

Ananda Vartā

A quarterly journal dealing mainly with the divine life and teaching of Mata Anandamayee and with other religio-philosophical topics



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*Just as there is a veil of ignorance for the individual,
So there is also a door to Knowledge.*

Mātri Vāni

Nothing has happened—to be able to understand this is very fortunate. If you can understand that nothing has happened, you have indeed been blessed with inner vision.

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Having turned to this side, the sense of want awakens. And proceeding further there is the first stage of passing from this condition of want and emptiness to one's true nature: the realization that without Him the world is darkness: nothing of this world seems attractive. It cannot be said that you have reached that state. To yearn for Him also indicates progress.

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All the time you have the desire to find, the acute feeling of lacking something. Just persist in your *sādhana* and for the rest, He will make it complete. By perfect grace comes perfect illumination. In the measure as you exert yourself you will receive.

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Action is necessary in order to remove the veil of ignorance. Using to the full the intelligence He has given you, proceed with your work. His grace is without motive or cause. Why He has not shown His mercy to you He knows best. Verily, all is His and He does according to His Will. Where there is a motive, there is the desire for fulfilment and the enjoyment of the fruit. I have acted and therefore I

have reaped the fruit. The fruit of what? The action is one's own and thus the consequences are equally one's own. God is everyone's, there is but one Self (*Ātmā*). To begin with, one does not realize this and therefore questions arise. At the stage at which you are at the moment, from there it looks as you have described.

* * * *

No matter what be anyone's line of approach, at first there is torment and perplexity, one is unable to find. After that comes a state of suspense, of emptiness as it were; one cannot penetrate within neither does one derive satisfaction from worldly enjoyment.

* * * *

Take care not to be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or someone experiences bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the spiritual path, before true Realization supervenes, one may get caught in supernormal powers (*vibhūtis*). To become entangled in his kind of thing constitutes an obstacle.

* * * *

The Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) has to be realized as the aim of life. The whole creation is a manifestation of God's supernal power (*vibhūti*)—He Himself as creative power. The *Ātmā* is one—yet again, who appears as duality? None but He. It is impossible that no experience should come to one who treads the spiritual path. The fact that one has chosen this line proves that there is already some connection from before. Forgetting that God is the sole Beloved, one has come to love sense objects. When anything besides God is contem-

plated, there is divided affection—*du iṣṭa*, *duṣṭa**. When will this pernicious misunderstanding be uprooted? It is important to discriminate minutely. If you examine yourself you will see : what have I been doing the whole of today? For how long have I remained without the remembrance of God? How much you think of the Beloved and how much of that which is harmful (*anīṣṭa*), which takes you towards death—become aware of this.

In Kishenpur, on September 20th, 1968, Mataji gave some rules for the behaviour of the inmates of the Ashram, in response to someone's remarks and questions. The following is the translation of what Mataji said in Bengali.

(1) When elders or superiors talk do not interrupt by commenting on what is spoken about. You may give your opinion only if you are asked. If you have anything to say on the matter, you may afterwards in private tell the elder : "In connection with what was said, such and such thoughts have occurred to me".

(2) When an elder or superior is conversing with some one, one should not disturb by saying something or by chatting. If one has something important to say, one may do so after the elder has stopped talking.

(3) When conversing with one's companions one should neither make fun of anyone, nor pass critical remarks about others.

(4) With antagonism at the back of one's mind, one should not talk about anyone in either praise or blame.

(5) Do not judge your companions or discuss them with others.

(6) If someone insults or abuses you or accuses you unjustly, think : "Lord, Thou hast in this manner given me a blow to teach me a lesson. Be pleased with me again !" Do not hate the person who has dealt the blow.

* *Du iṣṭa* two Beloved ; *duṣṭa* wicked.

-
- (7) Do not feel or speak unkindly about anyone,
 (8) Be truthful in speech and action.
 (9) Speak little and only when necessary.
 (10) Be always cheerful.
 (11) Remain calm, firm, serene and serious.
 (12) Talk to everyone with calmness, serenity, steadiness and equal consideration.
- (13) Cherish only what pertains to the Supreme Quest (*Paramārtha*).
- (14) Your conduct must be gentle and exemplary.
 (15) Be honest and frank in what you say.
 (16) The search after Truth must continue at every moment. When by the accumulated force of the sustained practice of discrimination between the Real and the unreal, of *japa*, meditation, ceremonial worship, the study of scriptures, singing the praises of God—whichever of these be the main line of approach for any particular person—one becomes engrossed in the Supreme Quest, then one cannot remain without the remembrance of God, and consequently foolishness, wrong knowledge and suffering are removed. To be a human being means to aspire to God-realization. Man's calling as a human being is to find God.
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Conversations with Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(*Translated from Bengali*)

Ranchi, 20th June 1965.

