

MATRI VANI

VOLUME I

[Translated by ATMANANDA]

With a foreword
by

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FOREWORD

The present booklet contains fragments of personal advice and suggestions tendered by Sri Anandamayi Ma to some of Her devotees at different times. As these formed part of letters (in Bengali) dictated by Mother in reply to their own supplications, their language bears upon it the native simplicity and freshness of the original messages without the least deterioration owing to the mechanism of transmission.

An analysis of the booklet would show that Mother's words are concerned with various situations arising in a man's life when under the pressure of circumstances he feels himself utterly helpless, hopeless and forlorn. Bereavements, disillusionments and a feeling of frustration in life, attacks of hostile force within , waning of faith, vagaries of an uncurbed and erratic mind, protracted physical ailments---these are some of the necessary evils incidental to ordinary human existence on earth. In every case it will be found that Mother has suggested practically the same sovereign remedy---viz., the cultivation of the habit of remembering God and taking His Holy Name supplemented by an unconditional surrender to His Will and an unshaken belief that all His dispensations are wise and for our good. It is true that the instructions conveyed in this collection were given to particular individuals and under particular circumstances; nevertheless, they have about them the ring of an eternal and universal appeal to mankind, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, age or nationality. Those who have the good fortune of knowing Mother more closely are aware

that She has not on Her part any personal bias towards a particular line of approach as against the others and that if in the case of a *sadhaka* [*spiritual aspirant*] the exigencies of individual predisposition and competence demand exclusiveness in a particular direction She never hesitates to recommend it.

Mother accepts the Supreme IDEAL of man as one and the same. But She says that on account of difference of outlook consequent difference in tastes, capacities, environments and ways of thought, paths of attainment become necessarily different. All these differences are true; but they are only superficial. What really counts for in each case is, whether one has or - has not the sincerity of heart, a truth-seeking spirit and a genuine thirst of the soul coupled with unceasing activity and undaunted faith and a stainless moral character. Detachment from worldly affairs and devotion to the divine Ideal are the chief assets for a pilgrim on the path of the Infinite..

In every age, on every occasion, in every turn of fortune, in the field of action and in the stillness of solitude, a man should therefore have a single Aim before him on which his mind's eye may be set and it should shine as if it were - the pole star in his mental firmament. To him it should be like the majestic lordship of the Supreme Father, like the -abiding Grace of the Great Mother, like the ever flowing sweet Spring of the Eternal Beloved; it may also be like the impersonal but self-conscious Bliss of the Divine Being; it may even be like the hidden Essence of his own soul. It is in the direction of this Supreme~ Objective that a man should always be consciously striving --- through action, through knowledge and through love. In whatever condition a man may happen to find himself at the moment of awakening he should bear in mind that his path really stretches out before him - from there; he has - only to exert himself to the best of his powers and proceed along the path. If it is true that a man through his limited action cannot reach upto the Goal, it is also true that no effort, however insignificant, goes in vain if It is sincere. Every genuine effort, however imperceptible in its littleness, has a value of its own as a means to the End; and where It is rightly put forth, this End is bound to be realized in its own time. But the Supreme End is above all means. We have to move forward along the path and utilize the resources accessible to us. For who knows at what Great Moment the Supreme Reality will reveal Itself in all its resplendent glory? When once the Vision dawns upon the soul, the defilements and impurities clinging to it from the immemorial past and accumulated through the apes will vanish in a single instant like mists at dawn before the rays of the rising sun. The finite assumes the role of the Infinite when the Infinite smiles upon it and, being freed from all limitations and disabilities of mundane life, it begins to live, move and have its being within the Infinite. One has naturally to start with a definite plan of self-discipline suited to one's tastes and capacities and arranged in a certain order of temporal and logical sequence, but when once His Grace shows Itself, the stiff formalities of rigid conventions sink into insignificance. All fetters are then snapped asunder and the "Impossible" not only becomes possible, but enters into the actual fibre of our being. Peace and Freedom are eternally restored to the soul and man realizes the Highest Goal of his existence. This little book is verily a lustrous string of precious pearls fit to be always worn round the neck by every devoted child of Mother. I heartily welcome its publication and congratulate both the compiler and the translator on the exquisite sense of propriety they have shown in the selection

and rendering of the pieces.

12th April 1959

Gopinath Kaviraj.

NOTES ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF TRANSLATED SANSKRIT WORDS

Vowels

a has the sound of u in much,
a has the sound of a in path,
e has the sound of ai in maid,
I has the sound of in bid,
i has the sound of ee in deep,
o has the sound of oa in road,
u has the sound of u in put,
u has the sound of oo in mood,
au has the sound of ou in loud,
r is 'ri' as in rid

Consonants

t, th, d, dh, n are dentals. They are pronounced by touching the teeth with the palate [as in French and German] .

t, th, d, dh, n are cerebrals and require the tongue to be placed against the roof of the mouth [s in English] , n being a nasal sound.

th to be pronounced as two distinct sounds, as in 'rat-hole', *dh* as in 'mad-house'.

m nasalizes the preceding vowel;

n corresponds to the initial sounds in 'new'

c corresponds to the English 'ch' as in 'church';

s represents a sharp forcefully pronounced 'sh'

s represents a soft cerebral 'sh' ;

s as in cross.

The accent of the words generally lies on the long vowels.

Dedicated at the lotus feet of
Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi
on the sacred occasion of
Centenary Celebrations, 1995-96

***IN MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
MAHARANI RAJKUVERBA OF GONDAL***

SHIVRAJ SINHJI

Hawa Mahal
Gondal, Gujarat



PART I

GENERAL ADVICE

1

All this, which is His creation, is under His dispensation, in His presence and is He.

In whatever state He keeps anyone at any time it is **all** for the good, for verily everything is ordained by Him, is of Him.

Relative happiness, which is happiness depending on anything, must end in grief. It is man's duty to meditate on God, Who is peace itself. Without having recourse to that which aids the remembrance of God there can be no peace. Have you not seen what life in this world is? The one to be loved is God. In Him is everything --- Him you must try to find.

2

If anything is to be had — whatsoever, in whatever way — it must be had of Him alone.

Man's bounden duty as a human being is to seek refuge at His Feet.

Days glide on; already you have let so many go by; anchored in patience endeavour to pass the few remaining.

3

Every moment belongs to God; Endeavour to keep your mind dedicated to His Feet. God, the Ocean -of Mercy, who ever blesses the world, pours out His grace at all times. It is incumbent on man to consider everything that happens to be for the best: 'For the best' denoting what is most helpful towards the realization of the Divine, the realization of the fullness of Bliss.

4

The ceaseless, never-ending current of divine Mercy and Compassion ever flows forth; in that current one should bathe.

5

Who are the truly wealthy? Those who are possessed of the Supreme Treasure —they alone are really rich and live in abundance. Poor and destitute must be called the man in whose heart the remembrance of God abides not. To depend solely on Him is man's one and only duty.

6

Verily, abounding sorrow is the essential characteristic of life in this world. Fix your mind on God.

7

The sovereign and universal remedy is the contemplation of the One. To think only of Him and to serve Him at all times is essential for every human being.

8

Let His Name be ever with you; imperceptibly, relentlessly time is creeping away.

9

To concentrate only on Him, the remembrance of Whom brings release from all anxiety, is meet and right.

At all times, endeavour to sustain the contemplation of God and the flow of His Name. By virtue of his Name all disease becomes ease.

10

Without the repetition of the Name and the remembrance of God, there is no hope of peace on earth. Let duty come first and foremost.

In **Rama**, who is the dispeller of all sorrow, there is **arama** — rest and ease; where *Rama* is not, there is **vyarama** — discomfort and disease.

11

It is possible to practise God's Name under the most adverse circumstances.. He causes everything to happen and is therefore ever near.

12

When you leave everything to Him Who is the Fountain of Peace, and then only may you hope for peace.

13

When the mind centres on what gives peace and one's gaze dwells on what promotes it, when One's ears listen to what fills the heart with peace and at all times there is a response from Him Who is peace itself, then only can there be promise of peace.

14

It is desire that causes sorrow; but the will to realize God is itself felicity. Be certain that He will cleanse and comfort you and take you into His arms.

Sorrow comes in order to lead you to happiness. At all times hold him in remembrance.

15

Your body, which is part of and depending on this illusory world, is on the other hand the

expression **of** a hidden inner process. You are yourself the many, appearing in various aspects, forms and modes. Each one of them exists in fact to fulfill a particular need. Yours is the give and take of the universe, yours the need, and yet you yourself are the fulfillment that hidden inner process is generated by you.

16

You are imperfect, something is lacking in you, this is why you feel the desire for fulfillment. ‘Body’ [*the Bengali word for ‘body’ is ‘sharir’ and the verb shora means to move on , to slip away.*] signifies— that which slips away, which is continually changing. If there is no want, no desire, then this kind of body that is ever in the process of perishing does not persist. Thus, after God-realization one can no - longer speak of such a body for the Self stands revealed.

17

The sense of want arises spontaneously —it is the Divine that awakens it.

To lose all is to gain all. He is merciful and compassionate. Whatever He does at any moment is all-beneficent, though certainly painful at times. When He manifests Himself as all-loss, there is hope that He **may** also manifest Himself as all-gain. To pine for the One Who helps towards the light of Truth is salutary, for it kindles the awareness of Truth.

Verily, He is everywhere at all times.

The endeavour to awaken to his real nature is man’s duty as a human being.

18

In the field of His play even getting means losing. This is but the nature of its movement. Think of Him Who cannot be lost. Meditate on Him alone, on Him, the Fountain of Goodness. Pray to Him; depend on Him. Try to give more time to *japa* and meditation. Surrender your mind at His Feet. Endeavour to sustain *japa* and meditation without a break.

19

Human-birth — does it not ordinarily mean experiencing desire, passion, grief, suffering, old age, disease, happiness, pain and so on? Yet it is man’s duty to bear in mind that he exists for God alone— for His service and for the realization of Him.

To say, “I do not know, I do not understand” is only ignorance. It is this veil of ignorance that causes agony and misfortune.

20

Verily, all is within His Law. How can one who has been able to accept this be still so greatly troubled? It is but your duty to consider everything as His. Whatever He may do, try to let the

thought of Him keep you at peace.

