

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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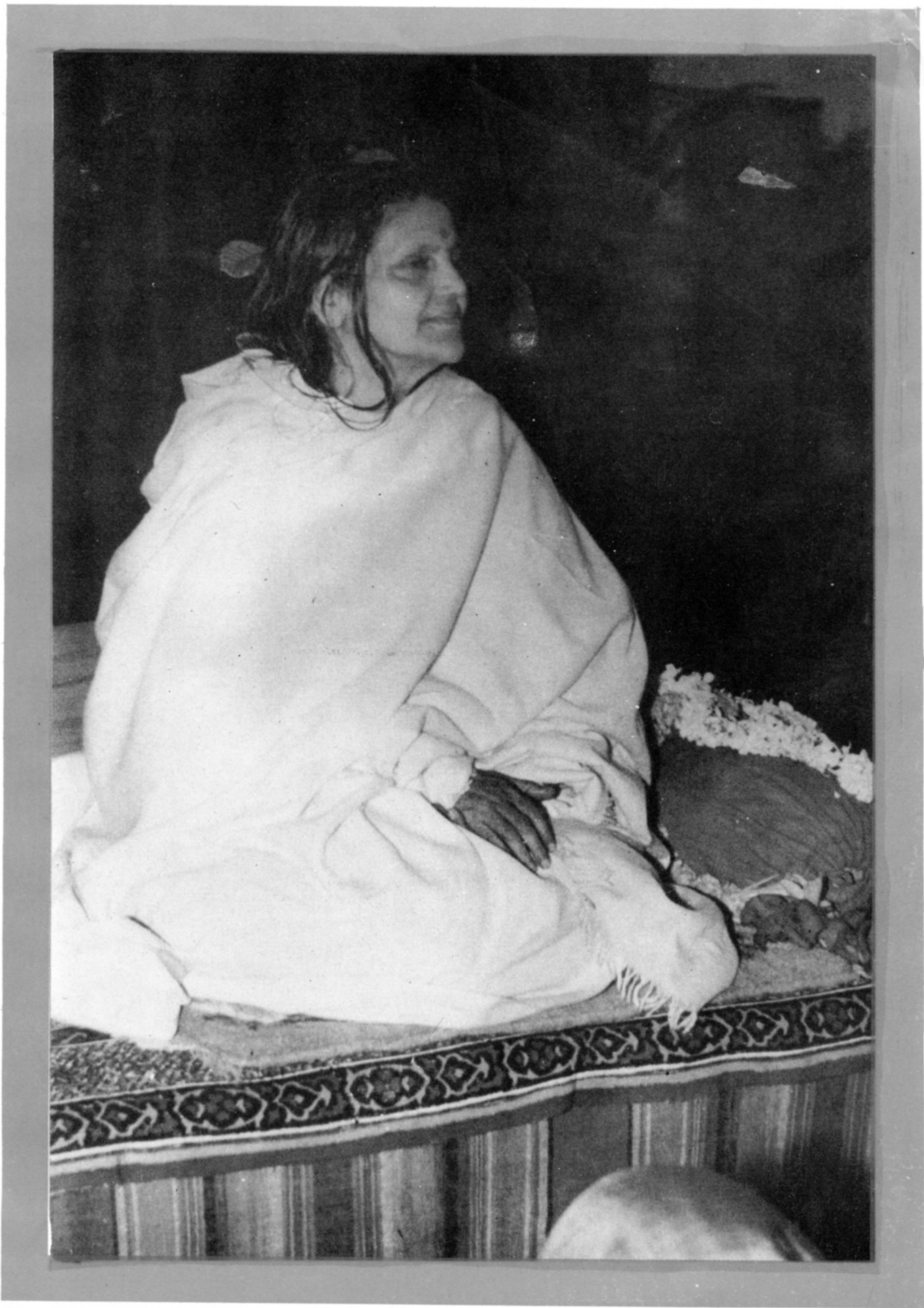


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MATRI VANI

Wherever God may place you at any time and under whatever circumstances, recollect that it is all for the best.

* * *

All is His and whatever happens is His Will. Call to Him, because all is His. To yearn thus for Him is real prayer.

* * *

Wherever you may be placed and under whatever circumstances, let your thinking be centred in Him and in Him alone

* * *

In the measure as one loves God, detachment from sense objects ensues.

* * *

Why should there be fear and anxiety ? Solely because I imagine that He is not near me. He is holding you. Why fear ?

* * *

If you cling to the One in whom fear is not, how can there be even a question of fear ?

* * *

Pray to Him with heart and soul, to the limit of your power, using all the strength and capacity you possess. Surrender yourself at his feet.

* * *

Until and unless you have definitely realised Him you must never abandon your spiritual practice.

* * *

Spiritual affinity is undoubtedly stronger than blood relationship. The happiness it gives is very special.

* * *

By constant practice one finally achieves.

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The pure the mind becomes. by the remembrance of Him in everything, the more excellent will your work be.

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To live in the presence of God, who is Truth (*satya*)—this indeed is the meaning of *satsang*.

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If your desire is intense, it is quite impossible that light should not come to you.

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Where the search after Truth is really genuine there can be no failure.



