

LETTER NO 7

(Ma's letter in Bhaji's handwriting)

*Dehradun
12.10.*

Kalyaniashu (a term of endearment made to a junior deserving affection),

I have received your letter of Monday and heard it well on Thursday.

During your student life, although you were seeing everything of the world around you all 24 hours, the thought of your studies was always in your mind, likewise presently along with your thoughts and actions always try to remember Him. May whatever comes call Him with single mindedness; with constant calling all the weakness will go away and energy will be awakened. May good things happen to you.

Well wisher,

Ma

The analysis:

Initially a seeker finds that the mind wanders more when he sits for his practice. During practice he tries to cut himself off from the world around. The sense organs have less feedback from external objects. But the receptive capability of the organs remains. Then they start perceiving impressions from within i.e. from the vast reserve gathered so far and stored as memories. A similar thing happens in the dream state also. Though for a normal person in the waking state all the sense organs are active and receptive simultaneously, their feedback to the mind is not simultaneous. Even two objects through the same sense organ cannot be accommodated in the mind at the same time. But the time sequence is so infinitesimally small that the occurrence seems simultaneous. The recognition of any object by a particular sense organ at a specific instant is the result of a chain of processes. For instance, (grossly speaking of course) when light rays from an object pass through the eye lens they form an inverted image on the retina. This triggers a light-sensitive chain of biochemical reactions from which energy is released. This energy is transformed into electro-magnetic wave-signals/ special wave-signals which propagate through the neurones to the brain centre controlling visual perception. This centre, acting more efficiently than a super computer, starts searching those similar impressions (by name and form) previously stored in the memory. When the immediate and the previous impressions tally with each other our objective

consciousness recognizes the object by name and form. The deeper/more prominent/clearer the past impression, the quicker the recognition. This is another name for right mindfulness. With constant practice this right mindfulness is habitual and it becomes effortless awareness. One can say, effortless awareness is another term for focusing the intelligence. A student is constantly being given training to shape his intelligence to excel in his studies right from the beginning of life. Right mindfulness is the only key to success in all walks of life. In the spiritual domain the objective of all practices in all the religions of the world is to establish oneself in right mindfulness.

BG might have expressed difficulty in concentrating her mind in her spiritual practice. She was an outstanding student throughout her studies. She came first in her Masters Degree Examination in Ancient History in the University of Calcutta, maybe without being aware of the key to her success. Ma pointed it out and asked her apply the same in her spiritual practice also. The mind cannot stay vacant except in a coma or deep sleep. Its wandering to various objects is quite natural. To tame it the mind should deliberately be brought back again and again to the object of meditation whenever one is aware of such distraction. In Astanga Yoga this practice is termed as **Pratyahara**. Ma pointed out that BG had gone through this practice without noticing it during her formal study-life. In the spiritual domain the goal had only to be switched from her studies to Him (as Ma said), the name and form of God that BG loved. She was asked not to mind the unwarranted disturbances that may come, but to be mindful of God only. The roots of the disturbances that occur during practice are mainly of two types. One is sanskars or inherited genotype, and the other is from the impressions of phenomena gathered during one's life time. It has to be remembered that impressions of the world, genotypic or phenotypic, remain very much active all the time and surface sporadically on the canvas of empirical consciousness at random, irrespective of time and place. At times one is astonished and frustrated to discover that he has such sanskars, irrespective of previous experiences so far in this life. He feels mentally sapped, and sometimes the effect is so drastic as to weaken him both physically and mentally. The way to recover, according to Ma, is the constant remembrance of God.

To encourage BG Ma ended the letter with words of benediction, sounding like prophecy; such words were unheard of from Ma during her later years.

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