



MĀTRIVĀNI

Translated by ĀTMĀNANDA Compiled by SISTER UMĀ

MĀTRIVĀNI

From the Wisdom
of
SRI ĀNANDAMAYI MĀ

VOLUME II

Translated by ĀTMĀNANDA
Compiled by SISTER UMA

With a Foreword
by
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PREFACE

This new volume of *Mātri Vāni*, like the first, is composed of letters dictated in Bengali by Sri Ānandamayī Ma in response to devotees' requests for personal advice and guidance, previously published in our quarterly, *Ānanda Vārtā*. The first compilation of *Mātri Vāni* appeared in 1959 and an enlarged edition in 1963. It is now in its fourth edition. This second volume represents a much more comprehensive selection of Sri Ma's practical teaching and throws light on several subjects not touched upon in the first volume. A few of the pieces in the last chapter as well as one or two in the other chapters are not from letters but rather from Ma's conversation, noted down and also first published in *Ānanda Vārtā*.

FOREWORD

The second volume of *Mātri Vāni*, containing additional selections from the sayings of Mother, provides us with another spiritual treasure. Her message is both timeless and timely, for a world filled with tensions and confusion needs to be constantly reminded that all our sufferings and tribulations can be traced to one primary cause: alienation from God, the source of our being. Mother aptly points out that all those who are steeped in worldliness are the actual renunciates, foregoing the bliss of God realization for the sake of paltry, ephemeral material pleasures. Again and again She reminds us that we who are blessed with the possession of a human body have to live in accordance with our exalted destiny, concentrating all our efforts on the only worthwhile goal, realization of our immortal nature. While in the ultimate sense time is a delusion, for all practical purposes time is a most valuable commodity which must not be squandered. Consequently it

behoves us ceaselessly to invoke the divine name. This is the way to cope with whatever problems confront us and to remove bad karma. Utilizing any and all devices that will remind us of the divine presence, we shall assuredly overcome *māyā*. While Mother acknowledges that normally *māyā* holds mankind in a vicelike grip, She makes it clear that *māyā* itself contains the key to our liberation, for "where there is a veil of ignorance, there is also a door to Knowledge". It is by suffering that suffering is overcome, because without suffering few would see the need for self-purification which leads to the unfoldment of our immortal Self. The pilgrimage to immortality may appear arduous and unattractive at first, but it has to be undertaken, for it will lead us to our true home from which we have been absent too long, exposing us to the dualities of worldly life and the cycle of birth and rebirth. Endurance and courage are essential requirements on the spiritual path. God realization is not bestowed upon cowards. Just as did Arjuna, each one of us has to act heroically, slaying our

weaknesses. There is no escape from the battlefield of life, since any attempt to evade our duty will only prolong the ordeal, keeping us in bodily captivity. Instead we must confidently engage in battle, wielding the unfailing weapon of *japa*. God will not withhold the price of victory, blissful immortality, which is none other than our own true nature.

Mother's advice is meant for renunciates and householders alike, for She advocates regarding all our duties as service to God who is immanent in all beings and conditions. Actually, we are all ashramites, since where is there a boundary, an area where God is not? All distinctions are part of our limited consciousness. In truth, mine and thine do not exist. Mother is never apart from us. It is to this level of realization that She urges us to advance. There, where only One is, all suffering ceases. And it is from the realization of Oneness that Mother addresses us. Thus Her sayings originate from a level beyond time, space and causality. Consequently, any analysis of Her personality or Her motives

from a dualistic level of consciousness is futile. As an unruffled lake at night clearly and accurately reflects the moon shining upon it, likewise Mother mirrors our own state of consciousness. Our vision of Her and our interpretation of Her advice constitute a reflection of our spiritual understanding. Ultimately, we must attain that level where we realize that She and we are One. May many a reader of this precious book be blessed with that attainment.

Alexander Lipski

19 October, 1976.

NOTES ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF TRANSLITERATED SANSKRIT WORDS

Vowels

a has the sound of u in much,
ā has the sound of a in path,
e has the sound of a ai in maid,
i has the sound of a in bid,
ī has the sound of a ee in deep,
o has the sound of oa in road,
u has the sound of a in put,
ū has the sound of a in mood,
au has the sound of a ou in loud,
ṛ is 'ri' as in rid.

Consonants

t, th, d, dh, n are dentals. They are pronounced by touching the teeth with the tongue (as in French and German).

ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ are cerebrals and require the tongue to be placed against the roof of the mouth (as in English), ṇ being a nasal sound.

th to be pronounced as two distinct sounds, as in 'rat-hole', dh as in 'mad-house'.

m̃ nazalizes the preceding vowel;

ñ corresponds to the initial sounds in ‘new’;

c corresponds to the English ‘ch’ as in ‘church’;

ś represents a sharp forcefully pronounced ‘sh’;

ş represents a soft cerebral ‘sh’;

s as in cross.

The accent of the words generally lies on the long vowels.

MĀTRI VĀNI

PART I

DHARMA

1

This body* always says and will continue to say that it is man's bounden duty as a human being to find God, to know Himself. The search after Truth is man's only expedient for attaining supreme peace. Mataji also says all creatures of this world and beyond are without exception the Self (*Ātmā*) of this body. The quest for immortality by becoming a pilgrim on the path of immortality is incumbent on man.

*Mataji often refers to Herself in this manner also as 'this little child', 'this small baby', etc. or simply, 'here'.

2

The path that leads to the realization of one's Self and cannot be relinquished — this is dharma. For every individual the road to illumination is different. Wherever you may be, from there itself start advancing. For there is only He and no other. He Himself is holding you. He never, never forsakes you. Then again, the practice (*kriyā*) that aims at God-realization is called dharma. Nonpractice — distraction from the remembrance of God or Truth, this is adharma. There is but one dharma.

3

At every moment and in the very circumstances in which you are placed, try to the limit of your capacity to sustain the remembrance of God, to pray for His mercy, to keep your mind absorbed in Him. Truly, truly, those whose aim is God-realization have started on their pilgrimage. Spiritual exercises must be done as regularly as possible.

4

At all times to be vowed to the search after Truth and consequently to be completely truthful in every respect is man's duty. God's grace streams forth at all times.

5

One should never tell a lie. God is Truth. By speaking the truth under all circumstances a state of integrity comes about naturally. No untruth should ever come from one's lips. If truth is the fulcrum of one's life all virtues will develop spontaneously.

6

The search after Truth is the one thing by which the shape of human life should be determined. Genuine desire itself opens the road to fulfilment.

7

Of all creatures the human being alone has the capacity to create an atmosphere, an environment that is conducive to the revelation of Truth. With this faith one should endeavour to adhere steadily and without wavering to the

practices meant to awaken one's true nature.

8

Keep your mind ever surrendered at the Guru's lotus feet. The quest after Truth and to be truthful is man's duty. Do your utmost to remain anchored in truth and spend much time in the contemplation of the Lord in a quiet secluded place.

9

Human beings have to be dwellers of the inner cave so that the Supreme Being who resides within may be revealed.

10

A man can be recognized as a human being by his worthy character. A human being is in fact a traveller towards the realization of the superman. Each one should advance with his gaze fixed in this direction. A spiritual atmosphere and satsang will be helpful in this pursuit.

11

To have obtained human life is extreme good luck. It is God who creates, preserves and again absorbs into Himself. The desire to attain to the realization of this must awaken in man. Therefore, it is man's duty to be constantly engaged in *japa*, meditation, the remembrance of God, worship, the perusal of scriptures, prayer, singing the Lord's praises, attending religious gatherings or doing service — in other words, to be pledged to practices and activities that will help to make his pilgrimage through life successful.

12

Man must aim at the superman, at real greatness. The traveller on the supreme path may hope to attain to the ultimate Goal. This is man's main duty.

13

Every living being by its very nature longs for happiness. Only because this happiness lies hidden within him is he able to long for it. If it were not already there he would not desire it. Yet it is a fact that he cannot help desiring it. A deep yearning for peace and happiness can be observed in every living being without exception. Even insignificant creatures such as insects, spiders and the like try to avoid pain. They are after well-being, safety and peace. Animals, when exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, seek shade and cold water. Similarly, when man is afflicted by all kinds of suffering, he goes out in search of God, the haven of peace, the fountain of bliss. In order to be rescued from the threefold suffering of the world one has to take recourse to another type of suffering. By pain, pain has to be conquered. This is called *tapasyā*. To be able to bear hardships and troubles is called *tapasyā* by this body. Just as the suffering of the world is irksome, so in the beginning one finds it difficult to

concentrate on God's Name. But, although it may seem arduous, by this very exertion one will be liberated from all suffering. Thus, what is wanted is effort, sustained practice, action.

Among animals and birds there is no desire to be liberated from suffering and to find the Supreme Being who is eternal bliss, eternal beauty. This aspiration is reserved exclusively for human beings. Although God has enveloped man by the veil of ignorance, He has also provided for him a door to Knowledge. By passing through that door man can attain to liberation. This is why he must be determined to realize the Supreme, to find God, to transcend ignorance as well as knowledge. So long as there are the opposites of knowledge and ignorance, in other words distinction and the idea of difference, the Brahman cannot be realized. By merging in the Brahman, all differences dissolve into It and one is forever established in one's true being.

14

Having obtained the great boon of human birth, do not waste a single moment. Plants, trees, animals and birds also live for some time and after generating other plants, trees, animals and birds of their own species, pass away. If you too live in a similar manner, what difference is there between them and yourself? Everyone should make a strenuous effort not to leave this world with a 'return ticket'.

15

The endeavour to keep the mind constantly engaged in the contemplation of That is man's duty as a human being. Do not escape by saying, "I cannot". You will have to develop the capacity for it; you will have to do it. For a human being everything is possible. By God's grace you have been born in a human body as a Brahmin. If someone is knocked down, he surely does not remain lying on the ground. He rises, stands up and walks on again. The speed of one's advance must become swift. For those who are pilgrims it is necessary to forge ahead with great vitality, vigour, vivacity and velocity. Do not proceed leisurely sitting comfortably in a hackney carriage.

16

Everyone without exception will have to put in strenuous effort. Men and women are equally endowed with the capacity to realize God. It is the duty of a human being to make human birth, which is such a rare boon, successful. Otherwise he has to continue in the round of births and deaths.

17

Due to the non-observance of the one *brahmacārya āśrama* the rules of all the other *āśramas* cannot be kept as they should be: just as without a solid foundation a house cannot be built. *Āśrama* signifies absence of strain and toil (*śrama*); and with the sole exception of God everything is conducive to strain

and toil. Consequently how can there be rest and ease (*viśrāma*)? If while living in the *grihasthāśrama* one is serving the Supreme in everyone, this is real and true *āśrama* life. Serve the Supreme Lord in your husband; serve the child Kṛṣṇa in your son; serve your wife as a ray of Mahamāyā. It is you people who say: “Wherever a man is there is Śiva and wherever a woman, there is Gouri.”

Do not attempt to be a ruler in this world; remain a server. The very fact of being a ruler creates complications; while if you can become a server, there will be no more trouble. In this manner family life becomes consecrated life. “I am but His server, acting purely according to His Will.” If this attitude of mind can be sustained at all times, then even while living in the householder’s *āśrama* no new ties will be formed. Your *prārabdha* will work itself out, that is all. If you can constantly live your family life in this spirit, what have you to fear? **He Himself will put everything right.**

18

Worldly happiness alternating with periodical troubles that cause much sorrow are characteristic of the householder’s life at every step. With great patience endeavour to do your duty to the best of your ability. Always pray for God’s grace.

19

You will have to turn your mind to dharma, for dharma is the life of your life, the Self (*Ātmā*), established in eternal Truth. Who is that Self? You must certainly get to know this. For how much longer will you reside in inns and journey on the road that leads astray and is beset with dangers and adversity? It is imperative to find one’s own path, to start out on the pilgrimage to one’s Self — to renounce the merely pleasurable and adopt what is for one’s highest good.

20

Those who have adopted the *āśrama* of the householder should be model householders and live according to the precepts of dharma. Endeavour to know your Self.

21

What this body always says is: Become a pilgrim on the path of immortality. Shun the road that leads to death; tread the path of immortality. Bring to light that you are imperishable, immortal.

22

Become drinkers of nectar, all of you — drinkers of the wine of immortality. Tread the path of immortality, where no death exists and no disease.

23

To be born as a human being is a rare boon. If in spite of having obtained

this great opportunity one does not give time to the contemplation of the Beloved, one will have to ask oneself: “What have I been doing”? **To neglect the contemplation of Reality means to take the road of death.**

24

To remember that God is in all action, in form as well as without form and to pray for His grace is man’s bounden duty as a human being. In order that Truth may be revealed concentrate on the practice that brings about inner awakening.

25

The remembrance of God must be with a human being day and night so that he may be cleansed from his shortcomings and errors.

26

Man is born in order to experience the happiness and sorrow of this world. Those who have the good sense of wanting to go beyond happiness and pain must take their sole refuge in Him.

27

Man experiences happiness and sorrow as a result of his past actions. He enjoys and suffers — and again new karma is created. In order to be liberated from all this, one must sustain the remembrance of That. Endeavour to keep your mind ever immersed in *japa*, *dhyāna*, the thought of God — this leads to peace.

28

Man is born in order to complete his karma; he is also born to complete the cycle of birth and rebirth. The man of supernormal power, that is to say in whom divine power is functioning, can also himself change his karma.

29

Prārabdha karma exists. But there is also a state of achievement which is beyond *prārabdha*, where the question of capacity (*adhikāra*) and incapacity does not occur. When the flood comes it washes away everything.

30

According to one’s actions the fruit is reaped. Nevertheless, by the contemplation of the Supreme Being, fear withdraws. Whether in the company of saints and seekers after Truth or in solitude, in whatever way it may be, you will have to invoke Him; otherwise freedom from the veil of ignorance cannot be won. Is it possible ever to bribe God? By cheating, you yourself alone will be cheated.

31

Truly, man is born in order to enjoy and suffer according to his destiny.

So long as you have not risen beyond fate how can you possibly avoid submitting to God's law? What you experience is precisely the result of your own actions. You have not got the capacity to judge whether the Almighty can overstep His own law or not. In God's kingdom everything is possible. He is omnipotent. It is none of your business to question what He does for anyone. Why should He always do what pleases you? He is the Lord. What He does — whatsoever — is all for your real good: this is the attitude to be taken.

32

Only by taking refuge in Him can sorrow be removed. The troubles and difficulties one encounters as the fruit of one's own actions are but the grace of God. If one can accept them as such, one will progress towards one's real welfare.

33

God apportions man's lot; He is not only the maker of fate, He Himself is also fate — remember this. What is called destiny is His decree — here rules and regulations do exist. World (*jagat*) means that which moves, and individual (*jiva*) that which is in bondage. In this state fate and restraint, rules and regulations, activity, are in force. As ordained by the Great Mother, whatever be the result of any action, that She will bestow without fail.

34

When living and moving along the line of worldly attachment (*moha*), one's bondage in this sphere increases continuously. Whereas, when living and moving along the line of divine aspiration — even though all kinds of pain and trouble may at times arise as a result of one's past actions — yet, by being constantly tied to the string of spiritual exercises performed in the awareness of *Bhagavān*'s holy presence, the pilgrim will, by virtue of his association with the Divine, be led towards the supreme path.

35

Pray for God's mercy. Under no circumstances must you allow yourself to be knocked down. It is God's law to end suffering by suffering. Your present condition is His gift of the results of your past actions. Bear in mind that it is because God will take you unto Himself that He is purifying and cleansing you.

36

Just as the mother cow cleans her little calf by licking up and absorbing into herself all the dirt, even so God draws into Himself all the sins and shortcomings of His children and purifies them. Regarding everyone as a manifestation of the One, do selfless service.

37

What *Bhagavān* does — everything whatsoever — is for the best. Just as a

physician cuts an abscess and removes the putrid matter, thereby freeing the patient from disease, even so by giving you sorrow God cleanses and purifies you and then takes you into His arms. He delivers man from all sins and blemishes saying, “Offer all your impurity and depravity to Me and in return receive the ambrosia of immortality.” He makes the devotee suffer pain and trouble in order to increase his eagerness, his yearning for the Real. God accepts as worship the agony, the flood of tears of the distressed.

38

Whatever God does is for the ultimate good. This is indeed difficult to understand for man and so he suffers when his desires remain unfulfilled. If one has faith in *Bhagavān* it is surely fitting to believe that He does what is for the best. This world has been created by a mere stroke of God’s imagination. He ceaselessly does and will ever do what is for the real well-being of the universe which He Himself has brought into existence. All human beings are scions of the Immortal. Consequently it is man’s calling to set out on the journey towards immortality. God arranges for everybody’s real welfare. Nevertheless, when a worldly-minded person’s cherished desire has been thwarted there is pain, grievance, affliction. Quite often even some religious work prompted by the best intentions meets with obstructions and difficulties. All the same keep in mind: “I cannot possibly know by what device God is drawing me to Himself. He, the fountain of grace and compassion is at all times lavishing His mercy on me.” Calm your mind by the repetition of His Name, by the contemplation of Him. Address all your appeals and petitions to Him; pray to Him.

39

There are many actions as the result of which one goes through great suffering after death — not to salvation. From darkness one has to proceed to even deeper darkness. Why this should be so cannot be explained. It is His inscrutable dispensation. As one sows so one reaps.

40

On being asked if by committing suicide one could be united with a person who is dead, Mataji replied:

Never. One who commits suicide enters a very deep darkness from which it is most difficult to be released unless someone who wields great power takes pity and liberates him from it. In that condition of dense darkness one cannot meet anyone. Suicide is a most heinous sin. Man is born in order to reap the consequences of his actions of former births. To try and escape from this by suicide is extremely foolish; it only prolongs the agony indefinitely. No one who is in his senses can possibly take his life; at the moment of doing so a person is invariably disturbed in his reason. Suicide does not solve anything; on the contrary, it creates endless complications and prevents one from paying off one’s karmic debts

God is everywhere, He pervades everything. He, whom you think you have sought in vain for so many years, is not apart from you. **Just as a man cannot be without bones, blood, flesh and skin, so the One is present everywhere, at all times, interwoven with everything that exists.**

A man who has gone forth in search of God — God will never give him back again. God is one's very own Self, the breath of one's breath, the life of one's life, the *Ātmā*. Not until his true Self has been revealed to him may a seeker ever relax his search. By seeking one will find; the Self is within one's own grasp. To feel fatigued, exhausted, because one has not found Him is a very good sign indeed. It indicates that one is nearing the purification of one's heart and mind.