The sense of want, does it not arise because the desired object **is** not obtained? When one's desire remains unfulfilled, fruitless, to continue craving for the same thing and be disappointed time and again—surely it is futile. So long as there is desire, the experience of want and sorrow is----from the worldly point of view--- but natural. Whatever you may desire that is of this ever-changing world will bring you sorrow, even though momentary happiness may be had at times. To seek THAT in which no sorrow is and al. is found, is man's sole duty.

21

Losing hope is losing all indeed. But has this loss of everything occurred? Is not the heart still bubbling over with desires and hopes? This is only natural — it is the innate tendency of the individual

Perfect resignation gives the deepest joy of all. Accept it as your sole resource. Whatever God does at any time is wholly benign. If you can bear this in mind you will be at peace.

22

What you consider to be your duty, you will in any case try to carry out, in fact you are doing it. But man's special duty, which is the thought of God, the activity of the mind that awakens the desire to know what you really are, on this you should concentrate; and it is most important to make a special effort in this direction. Give your attention to your regular daily practice of *sadhana* . If circumstances will not permit any other exercise, let it be only **the** remembrance of Him — the purpose of it all being the realization of the One Who is manifested in all forms and in all modes of being.

23

It is through the search after Truth that man can elevate himself. This he should regard in the light of a duty.

24

That in which there is no question of form or formlessness, of beyond form and attributes, of transcending even the beyond---that alone is worthy of human aspiration.

25

Man must go out in search of That which is concealed behind the world. He should choose an abode that will make it easy for him to proceed to his true Home.

26

The word *manus* (man: *Man* mind, *hus* conscious]) itself gives the clue to what man should really be: a being who is self-aware. Even if he has slipped and fallen, is it not his bounden duty to use as a lever the very earth to which he has tumbled, and raise himself up again? Besides, one

does not fall so often. As a man, constant effort is his duty .If he does not awaken to the consciousness of his own Self, what has he achieved? He has but wasted his life. How many lives are frittered away age after age in endless coming and going. Find out who you are. Discover the significance of the round of births and deaths, its cause and where it leads. When man becomes a traveller on the path to his inner being, the distance that separates him from his Goal gradually vanishes. You will most certainly have to undertake this pilgrimage to Immortality, trampling under foot hundreds and hundreds of obstacles and impediments.

This is the kind of manliness that has to be awakened. Why should you remain **helpless** as if paralysed? You only repeat over and over again that you cannot, cannot do *sadhana* . Why? Why? Why?

27

Let 'I cannot' be eradicated from your vocabulary. Time is gliding away swiftly: For a few days only lasts this reunion with friends and kinsmen. Gather up your possessions, brother, no one accompanies you on your final journey.

28

Man may find himself in all kinds of surroundings, yet he must not allow himself to be driven hither and thither helplessly under their influence. It is his duty under all circumstances to preserve his individuality and strength of character intact. To drift with the current is easy enough, but to stand firm as a rock is difficult. He who is able to do this will keep his head without wavering even among a dozen people of different points of view and lines of approach. This surely is the attitude that befits a human being.

29

Look, in order to pluck a rose one has to put one's hand into the midst of thorns. But if the rose is a person's aim and he has a keen desire to pluck it, he will not refrain from doing so for fear of being pricked. Moreover, the Great **Mother** arranges whatever as necessary for each one .She certainly knows the real need of every individual.]If one has at least this much faith, there is no reason at all to feel distressed.

30

Try your utmost never to succumb to anyone's influence. In order to become firm, calm, deeply serious, full of courage, with one's personality wholly intact, pure and holy out of one's own strength, one has to be centred in God.

31

To a human being the most noble, irreproachable line of conduct should alone be acceptable. It is a matter of great rejoicing if anyone strives to mould his life upon this pattern. In the case of a

woman it means preserving her integrity and purity by being completely faithful to her husband. Not even to allow her glance to fall on any must be her endeavour. Only actions that kindle man's divine nature are worthy of the name of action, all the rest are non-actions — a waste 'of energy. Any line of behaviour that fails to quicken the divine in man should be eschewed, no matter how enticing it might appear ;but any that helps to awaken man's inherent divinity must be resolutely adopted even though it be seemingly uninviting. Man's calling is to aspire to the realization of Truth, to tread the excellent path that leads to immortality. What appears delightful to the senses later develops into a hotbed of poison, generating inner turmoil and disaster, for it belongs to the realm of death.

32

Force of character is man's great strength. If he uses it in his dealings with the world he will indeed be victorious in most directions.

33

Worldly life is no doubt a battle-field. By becoming conscious of one's spiritual wealth one must strive to emerge triumphant from the battle.

34

You cling to that round *, rolling thing, believing that it constitutes your wealth; this is why there is so much trouble and confusion. What is this 'round thing'? Money of course. Try to cling exclusively to Him Who is the Whole, where one can speak neither of form nor formlessness and where trouble and confusion are non-existent.

**This whole passage is based on a play upon words, impossible to render into English. 'Gol' means round,: mal possession and golmal trouble and confusion.*

/

35

If you do not allow your thoughts to stray from His Lotus-feet there is hope of your being saved from all manner of temptations. Man's duty is to awaken to true humanity and to cast aside his animal propensities; to choose what is excellent and to relinquish the merely pleasurable. Let your mind be like a beautiful flower that may be offered to the Lord in worship. In very truth, man's sole duty is the search after Self-realization. With but the one Supreme Friend you my friend must try to avoid the ties of worldly friendship.

36

To indulge in what seems pleasurable means to choose that which appears lovely on the surface and therefore attractive. Improper, ill-fated, degrading actions~ that give expression to one's animal nature lead to misery even though they be pleasurable. The rules and regulations pertaining to the householder's period of life (*grihasta ashrama*) have to be observed as fully as possible. To live up to the highest ideals may be irksome at first, but ultimately leads to real well-being and peace. One must learn to find enjoyment in the Sublime—then only does one deserve to be called a human being. Having been blessed with a human body it is but right that one should behave in a fitting manner. Why give way to animal instincts?

If you cannot sustain *japa* at all times, at any rate complete two rosaries twice day, morning and evening. The search after Truth is man's real vocation.

37

There are various modes of living: one is the *ashrama* of the householder: another to do service, regarding whomever one serves as a manifestation of the Supreme Being; a third, way is to fix Self-realization as the one and only goal and advance towards it-with uninterrupted speed and determination. In keeping with his inclinations and bent of mind, everyone chooses one of these modes of living. God Himself will take care of -everything that concerns a man who, puts -his whole trust in Him.

38

To aspire to the realization of Truth is alone worthy of man. In the home of the householder [*grihasta ashram*] there should be no strain. Allowing oneself to be agitated by mental anxiety amounts to strain; this is not the line to be taken, for by such a state of mind the power to create obstacles is developed.

By seeking refuge in the Power that is Bliss, Goodness, Beneficence, the Destroyer of obstacles, peace will be established in the home. This is man's special pursuit as well as his duty. Those sensible, intelligent and wise men and women who depend on God and the Guru and full of faith, in a spirit of renunciation, endeavour to attain to Reality should advance along any path that is most helpful to their aspirations, ever remaining tranquil and choosing that which promotes peace. In all one's actions one must aim at fulfilling one's dharma.

39

Abide by your duty. To live in the home that he has created for himself is surely fitting for a householder. Do not, however, neglect the search for your real Home. Only when this is found has one truly come home.

40

In all forms, in all diversity and disparity is He alone. The infinite variety of appearances and manifestations, of modes of becoming and states of being, of species and types, all the numberless

distinctions as well as all identity, are but He Himself. With whom are you then angry? Whatever anyone says is according to his stage and condition at that particular time and therefore right for him. Surely, he is only demonstrating what he perceives and understands at that point of his development. This also is but an expression, a guise of the One.

41

To remain calm and at peace under all circumstances is man's duty. To form a bad opinion of a person just because one has heard some gossip about him is wrong. Hostility, condemnation, abusive language, ill-feeling and so forth, even if kept concealed within one's mind, will and must fall back on oneself. Nobody should ever harm himself by harbouring such thoughts feelings.

42

To dwell in the joy that springs from the mind's constant occupation with things divine is man's duty. Thinking of anything other than God is what creates sorrow. Be it mantra *japa*, be it meditation, worship, perusal of sacred texts, the simple awareness of God or a like device, be it *kirtan* or religious music — all these are different modes of being in the divine Presence. One should always remain engaged in one of them, in fact never be without Him. Bear in mind: This is what this little child requests from her friends and also from her fathers and mothers.*

* *Mataji often speaks of Herself as a little child and 'mother', calls children and unmarried people Her 'friends' and married people 'father'.*

43

How can this little girl possibly leave her father? Even if he pushes her far away, this obstinate little child will still be with him. The father will have to realize that such is the nature of his little daughter: in fact all her father's qualities are to be found in her and he should make her use these **very** qualities in the service of her ailing father.

If one feeds upon the things that aggravate the disease, is it not natural that the illness should grow worse? Medicine will have to be taken and also a change of air will be beneficial*.

[* The illness obviously here means '*bhava roga*', the disease of every man who looks upon himself as a separate individual. The medicine to cure this disease is *sadhana*. A change of air signifies a change from worldly surroundings to *satsang*, the company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth.]

44

They imagine this body_*[Mataji usually refers to Her person as 'this body.']*_to be far away but actually it is always very, very near. How could it possibly leave anyone? The question of distance

arises solely from *their* point of view. Whenever they can get a holiday let them come and meet this body.

No matter what work one undertakes, it should be done well. If one cultivates the habit of doing everything well, there is fair promise of one's doing likewise on the spiritual path. The action is He, - and the doer of the action is He and no other. At all events one should make an attempt to develop this attitude of mind. Truth — in the presence of which illusion is recognized as illusion — Truth, THAT Which IS, has to be made one's own.

45

So far as this body is concerned, nobody ever commits an offence against it and therefore there can be no question of asking this body's forgiveness. Nevertheless you will most certainly have to reap the fruit of what you have done. But this body does not feel even the faintest shadow of anger about it.

46

To tell the truth, while some people undoubtedly do approach this body in quest of Reality, very many come only to get their desires and longings fulfilled.

Although he has had such unmistakable proof of what the true nature of the world is his heart is still in it? At this juncture he should try his utmost to pledge himself solely to service, regarding whatever he does as service to the Lord. Ask him at all costs to make a resolute effort against letting his mind become entangled in anything pertaining to this ocean of sorrow. It is attachment to the world that has brought such deep distress to the unfortunate man. Nothing but ignorance is at the root of it all. He should continue to give news of himself to this body in any way he is able, for he has no one to whom he can confide his troubles and afflictions, which — one and all — are but the results of his past actions.