Question : How will in your absence the devotees derive the greatest benefit from this spiritual gathering ?

Mataji : Ma Kali, Gopal and Lord Siva have their abode in this Ashram. If you wish to benefit by their nearness, you must keep in mind that they are actually present here. Every day remember this at some time or other. They never stop giving *darsāna*, as it were; practise their presence all the time. You may not hear or see them, yet you will receive the blessing of their *satsang* from this. And whenever you feel the urge, sit in meditation near the statue of Kali. The more you meditate the better for you. Ma Kali is here for your good. In dream or during meditation She sometimes speaks to one or the other.

There is another thing to be remembered: Whatever exists, exists in your mind, Therefore try to see Him within your mind as much as possible. To man alone has been given the privilege and the capacity to attain to God-realization. Know your Self! Try to find out who you really are! Not to try for this amounts to suicide. So long as one harbours desires one cannot realize the Self. If desires prevail at the time of leaving the body, one has to take a return ticket and will be born again. To pass away while desires are lingering means death. Living for the gratification of one's desires is like slow poison. By that poison one is gradually delivered to death. Sense objects (*vishai*) are poison (*vish hai*) and they provide man with a return ticket for rebirth. Having obtained the rare boon of

a human body, if you wish to stop this round of birth and death, you must engage in *sādhana*. Desires ever generate new desires. Just as a creeper spreads, so also does the creeper of sense enjoyment expand and increase.

Mahātmā means great soul. *Jīvā* (individual) means that which is bound; and 'world' signifies constant change and flux. Like a leech, the *jīvā*, by its very nature, on leaving anything hooks on to something else. This is how the world of the individual is fashioned : birth, death and rebirth. And thus it appears as if God were far, far away. From this idea of God's remoteness arise foolishness, suffering, bereavement, agony, sorrow. Wife, son, daughter do not stay according to one's wish. So long as one is not independent of circumstances there is bound to be sorrow. The world (*duniya*) is based on duality; duality breeds pain, conflict, darkness. And in darkness there is the fear of falling. The learned men, the scholars of the world are all in danger of falling. Someone gets angry about a lie, yet he himself also tells lies. You should at least speak the truth, since Truth is your real nature. Lies come automatically to the individual. All the same you are longing and searching for Truth, because you are in fact pure, true, enlightened, free and tranquil. In order that That may shine forth which you actually Are, you must give up the notion of God's remoteness. Renounce that foolishness, that misery. If a person is fortunate enough to understand that he has to know Himself, then only *sādhana* will begin. Know your Self, that is to say, know God! One has to establish a relation with Him : either that of Master and servant, or of Mother and son, or as a part of Him. The spark is a particle of fire, but both have the power to burn. Similarly, the world, God and the individual are not separate. Wherever a *jīvā* is there is Siva and every woman is Gouri. You are father, son and husband all in one. Likewise, God Himself is the master as well as the servant. Water, ice and steam are of one and the same substance. The Formless and form

are both *Brahman, Brahmagopal*. Behold Him everywhere, sing His name. He appears as Sitaram, as Radhakrishna, Siva-Sakti and as Sakti and Her worshipper. It lies in the nature of the *jiva* to desire woman if he is a man, and to desire man if a woman. But when one becomes aware of one's divinity then the *jiva* is transformed into Siva. The inner and the outer are in fact one. But to make it intelligible to the mind, one has to talk of them as separate.

There are people who say : "Let God remain where He is, I am enjoying my life fully"—as if this enjoyment could last ! This is called foolishness, the fallacy that God is very distant. In order to get rid of it one has to obey the Guru's instructions and cultivate the company of saints, sages and seekers after Truth. In the midst of the attractions of form, sound, touch, taste and smell sustain the remembrance of Him. In the *mantra*, in the name received from the Guru, God Himself is present; repeat His name ! *Aksara** (letter or syllable) is that which is beyond decay. In the *aksara* also God is present. So long as an aspirant has not found a Guru, he should repeat whatever name appeals to him or her most. Or if someone prefers, he may contemplate light. What is light ? A reflection of the inner Light. When that inner Light becomes revealed, then there will be full illumination. All power is located within the head. There His form has to be revealed. Every single one of the innumerable forms existing are reflections of Him; why then should one clamour for a special name and form ! While you move in the sphere of name and form, hold on to Him as name and form. Or if name and form be foreign to your temperament, contemplate the light of the *Atma*. The outer light is a reflection of His Light. He is present also in every *kraya*. Make use of the *kraya* received from your Guru. In all beings is He alone, be they plants, animals, birds or hu-

* *Aksara* means both 'letter' and 'undecaying'.

man-beings—He resides in them all. Live with the remembrance of him.