But what is this? What is this that you say? You wonder whether as the result of searching for God one will be led to suicide? By the search for Him whose contemplation, whose Name conquer death! To indulge in desire for sense objects, this is indeed what must be called suicide; and he who thinks of committing suicide is at that moment mad. Never allow the mind to dwell on the idea of suicide; it is a sin to do so. For one who has sought God for thirty-five years it is not right to contemplate suicide or madness. His mind should rather be absorbed in the remembrance of God.

In God's creation the possible becomes impossible and the impossible possible at all times. In order that this fact may become evident, one must ever remember to sustain the thought of That which is Real. Verily, this small child* is always with you.

Write to him that for the present it is imperative for him to remain concentrated with single-mindedness on the one Goal. He should stay in solitude and endeavour with the help of *japa* and *dhyāna* to control his mind and thereby become firm, calm and unwavering in his determination.

*Mataji

If someone really and truly seeks God, he will certainly find Him. You say you have sought for thirty-seven years. Does He always reveal Himself within a specified number of days, months or years? He is eternal, ever present, everywhere, in everything — He alone Is. The first step on the path to this realization — be it induced by something read in a book or by direct word of mouth and accepted — the first step is the manifestation of unbroken endurance and never ending patience. My father, who is also a small child, it is only natural that fatigue and despair should overwhelm you, for this road is extremely difficult. So long as one's feet have not been set on a smooth and simple path, the condition in which you find yourself at present is natural; this is

also a state that may occur on the path. This small baby says, do not long for death while you are travelling on the path to conquer death. You are out to find immortality and yet awaiting death? Of course, to look forward to the death of death is very good. One, who goes out in search of Truth, for the realization of Truth, must walk with firmness, wide awake and full of vigour.

Yes, it is true; this little baby can send you only a few words. But through these words can be found the way to the realization of *Sabda Brahman*, *Akṣara Brahman* — provided someone is actually a traveller on the path. Pilgrims on the path of the Supreme must endeavour to be receptive. Only that which is all the time falling away has to be relinquished. To the limit of your power try not to give way to despair and to remain at every moment an aspirant towards Self-realization. The duty of a pilgrim is to aspire constantly at Him who is beyond everything, who is at the same time in all forms, qualities, moods and modes of being, and yet eternally beyond, who is all in all, the SELF of the Self. When the desire that lies at the root of all yogic practice becomes self-revealed, then He is found.

43

In this world of birth and death the pain of separation is unavoidable. Bear it, taking refuge in patience and obey the directions of your parents as much as you can. At all times keep your mind immersed in the thought of the Lord so that there may be no possibility of straying into a path that leads to misery.

44

What is to be done, Mother? He lent to you for a time what is His own so that you might serve Him in this manner; and He also stayed with you for a while accepting your ministrations. Then He Himself took His own back again. If tears come to your eyes, cry for God — for the Beloved. To weep for one who has left this world sometimes harms that person. One hears of many incidents of this kind. Therefore, it is the duty of the bereaved to remain calm and collected and pray for the spiritual welfare of the deceased. It is He who gives and He who again takes away. Thus, what can man do about it?

45

On the journey through life it is natural that everyone should be subjected to heartrending pain. Everything proceeds by the dispensation of Providence. Taking recourse to endurance and patience try to do your duty with calm and steadiness, with a God-centered attitude of mind, (*sat-pariveśa*). Unless he takes the path to the Supreme, man cannot find peace. Therefore the remembrance of God must be sustained under all conditions and circumstances.

46

In *Bhagavān*'s empire in this world there is creation, preservation and

dissolution — continuous coming and going, age after age. When subjected to the agonizing grief of the departure of a loved-one there is no way except to resort to fortitude and patience. It is His dispensation. Pray for the salvation of your dear one. Being plunged into that ocean of sorrow you will have to cross over it. Try to engage in the reading of sacred books, in *japa* and meditation even if you are not in a mood for it. Do not make your loved-one miserable by your tears and your longing for him. Taking refuge in God is the one and only road to peace. In this material world keep up the remembrance of the One even if there is no desire for it. Those who have been taken away are indeed in Him.

47

The lute of man's short life is strung with so many strings. They have to be cut asunder. There is no substance to these many strings. It is futile to let one's thoughts be occupied with the ties by which one is bound. Why behave like a fool and return again and again to this world of illusion? When someone understands deep down in his innermost heart that nobody is anybody's own, why then should he bear so much pain and suffering? Of course, being under the spell of delusion it is not always possible to attain to real, deep understanding. But in some cases even bitter medicines or injections administered forcibly restore people to health.

48

Bereavement and suffering, pleasure and pain are generated by delusion (*moha*); whereas man's journey through life must be directed towards the Supreme Being. When He is found all is found — contentment, peace, bliss. Evil-mindedness is due to the notion that God is far away. So long as you do not see Him in everything, make a supreme effort to be vowed to the uninterrupted thought of Him. **He is present in all practices and actions; He Himself manifests as action — try to remain ever aware of this!** Brooding over grief, which is but the result of delusion, makes it spread and increase like a creeper — bear this in mind!

49

Such terrible calamities on all sides bring forth the black cloud of despair and darkness. It is natural that your mind should be terror-stricken and harassed by all kinds of worries. What is to be done? The only refuge of the helpless is *Bhagavān*. Do not allow yourself to be broken. The very ground to which one has fallen, receiving a blow, has to be used as a lever in the effort to rise up again. This is God's law. He, whose tool you are, His indeed is everything. He Is. You are in the arms of the Great Mother. As She keeps you, so you have to live. Keep mind and body healthy. Rather than allowing yourself unresistingly to be consumed by the fire of worry and anxiety, ever try to keep awake the conviction that everything happens according to His Will. Truly, the contemplation of Reality is the path.

50

About health and ill-health this body does not say anything. The real, supreme and universal remedy for all ills is to abide in the constant remembrance of God. Put your whole trust in Him.

51

He should keep his mind free from cares and worries and be ever full of inner joy — this is the important thing! He should invoke God with his mind and heart and voice in whatever way and by whatever words that come to him easily. Why only mornings and evenings? At every moment! For this is indeed the unfailing panacea for every kind of trouble. He is the Supreme Father, Mother, Friend, Beloved, all in one. All names and forms as well as the nameless and the formless are His. Therefore, one should make use of any expedient or device that may aid one to sustain at all times in one's heart and mind the remembrance of Him and thereby to find peace.

52

Father! How much more do you want of earthly pleasure? Once you have a taste of *that* delight, you will have no more desire for worldly enjoyment. This is the actual truth. By cultivating the company of saints, sages and seekers after Truth, by attending religious gatherings, by studying books of wisdom and by similar devices, one develops a bent in that direction. Nothing will have to be given up. Only try to cling to Him desperately. What has to be relinquished will fall away of itself.

53

When one sees a stone, it cannot be called a *vigraha*; and seeing a *vigraha* it cannot be called a stone. Where it is regarded as a focus for the presence of God, there He actually is. Just as it is said that everything is God's own *vigraha*. Once it is regarded as His *vigraha* it is only fitting that one should strive after the direct perception of this fact. Stone-mindedness is foolishness — the fact of God's immanence has not yet been grasped. The delight in the things of this world, in sense objects, is fleeting indeed. It does not last; it is impermanent. But where God and God alone stands revealed, there is no such thing as impermanence. Your attention is directed towards the world, not towards the Eternal; you are identified with that which is transient, in constant flux. What is revealed thereby? The perishable. In the perishable there is no Self-revelation. How can Reality, true Being, be in that? For the destruction of destruction has not yet come about. The perishable must perish.

54

When the heart is full of worldly desires, it is their very nature to make the mind confused. This is why effort is necessary. So long as you do not become absorbed in *dhyāna* and *japa*, it has to be performed by constant

endeavour. To be moderate in eating, sleeping and so forth is imperative. Look, when you go on a journey you take with you only as much as you need. You don't carry along all that is in your home. Thus, when becoming a pilgrim on the path to the Supreme, you should take only exactly as much food and sleep as will help you to live always in the presence of Him. There is a saying: "As one eats so the mind becomes." Thus, withdraw the mind from outer things and make it turn within.

55

For long enough have you given your thought to worldly matters; now turn your mind towards the Eternal. Look, gradually the path will become clear to you and the thought of worldly things leave you as well. It is fated to disappear. The veil of ignorance will also wear out slowly. The One who Is, is eternal: what is fleeting must needs be destroyed.

56

Such is the pilgrimage through life! Whatever task comes to you in this world, in whatever manner, regard it as your duty and carry it out faultlessly to the best of your ability. To manifest power spontaneously through divine contemplation, through God's Name — is His very nature. In all conditions of life one should be engaged as much as ever possible in *japa*, *dhyāna* and similar practices.

57

Like a hero, taking refuge in patience, attend to your duties. Don't fall a prey to despair; don't be broken. One must remember that just as good times do not continue forever, so *Bhagavān* can also put an end to bad times. Repeating God's Name mentally, carry out whatever happens to be your duty.

58

Write to him to make his mind sound and vigorous as that of a wise and brave man. To allow the mind to be in this unhealthy state will not do. What is there to be afraid of? Ever remember: God Is. May His Will be done! He is everyone's very own and has a full claim on His offspring, to direct them according to His free and absolute Will. Everything He does is all-beneficent.

59

God is merciful. He has saved your life. Under all circumstances there must be the remembrance of Him. Anchored in patience pass through this difficult time. So often many receive blows that attack their wealth, position and life. If one's life has been saved, there is hope of everything else. Accept what has happened as the Will of the Almighty.

60

In wealth and property there is certainly no peace. What then does give

peace? My own true nature is peace, knowledge, divine consciousness — unless and until this is realized, how can there be peace? In order to find your Self you must become revealed to yourself. How beautiful!

61

Solely by turning to God is there any hope for man to gain peace. The world is as you have just experienced; it is futile to look for peace there. When one lacks sincerity and straightness of character and is, moreover, unable to grasp properly the purport of dharma, this kind of disturbed state of mind, where one finds it impossible to elevate oneself by any means or device, may occur quite frequently. It is imperative to depend on God no matter what one's condition may be. Pray to Him.

62

Although lacking nothing that the world can provide, is there peace? Your true being is knowledge, Peace; so long as you do not realize this there can be no peace. It is the nature of the world to keep the sense of want burning. From the world you receive the things of the world — never supreme peace. Therefore, the awakening of your true nature is imperative. You cannot remain in the realm of want.

63

Is peace possible in the domain of want? Ever new desires will arise. Sense objects only generate poison* but never give real peace. Caught in the round of coming and going, can one be at peace? As long as there are two, there will be sorrow. Duality breeds conflict, pain. Sorrow arises from want. So long as you are not established in your true Being you cannot possibly be at peace.

* A play on words: *Viṣaya* sense object; *viṣ hai*, is poison.

64

Even right in the midst of troubles and vexations one has to rely on God, practise *japa* and meditation and aspire to grow spiritually. By enjoying the pleasures and comforts of material life nobody ever attains to the realization of God.

Cultivate the remembrance of Him, who when you contemplate Him, when you enthrone His form in your heart, will give you peace. So long as He does not reveal Himself in a way that will dissolve all obstacles and obstructions, strive to live ever in His presence.

65

Apart from seeking refuge in the contemplation of the Eternal, there is no way of becoming liberated from worldly anxiety and annoyance. Engage in whatever practice that helps to keep the mind centered in Him who is manifest as creation, preservation and dissolution. To regret one's bad luck only troubles

the mind and ruins the body; it has no other effect — remember this! He by whose law everything has been wrought, He alone should be reflected upon.

66

Do you know why anxiety arises? Solely because God is thought to be far away. Evil-mindedness (*durbuddhi*) also has the same cause. To remove God into the far distance is called unrighteousness; that is to say, the idea that He is far away is itself unrighteous.

67

Forgetting that God is the one Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) men give their love to sense objects. To love anything that is not God means to divide one's devotion between two (*do-Iṣṭa*) and this makes one wicked (*duṣṭa*).

68

Earthly love causes intense suffering and does not last. Whereas the love of God gives extremely great happiness.

69

Everyone must strive after the revelation of Eternal Truth. Endeavour to go to your own Home. To live in another's house, in the company of another, causes conflict and suffering; that is to say, where two are there is blindness, darkness — darkness signifies ignorance.

70

One must endeavour to remain constantly engaged in the contemplation of That. All other thought engenders anxiety. He is holding your hand, so why worry? Do not allow your mind to be overwhelmed; be ever steeped solely in the contemplation of the Supreme.

71

Happiness that depends on anything or anyone turns into sorrow when that particular thing or person is out of reach. Everything in this world is transitory. So also worldly happiness: it comes and the next moment it is gone. If permanent, abiding happiness is to be found, That which is eternal will have to be realized.

72

In this world, every single person is crazy after something or other — some more and some less. What a comedy *Bhagavān's* play is! What a madhouse He has created! He Himself sporting with Himself.

73

Infatuation (*moha*) causes entanglement while the love of God (*prema*) leads to Self-revelation. Having become ensnared by *moha*, weeping and regret are bound to follow.

74

In this world is there any expedient for man save to be anchored in fortitude and forbearance? Consoling himself out of his own resources let him remain unperturbed. Everyone must try to fulfill his own duty in a spirit of dedication to the Divine (*satanusthāna*). A human being should live in the contemplation of the Eternal.

75

God keeps milk ready in the mother's breast before the baby is born; in Him put your whole trust; seek refuge in Him alone.

76

So long as God has not been found, sorrow will not depart. If He is to be realized, one has to practise the repetition of His Name, His contemplation, His worship, singing His praises — no other path to man's supreme welfare exists. The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, religious gatherings and the study of scriptures are also helpful on this path. This body ever stresses one thing: Sense enjoyment is poison and gradually delivers one to death. Therefore, this body always emphasizes: Endeavour to be engrossed in Him as much as you possibly can.

77

While one is in the midst of *māyā* it is difficult to understand from where *māyā* arises. Aspire to the knowledge of Him. Truly, to know oneself means to know Him. Having found one's Self all questions and problems are solved. So long as one lives in *māyā* it is difficult to know what *māyā* is.

78

So much has already been accomplished by you in the world of action. Now, endeavour to give your mind exclusively to the Eternal. Do not waste invaluable time. Those who do not practise the contemplation of God, in other words do not advance towards Self-realization, are 'self-murderers'. Adopt the good, relinquish mere pleasure.

79

The day that is gone never returns: this is very true indeed. The individual and the world — to be an individual implies bondage, whereas the world is in continual motion. So long as consciousness is focused on the level of happiness and pain, light and darkness, the polarity between attainment and non-attainment is bound to persist. To be a human being means to be a seeker after Truth.

80

The day that is gone returns not. To be a human being means to be Self-aware. Do not squander invaluable time. Beware of becoming a 'self-murderer';

realize that you are none other than the immortal Self.

81

The moment that has passed does not come back. Time must be used well. Only when spent in the effort to know ‘who am I?’ has it been used well.

82

The One from whom originate the universe and everything that is beyond it, who is Himself in His creation, He is present also in this very form. One must be bent on the search after Truth so as to find peace. Make a supreme effort to remain steeped as much as possible in a divine atmosphere. Think of Him as embodied in every person so that the mind may be wedded exclusively to good and pure activities.

83

If one is to attain to the Immortal, it is helpful to look for That in everyone and everything. The search after Truth is man’s duty, so that he may advance towards immortality.

84

Wherever God may keep you at any time, from there itself must you undertake the pilgrimage to God-realization. In all forms, in action and non-action is He, the One Himself. While attending to your work with your hands, keep yourself bound to Him by sustaining *japa*, the constant remembrance of Him in your heart and mind. In God’s empire it is forgetfulness of Him that is detrimental. The way to peace lies in the remembrance of Him and of Him alone.

85

Everything is His doing. He alone Is; your sole duty is to remember this at all times. So long as the sense of ‘me’ and ‘mine’ remains, there is bound to be sorrow and want in the life of the individual.

86

Contemplation of the *Ātmā* takes one towards one’s ultimate Goal; while worldly actions only deform Reality.

87

Action directed towards God is alone action — all else is worthless, non-action, activity of the path of death. To become absorbed in *sva kriyā*, the action that ends in Self-revelation, is man’s duty as a human being.

88

The action that aims at the Divine (*Bhagavat-kriyā*) is alone real action, all the rest is activity belonging to the path of death. The contemplation of the Self takes one in the right direction. Worldly pursuits lead to His manifestation

as absence. Everything, with the sole exception of the thought of God (*Hari cintā*), is worthless — wrong action. Man's duty is to become steady in the practice that helps towards the revelation of his own true Being.

89

While performing action, sustain the attitude that He alone Is. He is the instrument as well as its wielder. As He causes the instrument to move, so it has to move.

90

“Lord, Thou Thyself art present in this way, as that particular activity”, view it in this light. See in every action an expression of That. Then all actions will help towards the revelation of Reality (*Svarūpa Prakāśa*). Do not think of them as separate one from the other — all are That. Who is the power of action (*kriyā śakti*)? Thou thyself. And who is Power as such (*Śakti*)? That Itself — the One.

91

In all forms and shapes and in the formless is only the Supreme Being — That alone, Service performed with the conviction that one is serving Him in everyone will purify the mind and lead to the highest good. Patience is the foundation on which spiritual endeavour is based. The pilgrim on the path of the Supreme must be intent on becoming endurance personified.

92

Only if there is a spirit of service can one remain engaged in the service of God. By pursuing delusion death is reaped. His law is truly wonderful.

93

Every individual is bent on fulfilling his life, but it is the will of the Almighty that prevails. Regard what you are doing as His service. Do not let the delusion of attachment overcome you. Everything is His gift and should be offered again to Him. He has already taken it, He ever takes and will continue to take it. As the Self (*Ātmā*) He is eternally present in all. Try to abide in calm and patience.

