

The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,
He Himself is the traveller on the path to Immortality,
He is all in all, He alone is.

MATRI VANI

(*Replies to letters on various subjects from different people at different times.*)

42.

Accepting all conditions of life—whatever they be—as His gift, abide in fortitude and do service.

43.

Endeavour to keep your thought centred at all times on the divine Name or Form that appeals to you most. Let your mind be turned exclusively towards God — then, and then only, may you hope for peace.

44.

How can a man who is harbouring thoughts of suicide expect to become a Sannyasi ? The idea of suicide does not even enter the mind of those who consider themselves candidates for Sannyasa. A spirit of extreme self-denial and renunciation is the attitude that affords the greatest aid towards this exalted state. Vow to be truthful in speech and refrain from letter-writing. Do not talk to women nor allow your gaze to rest on them.

45.

To live in the joy that springs from the mind's constant occupation with things divine is man's duty. Thinking of anything other than God is what creates sorrow. Be it *Mantra Japa*, be it meditation, worship, the perusal of Sacred Texts, the simple awareness of God or a like device, be it Kirtan or religious music — all these are different modes of the Divine Presence. One should always remain engaged in one of them, in fact make it a point never to be without Him. Bear this in mind ! This is what this little child requests from Her friends and also from Her fathers and mothers.*

* Mataji often speaks of Herself as a little child and calls all children Her 'friends' and adults 'father' or 'mother'.

46.

It is by seeking to know oneself that the Great Mother of all may be found.

47.

God's holy Name is in itself the rite for exorcising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name ghosts and evil spirits cannot exist.

48.

Life's journey is bound to proceed inevitably in the manner you describe. Search in every home and see how many people can be found who have never known bereavement. This is why the one and only way out of the misery is the path toward Self-realization.

49.

A person who does not for the love of God and with a cheerful heart discharge himself of whatever responsibility that may fall to his lot at any time, will find life excessively burdensome and never be able to accomplish anything. Man's duty—more especially for those who have made the Supreme Quest their one and only aim — is to work joyfully for the uplift of the world, with the conviction that all service is His service. Work done in such a spirit helps to purify the mind and heart.

50.

Write to him that his condition very often indeed occupies this body's *Kheyal*.* He himself, by his own effort of will must become strong-minded and drop his negative attitude, which makes him imagine that he cannot and will never be able to succeed. On the contrary he must be determined that it will be possible, that achievement will most certainly be his. He should say to himself: "In whatever condition it pleases God to keep me, to that I resign myself, surrendering to Him whose creature I am, whose body this is." That is all. With perfect calm and tranquillity he should pass most of his time lying straight on his back in what is called the "dead pose" (*Shavasana*) and silently repeat his Mantra in rhythm with his breathing. *There is only*

* Ordinarily this phrase would be translated by "occupies my mind." However it would be incorrect to use the word 'mind' when referring to Mataji. *Kheyal*=Free Will (divine) expressing Itself spontaneously.

one Brahman without a second'—this is what he has to realize. Write to him in plain language that for him there is no need of an intermediary.

51.

Mataji said : Write to him, to tell the truth, some people undoubtedly do approach this body in quest of Reality ; but very many come to get their desires and longings fulfilled.

Although he has had such unmistakable proof of what is the true nature of the world, his heart is still in it ? At this juncture he should try his utmost to engage himself solely in doing service, regarding whatever he does as service to the Lord. Ask him, at all costs to make a resolute effort against letting his mind become entangled in anything pertaining to this ocean of sorrow. It is his attachment to the world which has brought such deep distress to the unfortunate man. Nothing but ignorance is at the root of it all. He should continue to give news of himself to this body in any way he is able, for he has no one to whom he can confide his troubles and afflictions, which—one and all—are but the fruits of his past actions.

By sorrow does the Lord dispel sorrow and by adversity does He destroy adversity. When this is done He sends no more suffering — this must be borne in mind at all times.

