



## MĀTRI VANI

( Dictated by Sri Ma as letters in response to devotees' requests for personal advice and guidance. )

It is everyone's duty to adopt the path which is congenial to spiritual life. It is He who calls and again He who hears. Try to be devoted to Him.

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Wherever you may be, be there in the spirit of a seeker of God.

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A human being must spend his or her life in contemplation of the Supreme. With this thought in mind walk on your path.

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In one's life of sādhanā different stages come and go – but one should stick to the spiritual path with patience and fortitude.

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The more sādhanā you do and the more you live in God's presence, the better will you know His will.

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Concentrating on the form of God you love most, repeat the Name. By the practice of God's Name the ego is burnt up.

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Meditate on the words you heard when you felt a spiritual presence in your home. Keep them in your mind. If the hearing is genuine; no questions arise. While hearing one understands instantaneously, one's doubts are solved.

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When questions and doubts have remained, it means there has been no real *samādhi*. When there is genuine *samādhi*, the path that transcends all questions opens out. You can reason it out for yourself at what stage you are since questions are still there.

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In the *Ājma* Mataji is always present with every body. One's actual experience of this fact is according to the state one has reached.

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When Mataji says; "follow the *Rishi Panthā*," it means that one should try to live as the *Rishi's* lived who were married, yet great saints. This should be the householder's ideal to aspire to. Everything comes about according to the state of achievement one has reached.

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In reply to the question: "How can I tell the difference between imagination and intuition?" Ma said:

Use your intelligence and discriminate carefully. Make an effort to discard the merely pleasurable for the sake of the highest good. Spiritual *sādhana* (*sāikarma*) must be done with the utmost sincerity—

even physically—because thereby the *śakti* to tread the path to God will be awakened. This *śakti* will guide you to discriminate right from wrong.

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Keep your mind calm by thinking of God and about God. The delight that God gives you when you contemplate Him is the way to peace. Serve God in everyone and everything. Pūjā and āraṭi are also God's service.

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By engaging in japa, meditation and keeping *satsanga* one's inner power (*śakti*) increases. What one receives depends on one's attitude of mind and heart. In all states and conditions it is man's duty to tread the path to God-realisation. If you cannot get *satsanga* read spiritual books.

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At all times remain steeped in what is REAL—remembrance and refuge! Thereby even death dies, where the remembrance of God persists there is no room for sorrow. Where is the time even to think? Jealousy, hate, anger, greed—none of these have the chance to arise.

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# MATRI SATSANGA

Swami Bhagavatananda Giri

( Translated from Bengali )

New Delhi, 25-11-57

*Question :* Suppose someone has prostrated himself in *pranāma* and is then unable to get up, how would you define such a state ?

*Mataji :* The saying : “Roots above and branches below<sup>1</sup>” applies to the human being, whose head is his root and his body represents the branches. With a tree it is just opposite : its head or root is down below and its branches up above. The seeds are present in all its limbs, you may know what is written in the *Śāstras*. This body talks in a higgledy-piggledy fashion. What is not potentially contained in the root, how can it become manifest in due course ?

There is a definite procedure for doing *pranāma* to the Guru. *Naman* means to render oneself pliable or lowly ; *naman* also means *na-mana* (no mind) in other words, not to be confined to the mind. If one has got rid of the mind, that is to say if whatever is in the mind has been surrendered, what is one's true Self (*svarūpa*) ? This will then become revealed. There is a Bengali Song<sup>2</sup> : Only the one *namaskāra* oh Lord, only the single *namaskāra*.” If *namaskāra* in the true sense comes about, nothing will remain any more. If *namaskāra*

1. “*Ūrdho mūlam adha śākhā*”, Bhagavad Gita, XV/I,

2. By Rabindranath Tagore.

is real and total, *samādhi* will supervene of itself. If the thinking mind does not function, then who will get up ? By performing *namaskāra* again and again, real *namaskāra* may take place provided there is a favourable conjunction. Some people get a headache when they try to meditate. Why ? It is due to a clash between the upward and downward tendencies of the mind. In the case of full and genuine brahmacharya contact with the source or root is established and the mind automatically gets wholly absorbed in meditation. So long as the ego remains, proper *namaskāra* cannot be performed. Egotism brings suffering ; where, by doing *namaskāra*, sorrow and strife are mitigated, there one should do *namaskāra*, there indeed one should sit and lie down. By the sustained practice of *japa*<sup>1</sup>, *dhyāna*<sup>2</sup> and *namaskāra* these occur effortlessly.

Don't you sometimes say "such and such an image, is made of stone and another one of metal" etc. But if you think of it as a stone, the presence of Śiva is not felt any more ; and if you consider it to be Śiva it cannot be a stone. Similarly, if you look with reverence at a *śālagrāma* (*Nārāyaṇa śilā*)<sup>3</sup>, it is no longer just a piece of stone ; but if you call it a stone it cannot be *Nārāyaṇa*. All names are God's names. Name and the nameless, form and the formless—all are He and no other.

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1. *Japa*—The practice of repeating a mantra or the Lord's name as a means of the continual recollection of His presence.
  2. *Dhyāna*—Meditation.
  3. *Śālagrāma* or *Nārāyaṇa śilā*—A special kind of small stone regarded as an emblem of *Nārāyaṇa* (*Viṣṇu*).

