

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

A quarterly journal dealing mainly
with the divine life and sayings of
Sri Anandamayi Ma

VOL.-6

JANUARY, 2002

NO.1

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MATRI VANI

New Year—Infinite forms of the God—His daily-changing ever new forms and formless too—endeavour constantly to perceive the same.

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So long as you are not finally established in that Supreme Knowledge, you all dwell in the realm of waves and sound. There are sounds that cause the mind to turn outwards, and others that draw it within. But the sounds that tend outwards are also connected with those that lead inwards.

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Look, the ocean is contained in the drop and the drop in the ocean, what else is the spark, if not a particle of fire - of Him, who is Supreme Knowledge Itself ?

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How many students attend college, but how few of them stand first, although they are all taught by the same professors ? None can foretell at what particular time circumstances will co-operate to bring about that Great Moment for anyone. There may be failure to begin with, but what counts is final success. An aspirant cannot be judged by preliminary results. In the spiritual field, final success means success right from the beginning.

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Every thing is infinite - infinity and finiteness are indeed the same. In a garland the thread is one, but there are gaps between the flowers. It is the gaps that cause want, the sorrow. To fill them is to be free from want.

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Inquirer : It is said that God's eternal Lila is based on duality.

Ma : The assumption of duality is also within Oneness; some advocate this opinion.

Q : What is the actual significance of the terms *dhāma*, *lilā*, *parikara* ?

Ma : They say that even in the midst of this Lila, Oneness remains unimpaired. What is enjoyed in Lila is *rasa*, which is unique; and in Vedanta too, duality is out

of the question. Although duality appears to manifest itself before the eyes of the bhakta, nevertheless, here also there is nothing but Oneness.

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As one continues day after day to carry out these acts of worship, one begins to question : "Is my Lord as small as this little image ? Does He dwell only in my shrine room and no where else ?" By performing His service one gradually comes to feel that all is His. This feeling grips one and spreads like an infectious disease. Some one once said : "Do not venture near Anandamayi Ma, there are small-pox germs around her." (Laughter)

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Single- minded devotion engenders deep thought, which expresses itself in action. The Lord's light descends on the devotee, His power awakens in him and, as a result, profound inner enquiry blossoms forth.

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Q : Are you suggesting that we must reach the state of Divinity ?

Ma : The question of reaching that state does not arise at all so long as the veil of ignorance persists. Whether what has been said refers to *Īśvarakoṭī* or *Sādhakakoṭī*, you yourself must ascertain !

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The many exist in the One, and the One in many.

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Samādhi means samādhāna (solution, completion.).



CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN DEVOTEES

[Fourteen]

—Vijayananda

1) Generalities.

Q : What is the place of meditation in sadhana ?

V : People who have a spiritual experience know that meditation is one of the last stages of the eightfold Yoga of Patanjali, and that henceforth a very firm basis is needed to practice it fully. Even rather advance *sādhakas* do something more corresponding to *dhāranā* (which is usually translated as concentration). Genuine *dhyana* is rare, it is almost the *samadhi*. The hippies of the second wave, those who along with the intake of drugs had an interest for spiritual things were the ones who floated the idea of meditation as an universal panacea, but it does not work like this.

One should certainly meditate at a fixed time but this does not mean that one has to force oneself. One should rather give to our body the good habit to sit regularly. It is said that our *prārabdha karma*, which means practically our destiny, is not reckoned in number of days to live but in the number of breaths. So those who breath peacefully will have a longer life. Several times in my *sadhana* I found myself facing a wall and said mentally, This is impossible to cross ! But I did it and then it was quite easy : impossible is not in the dictionary..... Of course in day to day life one must know how to adapt and to go around obstacles.

Q : A young woman being in the process of remarrying after a divorce : How to manage relational problems ?

V : One should make it a habit to see the Divine in the other.

Q : When we love them, this is too easy ?

V : Not so much, we should see them beyond their personal aspect, which means without attachment. For those whom we do not like, better to keep them away, except if we are already at a very advanced stage. If this is impossible, being near them should be taken as a *sadhana*.

Q : How to be introverted without being egoistic ?

V : By realizing that the Self at the core of oneself is not different from the Self at the core of others. At that time, love for others becomes completely natural.

Q : Question of a resident of the ashram before the departure of someone who spent several months there : 'You say that past is an illusion and thus no reality at all. Does it mean that if someone goes away one should forget him or her ? Is not the very basis of love is the capacity to remember the ones who are absent?'

V : First, someone who leads a life of a brahmachari in an ashram should not have love with attachment for another person. In addition to this, when I feel someone who thinks of me, this gives me joy inside. That comes in the present, not in the past. What is required is keeping away from mental constructions on past events. People constantly change, if one is attached to an image of them from the past, he will certainly be disappointed.

Q : Should sadhana in the world be spontaneous or the result of a persevering effort ?

*V : During sadhana, we should be able to go through hard time : There is the following hassidic story : one day two children came to visit a great sage who gave them beer to drink. The elder did not say much, but the junior who was perhaps only three or four years old exclaimed : *This is bitter, but good!* Immediately the sage concluded : *This boy will become a great spiritual person !*" And it happened to be so.*

Q : Some people say that Ma was a tantric.

V : Tantra corresponds to the worship of the Divine Mother. How could she have worshipped the Divine Mother, while she was herself the Mother ? From another viewpoint, for Ma as well as for any advanced sadhaka, all the paths merge in one single Yoga, the synthesis of Yogas if one can say. This is a total Yoga where all the ways are understood and integrated. Only in the beginning are the paths separate.

Q : A young girl came back from an ashram where she heard the guru say that the state of marriage and that of consecrated celibacy are the same, in both of them one can have the same spiritual life.

V : I do not agree ! If one is already married and remains so, while developing a spiritual life, this is good, but if one is not married and one gets committed in a householder's life, at that time this is a failure and a regression.

Q : A father whose daughter still is not married although she is not so young anymore : "It is a problem for a woman to marry late."

V : On the contrary, it is good to marry late, in this manner the number of years that one spends with couple problem is less !.... Some take the pretext that