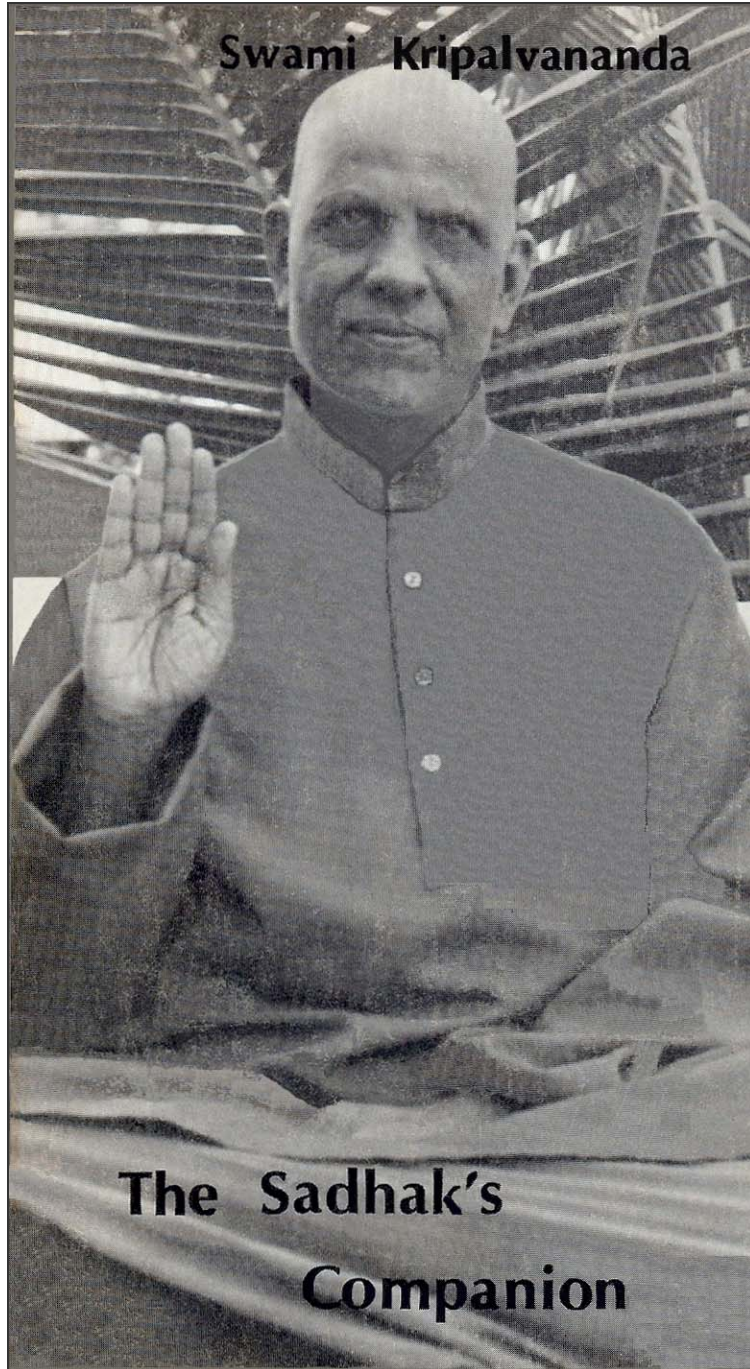


**THE SADHAK'S COMPANION**

from the words of  
Swami Kripalvananda



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## PREFACE

This little volume is a collection of guidances given by Dharmacharya Swami Kripalvanandaji Maharaj to his students over a period of time in 1971. It was first published in his native tongue, Gujarati, under the title Guru Vachanamrit; later an English edition was published in India by the Kayavarohan Tirth Seva Samaj. The translation from Gujarati into English was done by Gauri Modi.

Here, Yogeshwar Muni has placed the text into the American idiom. Darshana Shakti Ma has done the final edit; Tapasvini, Joyce Hawkeye and Kali Shakti Ma the final type; and Narada Muni the printing supervision. To all these, we offer our appreciation. Special thanks to Yamuna Carsen, whose financial help made this edition possible.

The Publisher

### NOTE

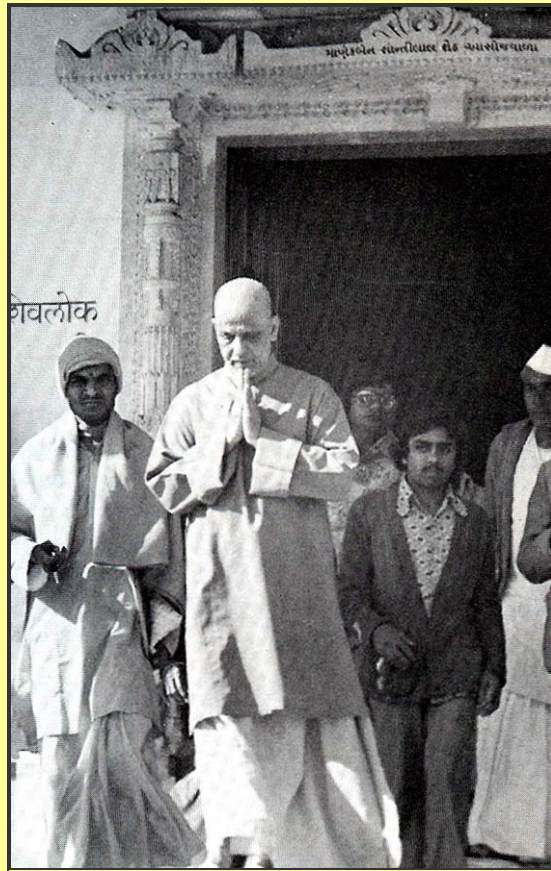
This edition is submitted at the lotus feet of my Guru, whose golden words of Truth have led me nearer to union with God. If any errors occur in this American version, the responsibility is mine. Aspirants of Truth should study and apply the wisdom in these pages; their spiritual progress will be greatly enhanced.

Berkeley, California  
20 July, 1977

Yogeshwar Muni

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## CHAPTER ONE

### PRAYER AND DEVOTION

The secret of achieving raja yoga (union with Truth through mental purity) is prayer. Prayer is a form of concentration or fixing the mind on a spot. In Sanskrit this is called dharana. The use of prayers results in concentration of the mind. Concentration leads to meditation or dhyana. The farthest boundary of prayer is where the land of meditation begins. Raja yoga consists of dharana, dhyana and samadhi. It is entered through dharana, and prayer is the secret to dharana.

Great beings have revealed various ways of attaining God but all of these ways depend on prayer for success. We write letters to friends who are at a distance to express our thoughts. If we want to convey our message to them quickly, we use a telegram. If we want to reach them even faster, we use a telephone. Prayer is the telephone we use to talk to our beloved God. But there is one condition: we must disconnect ourselves from other connections -only then does the phone ring and our beloved God rushes to answer.

While the best prayer is the prayer offered with affection, prayer offered with a selfish motive can bring worldly things like wealth and acclaim. Though this selfish prayer is a lower form, it can uplift an ordinary person. Such people then become examples to society. In the same way as hot metal burns one who touches it, so does prayer, offered in good faith, sooner or late reward the worshipper.

Prayers to God act as an antidote. They draw the poison from the eyes, revenge from the heart, and bitterness from the tongue. In this way the aspirant's character improves and the quest for spiritual practice becomes very easy. One who chants prayers mechanically does ordinary prayer. This sort of prayer is memorized or read religiously from books. When rote prayers are done with a true heart, then they become prayers of medium order. The best prayer is described by great saints as that which comes completely from the heart and is not spoken but conveyed to God when the devotee is carried away by deep love of God. When the devotee offers such mute prayers, divine communion with God is experienced.

Until an ordinary person reaches this state of devotion, one should pray regularly and attempt to make one's prayers pleasant. Most religiously-minded people believe that one should pray daily and this belief is not completely wrong; however, prayers offered in this way are usually mechanical and boring. On the other hand, when a purified person, whose soul has plunged into the depths of hopelessness, is inspired by the grace of God to pray, the prayer pleases God because the prayer springs from the depth of the devotee's heart. This also happens when such a person encounters unexpected happiness.

Natural prayer comes only when prayer is offered with affection. Through natural prayer a devotee gets nearer to God or we may say that God comes nearer to the devotee. When a true devotee faced with either great happiness or misery offers prayers full of joy or pathos to God, feeling God to be intimate, the time is ripe for true prayer. At such a moment, the feelings expressed in speech, in song or mutely, form the climax of prayer. In contrast, prayer done routinely and without affection is unnatural.

As the thoughts of a lover are always on the beloved and those of a miser on riches, so also are the thoughts of the true devotee eternally on the Lord; thus, he or she is always praying. The best of prayers offered at set hours are ordinary compared to the spontaneous, continuous prayers of a surrendered sadhak.

A devotee should know well the language in which the prayer is offered. This will enable understanding and satisfaction with prayer; thus, the devotee may delve deeply into God's realm.

The search for the Lord does not entail any labor, for if God must be sought, then the theory that He is All is meaningless. If a person is at a distance, we must call him loudly; however, the great Lord is very close. He only seems to be separate because of our unconsciousness.

The magnetic power of prayer is immeasurable. By the strength of prayer, God is moved and comes closer to us. Prayer is the enemy of dwaita (separation) and the friend of adwaita (communion). Just as sugar dissolves in milk, so also does the devotee become one with God by means of prayer.

After praying with an open heart, a devotee becomes composed and calm. Strength, peace, consolation, enthusiasm, patience, knowledge and accurate intuition are gained. As a result, spiritual progress is fulfilling.

