

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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MATRI VANI

When meditation occurs spontaneously, then only it is real meditation. It must come of itself, effortlessly.

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Let no gaps interrupt your attempt, for a gap will produce an eddy, whereas your striving must be continuous like the flowing of oil, it must be sustained, constant, an unbroken stream.

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Nobody is able to predict when for any particular individual that fateful Moment will reveal itself, Therefore keep on striving ceaselessly.

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The more ardent your pursuit the vaster the possibilities that will open out for you, and in proportion to your advance, suffering will diminish and not increase again.

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Body means perpetual change that which is ever moving away. But in the state when death may be said to be dead, can there be any question of a body ?

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If the teacher himself is in the state of ignorance, and the question is asked by one also in ignorance, how can there be even an expectation of the revelation of real knowledge ?

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Like a restless child, unconcerned with good or bad, you seek Supreme Bliss, never satisfied with transitory happiness and therefore ever wandering.

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How can you possibly be at rest until you have discovered a way to the Supreme Reality, until you become wholly absorbed in your source, reposing in your own self.

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In your innermost heart you know that you are free; that is why it is in your nature to yearn for freedom.

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Do not forget that it is the very mind which is the *mahayogi*, yes indeed the sublime *yogi*.

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As one is released from bondage, the destructible is destroyed, the Beloved alone shines forth.

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Do not be satisfied with fragmentary happiness, which is invariably interrupted by shocks and blows of fate, but become complete and having attained to perfection be YOURSELF

●

REPLIES TO WRITTEN QUERIES

by

FOREIGN DEVOTEES

—Vijayananda

1) About Ma

Q : *People often speak of Ma's look, that she used to gaze at some people for a long time; or did she not need that to impart what she wanted to ?*

V : A look is a full part of a facial countenance. It can communicate more clear and direct message than verbal phrases, because it directly expresses *bhava* (basic mood or spiritual state). That is why Ma, like other great sages, often used this medium to transmit a teaching or even simply to communicate a remark without needing to use words. Of course, Ma did not require to look at someone to give him a spiritual awakening. She could do it while being apparently busy with someone else or even from a distance.

In the beginning with Ma, I did not know any Hindi or Bengali (Ma did not speak English) and I used to communicate with her by look or simply by mental transmission. To take an example, I remember the first celebration of Ma's birthday which I attended. It must have been in Ambala, a big town in Punjab. At that time, the function was still very simple. Ma was lying on a small wooden bed and seemed to be in a state akin to deep sleep. Her devotees used to say that on these occasions she was entering *nirvikalpa samadhi*. In this state, empirical world has disappeared and an ocean of Bliss-Consciousness is left. At that time I was very attached to Ma's physical presence and I would have liked to have her near me always. I was sitting in front, at a short distance from Ma's bed. I was feeling quite bad that Ma had escaped into *samadhi* and said to myself. 'Ma went very far from us into *nirvikalpa samadhi*'. Almost immediately, Ma sat on her wooden bed, opened her eyes and intently gazed at me. It was a very long look full of tenderness which clearly conveyed that : 'No, I'm not far away from you, I'm always present in your heart'.

Q : *Ma's birthday centenary came to an end (May 1995-May 1996). It enabled us to remember temporal aspect of her life, its important events and so on. Now, how does one mediate on her timeless aspect ?*

V : Ma said that she came among us because there was an appeal which had attracted her on our plane of existence. We suppose that there was a group of spiritually advanced people with an intense devotion towards the female aspect of the Divine who made this appeal; but in reality, from where did she come ? Of course, these matters cannot possibly be conceived by mind. However, roughly speaking, we can say that there is a mass of Consciousness-Bliss, which has neither form nor place, but which is the support and basis of everything which exists. Modern scientists come near to this when they speak of a *unified field* which is the basis of every atom, molecule, etc.

So what appeared to us in the physical form of Ma was somehow a crystallization of the Omnipresent. Thanks to it, we could contact the Supreme in an easier way. The physical form has been removed from our visual field, but the Supreme of which she was the condensation is still the same. It (or She) will always answer our call if we do it with a devotion which is intense enough. Of course, most people cannot directly contact the formless and need a visual support. For those who were touched by this divine apparition which Ma Anandamayi was (even if they did not meet Her personally), a photo, reading a book or a meditation in front of the *samadhi* (tomb) can produce the necessary intensity so that the call might be effective.

II) Sadhana

1) Generalities

Q : *Is it better to meditate at a fixed time by disciplining one's body and mind or to meditate when we feel the need ?*

V : At the beginning of a sadhana, it is very useful to set a clear program for oneself and to meditate as far as possible at the same time and at the same place. One should sit during the duration which was decided on even if one does not feel like meditating. In this way, a habit will be developed, a good habit which will become a need, almost an addiction. Habit originates in *tamaguna* (the force of inertia) and from there comes its strength. The power of *tamas* lies in the fact that it is the inverted image of the Supreme : immutable, active, ever at rest. Hence *tamas* is such a considerable obstacle. But it is

possible to use this force by creating good habits for oneself, and the habit to meditate regularly is one of the best. This does not prevent one from meditating at any time whenever one feels like.

Q : *What is the relationship between marriage and spiritual life ?*

V : For those who want to reach the top of spiritual life (*moksha, nirvana, illumination, Self-Realization*), perfect chastity is a necessity, but those who can and want to reach this stage are very rare. The path of celibacy remains an exceptional one. This is why great sages have established and taught progressive paths leading an ordinary person from one stage to another until he or she has enough maturity to face this great problem, which is the discovery of Supreme Reality, and marriage is one of these stages. Sexual energy in a common human being must be channeled, then sublimated and divinized. Relationship between a man and a woman are part of nature, but of the inferior aspect of it (*aparā prakriti*). A level exists where this union occurs on the plane of pure consciousness without physical contact. In the usual marriage, man should consider his wife as an aspect of Divine Mother and the wife should see in her husband a manifestation of the male Divinity. Thus a relationship of mutual love and respect will develop which will eventually lead to the genuine love which is impersonal. And sexual relationships must be as rare as possible so that *sadhakas* might be prepared to reach the Supreme when the time comes.

Q : *May we consider anger as an addictive drug ? How does one overcome it ?*

V : The psychological mechanism of anger is as follows : the departure point is always a sensation of discomfort coming from our body which makes us ill at ease. The instinctive tendency is to free ourselves from it as quickly as possible and to come back to a state of euphoria. This sensation is not generally in the field of clear consciousness and mind tries to find a cause in the outer world to which it could attribute this feeling of being ill at ease and by destroying this cause it hopes to regain its balance. If an individual suddenly comes and abuses you or has rude behavior, that's it ! He is the one which is the cause of your uneasy feeling !

Mind then calls on this basic energy which is always present in *mulādhāra* and transforms it in a destructive force which is called anger. It directs it towards its enemy. Uneasiness, being projected outward, disappear from the