This body does not advise you to renounce your home and repair to the forest. Wherever you may go, as long as you are not free from desire, there will be your home with all that it entails. No matter where you may be placed, there itself meditate, engage in *sādhana*. Just as when drops of water keep on falling, even stone is pierced, so by sustained practice the veil of ignorance will finally be rent.

For the aspirant who is a householder, his wife is an embodiment of the divine *Śakti*, his son of Balgopal. While leading a family life do your work as the manager of the Lord. When the call comes for you to leave, none can accompany you. Of course, it has happened many times that husband and wife who dearly love one another get drowned together. But this is the fruit of delusion and not a desirable death. They are suicidals. One should drown for God. The human body is meant to be dedicated to God, to be employed in the service of Him. The householder has to mould his life after the model of the ancient *Rishis* who had wives and children equally worthy, and lived as prescribed in the *Sāstras*. And one who has taken *Sannyāsa* must observe the rules and regulations of the *Sannyāsa Āsrama*. God is my very Self, the breath of my life, He is not distant but exceedingly near. Wherever you are and in whatever condition, there itself begin to practise *sādhana*. Hold on with tenacity to Him who will liberate you from all worldly ties. You need not abandon anyone, only cling to God with all your strength. The bonds of family life caused by delusion (*moha*) are not to be fostered. With detachment, rising above delusion, live a life of service.

Why are *sādhus* called *mahātmās*? Because they have grasped the Sublime and hold on to It. *Paramātmā* means Supreme Self; none is above or beyond It, none outside of It. The *Paramātmā* Itself is present within you. Tread the path that will reveal your inner being, that line must

you choose. Act precisely according to your Guru's instructions. And until you have secured a Guru, meditate on the name and form that attracts you most, that gives you peace and bliss.

This body (Mataji) is like a musical instrument: what you hear depends on how you play. What is gone never returns. What you have to do, do it today, do it at once.

Question • Mataji has said, what has to be renounced amounts to very little, but that which has to be embraced is the really great thing. Is this correct ?

Mataji: That which can be renounced and that which can be embraced—both are transitory. Where there is no question of renouncing or embracing, there He stands revealed. Embrace what eternally IS. Embrace THAT which, when gripped annuls the duality of renouncing and adopting. Embrace Him who is unembraceable. He cannot be grasped by the mind. You alone ARE, you, poised within yourself. Thus grasp THAT which, when caught hold of, leaves no question of embracing or relinquishing.

Question: Why does the mind change from moment to moment ?

Mataji: This is its very nature. One has to go beyond the mind. But this has already been discussed at length.

This body (Mataji) does not go anywhere does not take anything from anyone, does not look, does not eat or speak. As you play the instrument so you hear the sound,

Matri Satsang

SWAMI BHAGAVATANANDA GIRI

(Translated from Hindi)

6th December 1947.

Question : "Better death in the discharge of one's *dharma*..... (*Svadharme nidhanam shreya...*)" says the Bhagavad Gita. What actually is this *svadharma* ?

Mataji : Whatever one's Guru tells him to do that is everyone's *dharma*. *Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas* and *Shudras* have each their own particular *dharma*. In actual fact, whatever the Guru shows you that is your *dharma*. Regardless of whether by fulfilling one's *dharma* one progresses or declines one should attend to it. This is why the Gita says : "Better death in the discharge of one's *dharma*...."

Question : The Gita also says : "Abandoning all *dharmas* come unto Me alone for shelter (*Sarva dharmān parityajya māmekam sharanam vraja.....*)". Are these two statements not contradictory ?

Mataji : There is no contradiction. Take refuge in God. Your natures differ. This is why the Guru will show you the path. With a spirit of renunciation worship God. Seek shelter in the Self (*Ātma*).

The Questioner : There are all sorts of Gurus. Gurus of the people, Gurus who teach, Gurus who give initiation, and so forth.

Mataji : He who helps you to attain to God-realization He is indeed the supreme Guru. To serve his parents is also the *dharma* of the son. If he serves his father and mother as manifestations of Reality or as forms of God, such service will actually reach God. In the householder's Ashram a son's duty is to serve his parents and to be devoted to them.