By sorrow does the Lord dispel sorrow and by adversity does He destroy adversity.

When this is done He sends no more suffering — this must be borne in mind at all times.

In very truth, the Eternal's offspring must centre their thoughts on Him. Divorced from Him there cannot be even a prospect of peace — never, never, never. By abiding in God man will find peace, the veil will be rent, and the Dispeller of Sorrow stand revealed. He alone is the conqueror of evil, *He* is yours, the **sole** treasure of the human heart.

47

Do not keep concealed within yourself what weighs on your mind. If you write it all to me freely and frankly, your heart will be unburdened even more. Father, why have you kept it suppressed within yourself for such a long time? To confide it to this body (*Mataji*) brings relief, does it not? Truly, this body belongs to all; for this reason it behaves and speaks, as far as possible, so as to fulfill the needs of the people with whom it deals at any particular time.

When the worship of an image or any other *puja* is performed according to the rites laid

down in the *sastras* as accepted by all *brahamana* priests and when *kumari puja* forms part of the ceremonial as prescribed by the *shastras*, then the priests and others concerned must be allowed to have their say according to what they feel to be correct. Write this to him! But of course, when this body plays with its friends, little girls and boys, it does not pay attention to the injunctions of the priests — the child may be of any caste! The other day, did you not see that the little girl taken as a focus for the worship was certainly not the daughter of a *brahmana*; yet the person who performed the *puja* offered clothes, food and everything else exactly as it should be done, did he not? To this body everyone and everything is equal.

48

The Lord's is the body, the Lord's is the mind, the Lord' is all mankind.

Serving anyone is His service only. Endeavor to keep your mind always elevated. Is there ever a time when He is invisible? The discovery of this is all that is wanting.

49

To perform one's worldly duties is a good thing. At the same time, one has to be mindful of man's real Duty.

50

No matter what work has to be done at any time, try to give your full attention to it and do it thoroughly. Under all circumstances rely upon God. Verily, He is all-pervading and therefore can be found everywhere. With your whole being invoke the Lord of Life.

51

To spend your days serving your mother is very good indeed. Endeavour to keep your mind surrendered at God's holy Feet — then alone can there be a prospect of the shadows of restlessness growing faint.

52

By doing service -heart and mind are purified — be convinced of this! -To engage in service is a very powerful *sadhana*; do not become impatient. Rather serve your people with the utmost calm and have a kind word for everyone.

Whenever you say or do anything wrong, beg to be forgiven and try your best not to let a similar error occur in future. Even though others may be unjust to you, -you yourself should neither -do nor say anything unseemly.

53

Regarding all beings as His forms, in a spirit of service and utter calm, serve the Lord; serve the Lord and only Him. In the measure as you grow more and more perfect in your capacity as a servant of the Lord, fondness, love and devotion for Him as well as implicit faith will awaken in you.

54

One who serves God can never be helpless. The more ardently one seeks communion by engaging in *japa*, His service and contemplation, the fuller will be His revelation.

55

A person who does *not* for the love of God and with a cheerful heart, acquit himself of whatever responsibility that may fall to his lot at any time-- will find life excessively burdensome and never be able to accomplish anything. Man's duty — more especially for those who have made the Supreme Quest their one and only aim — is to work joyfully for the uplift of the world, with the conviction that all service is His service. Work done in such a spirit helps to purify both mind and heart.

56

Worldly occupations and business are bound to cause worry; it cannot be otherwise. The only way to meet it is by endurance, endurance and more endurance. Having dived down among the waves of the sea one has got to rise up again. The talents and the work God has entrusted to you are meant for His service and for nothing else — bear this in mind!

57

Many feel the urge to create a new and better world. Rather than let your thoughts dwell on such matters, you should concentrate on That by the contemplation of which there is hope of perfect peace. It is man's duty to become a seeker after God or Truth.

58

What is perceived in this world is in the nature of a dream, similar to what one sees in dreams. The only difference is that the former takes place in the waking state and the latter during sleep. Albeit I am always with you, mother.

59

In dreams all kinds of things may be seen: what the mind has been busy with; also what has not been thought about, but has occurred in the past or will come about in the future. In any case everything that happens belongs to the realm of dream.

60

At one time you declared emphatically that if only you could secure suitable employment, you would most earnestly cultivate the spiritual side of life along with material comforts and pleasures. That you have kept your word as to worldly enjoyment is more than obvious; but in what dark cave, in what inaccessible abyss have you hidden away the tender plant of spiritual aspiration? When will you start making an effort to bring light into that dark cave? Delay not: The day that is gone never returns. Invaluable time is slipping away. Devote your days to the endeavour to draw close to the Lord of the Humble. When extreme old age supervenes, you will be too sluggish, too feeble to concentrate on God's name. How will you then make up for what you failed to do in good time?

61

The activity of the mind that distracts man and takes him away from the remembrance of God is called wrong thinking. Endeavour to cultivate whatever will prevent your mind from harbouring that type of thought.

All your burdens are borne by God. Be convinced of this and ever try to abide sincerity and cheerfulness.

62

After all these days this kind of question has occurred to him? Of course, it has happened because he is at a stage where questions arise, and there is nothing wrong about it---for is not everything God's creation? Things are different for different people. It is well to remember that what looms as a formidable problem may at times be resolved in a very easy way, and so the further question may arise: Was it after all a trifling problem? The Creator of all things is the one who knows how to appraise it; He alone knows what is great and what is small.

63

The stream of godly thoughts is the path that leads to the exhaustion of *karma*. So long as the goal has not been reached one is bound to reap the consequences of right action, wrong action, and inaction---according to *karma*, the law of cause and effect.

64

Everything comes to pass according to each one's destiny. You will have to accept this. The Creator has so regulated the universe that everyone has and ever will have to reap the fruit of his actions; there is no way out of it. If, because of your physical unhappiness, you have no wish to, and consequently do not concentrate on the name of Him who is the Supreme Father, Mother, Friend and Lord, do you call this creating good *karma*---that you have to suffer the same kind of trouble over and over again? Your father and mother arranged that, after careful consideration, they believed to be for your best. Karma, the consequences

of one's past actions, are one's own liability.

65

No evil can overcome him who cleaves to god's name. What one suffers is in exact keeping with the nature of one's actions. If the flow of God's name is sustained, all work will beget the good.

66

How much karma from former births remains yet to be worked out! Just as when, for example, someone has ruined his digestion by indulging in excessive and unrestrained eating; even though he later adopts a frugal and well-regulated diet, the results of these wise measures will not be noticeable straight away. Thus: whatever be the nature of one's actions at the time, one has also simultaneously to enjoy and suffer the accumulated consequences of one's previous conduct. In God's creation there is perfect justice. Generally speaking, man is born into this world in order to reap the pleasant results of his good deeds as well as the outcome of his wrong-doing. What about the consequences of any impropriety or injustice he commits at the present time? He will of course have to endure them. Man enjoys the fruit of his accumulated former good works, but he will also have to suffer the effects of evil deeds. The Almighty's Will is being fulfilled. Man must foster the desire to perform right action. Even the impossible becomes possible by God's Will. Let His Lotus-feet be your sole refuge.

67

Man must behave as a hero. During spells of misfortune he must abide in fortitude and patience.

Time does not stand still. Suicide is a most heinous sin. To whom belongs the body that you speak of' destroying? Is this the way a human being talks? For shame!

68

This is the time to mould yourself. You will have to resort to renunciation and fortitude. So as to be released from the evil propensities acquired in previous lives, which have led to pain and suffering, try to make your heart the consecrated shrine of the All-Good, and desire desirelessness. The first thing is to feel drawn towards God.

Be unflinching in service. Whatever has to be done for anyone, do it in a spirit of service.

There is yet another matter to which special attention must be paid: sloth has to be abandoned altogether. When it is a question of good deeds or spiritual exercises (*satkarma*), disinclination and lethargy have to be completely ruled out. The difficulties that may arise when doing anyone a service should be borne cheerfully.

69

No two days pass alike. Do not allow yourself to be -overcome by despair. Have complete trust in Him in spite of everything
 ---to Him you should call out in happiness
 and in pain. If you have fallen to the ground, use it is a lever to raise yourself up again, for it is man's duty to exert himself, no matter what he undertakes.

70

Misfortune must not be looked upon as a disaster: It would be a sin to do so for who sends misfortune? What **He** does is all-beneficent. Under no circumstances, however adverse, should man accept defeat. "Gurudeva, you do only what is for my real well-being" — keep this thought ever with you. In this world there are bound to be all sorts of troubles. If you have lost wealth and position, let them be gone. Pray to God only for the lives of your family.

71

In times of affliction one must persevere in patience. Although distress and danger are certainly part of man's lot, yet will they be conquered by one who can meet them with courage and calm.

Conditions vary. During times of misfortune it is necessary to rely on Him with even greater tenacity. There is no knowing through what mishap He may wipe out peril. Sometimes He actually removes danger by adversity. This is why He is called Dispeller of Danger— Saviour.

72

It is characteristic of human life that it cannot continuously be either full of happiness or full of misery. Just as your good luck has not been lasting, do you imagine this evil fortune will never end? For the present try to gird yourself with patience and fortitude and wend your way with complete trust in God. It is the Will of the Almighty that prevails. Be intent under all circumstances to keep the thought of Him as your constant companion.

73

Where God may place you at any time and under whatever circumstances, recollect that it is all for the best. Endeavour to go through life leaving your burdens in His hands. He is the Preserver, He is the Guide, He is all in all.

74

It is man's duty to try and cultivate faith and devotion. Blows are characteristic of life in the world; thus man is taught to understand what the nature of this world is — and then detachment from pleasure and enjoyment ensues.

75

At all times let forbearance be your norm. Say to yourself: “Lord, everything Thou doest is for the highest good! Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God’s grace; verily, all is His grace.

Anchored in patience, enduring everything, abide by His Name and live joyously.

76

Whatever happiness or pain is experienced depends upon what one believes and how one views whatever happens. If one wishes to go beyond beliefs, and points of view, one must have faith in the Almighty.

77

In all matters depend exclusively upon God. To Him you should submit your heart’s petitions and yearnings. Your whole life will have to revolve round Him, you have no other resort; on your own you are utterly helpless, for are you not His creature? Whatever He does is all for the highest

You are certainly not in position to choose what seems propitious to you.