Some people pray by asking the Lord to bestow a long list of worldly things upon them. A person in need of a servant advertises in the "Help Wanted" column and describes the kind of servant required. It is mentioned that the salary will be fixed according to the servant's efficiency. In the same way, a sakam (with desire) devotee gives notice to the Lord and patron saints concerned, advising that the devotee wants to be heard and have all needs fulfilled. The devotee asks to be granted plenty of wealth, wide popularity, a beautiful spouse, smart and pretty children, health, strength, knowledge, glory, fame, good friends, good followers, faithful servants, etc., and without any delay. He or she asks that all life's miseries be banished, that perpetual happiness may reign, and that all needs be taken care of day and night. In return the devotee promises to regard the Lord as Everything, serve Him and build a beautiful temple for Him of the finest white marble employing the best sculptors and architects. The devotee gives full assurance that he or she will regard Him higher than all others and will worship

Him with all his heart and soul. The devotee promises to fast (except for milk and fruit), observe silence (after going to sleep), abstain from sex (as far as possible) and light candles. The devotee will not be slack in these services; it will even be proclaimed about Him, "Here is a good patron saint who fulfils one's wishes." On the other hand, if the devotee is not satisfied with the results, there will be no hesitation in displacing Him from the altar and commenting on His ineffectiveness. Such is the custom of a sakam (with desire) devotee who may be compared with crows that eat garbage; whereas the nishkam (without desire) devotees may be compared with swans that dive for pearls.

Viewed idealistically, the above example is accurate; however, practically every action has some selfish motive behind it. If the Lord does not help in the achievement of one's goals, who will worship Him? Is it to be expected that people who want temporary happiness, temporary peace or temporary joy should ask instead for the Lord to grant them eternal peace, eternal happiness and eternal joy?

A man may start with selfish motives but sooner or later the error will be noticed. Sakam devotion is the first rung of the ladder and nishkam devotion is the last rung. How can one reach the last rung without climbing the previous rungs? Looked at this way, sakam devotion is not meaningless. It could be said that sakam devotion is the foundation of nishkam devotion; without it, the castle of nishkam devotion could not be built.

The nishkam devotee prays in order to attain God in eagerness for a mere glimpse of the Lord. Considering worldly gains to be trifling, there is no request of God that they be granted. It is even regarded as an insult to God to ask for worldly gifts. The humble request to God is, "O Kind Lord! Please rid us of the diseases of the body and mind so that we may progress on the path of devotion and meet you."

When a nishkam devotee reaches a state of concentration, he or she pleads to God for His blessings and the voice becomes hoarse with emotion and falters. Often after such devotion despair is lifted and one shines with the radiance of satisfaction and delight. Nishkam prayers bring thirst for knowledge, divine experiences, increased self-confidence and mental and physical elevation from the mires of degradation and lethargy. Through prayer one achieves intimacy with God and increased surrender unto Him.

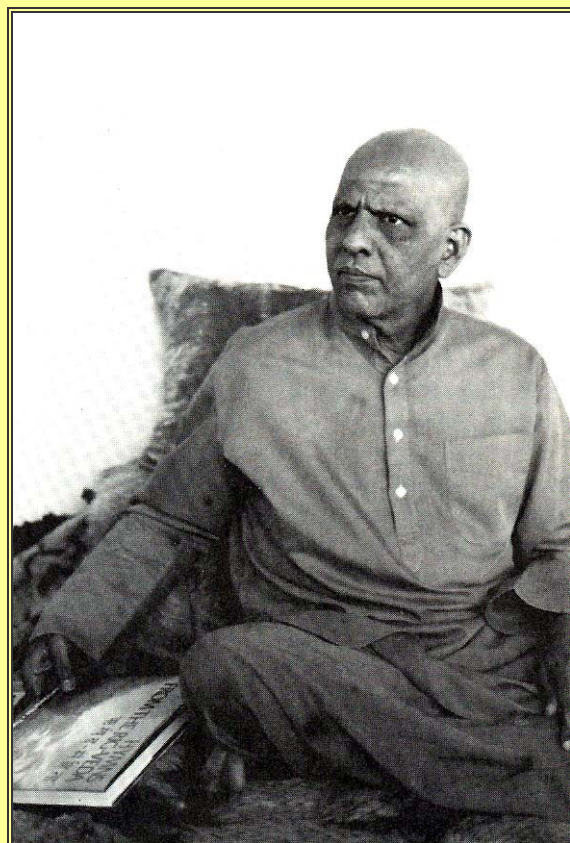
When the flesh is steeped in lethargy and the mind is agitated, one is not inclined to pray. If this state of affairs continues for long then a devotee's inclination to pray disappears. Just as a heavy thing cannot be tied up in a torn and old rag, so also the weak and the sensual mind cannot preserve wealth in the form of devotion.



When a selfish person wants to have work done, he or she tries to trap the Lord with a prayer full of honey-dewed words. But this is not a prayer. It is only a deceitful speech. The prayer of the selfish person is only in words, does not come from within and is full of play upon words. On the other hand, a good person's prayer is indicated by the heart, eyes, tongue and behavior. One's prayer is full of affection.

Perfect prayer is not possible until the mind and senses have been surrendered to the lotus feet of the Lord. Prayers are generated by physical and spiritual hunger. One is only completely attracted to God if one is perfect in the keeping of good company, in the study of scripture and in the practice of meditation. One can attain this through full faith in the character of one's Guru or of great saints. Unless one's pride decreases, one is not ready for prayer. Prayer can only be generated in a devotee whose physical and mental-sensual instincts of life have subsided.

By the grace of good companions, Holy Scriptures, a great saint or a good Master, a devotee gains the wish for nishkam prayers. The heart is filled with the highest devotion. The devotee wanting to attain nishkam devotion should, therefore, adopt the company of good people, the study of Holy Scripture, the darshan of great saints and the grace of a perfect Master.



## CHAPTER TWO

### SATSANG

When one gets entangled in affection for those dear to one or in enmity for enemies, in the flame of hope or in the shadow of hopelessness, progress in devotion comes to a standstill. One's attachment to God is increased when one is attracted to holy persons, the Scriptures, temples and places of pilgrimage but it is destroyed by the negative influences of evil persons, bad friends, vulgar books and unholy places.

A man's mind becomes like a garbage bin upon reading bad books or frequenting evil company. The mind becomes a fragrance spreading garden of flowers when one reads good books and has virtuous friends. One who is accustomed to live in heaven and is sent to hell to atone for some sins makes a small heaven in the midst of burning hell. In the same way, if someone accustomed to living in hell is sent to heaven for some good deeds, a hell is created even in the midst of heaven.

Thieves and adulterers are repelled by stealing and adultery. Addicts and misers hate addiction and greed; however, these feelings of repulsion or hate occur at good times and vanish during bad times. We all can see our bad habits sometimes but these moments of self-revelation are few and short lived. As a result, such a person fails to take the correct path. Desire for good conduct and good habits arises only when one comes in contact with well-behaved persons. In order to attain good conduct, one must have the instinct for good conduct awakened. By ridding oneself of bad company, one can mix with good company. Thus, one becomes a sattvaguni (one in whom the quality of peacefulness is dominant) and wages war with and wins victory over the senses.

When one develops a sincere attraction for a real saint, good scriptures or the Great Lord, it is considered good fortune. If, while occupied with these things, one feels great love for God and good thoughts gain strength, then one's good fortune is at the highest. When God takes the devotee into His fold, the good fortune and misery of the world no longer have any affect. The devotee is enfolded in a happiness which is invaluable and indescribable - this is the extreme happiness.

After a sadhak finds a Guru, one's thoughts should be with the Guru. If this does not happen, then either there is a feeling of unworthiness or a mistake in choosing a Guru. If the sadhak feels unworthy, then worthiness should be attained by serving his master. If he feels he has chosen the wrong master, then he should find a good master and surrender himself completely. The sadhak should not be hasty in choosing a master. Nor should he change masters as convenient.

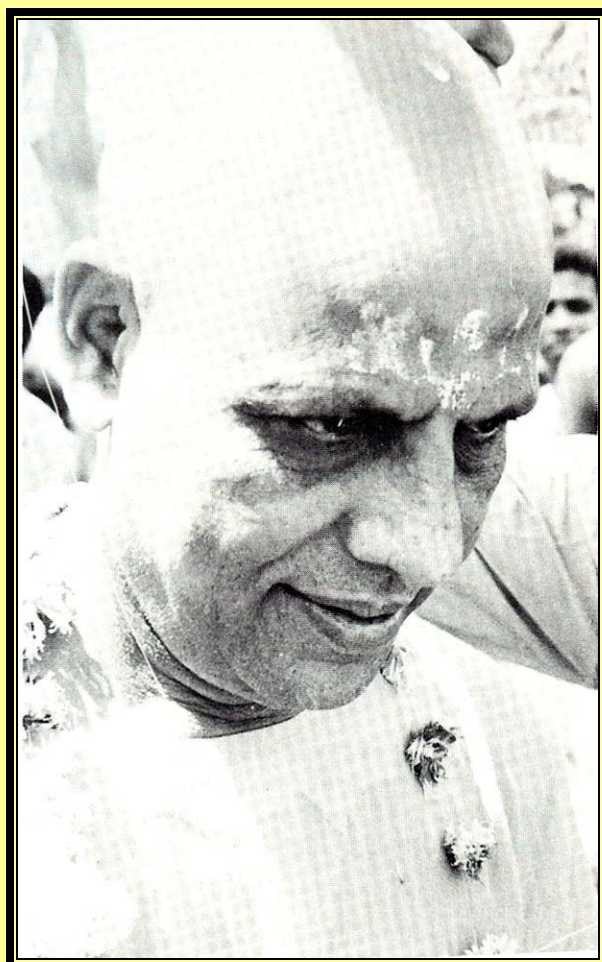
When a disciple has found his Guru, there should be a marvelous change in his life. If he is still an atheist, vicious or weak, without faith or self-control, then he has an overbalance of anger and passion and is thus not yet worthy. To make progress, he must seek good company, meet saints, read scripture and encourage good thoughts.

