gaze on the goal and in a spirit of discharge of duty. Evil *sankalpas* are those which make one a slave to external objects for one's happiness and even the fulfilment of which leads to renewed desire for something else still unobtained or for the repetition of the same thing over and over again; or the fulfilment of which involves the unhappiness of others. Good *sankalpas*, on the other hand, are those whose fulfilment is within one's reach, which relate to the present and the fulfilment of which one cannot do without; and above all the fulfilment of which does not involve harm to another. With bad *sankalpas* eliminated, the experience of fulfilment of good *sankalpas* leads to freedom from *sankalpas*; and a longing for true Life arises in the

heart of the aspirant. That is the utility of the fulfilment of a good *sankalpa*. The *sadhaka* should, therefore, never make the momentary satisfaction released by fulfilment of a *sankalpa*—even a good *sankalpa*—his perpetual food.

As long as desire for external objects for one's fulfilment clings to the mind, the mind cannot be pure. All compounded things are bound to dissolve and perish. Desirelessness is a necessary condition of a pure mind. For the aspirant to self-purification, Peace is the target, not pleasure. Desire is inconsistent with love, even as justice is inconsistent with anger. The inner ultimate want of man is not for fleeting objects, but for the all-pervading Life Eternal which lends them its glow.

An impure mind is caught in fear and greed. Attachment to external things, including the body, *i.e.* to non-self; lack of faith and indiscrimination, are the source of all evil. Non-attachment, be it noted, makes little difference to the right use of things. One derives no less comfort from the house one lives in, for instance, if he does not inhibit himself with the notion that it is *his* house. Similarly, one can make full use of the body without the false notion that he *is* the body, which forges a

chain of endless desires. If only one releases his consciousness from false identification with the body and attachment with personalities and attunes himself to the true Life pervading them, one would realise that Peace “which passeth all understanding.”

It is the lack of *rasa* (joy) that makes us go round and round the cage of external objects and pleasing circumstances. The easiest way of rising above them consists of *generosity* when one finds oneself in agreeable situation—*i.e.* sharing one’s pleasures with others—and *renunciation* in disagreeable situations. It is one’s attitude to events that makes all the difference. Disagreeable circumstances might be an obstacle to *bhoga* (pleasures of the senses); they cannot be an obstacle to *Yoga*. Only those who lack faith in Life beyond external objects and states of existence are afraid of disagreeable surroundings.

*Pravritti* (forthgoing) should be regarded as but a stepping-stone to *nivritti* (return to the source). Only such *pravritti* drags on in a vicious circle as is not pursued with a spiritual purpose. *Dharma* provides spiritual purpose. *Dharma* is a bridge-builder between *pravritti* and *nivritti*. One

who undertakes a *pravritti* in consonance with *dharma* rises above it at the end of the *pravritti*. The perfection of a *pravritti* consists in *nivritti*; and the mode of such *pravritti* becomes an example to others, Indeed, even as a purified arsenic cures many a disease, so do even pleasures enjoyed in consonance with *dharma* soon lose their attraction, for their utility ends when one has learnt from experience the illusoriness of desire and all objects of desire.

*Pravrittis* that cause harm or unhappiness to others are evil and pollute the mind. *Pravrittis* that cause benefit or happiness to others are righteous.

One cause of impurity of the mind is that men often think of *nivritti* while in *pravritti* and of *pravritti* in moments of *nivritti*. Hence they neither do justice to their work nor experience true *nivritti*. If one puts the whole of himself into one's work, one will experience *nivritti* after each *pravritti*.

Right use of all objects and things, and service of all individuals to whom one is attached, purifies one's mind of all false attachments. Therefore, unselfish, discharge of one's duties to all concerned is an effective means of purifying the mind. One who finds himself surrounded by various

relationships sticking to the mind should, therefore, confront all his relationships with selfless discharge of his duties and service to them. That will release his mind from their bondage and purify it.

Our attachments and aversions are fed by our not renouncing our supposed rights and claims on others, and our not utilising whatever is given to us in serving the interests of others. Expectation of anything from those we serve, pollutes the mind; selfless service frees us from any false attachments to those we serve.

Service prompted by attachment, like love infected by desire, also corrupts the mind.

The strength, capacity, resources and things given to one are Universal and not any individual's property. To regard the same as one's own is a gross impurity of the mind. Even as the water in every wave is that of the sea, so is the Eternal the sole repository of all power and resources. If one recognizes that what one gives to another is really not his but is only entrusted to him for right use, one would not expect a return; otherwise one cannot help expecting a return. Indeed, one who

gives over something believing it to be his own, really invests to earn a larger dividend; and his giving is tantamount to taking.

The *sadhaka* should discharge his allotted work through whatever is given to him, in the service of the Supreme Giver; which would leave as its residue only love of the Supreme. Even as all the household duties performed by a devoted wife resolve into love of the beloved, all work done by the devotee in that spirit resolves into love of his Lord.

Misuse of power, aimless wandering of the mind, the gulf between knowledge and practice, are symptoms of the impurity of the mind. Misuse of power makes the mind impure. Right use of power consists in utilizing it for the service of one's fellow-beings, not in self-indulgence.

Divine Law provides strength and resources for the discharge of one's duty. One has only to make right use of whatever strength and resources he is allotted to receive more of them if needed.

A very useful rule of conduct for purification of the mind is for the *sadhaka* to be wary in his actions, while being content with what comes to

pass. Be well assured that the Cosmic Power which regulates the working of all the world also apportions to us what is in our true interests and furnishes us with *viveka* to make the best use of what is given to us. So, instead of grumbling against the resources allotted to us, we should make the best use of them.

One of the major causes of impurity of the mind is that we do not live in the present, but dwell on the past and day-dream of the future—thereby accumulating all sorts of *sanskaras* in our minds. The *sadhaka* should forget past incidents and retain only the wisdom distilled out of the same. Constant thought of objects of desire is much worse than even their indulgence, for such thought draws a trail of psychological impressions, in continuity, on the mind.

Consciousness of one's virtues, which is a subtle form of pride, and the tendency to pry into other's faults, are enemies to purity of the mind. Our deepest vices, which make the mind impure, are those which are born of a consciousness of virtue, or vices bearing an artificial covering of virtue. It is easy to remove vice, but vices masquerading as virtue are very difficult to catch and wipe out.