Why should he permit you, who are the offspring of the Immortal, to stray towards that which is of death.

You may deem yourself fortunate, for as you yourself say, God has rescued you from the jaws of death and preserved you to this day. Place your reliance upon Him alone. The sufferings and obstacles bred of desire that you encounter, even these should be welcomed as in fact the doing of His merciful hands. To become agitated is of no avail. If you must be impatient, be impatient for God:

“To this day I have not received any response from Thee and invaluable time has been spent in vain.” Do not let your mind and body be tormented with restlessness induced by worldly longings.

78

He Who has given you what you possess in this world — wealth, distinction, youth ---appeal to Him for his own sake.

You cannot? Why? You will have to! Verily, man can do all things. Who can say what He will give to whom and through what? Everything is His, entirely His. What did you bring with you at birth? Were you not empty-handed? And all you have acquired — is it yours, really?

All is His and whatever happens is His Will. Endeavour to maintain this attitude. Saying: ‘It is mine’ you grasp at everything— this is the way to court sorrow. Call out to Him because all is His.

To yearn thus for Him is real prayer.

All that the world can yield — what is its worth? Have you not discerned down the years the inevitable course of events? In His store-house, where there are riches, relations, the vigour of youth, there are also old age, death, disease and **poverty**. You will have to experience them all. In this world there is no room for undisturbed ease; don't you see that there is distress at every step? Does it not dawn on you even now to whom you belong? This serious illness of yours, is anyone suffering~ it for you? Can anyone even share it? Why all these worries?

All is His; all is He ; to leave everything to Him must be your sole endeavour. Invoke His Name, meditate on Him; ever abide in the remembrance of Him. Not praying for anything that is of this world, strive to abandon yourself without reserve to Him. In Him no want of any kind exists, no pain, no agony — in Him is all attainment, the summit of fulfillment, rest, repose, tranquility.

79

On hearing the news of someone's illness, Mataji had the following communicated to the sufferer:

“Depend on Him absolutely. In whatever circumstances you may find yourself, sustain the remembrance of Him alone. Let this be your prayer: Lord, Thou hast been pleased to come to me in the form of sickness. Grant me the strength to bear it, gird me with patience, and give me the understanding that it is' Thou Who art dwelling with me in this guise.

80

Abandon yourself to God in all matters without exception. “May He do as He pleases with me, who am but a creature of His hands” — this should be your attitude of mind. It is personal desire that is the very cause of suffering. Why make yourself feel dejected by the anxiety that you will be dependent on others?. Is it you who have created your body? The One to whom you belong is free to deal with it according to His Will; therefore may He do as He chooses. Try your utmost to stand aside and watch patiently as a spectator. When the mind is at ease one speedily recovers from ill-health. In this ever-revolving world, which is upheld by Him who causes it to revolve, a certain calamity has occurred. What is to be done? No matter what has happened, may His Will prevail — live in this spirit. In your present condition constantly think of Him alone.

81

That you are making an effort to arrange for medical treatment is also, the expression of His Will. Verily, He, the One is everything. Thou, in truth, art the disease, Thou art the remedy and the power to heal —in all shapes and forms art Thou alone.

82

Write to him that his condition very often indeed occupies this body's *kheyala*. He himself, by his own effort of will must become strong-minded and drop his negative attitude, which makes

him imagine that he cannot and never will be able to, succeed. On the contrary he must be determined that success is possible, that achievement will most certainly be his. He should say to himself:

“In whatever condition it pleases God to keep me, I resign ‘myself, surrendering to Him this body that is His.” Just that. With perfect calm and serenity he should pass most of his time lying straight on his back in what is called the “dead pose” [*savasana*) and silently repeat his mantra in rhythm with his breathing. *There is only one Brahman without a second* — this is what he has to realize. Write to him in plain language that, for him, there is no need of an intermediary.

83

When the *Mahant* of Khanna*, Sri Triveni Pun Mal~araj, left his body, Mat~jj sent the following message to his great admirer Sri Krishnanandaji Avadhuta:

‘Under the semblance of union and under the semblance of separation abides He, ‘the Supreme Himself.’”

*Khanna is a small town in [pre-partition] East Punjab, now simply ‘Punjab’ in India. .

84

Who is going whither and whence from does he come? For this body* there is no going and no coming. That which existed before exists even now. What does it matter whether one dies or remains alive? Even after death he still exists, so why feel upset?

* Mataji

85

Who belongs to whom in this world? By exhausting one’s particular karma, everyone must endeavour to bring to completion his life’s pilgrimage. What you are experiencing is the usual state of affairs on the journey through life; therefore do not allow yourself to be so very agitated! If, due to attachment to those with whom one has been united in this world of coming and going, one is utterly immersed in the sorrow of bereavement, how can the pilgrimage along one’s own Path become fruitful?- With unbounded vigour and energy one must forge ahead towards the revelation of one’s true Self. Travellers on the Supreme Path must strive to complete their journey; Self-realization is its purpose and goal.

86

It is the Will of the Almighty that prevails at all times, such verily is - the law of creation. ‘World’ (*jagat*) means a ceaseless round of sorrow, temporary happiness, and affliction: to experience this man is born. Do you not see that the world is nothing but this in infinite variety?

For him who has set out on his life’s last journey with the name *Durga* on his lips, there should be no grief, no tears; at any rate try your utmost to hold this attitude. If weep you must, weep for

God. Blessed is he who breathes his last pronouncing God's Name. One must strive to keep one's mind ever concentrated on His Feet.

Pray for the Guru's Grace and constantly remember His Lotus-feet.

87

Life's journey is bound to proceed inevitably in the manner you describe. Search in every home and see how many people can be found who have never known bereavement. This is why the only way out of this misery is by the path to Self-Realization.

88

In every home God is present in an infinite variety of guises. For the very reason that one has -entered life, one has to quit it again — be it sooner or later. While living as a householder, this terrible, smarting pain is unavoidable it is similar in every family. Does any balm exist to soothe this burning agony, save to take refuge in Him, from Whom all beings emanate, by Whom they are succored, and in Whom they ultimately are absorbed?

89

Do not feel distressed because you are deprived of' his physical presence. It is the duty of the nearest and-dearest of the departed to pray that he may **progress** on his upward path. However, if tears rush into your eyes because he has left his body, then cry invoking God. To weep for God is everybody's one and only hope. Also perform as perfectly as possible the duties prescribed by the *sastras* for the wife and son of the deceased.

90

What can be expected from this world, whose very nature is constant flux; times are ever changing. To live in time is to be bound by it — by death*. If you do **not** rise above time, how can you escape the clutches of death? Had time not borne away the moment that brought you such acute distress and agony, would any life be left in your body? This is the way of the world. What you have experienced happens continually to every family, in one form or another. Console yourself with the thought that this is how the world is fashioned.

When one resides in a country not one's own, how can one possibly evade the hardships that are a foreigner's lot? Your Motherland is where there is no question of distress and sorrow, of

violence and hatred, of estrangement, neither of the opposites of light and darkness. The endeavour to find himself in his real Home, in his true nature, is man's sole duty. Courage and steadiness are what is required.

**kala* means both 'time' and 'death',

91

On learning of the death of a devotee's mother, Mataji said:

“Write to my friend: The fortunate, the blessed one [*According to Hindu tradition, it is most auspicious for a woman to die while her husband and all her children are alive*] has ascended to the abode of Peace leaving behind her husband, her sons and daughters. To weep and mourn the loss of her body is not right, although it is natural that tears should flow. You will have to resort to fortitude. Just as parents are always eager to make the happiness and peace of their children their own, it is equally the duty of children to adopt a similar attitude with regard to their parents. Human beings who have not attained to the final Goal but are still struggling on the way and live in this world, identifying themselves with the body, cause themselves much pain by becoming agitated and crying out in anguish it is indeed deep suffering. Those who have passed away have no means of expressing it, yet this anguish troubles them. Nobody wishes to cause distress to his loved-ones. Recall to mind: Your mother is as your self, the one who bore you —her peace should be your peace. What has happened is God's dispensation, and all men are His very own. Where and how, on what path and in what state He keeps anyone depends on the Will of the Almighty.

‘Do not let your father notice that you are depressed. Serve everyone in a beautiful and graceful manner. Feel that God has entrusted you with the service of the family. Do not allow your father to become gloomy.

‘To see the shadow of grief on the faces of his children will intensify his unhappiness greatly; mindful of this, be careful to remain composed in your father's presence.’”

92

On receiving the news of the unnatural death of a devotee's son, Mataji said:

“Write to the parents that there is nothing to be done by them at present except to abide in fortitude and bear their tragic bereavement with heroic strength and calm. Such is the law of God's creation. In some cases events of that kind --are brought to an end by a special curse of this sort. The current of life in the world, is indeed made up of joys and sorrows, for man is born to reap the fruit of his past actions. Therefore, having been blessed by birth in a human body it is one's duty to pursue unceasingly the path that leads beyond pleasure and pain. Verily, quite often by annihilating misfortune through misfortune God attracts man to Himself.

“That you have today been plunged into an ocean of grief by the deceased, and also whatever he himself has had to suffer, must be understood to be the result of some very grave karma. Nevertheless you should keep in mind that even through this terrible blow he is advancing on his

upward path. Pray to God for the welfare of his soul.

“Being the offspring of a religious family he has consequently had the privilege of a certain amount of *satsang*. You know, father, that the Self is indestructible and that only the body is subject to change and decay.

“ That this body [Sri Ma]] does not usually speak about past and future is well known to you, father and mother. If opportunity offers, both of you may attempt to go on a pilgrimage some time. Even though you are suffering unbearable agony through the loss of - your son, it is imperative to endeavour to calm yourselves by the remembrance and contemplation of God. Also let either of you, regularly every day, read a small portion of the *Srimad Bhagavat* .When you have completed the whole of it, start again from the beginning, and so on. While reading imagine that your son is by your side, listening.”

93

The following message was sent to someone who had discarded his sacred thread out of grief over the death of a beloved member of his family:

“So you have cast *away* your sacred thread? Well, Well! Of course, you are bound to do what gives you peace of mind. In this world, when a man dies his wife does not accompany him, neither does the husband go with his wife when she passes away, nor the son with his dying father. How can anyone of his own will go with his loved ones when they depart from this world? Surely this is self-evident! Everyone has to live his life according to the results of his past actions.