Question : Suppose a son does not serve his parents but only serves God, what wrong is there in this ?

Mataji : If a *sādhaka* serves God as he should, the service of his parents will never become an obstacle. One who with a sincere heart worships God cannot possibly hate anyone. If he develops real faith in God, he will have faith in all. When genuine faith in God awakens, then there is no more doubt. Such a man's character becomes completely transformed.

Question : I have heard it said that saints and *ma-hātmas* are God's dwelling-place and therefore their whole bodies radiate God's power. Why then are passion, anger, greed, delusion, pride, envy and so on not destroyed when a man touches their lotus feet ?

Mataji : If you touch their feet with the sincere belief that they are God's, these enemies of yours will certainly be destroyed. Something important has to be said in this connection. *Pranāma* must be done in the proper manner. You people do not make obeisance as it ought to be done. To do *pranāma* means to offer oneself entirely at the feet of the Lord—everything that is in oneself. What will be the result of such total dedication? The emptiness that is caused by giving everything will be filled completely with God's power. Just as when a pitcher is to be emptied of all the water, it has to be turned over, so you should dedicate at His feet without reserve everything that is in you, whatever it be, and become empty. Having thus created a vacuum within yourself, God's power will occupy you wholly. But *pranāma* of this kind hardly ever occurs and therefore touching the feet of saints does not give the proper result. The place where a saint sits also becomes divine. If he is really God-possessed, then divinity will shine through him. By divine radiation everything can become divine. If there were genuine yearning for God in your heart, you would most certainly find Him. In the measure as you give, you will receive. Just as butter melts by the proximity of fire,

so saints have the power to transform the lives of men by their mere touch. But saints do not interfere with the working of *karma*. Except of course in some very special cases—this is a different matter. As a rule *karma* is left to work itself out.

Question: Why does Realization not come even though one spends all the twenty-four hours at the feet of saints and sages?

Mataji: Out of the twenty-four hours, how much time do you give to God? If someone stays day and night with saints serving them, he will no doubt reap the fruit of it. If full realization does not occur, it does not mean that one has failed. The aspirant must be determined to accomplish his task at all costs, even unto death. This must be his attitude of mind. The spiritual path has to be pursued until complete Realization. So long as Rama has not been found, how can one be at rest? A man who yearns desperately for God, is actually lying prostrate at His lotus feet. He has no other interest at all.

There are two ways that lead to God. One is to do service at the Lord's feet and the other just to break the door that hides Him and to enter in. Perform *sādhana* in such a manner that there is no time at all left for any other undertaking. So long as you have not wholly realized God, do not rest. By behaving in this way, your life will be changed. Ceaselessly think of God and of God alone. While eating keep in mind that you eat solely for God's sake. Why should you sustain your body? This rare boon of a human body has been granted to you for the single purpose of doing *sādhana* in order to realize your Divinity. Those who are householders have to serve also their wives and children. But you, a *sādhu*, are free from worries. Your life belongs exclusively to God. If a *sādhaka* is truly burning to find God, then all his actions, bathing, eating – everything will be done only for God. By clinging to your

sādhana with firm faith and adamant determination you are bound to find Him. But if you will not live in this way, well, according to what you associate with, you will reap the fruit. This is why this small child always says: God is everywhere indeed. From whichever point you may start, God is there itself. Holy Kashi and sacred Vrindaban are actually within you. By using force one does not receive. Force is not *satyagraha* (adherence to Truth). By firm adherence to Truth God will be found.

Prayer is undoubtedly effective. Just as when the roots of a tree are watered, the water reaches every leaf and the tree remains fresh and green ; so, if you dedicate your all at the Lord's lotus feet, everything will become right. By making obeisance to sages and saints, a subtle link with them is formed. As you can take water from the ocean according to your capacity, exactly similarly can you absorb God's power depending on your capacity. As you give, so you will receive.

Question : Ma ! When one is attacked by inner enemies such as passion or greed, will they be put to flight by the invocation of the name "Ma" ?

Mataji : If you invoke Her sincerely from the depth of your heart, then your desires will be burnt up as water is dried up by fire.

Question : Ma ! Have we to do everything ourselves or will Ma also do something for us ?

Mataji : (laughing heartily) : In actual fact it is like this : If God did not make you act, would you be able to do anything ? It is the nature of the individual to think highly of his own capacity and might. Do not imagine that it is you who are doing everything. Unless God causes you to act, you are completely helpless. Make yourself a blank. Surrender yourself at the Guru's lotus feet. In the measure as you efface yourself, you will be fulfilled.