94

The endeavour to mould one's own desires so as to fall in with God's Will is man's duty. In the whole of your work depend entirely on Him. Skill in action — everything is He, His. In this spirit try to complete your task.

95

Only if there is a spirit of service can one serve the Lord. When the intelligence is clouded by delusion, death is the outcome. His law is very wise. Therefore I say, let everyone undertake the pilgrimage to the Highest — the pilgrimage by which all travelling comes to an end. Time must not be wasted in

idle pursuits. At every moment remain engaged in the meditation on your true Self. Do not allow your mind to dwell on the ephemeral. Because it is said that where Rāma is not, there is *be-arāma* (disease). Rāma means *Ātmārāma*, delight in the Self, repose in the Self, the essence of Peace, the essence of Knowledge, Self in its own nature.

96

The path which the Guru has pointed out, that path you must try to follow. Do not stay idle; make an effort to go forward. And if you like to work, do it in the spirit that everything is an expression of That. Service may be of the country, of one's wife as the presiding goddess of the home, of one's children as Gopāla and Kumāri, of one's husband as the Lord — for it is the one who appears in many guises. Do not pass your time merely with eating and sleeping. The invaluable boon of human birth must not be wasted in vain thought. Dwelling no longer in the traveller's inn (*dharamśālā*), make an attempt to go to your own real Home.

97

What you have to do, do it well and with all your might. By persisting you will gradually develop interest in it and come to love it.

98

Your whole life you have spent in acquiring knowledge from mercenary motives, and in similar pursuits. With all your strength you are serving worldly aims. Learn also to do a little service for the love of God so that your thought may dwell on His lotus feet.

99

Become a servant of the real Government. Worldly governments exist only because there is an inner Government. Just as one puts one's mind to the regular fulfilment of governmental duties, it is fitting to direct the current of one's thought also to that real Government. If family life is lived in a spirit of service, there is no occasion to form ties because one aims at Him alone. However, in order to abide by this attitude of service — just as a clock has to be wound once a day — one must try to wind the clock of the mind regularly every morning and evening; that is to say, sit still for some time in meditation or *japa*.

100

There also one obtains a pension. The pension you earn in this world lasts only as long as you live, but that pension never ends. By what grace of His such a pension is granted is impossible to tell. If anything is to be desired at all, one should desire this grace.

101

Even while living a family life you can with a calm spirit attend to

spiritual practices. Then only will that which is to be given up fall away. And that which can never be relinquished, which does not go, that indeed will remain.

102

When in one's heart of hearts one is seeking the Eternal although unconsciously, it is but natural that worldly life should seem savourless and that polite, sweet-sounding social conversation should jar upon one's ears. However, wait a little longer and see whether these feelings are permanent or only temporary. How can disbelief arise in one who has firm faith? The activities that invoke the presence of God such as *japa*, meditation, the reading and perusal of sacred texts will grow more and more attractive to you.

103

In order to go beyond belief and disbelief, believe in Him. Instead of doing so, you believe in all kinds of other things.

Just as there is a veil of ignorance, there is also a door to Knowledge.

104

Be it meditation (*dhyāna*) or the repetition of a mantra (*japa*) — engage in some practice of this kind. Try to keep your mind on God. **The impressions and dispositions developed in countless lives act as a cover of ignorance, veiling the true nature of things; endeavour to get rid of that screen.**

105

It is obvious that **doubt lies at the root of the desire to know**. If you had the firm conviction that God does everything, the desire to find out why things happen as they do would not arise in you.

106

In order to solve his queries and doubts, man must become engrossed in spiritual practice (*Bhagavat kriyā*).

107

There is only one book and everything is contained in it. Once it has been mastered nothing else remains to be studied. *Sāadhanā* has to be practised for the sole purpose of discovering one's own true Wealth (*svadhana*).

108

The Will of the Almighty is indeed everything. Becoming the allies of that great Will, all should strive for Self-realization, praying for God's grace.

109

Action is subject to one's own free will and yet again it is not. What does 'subject to one's own free will' signify? **His Will alone is Will.** The will by which you carry out your work, this very same will must be applied to the

contemplation of the One. Then only will you discover the great Will. What is needed is the supreme Will that takes you beyond willing and not willing.

110

Knowing that one is but an actor on the stage of the world, one lives happily. Those who mistake the pantomime for reality are of the world (*samsāri*) where there is constant change and reforming, ceaseless going and coming, the oscillation between happiness and sorrow. Those who are dressed up in various disguises, must not forget their real nature. Verily, you are the offspring of the Immortal. Your real being is truth, goodness, beauty (*Satyam, Śivam, Sundaram*).

111

Samsāra (the world) means the abode of uncertainty and doubt (*sangṣai*). The clown (*sang*) mistakes his role for the Real, yet is only dressed up for the play. This is why one speaks of ‘*sang-sāra*’.*

*A play upon words: *samsāra*, world; *sang*, clown; *sāra*, essence. Man thinks of himself as a separate individual (*jiva*); actually he is Śiva disguised as *jiva*. So long as he does not wake up to this fact the round of births and deaths (*samsāra*) continues for him. (*Samsāra* is ‘*sangsāra*’ in Bengali).

112

Man’s life must gravitate towards the realization of Truth. The Lord is Love (*premamay*); for the sake of this Supreme Refuge suitable practices and activities have to be adopted at all times.

113

The Supreme Power Itself is directly present in all sentient beings, in all religions and sects, in all forms under which It is worshipped. Cry out to It and to It alone. The Supreme Power, *Mahāmāyā*, cannot remain indifferent to the inconsolable weeping of Her offspring. Thus, the One who deals severe blows Herself again consoles by Her loving embrace.

114

The wise keep on declaring and the *śāstras* also say that if you are engrossed in the quest of the Supreme, it can never be that you will not find. Constant effort! So long as you have not reached, do not relax your efforts. Is not *Bhagavān*, who is Truth Itself, within you? Therefore do not abandon meditation, the contemplation of your Self. Being your very own, It is destined to be found by you. This is bliss and nothing but bliss. Where then are gloom and dejection? THAT alone Is.

115

To invoke Him does not go in vain. So long as you do not receive any response continue to call out to Him. Is it not your own Self to whom you are

appealing? And it is your own Self that you have to realize. By uninterrupted invocation He who is whole, who is undivided, is reached. It is your own Self (*Ātmā*), the heart of your heart, your dearly Beloved whom you are invoking, For how long have you not prayed for enjoyment and continued to experience it together with the suffering that follows without fail? The prayer to Him, by which the conflict between asking for renunciation or gratification is dissolved, that prayer must become dear to you.

116

Bhagavān, the all-pervading, in every form, in every sect and religion is He alone. To be eager to love God is very fortunate; it is in fact His grace. Man's love should be directed solely towards God, then only will there be peace and bliss. Ever take refuge at His feet. It is man's privilege to realize the One; the path to Truth is open to him.

117

It lies in God's very nature to keep the door to Himself ever open. If the amount of energy and time spent in worldly pursuits is given to the search for Him, the path of Self-knowledge will of a certainty open out of itself.

118

He who has created the universe is Himself present in all circumstances and conditions. The action is He, its effective cause is He, and the doer is also truly He. In order to realize this fact Yogis and Rṣis performed yoga and *tapasyā*. The One Himself appears as the Name, the mantra. His presence and the remembrance of Him must be sustained unceasingly.

119

One of God's Names is Love. He Himself resides within all, at every moment, everywhere. When man — true to his calling — aspires after the One with uninterrupted intensity, then only His presence manifests.

120

God is the breath of life, the heart of hearts, the Self. To find Him means to find one's Self. What is called the world is dragging man towards foolishness and misery — away from the Divine. Therefore, the only excellent path is the one that leads to Self-knowledge, Self-realization.

121

The One who has created this world is on every side. Rely on Him in all matters.

122

Light is gained by His grace alone. He is the One to be held in remembrance at all times. There is nothing else that you need feel concerned about, father. Contemplate only Him and Him alone.

123

God is complete. Thus, for full revelation one has to come to Him. Only because of the notion of God's absence is there sorrow in the world. Where God is revealed there are no 'two' — sorrow has no place.

124

How wonderful is the play of God's kingdom! The Self, the *Ātmā*, is of course one. Nevertheless, there is you, mine, yours and all the rest of it. If you cannot give up the 'yours and mine' then be the eternal servant of the Lord. How many lives have you not spent in the world, in family life, in the delusion of, 'this is mine and that is mine'? Say to yourself, 'I am immortal, the Self; there is only one Brahman without a second; I am His and His alone'. If the distinction between 'you' and 'me' remains, then let the 'you' be *Bhagavān*. What is in ice? Nothing but water. Thus, He is formless as well as with form. What is He with form? He Himself as action — actionless action. Attraction means to be attracted to one's own Self.

125

Where the *Ātmā* is, how can there be an ego? In the sphere of 'mine and yours', there only the ego exists. Renunciation and attraction dwell side by side. Change and immutability are both He Himself. Live for the revelation of the Self hidden within you. He who does not live thus is committing suicide. By the contemplation of God try to remove the veil of ignorance. Endeavour to tread the path of Immortality; become a follower of the Immortal.

126

Nobody can possibly be superior to God. Whatever is done, is done by Him alone. No one else has the power to do anything; you must bear this in mind. Depend upon Him. So long as you feel that someone may do something that would harm you, practise a little more often than you would do otherwise the repetition of the Name of your Beloved (*Iṣṭa*). To place your reliance on your *Iṣṭa* is the one thing to be done under all circumstances.

127

Man should address all his appeals and petitions to God and pray to Him regularly. The One who creates, preserves and destroys — in Him is everything indeed. If anything happens in one's worldly life that causes distress and anguish, one should endeavour to cleave to God's Name by all possible devices and cry at His feet. There can be peace only when God Himself, the fountain of peace, who is the end of everything, has been enthroned in one's heart.

128

God is supremely merciful and compassionate. Without cause or reason His compassion, His grace are pouring forth at every instant. Eager to receive

them, stretch out your hand, palm upwards. Shun the mentality of a businessman.

“I have done my best but without the desired result. I have reaped the fruit of my past actions. Lord, Thou hast given it to me. Thou art lavishing Thy grace on me”! If one lives in this spirit, there is hope of attaining to the ultimate Good.

129

Never attempt to do barter with God; do not foster the mentality of a merchant or trader; “For so many years have I practised meditation and yet attained nothing”! This is not the attitude to be taken. He is the breath of life, the Self of yourself. He is your very own.

130

You all have ever been good — not become good just newly. Unless there is inward goodness, it cannot materialize.

131

Just as a flower contains seeds that can be seen only when it opens, and in the seed again the tree is potentially present, so also He resides within you. By practising *sādhana* this may come to light. In other words, if the veil of ignorance can be destroyed, the One who is Self-effulgent will be realized. Just as the whole tree is potentially contained in the seed, in a similar manner He in His fullness is enthroned within you.

132

He from whom creation and preservation emerge, in His presence is all coming and going. Everything is within His dispensation, is indeed with Him. Thus, when by the remembrance of Him He is realized, everything is found — supreme peace and supreme bliss.

133

God is the fountain of goodness. By what device he draws anyone to Himself is incomprehensible to the ordinary person. Everything that He does, who is all-goodness, is for the best. Without the contemplation of Him there can never be happiness or peace. What the various frustrations in life lead to is also endless. If one allows oneself to remain tied up and entangled in their realm, it is but natural that one should reap restlessness, weariness and barrenness as the fruit of one’s life. Therefore, do not keep your thought on all this; rather let your mind soar to a high ideal, to your sublime Goal which is far beyond the ken of human understanding. Who can tell by what event or blow of fate His call comes? Do not be cowed down. You are real, pure, enlightened, free, eternal. In order to advance in that direction, it is your duty to gather your own strength and proceed with the momentum gained by a new attitude towards life. Truly,

God dwells within you also as knowledge and discrimination. Therefore, you must use this expedient on your pilgrimage towards the revelation of Truth. Time glides away. The Supreme Father, Mother, Friend, Beloved, Lord — all are He in one person. His lotus feet alone are worthy of contemplation.

134

The love of God is alone desirable for a human being. The One, whose offspring you are, who is your Mother, Father, Friend, Beloved, Lord, who has brought you forth, has nourished you with the nectar of mother's milk — by whatever Name you invoke Him — that Word you should keep in mind at all times.

135

God is the one and only friend of the pilgrim to the Ultimate. Act in this spirit so that you may come to accept Him as your all in all. **Unless one is single-minded there will be obstacles at every step.**

136

He who is the Supreme Friend never deceives. From the worldly point of view, a son may have to be disowned, but that Friend can never be given up.

137

Who is called a friend? He who makes you turn your mind towards the Beloved, he is your best friend. But a person who diverts your thoughts away from Him and tempts you to progress in the direction of death, he is an enemy, not a friend. Try to correct yourself. The man who makes no effort to improve himself is in fact committing suicide.

138

When touching your finger one has touched you although you are not the finger; by touching your dress one has contacted you though you are not the dress. Just as you are in the smallest part of yourself, so you are also in the whole of yourself. He is one and yet He is the many; and in spite of being the many He is one. Such is His *lilā*. He is as equally whole in a grain of sand as He is whole in man, and as He is whole in His totality — complete and perfect. Nevertheless, among all creatures, it is man's distinctive mark to be endowed with the special capacity or power to realize this perfection, this wholeness. This body calls a human being him who has discrimination, who is aware of this possibility. One who is not conscious of it but is engrossed in desires for sense objects, what is one to call him?

139

If you want to become a householder and take up family life, you will have to pass through all kinds of experiences. Let your mind be centred in God, then only is there a prospect of complete peace.

In order to acquire the only qualification that really matters one has to contemplate the Divine. Never cease to strive after the Knowledge that will free you from all ties and snares of this world as well as from the necessity to gain any other knowledge.

140

By one's own doing want is created and by one's own doing this want is again removed. You yourself have to actively aspire after Self-realization. Having chosen to feast upon the objects of the senses, you by your own volition thereby gradually move towards the realm of death. Become a taster of ambrosia, father; feast on the immortal! Tread the path of Immortality where no death, no disease exist.

141

You all are at present in a state of constant wanting. This has for the time being become your second nature. When you are hungry you are in need of food; having eaten you feel satisfied. Then again you want to sleep. After waking up you conceive the need to go out or to talk to someone. In this way you are always wanting something or other. This condition of ceaseless wanting has become your second nature. The ability to dwell in his true nature, in his Self, in his own state of Being is potentially inherent in man. The veil of ignorance is there, yet there is also a door to Knowledge. By passing through that door of Knowledge man returns to his own true nature, becomes established in his own state of Being.

142

Desires and cravings make up the contents of your subtle body. Just as the scent of a flower goes and comes, such are your births and deaths. Again, from another angle of vision, there is no birth or death at all. When the physical body is dead, that subtle body with those desires and cravings floats about shelterless, and then man is born again according to his karma. The ego or 'I-ness' which is studded with desires comes and goes, while for the *Ātmā* there is no question of coming and going. Man has a gross, a subtle and a causal body; the root-cause of the causal is the *Ātmā*. Until this is realized there is birth and death. The *Ātmā* is self-effulgent. Coming and going exist only for the individual. In order to realize your Self, you have just to remove the curtain.

143

Man appears to be all want; it is by contemplating want that want is earned. Therefore, to contemplate his real nature is man's duty. Otherwise there will be want, wrong action, frustration, misfortune, death. The Self is reposing within Itself. In coming and going as well as in true being is He alone. 'I am indeed the blissful Self. I have to become established in Knowledge.' There is none but you and you, and you alone. You are actually present in everything

whatsoever. Then again, you are THAT Itself. In the infinite many there is He alone — am I alone.

144

Father has written that he finds no relish (*rasa*) in the spiritual. So long as one has not crossed over the desert, dryness will not go. At present the One has taken on the guise of aridity, so there is hope that He may also let Himself be found as delight (*rasa*). For how many lives have you not been in the body to reap the fruits of your actions? Your longing for the taste of divine delight will make you a pilgrim from the realm of want to the realm of your true Being. Body means want — want of completeness, fulfilment, perfection.

145

One should make an effort to practice *sādhana*, in other words, to go to one's real Home. If the mind is not turned in that direction there will be foolishness, misery — suffering. As if by compulsion the mind runs after the gratification of desires that bring suffering. The mind has become uncontrollable. By the repetition of a divine Name or mantra and by meditation, this illness can be cured.

146

If you turn to God in order to be liberated from your desires for sense objects, your inner strength will grow. Take to some spiritual practice. Keep yourself bound to meditation on God whether you are able to concentrate or not. There is hope that some time or other you will get interested and also remain absorbed in it.

147

To see That which when seen the wish to see anything more vanishes forever, to hear That which when heard the desire to hear anything else does not awaken anymore: Real *darśana* (vision) is that *darśana* after which no more question can arise of vision or no vision or of displaying anything. *Darśana* must be all-encompassing, unveiled, uninterrupted, indisputable.

148

Without God, where are you? That glimpse does occur in some form, as some sort of intuition.

149

In very truth, everything without exception is possible for God. The impossible becomes possible and the possible impossible.

PART II

PARAMARTHA

150

Try any try again to reach the goal you have set before yourself. So long as Realization does not come you must never relax your efforts. Let this be your firm resolve.

151

Through the ever new transformation of a life dedicated to the supreme quest, one must strive to become firmly established in one's true Self (*Swarūpa*).

152

Unless one penetrates to a certain depth, it is but natural for the mind to be fickle and distracted. Those who are filled with divine aspiration; must they not constantly abide in His presence so as to discover pure love? Let not one precious moment be wasted!

153

After happiness gloom is bound to follow. The realization of the Brahman is a state beyond joy and dejection. Just as when you see a wet earthen vessel from a distance you presume that it is filled with water because generally an earthen pot full of water looks wet; similarly knowers of the Brahman give the impression of being steeped in joy; but this is not the ordinary joy or happiness. What that state is like cannot be described in words.

154

In all forms, lovely and ugly, is but the Guru, the *Iṣṭa*. At all times, in all places and situations, aim only at That. Days are slipping away; throwing off care and anxiety, fix your mind on God without delay.

155

Is it not wonderful to be a pilgrim on the supreme path? This is indeed the path to be taken. The ultimate Goal is reached when the supreme path has become revealed.