A railway car cannot gather motion by itself. However, once it is joined to an engine it can travel thousands of miles because it has complete use of the power generated by the engine. The Sadguru (Master who is Truth), with his large store of power, is like an engine that pulls the good disciple to the holy feet of God. In the same way as a railway car is held to an engine, a disciple should be linked firmly to the Sadguru, and then the full measure of the Sadguru's divine power will be received. A disciple should be a soldier and make the Sadguru the Commander. He should be the means of the Guru's action, giving him one's soul. He should give the boat of life to the Sadguru and make the Sadguru the helmsman. The helmsman, then, should be allowed to guide the boat to its destination in whichever way he considers best. If a disciple has no faith in his Sadguru, he is not yet a worthy sadhak. Only a disciple who has full faith in every word uttered by the Sadguru and who obeys his commands without question can break away from the clutches of Maya (illusion).

Satsang is a treatise in two words. "Sat" means God (truth) and "sang" means attachment. Thus satsang is the means by which the attachment for God is developed. If contact with an individual increases one's affinity for good and dislike for evil, then this contact may be called satsang. If contact with another makes one's faults clear, arouses repulsion for these faults, and develops in one an implicit liking for what is good, then this contact may be called satsang. If the pure character of a person arouses our confidence, leads us to the path of righteousness and inspires us to lead a good life, then this companionship is satsang. If association with an individual kindles in us the love of God, leads us to acquisition of knowledge and good conduct and increases in us the desire to break the bonds of the senses, then this association is satsang.

Good books, holy places and all that inspires devotion to God and increases abstinence and good conduct, can all be termed satsang. When satsang is effective, one can realize one's own faults. Attraction for good deeds increases day by day, harshness of the soul decreases, devotion for God is performed with enthusiasm, one has the strength to observe rules and one becomes enthusiastic about taking vows. There arises love of good books and the words of saints. One experiences great joy in discussing and hearing about God. Good habits come automatically and bad habits disappear. Unless this sort of change begins to manifest, one should know that spiritual progress has not begun.

If you find a person who arouses good feelings in you, you should regard this individual as your Sadguru and give service. You must keep yourself in eternal contact with his pure soul.



## CHAPTER THREE

### SACRIFICE

When Devotion is still a little girl, she regards the ways of attaining God as toys and plays with them. When she attains maturity, she regards the means of attaining God as her greatest wealth. Only then can she give birth to a child in the form of Knowledge. When Knowledge reaches youth, Devotion then gives birth to a second child named Asceticism. The elder brother, Knowledge, is very fond of his little brother, Asceticism. The younger brother loves his elder brother to distraction. He cannot bear a moment's separation from his elder brother. Once Asceticism attains maturity, the Lord comes forth. Upon seeing Knowledge, Asceticism, and Devotion, the Lord becomes crazy with love.

An upashak is one who gives his or her whole life for upasana (service to the Lord). A seed thrown at random does not take root, but a seed sown carefully at the correct time grows. An upashak should know the principles of upasana completely and then be completely devoted to upasana. Then upasana will sprout.

An able person can undertake and complete several vocations in life; however, the attainment of God is so difficult that even if one puts all one's effort and concentration into the task, there may not be success in a lifetime. An upashak who wishes to attain God should close the gates to all activities and keep open only the gate to the Lord. The ordinary person has accustomed the mind to doing several actions at the same time; he or she is channeled in several different directions. To attain God, one has to channel all one's actions in one direction, toward pursuit of the Lord. To attempt to attain the Lord Almighty means to sacrifice one's whole life to this holy cause. To make a garland we bind together several flowers on a string. A sadhak cannot become an upashak and make real progress unless the soul is sacrificed and one ties all actions on the thread of God and is hit by Cupid's arrow in love for God.

If one acts only with the intent of realizing God, then these actions do not result in bondage. But if sensual intentions are hidden in these actions, then one is bound by them. In the third chapter, verse nine of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna says to Arjuna, "O Son of Kunti, all actions, except those pertaining to worship (sacrifice) bind the atman (soul) to samsara (the world of illusion): therefore, discharge all your legitimate duties without attachment."

Yoga and sexual enjoyment both need isolation. If lovers make an exhibition of their love, this indicates that their action is not from love but has some base motive. Just as true lovers enjoy each other in isolation, so also yogis perform yoga with their beloved God in isolation. Sensuous people try to conceal their adultery and the yogis try to conceal the practice of yoga.

Sometimes penances are undertaken which are hard on the body. People are often attracted toward such penances but in a tortured state, a sadhak is not able to concentrate on God. Both mental and physical hardships are barriers to tapas (spiritual austerity). A real sadhak does not consider his body and soul as enemies and torture them; nor does he regard them as friends and spoil them. Some sadhaks show indifference toward mental and physical hardships. Such sadhaks regard body and soul as enemies and fight to suppress them. As a result, the body is always uncomfortable and the soul is agitated. These conditions do not promote good concentration and meditation on God. Such fanatical sadhaks are of obstinate character, while the spiritual sadhak is a seeker of truth. Such puritanical suppression arises from ignorance while tapa (austerity) arises out of knowledge. A third type is passionate or worldly penance; it is a mixture of ignorance and knowledge.

True asceticism differs from willful sacrifice. Asceticism is a state wherein desire for worldly pleasures, whether they are available or not, does not arise at all. Asceticism is a synonym for renunciation. As one's love for God increases, the attraction for worldly pleasures is destroyed. Asceticism means the actual disliking of worldly pleasures and extreme liking of God.

Willful sacrifice means to discard worldly pleasures because they prevent one from reaching God. This type of sacrifice cannot properly be called asceticism. Sacrifice points toward asceticism but is not asceticism. They carry different connotations. For the ordinary person, preciousness or cheapness depends on the non-availability or the availability of things. People aim at things which are far in the horizon of non-availability, not for things which can be easily attained. However, this does not mean that only things that are not available are worth striving for and that things that are easily available are worthless.

Hoarding wealth, or taking pride in sacrifice, throws an individual into the abyss of downfall.

Sacrificing cruelty and selfishness while allowing only Divine treatment of others acts as a balm to the soul. But if willful sacrifice produces pride, then the remedy is worse than the disease.

If one has conquered the core of his being, then he has conquered the universe.

To make the roving mind steady is like stopping a storm. Only a shield can bear the lashes of a sword and only abstinence can protect a passionate mind. The wavering mind of an individual without self-control is weak, while the determined mind of an individual who abstains is strong. An army of eunuchs will turn to their heels when they hear the shout of a hero. If one wants to live, one must take up the weapon of determination. The Lord gives boons unasked to those who have made good resolutions in their hearts.



Once one resolves to be good, one has closed the avenues of despair, misery and defeat. The slave of the mind is scorned by everyone, while the conqueror of the mind receives all praise and affection. Unless one is introspective, one cannot make pure resolutions. The resolution of one trained in abstinence remains until the goal is accomplished. The resolutions of the emotional, who are untrained in abstinence, are born one moment and die the next. Resolutions made in moments of anger or passion are not resolutions but obstinacies. Not insisting on the Truth is lack of resolution.

Mental peace opens the storehouse of knowledge and closes the gates of ignorance. That is, only a peaceful and undisturbed mind can acquire and use it beneficially. A disturbed state of mind yields only plentiful ignorance. Only after achieving a peaceful mind, can it be seen how one had been forsaking knowledge and welcoming ignorance while in a disturbed state of mind. When the mind is at peace, the individual is happy. Peace and happiness are complementary; one cannot exist without the other. Peace results in good habits, while a disturbed mind acts with anger and passion. If one can remain peaceful, then one can surely achieve one's worldly and spiritual goals.

To achieve peacefulness, one must resort to celibacy, controlled diet, exercise, avoidance of vice, study of scripture, friendship with good persons, observance of rules, dutifulness, determination, affinity for virtuous living and avoidance of faults. If one does not follow the above, then mental and physical disturbances creep in and mar the path of one's spiritual progress.

As water quenches thirst and as food banishes hunger, so the sight of a saint quells evil thoughts and remembrance of God calms down misery. Evil thoughts come from two sources: physical illness and bad social atmosphere. Since the body is linked with the mind, a diseased body taints the mind and a diseased mind infects the body. A saint is an ocean of good thoughts. As a foul sewer is purified as it merges into the sea, so is the evil mind cleansed by meeting a saint. As sour whey makes a rusty vessel shine, so the good habits and pure thoughts of a saint polish the tarnish from the mind of a worldly person.

When there is a high breeze, the leaves of an oak tree rustle wildly but once the breeze dies out, the leaves are still. Disturbance in the mind is caused by desires. When these desires gain strength, the mind becomes more disturbed. At such a time, one should resort to nam smaranam (calling upon, repeating the name of God); this returns peace to the mind. When the mind is in full storm, only the individual with faith will gain peace by saying God's name.

Faith is born and fed by Satsang. Its absence weakens faith and strengthens distrust.