‘Now that this misfortune has befallen you, have you given up eating, have you renounced your wife and children, your friends and relatives? Have you left off wearing clothes, or sleeping, or talking to people? It is true that you have been plunged into a sea of misery. But what possession of yours has gone with him who died? Only your sacred thread? Your parents’ gift of love and esteem, so precious as an aid on the way to the eternal Goal of human life! If today you resume the sacred thread in honour of him who has left this world, it will keep his memory alive in your heart. You had accepted it for his sake, this symbol of all that is an aid towards immortality. To discard the sacred thread, once it has been assumed, is a matter of deep regret for the ordinary man. Surely, you could keep it in remembrance of him who has passed away.

“One should not pray to God for any person; all prayer has to be solely for That which, when found All is found. The wearing of the sacred thread is also meant for this purpose.”

94

If you are not seeking God, you might, at your own sweet will, throw away anything whatsoever — why only the sacred thread? The desire to obey impulses of this kind will arise most certainly in those who do not aspire after God for His own sake, who do not love Him; it is their attitude towards life--their natural bent. If you have the power to destroy, why have you not by this time done away with all the obstacles that are hampering you? Nobody of himself has the power to lift as much as a blade of grass. It is His Will, the Almighty’s Will

that alone, prevails. At times, it is true, man is made to suffer. But thereby, also He, the Fountain of Goodness, does what is for man's real welfare; yet, to realize this is perplexing for the ordinary person.

To be without a sacred thread, without the *Gayatri* is inauspicious, nay, harmful for a *brahmin*. To what extent are you able to judge which the right path is for you? All-beneficent is everything that He does who is Goodness Itself.

Right speech is solely to talk of Divinity; all else is but torment and futility*.

[* *Hari katha hi katha; aur sab vritha aur vyatha—free Hindi rendering*]

95

Such is life in the world. Girded with fortitude like a hero you must try to steady yourself. There is simply no hope of peace save in the contemplation of God. Let this be our firm conviction. It is man's duty under all circumstances to seek refuge in Him by virtue of Whose Law all things are wrought. Not to wail or pine for the physical presence of the departed should be your sole endeavour. This is a journey that everyone, without exception, has to undertake, and it is necessary for each to prepare for it. Those who have been received into His arms should be entirely given over to His care.

Regard whomsoever you serve as the Supreme Being. Rely on Him absolutely.

96

To attempt to summon the spirit of the departed is not advisable. Very often some other being responds, and the ordinary is not in a position to distinguish between a genuine manifestation and a fake. Therefore it is harmful. Someone who took part in spiritualistic séances became insane. Against his mother's' wishes he continued to do so. To actually get individual into touch with the spirit of the dead one is difficult for the average person. Do not let your mind be occupied with any such matter. On the level of the Self (*Atma*) you are one with your deceased daughter. In this world happiness alternates with sorrow. Bear in mind that, as the Self (*Atma*), she is with you — within you. This is the truth, not fanciful thinking. Birth and death happen in fulfillment of the divine Will. In all shapes and conditions is but He alone.

97

God's Holy Name is Itself the rite for exorcising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name ghosts and evil spirits cannot remain.

98

Do not give in to your inclination to think about ghosts and apparitions; rather keep your mind solely on God's Name and meditate on Him. In the presence of His Name no other power can function. This is the truth, be firmly convinced of it. The moment you have recourse to God's name you should feel that no lesser power can touch you. If at that time you are aware of any physical anxiety, be quite certain that it is merely a bodily reaction.

99

When he retires for the night, he should repeat the Lord's Name and fall asleep doing so. If he be afraid even then, let him place a sacred book like the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Candi* or the *Ramayana* near his head. Besides he should unceasingly sustain the flow of God's Name and remember that where Scriptures are, there is He Himself, and no fear of any kind can exist in His Presence.

PART II

THE PATH OF SELF-REALIZATION

100

The Self, Self-contained, calling to Itself for its own Revelation — this is happiness.

101

The intense desire for God-realization is itself the way to it.

102

God, the Self, is all-pervading. Where is He not? In all forms and in the formless, in all names and the nameless, in all places and conditions, at all times is He. When the desire for Realization awakens, this is an actual manifestation of Him, the indivisible One. Since all names are His indeed, He will let Himself be grasped by any one of them.

The keen desire to attain to the Goal must be conceived. The very fact that Self-realization is one's goal means to seek and to find.

103

Whether it pleases you or not you will have to make the Eternal your constant companion just like a remedy that has got to be taken. Without loving God you will not get anywhere. Remember this at all times.

104

If you are able to love God really — this is the consummation of all love.

105

Be truthful in every way. Without purity one cannot advance towards Divinity.

106

Speak the truth to all. Secrecy, slyness and deception amount to cheating. They only taint the mind and set one floating on a sea of misery.

A truthful, pure and holy life tends towards joy and happiness supreme.

107

Truth itself will assist in every way him who has gone forth in search of truth.

108

On the journey through life in this world nobody remains happy. The pilgrimage to the Goal of human existence is the only path to supreme happiness. Try to tread that path which is your very own, where there is no question of pleasure and pain, the path that leads to freedom from egotism and to the highest Bliss.

109

Everyone runs after happiness and enjoyment. Yet, supreme happiness and bliss- are ever *There* and nowhere else. That which is eternal must be revealed, and then the question of going in search of anything does not arise.

110

Be anchored in fearlessness. What is worldly life but fear! When you live in the grip of fear, must you not be afraid? It is futile to expect fearlessness there. That you may be delivered from all sorrow you should endeavour to let God be your one and only support.

111

To forgo the shelter that the life of the householder (*grihasta asrama*)

affords in order to devote, one's days wholly to the Supreme Quest is difficult.

If you are capable of this — very well. But examine carefully the promptings that come from within. *His Will* be done.

112

How can one be a human being without fortitude? To attain to Truth one has to endure all hardships, ever abiding in patience. It is the obstacles that give birth to patience.

113

Those who, prompted by a deep yearning for the vision of the Supreme Being tread this long and difficult path, can do so only by His grace. To take refuge in patience is the only acceptable attitude of mind. One must never lose hope. Wherever you may be placed and under whatever circumstances, let your thinking be centred in Him and in Him alone.

114

Write to my friend and tell him that he must become a traveller on the path upon which Peace is found. He will certainly have to undertake the pilgrimage to where no death exists and no decay, where everyone is ever present. Who is it that dies and who that appears in the guise of death? Unless these things are known by direct perception, there can be no release from this ocean of misery. Let my friend strive without ceasing to abide in the presence of Him, the remembrance of Whom for ever puts end to sorrow.

115

A pilgrim on the path of Immortality never contemplates death. By meditation on the Immortal, the fear of death recedes far away; remember this! In the measure that your contemplation of the One becomes uninterrupted, you will advance towards full unbroken Realization.

116

He who yearns for God will find Him, and for the man who has found Him, death dies. One should look forward to the vision of God which is the death of death and endeavour to let one's mind at all times be engrossed in activities or practices that may prepare one for such a vision. You do not know in what shape or manner God Himself is with you. Ever try to spend all the twenty-four hours in the contemplation and remembrance of the Supreme Being, in the repetition of God's Name or the study of books of wisdom. By some realization, by a divine mood or appearance, even by tears shed in longing for Him, the One at times makes His Presence felt. Endeavour to keep your mind absorbed in the thought of Him and in readiness to experience His touch in all forms and modes of being. The day that is gone will not return. Try to make the best use of every precious moment, being ever intent on the realization of your own *Self*.

117

When you first began to learn to read and write, you surely did not examine the reasons for and against doing so, did you? You accepted what you were told.

Even if all sorts of critical thoughts arise, call to mind that they are only due to your lack of understanding. They are certainly not the outcome of pure wisdom. Try to accept as much as you can, as is appropriate to the occasion. Discard laziness and exert yourself. It is natural that the mind should find all sorts of reasons for not doing *sadhana* ; yet your aim must be to persevere in it. Reject such thoughts as ‘ I shall not be able to do it ; it will not be possible.’”

Suffering is of the body only. Despite all such discomforts officials and businessmen attend to their work. How painstaking they are! Create time for everything! The purer, the more transparent you can make your mind, the greater will be your possibilities of spiritual progress.

118

It is the pure, undefiled flower that finds a place at the Feet of the Lord and nowhere else. Take great care to spend your life in spotless purity, worthy to be dedicated in worship to the Lord. Speak about Him. Meditate on His Glory, try to see Him in everyone, Him Who is the Self, the breath of life, the heart of hearts. You feel lonely? In very truth you are not alone. Does the Supreme Friend ever forsake His friends?

119

Ishvara, the Lord of the world is not a thing to be perceived by the senses or grasped by the mind. By contemplating the Divine, peace is won. God Himself draws you towards Him.

120

That from which spiritual inquiry has arisen and which has created you and all that is manifest is *Ishwara*, the Lord of the Universe.

To be sure there is a way of approach even in terms of gain and loss: not to aspire to God-realization is loss and to aspire to it is gain — although He is Self-luminous (and therefore no effort can bring about Illumination). He and He alone is the one thing needful, all the rest is worthless. Without Him man cannot live, where is the place where, lie, is not? Therefore, to leave Him is impossible, He cannot be excluded. Because He is All –in-all. Such is the nature and the mode of His play. Through illusion (*moha*) you forget Him. All trouble is due to ignorance alone.

If man endeavours to live his life in the world according to dharma, the dictates of religion and righteousness, he will gradually overcome sorrow and will progress towards peace. Without Him Supreme Peace cannot be found.

121

In everything and in everybody is but the One Himself. Try to be constantly aware of the fact that whatever is perceived at any time, in whatever way, is but a manifestation of the Supreme Being. How can the perceiver be excluded? Exclusion and non-exclusion are also none but He. Even the feeling of the absence of God is His manifestation—so that His presence may be realized.

122

We should not allow our attention to wander at large, but stick to a particular aim or object. Nevertheless to begin with we shall have to choose an object that is suited to our *sadhana*. To 'live in solitude' means to be solely in the company of the one beloved, does it not, father? Only when one is unattached and without cares and worries can there be freedom from conflict and perplexity. Write to him that he has no cause whatever for worry. The grace of the Lord flows down unceasingly at all times. A person, who has made God-realization the one and exclusive aim of his life, has already found refuge in Him — even though He may, for the time being, declare Himself by His absence.