The habit of judging others by prying into their faults is a perverse and destructive habit, which makes the mind impure. One should mind one's own duty, instead of depending on the performance by others of their duty.

Contemplation of objects and things makes the mind impure; contemplation of what underlies them—Life, Reality, God—makes the mind pure.

The longing for respect and honour in the eyes of others—a symptom of the impure mind—lingers in one's mind only as long as one is not worthy of respect. For as long as one depends for one's happiness on others—things or individuals etc.—one's very dependence on and slavery to others makes him unworthy of respect. He alone is worthy of respect whose entire *pravritti* is for the benefit of others, and who does not desire anything for himself. In the soil of desirelessness sprouts the plant of *yoga*, which bears the fruit of self-realization, which is saturated with the *rasa* (delight) of Love.

Knowledge or apprehension of Reality has several levels corresponding to the organs of apprehension. What is perceived by the senses to be one thing is known to be quite different from

the level of the intellect. Things which the senses take to be static and permanent appear to the mind as changing and transitory. The faculty of reason must dominate over the senses in man; it is the animal nature wherein senses are all in all. It is only while the struggle between the senses and the intellect persist that the mind remains impure. When the mind turns inwards and is completely illumined by *viveka*, the Self is realized and there is only Reality, Love. As with the rising of the Sun, clouds begin to disperse, so with the awakening of *viveka* the fogs beclouding the mind begin to dissolve and the mind gets purified.

Death ends man's relationship with material objects only in a physical sense, but renunciation ends the relationship with them in the deeper, psychological sense and gives a foretaste of death while living, leading to the realization of Immortality. There is a world of difference between the two : a thing or body dying but one's attachment to the same remaining intact makes the mind impure, whereas a thing or body remaining alive but one's attachment with the same cut asunder does not affect or leave any *sanskaras* on the mind. There is nothing evil in objects or things in

themselves; evil creeps in by our identifying ourselves with them.

A pure mind is imbued with perfect equanimity. If your mind is attracted or repelled by any object, beware it is infested with lust or greed. If your mind is sensitive to what others say of you, or do to you, be sure it is an impure mind. If you feel conscious of being in the possession of any virtues, know that you are not truly virtuous.

The ego is very subtle, even after the subsidence of *sankalpas* and *vikalpas*, sometimes it prolongs its sway by revelling in its own domain, as it were. That is like one almost crossing out a river, but drowning near the shore. This happens specially if a *sadhaka* gets attached to a particular form of *sadhana*, a routine, a process, soulless ritual; or, he begins to take pride in having achieved a measure to progress on the spiritual path; or to hanker after recognition and fame, if nothing else.

Dissociation from the mind is also a radical means of purification of the mind. To dissociate from the mind is to become its beholder as of something outside our self. This means, instead of removing the various impurities of the mind one

by one, starving the mind of its very food derived from our association with it.

Much more sticky than impurities of the mind is the inertia that allows man to put up with the same.

The *sadhaka* who establishes his goal for good, performs all works with the purest motives so as to take him to his goal; and thus all his acts become *sadhana* for him.

Unless one's entire life becomes a *sadhana*, complete purification of the mind cannot be achieved.

Discharge of one's duties in a spirit of dedicated service; desirelessness and a burning quest for Truth and surrender to Divine Grace, are powerful aids to the purification of the mind. Compassion and service purify the mind of animal propensities, a burning quest for Truth brings about detachment and desirelessness in the aspirant, and surrender to Divine Grace is the most potent weapon to erase all impurities of the mind.



## Chapter III

# PURIFICATION OF THE MIND (*Contd.*)

## FORGIVENESS

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One of the principle causes of our minds becoming soak-pits of impurities blocking the flow of the waters of Life and Love is the wrong habit of finding fault in others, especially harbouring antipathy or aversion for any injustices or supposed injustices done by others to us in our various relationship in the world—as well as the consciousness of guilt in ourselves, resulting from our own actions against our *viveka*.

The aspirant must learn to forgive others. In truth, none *other* can inflict a wrong on you; it is but your own *karma* which recoils on you through another. But even if this be hard to understand or to accept, let the aspirant forgive others as he would forgive an erring child.

What comes in the way of our forgiving others is our clinging to the illusion of our claims on others and our dependence on them (including our own

bodies, which are not our *Selves*) for our fulfilment. But he who realizes his relationship with the Divine and is treading the Path of Return lays no claim on the world; he lives in the world to redeem its debts by discharging his obligations. He recognizes that others cannot deliver the goods, cannot fulfil his true, innate want. Forgiveness is his strength, not weakness. One who seeks God's forgiveness for himself must learn to forgive others. To ascribe one's lot to the wrongdoing of others, or to harbour the faults of others in one's mind, is a mistake and is a gross impurity of the mind. To seek forgiveness from all and to forgive all purifies the mind. Pure consciousness shines in the purified mind.

Some people are confounded by a seeming contradiction between forgiveness and justice. Our sense of justice is distorted, because on account of the limitations of our ego, our reactions are perverted. Justice in our view consists of punishment of the wrong-doer and reward for right conduct. Divine Justice, however, is a self-operating mechanism that accelerates the onward march of the pilgrim on the path. It serves its purpose in making the guilty see his guilt for himself, which alone make him turn away from it for ever. That is

the end of so-called punishment in the scales of Divine Justice; its values are derived from a larger Cosmic purpose than an individual can conceive. If God dispensed justice according to our sense of justice, then a liar would lose his tongue the moment he told a lie.; the air would withdraw from the guilty—man, dropping him dead, and so on !

Strict justice, in our sense, one could do only to himself, for one can understand the workings of his own mind, not of other minds. An aspirant should, therefore, refrain from judging others; and also, he should be forgiving to others in so far as he feels wronged by them. Even one to whom society has entrusted the task of administering justice should not lose sight of the true purpose of justice: justice from the spiritual standpoint is always tempered with love. Indeed the outer form of action warranted by a given situation should make little difference to the love and sympathy in one's inner attitude. Love relates to the substratum, action to the surface. Even if one has to shoot a fellow-being for any compelling reason, one's heart should vibrate with pain and love and sympathy for the erring person. One may hate the sin but not the sinner. Even in common expressions of love we

express love in different ways: the love of the brother for the sister, of the mother for the child, of the husband for the wife, of the friend for the friend, etc. The same principle should operate even when in certain events our actions have to assume unpleasant shapes. Even the Goddess appears not only as Saraswati, Goddess of learning and wisdom, or Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth and prosperity; but also as Kali, the Goddess of power and destruction of evil. But surely the Divine Mother does not shed Her inherent love while assuming the form of Kali for the work calling for that form.