156

Why allow yourself to become agitated and excited? This is not the attitude fitting for a pilgrim on the spiritual path. On the contrary, by spending one's life in the awareness of God, seeking the company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, one's hopes and aspirations will be fulfilled.

157

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 — emptiness as it were; one cannot penetrate within, neither does one derive

satisfaction from worldly enjoyment.

158

Take care not to be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or someone even experiences bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the path to Self-awareness, before true Realization supervenes, one may get caught up in supernormal powers (*vibhūti*s). To become entangled in this kind of thing constitutes a grave obstacle.

159

Just as a plant in a flower-pot is firmly embedded in earth — no matter how much the pot may be moved from place to place — exactly in a similar way keep God firmly enthroned in your heart. Unless you reach a certain elevated state of consciousness you cannot at all times sit still in one posture. Yet, although you may change your place, God ever remains steadily enthroned in your heart.

160

By saying, ‘I cannot’ one does not get far. One has to acquire capacity and go ahead. Truly, for man everything is possible. By God’s grace one has obtained a human body. Even though someone may slip and fall, he will not remain lying on the ground but rise, stand up straight and walk again. The speed of advancing must become brisk. In order to find your Self, progress along your own path, in your own rhythm.

161

Pilgrims of the supreme path must advance swiftly on their way to the Goal.

162

Endeavour to keep your body healthy and your mind engrossed in *japa* and meditation. It is but natural for man to become agitated at times. Nevertheless, try to advance speedily beyond the level on which agitation occurs. Time is gliding away.

163

What Ma says is for the good in every respect. Though the inclination may be lacking and one forces oneself to attend to one’s spiritual practices, then also God will most certainly grant the power to advance in His direction as the fruit of one’s labours. The result of the practice (*kriyā*) will be reaped as well as the result of the concentration of the mind — remember this! To complain that one has striven for a long time without any effect will not do. In that realm bargaining has no place. In order that practice may become one’s second nature it is man’s duty to remain ever yoked to it.

164

That you have become aware of not knowing is also God's grace, and your aspiration is equally God's grace. The desire for Reality leads to the annihilation of all desire. If a person's intelligence is bent on the discovery of Truth and he is constantly engaged in religious acts (*sat kriyā*), he cannot know at what moment the revelation of the One may supervene, crowning his efforts. Thus, whether you feel like it or not, so long as Enlightenment does not come, continue your pilgrimage on the supreme path with tenacious perseverance.

165

Man must ever be intent on discovering the *mahāyoga* that will reveal his eternal union with the Divine.

166

For how many ages has one not performed penance (*tapasyā*) by the oblation of enjoying and suffering the results of one's actions! The yoga of the *sādhaka* should by the pursuance of the yogic current be converted into *mahāyoga*.

167

For ages and ages you have already enjoyed so much of eating and sleeping, of worldly pleasures and comforts. The more one indulges in them the more prominent they grow. One must not give in to them. Man does not know at what particular time the Divine Power (*Śakti*) may manifest. Make up your mind never to abandon your practices aiming at That (*Tat karma*) until you have reached your Goal. You must keep on exerting yourself, binding every minute of the twenty-four hours. The more the mind remains absorbed in the thought of God, the stronger will that Power grow, and this Power is your companion on the path to the Supreme — remember this.

168

He alone knows to whom He will reveal Himself under which form. By what path and in what manner the Almighty attracts any particular person to Himself with great force is incomprehensible to the human intelligence. The path differs indeed for different pilgrims. Very often He destroys misfortune by misfortune, and annihilates sorrow by sorrow. To advance in this spirit means for everyone to tread his own path. One's own path is the path that leads to Self-realization, to the supreme, ultimate Goal itself.

169

Pilgrims on the road towards God very often encounter obstacles and stumbling-blocks which are due to their own former actions. In such cases one should pray, "Lord, gird me with patience and the power of endurance that I may be able to continue undaunted my pilgrimage on the path that leads to

Thee.” Keep your spirits high by reflecting that those hindrances and difficulties are breaking up your bad karma. Bear in mind that God is thus cleansing and purifying you in order to take you unto Himself.

170

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 operates without motive or cause. Why He has not shown His grace 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. But actually God is one’s very own; there is but one Self (*Ātmā*). To begin with one does not realize this and therefore questions arise. From where you stand at the moment, from there it looks as you describe.

171

Whatever comes to pass is bound to happen corresponding to each one’s own karma. If you have to be proud, be proud of your relationship with God. Do not waste your time by letting it pass without the remembrance of Him.

172

Ordinarily the movement of man’s life proceeds on some basis — be it in the field of *sādhana* or in the realm of the world. To be embodied* means to want — to experience pleasure and pain. However, enjoyment and suffering are due to oneself. Moreover, if there is no sense of ‘me and mine’ suffering and enjoyment cannot be experienced. ‘My house, my wife, my son, my enemy, my friend’: thus, the rhythm of life is based entirely on the sense of ‘I’. The objective of the *sādhaka*’s life is attainment. While advancing one is not yet aware of the path. Only he whom it has led to achievement can speak of the path. Then everything becomes illumined by one Light. In essence there is only One; the path, the Goal — whatever one may speak of — nothing is anymore apart from oneself.

* A play upon words: *deho* body and *deo* give!

173

Never remain without the presence, the name of the deity you worship. While moving about, while eating and sleeping, at all times sustain the flow of His Name. A plant will grow more or less rapidly exactly according to the measure in which you provide it with water and manure. If you do not progress quickly, you should understand that it is entirely your own fault. Call to mind that you have not been able to go beyond the way of thinking fostered life after life and dedicate yourself wholly at His feet. The wrong lies all on your side.

174

One should constantly keep oneself well protected by the unbroken string of spiritual practices and actions dedicated to the Divine; no interruption must be allowed. God is whole — there is no break in Him. He bestows the fullness of Enlightenment.

175

Where mature spiritual experience is a fact, agitation should certainly not be brought in. One speaks of transformation when worldly attachment slackens. In the measure that worldly interests decrease one progresses towards real joy.

176

“He Is! If He were not, where would I be? He is actually touching me.” If you keep up this attitude of mind, you will see Him and Him alone. “If I remain, let me be His servant, His handmaid. Thus I shall not be separate from Him anymore.” In order that this spirit may prevail, sustain uninterrupted *japa*. The more you think of your Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) the more your faith will increase. Do not allow your mind to wander in many directions, but become one-pointed. Why should there be fear and anxiety? Solely because I imagine He is not near me. He is holding you. Why fear? If you cling to the One in whom fear is not, how can there be even a question of fear?

177

God pervades the universe and is also beyond the universe. He is formless as well as with form. Of this very God you had a vision in the form in which you imagine Him at present. To make this clear, He took on the shape that is dearest to your heart and appeared before you. Because of your desire to find Truth this particular form manifested by God’s grace. If you want to become one with *Bhagavān*, the more intensely you engage in spiritual practice (*Bhagavat kriyā*) the swifter will be your progress.

178

In the measure as one loves God, detachment from sense objects ensues. To concentrate on God means to become drawn towards Him. And *vairāgya* (detachment) means becoming disentangled from sense objects. Feeling pulled towards the Divine and indifferent to sense objects occurs simultaneously. Renunciation happens of itself. There is no need to give up anything. This is real, genuine renunciation.

You all are relinquishing the highest Bliss and thus you actually are renunciates! By abstaining from the Supreme you have become supreme renunciates.

179

God’s mercy pours down everywhere and at all times. One becomes aware of this by making oneself receptive to it. To pray constantly for His grace

is man's duty.

180

All the time you have the desire to find, the acute feeling of lacking something. Just persist in your *sāadhanā* and He will fulfill what is left undone. By the fullness of grace comes full illumination. In the measure as you exert yourself you will receive.

181

The One alone is concealed within all beings. So as to get first-hand knowledge of this, one devotes oneself to spiritual exercises — to one's *japa* and meditation. To practise concentration for the sake of finding God is incumbent on man. In whatever direction one causes the mind to move, in that direction it becomes engrossed. Therefore, if one tries again and again to turn the mind towards the Supreme Being, if one persistently aspires to realize that one is eternally united with Him, then there is hope of finding the way that leads to His touch.

182

If someone really thirsts for light, it is impossible that God will not grant it to him. Be as regular as you can in your spiritual exercises. Perform *japa* and meditation, sustain the remembrance of Him, study sacred scriptures. So long as you are steeped in the thought of Him with the help of any of these, you are on your pilgrimage towards Light — be mindful of this! Read the Bhagavad Gita daily and attempt again and again to grasp its inner meaning.

183

To invoke God sincerely without a result — this can never happen; He will surely cleanse and purify His own offspring and then take them to Himself. Pray to Him with heart and soul. To the limit of your power, using all the strength and capacity you possess, endeavour to live constantly in His presence. Surrender yourself at His feet. He Himself gives His *kriyā* (spiritual practice), training the aspirant to go beyond all *kriyā* in order to reach the Goal. Therefore, try with all your might to concentrate with your entire being on that form of Him to which you can give yourself whole-heartedly and without reserve. Time is speeding away.

184

Until and unless you have definitely realized Him you must never abandon your spiritual practice. Be determined about this. He can be realized by *japa* and meditation. The *japa* and meditation you are doing — try to sustain it without interruption. It cannot be that He will not respond when appealed to but it takes time. When one's endeavours are very ardent and one forges ahead with great speed, there is hope of Enlightenment.

185

To have chosen Kashi for one's abode is a matter of great rejoicing. Exert yourself to the limit of your capacity. Living in the shelter of Viśwanāth and Annapūrṇā is very fortunate.

186

The Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) has to be realized as the aim of life. The whole of manifestation is but a display of God's divine power — He Himself as *vibhūti* (creative power). The *Ātmā* is one — yet again, who appears as duality? None but He.

It is impossible to continue on the spiritual path without some inner experience occurring. The fact that one has chosen this line proves that there is already some connection from before.

Forgetting that Bhagavan is the sole Beloved one has come to love sense objects. When anything besides God is cherished, there is divided affection — *du īṣṭa*, *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 have I thought of the Beloved and how much of that which is harmful (*anīṣṭa*), which leads to death"? Become aware of this.

^{*} *Du īṣṭa* two beloved; *duṣṭa* wicked.

187

In order to annihilate what is undesirable and harmful (*anīṣṭa*), the mind has to be steeped in the adoration of the Beloved (*Iṣṭa*). The notion that He is far away must be altogether given up. Thou art within and without, in every vein and artery, in every leaf and blade of grass, in the world and beyond it. The awakening of the sense of want is to be welcomed; it opens the way. He is there at every step to make the unfit expert. "As the sense of want and emptiness appearest Thou and no other — Thou art ever close by. Lord, I take refuge in Thee, I take refuge in Thee!"

188

In all your activities, in your *kirtana*, Ma is with you. With perfect repose sit still thinking: "In the midst of emptiness Ma is with me." This will give you *ānanda*. Whether you meditate sitting quietly or lying down, feel: "Ma is with me at every single moment."

189

To invoke That, to be constantly intent on realizing It, is man's duty. At all times in Her arms, in Her embrace — within the Mother. On finding the Mother, everything is found.

190

Knowing the Mother means realizing the Mother, becoming the Mother. *Mā* means *Ātmā*, *Mā* means *mayi* (all-pervading), Self-permeated, reposing in the *Ātmā* — That! Knowledge as such, *Ātmā* as such, Śiva as such. “To become” actually means it ever is so.

191

God’s true being cannot be described, for when speaking of ‘being’ there is the opposite of ‘non-being’. When trying to express Him by language, He becomes imperfect. All the same, in order to use words. He is spoken of as *Sat-Cit-Ānanda* (Being-Consciousness-Bliss). Because He Is there is Being; and because He is Knowledge itself, there is Consciousness; and to become conscious of that Being is indeed Bliss. To know the essence of Truth is bliss. This is why He is called *Saccidānanda*, but in reality He is beyond bliss and non-bliss.

192

All without exception are actually embodiments of Bliss. Having found one’s Self it is natural to experience the bliss of the Self.

193

Just as the same person is father, son and husband — and none of them any less than the other — so the paths of knowledge, devotion and action all lead to the One. All names are God’s names and yet He is nameless and formless. Discover Him in any particular form and you will finally come to see that all forms are expressions of the One.

194

What does *Ātmā darśana*, direct perception of That, mean? Seer-seeing-seen — where these three are realized as modifications created by the mind, superimposed on the one all-pervading Consciousness, this realization is called *Brahmīsthiti*. Where there is no question of action or non-action, there is *Ātmāsthiti*. (One is established in the Self). And for those who worship God with form, direct perception of That means to perceive Him everywhere. Just as it is said: “Wherever my glance falls there Kṛṣṇa appears.” If anything is perceived that is not Kṛṣṇa, one cannot speak of true Vision. In perfect, all-embracing *darśana* the Beloved stands revealed.

195

“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.

196

Only you exist, you and you alone. Truly, you are contained in

everything. Again, you are indeed That Itself. In all infinity is He and no other — I alone am.

197

When there is God there is also *māyā*. When was He not? Therefore, *māyā* is equally beginningless. Where is the end of it? To whom does one feel attracted? Whose manifestation is it? Reflect deeply! When one has realized what is one's own, whose *māyā* is it? Endeavour to find yourself, be it as the Lord's servant, be it as the *Ātmā*. You are immortal, the bliss of the Self. Why then experience birth and death? There is but the Self reposing within Itself.

198

He alone Is; therefore, He Himself speaks to Himself for the sake of His own revelation. The One who appears as movement as well as stability, is also the *akṣara* — that which is indestructible. On the surface and in the deepest depths is none but He. In movement He is spontaneous movement where, although ever remaining motionless, He is perpetual motion.

199

Strive to find Him who, when found everything is found. Invoke Him, pour out your heart to Him with all your troubles and perplexities. To Him you should address your complaints and petitions, for He is complete and perfect, the fulfiller of everything, the destroyer of all sorrow and misfortune. Ever let your mind dwell on His lotus feet, contemplate Him alone, pray to Him, do obeisance flinging down body, mind and soul before Him. He is the fountain of goodness, peace and bliss — What is He not? He is the Life of life, the Self.

200

Dwelling in the realm where vain results, vain suffering, vain enjoyment are experienced — appearing to be quite useless — even in the guise of futility is He and no other. 'There' the question of useless realm or any other realm does not arise: 'There' everything exists, although there is nothing — one's own true Self, the Self reposing within itself.

201

What is satsang? *Sva* (own, self) means *Sa* (He), God, Being-consciousness-bliss (*Saccidānanda*), the *Ātmā* — call it what you will. *Sva* is *Svayang* — That Itself, He in person, *Sva-ang* signifies that God is eternally revealed in every part of creation. This is why it is said: Seek *satsang* so that you may know yourself to be *Sva-ang* (His own limb) and know that He is ever revealed in every atom of creation.*

* *Ang* part, limb. *Sva* and *Sa* are pronounced alike in Bengali.

202

You have not seen Him, but are yearning for Him — because He is your

very own. Does one pine for what one is seeing? One's own has been lost, or rather is hidden behind a screen; this is why one is hankering after it.

203

There are two kinds of restlessness: one due to worldly activity and the other the restlessness to advance on the spiritual path. The latter is the very means to real peace. That which is tranquillity, *Ātmā*, God, That becomes known. Only when there is intense hankering after it will supreme peace be found. Eternal bliss is also one and the same thing.

204

Everything is pervaded by the Self. He Himself has permeated and is permeating the all. If you cry out for Him with genuine longing and desperate eagerness, He will be with you at that very instant. A mother knows exactly whether her child is weeping with real anguish and when she hears such sobbing she drops all her work and hastens to her dear one.

205

When rice is boiled in a vessel, pressure is generated by which the lid opens of itself. There is no need to use force. Likewise, apply all the energy you possess to your task and He Himself will do the rest. By the keen sense of want of the divine presence, a desperate yearning ensues and this will open the way to Self-realization.

206

Having turned to this side (inwards), a feeling of emptiness (*abhāva*) awakens. And proceeding further there is the first stage of passing from this condition of insufficiency and want to one's true being (*svabhāva*), the realization that without Him the world is darkness — nothing of the world seems alluring. It cannot be said that you have reached such a state. Though to yearn for Him also indicates progress.

207

If you can love God there will be no more sorrow. Even the feeling of separation (*viraha*) from Him is joy. It is because of your love for Him that you will be aware of the anguish of being apart. Solely the man in whom God abides in a very special way is capable of this painful awareness of separation from Him.

208

Where nothing is, there is everything. All efforts are for the sake of this realization only. To do *praṇāma* means to pour oneself out at His feet, to become closely bound to them and thereby united to Him, to become His who alone is. When doing *praṇāma* in a temple or anywhere else, you should not hold back anything, but give yourself without reserve.

You must know Him in such a way that no place remains where He is not. According to *Vaiṣṇava* terminology there is *viraha* and *milana* (separation and union). But this *viraha rasa*, this experience of profound yearning for God after having known union is not like the worldly sense of separateness, which means not knowing the other, being unfulfilled.

Everything comes by His grace alone — this of course is a fact. You experience as your own the power He has vested in you. Apply it in His service to the utmost of your capability, whatever be the nature of your approach, whatever your line.

Just as thoughts about your home crowd into your mind as you draw nearer to your dwelling place, so also the closer you get to God the greater grows the joy derived from the ever increasing variety of experiences of the Divine. Indeed, as you advance to your real Home you realize more and more of this joy. You are on the way to finding yourself, be it as the servant of the Lord or as a part of Him or as the one Self. You must seek what will take you to *eka rasa*, the state of undifferentiated Being, of Oneness, where nothing remains to be known, to be attained.

All desire must be for God only. Whatever you do, whether with your hands or with your brain, do it as His service. Whatever you accept, physically or mentally, accept it as God coming to you in this shape. If anything is to be given, it is surrender of yourself at His feet.

209

No matter where you may be placed, from there itself must you take to the remembrance of God. All without exception belong to Him — be convinced of this. In order to kindle the love of God one has to endeavour to keep the mind constantly engrossed in *japa*, meditation or the reflection on spiritual subjects. Man must be gripped by a keen desire to awaken to the love of God.