Devotion is not roused without faith and faith cannot survive without devotion.

One who perseveres even after several unsuccessful trials in anticipation of victory is the true person of faith.

Man is led along by faith. Often faith misleads a person on to a wrong path but ultimately it definitely brings one to the correct path. Due to faith one has to face miseries. But after reaching the state of wellbeing, these miseries seem negligible.

Only the person of faith is the fit recipient of knowledge. The person of faith concentrates on one path while the person without faith changes his path several times a day. The former is idealistic and reaches the goal. The latter has no ideal or goal, like a roving beggar or a reed which moves with the breeze.

God is omnipresent. Yet He is not found in the eyes, soul or speech of the person without faith.

Fanciful thoughts that flow from one state to another are like ripples in still water. Strong concepts which last for months and years are like giant ocean waves. The powerful sets of the mind which last till death are like great waterfalls. These are called faith. The torch of faith may flicker in hard times but it never goes out.

Faith leads one onto the path of knowledge and action. When faith is kindled in one's heart, enthusiasm, self-control, ability to work, concentration, patience, sacrifice and service follow naturally in one's life. Faith is God's greatest boon. Distrust leads to ignorance and lethargy and their progeny are despair, impatience and selfishness. The person who cannot persist at a task is without faith.

Bhajan (the singing of holy songs) is a way to develop full faith and endless devotion to God. One is trying to see God and when one is singing bhajans (holy songs); both the mind and the heart cooperate with the body towards this end.

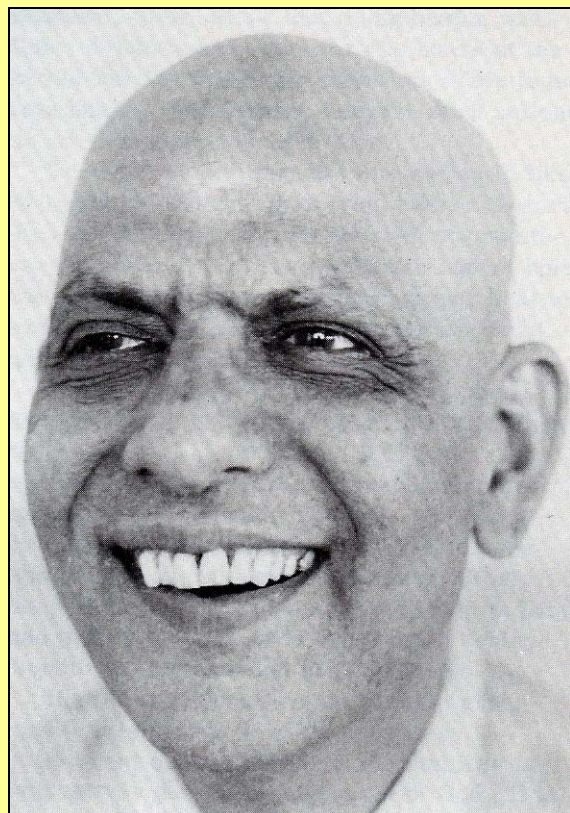
Bhajan brings intimacy with God and lets us transcend Maya (illusion). Technically speaking, any action which results in mental and physical purification is bhajan. One can only be steadily in sattvaguna (the tranquil state) if mental and physical purification has taken place. Only when sattvaguna is achieved are faith, devotion and clear reasoning possible. Only in sattvaguna do the physical organs of the body work smoothly with the mind.

Even though the singing of bhajans brings mental and physical purity, it would be an error to think that after a day of gluttony, sloth, vices, bad thoughts and actions, adultery, theft, etc., that doing bhajan with flute, cymbals and drum for two hours at the end of the day will bring salvation. This is not true bhajan but a farce, because such actions do not bring one nearer to God.

To properly put thoughts into action is like bringing the Ganges down from heaven to earth. To succeed at either, one must first practice severe austerities. As a water pot cannot hold the entire sea, one cannot use a paper boat to cross it; so one may not show one's powers until one has developed worthiness.

If only ordinary effort, patience, power and knowledge are brought to bear in a task, then the result will be ordinary. The tasks taken up by great beings call for extraordinary effort, patience, power and knowledge. To lead a prosperous life, the necessary virtues are confidence, knowledge, unrelenting effort, deep faith, great fondness for the task at hand and patience. Only after laboring to achieve worthiness can one achieve high goals.

High ideals alone are not enough; great strength is also absolutely necessary. Attainment of such strength and stability is exclusively due to the blessings of God. It is only the Almighty's blessings that make a man or woman great and able to achieve great things.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### HUMILITY

Greatness has its permanent abode in humility and shallowness in pride. Humility is the landmark of knowledge while pride is the landmark of ignorance. If one's head is filled with proud notions, one's mind becomes heavy with all the sins of the universe and the head will not bow to anyone. However, if humility takes up its abode in the head, it then is full of virtue, and being light, easily bows down to all.

The idea that if one bows one is a non-entity and that if one does not bow one is great, is false. The branches of a tree that is heavily laden with fruit bow low. An older person bends down to pick up a child. An overflowing vessel pours out so that an empty vessel may be filled. A humble individual is greatly loved by God and the universe.

A holy man advised a devotee of Truth, "Brother, be like a brickbat by the side of the road. As you are kicked about by pedestrians, your pride will disappear." But, on second thoughts, the holy man felt that something was wrong with his advice. Yes, it was good that one should become a brickbat but what about the feet of the pedestrians? Wouldn't they be injured? So he modified his advice. "Brother, be as humble as dust on the street." Again, the holy man was not satisfied with his advice because he remembered that dust settled on the body and clothes and makes people dusty. So, in the end, he said, "Brother, be as cool as the moonbeam and bestow your calmness on others and make them happy."

A shrewd gardener went to the thorny hedges and bowing down to them, said, "I have decided to call a conference of flowers. I shall be honored and glad if you take the chair and preside over the function." The thorny hedges were very pleased and acquiesced. Thus the gardener got his way and built up the thorny hedge. Falsely proud and ignorant people, who are likely to interfere with our tasks, may be touched by gentle words and so instead they may come to help. Humility can redirect the wicked tendencies of those weak in virtue.

Pride means multiplication; that is, a proud person makes a show of being many more times virtuous than he really is. Humility means division; a humble person makes little of virtues and is self-demeaning. A proud person is blind because one sees only oneself. Humility has divine sight as one sees only others.

He who does not see his own faults is blind. Such a blind person cannot make progress on the divine path and cannot be called a satsangi (one who participates in satsang). A person is also disabled if faults are recognized but one cannot get rid of them. Only the person who acquires virtues in order to get rid of vices can overcome vices. Such a devotee is the true satsangi.

Good behavior takes an individual to the peak of sublimation. Good behavior is attractive and is at the root of all happiness while bad behavior is repulsive and is at the root of all evil.

Water's heaviness makes it descend while steam's lightness allows it to rise. Passion, anger, greed, intoxication, attachment and enmity are the six vices of our materialistic mind and bring about our downfall. We will only attain sublimation when we can overcome these six vices.

Sometimes, a single bad habit may degrade a person to a wretched state while a single good habit may raise the most wretched of humans to the status of a great man or woman.

A friendship lasts as long as the individuals involved endeavor to hide their faults. Neither virtue nor vice are fond of fame. They both prefer solitude.

In the beginning, a devotee's or a saint's aim is the realization of God; however, when many people are attracted to him by vows, rules, love of God and good conduct, the purpose is lost. This mass popularity leads one off on the wrong path. Deceit, pride and false shows of humility increase. By attaining the status of master, the status of student is forever lost. The result is the downfall of the devotee or saint.

Great beings and saints never hide their faults. They never seek the companionship of sin. Ordinary persons cannot keep from exhibiting their virtues. As a result, their virtues are gradually replaced by vices. When there is no awareness of virtue and vice, virtue vanishes and vices multiply. Virtue brings love and vice brings hatred. Good individuals try to hide their virtues and bad individuals try to hide their vices but neither virtue nor vice can be hidden. How can one conceal the perfume of flowers in a beautiful garden or the putrid smell of a rotten corpse in a ditch? One should admit one's faults and be rid of them. One cannot be innocent without first being virtuous.

Slanderers line the path of the virtuous; so, the virtuous cannot abandon their path. Thus slanderers protect the treasure house of the character of the virtuous. Slander is poison yet it is like nectar. The hated slanderer does the work of a powerful Sadguru (Master who is Truth) because he guards the character of the virtuous. Slanderers are like thorny hedges which surround the sweet-smelling garden of the virtuous.