So we must once for all forgive others who might have done any harm to us, unilaterally as it were, even without their asking for it. And in respect of the consciousness of our own guilt, we should resolve from the depths of our hearts not to allow past mistakes to be repeated and sincerely ask for forgiveness. Thus only will the impurities of our minds caused by both the above categories of *sanskaras* be washed off.

It required great moral strength to seek forgiveness for one's own past wrong actions. Only one who is truly repentant and who has realized

that any satisfaction of the senses derived from evil propensities is bound to reap a harvest of evil and sorrow, can rid himself of the same. A vice is not so damaging in itself – being born of delusion, and not being a part of man's real nature—as not to see it for oneself and not to feel remorse for being a prey to it. We but deceive ourselves by shutting our eyes to our vices, and aggravate the wrong by resorting to further falsehood in attempting to conceal the same from others. This vicious circle can be broken definitely by true prayer for forgiveness following sincere repentance for the past, and right resolve for the future. Forgiveness is a spontaneous quality of the Divine. Even as the ocean receives and purifies in its sweep the dirtiest stream, so does the Divine transmute the greatest sinner as soon as he surrenders his sins to Him. Even though an individual you may have wronged might not seem to forgive you, the Divine in him forgives you. Indeed, only the Infinite can afford to forgive all its embrace.

The aspirant should, however, guard himself against the illusion of “memory”. When one has firmly resolved to respect one's discrimination and

not to repeat past mistakes, sinful *sankalpas* cease to sprout in his mind. Nevertheless the memory of his past pursuits may remain green for sometime. The aspirant sometimes mistakes it to indicate that he still remains a sinner and thus unnecessarily drags himself back into the mire.



## Chapter IV

# SATSANG AND SADHANA

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The aim of *sadhana* is to unite the *sadhaka* with Truth, in which is true life, freedom and love, and which is real *satsanga*. On the other hand, to hug un-truth is *asadhana*. Renunciation of un-truth, *i.e.*, of *asadhana*, is the true *sadhana* for uniting with Truth. Man is given the faculty of *viveka* to perceive un-truth. The *sadhaka* owes it to himself to renounce all un-truth as revealed by his *viveka*. Union with Truth follows renunciation of un-truth. The responsibility of the *sadhaka* lies only in renouncing un-truth. Truth is self-luminous, it alone IS. Most people direct their efforts towards attaining Truth, without shedding all the un-truth which they have embraced. But that is like placing that cart before the horse. Man can only shed un-truth; Truth then reveals itself by itself.

The prime responsibility of the *sadhaka*, therefore, is to make a determined resolve to renounce un-truth. The will to renounce untruth is the basic *sadhana* for the total renunciation of

un-truth. Renunciation of untruth and realization of Truth (*satsanga*) are two sides of the same coin. Effort ends with renunciation of un-truth; Truth is self-effulgent. The scope of effort does not stretch beyond renunciation of un-truth, and Truth does not demand more from its votary. Renunciation of un-truth by itself spontaneously leads to union with Truth. Renunciation of un-truth carries in itself the end of *asadhana* and the emergence of true *sadhana*. Many people, however, in ignorance of this fundamental distinction, engage themselves in forcibly suppressing their *asadhana* by different external forms of *sadhana*. Such suppression may cover up, *i.e.*, outwardly suppress, *asadhana*; it cannot eradicate it. What is worse, the *sadhaka* often arrogates to himself the false credit of doing *sadhana*, which is a grave *asadhana*. The *sadhaka*, therefore, should direct an all-out effort towards the renunciation of all un-truth, as revealed by his *viveka*, through earnest self-introspection.

Here the *sadhaka* will have to be on guard in so far as even after his firm resolve to renounce un-truth the memory and reactions of his past would take time to be effaced. Some *sadhakas* are discouraged by this phenomenon, and lose heart,

which results in shaking and relaxing their right resolve. The *sadhaka* should be patient, trusting in the law. Even when a tree is cut from the root, its branches and leaves remain green for a while. But for a while only. The *sadhaka* should look at such phenomena in a spirit of detached non-co-operation, till they disappear—as disappear they shall when they no longer derive any sustenance from the *sadhaka* himself.

Association with un-truth automatically leads to *asadhana*, and *satsanga* (association with truth) to true *sadhana*. No one can remain immersed in un-truth for all time or *in toto*, for un-truth is unnatural and not one's being. Union with truth, however, is natural and eternal. It is for this reason that *asadhana* is a partial affliction in a *sadhaka*, but the inner craving for total *sadhana* remains alive in him.

All true *sadhanas* resolves into peace, freedom and love, for which every human being craves. Partial *sadhana* does not satisfy any earnest *sadhaka*.

No one is helpless in renouncing un-truth. But craving for fleeting pleasures on the one hand, and pride of partial *sadhana* on the other, nourish one's

association with un-truth. The melting of pride of partial *sadhana* helps to melt the craving for fleeting pleasures as well, inasmuch as no one could be satisfied with a life of total *asadhana*—which would thereby be exposed in its nakedness. The consciousness of partial *sadhana* feeds the ego and makes renunciation more difficult. The ego contains within it the seed of *asadhana* as well as the yearning for *sadhana*. To value external objects as life itself is un-truth, and is the seed of *asadhana*. Spontaneous love of freedom is reflected in the longing for *sadhana*. With one's inner yearning for freedom, to continue to subsist on dependence on external objects is just stupor. No external paraphernalia are needed to achieve freedom; and what does not require any external paraphernalia—which include the body and the mind, both being external to the Self—does not require effort or practice. The very factor of dependence on external objects becoming intolerable to a *sadhana* kindles in him the yearning for freedom, which is a self-sufficient *sadhana* for freedom. Truth is eternal and all-pervading. It is only identification with un-truth that hides Truth from the *sadhaka*. Desire for external objects is the *sadhaka's* own screen

separating him from true life in Truth and freedom. Renunciation of un-truth is all that is required of the *sadhaka*.