210

Do not give even a thought to results. Stay immersed in Him and Him alone. Results will not always be bad. When the time is ripe, the Self reveals Itself. Being the offspring of the Immortal, be ever concentrated on the Goal which is Immortality.

211

Striving to dedicate this transient ego or ‘I-ness’ to the eternal ‘I’ leads to one’s real good. In order to keep the mind constantly fixed on the supreme object of life, one should ever be engaged in spiritual practices, the study of scriptures, the awareness of God and so forth. At some auspicious moment in the life of the aspirant his prayer should receive full response. **Do not even look in the other direction.** Bind yourself solely and with unshakable determination to the practice that will take you to the Goal of your pilgrimage.

Go forth to realize God — try at least. This is the genuine madman.* Madman (*pagol*) means *paua gol*, (to reach the goal), *peye gele*** achieved — signifying unlimited Enlightenment. When one becomes obsessed by this madness, the madness after the world of duality takes flight. Some people are crazy over another's body. By this sort of insanity, falling a prey to infatuation (*moha*), one ruins one's body. Turning into a madman after God will not spoil one's body.

*'Madman' in the sense of otherworldly, visionary, seer. Śiva for instance is called '*pagla*' (madman).

**A play upon words that cannot be translated. Being mad after something implies intense concentration and one-pointedness and therefore achievement is bound to follow.

Only in the realm of body and mind can hostile power have sway. Sit absolutely still in a fixed position for as long as possible and try to remain immersed in the stream of consciousness (*cetnār dhāra*). Just as, nourished by the rain that pours down from the open sky, trees shoot forth new sprouts and grow to their own lofty stature, so also should there be an aspiration in the *sādhaka*'s life to advance steadily towards his chosen Goal, free from thoughts of the past; to keep the mind elevated and inspired by proceeding straight and simple to ever new spiritual realization.

A traveller who is eager to reach his destination quickly, does not look back to see by what road he has come nor does he ponder about what he has seen on the way or what he has gained by it. Exactly like that, thoughts of the past must be cast aside in the aspirant's life. Let there be a constant endeavour to fulfill your aim. So long as one dwells in the realm of the mind, even though the beauty of one's Chosen Ideal may only be imagined, one should make a sustained effort to advance towards it.

The empire of the mind is enclosed by the body. Even though you may desire to turn the mind inward, will it voluntarily renounce its empire? To divide, to wander backwards and forwards again and again constitutes its natural movement. But your sole duty is to realize: "Thou alone art within and without, in want and emptiness, in fact in all circumstances whatever." In order to destroy the undesirable (*aniṣṭa*) one must focus one's mind on the invocation of the Beloved, the one desired (*Iṣṭa*).

While one is still guided by reason there is always the possibility of straying from the right course. So long as one has not realized that He and He

alone is manifest in all modes of being, in all forms and in the formless, single-mindedness and unswerving faith are indispensable. Such one-pointed devotion must have for its sole aim the revelation of the Beloved. Living among your people in a spirit of service, be helpful to everybody.

216

In the morning, as soon as you wake up, pray: “Lord, accept as Thy service everything that I shall do today.” At night again, before falling asleep, pray: “In self-surrender I bow to Thee placing my head at Thy holy feet.” Try to spend the whole day in this spirit.

217

Mataji advises men and women alike to serve all living beings with the conviction that they are manifestations of God. A person who can remain steeped in the thought of God all the twenty-four hours is indeed constantly engaged in the greatest service of all sentient beings. His actions set an example for worthy human conduct.

Now, father, do please try to understand this: At times Mataji says certain things in a peculiar manner; if it has not been understood, one should ask for an explanation.

It is necessary to remain constantly in a spiritual atmosphere and keep one’s thoughts occupied with the contemplation or discussion of Truth. If there is a gap, one’s mind may be drawn downwards. A human being should be aware of this at every instant.

218

The spiritual practice that will cleanse one from the dross accumulated life after life and that has for purpose the uncovering of one’s innate, radiant, illumined Self which lies latent deep within — this has to be fostered and served. What does service signify? Action that purifies the mind.

219

By the talk and the dealings of the people all around, distraction and agitation are produced in the mind due to the clash of different kinds of vibrations. Therefore, one has been advised to eat pure food, to cultivate elevating thoughts and feelings and gentle, benevolent behaviour, to read books of wisdom. In order to avoid distraction and agitation, advance towards That which has brought you into being. Even now devote yourself to the practice that will provide you with the capacity to remain undisturbed under all circumstances.

220

Keep a strict watch over everything you do: how you eat, sleep, move about and sit. Furthermore, the practice one has undertaken in order to be

released from bondage must be performed with faith and love. No spiritual exercise or rite should be done disrespectfully, for it is He Himself who has come in the guise of the practice.

By affliction He destroys sorrow. The suffering that has to be endured with patience, fortitude and forbearance is the ‘Destroyer of Sorrow’ Himself who appears in this shape so as to conquer all suffering.

221

When you watch a show at the cinema you do not feel sleepy. Entertainment keeps the mind engrossed and sleep does not come. From the exertion during the waking state one rests during sleep. In deep sleep man goes to his true Being, but under cover of ignorance. Where the unveiled revelation of one’s true Being is, the question of sleep does not arise. In the measure as the practices and the intensity aiming at that state of unveiled revelation gain in momentum, the necessity of sleep will diminish.

222

On the path of *sāadhanā* one should not allow anything bad or inauspicious to remain hidden in one’s mind. The purer the mind is kept the more this will help one to progress. When anger arises in your heart try to cast it away

223

That God has saved you from the attack of a poisonous snake is a great good fortune. Call this to mind whenever anger arises in you. Increase the number of your *japa*. Try to purify yourself. **At the slightest indication of anger drink a sufficient quantity of cold water.** Anger harms a human being in every respect. It produces the action of poison in the body. Pray to God to preserve you from this mood. To criticize people or to feel hostile towards anyone harms oneself and puts obstacles into one’s path to the Supreme. If someone does something bad, you should feel nothing but affection and benevolence towards him or her. Think: “Lord, this is also one of Thy manifestations!” The more kindly and friendly you can feel and behave towards everybody, the more will the way to the One who is goodness itself open out.

224

In the *śāstras* it is said: “Do not utter unpleasant truths.” Who are you to lecture to the whole world? Why should they listen to your words? If you have the power to make everyone listen to what you say, then only will speaking out be fitting and right. Otherwise your mind will become distracted and your *sāadhanā* obstructed.

225

Verily, God is in all shapes and forms. Keep this fact firmly engraved in

your heart and mind. Everybody should be told that in God's creation, according to the Hindu *Sanātana Dharma*, it is unlawful to say what will cause hostility or distress to anyone. For God and nothing but He manifests in all shapes and forms. To be opposed to anyone is to be opposed to the Supreme Being: we are all one *Ātmā*. This is what we have to bear in mind. Preserve a spirit of calm and friendliness.

226

By idle and vain talk stumbling blocks are created on the path that leads to Him; going in that direction you have already spent ages and ages. Now retrace your steps and return to your Home. When one lingers on the road, one merely prolongs the troubles and hardships that are the pilgrim's lot. One who faces in the direction of God, engrossed in His name and in the love of Him, advances, no matter what his condition may be; always remember this. To say, "I have not felt His touch", and therefore to pursue worldly enjoyment can never be for your real good — keep this in mind.

227

Those who desire to remain intoxicated by Reality do not require artificial intoxicants. Indulging in false things will only increase falsity, for every direction is indeed infinite. Those who desire the truly genuine Thing proceed of themselves with great intensity so as to progress in their *sādhana*.

228

The delightful words or sayings that help towards Self-realization, anything leading in that direction, should be accepted. Just as a thirsty man cannot forget water, so should one endeavour to keep the Goal awake within oneself.

229

Anchored in patience and endurance which are so important for *sādhana* one should try to forge ahead cheerfully with untrammelled speed in quest of the One. He who dwells in the heart must be revealed without and within.

230

To be always in a happy mood helps spiritual endeavour. Dejection creates obstacles on the path. If one is to abide in His presence one has to become free from bondage. Driving the mind inwards one must be intent on the revelation of the Supreme One who resides within.

231

Relinquish what seems bad to you. That you are vowed to the constant remembrance of God is a matter of great rejoicing. To the limit of your power pray to Him for His grace. Truth Itself will help a man who goes out in search of Truth and thus power will manifest through your spiritual practice.

232

By doing *japa* and meditation of *Kṛṣṇa*, by loving Him, His attraction should become so powerful that even suffering is cherished. Therefore, meditating on Him alone, dedicating all actions to Him, be an instrument in His hands. Keeping your body — His temple — clean and pure, immersed in the thought of Him, endeavour to let all your actions be permeated by *Kṛṣṇa*. **He is all that is experienced.** The man who can be engrossed in Him, in joy and sorrow, in every one of his actions, in the midst of **worldly life that is ruled by the mind** — that man will be victorious.

233

By chanting the *Gāyatri mantra*, by performing fire sacrifice, by *japa*, meditation and similar practices one is cleansed and purified from the dross and karma accumulated during countless former births and in the present. Thereby is aided the unveiled revelation of that blazing, glorious Reality which like a radiant light shines deep within oneself and which is the Goal.

234

The purpose of ceremonial worship (*pūjā*) is the revelation of the Beloved. For the sake of finding oneself, for Self-realization should be worshipped He, at the worship of whom the question of non-duality and duality does not arise. *Pūjā* for the sake of God is disinterested worship (*niskāma pūjā*).

235

Do whatever God prompts you to do. *Japa*, *dhyāna*, *pūjā* have to be performed regularly for the sake of practice, even if one does not feel inclined — so that this practice may be transformed into the yoga of practice. Devotion and faith must certainly be awakened. What is happening at present is to cause you to stand on your own feet, to make you vigilant. Whatever has to be done, God will put it right — remember this. Whether one feels like it or not, it is imperative to attend to one's prayers with great regularity.

236

Without attaining to inner yoga one can certainly not become an instructor of yoga. When a person who is in living touch with Him who is called the Supreme Lord of Yoga (*Yogeśwara*) teaches a yogic *kriyā*, points out the path of yoga, no physical harm will come to the disciple by practising it. There is then hope that the path that will bring him in touch with the yogic current (*yogic dhārā*) may open out for him.

237

If, instead of being consecrated to God's work, divine power is employed for worldly ends, it is wasted. By using spiritual energy for worldly pursuits, the current of this energy will be broken. When by sustained *sādhana*, one has been

blessed with power, it is not right to squander it.

238

Everything is *Bhagavān's vibhūti*, His *māyā*, His *lilā*, His very own play. To use for worldly purposes what one has received spiritually in the course of that play is not correct.

239

***Mahāmāyā*, the Cosmic Power, is one thing and *viṣaya māyā*, the delusion of sense objects — sense enjoyment — quite another. For you, a pilgrim to the Eternal, it is detrimental not to continue on the path to Him. Having left aside sense objects, do not remain entangled in supernormal powers. Supernormal powers are but a stage. They may be beneficial; they may also be harmful. But through them you will not attain to the Supreme, the Ultimate. Having obtained power it must not be dissipated. Aspire to Self-realization. Otherwise there will be obstacles — decline.**

240

To use and operate power is one thing; quite another is spontaneity, coming about of itself. If power is used deliberately the 'I' remains and consequently a downfall may result. Whereas in the case of a spontaneous occurrence this is not so.

241

The power of *mahāyoga* is concealed in everything. So long as this has not been fully revealed, how can one speak of uninterrupted, undeniable supreme vision?

242

That there is an infinite variety of *āsanas* (yogic postures) must be perceived by direct perception. When the divine mood awakens of which a particular *āsana* is the expression, then the *āsana* has borne its fruit. In the material world also one feels at ease and contented when taking up the posture that corresponds to one's state of mind at the moment. It has to be understood that man must of necessity always be in some posture or other. What exists at the root of things thus finds expression in the physical. When that root of things is touched, each *āsana* will take shape in its own precise peculiarity: this is called the spontaneous formation of an *āsana*.

Look, in everyday life also, don't you automatically take up various postures according to the nature of your thought at the time? These postures form of themselves as expressions of your mood. In this material world one becomes within oneself completely engrossed in the particular idea that attracts one, so much so that someone may even be ready to die for it. All this happens in various ways in the physical world because one is prepared to live in the

realm of the fleeting in a transient body; that is to say, one wishes to turn outward, into darkness. Where man is ever pure, enlightened, free, eternal, there again all God's numberless names, forms, attributes are eternally real. There the nature of the name, the nature of form and the diverse waves of divine moods, inspirations and raptures stand revealed. In Him should one become engrossed, lost, affixed, immersed, stripped of everything, and then this whole world will be seen as the outer expression of the inner Reality, as the One Himself, the field of His creative activity. He alone as creative action, the One-with-action and actionless, as form, quality, idea, mode of being, in the world and beyond — He and no other is ever enthroned in the posture of *mahāyoga*, the supreme yoga. The One who is seated, Himself the *āsana*. To realize Him in the world and beyond the world, this is the death of death; there death is conquered, time quelled. To direct his course towards this and this alone should be the aim of every human being.

243

Do as much as lies in your power. By using energy again and again with perseverance, the necessary action (*kriyā*) will materialize. A person who studies has a somewhat distinguished manner of speaking. Similarly, by treading the spiritual path persistently, power is developed. On this pilgrimage whatever has to be relinquished will fall away and gradually that which is eternal, true, enlightened, free will emerge. Ever keep your gaze fixed on the Goal, just as an archer aims his arrow straight at the target. If you are a *bhakta* sink your 'I' in the 'Thou'; and if you proceed by the path of self-enquiry, let the 'you' be drowned in the 'I'.

PART III

JAPA

244

Children of tender age do not want to learn to read and write because they prefer to play. If little boys and girls are to be taught reading and writing, they will have to be persuaded to learn. So also, to begin with, one has to repeat the Name forcibly. Constant practice is needed. Look, when dirt accumulates on a vessel, it has to be scrubbed and polished to become shiny. Rubbing it just once will not make it clean. In order to light a match, friction is necessary; one cannot be sure at what instant fire will blaze forth. With the repetition of the Name it is also similar. By sustained practice success will be accomplished. Become wedded to the yoga of practice.

245

The fact that you are aware of your incapacity to concentrate on God's Name is: also His grace. Even though not interested take the Name as a medicine. This also will have a good result. You will improve. God's Name is not like worldly medicine that acts at times and at other times does not; God's Name invariably bears fruit. This is why it is said, either get yourself admitted into the hospital, take the medicine prescribed by the doctor, regulate your diet, and your illness will be cured. Or use the doctor's medicine and diet while remaining at home. That is to say, either renounce everything and seek refuge solely in His Name, or else, while remaining with your family, act according to your Guru's instructions and live a regulated life. Thereby also you may hope to get rid of your disease. Whoever likes to take injections? Yet they are beneficial. Which child enjoys learning to read? All the same, by studying regularly with the assistance of one's parents and teachers one becomes an educated person. This is so where learning is concerned that serves worldly ends. Again, if you can acquire *Brahmavidya*, the knowledge of Reality, there is hope of recovering supreme wealth. What is supreme wealth? None but God Himself.

246

No attempt is futile; everything serves a purpose. Suppose you are travelling somewhere by railway. In order to catch the train you will first go by boat from your village to Dacca, then descend from the boat with the help of a stick and get into a horse carriage that will take you to the station. Although your aim is a journey by train, you cannot say that the boat, stick, horse-carriage and so forth are of no use. Similarly, you should understand that everything you do in order to realize God is helpful. Nothing at all is wasted. By whatever Name you may invoke Him, your effort will be crowned with success. The main thing is to cling to the Name with constancy.

247

You say the mind will not concentrate on the Name. What do you gain by feeling upset when your mind wanders here and there? Rather reflect in this manner: “The mind does not obey me; very well, I shall not obey the mind either; I shall continue to repeat the Lord’s Name.” Have you never watched children flying kites? How very high the kites rise up freely, yet they are limited by the length of the string to which they are tied. The kite can be compared to the mind and sense objects to air. Keep the mind tied by the string of God’s Name; some day or other it will become still.

248

Just try to keep the kite of your mind tied to the string of a divine Name. If it is fixed in this manner your thinking will some day or the other get under control. Although restlessness is the nature of the mind, yet to become still is its dharma. To make it calm, you will have to be centred in something. In order to find a job you look to some person or other for support, you go to a particular place. Similarly, in order to be liberated have recourse to the Name.

249

At all times the repetition of the Lord’s Name should be kept up. Through the practice of the Name enjoyment, liberation, peace, all these will blossom forth. With firm faith, implicit confidence and devotion, casting away pride, adhere to the Name and you will see that all your work will be done, as it were, of itself. When this body was engaged in the play of *sāadhanā*, this kind of thing used to happen and this is why so much stress is laid on it. Do not take anything, lightly in order to test God, for by doing this you will not advance towards Self- realization. Surrender your all to Him! Your burden, the burden of the world is ever carried by the One who sustains the universe — remember this!

250

While working with your hands, His Name should be repeated mentally. The work you do with your hands is the *mudrā*. With this very *mudrā* sustain the flow of His Name. Nursing the sick — anything at all is His service, His work. Let this be your attitude of mind.

251

Whenever you possibly can, sustain the flow of a sacred Name. To repeat His Name is to be in His presence. Just as a human friend opens his heart to you and tells you all about himself when you come to him, so, if you associate with the Supreme Friend, He will reveal His true Being to you.

Do you refrain from bathing when faced with waves of the sea? Surely, you plunge right into the midst of them and take your bath. Similarly, in the very thick of tempests and difficulties of worldly life endeavour to maintain the remembrance of Him, the repetition of His Name.

252.

The performance of *japa* has a beneficial result of its own. When a person practises *japa* and dedicates its fruit to God, the fruit can never be destroyed or lost. When the time is ripe God will return it to the aspirant. When the *sādhaka* begins to notice that his desires and passions are growing weaker and weaker, he should understand that God is in this way bestowing upon him the fruit of his practice. This is why one does *japa samarpāna* (offering one's *japa* to one's *Iṣṭa*).