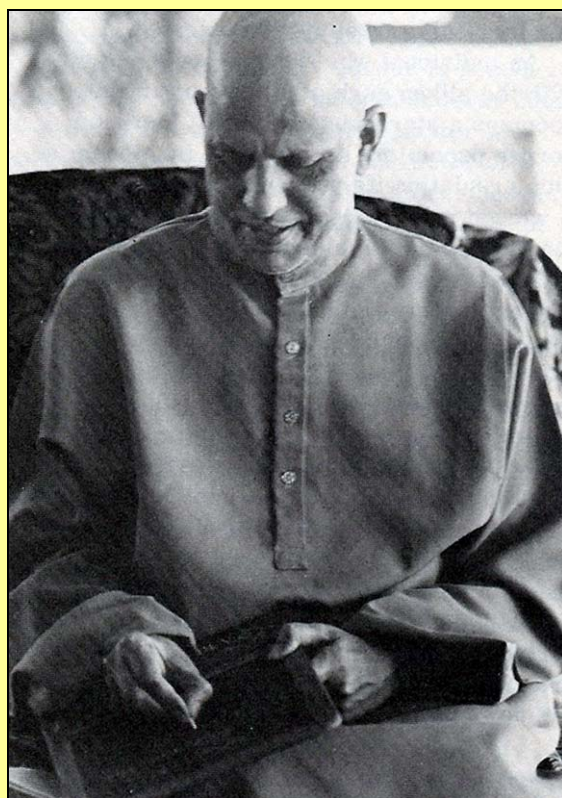
Loving admirers do the work of an enemy by making the character of an individual vicious. The virtuous are like clay jars of nectar and admirers are like children throwing stones. Praise makes an individual proud and careless. The same censure that makes a courteous person humble and careful makes a rude person jealous and cruel. Bitter censure is the remedy for faults while sweet

praise destroys virtues. Saints turn a deaf ear to praise from admirers but give a willing ear to the censure of slanderers. They even regard the censure as nectar and preserve it forever in the jars of their memory and always sip at it. Faults which have not been found even after deep introspection are revealed by the words of slanderers and float up like butter to the top of whey. Thus a slanderer reveals the faults which one tries to conceal from society. If after listening to self censure, an individual does not take stock of the soul nor try to get rid of bad habits, then it is impossible to participate in spiritual devotion. An individual, who cannot do without praise, as a railway carriage cannot do without an engine, is like a cripple who cannot walk without crutches. The inspiring praise of a sincere well-wishing admirer helps an individual to progress but the murderous praise of the self-serving false admirer only makes one intoxicated.

An individual who tries to cover vices with the silken garb of a virtuous image becomes a storehouse of vice. Just as a corpse proclaims its presence by stench; so, vice proclaims its presence by corruptibility. A wicked person conceals faults and exhibits virtues, while a refined individual conceals virtues and exhibits faults. A refined person is frank because of virtue and a wicked person is crooked because of vice. Popularity achieved by making a false show of virtues is short-lived. Real popularity, established by society, is achieved only by accepting one's faults and is permanent.

If one sincerely praises another after being impressed by his or her virtues, the mind is purified. Censuring a wicked person only leads to the degradation of one's mind.

Thus a refined individual does not show off virtue and is uplifted; while a wicked person tries to conceal vice which results in degradation.





## CHAPTER FIVE

### SILENCE

Silence means to control our speech. The little elf, the tongue, needs a giant to control it and when the elf is angry all the ingenuity of the giant is needed to check it.

God has given us a tongue with which to talk; however, it can act like a horse without a rein or an intoxicated, haughty elephant. Silence, therefore, is absolutely necessary to keep the tongue in check.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna's advice to his disciple is that if any devotee wants to perform devotion successfully, he or she must triumph over the tongue and the genitals. Though these two organs are boneless they are very wicked. Just as a dog wags his tail when he sees his owner, so the mind wags its tail at the command of these two organs.

The tongue is extremely efficient at two things: eating and talking. When the tongue is too efficient at eating it not only makes a healthy person sick but will push one into the jaws of death. When the tongue is too efficient in speech, it makes an enemy of the whole world.

We speak much more than necessary. Constant talk has made our tongue's hinges loose. We talk and talk whether or not the other person wants to listen to us. All those around us talk too much so that we feel the whole world is full of nothing but disturbances.

Bitter words result in quarrels. Even sweet words bring about attachment. Bitter words are at the root of evil deeds and sweet words are at the root of good deeds. When a good person speaks it is like perfume but when a wicked person speaks it is as if we smell the stink of a gutter.

One can express the bitterness or sweetness of the mind through speech. Once a person begins speaking it is not possible to exclude bitterness from the sweetness of the speech. If one wants to keep bitter speech in check, then one must also control the sweetness.

Some shallow people ridicule the method of silence. They say, "What is the use of locking up the mouth? One should instead lock up the mind, which is the real cause of trouble and has never observed a vow of silence." Sweetness of speech is born of a peaceful mind and bitterness of speech appears in a disturbed mind. It is very difficult to maintain peace of mind when dealing with all the different kinds of people in the world.

A selfish motive can be used to make a person behave well, act with humility, use sweet speech and act pleasantly; however, when the selfish motive is achieved, all these "good" qualities disappear.

An intelligent person often feels that skilful speech impresses others but too much smartness of speech is a bore to others; those listening, directly or indirectly, try to avoid this type of person. If one is sparing with speech, there is universal respect. The calm mind spreads perfume and, like a candle, radiates light.

Speech is the medium for ordinary people, but for great persons, ideal life speaks for itself. Ideal character produces a far better effect than speech. People who cannot observe silence are not liked by anyone and everyone avoids them.

By misusing water, clay is produced; by misusing speech, bitterness is produced.

We are not wise if we go on speaking when we know the other is not eager to hear. A wise individual's words are more precious than all the diamonds, rubies and pearls on the Earth!

You can only value your own speech if you value the speech of others. When you speak more than necessary, it means that you consider your speech trifling.

Often our tongue ceases to move but our mind is still active; it goes on ticking. When the mind also becomes still, then real silence is born. This silence comes only in samadhi (pure consciousness, union with God) and is not easily obtained. We want peace but we are not willing to be silent.

When we see or hear something we don't like, immediately the mind is disturbed, like a red-hot iron being dipped in cold water. This disturbance breaks the bonds we have placed on our tongue and upset results. The sword of retaliation injures both persons concerned. One sword striking another produces sparks and this retaliation faced with retaliation produces enmity. Only silence can act as a shield against the blows of the sword of retaliation.

There is a lack of wisdom in praising one's own intelligence and experience. Wise men and women do not praise themselves. If others praise them they are not carried away. They don't think of themselves as individuals of great wisdom. Yet those around them regard them as wise and full of experience.

Some of those who observe complete silence write their thoughts on slate or paper when it is necessary to convey them to others. This way the silent person keeps in contact with the world. Sometimes this becomes a matter of dispute, for some say that one can abuse others in writing as well as with speech. If others are abused through the written word, then the goal of reaching mental peace by silence fails.

If one's mind is still upset despite taking care with one's speech, it is better to go to a place of solitude rather than burden another with one's upset. Great individuals who advocate silence also advocate solitude. If silence and solitude are both observed, then the silence is both successful and dazzling. Because the mind becomes flighty when it comes into contact with people, one who is observing silence must be very careful and alert in relationships.

When garrulous people see me writing on a slate, they say, "Kripalu, you do not talk but you write, it is all the same, and talking would be more convenient. Your time would be saved and we would be satisfied." Such people have forgotten that the one who observes silence thus only writes when it is really necessary. Only important questions are asked and most conversations are over in five minutes. The longest interview should not last for more than ten minutes.

One who is observing silence should follow the rule of not getting others involved in one's activities. If this rule is broken, then one has to resort to slate or paper, thus making it difficult to maintain mental peace. When maintaining silence, if one becomes upset this should not be expressed, even in writing. This is against the rule of silence and the vow is broken. Thus, one who resorts to writing while on silence must make it a rule to write only when the mind is at peace.

If one is observing silence, one may pray to God out loud. Prayers do not break the vow of silence. One may also recite and explain religious texts if one immediately resumes silence afterward. Such religious discourses should be very humble or the sadhak will remain ignorant though knowledge is imparted to others. The sadhak should remain alert to the temptations of pretence and pride.

One who is observing silence must not only curb the tongue but must also be careful not to allow mental peace to be disturbed through the activity of the other sense organs. Vice should be discouraged and virtue encouraged. Silence should bring both physical and mental sublimation.

Upsets of the sense organs are really upsets in the flighty mind; so if the mind is restrained, the sense organs are restrained. Unless one can observe celibacy, one cannot succeed in the vow of silence and unless silence is observed, one cannot succeed in the vow of celibacy.

A proper sadhak studies holy books, cultivates good habits, says prayers, does meditation, repeats mantra, fasts moderately, observes celibacy, exercises and follows a vow of silence. Only by strictly following these rules, can the goal of sadhana be achieved.

One can achieve deep introspection when one is under the vow of silence and has a firm understanding of one's own faults and virtues. As a result one

disposes of old vices while preventing new vices from entering and protects one's existing virtues while endeavoring to attain new ones.

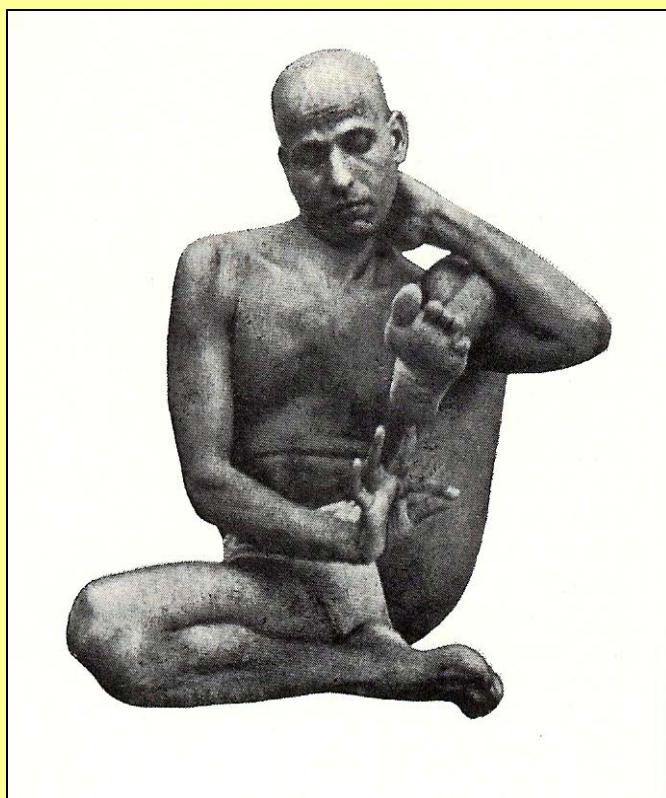
The vow of silence is a great penance if it is observed properly. Then even the impossible is made possible. The Lord Shri Krishna has said in the third chapter of the *Gita*: "I am the reticence of those who keep things secret and the wisdom of the wise."