123

Keep your thoughts on Divine things (*Hari katha*). To surrender mind and heart and body to Him Who is their Lord gives peace; but to expect peace from the world will of a certainty bring sorrow in its train. Try to live a life of holiness and simplicity, in other words, be established in godliness and virtue. Why dissipate mind and body by useless worry? He unfailingly does what is for the best. Why, by harbouring only longings and desires invite sorrow? In whatever circumstances you may be placed, reflect thus : "It is all right, this was necessary for me; it is His way of drawing me close to His Feet," and try to remain content.

By Him alone should your heart be possessed!

124

When there is constant effort to grow into the awareness of THAT which IS, there is hope that in time this awareness may become permanent.

125

Always keep yourself in a state which is favourable to the contemplation of the Divine. Thus will be provided the right sustenance for the mind.

126

Who am I ? With this attitude endeavour to let the mind stand back as a witness. Search after your Self. As long as may be, sit immersed in meditation, becoming quite still, **steady** and fully concentrated.

127

Throughout the twenty-four hours abide in the awareness of the Presence of God. Then only can there be hope of Realization. Who can foresee at what moment He may choose to reveal

Himself? This is why one must ever keep wide awake.

128

Let your thoughts dwell constantly on the Supreme Reality — endeavour to let your mind be absorbed in THAT.

At all times be truthful in speech, uncompromising in self-discipline, and devote yourself to the study of books of wisdom and to *satsang*. Cherish the company of those who are helpful to your quest, avoid those who distract you — in other words, hold fast to the Good and shun the merely pleasurable. If you live in this spirit, the help you need will come to you naturally — unasked.

129

Day and night should be spent in the quest for God (*sadhana bhajana*). The desire to find Him has to be specially fostered. To be a human being means to place first and foremost the desire to know One's Self. Except for the little time necessary for the service of the family, all the rest must be devoted to *japa*, meditation, the reading of scriptures, worship, prayer, self-dedication. Yearn and cry for Him for His own sake. If opportunity arises, seek *satsang*. Whenever this is not possible strive to keep the constant awareness of God's presence enshrined in your heart.

130

To frequent the company of saints, sages and seekers after Truth is incumbent on man. Association of this kind will help to awaken his interest in That which is Real. The more consistently one seeks the fellowship of the spiritually-minded the greater will be the benefit.

131

To associate with pilgrims on the path of Self-realization means to open oneself to good sense, to right discrimination. But taking a wrong path leads to distraction and restlessness.

132

When no opportunity can be found for coming into the physical presence of the holy and wise, it behoves one to contemplate *Vasudeva*, the Divine Dweller in every human heart. By cultivating His Presence one prepares oneself. One should select activities and surroundings that are apt to induce divine thoughts and aspirations (*sad bhava*).

133

Just as without the help of teachers and experts one cannot become proficient in the worldly knowledge that is taught in universities, so the sublime knowledge of the Absolute does not come without the guidance of a competent Guru. To find Him is the problem, whether it be for spiritual

progress, liberation, or any other matter, however insignificant it may seem.

134

In one form or another grace of the Guru must be obtained. Until the Guru is found it is man's duty to invoke and try to realize God by looking upon all forms as His Form, all names as His Name, and all modes of being as His.

135

If you can give your undivided attention to the Goal and remain concentrated on it with unwavering steadiness, you will hold your ground in spite of everything that may be opposed to it. The kind of world in which one lives and the company one keeps, in that particular World will naturally exercise a powerful influence on one's mind and character. When one has entered into close contact with one's real Guru — provided He has let this close relationship be established — then the responsibility for one's actions rests no longer with oneself, for He can do everything. In what manner He may choose to impart His teaching to a particular person — for sometimes a child is taught to walk by catching hold of his hand at other times by being left to himself — the aim will always and in every case be the same, for the disciple is the Guru's very own. He Himself selects the method by which to draw His children close to Himself, the method that is best suited to each one. Such is His own free and absolute Will. Those who, taking the responsibility upon themselves, wish to judge from their own level, will reap the consequences of their way of proceeding. Quite obviously it is difficult for the ordinary person to understand all matters for he does not know what course of action is right for which purpose. This is why the One appears to him in the guise of disappointment and failure.

136

Placing your trust in you Guru, practise the seed mantra you received from him and contemplate the Beloved [*Ishta*] It is imperative to have unswerving faith in one's particular *Ishta* . What is the use of seeking initiation again and again? Rather is it not of the utmost importance to strive strenuously after the full revelation of the form* under which He has manifested Himself to you?

Whenever practicable seek *satsang*.

*The *mantra* and the *Ishta* are one, the *mantra* being the sound aspect and the *Ishta* the form aspect of one and the same thing.

137

To the enquiry whether *diksha* [initiation by *mantra*] is necessary, Mataji replied:

“When *diksha* is necessary it comes about at the appointed time. Keep one's mind on the thought of God and have unshakable faith that at the right moment He will give all that is needful.”

138

The realization of Divine Power may be induced by any means that suits a particular person. If one feels inclined that way it may be brought about by initiation [*diksha*] or else it may be effected by the Guru's touch. It is immaterial by which method one chooses to develop the capacity to live a life dedicated to God. The important thing is ever to remain immersed in the contemplation of Him and to derive bliss from it. Indeed, this is a cause for great rejoicing.

139

It is only natural that ever more bliss should be experienced while practising yoga. So long as the One has not been revealed, distractions will come. But the Guru alone can point out whether one is proceeding in exactly the right manner. Transformation means that worldly interests have lost their hold. To the extent to which one becomes indifferent to worldly pursuits will one progress towards real Bliss.

140

Silent *japa* should be engaged in at all times. One must not waste breath uselessly: whenever one has nothing special to do one should silently practise *japa* in rhythm with one's breathing—in fact this exercise should go on continually until doing *japa* has become as natural as breathing.

It is of great value to read sacred texts and books of wisdom. Speak the truth. Bear in mind that God's Name is He Himself in one form; let it be your inseparable companion. Try your utmost never to remain without Him. The more intense and continuous your efforts to dwell in His Presence, the greater will be the likelihood of your growing joyful and serene. When your mind becomes vacant, endeavour to fill it with the awareness of God and His contemplation.

141

One may well say: What harm can there be in doing *kirtana*, *japa*, meditation, etc. together with others? But to feel the attraction of company constitutes an obstacle. It will naturally bring about unsteadiness.

Moreover, if a desire lurks or arises in one to be the head or leader of the congregation, it is also harmful. This holds good in the case of both women and men. If you ask this body for advice, it will tell you to stay quietly in one place, and practise *sadhana* as a sincere and earnest aspirant and first of all to fill your own emptiness; then the treasure you have accumulated will of its own accord seek an outlet and thus communicate itself to others. Whereas, if you start distributing right from the beginning by serving and giving spiritual instruction to others, you will soon be empty yourself and repentance is bound to follow. Of course, if serving and teaching is your aim, then it is quite a different matter. But if you want to attain to perfection, your method of proceeding is not right, for it creates obstacles. This body [*Mataji*] maintains that you should abide by whichever of the two paths you prefer. To change one's mind again and again will not lead anywhere. Whatever one does must be done one-pointedly. Having turned away from worldly enjoyment and

started advancing towards the Goal of human life, one should endeavour to arrive at Self-realization.

142

It is by seeking to know one's Self that the Great Mother of all may be found.

143

Your mother may not show her affection outwardly, yet she is and always remains your real mother. Even though you may want to put God the Mother aside, She will not leave you. Are you not Her offspring? Keep in mind that everything is under Her dispensation; She provides, for each the right thing, at the right time, in the right way. Yes, certainly, it is to be welcomed if the desire for the Real awakens. A mother is she who has the capacity to know precisely and measure out to her child exactly what he needs. It is because she knows how to make allowances for Her child's mistakes, how to forgive, that she is called 'mother'.

144

Yes, if you can observe silence and be in harmony with everyone all round, it will be excellent. Try to remain without the help of signs and gestures for as long as possible.

145

To begin with keep up your habits regarding bath and diet, so that you may get undisturbed sleep. This will make it easy for you to think of God and meditate. When the **body** is healthy it helps to fix your mind on Him. As you progress in your *sadhana*, your diet and sleep will automatically undergo certain, necessary changes.

146

According to one's strength one should try to set apart a day for self-restraint (*samyam*), if not once weekly, then once a fortnight or at least once a month. On those days strict control is to be exercised as regards food and drink, speech and conduct, going to see places and people—in fact in every respect whatsoever. In this way one may gradually succeed in developing self-mastery and be able to live according to these rules quite effortlessly, or at any rate with some measure of ease even for two or three months every year. Later it may perhaps become possible to sustain permanently such an attitude of life, which will set in motion a current leading to Self-realization. The consequence of indiscipline and self-indulgence is sorrow it means moving away from one's own true Self.

147

To see Mahadeva appear and dissolve Himself into your body, accompanied by a manifestation

of light are undoubtedly good signs. Even the faint vision of a spiritual form [*cinmayia murti*] is very auspicious. The appearance of *Kasi Viswanatha* in the centre between the two eyebrows does happen to those who practise meditation. The seeing of figures from the waist up to the neck in a great variety of shapes and presenting themselves in many different guises is quite common with *sadhakas* [spiritual aspirants] . When you have no definite proof as to the identity of a particular apparition, you must not, at the mere sight of his form, take it for granted that it is the one you assume it to be and no other. The fact is that the *sadhaka's* spiritual Energy (*sakti*) manifests itself in countless ways according to his special method of approach. If contemplate the form seen, which represents the outer manifestation — although in an obscure way — of that spiritual Energy which is intimately connected with man's innate urge towards God (*bhagvad bhava*) it will lead you to God-centredness and help you towards the things that favour a consecrated life. It must be borne in mind that He manifests Himself in everyone in this way through the development of His divine Energy (*Tat Sakti*).- Heart and soul have to be put into the attempt to convert religious practices such as *puja, japa , dhyana* into living experiences so that their inner significance may be revealed.

148

When you feel power within yourself, when new light dawns on you from within, the more you can keep it concealed in utter calm and stillness, the more will it grow in intensity. If it gets the slightest opening, there is always the Fear of its escaping. Be vigilant. He Himself will provide everything that is necessary — initiation, instruction — whatever it may be.