253

Different kinds of flowers are prescribed for different kinds of *pūjā*; similarly, there are various mantras and various kinds of rosaries. To practice with the help of beads is certainly necessary. But when *japa* comes about of itself — spontaneously — then of course there is no more need to count. However, as long as one performs *japa* by effort, one will have to keep count of it. There is all the difference between doing *japa* and *japa* occurring of itself. The mind must reach a condition where it cannot remain without the remembrance of God.

254

Having as one's sole pursuit the Self-revelation of that palace of jewels in the form of the Word (*Akṣara*), of God who Himself present in His creation is imperishable, eternal — He indeed being the supreme talisman of protection and safety; knowing Him who is ever poised in Himself to be alone worthy of remembrance — this is the highest good.

255

The *akṣara* (syllable or series of syllables) by which the mind becomes liberated is called mantra. The *akṣara* is *cinmayi* (permeated, as it were, by consciousness); it is the *Śabda Brahman*; it is called the *Nāma Brahman*. Feel convinced that He will be found in the Name. Have firm faith that the seed that has been buried in your consciousness will without fail grow into a tree. Just as after sowing a seed, it has to be watered and manured, similarly the seed in the form of a mantra will be made to sprout when provided with the necessary nourishment in the form of satsang. As you desire God, be it in a particular form or without form, so will you find Him.

256

The Name and the Named are identical; for He Himself appears as Name. The letter (*akṣara*) is indeed God's own guise. When the Name one repeats becomes alive, it is as when a seed is sown the tree grows out of it. If the Name that appeals most to any particular person is constantly repeated; one arrives at the realization that all names are His names, all forms His forms. Furthermore, that He is without name and form will also by and by come to light.

257

The immutable Brahman, the primeval sound, the *Omkāra* are one and the same as the word ‘Ma’ — *ānanda* in essence. Is it not God to whom you say, “Thou art Mother, Thou art Father, Thou art Friend, Beloved, Master!”? He indeed is the Mother, all-pervading (*mayi*), who gives to everyone exactly what he needs — She Herself giving of Herself to Herself!

258

Karma accumulated for ages and ages, sins and desires are wiped out by God’s sacred Name. Just as lighting a lamp illumines a cave that has been in darkness for centuries, even so the obscurity of numberless births is annihilated by the power of a divine name.

259

By God’s Name the pull of evil is vanquished. There is a saying that it is impossible for man to commit as many sins as can be annulled by God’s Name: just as a single spark of fire can consume more things than you are ever able to accumulate, so by the contemplation of the Supreme Being, by the endeavour to approach Him, all your sins will be obliterated. The destructible will be destroyed and Reality stand revealed.

260

One seed has to be destroyed by sowing another seed. That is to say, by the constant repetition of the seed mantra, the seed of karma will be destroyed and then no more new karma will be created.

261

Those who know who is their *Iṣṭa* may while doing *japa*, contemplate Him from His feet to the crown of His head. If one wants to engage in *japa* for a prolonged time, then one should concentrate on the word (*śabda*) while repeating it. God is present in the syllable (*akṣara*); God is present in the sound (*śabda*).

262

To some devotees the One gives *darśana* in the form they love most. He has endowed you with devotion and capacity, but He has not come to you in the form of a mantra, a word of power. For the time being repeat the Name of Him that appeals to you most; contemplate Him in the form dearest to you and pray, “Lord, reveal Thyself to me in the way that is for my ultimate good!”

263

Keep on repeating the Name of the Lord. Pray: “Lord be pleased to manifest in the form of *dikṣā*.” Endeavour at all times to remain merged, plunged in the Name. Solely for the sake of God must His Name be repeated remember this.

PART-IV

GURU

264

The one who manifests as the longing to find a Guru, also manifests as the fulfilment of that longing. But it is necessary that this longing should be genuine. At every moment be aware of Him for the sake of His realization.

265

In order to find a *Sadguru* genuine endeavour is needed. When your aspiration becomes pure, you are bound to find a *Sadguru*. Look, when a child keeps on crying, “Ma, Ma!”, writhing with pain, can the Mother remain indifferent? She will hasten to him with alacrity. Pine for a Guru with equal intensity and he will most certainly come to you.

266

The One who is your Guru is the World-teacher and He who is the World-teacher is your Guru. He is of infinite forms, of infinite manifestation, and of infinite non-manifestation. In the shape of the Guru, *Iṣṭa*, mantra is He and no other. Wherever mind and heart may turn is the all-pervading Self (*Ātmā*) — reposing by Itself within Itself. In order that this reality may become revealed, may be grasped, there are various paths. Again, grasping means holding on to one’s own Self. On the other hand, there is no question of grasping or not grasping. This, verily, is the realization that is wanted.

267

If the relationship of Guru and disciple has solidly been established, the Guru can never be forsaken; He is ever present with the disciple. **God alone is man’s Guru.** One should put one’s whole trust in Him. *Kriyās*, yoga and similar exercises cannot be practised without a Guru by one’s side, while *japa* and meditation may be performed anywhere. Endeavour to sit absolutely still in unwavering contemplation so as to calm the mind. Try to keep your attention fixed on the supreme Goal. Then only is there hope that the path to tranquillity will open out.

268

The real significance of the concept ‘Guru’ is extraordinarily profound. The Guru should be regarded as God. The Guru can never be deserted. Where the Guru is given up one has to understand that the act by which the relationship of Guru and disciple is established has never taken place. Nothing wrong or improper can ever be committed by the Guru who is said to guide one life after life. His power and the devotion for him can never slacken. The Supreme Being who, in the search after Truth is Truth Itself, sees to the fulfilment of the disciple’s aim.

269

The relation between Guru and *śiṣya* (disciple) deserves to be called eternal only when the Guru is possessed of divine power and can and does communicate this power to the latter at the time of his initiation. This power being eternal, the relation between Guru and *śiṣya* as thus established is also eternal.

The mantra which is imparted to the *śiṣya* during *dikṣā* must not be a dead word, as in common usage, but must be a syllable or series of syllables instinct with life or spiritual energy, capable of functioning actively in the *śiṣya*'s psycho-physical organism.*

No true relation between Guru and *śiṣya* can exist unless this relation is assumed to be eternal. This implies that the Guru ought to be capable of communicating power to others as a matter of grace.

It is only in the case of a divinely gifted, powerful Guru that a temporary slackening of the disciple's faith cannot do much real harm inasmuch as the hidden power of the Guru infused into the disciple and functioning within him steadily, though unconsciously, has invariably a tendency to come up and lead him to a deepening of his faith.

In a case where the disciple's faith in his Guru is genuine and firm, any limitation in the Guru is not a hindrance. However, as soon as this faith is shaken for any reason whatsoever, difficulties are bound to arise. For **except by faith, which naturally invokes divine grace and does not depend upon the individual merit of the Guru, there is no other way to render the relation with the Guru eternal.**

Various obstacles are met with by one treading the path of perfection. Such a life is bound to be a constant struggle for Self-knowledge and God-realization. To realize the Self is to realize God and to know God is to know one's Self. On this path one can progress only by adhering to truth, fortitude and serenity. Every person truly in search of God should take refuge in a reliable guide and follow such methods of *sādhana* as may enable him to rise above all conflicting and distressing situations in the world. He should accept what is truly uplifting and reject mere pleasure. Is it not fitting for you to try and live always in a spirit of calm, steadfastness and patience?

*Mantra as such has its own power but is usually dormant. It has to be awakened by the Guru before it is transmitted to the *śiṣya*. Else, the entire responsibility of awakening it would fall on the *śiṣya*, in which case its realization would be beset with difficulties.

270

The Guru actually emerges from within. When genuine search takes effect, his genuine manifestation is bound to occur; it cannot possibly be otherwise. The One, assuming Himself the shape of the Guru, of His own

accord brings about His manifestation or becomes manifested.

271

Endeavour to remain engulfed in the contemplation of the mantra received from your Guru. He is holding your hand and will never let it go. At all times keep your mind at His lotus feet. You are God's own scion. If your aspiration is genuine, He will never let you turn back.

272

Even on this thorny path the Guru is constantly holding your hand and leading you towards the One. Remember, this is the actual truth.

Occasionally to mistake marsh-gas for real light is but natural. Albeit, it is He indeed who is present in all forms. The path that brings full and unobstructed Enlightenment must be pursued with the utmost concentration at every moment and to the limit of one's capacity. Where He manifests as the pilgrimage undertaken for the sake of supreme union, there is hope of its being crowned with success.

273

What fear is there for a man whose one and only object in life is the supreme quest? The One who is the goal of the journey is all-pervading. What is needed is His revelation. Nevertheless, the longing for Him must become genuine. If He manifests as longing, He will certainly also manifest as fulfilment. Whatever arises spontaneously from within is good. Watching as a spectator, place your reliance in the Guru in all matters. The Guru is very, very near.

274

The man who is a seeker after Truth shall find his own true Self within himself through his Guru's instructions. In the mantra bestowed by the Guru, the Guru himself is indeed present. You may see his body die, yet the Guru never leaves you. You are crying your heart out for the loss of his physical frame, but why do you put obstacles in the path that he has chalked out for you? Verily, the Guru is one.

275

Where Buddhahood (Enlightenment) is, there compassion will do its work even from Nirvana — just as you may take any amount of heat produced by fire yet its power to burn will thereby not be diminished. In God, whom you conceive as complete and perfect, nothing can ever decrease. Poised in Himself, depending on Himself alone, He is absolute.

276

Where a true *bhakta* is, the *Sadguru* will most certainly manifest in person. When there is need of a Guru, his appearance is but natural. So long as

one has not been initiated by a Guru, the ordinary person's duty is to engage in the study of scriptures, in *japa*, meditation, the chanting of God's Name — any Name one likes best. In order to reach the state of a genuine *bhakta* one must constantly devote oneself to *satkriyā*, action which aims at the Eternal.

277

The Guru's power is vested in the disciple who prays for the Guru's grace. All this is the manifestation, the Self-revelation of Him who shines resplendent within. The Guru's grace should be solicited without ceasing.

278

So long as one dwells in the realm of creation, preservation and dissolution, the remembrance of God is to be sustained under all circumstances. As far as possible submit all aspirations, petitions and prayers of your heart and mind to Him. If one has a Guru, the *Gurumantra* must be practised as much as lies in one's power, and if there is no Guru then any of *Bhagavān*'s Names. At all times pray for the Guru's mercy.

279

In order to return to one's own Home determination is needed as well as the grace of the Guru. There are two possibilities: gradual revelation, and revelation due to grace — just as when a dark room is suddenly flooded by light. The *sādhana*s for gradual revelation are of infinite variety. The intense yearning for one's true wealth (*svadhana*) is in fact the *sādhana*. Entreat Him, "Take me, accept me!" — this is *sādhana*. He Himself appears as infinite *sādhana*s. In action His grace manifests step by step; by continuous friction fire is kindled, the way to Enlightenment opens up. On the other hand there is grace without any cause or reason. In this there is no method, no gradual development. That is why it is said there is no knowing where and how He will be found. Thus, grace is needed. Pray for His compassion!

280

Gurupurnimā falling on a Thursday is a most auspicious constellation. Try your utmost to carry out fully the Guru's orders. The Guru never abandons his disciple, this should always be borne in mind.

281

On *Gurupurnimā* day pilgrims on the path to God-realization should determine to remain ever wide awake on their pilgrimage towards the achievement of their sublime Goal.

282

To carry out scrupulously the Guru's instructions is the greatest service. It is written: "The gratification of one's will and pleasure is called self-indulgence; the fulfilment of Sri Kṛṣṇa's will and pleasure is called love."

Therefore, to put into practice without reasoning the Guru's orders means engaging in the greatest service of all.

283

If a person decides to shape his life according to someone's directions and then again acts according to his own sweet will, this, from one point of view, creates a hindrance.

284

The practices leading to the ideal that has been shown by the Guru as the Goal are performed in order to become one-pointed. When the disciple with single-eyed devotion advances towards the one Goal, how can one say that there is no ideal? To labour for the attainment of the Goal according to the Guru's instructions, this indeed is called firm faith (*niṣṭhā*). To engage in action for the sake of enjoyment is one thing, to perform action as yoga quite another. Directed towards the supreme quest it is called yoga and directed towards worldly aims it is called *bhoga*. He who treads the path of action as yoga is on the way to liberation. Whatever current he may be able to enter, he should, ever united with that current, endeavour by that yogic practice (*kriyā*) to attain to liberation from action. In the realm where one is ever free, in the transcendent and beyond, there no question can arise. First of all become united to yogic action with single-minded devotion along whatever current it may be, then only can you reach liberation from action. To be a yogi means to be eternally united, and to be eternally united is to be eternally free.

285

The way to God-realization is indeed straight and simple. The mantra which the Guru communicates is certainly the most excellent one. **If the mantra received from one's Guru is repeated in the right manner, realization is bound to occur.** How wonderful God's dispensation is! When the power transmitted to you by the Guru begins to function, action will not create new karma anymore. If one enters fire one will of necessity be burnt. Although all names and forms are His, the One is yet again without name and form. For the man who loves the Name, God is truly present in all names and forms. And for the person who feels drawn towards the Absolute, He is nameless and formless.

286

Wherever you stand, from that very state you must obey the Guru's commands. Of course, at times the Guru himself arranges for the carrying out of his orders. If you exert yourself, the power to live according to his injunctions may manifest. One should have complete faith in the Guru's precepts.

287

Where the search after Truth is really genuine there can be no failure. In

order to purify body and mind one practises the presence of God, the repetition of His Name, meditation; one seeks *satsang* and studies scriptures. Of special importance are the Guru's instructions.

288

To strive to know Himself, to find Himself is man's duty as a human being. Of all creatures man alone has been endowed with the potential capacity to realize God. Thus, the search after Truth is his bounden duty. Let every man advance along the path which is most congenial to him. The Guru's instructions have to be carried out without using your judgement. For the present remain engrossed in the study of scriptures and books of wisdom and in *satsang*. **For the sake of realizing God who is Truth, sit perfectly still for at least a few minutes every day, making the mind empty. So long as you do not receive special instructions from your Guru, adhere to this practice in order to become fixed in yoga. If you wish, you may proceed in the manner indicated, with the search after Truth as your object.**

289

That God's transcendental, actionless action is ever present in the universe should always be within man's awareness. The instructions and the mantra given by the Guru in order to deliver the mind have to be remembered and reflected upon. To the limit of your capacity try to tread the supreme path faultlessly so as to attain to the consummation of human life.

290

The perusal of scriptures — regular daily study of books of wisdom — is a matter of *ānanda*. Spiritual instruction, the teaching of the *śāstras*, whatever has been disclosed of spiritual experience in scriptures for the sake of undoing the knots (*granthi*) of the heart — this is called *Gurugrantha*. There the Guru manifests as scripture. The reading of books of wisdom and the singing of God's Name — the cream of the Kaliyuga — are the expedients by which to cross over the ocean of becoming (*bhavasāgara*). So many times have you undertaken the pilgrimage to death; over and over again have you experienced happiness and pain. Now become a pilgrim to Immortality; retrace your steps and proceed to your real Home.

291

A traveller on the path to the realization of the Supreme Father has to obey his Guru's instructions so that his journey may be crowned with success. However, in a case where there are no such instructions, one should, according to the dictates of one's heart, keep oneself engrossed in calling out to God, in prayer or meditation. If someone prays to Him with a sincere and simple heart, God will fulfill his cherished desire. To yearn for Him with his whole being is man's duty.

292

To live according to the Guru's instructions is indeed the means to Self-realization. When prompted by the desire to find God, yogic technique is used to awaken *kundalinī* it is impossible that He should not respond. If one really and truly yearns for God, can it ever happen that He will not reveal Himself? Practices that aim at arousing *kundalinī* should be undertaken for the sole purpose of finding God. It is impossible that this should remain fruitless; be convinced of this.

293

Having made contact with a great spiritual being (*Mahāpuruṣa*) there can be no more decline. To go near fire without being affected by its heat is impossible. Those who cultivate the company of a *Mahātmā* do so in order to be liberated from the round of births and deaths. The question of birth and death does not even arise anymore. If there is birth there will be death, and if there is death there will be rebirth.

294

To live in the presence of God who is Truth (*satya*) — this indeed is the meaning of *satsang*. Seek refuge in Him! By taking shelter in Him every blemish and imperfection will disappear. Your defects will surely be transformed into virtues. He is Father, He is Mother, He is Friend, Beloved; He alone is all in all: this is the idea you have to cherish. Is there anything that He cannot give? If your desire is intense, it is quite impossible that Light should not come to you. The question whether the path is long or short must not be allowed any room in your mind. "Realization will have to be granted to me", this should be your determination. Employ your whole strength and capacity, then only will you succeed. How beautiful! By holding on to Him everything comes of itself.

Abandon the transitory; "I am the *Ātmā*," fix this thought in your mind. In order to be liberated from constant coming and going, the round of births and deaths, one has to seek the support of the Guru. Whither does one come and where does one go? He Himself is everywhere. Taking refuge in Him is liberation.

295

So long as the manifestation of the Guru's power is not experienced, the special pilgrimage to Enlightenment, to Self-knowledge has not really begun. This is why you have not found your own steady speed of progress. *Sādhana* proceeds within the realm of *prakṛiti*. Therefore it is man's bounden duty at every moment to be intent on advancing rapidly and vigorously.

296

If peace of mind is to be found one should follow the particular path and contemplate the particular form that appeals to one most and that helps one

towards the supreme Goal. So long as the inner Guru has not been revealed, how can final consummation be near?

PART – V

VAIRĀGYA MĀRGA

297

Towards Self-realization is the only direction in which to advance; all the rest is vain and leads to suffering.

298

The path of renunciation is indeed the path of bliss. The man who is on the pilgrimage to God is fortunate. The path to Him is alone worthy of being called a path; all others are wrong paths, where one meets with troubles and calamities at every step.

299

The man who has gone out in quest of the Eternal can no longer remain engrossed in anything that does not lead to Self-realization, to the realization of God. Just as when a house is on fire one opens the door and leaves it, so once discrimination and dispassion have been awakened, the question of proceeding in any other direction does not arise.

300

It is a matter of rejoicing that he wishes to join the Ashram. The moment his desire to do so is genuine, he has already as good as entered the Ashram.

301

The One for whose sake you have chosen this path in order to dedicate your life to Him, should be remembered constantly. Talk solely for His sake. Be mindful of His words; ever aware of Him; listen to His promptings alone.

