

2nd Letter

(Letter written by Didi)

April 1934

Snehaspadeshu (dear one) Bhramar

As per Ma's directive we have been here for some days. Don't know for how many days we will be here. However, Ma has heard your letter. Whatever Ma said that I am writing below:

"By continuously repeating the name the state of dhyān comes. Which is superior and which is inferior you don't need to consider now. Try to keep the name on your lips and the remembrance of the name in your heart. Then only you will see that your state of dhyān is coming automatically.

"Some dreams come true in their proper time. But at what moment this time comes nobody can say. I am always with you, remember that. Keep your mind attached to God. With enthusiasm and joy, pass your time in purity. This is all I have to say."

Hope that all of you are keeping well.

Yours

Khukhuni Didi

The analysis:

The word Meditation, the English equivalent for **dhyan**, has not been used. We take meditation as a process whereas Ma takes it as a state of the **antahkaran** (the inner being). In the scriptures the word dhyan is used both as a process as well as a state.

An answer given by Ma to a question as to the definition of Dhyan (meditation) was: **Achinta-e- param dhyan**. (a=no; chinta=thought; e=verily; parama=the ultimate)

Let us try to understand what she wanted to convey by this saying.

The paradox is that in spite of knowing this truth we are still trying to bring the Ultimate Reality within the domain of thoughts. Of course, we are left with no other alternative. In one context the scripture says that the Ultimate Reality is unattainable either by intelligence or repeated hearing. It also says Shrotavya (must be heard), Mantavya (reflected upon) and Nidhidhyasitavya (should be contemplated upon). As such these two sayings may appear contradictory. The intention of the scripture is to inspire us to go for

Spiritual practice. First we have to have the intellectual understanding, and this in turn may be experienced through Sadhana. To hear we need sense organs, to reflect we need mind and to contemplate we need intelligence.

The fluctuation of inner being between affirmation and its opposite is called the mind. The affirmative state of the inner being is called the intelligence. We need intelligence for thinking. Thinking is to re-look at the Vritti (conditioned mind set). Vritti is the reappearance of a reflected image of the object captured by the sense organs onto the canvas of immediate objective consciousness, and stored in the form of memory. Thinking is always objective. The object may be either gross or subtle. When there is no object there is no thinking.

The scriptural definition of Dhyān is *ōDhyānah nirvishayayh manahō* i.e. Dhyān is the state of mind without any object. As we know that the mind exists only when there is an object, it disappears in the absence of an object. (in the case of deep sleep.)

We must bear in mind that in Astanga Yoga (Yoga with eight limbs) Dhyān is given as the penultimate state. The succeeding step is the state of total consummation or Samadhi. The subject and object merge in oneness in that state.

What *we* understand by the word Dhyān is a process. The process may deal with an object, with or without form. We find here that the definition of Dhyān according to the scriptures and Ma does not go well with our conventional understanding.

Once Ma asked this writer whether he does Dhyān or not. He answered that whenever he tries, the mind runs after various objects or objective impressions stored in the memory. Ma said, *ōDhyān cannot be done, it happens.ō* That means Dhyān is not a process but the result of a process.

The paths of spiritual practice are many and varied. No path or practice is futile. One can achieve his or her goal by following any lineage or practice that goes well with his physical and mental constitution, as described by his preceptor/ guide/ Guru. A seeker always wants to follow the most efficacious practice to achieve the goal quickly. Very often he uses his rationale to judge the suitability of a path, and doubts crop up about the efficacy of a path as advised by the Guru. At times he also does his sadhana according to his own ideas. BG had doubts about the effectiveness and superiority of dhyān over Japa (Repeated chanting of God's name). Here we find that Ma was very specific in telling Bhramar not to use her own

discretion and she should go on with chanting God's name. The state of dhyān will result effortlessly.

Ma pointed out an interesting aspect of the dream state. Before taking up Ma's comments on dreams we need to clarify our understanding about dreams in the wakeful state. The understanding of a dream in the dream state is also a dream. Very often one says, "I dreamt last night" and describes his dream. If a dream is of an action there must be a doer. A doer of any conscious action is free to apply his choice in doing things. But dreams come to the doer randomly and leave him with no choice. Dreams are unpredictable. Consciousness plays its role in the dream state but the dreamer is not conscious about that state. He remembers dreams when awake. The question is, if the dreamer is not the doer then what brings the dreams?

There are different theories put forward by both psychologists and spiritual people. In the non-dualistic vedantic theory of monism dream plays an important role in understanding the philosophy. In Mandukya Upanishad and its commentary by Acharya Shankar, and the Karikas by his Grand Guru Gourpadacharya, the dream state had been treated elaborately. The state of dream is in between wakefulness and deep sleep. The mind is conditioned by the interactions of the sense organs with the world outside. Those impressions stored in the subconscious mind, are called **sanskars** (conditioned mind-set) and remain always active on the surface in the immediate consciousness. These **sanskars** ingrained in the chitta (stored memories) of a person, are brought about either by repeated phenomenal interactions of the sense organs with the world outside - which may be termed **phenotypic sanskars** - or by genetically carried traits - termed as **genotypic sanskars**. During the state between deep sleep and wakefulness, when the gross sense organs go into hibernation, **sanskars** from the subconscious occupy the mind and so dreams come. It has to be remembered that witnessing and recognizing an object in both the waking and dream state is not possible without **sanskars**. Suppose a painting of the god Ganesha is shown to a person with some other religious adherence, who does not have any knowledge about Hindu mythology, he will take it as a fictitious painting only.

As has been said these **sanskars** are always in an active state. Uncontrollable and random interactions between the **sanskars** within can give rise to new **sanskars** which may not be a result of direct interactions of the sense organs with the outside world. One may dream of a centaur having a horse body and human head which neither the dreamer nor anyone else has ever seen.

Unlike the waking state, where the object perceived has temporal and spatial dimensions with a proper sequence, dream has its own time, space and sequence. An action which may take hours or days or years for completion in a wakeful state, could happen in no time during a dream.

The way a vedantist (believer in non-dualistic monism) looks at dreams is quite different from that of a bhakta (one who follows the path of devotion) who believes in the name and form of God. A vedantist considers a dream as mithya (untrue) or illusory, whereas a bhakta takes it as God-sent.

According to him a dream is also true and is the result of spiritual actions, spiritual austerity and worship. It is being presented by God; likewise He (God) is the only controller and dispenser of dreams. For strong and intense sanskars the fruits comes in the wakeful state in the form of pains/happiness, loss/gain, attraction/ repulsion and birth/death etc. On the other hand for comparatively weak sanskars God delivers the fruit as He wills in the form of a dream.

From Ma's comment on dreams in this context one may take her as subscribing to the path of devotion. However if we look at her life in totality we will find that she does not subscribe to any path in particular, yet all spiritual paths were hers. She used to say, **“Whatever you say about this body.”**

Her response is according to the mind set of the aspirant. We know that the Ultimate Reality is beyond the domain of intelligence

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