Let us ponder over the three fundamental urges of man—action, cognition and love—in this context and from this point of view.

### RIGHT ACTION FOLLOWS RENUNCIATION OF WRONG ACTION

From identification with the un-true wrong action follows automatically, and similarly renunciation of the un-true spontaneously unfolds right action. Wrong action is any action which goes against the dictates of our own *viveka*. It corrodes the springs of right action. The springs of right action will begin to operate as soon as wrong action is renounced. Partial, or fragments of, right action performed along with wrong action only go to feed false pride in the *sadhaka*. From this point of view, a partial performance of good deeds, without renunciation of un-truth and wrong action born of un-truth, gets infected by and merges into wrong action. It is therefore, extremely necessary to renounce wrong action or evil deeds before the *sadhaka* starts on right action or good deeds.

Without the renunciation of wrong action *satsang* is not possible. *satsang* is the unfailing base of right action. The *sadhaka* should, therefore, constantly aspire for real *satsang*, which alone would uproot all wrong action and spontaneously unfold pure right action and nothing but right action.

To the true *sadhaka*; life consists of nothing else but *sadhana*. The gulf between life and *sadhana* is only due to association with un-truth.

Only one who performs right action—discharging his obligations and fulfilling his duties—can have a taste of an effortless state of freedom. Association with un-truth leads to wrong action. Right action leads to eternal freedom, which—and not action as such—is dear to all. Attachment to action prevents one from realizing this mystery. What one has to *do* is only to renounce un-truth. Then follows pure action. In renunciation of wrong action lies pure action; in renunciation of *asadhana* lies *sadhana*, and in renunciation of attachments lies infinite love.

To regard the allotted things (including the body), power and talents as one's own is un-truth. Identification with this un-truth is the root cause

of all mental impurities, which are foreign to our real being. *sadhana* is the only manifestation of our real being. From this point of view, in the right use of the allotted things, power and talent consists right action. Action is in relation to others, but its reaction affects oneself. According to the science of action, what is done to others rebounds manifold to oneself by the mechanism of nature. Anything done by regarding the allotted equipment as one's own is not *sadhana* but only leaves a residue of body-consciousness and egoistic pride, which is the root of all *asadhana*.

Whatever things, power or talent is given to a *sadhaka* is really not his property; and therefore attachment to the tools given to him is attachment to un-truth, which has given birth to all conflicts among brother-men. It is impossible to eradicate these conflicts without renouncing attachment to all that is given to us for right use. The *sadhaka* must, therefore, renounce all attachment, and just make right use of whatever is given to him. Nothing endures, however deep our attachment to anything; we are deprived of everything at sometime in spite of our attachment to it, and we are only left with the residue of greed and desire which bind one in their clutches.

A false valuation of things, power or talent entrusted to one makes one mistake these for *life*, and makes one crave for what is not given to him, which deprives one of purity and peace. Providence provides everyone what he needs, without his craving for it. Craving or desire leads nowhere. There is not a single soul in the world whose every desire is fulfilled. To regard the fulfilment of desires as *life* is, therefore; a mirage. The seeming pleasure derived from the fulfilment of a desire is invariably followed by the pangs of a fresh desire; and the vicious circle goes on without end, unfulfilled desires always remaining as the residue falling to one's lot, perpetuating *abhava* (want); whereas the *sadhaka* essentially longs for the ending of want which can never be achieved without the annihilation of desire. In desirelessness lies freedom and the fulfilment of the true want of man. The *sadhaka*, therefore, should regard everything that falls to his lot as a tool for service, not for his exploitation or self-gratification.

No one likes another to do evil to him. To do unto another what one does not like for himself is obviously opposed to one's *viveka*. Association with un-truth makes one forget this simple truth and

resort to wrong action. Right action can emerge only in so far as wrong action makes way. One should never do to others what one would not have others do to him. To seek one's gain in another's loss is the height of folly. The *sadhaka* should not accept any happiness which is born of another's unhappiness.

The rights of one consist in the duties of another, and the duties of one make for the rights of another. The *sadhaka* should realize that he is free only in the fulfilment of his duties to others, not in the achievement of his rights from others. The latter is only a shadow of attachment to un-truth; and when a *sadhaka* renounces attachment to this un-truth, he is blessed by becoming just an instrument of the Divine for service. Attachment to rights prevents the *sadhaka* from being freed from the shackles of desire and anger. The emphasis on rights makes him look to others for their fulfilment and when this desire is thwarted anger is aroused.

The desire to retain the fleeting phases of pleasure and the fear of ever-recurring pain are another hurdle in the way of the *sadhaka* retaining his poise essential to right action.

Not to do evil because it is evil, and to do good because it is evil, and to do good because it is good, is *sadhana*. But to refrain from evil because of fear or to do good motivated by desire is *asadhana* in the shape of *sadhana*. It would be easier to overcome *asadhana* in the shape of *asadhana*; but when *asadhana* assumes the shape of *sadhana*, it becomes very hard to get rid of it. There is no room, therefore, in the life of a *sadhaka* for fear or desire.

All *asadhana* is rooted in ego-consciousness; and ego-consciousness is the mother of manifold *asadhana*. Renunciation of ego-consciousness is therefore essential. Ego-consciousness is fed by attachment to things or to environment, which is caused by mistaking them for life. The *sadhaka* declines to mistake any thing, state or environment as life.

Right action performed along with wrong action often feeds wrong action itself ! Partial discharge of duty feeds false pride. Consciousness of partial virtue prevents the awakening of remorse for vice, which feeds attachment to fleeting pleasure and rules out total annihilation of wrong action—without which there can be no emergence

of pure action. Which is essential both for one's liberation and for the reform of society. The merry-go-round of wrong action alternating with right action sustains the ego.