Question: What is the meaning of 'good omen; and' 'bad omen'? I have been told that, although Brahmins are pure, to come across a Brahmin is an evil omen.

Mataji: To meet a Brahmin is very auspicious indeed. Everything depends on what one believes. You believe in somethings and so it happens. This reminds me of the following: An Englishman was to travel somewhere. Someone said: "Don't go now. The planetary constellations are unfavourable." But the gentleman paid no heed to the warning and went on his journey. When he was on high sea, a terrible storm made the boat sink. With great difficulty the gentleman reached the shore by swimming. When he arrived people said: "This is all due to that hostile constellation." Thus, everything happens according to one's *karma*.

Question: Well then, is a bad planetary constellation an obstacle or not?

Mataji: It is said that an inauspicious planetary constellation may even cause death. This is why good works should be begun on auspicious days. Will you listen to a true story? When this body was a child, it stayed in the house of its uncle. While there, some neighbours were celebrating a wedding and their relatives had come for the occasion. Kali Puja was performed in their home and everyone was engrossed in the *pūjā*. Amongst the guests was a woman with her small daughter. As about 3 a. m. the *pūjā* was over. The child had fallen asleep, but the woman woke her up when *prasāda* was being distributed. The child was crying bitterly and her mother was unable to appease her. None of the people present could calm the child. Finally her mother lost her temper and said: "Very well, *marjao*;* I shall leave you here by yourself and go to take *prasāda*." When the woman returned after a little while the child had

* *Morjao* literally means "die!" but is used in the sense "do as you please, I have had enough trouble."

disappeared. Everyone started looking for the little girl. After a long and troublesome search the child's dead body was found in the jungle. What lesson can one learn from this incident? Never, never utter anything unpropitious. A mother's scolding is done for the good of her child and is therefore a blessing. Even so no unpropitious word should be pronounced. In the world there is the auspicious as well as the inauspicious. This is God's *lila*. God Himself is beyond both. All the same, one should never say anything that is not benedictory. A *sādhaka* must be specially vigilant about the words he utters. Never, never must he allow anything to escape from his mouth that might amount to cursing. For him all talk must be about God alone, all the rest is painful and vain.

A Little Anthology

ON RENUNCIATION

That man attains peace who abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment and longing, without the sense of "I" and "mine." This is the state of dwelling in God; having attained this, no one is ever deluded. Being established in this knowledge even at the end of life, one attains oneness with the Supreme.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*

After real meditation worldly pleasures become unalluring, dull, entirely savourless. What does *vairāgya* signify? When every single object of the world kindles as it were, the fire of renunciation, so as to make one recoil as from a shock, then there is inward and outward awakening. This, however, does not mean that *vairāgya* implies aversion or contempt for anything of the world—it simply is unacceptable, the body refuses it. Neither dislike nor anger will arise. When *vairāgya* becomes a living inspiration, one begins to discriminate as to the true nature of the world; until finally, with the glowing certainty of direct perception, the knowledge of its illusoriness arises. Each and everything belonging to the world seems to burn; one cannot touch it At present, what you enjoy does not impress you as being short-lived, rather does it appear to make you happy. But to the extent that the spirit of detachment is roused, the relish of such pleasures will die down, for are they not fleeting? In other words, death will die. Now that you are advancing towards that which is beyond time, the semblance of happiness brought about by mundane things is being consumed. As a result, the question, "What actually is this world?" will arise. So long as the world

seems enjoyable to you, such a query does not present itself. Since you are progressing towards that which transcends time, all that belongs to time will begin to appear to you in its true light.

—*Mataji*

The sense of possession is a great obstacle to the realization of God. The idea of "I" and "mine" must disappear entirely before the aspirant can find absolute freedom and peace in union with God. Verily, everything belongs to the Lord who dwells in the hearts of all creatures and things. Attachment to any external object narrows our vision, fosters egoism and gives rise to the false notion that we are separate from God, i.e., from the universal life and spirit. The whole universe is permeated through and through with God. The visible and invisible worlds are all He. There is nothing and none but He. All, all is He. Such is the Truth, where then is room for the ideas of "I" and "you"—"mine" and "yours?" All are He!