302

The purer the mind becomes by the remembrance of Him in everything, the more excellent will your work be. As action also none but He manifests. In one's work one must cultivate purity and sincerity. Having chosen the spiritual path, one should never at all covet anyone's affection or respect, or wish to be helped in one's tasks. At all times practise patience and self-discipline. Just as when a drop of acid falls into a large quantity of milk, all of it turns sour, so even if a little attachment or anger steals into one's work or service, it is very harmful — remember this!

303

For those who are pilgrims on the path, it is imperative to forge ahead vigorously, energetically, steadily and at great speed. Sitting in a rickety cart will not do. Dynamic strength of mind is always needed. You yourself have to mould your own life — keep this in mind!

304

Undertake only work that can be done as worship, so that no time may be wasted by attending to it. Anything at all can be accomplished by sustained

effort. You must spare no pains to make the mind concentrated. How many lives has man not frittered away in eating, drinking and sleeping! “I am immortal” — this is the idea that should give direction to your life.

305

A *brahmacāri* should never allow his religious practices, his acts of service and so forth to be tainted by anger. For has he not chosen the path of God to attain to the love of Him? Travellers on the path are longsuffering, humble and patient — God in His compassion has turned their minds in this direction. Suffering is to be looked upon as *Bhagavān*’s mercy to exhaust one’s evil karma. “Even if Thou wouldst make me Thine own by punishing me, let Thy Will be done!” Endeavour to remain steadfast and serene. Remembering His presence constantly, do service.

306

Since you are living the lives of *sādhus*, you should try to ignore the cold as much as possible. If one moves about and takes exercise one feels it rather less. By leading a strictly regulated life one becomes firmly anchored on the spiritual path and then one does not have to suffer so much. You might exert yourselves a little more in this direction. If the cold is extreme do not bathe early morning but later in the day; on rising from sleep change your clothes, sprinkle some Ganges water on your body and then proceed with your *sandhyā* (morning worship) and other spiritual exercises.

Brahmacāris must completely shun sarcasm and frivolous jokes. It is therefore important to observe silence as much as possible. *Brahmacāris* are forbidden to sleep during the day. Rising early they should take great pains not to fall asleep during the day. If for a prolonged period of time one makes a special effort in this direction, the habit will be established. Do not lose courage and be persevering in your *sādhanā*.

307

The vessels used for *pūjā* and one’s own vessels should always be scrubbed by oneself. Moreover, it is only fitting to do so for one who lives the life of a *sādhu*. The other day I met a young man who told me that if it was for the Lord’s service he enjoyed doing any kind of manual labour, such as going shopping, cutting vegetables, cooking, performing *pūjā*, cleaning vessels and so forth. Even if someone offered to relieve him he would decline, saying that he wanted single-handed to attend to everything necessary for the service of the Lord. He delighted in carrying out all these tasks. At the same time he looked healthy and fit. In this way one keeps happy and contented, for one is working for the Lord, and it is work performed as service that purifies heart and mind. To live in this manner promotes physical and mental wellbeing.

Furthermore, use your leisure to read religious books, to listen to

discourses on spiritual subjects or seek *satsang* and so forth. Do not give the mind a chance to indulge in impure thoughts. The young man mentioned above had hardly enough to eat. If someone gave him a fruit he would be exceedingly pleased. **Sri Gopinath Kaviraj was saying in this connection that through need and poverty one could learn what was favourable for one's *sādhana*, such as dependence on God and so on.** For those who have dedicated their lives entirely to the supreme quest, it is good to live in this spirit, although among householders there are many who enjoy affluence and plenty. Anger, pride and the like are not helpful on the path. Reliance on God is of real assistance, and to feel at all times: "Whatever He arranges is for my true welfare". For you yourself do not know by what means God will draw you nearer to Him.

Drink a quarter of a litre of milk a day and eat rice or *roṭi* with dal and vegetables twice daily. For so many days you have lived on half a litre of milk or fresh cheese without specially benefitting by this diet. Therefore, try now for some time to take normal diet and exercise; do not strain yourself unduly and see how you feel as a result.

You will have to strive earnestly to remain ever centred in God, no matter in what way He may keep you. If the mind is fixed on God, the question of material wants and complaints, of honour or disgrace does not arise. The more you let your thoughts dwell on Him, the more will you find yourself improving in health of body and mind. By discussions on divine things and by a simple frugal life, you will have to prepare yourself.

You must become calm and healthy. When thinking, think of Him alone; when working let it be His service only. You are by nature good and kind-hearted, but you will have to become good in every respect. **On no account allow your thoughts to dwell on wants and complaints.** Learn to adapt yourself to circumstances as they arise — then only can there be hope of peace and tranquillity.

Mataji expressed joy on hearing of your daily programme and your collective timetable, your observing silence at fixed hours, etc...She also said: "Really, it would be a matter of rejoicing if, like good boys, they could pass day and night in divine thoughts and occupations. What is required of a pilgrim on the supreme path is that he should ever keep on walking. To spend one's time in the remembrance of the Eternal does indeed mean to be a traveller on this path."

308

To regulate one's life in accordance with the injunctions of the *śāstras* is one's duty in human life. **To accept what one is not entitled to is forbidden by the *śāstras*.** Those who live as *sādhus* in the ashram may accept people's gifts as well as their obeisance in keeping with their merit. Unless one has attained to a certain state of achievement it is not helpful on the path to the

Supreme to accept veneration and gifts. **It is not fitting to take pleasure in what one is not entitled to.**

309

Blame may be likened to cowdung. When it lies about just anywhere it is of no use. But when, mixed with earth and turned into manure, it is put under plants, what lovely flowers, fruits and grains will not grow! Similarly, if an aspirant can bear to be blamed and criticized, that is to say, if he uses it to improve his character, it will be very beneficial — just as the soil is made fertile by manure. **Do you see what a fine thing blame is? Blame also is none but He, the One.**

310

If the aspirant on the spiritual path can, full of endurance, patience, steadiness, calm and serenity, remain engrossed in his religious practices, then even if a wave of ill-luck comes, it will not be able to touch him. To try his utmost to reach such a state is indeed man's duty.

311

They are living in a locality where *tapasyā* is practised, in the foothills of the Himalayas, in the vicinity of a Śiva temple. By the atmosphere of their *sādhana*, their *tapasyā*, the place should become so filled with spiritual vibrations that even people coming from outside would be able to notice this distinctly. Ashram life must be made worthy of its name, must be blessed — this is as it should be. Eyes, face, the whole body will then radiate tranquillity, gentleness. All travellers on the supreme path must be full of devotion, ascetic, the very embodiments of love — great yogins. The pilgrimage is undertaken for the sake of self-forgetfulness, for the revelation of one's true Being, to experience the touch of Him.

312

The faithful devotee, the ardent lover of God, the ascetic, the great yogi — all are pilgrims on the path to the Supreme; the revelation of their forgotten Self, of His touch, their common goal.

313

For the *sādhaka* and the *sādhikā* it is imperative to be constantly absorbed in the thought of the Supreme. No other thoughts of any kind are to be tolerated. The more time one devotes to meditation on the Highest the fewer worldly considerations will arise. For those who have dedicated themselves to this path unreservedly with heart and soul, even some negligence in the duty to their parents will not result in any obstacle or setback to their *sādhana*. If one's firm and undivided attention is given to the supreme path, God Himself takes care of everything.

314

Change your life totally, from its very root. Become a *sādhaka* and go ahead on the spiritual path with splendid vigour and energy. At every single moment He is with you as your helper — try to be aware of this. The One to whose service you are devoting your life is Himself the Saviour. In order to experience this deep within, try with all your might to purify yourself — body, heart and mind. **If for a whole year one strictly speaks the truth and adheres to truth scrupulously in every respect, the result of advancing towards the light of Truth will be noticeable to a certain extent. Let there be not even a hint or suggestion of falsehood.**

315

By constant practice one finally achieves. They all should make up their minds to try and follow the advice of their friend* to the minutest detail. At what moment He will grace us with His touch lies with Him; our duty is to continue to invoke Him without interruption. Enough time has been spent in wandering hither and thither aimlessly, in leaving the path in order to enjoy the sights of the world and to have fun in various ways in the manner of the world. Now all one's time should, as far as possible, be spent in the attempt to find one's Self. Vain, idle talk is of no benefit and only prevents one from advancing towards Him — it is but an obstacle to one's efforts. Ages and ages have been wasted in this manner. Now, friend, return to your real Home! By lingering on the way you only prolong the agony of the troubles and difficulties that have to be endured on the pilgrimage. Ever remember that one who is eager to advance towards Him and practises His Name and His Presence, progresses no matter what his condition may be. To say, "I do not feel His response." and therefore to take pleasure in mundane things can never be for one's good — always bear this in mind.

*Mataji.

316

When in association with great souls — saints and *sādhus* — you are striving to embrace the Highest and to relinquish ephemeral pleasures, it is not proper to criticize any action of those great ones. Whatever they say should be accepted without argument. To speak of falsehood or error where they are concerned is an offence on your part and therefore harmful. Are not all those whom you are judging in this manner your own people? So long as one's true being has not been realized, everybody should be treated as one's very own Self. Try to find God in everyone. This is the attitude to be cultivated. Good and evil are all within the One who pervades the entire cosmos. Therefore, the duty of those who have gone out to realize Truth is to regard everything that saints and *sādhus* undertake in the quest of Truth, as the various manifestations of their *Iṣṭa* or Guru. This is the spirit to be adopted.

Embrace that which takes you to the goal of human existence and renounce mere sense enjoyment. **There is but one family of seekers spread out all over the whole earth.** Thus it is the duty of those who have gone out in search of Truth to accept everything that *sādhus* do in search of Truth as the various manifestations of their own *Iṣṭa* or Guru.

“Thou art Mother, Thou art Father, Thou art Friend, Beloved, Master.” Where everything is based on the One alone, there one single ashram exists, pervading the entire universe. There is no question of boundary or limit — it is boundless, unlimited. All is of the One, is the One. Only because of duality is there conflict. Blindness and bondage are but due to the veil of ignorance.

How enviable their lives (the lives of the *āshramites*) are! Free from the numerous ills, worries and embarrassments that harass the householder, what a wonderful chance is given to them to perfect themselves, to attain to inward beauty, to make themselves fit for the achievement of the supreme object of life. By enduring the difficulties that arise when people from different places, of different upbringing and temperament are thrown together one’s power of forbearance grows strong, the capacity for endurance is developed. Do not pay attention to the shortcomings of others, but try to discover their positive qualities, remembering that it is your way of looking at things (namely of finding fault with people) that causes you pain.

All these difficulties are due to your own karma. In God’s creation the results of one’s actions have to be enjoyed and suffered to the minutest detail. Everything is His dispensation. You will have to find Truth! Always bear in mind that you have to exhaust all kinds of karma and that He is thereby cleansing you to make you fit to be united with Him. At all times and for everyone He is. The nearer you draw to Him, who is the fountain of mercy and compassion, the more will you experience His presence. Spend your time in *japa*, meditation, the study of scriptures and so forth. **Be truthful in thought, speech and behaviour. Let others do as they please, as their nature dictates. To the good the world appears good. Be straight and sincere with those with whom you have to work. By your example others will be changed.**

Man should be full of generosity and broad-mindedness in outlook and conduct. The harmony in the home between husband and wife, between parents and children is based on worldly attraction and affection. But to live in harmony with a large group of people — in this lies real greatness.

In whatever circumstances God may place you at any time, cast aside distractions and be ever intent on kindling a spiritual atmosphere. The foundation for it is truthfulness in speech and conduct, patience and long-suffering. Depend on God in all matters. That all kinds of difficulties should

occur on a pilgrimage is but natural, it is the rule of the world.

319

Invaluable time is gliding away. Men and women who have come to live in the ashram must try to attain to the ultimate Good by regulating their time in such a manner as to abide in the remembrance of the Divine Presence throughout the whole day. Nobody can tell at what moment God may grant him the experience of His revelation. Therefore, to keep his attention ever grafted upon God is man's duty. Everyone in the ashram must develop serenity, love, friendliness, joy, truthfulness, tolerance and patience.

320

People of different *samskāras* are staying with Ma. What you are experiencing is due to these manifold *samskāras*. To remove the wrong idea of distance (between God and man and between man and man) one comes to live in an ashram. Ma does not turn out anyone. Continue to live in *satsang* in your organization and strive strenuously for the awakening of right intelligence (*sadbuddhi*).

321

You have assembled here in search of Truth. Where your place is there is also his. Everyone talks according to his natural disposition, but you have not taken to the spiritual path for the sake of this kind of thing. The supreme Goal to which you aspire, the same claim is yours and also his. You are both in one position; you both have the same spiritual relationship with Ma. Where this body is, there all are without exception. None of you have come here for anything worldly. Everyone receives according to his attitude of mind and heart. You are all pilgrims in quest of the Supreme.

322

Ashramites must not pay attention to honour or insult, to praise, position and fame. Everything has to be surrendered at the feet of the Lord. Have you not chosen this life, renouncing everything? To be insulted (*apamāna*) means to bear animosity willingly (*apa mene noua*). In all shapes without exception is He; be friendly and affectionate towards all.

323

Human beings are not all made to the same pattern. From various places many people have assembled together in the sole endeavour to find the highest good. It is then not always possible for everyone to give expression to his inborn tendencies and inclinations (*samskāras*) and this is why difficulties arise. The all-pervading One assumes particular forms at particular times. If, anchored in patience, you adopt this view, is it not likely that you will find peace? There are some who create disturbance and vexation for others as well as for themselves, but this is not what this body (Mataji) wishes; on the contrary, it

requests everybody to refrain from such behaviour.

324

It is Ma's *kheyāla* that you should live in the pursuance of the supreme object of life, constantly remaining in this atmosphere so that He Himself may stand revealed. Men and women of the most varied temperaments and conditioning gather around Ma. One lives in an ashram to drive away the habit of considering others as distant from oneself which is foolishness. Mataji does not send anyone away. By prolonged residence in a *satsthāna*, in other words, a place dedicated to the Divine and the search after Truth, and by *satsang*, (the company of saints and seekers after Truth), *sadbuddhi*, (true understanding), will be awakened.

325

Spiritual affinity is undoubtedly stronger than blood relationship. The happiness it gives is very special. By the atmosphere created by your meditation, your spiritual endeavour, the place ought to become so wonderful that even people coming from outside will be able to notice it. Ashram life must be made worthy of its object. This surely is as it should be! And then your eyes, your face, your whole countenance will radiate peace and tranquillity.

326

By entering on this path you have overcome the world. There is only one Brahman without a second, one *Ātmā* — towards That should you strive. Let there be no ill-feeling, no angry or excited talk, no quarrelling, no distinctions among you. If you foster a spirit of friendship, your tolerance and courtesy towards all will increase. Whenever you feel hurt by anything that has been said, you should eject the matter like poison. You all are very, very good. By goodness kindle the Light.

327

In response to someone's remarks and questions, Mataji gave the following rules for the behaviour of the inmates of the Ashram:

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 someone, 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.

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.

328

In the new year a *sādhaka* should make renewed efforts for new realizations.

329

At every single moment try to be aware of Him; for have you not chosen this path to dedicate your lives to Him? Therefore, when speaking speak of Him; when thinking think of Him; when listening listen to His words or to what is said about Him. Further try, each one of you, to keep a diary, so as to check your mind from turning outward. This may also make you watchful and help you in your striving. Those who are pilgrims on the path must develop great inner strength, energy, agility and swiftness, so that their lives may become beautiful and so as to fill their new life with a new current. It will not do to sit and ride in a rickety, jolting bullock cart. At all times the mind must be intensely vigorous, energetic and alert — then only can one forge ahead with

great speed. Remember that **every person has to mould his or her own life.** Accept cheerfully whatever He may bestow on you or take away from you.

PART VI
ĀNANDA SVARŪPINĪ
(Ma on Herself)

330

Solely for you all is indeed everything that this body says or does — its actions, movements, its going hither and thither. Whatever is done for your sake through this body at any time, it is you who cause it to happen.

331

Write to her: “Under whatever Name anyone may seek God, this little child most heartily welcomes him.”

332

Many tell Ma, “You are my Guru.” And Ma always declares: “Whatever you may say is all right.” Ma also says, “The One who is all-pervading, who is variously called *Parabrahman*, *Paramātmā* or God, He verily belongs to all.”

333

Who is ‘Ānandamayī Mā’? Who indeed is *ānandamayī* (bliss-permeated)? He is in all shapes and forms, eternally enthroned in the hearts of all beings. Truly, He dwells everywhere. Having seen That, attained to That, everything is seen, everything attained. This means to become fearless, certain, free from conflict, immutable, imperishable.

334

This body practises neither *tantras* nor mantras, nothing of the sort. What is called *tāntrik kriyās* and how they are performed does not come into the picture here. This body is indeed related to everyone in the *Ātmā*. Here there is no such thing as a separate home or household; or if at all you want to speak of a home, it is He, the boundless One.

335

Since this body does not act from any resolve or preconception, there is for it no such thing as giving initiation or anything in this line. All the same, any possibility is contained in this body. On so many occasions, suddenly, seed mantras or *samnyāsa* mantras will issue forth from this mouth. It may then well happen that someone has heard what has been uttered, and it may also happen that someone has in some other way received something and made use of it. There have been occurrences when ordinary people would feel perfectly certain that these had been prearranged. Actually there has been nothing of the sort. Simply what is meant to come about takes place. Do you know how? It is like this: The earth is of course always there and a fruit falls from a tree and a new tree grows up. But nobody has sown the seed. Just as a tree may develop from a seed that has been sown, exactly the same kind of tree may grow out of a fruit that has fallen to the ground. The flowers and fruits of both trees will be similar. In the same way this body has no desire, no intention or set purpose —

everything occurs spontaneously.

336

Happenings appear natural or unnatural, normal or supernormal according to your angle of vision. Here, of course, karma and desire (*vāsanā*) do not even exist. Here, all that can be said is: “Whatever happens is equally welcome.”

337

Very often this body keeps itself concealed both as regards its behaviour and its words. This is the actual fact. It is surely necessary and therefore it comes to pass.