### BREAKING THE FETTERS & LIFE IN FREEDOM

Man feels bound by fetters of the inevitable when his desires are not fulfilled. But the lover of true freedom perceives bondage even in the fulfilment of desires, in as much as the fulfilment of desires is dependent on *external* factors like individuality, objects environment, time etc., which are all a passing show; and dependence on such external paraphernalia is the antithesis of true freedom. True freedom unites the *sadhaka* with Life Eternal in Consciousness, and releases him from the bondage of all objective phenomena. Thus, to regard gratification through passing fulfilment of desires as life in freedom is un-truth, without the total renunciation of which the realization of true freedom is not possible. The aspiration for freedom is an inherent want of the *sadhaka*, and cannot be satisfied by fleeting fulfilment of desires, which might suppress the hidden urge of freedom for a while but cannot obliterate it. On the contrary, indulgence in self-gratification through the

fulfilment of desire, gives birth to fresh desires; and the fulfilment of *any* number of desires leaves the residue of unfulfilled desires. For *all* desires of no one are, or can be, fulfilled.

It is to awaken the hidden want of man that the non-fulfilment of desire is an inevitable part of Divine dispensation. But not realizing the significance of this, man goes on striving for the fulfilment of desires and continues to be a slave of desire. Running after pleasures and fear of pain is *asadhana*. The cause of this *asadhana* lies in mistaking the phantom of desire-fulfilment as the *life* itself. This is just *asat*, without discarding which true *sadhana* is out of the question. Thus, at each step, renunciation of *asat*—which brings out *satsanga*—is the base of true *sadhana*.

The *sadhaka* must, therefore, renounce the love of pleasure and the fear of pain. Pain faced squarely becomes a messenger of release from pain as well as from craving for pleasure, which is indeed the mother of pain. Suffering borne thoughtfully and cheerfully becomes *tapa*, which paves the way to life beyond pleasure and pain. Slavery of pleasure is bondage, and the fear of pain prevents the *sadhaka* from being released from the same.

The incidence of pleasure and pain depends on providential dispensation and is beyond the powers of the individual. What is within the power of the *sadhaka* is the *right use* of the same. The *sadhaka* should realize that true freedom is within one's self, and that identification with anything external to one's self is un-truth. No plane or state of being pertains to the core of the real being in man. To identify oneself with any state of being is *a-sat*, and a chain of bondage. Detachment from the same leads to freedom.

Freedom is unborn, eternal and immutable. It illumines itself as well as the bondage. The latter has a beginning in time and must therefore come to an end like everything born. Intense yearning for life in freedom devours all attachment to various passing phenomena of bondage. In the yearning for freedom is inherent, the destruction of bondage. The *sadhaka* who despairs of freedom and gets addicted to slavery is a victim of *asat*, which he must renounce. To realize *asat as asat* is an easy means of releasing the *sadhaka* from its bondage.

The *sadhaka* creates his own bondage by attachment of *sankalpas*, which are extraneous to his real self, and therefore *asat*. Dissociation from *sankalpas* is renunciation of *asat*, and results in

*satsang*. Should the *sadhaka* not co-operate with *sankalpas* that raise their heads, they would die out by themselves—the essential among them after fulfilment and the non-essential without prolonged agony. To merge one's *sanskalpas* in the will of the Supreme is, for the *sadhaka*, the best means of melting his slavery to extraneous objects.

When the *sadhaka* realizes the *sankalpas* to be extraneous to his real self, non-co-operation with the same becomes easy, and he is not affected by pleasure or pain on their fulfilment or otherwise. Thereby he realizes his inherent life in freedom, which is immutable. One has only turned his back to it, forgetting his real self, which is not separable from him, while everything extraneous is doomed to be separated and can be ended by renunciation of the obvious *asat*.

When the quest for true life beyond pleasure and pain is kindled in the heart of the *sadhaka*, his *sankalpas* melt away; for a realization of the phantasmagoric nature of all that is born (body, objects and the world) robs it of its false glamour, and the *sadhaka* no longer identifies himself with the same. Non-identification with the un-true frees the *sadhaka* from the shackles. It is ignorance of

the delusion of the untrue that keeps him bound to it and does not let him awaken to the quest of the true. It is evident to all *sadhakas* that the pleasure derived by the fulfilment of *sankalpas* is not lasting; and what is not lasting cannot be true life. To identify oneself with what is not true life is association with *asat*. The *sadhaka* should therefore remember firmly that to regard any passing show as life is association with *asat*.

The urge for life in freedom is the inherent want of man. What separates man from it is attachment to objects, environment etc—the root cause of which is to regard oneself as the body, which is an obvious *a-sat*. Distinct realization of *asat* as *asat* leads to its renunciation. The *sadhaka* should, therefore, direct tireless effort to spotlight and sift out all *asat* from his life.

When the *sadhaka*, in the light of his *viveka*, realizes that he is not the body, all his relation with activities, thoughts and states of being proceeding from his identification with the body is cut asunder. Even while retaining the body, he is freed from the shackles of the body, and he attains desirelessness, which ushers him into the kingdom of freedom.

One in whom are found together the impressions of associations with un-truth as well

as a yearning for Truth is a *sadhaka*. The yearning for Truth is self-fulfilled the moment the reactions of association with un-truth are exhausted; and firm renunciation of un-truth spontaneously exhausts the reactions of association with un-truth—which results in real *satsang* and the emergence of true *sadhana*., whereon the entire life of the *sadhaka* becomes *sadhana*, and *satsang* and *sadhana* becomes the life of the *sadhaka*. All his problems are then resolved.

The *sadhaka*'s problems are posed not by un-truth but by his association with un-truth; for un-truth by itself is powerless to affect the real being of the *sadhaka*.

#### THE ENDING OF ATTACHMENTS AND THE DAWN OF LOVE

Belief in conflict with one's *viveka* is untrue, without the renunciation of which belief in what is true, which is a mark of *sadhana*, does not manifest in the heart of the *sadhaka*. True belief leads to unbroken relationship with the True, which leads to the realization of unity of kinship. The unity of kinship fulfils itself in LOVE, which is the sole fountain-spring of BLISS—which is the true want

of man, and for lack of which he wanders in the wilderness of delusion.

The *sadhaka*, therefore, has first to examine how far whatever is perceived through the senses or the mind—which is absolutely transient and with which one cannot have unbroken relationship—is worthy of belief. Man has become a prey to the perishable because of his reposing faith in objects, the body, individuals, circumstances and passing states of experience etc., which are fleeting phenomena and attachment to which is trust misplaced and only gives rise to greed, lust, *moha*, humiliation, pride etc. making a whirlpool of untruth.