—*Swami Ramdas*

Jñāna never comes without renunciation of lust and possessions. With the dawn of renunciation is destroyed all ignorance, all *avidyā*. Many things can be burnt by means of a lens held in such a manner that the rays of the sun fall on it directly, but you cannot use it so in the shade of a room. Even so with the mind. You must take it out of the dark cell of this world and expose it to the full blaze of Self-effulgent Divinity. Then alone true renunciation will come, and with it all ignorance will be destroyed.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Whoever leaves this world behind him passes away from mortality, and when he has passed away from mortality, he attains to immortality. If thou desire to reach this abode

of immortality, and to attain this exalted station, divest thyself first of self and then summon unto thyself a winged steed out of nothingness, to bear thee aloft. Clothe thyself with the garment of nothingness and drink the cup of annihilation. Cover thy breast with a nothingness, and draw over thy head the robe of non-existence. Set thy foot in the stirrup of complete renunciation and, looking straight before thee, ride the steed of non-being to the place where nothing is. Thou wilt be lost again and again, yet go on thy way in tranquillity, until at last thou shalt reach the world where thou art lost altogether to Self.

—Attar

When we realize that we have desired so much in this life and gained so little, then the spirit of renunciation comes. Desires are the cause of all our suffering. So long as we have any selfish desire whatever, we shall have to live in the world of variety ; but the wise man realizes that this is perishable and gives it up. So long as a man is hungry he will ask for food. Only when his hunger is satisfied will he refuse it. So, as long as a man is hungry for the world, as long as he has desire, he clings to the things of the world ; but when his hunger is satisfied, then he is ready to give it up and the life of consecration begins for him.

Worldly men think that the religious man is foolish : but they will grow and change. If the child asks how sugar tastes, you cannot describe it, he will have to taste it for himself. So that state beyond desire is indescribable and you will have to taste it for yourself to know what it is. The Seers of Truth may tell you what is to be seen and felt in that state ; but only as you have experienced it for yourself, can you know what it really is. Each must have his own experience. We cannot learn from the experience of others.

It is true that when we try to lead an ideal life of absolute devotion and renunciation, we have to go through

many trials in the form of criticism and condemnation from the world ; but also is it true that the joy one feels in the spiritual life, even in the midst of all external suffering, is infinitely greater than any pleasure that the world can give us. So we should discriminate and stand by the Ideal, whatever may happen to us.

—*Swami Paramananda (of Ramakrishna Mission)*

Once the venerable Anuruddha lived at Sāvatti, in the house near the Salalā Tree. There he addressed the monks as follows :

“This river here, the Ganges, brethren, flows to the East, is bent toward the East, directed toward the East. Now suppose a large group of people approaches, carrying mammoths and baskets, and they say : ‘We shall make this river, the Ganges, flow to the West, bend it toward the West, direct it toward the West.’ What do you think, brethren : can this large group of people actually make the Ganges flow toward the West, bend it toward the West, direct it toward the West ?”

“Verily not, brother.”

“And why not ?”

“The Ganges, to be sure, brother, flows to the East, is bent toward the East, is directed toward the East. Impossible it is to make it flow to the West, to bend and direct it toward the West, whatever fatigue and pain this large group of people might undergo.”

“Similarly, brethren: if a monk who has cultivated and frequently practised the four Foundations of Mindfulness, is surrounded by kings and ministers, by his friends, acquaintances and relatives, and offering treasure, they entreat him: ‘Come, my dear man! What do you want with these yellow robes? Why do you go about with a shaven head? Come, return to the lay life where you may enjoy your treasure and do good deeds!’ But, brethren, that a monk who has

cultivated and frequently practised the four Foundations of Mindfulness, should give up the training and return to a lower state, this is not possible. And why not? There is no possibility that a mind turned for a long time toward detachment, bent toward detachment, directed toward detachment, should return to a lower state."

—from the *Samyutta-Nikaya* of the Pali Canon

If one is to find the way to spirituality — *Paramārtha* — he must never be tempted by worldly happiness. The path to God is difficult. The only thing to be done is to surrender yourself at the Feet of God. As long as the mind dwells on worldly happiness and comforts one cannot feel even the slightest touch of God. As long as the heart is not weeping for God, how can one hope to get a glimpse of an experience of God? This is the way to *Paramārtha*. He who is really and truly yearning for God, the longer time he can devote to the repetition of mantra — *japa* — to remembrance of God — *dhyāna* — to the praises of God and reading of sacred books, the greater is the possibility of getting the touch of God and of progressing. One must always try and try anew. He should not even give time to wonder whether there are results or not.