One can compare an audience with a lake and the words of a speaker with pebbles. As the pebbles thrown into the lake produce ripples, so do the speaker's words produce a reaction in the listeners' minds. An individual who speaks with affection and has a calm mind will create similar feelings in the minds of the listeners. However, when an individual speaks from a disturbed or bitter state of mind, the listeners reciprocate with the same feelings. Speech can make an enemy of a friend or a friend of an enemy. The written or spoken word is the most important factor in an individual's relationship with the rest of the world. One should not write or speak when the mind is upset.

The most auspicious moment to take a vow of silence is when there is a disturbance in the mind. One should not reprimand anyone without forethought but should be reticent and think over the matter calmly first. In a disturbed state of mind one cannot listen, give good counsel or impart advice. If one is upset and reacts quickly to criticism with a reprimand, the result is never good. Though one remains verbally silent, the actions may still reveal pleasure or displeasure. These actions also affect the other's mental state. If a wife is angry with her husband, she can disturb him even if she says nothing by banging things about the house, beating the children or weeping.

On the other hand, suppose the wife has gone to her father's house for a few days and on some excuse her husband comes to see her. Though she may not be able to talk due to the presence of some elders, she can please her beloved by her coy gestures and make him very happy. These examples show that restraining speech is not the only requisite of silence. One must also control gestures that please or displease. If a person cannot curb gestures, feelings cannot be kept secret. So one should ponder over the effects of one's behavior on others.

For an individual to vanquish the tongue, he or she must not only speak the truth and observe silence but must also resort to strict dieting and fasting. One should also learn not to hurt anyone with speech or gesture. An individual who has succeeded in vanquishing the tongue can win the world and reach God. Reticence gives the devotee and the people around profound happiness and peace.



## CHAPTER SIX

### DIET AND EXERCISE

When we eat too much, too often, with too little discrimination, our stomach gets worn out. In such circumstances, how can the intestines eliminate all this extra waste? When this waste matter in the intestines is not eliminated then it builds up and putrefies. This putrefaction causes many diseases.

Fasting is a good way to learn to control our gluttony. A total fast gives our intestines a rest and much of the waste matter is eliminated. However, fasting alone does not completely destroy our gluttonous nature.

In India fasting is commonly considered to be limiting the diet to fruit juices, milk, yogurt, butter and fruit. This type of fast achieves only one goal of fasting: some measure of self-control is attained.

In many sects fasting has the definite purpose of purifying the mind and body. So fasting can be called a search within. If after such fasting, no such purification is noticed, then we should conclude that there is something about fasting that we don't know. If we lack clear understanding of a good act, it fails to produce the expected results.

Some people, preferring a fast of limited foods, burden sick people with oranges, milk, sugar, etc., thinking this to be an adequate fast. Liquids and fruit are both foods, which when pushed on a sick person whose appetite is poor, increase the waste matter in the body and thereby the length of the disease. Some people believe that fruit juices are nothing but water and are easily digested but this is not true. These juices are nutritious but also contain roughage and the roughage is indigestible due to the condition of the patient.

Fasting and abstaining from sex are unsurpassed remedies for diseases. Through fasting diseases are eliminated from the body enabling good health to enter naturally.

When much waste matter collects in the body, we become sick and lose our appetite. This is natural and is an involuntary fast. When we voluntarily fast the appetite increases; therefore, voluntary fasting is difficult. But when Mother Nature inspires an involuntary fast, we are saved and not eating is easy.

Both voluntary and involuntary fasting purifies the body. Only through fasting is the built up internal waste matter eliminated. Therefore fasting is necessary.

Nature set the correct example through our loss of appetite but we are often such fools that we force a person who is naturally fasting to eat and then one is made

worse. We mistakenly advise that the fasting has made them weak and that one cannot live without eating, not realizing that gluttony was the cause of the disease and loss of appetite in the first place. One can observe that often people are weak regardless of how much they eat, while others are strong in spite of not eating.

By overeating, we overburden the digestive system and much of the food goes undigested. This undigested food gets pushed forward, becomes putrefied and causes diseases like coughing, acidity, flatulence, impure feces, urine, perspiration and bad breath.

After considering everything, it is wiser to limit the amount of food you eat and remain healthy than to overeat and become a victim of disease.

To protect our health we should do physical exercise as regularly as we eat. Lack of exercise makes the mind wavering and sensual. Different asanas (yogic postures) exercise different parts of the body. They keep the body warm, stimulate hunger and make the body strong. Exercise increases alertness and makes one's attitude pleasant. It gives rest to the mind and vitality to the nerves. Physical and mental strength increases. In short, through exercise, every part of the body becomes alive and the ability to do work increases.

Lack of exercise makes the lungs weak and respiration feeble. Blood circulation diminishes and the chest does not expand. Digestive juices are not properly produced and there is less purification through perspiration. Constipation results, the body deteriorates and the metabolism slows. In the end, the body becomes prey to disease and mental and physical illnesses result.

Games are the mother of physical exercise. In games the mind is uplifted and the body is stimulated. Games are the festival of life, the incomparable scene of happy life. They are the steamship which takes one away from the land of misery, disease and disappointment. Team games encourage unity. An individual who eats but does not exercise or play games which call for exertion is always unhappy, pessimistic, diseased and indecisive. Old age is never far from such an individual.

The best physical exercise of all is dancing. Success is always rolling about the feet of a dancer. One can reach God through dancing. All the great teachers of the path of bhakti (devotion) like the Gopis of Brij, Devarishi Narad, the great ascetic Shuka-Sankadi, Mirabhai and Narsinh Mehta were dancers. Shri Natawar (Krishna) and Shri Natashwar (Shiva) are both dancers and can easily be reached by dancers. The booming tolls of bells, sweet music and the dances of Lord Shiva carry inexpressible meaning. Through exercise and dance a yogi becomes an urdhvareta (one with upward flow of sexual fluids). Life without exercise and rest without exertion is the same as death.

The study and performance of asanas (yogic postures) should be done in a pure, peaceful and beautiful environment. There should be flowers and incense, so the mind will be in a pleasant state. One should do asanas after a bath, in a clear, level place on a thick pad. One should not do asanas in a place where there is a high breeze.

Asanas are equally useful to men, women, children, the old, the diseased and the healthy. One should do asanas on an empty stomach, at least four hours after a meal, morning and evening. After finishing asanas, one should wait one hour before eating. Asanas should be done under the strict guidance of an expert. Whether one is sick or healthy, one should do pranayam (breath control exercises) for at least one month before beginning with easy asanas. After one's strength and knowledge have increased, one should go on to more difficult asanas. Before trying a new asana, one should study a picture of the asana carefully, read the description thoroughly and then, without haste, one should arrange the limbs in the pose of the asana. Bodily progress is maximum when the asana is done with full understanding. When done without understanding, asanas can harm the physique. One should accompany an asana with its complementary asana in order to maintain balance and thus exercise the whole body. According to one's preference, strength, and understanding, one should choose asanas for the head, neck, chest, abdomen, spine, and limbs.

One should not become over-eager and strain the body while doing asanas. Also, as soon as the body starts to tire, one should stop doing asanas. Asanas that are the most beneficial should be done only within set limits of time and strength. One cannot do difficult asanas in the beginning and one should not torture one's limbs to achieve them. Gradually, as practice continues, they will become easier. After one achieves the pose, one should increase physical endurance by retaining the asana for longer and longer periods. This can be done with easy asanas from the beginning.

A patient should do asanas only after medical consultation, especially a person who has undergone a surgical operation. A student of asanas should not sit near fires and should avoid sexual contact, bad company and vices. Cold water baths should be taken.

Only after attaining full mastery of pranayam (breath control exercises) should one attempt doing asanas along with tribandh (three locks), dwibandh (two locks) or ekbandh (one lock). Until one has mastery of pranayam, one should do asanas without kumbhak (breath retention). To breathe in is called purak, to retain it is called kumbhak and to breathe out is called rechak. One can do kumbhak following either purak or rechak. If kumbhak is performed after rechak, it is called bahya kumbhak. There are three bandhas (locks): Mulbandh, Jalandhbandh and Udiyanbandh. Contraction of the anus after rechak or purak is mulbandh. This causes apana (expelling energy) to be reversed, and thus uplifted. If one raises prana (life energy) and apana into the head and lowers

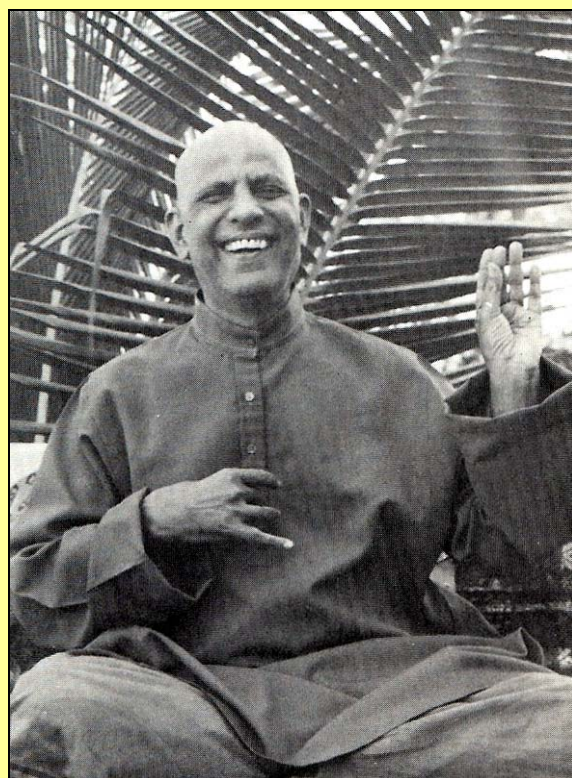


one's neck until the chin presses against the chest, one has done jalandhbandh. This stops the flow in the sensory and motor nerves and permits flow only in the center of the spinal cord. In udiyanbandh, the abdomen is contracted toward the spine after rechak (exhalation). This brings the life force to the brahmarandhra (an aperture in the crown of the head). The tribandh (all three locks) should not be attempted without the guidance of an expert. When one learns a posture, one is usually instructed to do kumbhak after rechak or purak; however, from there on one should breathe normally.