All that is, thus, undependable is only to be made right use of by the *sadhaka*. Right use of objects, power and ability, and service of—not attachment to—individuals befits the *sadhaka*. Protection of the rights of all who come into contact with the *sadhaka* is service. Service nourishes compassion. From this point of view, the 'world' claims our service, not attachment.

Trust in all phenomena perceived through the senses and the mind is un-true; for the senses and

the mind are instruments of extremely partial knowledge. Renunciation of such trust leads to faith in that which illumines even the un-truth. Only the unborn is worthy of faith; for it is eternal and immutable. Faith leads to realization.

Attachment to the fleeting has damped the inner quest or yearning of man. The fleeting objects of attachment perish according to the Law of Nature, yet attachment to them persists and causes man to be born again and again, creating a wall between him and the Kingdom of Love and Bliss. Detachment from the untrue, therefore, is essential for the *sadhaka*.

Faith should mean acceptance of relationship with the True. It is an exploitation of faith to misuse it for any fulfilment of desire. Action is the instrument for seeking to fulfil a desire. But realization of unity with the Beloved requires faith, and for that only the *sadhaka* should make use of faith, which is the most potent *sadhana* for the same. The awakening of Love is not a product of any effort. It is, therefore, not dependent on anything external. Faith alone is the master-key for it. Renunciation of the un-true results in faith in the True. Faith leads to realization.

It behoves the lover—the *sadhaka* who aspires for unity with the Beloved—not to lend faith to any power save that of the Beloved, not to beg anything from the Beloved, and to dissolve all his attachments into one sole relationship with Him. Thus the very being of the *sadhaka* is transformed into pure yearning for the Beloved, which is the climax of the *sadhana* of Devotion. Such union is not wrought by practice, but only by deep faith. Practice, being dependent on the body and external factors, cannot usher one into the realm of the Self-luminous. Faith is the magnet that attracts Divine Grace. Refuge in Divine Grace is the quintessence of the devotee's *sadhana*. Relationship with the Divine melts away all other attachments, including that for the body.

When the *sadhaka* gives up all trust in the untrue and pins his faith in God, His sweet remembrance is spontaneously awakened in him. But he impatiently looks for its effect on his body and mind etc., which he had sought to dissociate himself from. Such tendency renews his attachment to body and mind. The *sadhaka* should aspire from the core of his soul, and not look towards the fruit of it in his body and mind or in

the attainment of anything. The devotee's heart is directed to the Beloved and not diverted to his own body and mind—which being surrendered to the Lord, are no longer his. For the devotee, there is no other *sadhana* to do but a feeling of kinship with the Lord. Indeed, other extraneous *sadhana* might be a distraction in the way of 'simple union', which the devotee yearns for.



## Chapter V

# SATSANG AND SADHANA MOOK SATSANG AND REPOSE

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The Immutable, the Eternal, is Truth, and association with That is *satsang*. In fact, Truth, being the bed-rock of all existence, is the eternal companion of man; it appears to be remote on account of man turning his back to it, or crowding it out from his mind. The love of Truth swings back the *sadhaka's* face from untruth and unites him with itself. But this applies only to those *sadhakas* whose minds are not deluded by pleasure-seeking indulgence in un-truth and its vicious phenomenon of fleeting sensation. The way to be rid of the same is, first, Right Action—*i.e.*, right use of all that is given to man. Such action does not leave behind a trail of *samskaras*, which is the lot of those who are lost in action born of attachment, and which indeed is the cause of the restlessness of the mind. Suppressed *samskaras* emerge time after time, and prevent the *sadhaka* from the bliss of repose, which pertains to his real nature. The *sadhaka* should

therefore abandon all wrong action, *i.e.* activity which is born of attachment, or is unessential and self-centred.

When the *sadhaka* becomes an instrument of Divine Will, and retains no *sankalpas* of his own, he discharges his duties without losing his equilibrium or repose, and enjoys the Peace of the Divine even when engaged in work. But this is possible only when the *sadhaka* renounces all personal *sankalpas*, which is possible only when he rids himself of attachment to things, individuals, circumstances etc. The memory of the past may yet oppress him for a while; but if only he does not co-operate with it, that too will soon exhaust itself; for all fleeting phenomena become lifeless as soon as one ceases to co-operate with them.

Such a *sadhaka* dwells in peace after the cessation of an activity; that is to say, between the end of an activity and the commencement of another he is not inhibited by thoughts of the past or the future. All his activity is related to the service of the world; for himself, the *sadhaka* bears no relationship with the world save that of service.

True repose is inherent in *mook satsang*—silent communion with the Absolute—which is an effortless state. It is the base as well as the apex of all *sadhana*. It is identification with *asatya* (un-truth) that deprives one of *satsang*. It is dispelled by *viveka*. Mechanical practice or effort only suppresses desire, which emerges again and again. *aviveka* can be ended only by dissociating oneself from false identification with *asatya*—the body and external objects—through *viveka*. This frees the *sadhaka* from desire; and Peace is a state of desirelessness. When the *sadhaka* is thus purified—with no residue left of action born of attachment, and no feeling of doership in his actions—he enjoys effortless awareness, which is another name for *mook satsang*, in which is inherent the total renunciation of un-truth.

The climax of effort for the devotee is seeking refuge in the Lord (*Saranagati*); for the man of thought, in detachment; and for the man of action, in selfless dedication to duty—Dharma. All these threefold efforts culminate in *mook satsang*. Not in the *sankalpa* of not doing this and not doing that, but in the total renunciation of *sankalpas* consists

*mook satsang*. *Mook satsang* resolves 'doing' into 'being', and 'being' into 'IS', which is the Eternal.

Yearning for *satsang* dissociates the *sadhaka* from *asat*, and unites him with Sat. *Mook satsang* helps the *sadhaka* in this happy consummation. It is atonce the highest *sadhana* and the goal of *sadhana*.