—*Mataji*

Some Recent Significant Trends in Contemporary Western Psychology

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PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

Introduction: Western Psychology is a branch of modern western science which is empirical and positive and is based on inductive methods. It is directly connected and based on biology and physiology. All its conclusions are arrived at by the application of experiments of the statistical method. Naturally, therefore, its theories are more objective and materialistic than purely mental and spiritualistic, as those of psychology (science of mind) are generally accepted to be. Most of the branches of western psychology are behaviouristic in their dealing with their particular problems, mind as such playing very little part. Recently, however, there are some trends in the field of western psychology, which indicate a significant drift towards mentality or spirituality, which bring it closer to Indian psychology. They are Psychosynthesis, Psychosomatics, and Parapsychology.

Psychosynthesis :

Psychosynthesis is a very recent trend in western psychology which has been founded by Dr. Roberto Assagioli of Italy. Like Sigmund Freud, he was originally a medical man. He took his medical degree at the University of Florence specialising in neurology and psychiatry. After having practised various methods of psychotherapy, such as suggestion, persuasion, and psychoanalysis—he evolved a new and comprehensive method, aiming at a complete reconstruction of the personality, called Psychosynthesis, which he developed under the influence of study of Indian philosophy. It embodies many truths and practices of

Indian psychology, such as Yoga. Dr. Assagioli has applied the truths of Psychosynthesis not only to cure patients, but also has used them as principles and methods of education and self-education and reform of criminals. In 1926 he founded the Institute of Psychosynthesis in Rome. Dr. Assagioli is a great writer and lecturer. He has extensively travelled in Switzerland, England, France, Holland and America. A lot of his papers and articles have been published and translated in several languages. A book by him on Psychosynthesis has also been published in 1966 by Hobbs, Dorman & Company, Inc. New York and Buenos Aires, giving in clear details the principles and application of his theory. Psychosynthesis takes a wider, and deeper view of human personality than any other school of modern psychology, including psychoanalysis. It includes in the concept of human personality its consciousness, its conscious Self or I, its unconscious discovered by Freud and his followers, which it classifies under three strata, namely, the Lower Unconscious, the Middle Unconscious, the Higher Unconscious or Super Conscious. It admits also the Collective Unconscious, discovered by Freud and Jung and others. Besides the ordinary ego or I, Psychosynthesis admits the existence in human personality of the Higher Self, corresponding to that core of being which is called the *Atman* by Indian psychologists. Thus, according to Psychosynthesis, human personality consists of 1. The Higher Self, 2. The Conscious Self or "I" (corresponding to "*Aham*" of Indian psychology), 3. The Field of Consciousness (corresponding to our waking life-*Jāgrat Awastha* (Vedanta) 4. The Higher Unconscious or Superconscious, 5. The Middle Unconscious, and 6. The Lower Unconscious. All the normal, abnormal, mystic, religious and social phenomena of human life are accounted for by this comprehensive concept of human personality by this school of psychology.

In order to be healthy and whole psychosynthesis advises a process of unifying or synthesising the multiplicity

of our personality in one organic unity round a dynamic centre at two different levels :— 1. At the level of the little self, leading to personal psychosynthesis. 2. By discovering the Higher Self, at the level of the Higher Self, thus leading to the possibility of spiritual psychosynthesis. The fact is that ordinarily we know neither our little self nor the Higher Self. We are wrongly identified with other aspects or factors of our personality and are controlled by that with which we are identified. We ought to awaken ourselves to our real selfhood by disidentifying ourselves (both as our little selves and as our Higher Selves) and thus truly awakening our selves into our real Selves. According to psychosynthesis as according to Vedanta, dis-identification with what we are not, is very essential for Self-realization. For awakening into the Self, disidentification from the not-self is very essential. Psychosynthesis has discovered the principle underlying all Indian *sādhana* that we are dominated by everything with which our self is identified. We can dominate and control everything from which we disidentify ourselves.



The Higher Self, according to psychosynthesis is very similar to the *Atman* of the Vedanta. It is transcendental, but reflected in the individual conscious self which is changing, unsubstantial and illusory, as in the Advaita Vedanta.

Modern psychology, since the time of the publication of William James' 'Principles of Psychology', has neglected *Will*, as a great factor in human personality. Psychosynthesis has rediscovered the power of will and conscious effort, as an essential power of the conscious self with the help of which healthy psychosynthesis of personality can be effected, and all ills cured.

Indian psychology of Yoga and Vedanta with similar concepts of human personality as those of psychosynthesis,

now can join hands with modern western psychology, by making itself practical in the interest of mankind, and psychosynthesis may learn to be more theoretically sound and practically effective by adopting the yogic and vedantic methods of meditation and Self-realization.