149

Indolence and lust — these two are the greatest obstacles on the path to Self-realization. It is patience and fortitude that are most helpful. If anyone has been so blessed as to 'feel that the spiritual path is all-beneficial — if God bestows His grace on anyone in this way — it is necessary that he should exert his will-power to the utmost and devote day and night to the service of God. The various activities that aid the spiritual life have to be knit together closely with ever renewed effort just as in a flower garland carefully strung the thread cannot be seen. No sooner does the mind find a gap in the garland than it will direct all its actions downwards, towards the perishable. Therefore, even though meditation may never be successful, persist to the limit of your capacity; one should engage in *japa*, worship, recite holy texts (*patha*], sing the praises of God (*kirtana*), or read books on spiritual subjects.

Choose carefully and abide strictly by such occupations as awaken godly thoughts — and feelings. Be very firm in your resolve to cultivate as much as possible the actions that are helpful to a God-centred life. Engage in them even when there is no desire so to do, as one takes medicine. With or without inclination persevere in their performance, so that there may be no- time at all left for the display of restlessness.

To indulge in physical comforts is to turn aside from the communion with God; to yield to the likes and dislikes of the tongue and to taste in order to satisfy the palate is to deprive oneself in

equal measure of the relish of the Divine. Therefore, whatever food or drink is taken should be consecrated to God and partaken of as His *prasada*. Do not eat what does not agree with you. Take a full meal at midday, milk in the afternoon and fruit or some light refreshment and water at night.

Keep your thinking on a very high level. Praise and blame, filth and sandal paste must become alike. Nothing in the world should be repulsive to you. Look into your own heart and become repelled by the repulsion.

It is only so long as the mind is filled with the thought of God, with **the** awareness of His Presence that there can be real rest.

Food, sleep, toilet, clothes, etc, should be given only as much attention as is needed for the maintenance of health. What is the use of a merely well-nourished body? Rather should it become an aid to spiritual endeavour. Exclusively to this end must the current of life be diverted, away from the world, moving entirely in the direction of the Divine. Take pains to discover for yourself the various things that you can do with real joy and that will bring you nearer to God. Has anyone ever become great by sitting down and saying 'I cannot'?

Anger, greed and the like must be altogether abandoned. Neither should you be swayed by praise or prestige. Do not retort in a spirit of contradiction to anything that is said. Reply politely with; smile and say no more.

All work must be done as a service to God. The longer you can remain stirred inwardly by the feeling of His presence, the more will your body, your mind and your actions progress towards the Divine state of being (*divya bhava*). Attune yourself solely to- God. Where the thought of God is, there He Himself is present in the form of that thought: To seek Truth is man's one and only duty.

Learn by heart hymns and verses in praise of God and repeat them .Whilst you move about. Never allow **your** mind to, be idle. Keep it engaged in the repetition of a *mantra*, of God's name, of sacred hymns and the like, or else in pure Remembrance.

One thing more: joys and sorrows are time-born - and obviously cannot last. Therefore do not be swayed by them. Keep in mind that they must pass in time. Aiming at the Highest, hold your course and attend your work, totally unconcerned with the results.

And yet another thing: It is He, verily, who manifests Himself in all temperaments and forms: whomsoever you may hate, you hate but your own Beloved (*Ishta*).

In the whole universe, in all states of being, in all forms is He. All are *His* names, all shapes His shapes, all qualities His qualities, and all modes of existence are truly His.

To help towards Self-realization He appears to different individuals in different ways : in the shape of the Guru, of the mantra, of the *Ishta* (the object of one's worship] and of *Bhava* (devotion, inspiration). Even if devotion and reverence are not natural to you, try to cultivate them by recognizing the need of them. Do all your work with this attitude. The greater 'the difficulties and obstructions, and the more intense your endeavour to cling to His Feet, the more will your power increase from within. And when the time is ripe, you will gain mastery over this very power.

Time is precious and must be used well. The day, the hour, that is gone, returns not.

It is necessary to try and dedicate to the Supreme every single action of one's daily life. From

the moment one wakes up in the morning until one falls asleep at night one should endeavour to sustain this attitude of mind. By so doing one will gradually come to feel: How can I offer Him greed, anger and other undesirable qualities of this kind? To Him who is so infinitely dear to me, who is my very own? Does one give that which is bad to one's loved ones? As one continues to reflect in this way one finally becomes incapable of doing anything bad or undesirable. Then, when at His Lotus-feet one has sacrificed without reserve whatever small power one possesses, so that there is nothing left that one may call- one's own, do you know what He does at that fortunate moment? Out of your littleness He makes you perfect, whole, and then nothing remains to be desired or

achieved. The moment your self-dedication becomes complete, at **that** very instant occurs the revelation of the indivisible, unbroken perfection which is ever revealed by the Self.

151

Whatever comes to pass by the will of Him who is Will itself, is beneficent. In a life that moves within worldly consideration, conflict is natural. To persevere with steadiness in the movement that ends in Self-realization is man's duty. A glimpse of one's own essential nature gives bliss. The mind that aspires after bliss is really aspiring to its own Self, which is its mother — even though the view that the mind is the child of its own Self may be imaginary. Whose, after all, are the movements of the mind? If one remains ever steeped in the rhythm of one's true nature*, how can one possibly go wrong or experience misfortune or lose one's way? Where is the chance to even think of these possibilities? When one treads the path, in other words, practises **sadhana**, is it not one's duty to keep one's gaze constantly fixed on one's chosen ideal? It has to be admitted that without the taste, the experience of inner joy, one does not find the energy to go ahead. Yet, if **sadhana** is one's purpose in life, one must not allow it to become shriveled and emaciated: to keep it well sustained by nourishing food is man's unceasing duty. It is interruption that produces ill-health. Although it is true that without His touch the child **sadhana** cannot reveal itself, nevertheless one must keep one's winkless gaze fixed on the light obtained so far. Every moment is pervaded by Him, by His contact, His touch, His advent, His acceptance, His victory'.

* *Man's true nature flows towards God alone.* ("Words of Sri Anandamayi Ma")

152

Write to the father some of this little girl's unconventional talk:

"This small child* [* Mataji] is ever near her father . The mind's agony, listening to people's talk and speaking, all happens within oneself. Near and far are also but within oneself. You should not only be **sadhaka at** the time of your spiritual exercises — albeit everything is contained in everything. The capacity for uninterrupted **sadhana** is also potentially in oneself: it will be discovered by wise discrimination. One should continuously be immersed in the particular **sadhana** that will enable one to become possessed of the Supreme Treasure which is by its very nature one's own. At all times it is the Self that plays within Itself as ego (**ahamkar**) and as intelligence (**buddhi**). Use the present with great skill. The One who manifests in the (impure) actions of the I-ness, He Himself also appears in Pure Action. In order that this may be revealed, intelligence becomes aware of stability in motion, where in the movement of Self-action, wise discrimination would realize its own true Nature. When this happens, then, in stupidity as well as wisdom, He is recognized, the One who becomes revealed, who who IS. He is infinite and also with end. Towards Him one should try to advance steadily without ever halting, having become free from obstacles and obstructions. When one has entered the Stream, any form that is perceived by the purified mind and intelligence may be accepted as an experience on the way to Self-awareness.

When one has become still, that is to say one has become established in a state of tranquility, then the activity of nature which continues at every moment in sleep and in waking and is part of the movement of the pilgrimage from birth to death, this and the thinking mind become caught in that Stream and eternally remain floating in it.

Ever to keep the mind poised in the Self, wide-awake in the current of Reality, where the Unfathomable, the One-without-end is ever revealed in His Infinity — this must, with the intensity of an obsession be your one and constant endeavour.

153

If one does not arrive at a state of stillness, the agitation of one's whole system will manifest through every nerve and fibre of the body and render one inefficient. If one's energy is not retained, the harmonious functioning of this energy in perfect tranquility is not possible. Interest in the Supreme Quest and practices performed in search of Truth naturally have a calming effect. The preservation of energy is essential; if he finds *kirtana* helpful, he should, at the time when *kirtana* is sung, try to sit absolutely still in a fixed posture and concentrate. A disturbed state of mind and body is not favourable.

154

Those who attempt to be *brahmacharis* must live a life of renunciation. Sloth, greed, impatience, praise and fame are serious obstacles. Taking great care to avoid these, all work should be done in the nature of a service. Furthermore, the rules enjoined on *brahmacharis* and *sadhus* have to be given special attention. What might seem an offence in the eyes of others should not be pursued, nor what is likely to cause even the slightest harm to oneself.

155

Merely to assume the robes of a *sadhu* while the spirit of renunciation is lacking will not do. Taking *samnyas* and becoming a *samnyasi* spontaneously, are certainly not one and the same thing.

156

Inward *samnyasa* is real *samnyasa*. To become a *samnyasi* is very fortunate, is in fact a matter of supreme rejoicing. But do you feel that the right moment to take such a step has come for you? *samnyasa* signifies complete renunciation, the annihilation of everything: even the idea of annihilation has to become extinct.

157

How can a man who is harbouring thoughts of suicide expect to become a *samnyasi*? The idea of suicide does not even enter the mind of those who consider themselves candidates for *samnyas*. A spirit of extreme self-denial and renunciation is the attitude that affords the greatest aid towards

this exalted state. Vow to be truthful in speech, and refrain from letter-writing. Do not talk to women nor allow your gaze to rest on them.

158

What does catering into one's own True Being (*svarupa*) signify? To realize what IS: that He, the Self-effulgent One is all-pervading, present in all shapes, states of mind and modes of existence. *There* speech, words have no place. For, can Essential Form (*svarupa*) or formlessness (*aruapa*) be described in any language? He and He alone IS.

159

When people talk about the vision of the Self (*atma darsana*) and Self-realisation, it only from hearsay; still, it is necessary to find a way to such first-hand knowledge. Thus we have to adopt any method that may help us to attain to it.

You can see for yourself--just think: there is air and without air our body cannot keep alive. Grasp this: does not the air pervade everything? Plants, minerals, animals, in fact all creatures? You **differentiate** between the earth, water, fire, air, ether and so forth, do you not? Viewing them each separately helps us to understand them. It is said that in essence there is Truth-Consciousness-Bliss [*Sat-chit-ananda*]. Only when consciousness is rooted in Truth can there be Bliss.

From our worldly point of view we everywhere perceive animate or inanimate things; but in reality He who is Truth, He who is Consciousness, permeates them all; only this cannot be realized- by the average person. As soon as the mind understands the fact of His immanence, then, just as when an image is to be worshipped, life has first of all to be instilled into it through *prana pratishtha*, so He becomes, as it were, active within us, at first through the vehicle of the breath, which is an expression of the life-force (*prana*). The word 'within' has been used only because we think in terms of 'within' and 'without'. This is why we speak of 'I' and 'you', of God 'with form' (*sakara*) and 'without form' (*nirakara*).