The cessation of all propensities born of *sankalpas* and dwelling in Peace both inside and outside is *mook satsanga*. Desire for what one has not got, and misuse of what one has got and lack of faith in, and love for, the Eternal—are obstacles to *mook satsang*. Even a short spell to *mook satsang* awakens the *sadhaka* to Reality. It is equally useful to *sadhakas* of any path; even as the earth unfolds all varieties of seeds; *pravritti* and *nivritti* alike gain their end through *mook satsang*, which helps the *sadhaka's* 'I' to rise above both to true life. *Mook satsang* is independent of any external possessions or circumstances.

*Mook satsang* dissolves even unfulfilled desires in the *Rasa* of Love.

The Voice of the silence can only be heard in true *mauna mook satsang*. *Mook satsang* is silent communion with the Absolute, a state of pure awareness, and affords true and immutable repose.



Repose, freedom and love constitute the true want of every *sadhaka*. Their fulfilment is inherent in perfect dutifulness, detachment and feeling of kinship with the Divine. Renunciation of impure action (which is against the dictates of *viveka*), renunciation of attachments (which are contrary to the light of *viveka*) and the ending of trust in all that is extraneous (which is opposed to *viveka*) result in perfect dutifulness, detachment and love. Renunciation of untruth consists in the firm rejection of these three aspects of untruth. This is the responsibility of every *sadhaka*, in the discharge of which every *sadhaka* is free. It is the forgetfulness of his real want that makes the *sadhaka* forget his responsibility. The awakening of his real want makes the *sadhaka* alive to his responsibility.

Action that is in consonance with *viveka* and not beyond the power of the *sadhaka* constitutes

his duty; action that is contrary to the light of viveka and beyond one's power is non-essential, indulgence in which is association with *asat*—which must be renounced. Indulgence in such action makes one forget his real duty, the disregard of which provides the soil for breeding more and more indulgence in impure actions. The *sadhaka* should therefore, be vigilant for the performance of duty in the purest spirit and with his eyes fixed on the goal. The *sadhaka* has to protect the rights of all concerned, for the dissolution of all accumulated attachments, and to renounce all his supposed rights, to prevent the formation of any fresh attachments and their breed—lust, anger, etc.

The realization of what constitutes the real want of man is inherent in himself. What is not realizable is the fulfilment of all extraneous desires. To turn one's back on the former, and to indulge in the latter, is falling a prey to untruth. All composite things are doomed to dissolve, and to seek to preserve them is a delusion; whereas the true Life pervading everything, and still remaining itself beyond them, pertains to the real core of man, and

is his undeniable heritage. The true *sadhaka* boldly and firmly rejects the former and leaps up to the latter. He rejects all perishable attachments and thereby attains true freedom and Love Eternal. Identification with the body is the primal cause of bondage, and has pushed man into pursuing the mirage of fleeting pleasures. The *sadhaka* boldly breaks the chains that thus bind him—rejecting once for all the suzerainty of *asatya*—and unites with Truth, which is true *satsang*, the quintessence of pure *sadhana* which merges in the *Sadhya*.



## Chapter VI

# THE ESSENCE OF SADHANA

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“I am” is every man’s experience. Next comes the experience of “the World” around and one’s various relationships with it. Last though not the least, one feels and gropes after the First Cause of the entire Creation.

As one awakens to the light of *viveka*, one aspires to fulfil himself *vis a vis* himself, to redeem the manifold relationships with which he finds himself bound with the world, and to meet or realize his Creator.

To fulfil himself, man must realize his Self. To realize his Self, he must dis-robe himself, his inner consciousness, of what he is not—the body and things, the talents and ability, the energy etc. provided to him to play his role. Namely, he must rid himself of the fever of “me” and “mine”, of desire for external things and of a sense of his rights or demands on others. Riddance from the sense of “I” and “mine” does not detract an iota from the use—right use—of whatever is given to one. On the

contrary, it spontaneously results in right action, which helps to build up a good social order. It also conduces to make one desireless; for when the very body is recognised to be an external thing, no external thing would be needed for the real self. By desirelessness the mind becomes pure and calm which releases *pravritti* in the service of all and spontaneous *nivritti*—compassion and detachment. If only men seek to serve, to protect the rights of others, the right of *all* would be protected without the selfish clamour of greed and jealousy and with mutual love warming the hearts of all. For love is the *summum bonum* of service, and indeed true service is the outer expression of love.

With the splitting of the atom of the “I” the *sadhaka* becomes one with *Yoga, Gnana* and Love.

When the *sadhaka* thus fulfils himself, automatically he becomes a blessing to the world and ‘Joy of the Return’ to the Lord of the world. Pure *sadhana* flows through him. Through such a one everything that passes his touch is rightly used in the service of the world. He returns good for evil; his knowledge becomes a candle that lights other candles; his strength a support of the weak; his love freely given.

Not to do evil is the beginning for such a *sadhaka*. Nobody can be entirely evil-infested. Even a murderer has compassion for someone in some corner of his heart. By returning good for evil the evil-doer too is purified and transformed. In the perfection of *sadhana* evil no longer exists for him. The true *sadhaka* realises the *present* purity of everyone. However impure one's past might have been, the present timeless moment of everyone is pure. The *sadhaka* therefore has compassion rather than anger for the evil-doer.

Above all, the *sadhaka* realizes that his body and possessions are a trust from Providence, which it is his duty and privilege to utilise in the service of the world. He never forgets this obligation to the world.

Finally, in the heart of such *sadhaka* springs forth faith, a spirit of surrender, and love and devotion for the One who is the bed-rock, the Source, the life and light of himself and the world. What is that One like, where is He, what He does are secondary questions which are not essential to the acceptance that He IS, and that He IS our own

and we are His own. His Glory both of Transcendence and in Immanence then reveals Itself to the consciousness of the *sadhaka*, uniting it with His Consciousness. What a pity that we forget our innate relationship with such a One, our Source and our Creator, and forge our attachments with the crumbs that we receive as gifts from Him. If we can do nothing else, we can surrender ourselves to Him in humble but one-pointed love, which itself would melt our ego. His Grace is ever raining, flowing. The world, on the other hand, is by its very nature incapable of delivering the goods, of fulfilling the real want of a single soul.

Surrender to the Lord of Love is not an escape; it is a remembrance of our inborn, imperishable relationship with Him. For the *sadhaka* who has surrendered himself to Him, there remains nothing else to do, for HE does everything for him. Such is His Love, His Compassion, His Power, His Wisdom.