In very truth the Eternal's offspring must focus their thoughts on Him. Divorced from God there cannot be even a prospect of peace—never, never, never. By abiding in God man will find peace, the veil be rent, and the Dispeller of Sorrow stand revealed. He alone is the conqueror of evil. He is yours, the sole treasure of the human heart.

52.

They imagine this body to be far away, but actually it is always very, very near. How could it possibly leave anyone ? The question of distance arises solely from *their* point of view. Whenever they can get a holiday let them come and meet this body.

No matter what work one undertakes it should be done well. If one cultivates the habit of doing everything well, there is fair promise of one's doing likewise also on the spiritual path. The action is He and the doer of the action is He and no other. At all events one should make an attempt to develop this attitude of mind. Truth — in the presence of which illusion is recognized as illusion—Truth, THAT which IS, has to be made one's own.

MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

(11)

From Mataji one can never get a definite decision on any problem. That is why I wondered whether it was any use, writing down all Her utterances? I asked Mataji about it. She replied :

Mataji : At least you have understood that there is a state where problems are no longer settled in any particular way. In the course of your life have you not after careful consideration come to a decision on many questions? But now you will have to realize that no solution can solve any problem finally ; in other words, you will have to go beyond certainty and uncertainty. The resolution of a problem arrived at by the mind must of necessity be from a particular side ; consequently there will be room for contradiction, since your solution represents but one aspect. What then have you actually solved? A complete synthesis of all the conflicting views can be attained through a number of distinctly separate avenues of approach. Again you will see that there is a place where lies the ultimate solution of the problems of all shades of opinion without the possibility of contradiction. What happens then? Whether a question be raised regarding a solved or unsolved problem, whether one may say "yes" or "no"—everything is THAT.

(12)

One evening during Mataji's stay at Solan in 1948, Srimati Rameshwari Nehru, the wife of one of Pandit Jawaharlal's cousins came for Mataji's Darshan. She asked the following questions :

Does the capacity to meditate come by practice in this life or is it an aptitude acquired in former births?

Mataji : It may be the result of either of the two or of both combined. Meditation should be practised every day of one's life. Look, what is there in this world? Absolutely nothing that is lasting ; therefore direct your longing towards the Eternal. Pray that the work done through you, His

instrument, may be pure. In every action remember Him. The purer your thinking the finer will be your work. In this world you get a thing and by to-morrow it may be gone. This is why your life should be spent in a spirit of service : feel that the Lord is accepting service from you through whatever you do. If you desire peace you must cherish the thought of Him.

Question : When will there be peace on earth ?

Mataji : Well, the present state of affairs is quite the other way ; things happen as they are destined to be.

Question : When will this state of unrest come to an end ?

Mataji : The fact that many of you feel concerned about it and ask : "When will it end ?" is also one of the ways of His Self-manifestation.

The world — *Jagat** — means ceaseless movement and obviously there can be no rest in movement. How could there be peace in perpetual coming and going ? Peace reigns where no coming exists and no going, no melting and no burning. Reverse your course and advance towards Him — then there will be hope of peace.

By your *japa* and meditation those who are in contact with you will also benefit through the helpful influence of your presence. In order to develop a taste for meditation you have to make a deliberate and sustained effort, just as children have to be made to sit and study, be it by persuasion or coercion. By taking medicine or having injections a patient gets well ; even if you do not feel inclined to meditate conquer your reluctance and make an attempt. The habit of countless lives is pulling you in the opposite direction and making it difficult for you : persevere in spite of it. By your tenacity you will gain strength and be moulded, that is to say you will develop the capability for doing *sadhana*. Make up your mind that however arduous the task, it will have to be accomplished. Recognition and fame last for a short time only, they do not accompany you when you leave this world. If your thought does not naturally turn towards the Eternal, fix it there by an effort of will. Some severe blow of fate will drive you towards God. This will be but an expression of His Mercy ; however painful, it is by such blows that one learns one's lesson.