Be ever aware of the following: what is called life-breath is really an aspect of a universal, all-pervasive power that functions continuously. It is He in one of His forms; He who is Truth-Consciousness reveals Himself in this mode. If with the help of a *mantra* received from the Guru we can remain concentrated on the breath, or even if, at any time there be no mantra, we simply keep on watching the movement of the breath, this will help to steady the mind and may also be an aid in our search of Him, who is the Life of our life, who is the Whole, the Eternal One.

The vision of the Eternal play (*lila*) of the Supreme Being whose essence is Consciousness and Bliss is impossible, unless one has seen His delight in His own universality and self-sufficiency and finds this joy repeated within oneself in union with and as part of the Whole. Until the senses **have** been mastered and passion transcended, how can we become identified with the Supreme Self?

The ever-moving breath changes its rhythm according to what we do, feel and think, with the

precision of a clock's pendulum, which works without a break although it may at times go fast or slow. With a similar constancy endeavour to concentrate on the breath; this will exercise a check on the mind and prevent it from wandering away to outer objects: Look, when a restless child is caught hold of, taken inside the house and given toy, he will cry for a short time at least remain quiet and absorbed. In order to calm one's restlessness it is necessary to keep but one single end in view.

Divine thoughts and aspirations (*sadbhava*) are the essence of *satsang*; to the degree that we foster these, the craving of the heart will be fulfilled and the mind stilled. With the help of your intelligence and individual capacity try to unite the mind with the breath. Do you know what the essential thing is? To realize that the unbroken current of aspiration itself is a revelation of Him who is the indivisible Whole.

160

Mahasunya — the Great Void is alone His Form. But it has to be distinguished from the ordinary void that belongs to the world; where this functions, the Great Void cannot be comprehended. What is and what is not? Yet everything is and is also not — and neither is it not, nor is it. Albeit, to find all by losing all, this is what is wanted.

161

God alone is Truth, Happiness, Bliss. Do not set your hopes on anything except Supreme Beatitude, the Bliss of the Self. Naught else exists. What seems to exist outside of It is merely illusion. Try to find your Self! All this clamouring is but natural to man. He cries out again and in the endeavour to get rid of his sense of emptiness.

The true aim of man's life is to realize God. The question of renunciation arises obviously only in regard to what has to fall away in any case. That which is Eternal that which is Truth has to be embraced.

He who is himself bound will ever be attracted to the bound. This is the very nature of the individual. With the help of the Guru one comes to realize the impermanence of things. Everything is possible through the power of the Guru. Even when you feel you have lost patience, do not relax your efforts but try again and again. To your last breath never leave off striving. Pray to Him that you may continue to remain at His Feet all the twenty-four hours.

He who has been initiated by a **Guru** must, under His direction, try to keep his mind every minute of his life engaged in spiritual pursuits, such as worship, *japa*, meditation, the perusal of sacred texts, *kirtan*, *satsang* and the like. Exert yourself to the limit of your power, however feeble it may be. He is there to fulfill what has been left undone.

162

O Will Supreme, Thy Will prevails.
 The Fountain of Goodness accomplishes everything when the time is ripe.
 To aspire to That which is Eternal Truth is right for everyone.
 Of Thee alone must be the spoken word,
 All else is but futility and pain.

GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT WORDS

atma or atman : -The true Self . Supreme Existence or Being that is of the nature of Self-awareness and Self-Delight and behind all manifestations in nature.

atma darsan: Vision of the true Self. The Self is Self-luminous and therefore cannot be revealed through the instrumentality of anything else.

Bhagwad Gita: The Lord's Song. An episode from the Hindu epic Mahabharata in which Sri Krsna, the 8th Avatar of Vishnu *expounds* the doctrine of selfless action done as duty, not for profit or recognition, but in a spirit of dedication to the One Supreme Being. The *Gita* is probably the most widely known among Hindu Scriptures and has been translated into all important languages of the world.

brahmacari: A religious student who devotes himself to spiritual practices and to service, and observes strict celibacy.

brahmana : A member of the priestly caste, the highest caste in Hindu society. The special duty of a *brahmana* is to aspire to *Brahmavidya*, the knowledge of Supreme Reality. A real *brahmana* has to be a *brahmana* by birth, conduct and knowledge of the *brahmana*

Candi or Durgd Saptshati : Part of the *Markandeya Purana* It deals with the descent of the Supreme Power (*Mahasakti*) that manifests to conquer the evil forces that invade not only humanity but also the realm of the *dewas*. It consists of three sections representing the victory of the Divine Power in three different ways over three destructive evil forces on three

memorable occasions taken from history.

dharma: The Law of being. It signifies the inner principle of religion. Dharma may also mean righteousness or duty. Man's dharma is to realize his innate Divinity.

dhyana : Meditation. It is of different kinds, according to whether its object is external or the sense faculty itself, namely the ego that is behind the whole process. The highest dhyana is transcendent and discriminative in character and can come about only when the ego-consciousness is dissolved.

diksa: Initiation into the spiritual life, effected through the grace of the Guru who represents the Divine. (See also *Guru*)

Durga: The Divine Mother as Protector and Fosterer.

Gayatri : A sacred mantra of the ***Rigveda***, a hymn to the sun, recited daily by Hindus of the three upper castes after they have been invested with the sacred thread.

grihastha dharma: According to Hindu system, human life is divided into four successive stages or ***asramas*** looked at from the viewpoint of the pilgrim on the spiritual path. The ***grihastha dharma*** of the married householder is the second stage, preceded by ***brahmacarya***, the stage of the celibate student.

guru :Spiritual guide and teacher. According to the Hindu tradition, the candidate for admission into the spiritual life has to place himself under the guidance of a competent teacher who usually gives him initiation by mantra. This mantra is the representative of the deity (***Ishta***) of the disciple and has to be repeated by the disciple regularly and in a specific manner.

Ishta: Literally 'Beloved'. The chosen deity one worships, the Object of one's supreme desire. It is the particular aspect of the Divine with which the disciple will have to be in perfect communion before the Supreme Gnosis becomes possible. The ***Ishta*** appears as a person on the lower plane, but in reality is nothing but the Self that is beyond form, the Supreme in its aspect of Bliss.

Isvara: The Creator and Lord of the universe, the ***Saguna Brahman***.

japa : The practice of repeating the Lord's name or a ***mantra*** as a means to a continual recollection of His presence. The repetition, as one of the daily disciplinary exercises, may be for a fixed or indefinite number of times. ***Japa*** maybe vocal, semi-vocal or mental. The last is supposed to be the best. It may be practised, either without rhythm or rhythmically, following the natural rhythm of one's breath. The counting during ***japa*** may either be done with the help of one's fingers in the prescribed manner or with the help of a rosary. ***Japa*** may also be done

continuously without counting.

karma : Action, the result of action, as well as the law of cause and effect by which actions inevitably bear their fruit. **Karma** originates from the individual self in ignorance functioning as an active agent. When man realizes his own true Self karma ceases for him.

Kasi Visvanatha: An epithet of **Siva**. The presiding deity of Varanasi.

kheyala : Ordinarily a sudden and unexpected psychic emergence, be it desire, will, attention, memory or knowledge. Mataji, however, has given the word a much wider meaning. She describes as **Kheyala** the incomprehensible acts of the Supreme, as for instance His dividing Himself in creation, etc. In Mataji's case no there is no ego to account for Her movements, feelings and thoughts. When She uses the word **Kheyala** with reference to Her own person, it must be understood to denote a spontaneous upsurge of Will, which is divine and therefore free.

kirtana : The chanting or singing of the names or glories of God. It may be performed by one person or by a group of persons to the accompaniment of musical instruments mostly drums and cymbals.

Kumari puja: A ceremony in which a small girl below the age of puberty, usually the daughter of a **brahmana** is worshipped as the representative of the Eternal Virgin, the Mother of the entire universe.

Lila : Literally, 'play'. Movements and activities of the Supreme Being that are free by nature and not subject to laws. The creation, is explained by the **Vaishnavas** as the **Lila** of God.

Mahadeva: Siva.

Mahasunya: Great Void means Absolute Consciousness, characterised by the absence of all creation. **Sunya** or (ordinary] void is the interval or gap between every two persons, things, feelings, thoughts, ideas, etc. which of necessity exists in the world of duality.

mantra : A series of sounds of great potency. It is the sound representation of the **Ishta Devata**. Name and form are inseparable; if, therefore, the name is instinct with life, the form that it represents is bound to reveal itself, provided the practice is intensive enough. A **mantra** is a word of power, divine power transmitted through a word.

prana pratishtha : When an image of a deity is consecrated for worship, a connection is established with the particular aspect of the Divine which it represents. This is called **prana pratishtha**. The image therefore becomes a live focus for the transmission of divine power and blessing.

prasada : Food offered to a deity or saint becomes **prasada** when it has been accepted and blessed. It is then partaken of by the devotees.

puja: Ceremonial worship of the Hindus. Offering of various articles representing aspects of oneself to the object of adoration.

Rama: Sri Ramacandra , an incarnation of **Visnu**, and the hero of the **Ramayana**. Mataji has often explained the actual significance of the word Rama as **ananda** (bliss).

Ramayana : A Hindu epic, dealing mainly with the life of **Sri Ramacandra** and his consort.
sadhaka: One who practises **sadhana** .

sadhana: Spiritual practice performed for the purpose of preparing oneself for-Self-realization.

Sadhu : One who has dedicated his life to spiritual endeavour.

samnyasa: Renunciation. According to the Hindu system it is the last stage of human life, in which a man renounces family, possessions, caste, social position, etc.— in fact everything to which he is attached— and surrenders himself to the Divine. Technically, it is of two kinds, **vidvisha samnyasa** preceded by a sense of detachment from the world. The other is **vidvat samnyasa**, which is **samnyasa** par excellence, preceded by the dawn of **brahma jnana** (realization of the Brahman). In the former, certain rules of discipline have to be observed. The latter is absolute freedom.

Samnyasin: One who has taken **samnyasa**.

Sastras: The sacred Hindu Scriptures.

satsang: The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the actual physical company, or in an applied sense, by reading holy Scriptures or the lives and teachings of saints. Also a religious meeting. In its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

Srimad Bhagavat : One of the main 18 **puranas** , dealing with the **avatars** of Visnu, especially and in great detail with the life of Sri Krsna .