CONVERSATION WITH WESTERN DEVOTEES

[Fifteen]

—Vijayananda

Q : *You started your sadhana during the war when your life was constantly in danger and afterwards when all the horrors which happened came to be fully known. Have you not been disturbed then?*

V : No, not even while it was happening I took it as a game, the one's running after others, it was like playing cops and robbers. And after the events, as the past has no reality, there was no reason to be disturbed either.

Q : *If past has no reality, what is left of Tradition?*

V : Tradition is indeed experienced in the present, when we follow what our guru tells or told us to do. From the relative and empirical point of view, the question of past and its heritage arises, but in sage's experience, this kind of questions does not arise. If you ask them, it means that you still are on the empirical plane.

Q : *How does one differentiate between mental and vital being ?*

V : To know the mental being of a person, one takes the help of his face and voice; to perceive his vital state, it is enough to be physically close to him or to take his hand for some time. The yogic body is realized when there is the union of the male and female forces inside. The causal body is so called because it corresponds to that part of the ego which migrates from one life to another and thus represents the cause of rebirth. There is a stage in *sadhana* where the subtle body is felt as a wonderful coat that nobody should touch; but this is pride, one should go beyond. All that is a question of experience.

Q : *Can we say that samadhi is a form of sleep ?*

V : I found a way of being completely conscious while body is as if asleep, for instance when I remain lying in the early morning or even sitting. This is nevertheless not *samadhi*, because in the latter there is intense joy. Near death experiences are not really experiences of death but give a feeling of happiness and light as we may have in deep sleep.

- Q :** *Many people came to Ma, and are now coming to Amma for physical healing. Can we say that these sages see diseases?*
- V :** They see the spiritual origin of diseases in the form of spirits which possess the body and appear in some of its parts.

BHAKTI

- Q :** *Can we live without desire?*
- V :** For most people, desire is necessary; this is what may take them out of *tāmas*. Everything depends upon people's levels. We can not live without love. Mystical love is the only one where total merging is possible. The fusion of physical love does not last.
- V :** *(To an elderly man who was suffering from glaucoma)* For you, the best is to concentrate on the heart rather than on *jnāna*; but this is only a stage, a footstep to be able to later visualize energy in the heart of every other human being and still later throughout the whole universe. At that time you merge into the Formless.
- Q :** *Is not all that eventually the result of grace ?*
- V :** It depends on how you understand the term grace. When you call what you consider to be the personal God, there is an echo which comes back to you and which is not in fact different from yourself, but it is beyond your ego.
- Q :** *Sometimes I succeed in pacifying my emotions for a little while but then they start again with full strength!*
- V :** Reaching a kind of intellectual peace is not enough. We should give to the basis of mind what it is longing for, i.e., for instance an intense *rasa*, taste of joy, so that it might really be attracted and stabilized. When we are in the emotions we are carried away. When we go beyond them, the emphasis is on pure consciousness along with bliss.
- Q :** *But is not joy an emotion too ?*
- V :** No, in this case, the joy of pure consciousness is steady, while other emotions are changing. However, there are days when we do not have emotions to direct towards the divine, then we may practice *ātma-vichāra*, the 'Who am I' for instance. If that even does not come properly, there is something that you can do to still your mind at least temporarily : stopping your breath with empty or full lungs as you feel. Gather all your energy in the heart and stay like this as long as possible. One can also perform one's usual practices of meditation with concentration on different *chakras*, but visualize

them in a kind of subtle body before oneself, at a distance of one or two meters.

JNANA

Q : *Should we see the world as an illusion, or as reality, or as Divine Mother's body?*

V : Ramakrishna had a vedantin master, called Tota Puri, who had reached *nirvikalpa samadhi*. Ramakrishna himself had not been able to get it at that time, but he could see the play of the Divine Mother in the entire world which was rejected by Tota Puri as illusion, *Maya*. Each of them taught to the other what he missed. Ramakrishna had been able to make the link, to come and go between the world, *samsāra* and *samadhi*. *Vedanta* means the culmination of Vedas. In India, this represents the metaphysics for the fourth ashrama, *sannyāsa*, which is itself the crowning of the three first ones. It is the result of a whole training of behavior and of *bhakti* practices during the stages of student, householder and *vānaprastha*, i.e., retreat in the forest. *Vedanta* does not consist of endless and somewhat psychological talks as it is believed in the West. Westerners do not like the idea that 'the world is a dream'. It should be understood that this is only a stage, afterwards we find again a reality to the world, but from another angle, in the sense that we see in it pure consciousness only. Zen says so : *In the beginning mountains are mountains, then they are no more so, and afterwards they become again mountains*. If one tries to concentrate on pure consciousness directly, he falls asleep after some time. This is why in meditation an affective element, a joy, a love are necessary.

Q : *It seems that there is a good deal of 'positive thinking' and affirmations in the Vedanta. For instance Ramana Maharshi used to advise his disciples to read the book which repeats ceaselessly 'I am the self, the infinite, the limitless'. What do you think about it ?*

V : This is for beginners. For those who are more advanced, observing mind without countering it is sufficient, this is the best way to quiet it.

KUNDALINI

Q : *What does 'opening the channels of energy' mean?*

V : When I was in Almora in 1954 I worked on the opening of *nadis*, channels, for a year continuously. Thanks to that, I knew that I could gain a perfect chastity without inner conflict and suppression and also an immunity against