* The word "*jagat*" is derived from the root *gam* = to go.

the lady's devotees came to this body and inquired : "Ma, you never put anyone to shame and certainly not in public. Why then did you do so in this case ?" I replied : "Yes, as you know this body does not as a rule interfere with anyone's natural ways. Yet whether it concerns the most ordinary or the most extraordinary event — style it as you please —, what holds good for this body to this day and has until now always been so, is simply this : Whatever is meant to come about just happens spontaneously. When that lady arrived this body welcomed her with great respect, offering her its own *asana* and putting a garland round her neck. How very pleased everyone felt ! Every form, every expression is He and He alone. That day this body did not disclose anything. But the lady of her own free will declared : "I shall come again to-morrow !" You all heard it, did you not ? What occurred then was His way of revealing Himself. Tell me, what is there to do ? By whatever method He may choose to teach anyone at any time — this body has no desire of its own — only whatever comes to pass.

When (in the early days) this body used to do *Pranam* to every creature, whether an insect, a spider, a dog or a cat, it did so with the full consciousness of the presence of the Supreme Being in everything.

'Whatever comes to pass' — there is something else to be said in this connexion. To base one's life on deception can never be for one's good. He who deceives will himself be deceived. On the other hand falsehood may also be converted into truth. Someone may deliberately play false, yet through his disciple's sincerity the truth may actually be brought to light. As a result the disciple excels the Guru. The resolve to find the truth will inevitably lead to its revelation. I told that lady's devotee, "how many times did I ask you all : 'Shall I disclose it ?' And without exception you kept on begging me to do so. Therefore — what more can be said ?"

What a great variety of similar incidents occur ! Listen to the story of a young woman who under the slightest provocation would enter into 'Samadhi'—so people believed. She appeared to become lifeless, her hands and feet turning cold. When she came to this body she also went into this strange state which people mistook for *Samadhi*. The girl's mother was called 'grandmother' by this body, both were of the same village. She said to me : "Grand-daughter, please try and help this girl !" I quite understood what was the matter with the young woman, so I whispered into her ear ; "You

will very soon receive a letter from your husband," whereupon the girl recovered in no time. The news of the cure spread far and wide, people felt greatly mystified, wondering what powerful *Mantra* Mataji had whispered into the girl's ear! Indeed, under the circumstances it *was* the appropriate *Mantra* for her. Her condition was solely due to worrying about her husband's prolonged silence.

Then again there was a young man, into what supernormal states he used to go, how many kinds of visions he had! He would for example do *Pranam* and remain in that posture for hours together without raising his head, tears streaming down his cheeks. He said he saw and heard Sri Krishna teaching Arjuna, as described in the *Gita*, and that he had many other visions and auditory experiences of the kind. This body told him that if a *Sadhaka* could not maintain firm control over his mind, he would be liable to see and hear many things, both illusory and genuine all mixed up. He might even fall a victim to the influence of some 'spirit' or power. Such occurrences, far from intensifying pure Divine aspiration, would rather hinder than otherwise. Moreover to see someone in a vision or to hear him address you, may well become a source of self-satisfaction or egotistic enjoyment. To lose control over oneself is not desirable. In the search after Truth one must not allow oneself to be overpowered by anything, but watch carefully whatever phenomena may supervene, keeping fully conscious, wide awake, in fact retaining complete mastery over oneself. Loss of consciousness is never right.

The Lord Buddha is Himself the essence of Enlightenment. All partial manifestations of wisdom that come in the course of *Sadhana* culminate in Supreme Enlightenment (*Bodha Swarupa*). In a similar way Supreme Knowledge (*Gyana Swarupa*) or Supreme Love (*Bhava Swarupa*) may be attained. As there is a state of Supreme Self-Knowledge, likewise is there a state of perfection at the zenith of the path of love. There one finds the nectar of perfect Love identical with Supreme Knowledge. In this state there is no room for emotional excitement, indeed it would make it impossible for Supreme Love (*Mahabhava*) to shine forth. Be mindful of one thing: if when following a particular line of approach one does not attain to that which is the consummation of all *Sadhana*, namely the final Goal, it means that one has not entered the Stream. At the supreme summit of Love, which is *Mahabhava*, exuberance, excessive emotion and the like cannot

possibly occur. Emotional excitement and Supreme Love are not to be compared at all, they are totally different from one another.