What do you consider a stone actually to be? These are all different expressions of the ONE. If you look with devotion you will perceive God in a stone. We must regard our *vigrahas* or Deities as embodiments of THAT. Even if this is actually perceived, the perceiver has still remained. The *triputi*, i.e. division into knower, knowing, knowledge must be abolished. The presence of God must be realised by direct perception. Go higher up, beyond the level of knowledge (*bodha*). Everything is just an expression of God. Formless and with form are one and the same—just like water and ice. What is ice? Nothing but water. So long as the vision of Reality is not constant, so long as the touch of Supreme Being is not felt uninterruptedly, conflict will persist. Try to go further beyond! To perform *namaskāra* in order to become free from conflict and doubt—transcend even this! Rise above the state where one argues whether God exists or not.

Some people inquire: "Where does God reside, for I cannot perceive Him?" But there is no question at all of His existence or non-existence. While doing obeisance remember, "the deity I worship is indeed the Lord of the whole universe, and within all the deities of the whole universe my Lord is present. Just as my Guru is the World teacher and the World teacher is my Guru." The *vigraha*<sup>1</sup> has to be looked at as an embodiment of

1. *Vigraha*—Concrete External Presence as Form. An image consecrated through mantras or through the devotion and adoration of the worshipper becomes the Deity Itself.

Reality Itself. The joys and sorrows of this world are transitory. Therefore bow down in *namaskāra*. Not to be able to rise up after doing obeisance is also a stage. Then there follows a state where the question of rising up or not does not exist anymore.

When performing *namaskāra*, first of all think : "God is right in front of me," and have His *darśana*. Next, when you bow down in *praṇāma* to Him, let your gaze wander from His lotusfeet to His head. Some people hold the breath within while viewing the Deity from the feet upwards and exhale when glancing at Him from His head downwards at the time of doing their *praṇāma*. Thereafter imagine : "the Lord's merciful hand is resting on my head in benediction." You believe don't you, that electricity can be passed on by hand ? Similarly also, from the point of view of the world, He whom you venerate as your Guru or as God, does possess this power (*śakti*) in each of his limbs, and by His mere touch this power can be transmitted to you. Thus, when you start by gazing at His feet and then have full *darśana* while inhaling, think earnestly that with your breath His power is entering into yourself. Further, when exhaling slowly, slowly, while viewing Him from His head downwards, dedicate yourself totally. By this type of *darśana* you are being purified. Now you have earned the right to fall at His feet, so prostrate yourself full length (*danḍavat*). Whatever you may now say or do, it all represents Him alone.

*Question* : You have taught us all this by your personal example.



*Mataji* : Well, but this little girl is crazy.

The next stage is *bhakti* (devotion)—one starts worshipping with deep feeling. There is a great difference between going through the motions of *namaskāra* and genuine *namaskāra* coming about spontaneously. Just as taking *saṁnyāsa* and the actual state of *saṁnyāsa* are two entirely different things. One gets initiated into *saṁnyāsa* in order to become a true *saṁnyāsī*. *Pranāma* means full prostration (outwardly and inwardly) so that full power may be received from Him.

Pitaji, you are a learned pandit, see how impudent is this little daughter of yours ! She just converses with her fathers, mothers and friends.

Every form is indeed a *vigraha* of God. Whether changing or changeless, He is present in all shapes and guises. Everyone must strive for the revelation of his own true self (*svarūpa*). To pursue *Brahma-vidyā* (knowledge of the Eternal) is the only real study. The learning, in other words the action (*krīyā*) within the disciple that is brought about by the Guru's *śākti* is the only learning worth while.

“If *SĀDHANĀ* is one's purpose in life, one must not allow it to become shrivelled and emaciated.”

—Sri Sri Ma.

# IN ASSOCIATION WITH SRI MA ANANDAMAYI

Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

( Translated from Bengali )

## *Sri Sri Ma visits Calcutta and Dacca.*

After the month of Jaistha (June) 1937, I did not meet Ma again until over a year later, on Oct. 16th, 1938. During this long interval, many memorable episodes had occurred round Sri Sri Ma. Towards the end of Jaistha in 1937, Ma left for Kailash from Almora with Baba Bholanath, Jyotish Babu, Swami Akhandananda, Gurupriya Didi and the eldest son of Sri Pran Kumar Bose, etc. I heard many interesting details about their travels from Baba Bholanath and Didi. Jyotish Babu was seized by an intense spirit of renunciation on reaching the shores of *Mānas Sarovar*, so much so that he entered *Samnyāsa* spontaneously. Ma thereafter named him Maunananda Parvat.

On the 10th of Śrāvaṇa, Didi had written to me from Dharchula (on the way back) that Jyotish Babu was very ill, but that the rest of the party had returned hale and hearty from Kailash. In such a serious condition Jyotish Babu was brought back to Almora, and on the 2nd Bhadra (mid-August), at the feet of Sri Sri Ma, he left his body, uttering the name of Ma with his last breath. He had requested everybody present to sing the name of