PSYCHOSOMATICS

Psychosomatics (or Psychosomatic Medicine) is a recent doctrine of medical psychology which has released psychology from its materialistic behaviouristic and physiological bias that all mental activities are dependent upon bodily activities or changes. Long ago Freud had explained most somatic or physiological changes of hysterical persons as conversion in the form of bodily symptoms of the repressed mental urges or repressed ideas, but now it has been established that all emotions, conscious or unconscious, are direct or indirect causes of several somatic (bodily) illnesses, which are now named "emotionally induced illnesses." In 1928, Dr. George Draper published a paper in the Journal of the American Medical Association under the title, "Disease, a Psychosomatic Reaction". Later on several such papers were published in other journals and the term psychosomatic came into vogue. In course of time a series of monographs, entitled, "Psychosomatic Medicine, Experimental and Clinical" were published by the above mentioned journal. The Editorial Board consisted of representatives from the relevant disciplines of medicine, such as Neurology, Physiology, Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis, etc. The Tenth International Medical Congress for Psychotherapy held in July-August, in 1938, devoted a major section to psychosomatic problems. A group of investigators of Chicago working under the leadership of Alexander in Chicago, studied diseases of the digestive system and came to the conclusion that in most of them important psychogenic

factors were etiological factors. Recent investigations have disclosed that every bodily illness has its psychological etiological component, that the bodily disorders are mostly psychosomatic, resultants of emotions. Any emotion, according to this school of thought can set the autonomic systems and the adrenals in motion, which in turn, affect the heart, the lungs, the circulation and other visceral functions.

Usually psychosomatic disorders are temporary, as emotions are, but there are circumstances which tend to make these conditions chronic. Continued emotional stresses and strains may transform the temporary psychosomatic disorder into a chronic somatic disease.

Here are some interesting quotations from a writer who has made use of the theory of psychosomatic medicine in advising people how to keep healthy, as free from emotionally induced illness.

"Fully 85 per cent of all headaches are emotionally induced." "It was learned by careful study during World War II that the thing we have called *muscular rheumatism*, or myofibrositis or fibrositis, is almost invariably produced by emotional tension." "Fully 30 per cent of the skin trouble in the United States is what the dermatologists call the neurodermatitis". "Fully 50 per cent of the patients who complain of an ulcer-like pain are found not to have an ulcer but merely an emotional muscle pain of the stomach". "85 per cent of the patients complaining of pain in the back of the head, radiating down into the neck have their pain as a result of emotional tightness in the muscles".

According to this author, John A. Schindler, M. D., author of "*How to Live 365 Days A Year*," 75% of pain in the back of the neck, 90% of the lump in the throat, 50% of ulcer-like pain, 50% of gall-bladder like pain; 99.44/100% of gas; 80% of giddiness; 80% of headaches, 70% of constipation and 90% of tiredness are psychosomatic; that is to say

all these symptoms are caused by emotional tension. No one, according to him, is immune to emotionally induced illness.

Emotionally induced illness is a physical, not a mental disease. It produces thousands of symptoms, varying from such homely ones, 'as pain in the neck' and 'gas' to such complicated ones as 'nephro scellerosis' and 'peptic ulcer'.

An emotion produces chemical and physical changes in the body (either on the face, where they may be seen by others, or internally, where they are felt by us)—changes that are the *feeling* of every thought we think. For example, in the emotion of anger, the chief central manifestation is reddening of the skin of the face, a widening of bloodshot whites of the eyes, contraction and tightening of the lips, clenching of the fists, a tremor in the arms, and very often a tremor in the voice. Internally, when you become angry, your blood immediately clots quicker than normal. When you become angry the number of blood-cells increases by as much as half a million per cubic millimeter. When a person becomes angry, the muscles at the outlet of the stomach squeeze down so tightly that nothing leaves the stomach during anger, and the entire digestive tract is affected so that many people have severe abdominal pains during or after a fit of anger. The heart rate goes up markedly during anger, often to 180 or 220 or higher, and stays there until the anger has passed. The blood pressure rises markedly and speedily from a normal of 130 to 230 or more, blowing some blood-vessels in the brain. Part of the manifestations of the emotion of fear is a squeezing down of some of the vessels of the brain—this produces the faint.

Part of the manifestations of the emotion of disgust is a contraction of the stomach, violent enough to cause vomiting.

The emotional effects produced through the autonomic nervous system are less severe than those produced through