While absorbed in meditation, whether one is conscious of the body or not, whether there be a sense of identification with the physical or not — in any case it is imperative to remain wide awake; unconsciousness must be strictly avoided. Some genuine perceptivity must be retained, whether one contemplates the Self as such or any particular form. What is the purpose of this type of meditation? It opens up one's being to the Light, to that which is Eternal. Suppose the body had been suffering from some pain or stiffness, — lo and behold after meditation it feels perfectly hale and hearty, with not a trace of fatigue or debility. It is as if a long period of time had elapsed in between, as if there had never been a question of any discomfort. This would be a good sign. But if tempted at the first touch of Bliss, to allow oneself to be drowned in it and later to declare: "Where I was I could not say, I do not know", — this is not desirable. As one becomes capable of real meditation and to the extent that one contacts Reality one discovers the ineffable joy that lies hidden even in all outer objects.

On the other hand when in the course of meditation one loses oneself as it were, lapsing into a kind of stupor and afterwards claims to have been steeped in intense bliss, this sort of bliss is a hindrance. If the life-force seems to have been in abeyance — just as one has a sense of great happiness after sound sleep — it indicates stagnation. It is a sign of attachment and this attachment stands in the way of true meditation, since one will be apt to revert to that state again and again; although from the standpoint of the world which is altogether different, it would seem a source of profound inward joy and therefore certainly an indication of spiritual progress. To be held up at any stage is obstructive, it simply means one has stopped advancing.

When engaging in meditation one should think of oneself as a purely spiritual being (*Chinmayi*) (without any touch of materiality), as Self-luminous, poised in the Bliss of the Self (*Atmaram*), and according to the Guru's instructions, try to concentrate on one's *Ishta* (the Beloved). The young man previously mentioned, (the one who used to have visions), was intelligent and therefore able to understand this sort of reasoning. As a result the spectacular experiences ceased and he attends now to his meditation and other spiritual exercises in a very quiet and unobtrusive manner.

The same evening when the conversation again reverted to *dhyana* (meditation) and *asana* (posture), Mataji said :

Mataji :—Look, if you spend hour after hour sitting in a certain posture, if you become wedded to that pose and are unable to meditate in any other, it shows that you are deriving enjoyment from the posture; this also constitutes an obstacle. When one first starts practising *japa* and meditation it is of course right to try and continue in the same position for as long as possible. But as one approaches perfection in these practices, the question as to how long one has remained in one posture does not arise; at any time and in any position lying, sitting, standing or leaning over to one side, as the case may be — one can no longer be deterred by anything from the contemplation of one's Ideal or the Beloved.

The first sign of progress comes when one feels ill at ease in any but a meditative pose. Nothing external interests one; the only thing that seems attractive is to be seated in one's favourite posture as long as may be and contemplate the Supreme Object of one's worship, plunged in a deep inner joy. This marks the beginning of single-mindedness and hence is a step in the right direction. Yet here great prominence is given to posture. If one stays in that position as long as the inclination lasts — confident that the Beloved can never do one harm, — and if one is able to remain fixed in it, then the posture becomes of overwhelming importance. This only shows that one is nearing perfection in the practice of *asana*. Rising, sitting down, walking, in fact any gesture taken up by the body is called an *asana*. It corresponds to the rhythm and the vibration of body and mind at any particular moment. Some aspirants can meditate only if seated in the pose indicated by the Guru or formulated in the *Shastras* and not otherwise. This is the way to proficiency in meditation. On the other hand someone may begin his practice while sitting in any ordinary position; nevertheless as soon as the state of *japa* or *dhyana* has been reached the body will spontaneously take up the most appropriate position, after the manner that belching happens involuntarily. As one's meditation grows more and more intense the postures correspondingly of themselves gain in perfection. When a little air is pumped into a tyre the tyre will be flabby; but when it is filled to capacity it remains completely stable in its own natural shape. Likewise when real meditation has been attained, the body feels light and free, and on

rising after meditation there is no fatigue of any kind, no pain, numbness or stiffness in one's limbs.