If one does the same asana with both the right limb and the left limb, this is two different asanas. One should study and create new types of asanas in this way. The asanas of the left limbs and those of the right limbs are complementary because each offers rest to the other limb. By doing complementary asanas, the body gets rest and can do more asanas. Padmasana (lotus pose, in which the right foot is placed on the left thigh and then the left foot is placed on the right thigh) and kamalasana (also lotus pose, in which the left foot is placed on the right thigh first) are complementary asanas. The complementary asana of bhunamanasana (bowing pose) is matsyasana (fish pose), that of ardhaupadhasana (half pillow pose) is vampsarshwa ardhaupadhasana (left side half pillow pose) and that of shirsha sprishthasana (head touching pose) is both urdvapadmasana (upward lotus pose) and matsyasana (fish pose). The complementary asanas of sitting asanas are standing asanas and those of standing asanas are sitting asanas. With some practice one can learn to recognize complementary asanas.

A student should note how long a posture can be held when beginning a new asana. Then this time should be gradually increased. The time limit for each asana differs from person to person. The time limit for one person is of no use in judging another's, since an asana may be easy for one person and difficult for another. One should meet the calls of nature and bathe before doing asanas. To relieve constipation, one should do abdominal asanas before one's bath. This relieves the constipation then one can continue with other asanas after the bath.

A student of asanas should not take medicines and should not keep late nights. He should not travel unless necessary, because traveling entails irregularity. He should take care of his health and refrain from wearing tight clothes, suspenders or knickers during the practice of yoga.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### MEDITATION

When the upashak (aspirant of union with God) tries to force the mind into introspection by means of dhyān (meditation), the attention slips onto the outer world. The reason this happens is that the attention is being controlled by the strong apana (regenerative force) in the body of the aspirant. The prana (life force) in willful yoga is not able to restrain the apana, so the attention becomes extroverted. It is impossible to attain the highest stage of dhyān unless prana is capable of holding in the apana. It is only when the prana starts uplifting the apana to the peaks of dhyān that mental and physical impurities are gradually vanquished. If worldly thoughts intrude during meditation, then there is something wanting in our love of God. But we should not be discouraged. We should remember our Sadguru and offer prayers to God. If by remembering one's Sadguru, worldly thoughts ebb away, then such remembrance will lead one to achieve true meditation. If offering prayer to God helps to push us towards God, we should use it as a means of dhyān. We should use whatever ways that are effective to achieve dhyān. We can study dhyān properly only if we have firm faith in God, Guru and scripture. Such faith comes from chanting to God; therefore, one should chant always.

In warm countries, a cold bath is a tranquillizer for the mind. The tired limbs are relaxed and are ready for exertion. Sattvaguna (the peaceful state) results from a cold bath; delight, eagerness, patience, alertness and knowledge come naturally. It is advisable to bathe before early morning dhyān. From 3 to 6 a.m., nature is at her best, so this is the ideal time for dhyān.

If the upashak is not enthusiastic when entering the room of upasana (worship), then upasana is a burden. One should first shed all worldly thoughts; if this is not done, then the upashak's mind will become lethargic. Should this continue for long one will cease to be an aspirant of union with God. How intoxicated are lovers with their passion when they meet! Their thoughts always flow in one direction. Lover and beloved are immersed in each other. The true upashak enters the room of upasana like the true lover entering the room of the beloved. Nor does the devotee like to leave when time is up. The joy of meeting and the pain of separation are written on the face.

There are many reasons for distractions in dhyān. According to psychology, one cannot concentrate on a task that one does not like. Liking creates attraction and only attraction can make the attention steady on its object. When one is familiar with a subject, one is more easily attracted to it. Upasana does not attract an individual who has not had the privilege of satsang. A taste for upasana comes only when the mind is impressed by a holy person, Sadguru, scripture or religious minded relatives and friends. Progress is made in dhyān only if one has

previous knowledge. Upasana cannot be attractive to an upset mind. If one's mind is engaged in worldly thoughts, then one cannot forcibly do meditation. The mind is not interested and will escape. Dhyan is not possible in the face of either mental or physical disturbances. Also, if the environment is not suitable for dhyan the mind will not become steady.

Mental lethargy springs from uncontrolled diet and bad influences, resulting in repulsion for upasana. People think the illusory world is precious and that God is cheap; so they abandon God, who is near, and chase the precocious world of Maya (illusion).

If one lacks faith in one's Sadguru, his advice will not remain in one's memory and there will be lack enthusiasm for meditation. The upashak should begin sadhana with the realizations born of satsang. When one begins to see the virtues of a holy person, the immense magnetism of the holy person attracts one. One's vices begin to poke like iron pikes and the mind and body become eager for sadhana. Then the mind runs like a child and clings to the feet of one's Sadguru and one has full faith in his words.

A groom tries to attract his future bride by being well-dressed and prepared. The upashak should prepare in the same way to enter the upasana room. When there is no affection for God, then the aspirant's entrance to the room is as dull as a groom of seventy-five about to wed his fifth wife.

If an upashak sees good and bad things, hears sweet and bitter words, tastes many things and talks a lot, if the skin is constantly touching things and people and one is always smelling various things, the mind gets agitated by the senses. It is not advisable to enter the meditation room in this state of mind.

Only after a refreshing bath, should one pray to God or one's Sadguru and try to remember or read and meditate on their words. One should not enter the upasana room unless one hungers for meditation. When an aspirant gets into the habit of dhyan, as one is habituated to food, then he or she will always be ready for dhyan.

The conflict present in every walk of life frightens people with its terrible visage. But if a traveler abandons the goal because of fear, no progress will be made. If one does not let fear triumph but boldly takes up the fight, facing many defeats and yet moving forward with hope of victory, the final goal will be reached. Thus one has to cross the territory of Maya to settle down in the land of God. Because the science of yoga is very useful to humanity, it is worth knowing. Knowledge of yogic science makes the spiritual path easy. Yoga is a real boon for one who has faith in God. Through yoga, one's faith increases greatly and one becomes the ideal religious person. But even if one has no faith in God but believes only in science, the path of yoga is also blissful because yoga makes the scientist into a perfect theist.

Sublimation of the senses is the climax of yoga; it is the final samadhi. This state of yoga is called maha yoga (great union), purna yoga (perfect union) or raj yoga (royal union). Finding the successful means to sublimate the senses is another question. The means are many but, in the end, sublimation should be complete. Partial sublimation results in incomplete progress, but it does yield some fruit.

As steam has the power to work gigantic machines, so do the sublimated senses have the power to achieve the greatest spiritual progress. To produce steam, water and fire are necessary. To produce spiritual power, pranayama and celibacy are necessary. Experiment with pranayama and celibacy for one and a quarter years, then see if anything has been achieved. If so, you could continue. There is no doubt, though, that you will be ready to give up your whole life to the cause of yoga. The ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose are the five sense organs. Their fields of action are hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling. The mind, which is attracted by the senses, concentrates on any actions that are happening. This concentration can be channeled into the field of sublimation by constant watch and study.

There are five types of dhyana, one for each of the five senses. One should try to achieve meditation through the organ that is most submissive. Because of the different types of dhyana, different branches and sub-branches of yogic knowledge have developed. If the ear is the centre of dhyana, the result is shabda brahma yoga (union through the sound of the God of Creation), akshar brahma yoga (yoga of the imperishable, the syllable "Om"), or nada brahma yoga (yoga of roaring sound). By making the tongue the centre of dhyana, mantra yoga (yoga of the repetition of God's names), amrita siddhi yoga (yoga of immortal accomplishment), jaya yoga (yoga of victory), nada brahma yoga, shabda brahma yoga, akshar brahma yoga, and bindu yoga (yoga of the dot at the end of the syllable "Om") are produced. By meditating on the sense of smell (the nostrils), hatha yoga (sun-moon yoga), Kundalini yoga (serpent yoga), Shiva yoga (pure yoga), Pashupati yoga (yoga of the Lord of Animals), ashtanga yoga (eight-limbed yoga), jnana yoga (yoga of knowledge), bhakti yoga (yoga of devotion) and all other branches of yoga are born. By making the eye the centre of concentration, raj yoga (royal yoga), laya yoga (yoga of dissolution), surat shabda yoga (yoga of delightful sound), etc. are produced. The head is the organ of action, while the tongue is the organ of both action and knowledge. By making both of these organs together the centre of concentration, one achieves sparsha yoga (yoga of touch), bindu yoga, shabda brahma yoga, akshar brahma yoga, nada brahma yoga, laya yoga, hatha yoga, raj yoga, jnana yoga, bhakti yoga, etc.