Thus, in Self-realisation, service of fellow-beings and love for the Lord consists the fulfilment of the faculties of thinking, doing and feeling with which the human being is endowed. Nothing exists

outside the Lord of Life and Love, and in serving all he serves the Lord of all. Thus, man being a ray of that Life and Love, he fulfils himself in realising his true being.



## Chapter VII

### SOME MAXIMS OF THE SAINT

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1. Renunciation of wrong action spontaneously leads to right action.
2. Right use of the present is the root of progress.
3. In the renunciation of one's rights and the protection of the rights of others lies the secret of attainment.
4. One who desires nothing for himself is desired by all.
5. What one does to others is rendered unto him.
6. Goodness does not brook a thought of return.
7. Returning good for evil destroys the evil.
8. Exercising the mind on what others should do makes us forget what we should do.
9. In the right use of things lies the key to obtaining all things necessary. Right use of things consists in the service of others.

10. Retaining relationships without rendering service is bondage.
11. Acquired wealth is a trust of the poor.
12. All power is a trust of the weak.
13. Service and sacrifice are the acme of duty and dutifulness.
14. In the craving for selfish rights is hidden virtual *himsa*.
15. The feeling of compassion is the highest service.
16. It is a tremendous mistake to covet one's gain in the loss of others, one's progress in another's downfall, and one's happiness in another's unhappiness.
17. Do not pry into the vices of others. Looking into the vices of others binds you with the vices.
18. Do not listen to gossip against others.
19. Forget your virtues and others' vices.
20. Not to repeat a bad deed is the best atonement.
21. Forget the past, mind the present. The present makes the future.

22. Do to others as you would like others to do to you. Do not do to others what you would not like others to do to you.
23. In the renunciation of aimless ramblings of the mind lies the key to creative thought.
24. Paying heed to *viveka* is to destroy *aviveka*.
25. In the renunciation of *asadhna* is the emergence of *sadhana*.
26. The awakening of quest for the Eternal swallows all desires for the ephemeral. In *nivritti* from desires is vested the fulfilment of quest.
27. All impurities are rooted in the craving for pleasures of the senses.
28. Past mistakes are obliterated by themselves if they are not repeated.
29. From the renunciation of evil *sankalpas* emerge good *sankalpas*. Renunciation of indulgence in the fruits of good *sankalpas* leads to *nivritti* from *sankalpas*. The peace of *nivritti* from *sankalpas* is much more precious than the pleasure of the fulfilment of *sankalpas*.

30. The right use of pain and suffering is in detaching oneself from the rising above the same.
31. To imbibe the lesson of sorrow is the greatest *tapa*.
32. To regard another as the cause of one's suffering is a delusion.
33. Above pleasure and pain is life.
34. The plant of sorrow grows from the seed of pleasure. To crave for pleasure is, therefore, to invoke pain.
35. To be desireless one must be free from the sense of 'I' and 'mine'.
36. In the knowledge of the real nature of the world is Inherent the renunciation of the world.
37. The destruction of ego releases infinite power.
38. A timeless moment of effortless repose is of far greater value than a long course of calculated effort.
39. Truth is the greatest shield in life. None protects like it.



40. Love is the nature of the Beloved and the life of the lover. Love is light, life, eternity. There is nothing else to achieve but Love, in Love consists the perfection of life.
41. Faith and Love go together.
42. In the ending of desire is the dawn of Love.
43. In the sense of unity resides Love.
44. The truth is that the Supreme Giver is ours, but all the things He gives are His.
45. The last offerings at the altar of Love is the surrender of "I" and "mine."



46. Inherent in one's own reform is the reform of all.
47. Actions, beliefs and relationship opposed to *viveka* are to be rejected.
48. Only he can be free of fear who is not a cause of fear to anyone. One who gives fear to others is himself in the grip of fear. Only one who himself is in the grip of fear gives fear to others.
49. All fear is grounded in body-consciousness.

50. The urge to give happiness to others helps to destroy one's own craving for pleasures.
51. The right use of pleasure is in sharing the same with others.
52. Only he can be free from faults who sees only his own faults.
53. There is no vice greater than prying into the faults of others.
54. Desire for pleasure is the mother of frustration. Compassion eats up the craving for pleasure.
55. To feel a need is itself beggary.
56. Adversity is afraid of one who is not afraid of adversity.
57. Peace is the source of power.
58. Forgiveness or generosity motivated by attachment, and renunciation caused by anger, are fruitless.
59. By adopting any one *sadhana* in its fullness, all the *sadhanas* are carried out by themselves.
60. A *sadhaka* must respect the Law of the Divine. The light emanating from the Sun is not the

Sun, but it is inseparable from the Sun. Even so, the Law of the Divine cannot be separated from the Divine.

61. In renunciation, love and service is the perfection of human life.
62. The generosity of the world, the good-will of enlightened souls and the Grace of the Divine ever abide with all the *sadhakas*.
63. A *sadhaka* who retreats from the outer world for *sadhana* but keeps his inner psychological attachments with the world does not reap the benefits of solitude. True solitude consists in the inner solitude of the mind.
64. For the right regulation of one's speech, the *sadhaka* should cultivate the habit of silence, and of speaking only when useful or necessary. A *sadhaka* must avoid gossip and social chatter.
65. No real *sadhana* is big or small in itself. What is important is the *sadhaka's* spirit of whole-hearted devotion and dedication in his *sadhana*. In fact  $\frac{3}{4}$  is the same as  $\frac{75}{100}$  or  $\frac{750}{1,000}$ !

66. The non-fulfilment of a desire is sorrow. Merely to smart under it is indulgence in the self same sorrow. If one pines for pleasure in one's pain, it is indulgence in the self-same pain. If a pain makes one's gaze pierce deep enough into a pleasure to see the pain inherent therein, that is the real lesson of pain.
67. The forgetfulness of the goal of life prevents the desired lesson of pain from sinking into our minds.
68. The discharge of every *pravritti* for the good of all, free from attachment, is the path of action.
69. To detach oneself from all objects, circumstances and states of mind through *viveka* is the path of thought.
70. Faith in, and surrender to, the Lord is the path of devotion.