In true meditation Reality is contacted and just as the touch of fire leaves an impression, this contact also leaves its mark. In what way? Impediments fall away — they are either consumed by detachment from sense objects or molten by devotion to the Divine. Worldly things seem tedious, quite foreign to oneself; worldly talk loses all its appeal, becomes devoid of interest and at a further stage even painful. When a person's earthly possessions are lost or damaged the victim feels disturbed which gives evidence of the stranglehold that sense objects exercise over man's mind. This is what is called *granthi* — the knots constituting the I-ness. By meditation, *japa* and other spiritual practices, which vary according to each one's individual line of approach, these knots become loosened, discrimination is developed and one comes to discern the true nature of the world of sense perception. In the beginning one was enmeshed in it, struggling helplessly in its grip. As one becomes disentangled from it and gradually passes through various stages of opening oneself more and more to the Light, one comes to see that everything is contained in everything, that there is only One Self, the Lord of all, or that all are but the servants of the One Master. The form this realization takes depends on one's orientation. One knows by direct perception that as one exists so everyone else exists, then again that there is the One and nothing but the One, that nothing comes and nothing goes—yet also does come and go — there is no way of expressing all this in words. To the extent that one becomes estranged from the world of the senses one draws nearer to God.

When attaining to true meditation one's chosen posture no longer represents either an obstacle or a source of enjoyment; in other words it is quite impossible for one to feel able to meditate only in one particular pose and in no other. Whether one happens to sit straight or crooked, the right posture will form of itself pulling the body into the proper position. Again there are occasions when one becomes entirely independent of the physical pose: in whatever attitude the body may happen to be, meditation just comes about effortlessly. Albeit without a doubt there is also a state in which, if one takes up a special pose, such as for instance, *Padmasana* (the 'lotuspose') or *Siddhasana* (the 'perfect pose'), no interruption of one's union with the Supreme Being can ever occur.

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Mother as Revealed to me from a Distance by Looking at Her Picture.

By

Miriam Orr (Paris.)

When I saw Mother's picture for the first time in the book "Ma Anan-amayi" by Devotees, something strange happened to me. The picture caused an experience I had never had before. I was struck by Mother's beauty, sweetness and harmony ; I felt inwardly shaken ; Her sweet smile and Her loving eyes touched something in me, quite unknown till the moment I beheld Her picture. Her silence Her sweet smile and Her loving eyes penetrated my whole being and seemed to tell me without words : "Why all this worrying, struggling and clinging to the forms of this world ? Is it worth while, is it essential ? The whirlpool of chasing, tangled pictures, forms and names — is it not a dream you are dreaming, a dream you are weaving like a spider's web ? Should you not wake up ? Are you not already awake, even while dreaming ? Weaving your own dream and yet awake all at once, but not knowing that you are awake, being caught in the cobweb of your dreams ?"

These words were not heard by me. I am using them in order to communicate something of the very first impression Mother's picture made on me, of the experience it evoked, an experience of a new order. It is difficult, if not impossible to describe. It was a little bit like when a small child who is fast asleep with the heavy sleep of childhood, is shaken by a grown-up because it is time to rise — and yet it was not like this. A child must leave his dream-world to get adjusted to the waking state, which is another world, the world of forms and actions. The way Mother woke me was different and the world into which Her sweet smile and Her radiant eyes shook me seemed a world without forms, without actions and without end. Forms and actions seemed to fall away as dry leaves drop from a tree.

This strange experience was much swifter than words, it might be compared to a sudden light in a dark chamber, to a soft, smiling light that made the world of forms and actions

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