A particular focus for dhyana can encompass all other possible foci of dhyana because there is only one mind grazing in the different fields of dhyana. Thus all meditative variations stem from the various sense faculties and their organs.

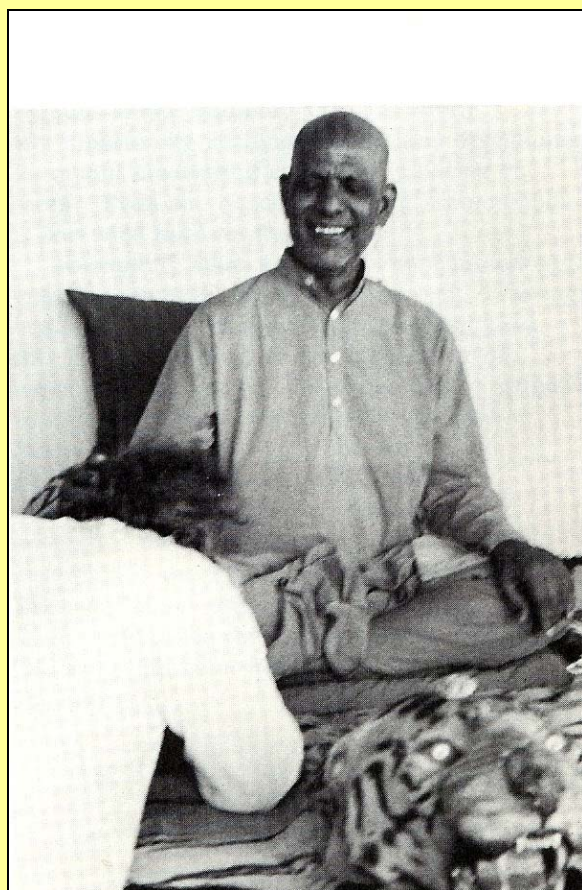
Concentration is the perfection of the art of action. An artist also uses concentration to perfect his or her art, whether it be drawing, music, dancing, elocution, writing or any other. As concentration is an important aspect of yogic knowledge, the activity of the artist is essentially yoga and the artist, a sadhak. The sense faculties of a painter, musician, dancer, orator or an author are active while drawing, singing, composing, dancing, lecturing or creating a masterpiece of literature. Thus it is seen that concentration and the senses are intensely related. Through concentrating the senses, either good or bad may result: one should ignore concentration of the senses that leads to degradation and practice only concentration that elevates one's life. By sublimation of the senses, not only are the sense organs calmed but the mind also becomes soothed. So this sublimation is considered superior to the concentration of the artist or scientist, though their concentration can be considered permanent if they ignore temptation when it crosses their path. The art that comes from such concentration makes a deep impression on society. All the inventions of science are also the result of concentration. Concentration is achieved while performing the many actions of life. This indicates that concentration is not impossible but is easily achieved by everyone. There is no indication that concentration is directly related to one's character but it is indirectly related to deep levels of the being.

Only a few seek salvation but everyone strives for wealth. Even wealth is best achieved through yoga. The science of yoga is the best and most universal path to follow. In yoga there is no room for despair. One must have that steadiness of mind which is the essential factor in achieving concentration. Since steadiness of mind can result in concentration, it is valuable to know what brings about steadiness of mind.

A healthy mind is the result of a healthy body and an unhealthy mind comes from an ailing body. Therefore it is necessary that the body and mind both be sound and healthy. A sadhak should live and think in such a way as to promote a sane balance between the different tendencies of the body and mind.

One must like concentration in order to make progress. One comes to like a subject when one has come into close contact with a master of that subject. One can attain illumination by reading holy books, discussing them and meditating and experimenting on them. Even so, concentration is not possible if one does not like the subject.

An expert, when asked how he attained such energy to achieve his goal, answered, "Through concentration." Lovers of yoga should keep this in mind and strive for concentration which is a necessity. Thus successful efforts to attain wealth, satisfaction in worldly desires or salvation require earnest concentration in the correct direction compounded with efficient discoveries of scientific means of achievement. If we summarize these achievements and compare them to the science of ashtang (eight-limbed) yoga, we will see the yogic methods are by far the best, the most honest and the most scientific.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### GUIDANCE TO MY CHILDREN

The first requisite in life is that peace reign in your household. If there is no peace in the house, your mental disturbances will increase and make you mad. If there is peace in the house, mental equilibrium will be maintained and you will be able to face and suppress any disturbances that crop up. To establish peace in your household you will have to win the hearts of every individual - big or small. When peace is established by force then it is not peace, it is a regime of terror. Divinity is born out of the peace which is founded on love.

A family or friends constantly involved in bitter quarrels are like screaming, tortured humans trapped helplessly in a house on fire. Being burned alive would be better, since the fire of quarrelling saves the individual but leads to further burning and torture. God or devotion never enters a household racked by quarrels. The worst of all hells is a house where there is enmity between husband and wife, father and sons, in-laws and wife or brothers and sisters.

An individual can never attain tranquility of mind unless one seeks solitude and considers the future with a calm mind. Tranquility is achieved naturally by devotion to God. Mental tranquility is the result of sattvaguna (quality of purity) and the disturbed mind results from rajaguna (quality of passion) and tamoguna (quality of dullness). If tranquility is achieved during devotion then one might surmise that there love for the Lord in one's heart. The more tranquility one can achieve during devotion the more love one has for God. The art of making sattvaguna permanent is the foundation of spiritual sadhana. To increase mental tranquility, one should strengthen the bonds between oneself and God. Of course, my guidance leads to the purification of the mind and body. By constant good actions, mental tranquility is sure to be achieved and love for the Lord also increases. This is the key to spiritual prosperity.

Peace is equally necessary in your field of work outside the house. You must make your pastimes cordial by your personality, reticence and politeness of speech, tolerance and the habit of giving importance to others. Pleasantness and frankness impress the people around you and attract them towards you. If you can get others in a cooperative mood, your work will become very easy. Only love can win the heart of others. Learn to love.

The third point is that your satsangi brothers and sisters must be dearer than your own brothers and sisters. Your relationship with them should be devoid of selfishness. If good feelings are not born in you in spite of their companionship, then you should know that you are lacking in something. Through satsang, your faults should decrease and virtues should increase. If the reverse happens, then beware! You are not a true satsangi! When you find more and more faults in the



other persons then know that you are preparing to forgo friendship for enmity. Exert yourself to rid your mind of bad thoughts. You will achieve divine power. Sing eternally the praises of God! We observe that continuation of the good and the bad in society occurs only due to companionship. When the company is good the individual takes the best path. If the company is bad, one is diverted towards the bad path. Now if this is so, why not strive to keep good company?

Your spiritual progress cannot be achieved by the celebration of festivals. For spiritual progress you must take up your abode in an ashram (guru's house) every now and then and do upasana (worship). The Guru's house is your home. It is the abode of peace and happiness, the school of abstinence and the biggest pilgrimage of knowledge. It is the house of the Lord. The Guru's house is the boon of the Lord.

I want this ashram to be your favorite abode. Like the divine tree, I hope it fulfils all your secret wishes. This is the site of my penance. Here I have done yoga sadhana to become contented. If you pursue your sadhana here with purity in your heart and truth in your mind you will definitely receive divine inspiration and undergo divine experiences.

Follow a regular schedule and fulfill your daily obligations with purity in your mind. Thus every action is followed by a change in the heart. Each action will seem dear to you. You must know that you have gone one step forward in sadhana when there is no dislike in you for anyone and you are always in a pleasant mood. The change occurs first as a decrease of egoism and then is replaced by humility. Take care my words do not escape from the cage of your mind. You may forget me but do not forget my words. Do not neglect my advice but try to follow it enthusiastically as far as possible. Be enthusiastic, pure and loving goodness.

Because of my immense love for you, I must tell you something for your benefit whether you are my disciple or not. If you listen to me, you will prosper.

Do not have the images of many Gods and Goddesses in your place of worship. Only have the images given by your Guru and one of your Guru himself. My disciples have three images. They are Brahmeshwar (Lakulish), Badha-Purushottam (the highest individual, Krishna) and myself. Having other images increases distrust. God is one. He has many images. You must worship the image which your Guruji (Dear Guru) commands. Bow to other images, regard them as holy but have only one image in your place of worship. In the same way repeat only the Gurumantra (mantra given by the Guru). Repeating other mantras destroys faith and prevents you from winning the favor of your Guru. Study the holy texts and literature prescribed by your Guru. Shri Gita, Ramayana and Mahabharata are the three main texts for all. The people who have accepted me for their master must read Guru Prasadi ((Gift of the Guru), Sadhak's Companion, Shri Gita and Guru Govind Pujan (In Praise of the Cowherd Guru).

The words of the Guru are like mother's milk. They are easily digestible and can be adapted in your life.

No one must choose a Guru merely because others have chosen him. You must choose a Guru in whose character you have implicit faith, at whose one word you are ready to lay down your life.

“This is surrender yoga. In it we have to surrender our whole soul to beloved God. We have to let go of all our rights and attachments to everything. After doing this we do not have to worry about anything because our protector is the omnipotent Lord (Shri Prabhuji). Feeling this we may remain at ease.”

Swami Kripalvananda