338

With this body, nothing happens unconsciously or by mistake — be it right here or far in the distance. Whether it is perceived outwardly or not, whatever is destined to occur does come about.

339

With this body it is like this: It does not talk to anyone, nor go to see anyone, nor eat at anyone’s house.

340

Who is it that appears as distress and hardship*? To take suffering upon oneself is quite a different matter. Every kind of action is not possible everywhere. Here (with Ma), laughter, giving life or stifling it — everything is He — THAT. Here there is no taking on the suffering, the tribulations of others, there is only perfect equality, identity.

** Here Ma referred to the disaster at the Kumbh Mela at Allahabad in 1956.*

341

A person who expects this body to be always supernormal in its dealings with the world will be disappointed, for this little girl acts according to her *kheyāla* — whatever it be at any time. In other words, accept what little service you may be able to receive from this child. In what light anyone sees this little girl depends on his ideas and attitude of mind. To her everything appears delightful.

342

Wherever they may be, this body is with them at all times. This body does not know how to serve everybody — only what may come about spontaneously at any time: what little they can get done by regarding this small child as their very own, by their love and respect for her while giving her *satsang* and *sādhurang*... Here the door is always open; without any hesitation let them come whenever they feel like it.

343

I was just wondering about the following: when according to your point of view this body is somewhat indisposed, you see it adopting more than usual the ways of your world. While on the other hand, when this body is in what you call, ‘good health’, then you say that it is turned to the ‘other side of things’. That you observe this is due to the fact that you distinguish between different states of mind. Whereas to this body whatever comes to pass is equally welcome. **It does not choose between this or that ‘side’.** To say ‘not’ does not express it adequately either. The word ‘you’ is being used because you differentiate between ‘mine’ and ‘thine’. **The idea that there is ‘mine’ and ‘thine’ is in fact your illness.** In the relationship between the Lord and His eternal servant however, there is no such thing as ‘mine’ and ‘thine’.

344

Whether this body talks to you or laughs or lies down to sleep, or whether it sinks to the ground and rolls about, as sometimes happened during *kīrtana*, no matter how many different states and conditions this body may appear to be in, it nevertheless remains always in the one state. Indeed everything arises out of one Being (*bhāva*).

345

You and I are two persons and yet you and I are one; and the gap between the two of us, this also is myself. There can be no question of ‘two’. Attachment and hatred arise out of the sense of duality.

346

It is characteristic of this body that from whatever point of view anyone may speak at any particular time, it will respond from precisely that point of view or angle. This body is not always consistent in what it says in the way you would be. Everyone’s varying thoughts and feelings are indeed ever clearly visible before my eyes.

347

You know in what manner service used to happen through this body: I myself the patient, myself his suffering, and the nursing also done by me. This is why whatever was required anywhere at any time came about in precisely the way needed. You also should exert yourselves and at least try to engage in service with heart and soul considering whomsoever you serve as your own Self. By so doing, all your service will in time become instinct with life.

348

When *pūjā* and similar rites were spontaneously performed by this body* then the particular characteristics of the deity worshipped, the *āsanas* and *mudrās*, the display of power and so on, specific to that deity, everything

manifested through this body in exactly the prescribed manner. But all this, far from being the product of imagination, was as real as you are here right now before me. Every detail necessary for the ceremony not only appeared of itself, in fact it issued from this body. Even the forms (*mūrti*) of gods and goddesses were taken out of this body and made to sit down and then were worshipped. Again, when the *pūjā* had been completed they merged into this body exactly from where and in the same way in which they had emerged. **It has to be borne in mind that everything is possible.**

* During Her *sāadhanā lilā* in Her early twenties.

349

When this body was engaged in the play of *sāadhanā*, at times, if any person approached it in a spirit of deep faith, this body would feel as if suffocated. If someone came and touched my feet, I would in return touch his. One day when Bhaiji did *praṇāma* to me, I also did *praṇāma* to him. Needless to say he bolted away, but where could he go? As quick as lightning I followed him, and catching hold of him I did *praṇāma*. See the play of the divine power; he was unable to escape. Yet later again, whether anyone touched my head or my feet, it made no difference at all. Once the feet of this body became sore as the result of being touched by so many people. It also happened that when I was walking someone would catch hold of me and stop me by force in order to do obeisance. Then again, at the time of playing the role of a *sādhikā*, it occurred that when people offered flowers at my feet and put a garland around my neck, this body would become as if paralysed. At other times, if a *bhakta* put his head on my feet, this body would feel an electric shock. Once it was as if this whole body was burning. Then also, when someone as much as put his hand on my foot, it became difficult for this body to breathe. Yet on other occasions people could touch my feet or seize my hands and it did not matter in the least. Someone would bow down to the ground before this body and it would remain seated quite comfortably, feeling nothing — so much so that someone remarked: “Look, how grandly she is sitting, just like a *Mahanta!*” It also happens that people do *pūjā* or *āratī* to this body and someone observes: “Do you see how She accepts worship and adoration?”

There is only One — so then, what is wrong in letting people do as they wish? When one is in duality and does not perceive the One in everyone and everything, then to allow people to worship one is wrong.

350

I may tell you that this body has not followed only one particular line of *sāadhanā* but has covered all the known lines. It has passed through all the different varieties of practices referred to by the sages of ancient times. This body has successfully gone through *nāma sāadhanā*, *hatha yoga* with its various *āsanas*, and through all diverse other yogas, one after another. In order to attain

to a particular stage along one of those lines of *sāadhanā* an ordinary individual may have to be born again and again, but in the case of this body it was a matter of a few seconds.

Moreover, the different forms of *sāadhanā* that this body has been seen to practise were not meant for this body; they were meant for you all.*

* From the diary of Sri Amulya K. Datta Gupta, translated by himself.

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At the stage of the *sādhaka* there is progression towards a goal. But here, one cannot speak either of a stage or stagelessness, neither of a goal nor aimlessness. Just as when lighting a lamp every object in a dark room can be clearly seen one by one, it is exactly like this. But while still treading the path of the aspirant, it is not possible to perceive all details. Many kinds of obstacles have to be overcome while advancing. There is an outer current and there is another one that leads within. But here, there is no question of this either. Here, the veins are myself, the nerves are myself, the movement is myself, and the witness of it all is also myself. Of course, the word, 'myself', is used only because some language has to be employed.

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When you relate your spiritual experiences, this body often says that it has had similar experiences and this is why it knows what they are. Not only that, if anyone discloses to this body a special line of *sāadhanā*, it can describe in minute details the various stages of that very line.

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For this body only One exists; there is not even the possibility of a second. Who then can give trouble to whom? Only if there be 'another' can he cause trouble.

354

It happens off and on that the forms (*mūrtīs*) of diseases approach this body. They may even enter it and have full play for a certain period of time. It is the nature of this body neither to invite anyone nor to send anyone away. Just as you are here, so do illnesses come. This body does not turn you away as you well know. Why then should it mete out a different treatment to them?

355

This body is not sitting here to reply to your questions. In actual truth this body does not stay with another, nor eat or wear anything given by another, nor enter the home of another, nor converse with another. Then again, expressed from a different angle, this body, as it were, speaks to its own mothers, fathers and friends. To deliver a talk or lecture does not occur to this body. As you ring the bell so you hear the sound.

356

Your sorrow, your pain, your agony is indeed my sorrow. This body understands everything.

357

For Ma the question of taking on or dropping anyone does not arise. For Ma there is taking on in dropping and dropping in taking on. At all times and under all circumstances, in inspiration and in dryness, Ma is, remains and ever will remain with everyone.

358

This body does not establish any *āśramas*. Where *śrama* (toil, strain) is not, there is an *āśrama*. Transcending the world and pervading the whole universe there is but one single *āśrama* where there are lakes as well as oceans, where no distinction exists between one's homeland and foreign countries. In whatever way you may express it, so it is.

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You may want to banish this body (Ma) from your mind. But this body won't leave for a single day — it does not and never will leave your thought. Whoever has once been drawn to love this body will never succeed in wiping out its impression even despite hundreds of attempts. This body rests and shall remain in his memory for all times.

360

The *Ātmā* of this body is everyone's *Ātmā*. It cannot be that anybody, anywhere, is not Ma's very own.

GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT WORDS

akṣara (1) *The Immutable, Indivisible.*

(2) *Sound-unit of the alphabet.*

(3) *Monosyllable Aum.*

Akṣara Brahman (1) *The immutable Brahman.*

(2) *The sound or word expressing Brahman.*

ānanda Bliss, delight, joy. The bliss that is beyond happiness and sorrow and not affected by either.

Ānanda Svarūpini One whose essential nature is bliss. (*Rūpini* is the feminine of *rūpa*.)

Annapūrṇā An aspect of the Divine Mother: Giver of food, physical and spiritual. *Viṣvanātha* and *Annapūrṇā* are the presiding deities of *Vārānasi*.

ārati A devotional ceremony in Hindu worship with the waving of lights, incense etc, before the object of adoration.

āsana Yogic posture or physical pose. Every posture corresponds to a particular state of mind. Yogic postures are helpful to concentration or are expressive of focussed energies. Certain yogic poses are also used for curative purposes.

āśrama The four *āśramas* (*brahmacārya*, *grihastha*, *vānaprastha*, *saṁnyāsa*) are the four successive stages of life from the viewpoint of a pilgrim on the spiritual path.

Ātmā or *Ātmān* True Self. Supreme Existence or Being that is of the nature of Self-awareness and Self-delight and behind all manifestations in nature.

Ātmā darśana Vision of the true Self. The Self is Self-luminous and cannot be revealed through the instrumentality of anything else.

Bhagavad Gitā The Lord's Song. An episode from the Hindu epic *Mahābhārata* in which Sri Kṛṣṇa, the 8th Avatara of Viṣṇu, expounds the doctrine of selfless action, done as duty, not for profit or recognition but in a spirit of dedication to the One Supreme Being. The *Gitā* has been translated into most languages of the world.

Bhagavān Supreme Reality, endowed with infinite power, unbounded compassion and unlimited knowledge.

bhakta Devotee. One who advances by the path of devotion.

bhakti Devotion and love for God.

brahmacāri A student who devotes himself to spiritual practices and to service, and observes strict celibacy.

brahmacārya āśrama The first of the four *āśramas* into which life is divided according to the Hindu system, the stage of the religious student. (See also *brahmacāri* and *āśrama*.)

Brahman The Supreme Reality conceived as one and undifferentiated, static as well as dynamic, yet above both.

dal Split peas, beans, lentils. Boiled dal together with rice or unleavened bread is the most common food in India.

darśana Sight, vision. One speaks of having *darśana* of a saint, sage or a deity, etc, which means to be blessed by his sight or presence.

dharma The law of being. It signifies the inner principle of religion. Man's dharma is to realize his innate Divinity. The word 'dharma' conveys in Sanskrit the idea of righteousness in thought, life and action and implies in addition a sense of inwardness in outlook, purity in aspiration and integrity in character, capable of reflecting the blissful wholeness of Eternal Truth.

dharmaśālā Resthouse for pilgrims.

dhyāna Meditation. It is preceded by mental concentration (*dhāraṇa*) and followed by *samādhi*. When the stream of attention is constant (like the flowing of oil) it is called *dhyāna*. The highest *dhyāna* is transcendent and discriminative in character, and can come about only when the ego-consciousness is dissolved.

dikṣā Initiation into the spiritual life, effected through the grace of the Guru who represents the Divine. (See also Guru.)

Gāyatri mantra A sacred mantra of the Rigveda, a hymn to the sun, which is a prayer for enlightenment, recited daily by Hindus of the three upper castes after they have been invested with the sacred thread.

Gopāla The child Kṛṣṇa.

grihasthāśrama According to the Hindu system, human life is divided into four successive stages or *āśramas* looked at from the viewpoint of the pilgrim on the spiritual path. The *grihasthāśrama* is the second stage, preceded by *brahmacārya*, the stage of the celibate student.

Guru Spiritual guide and teacher. According to Hindu tradition the candidate for admission into the spiritual life has to place himself under the guidance of a competent teacher who usually communicates to him during *dikṣā* (initiation) a mantra or one of the potent names of God. This mantra or name has to be repeated by the disciple regularly and in a specific manner. It is the representative of the deity (*Iṣṭa*) of the disciple.

Guru grantha Grantha Book, especially scripture. Guru Dispeller of darkness. A collection of the Guru's teaching which unties the knots (*granthi*) of ignorance. (Popularly *guru grantha* refers to the collected writings of the Sikh Gurus that are worshipped in Sikh temples as the Deity Itself.)

Gurupūrṇimā Fullmoon day in July. It is the custom in India to worship the Guru on that day.

hathayoga Yogic practice through the medium of the body. It has different features, all intended to purify the body with respect to the three humours: *vayu*, *pitta*, *śleśma* (nervous energy, bile, phlegm.) When these are in harmony there is health. *Hathayoga* is a stepping-stone to a higher yoga called *rajayoga*.

Iṣṭa Literally 'Beloved'. The chosen deity one worships, the Object of one's supreme desire. It is the Supreme Reality in its aspect of ānanda. It appears as a form on the lower plane but in reality is nothing but the Self that is beyond form. *Iṣṭa* is the particular aspect of the Divine with which the disciple will have to be in perfect communion before the Supreme Divine Gnosis becomes possible.

jagat Literally 'that which is constantly going', i.e. the world which is always in a state of change and transition.

japa The practice of repeating a mantra or the Lord's name as a means to a continual recollection of His presence. The repetition may be for a fixed or an indefinite number of times. *Japa* may be vocal, semi-vocal or mental. The last is supposed to be the best. The sound should, as a rule, be inaudible to others. *Japa* may be done either without rhythm or rhythmically, following the natural flow of the breath. The counting during *japa* may be done either with the help of a rosary or with the help of one's fingers in the prescribed manner.

jiva Individual consciousness, monadic in character. It is conceived either as an eternal aspect of the Brahman or as an artificial manifestation of the Brahman under the influence of *māyā* or *avidyā* (ignorance of the true nature of Reality or Self), and ceases to exist when that influence subsides through the supervision of *Jñāna* (Knowledge of Reality).

karma Action, the result of action as well as the law of cause and effect by which actions inevitably bear their fruit. Karma originates from the individual self in its ignorance functioning as an active agent. When man realizes his own true Self, karma ceases for him.

Kāsi Vārāṇasi (Benares).

kheyāla A sudden and unexpected psychic emergence, be it desire, will, attention, memory or knowledge. When Mataji uses the word with reference to Her person, it must be understood to denote a spontaneous

- upsurge of Will, which is divine and therefore free.
- kirtana* Chanting or singing of the names or glories of God, performed by one person or a group of people, usually to the accompaniment of cymbals and drums.
- kriyā* Any kind of ritual or purificatory action or yogic meditative process such as control of energies in the spine.
- Kṛṣṇa* Attractive force. The 8th *Avatāra* (Incarnation) of Viṣṇu. Sri Kṛṣṇa is considered to have been a *pūrṇa* (perfect, complete) *Avatāra*.
- kumāri* The eternal immaculate Virgin, divine in nature. *Kumāri* is the Mother of the entire creation.
- kuṇḍalinī* The Serpent Power that is said to lie coiled up slumbering at the base of the spine of the ordinary person. By yoga it can be roused and made to rise up through the spine. When it reaches the crown of the head there is enlightenment.
- līlā* Play. Movements and activities of the Supreme Being, free by nature and not subject to laws. *Vaiṣṇavas* explain creation as the *līlā* of God.
- Mahāmāyā* The Supreme Power of creation. A name of the Divine Mother.
- Mahanta* Head of a religious organization.
- Mahātmā* Great soul; a person who has destroyed his ego and realized himself as one with the All.
- Mahāyoga* Supreme Union. Union of every individual with every other individual, of every object with every other object and of all individuals and objects with the universal One.
- mantra* A series of sounds of great potency. It is the sound representation of the *Iṣṭa Devatā*. Name and form are inseparable; if therefore the name is instinct with life, the form that it represents is bound to reveal itself, provided the practice is intensive enough.
- mārga* Path.
- Māyā* The Supreme Divine Power by which the One conceals Itself and appears as the many.
- mudrā* Particular pose of the body as a whole or of its parts, representing the expression of a particular *deva śakti* (higher natural force). Without that pose that particular *Śakti* cannot function. The performance of *mudrās* is necessary in order to produce necessary changes in the mind or character.
- Omkāra* The syllable ‘Om’.
- Parābrahman* Supreme Reality.
- Paramārtha* The supreme Object of human life. Inner treasure, highest

meaning.

Paramātmā Supreme *Ātmā* of the entire universe, of the individual as well as of the cosmos.

prakṛti Nature or Primordial Matter, consisting of the three *gunas*: *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*.

praṇāma Obeisance. A posture of surrender, indicating one's own smallness in the presence of the Divine.

prārabdha karma The portion of one's past actions which is bound to fructify in the present life and cannot be averted.

pūjā Ceremonial worship of the Hindus. Offering of various articles representing all aspects of oneself to the object of adoration.

Rṣi Seer. *Rṣis* are said to be that class of beings, distinct from gods, men, demons, etc. to whom mantras are revealed.

roṭi Unleavened bread. This or, rice are the most common food in India.

śabda Sound, word.

Śabda Brahman The eternal Sound-power or vibration that is the first manifestation of the Supreme Reality and lies at the root of all subsequent creation.

Saccidānanda The Supreme Reality as self existent Being — Consciousness — Bliss (*Sat — Cit — Ananda*).

Sadguru The perfect Guru who shows the way to the realization of What IS.

sādhaka One who practises *sādhanā*.

sādhanā Spiritual practice for the purpose of preparing oneself for Self-realization.

sādhikā Female *sādhaka*.

sādhu One who lives free from family and business entanglements in order to dedicate all his time and energy to spiritual endeavour.

Śakti Power that is eternal and supreme and of the nature of consciousness. In Hindu mythology Śakti is often symbolized by a divine woman.

samsāra Cycle of the life in the world through a series of births and deaths. It is consequent on ignorance of the true nature of the Self and of *karma*.

saṁskāra Impressions, inclinations, psychic traces left in the mind after any experience, often brought over from former births.

saṁnyāsa Renunciation. According to the ancient Hindu system, the last stage of human life in which a man has to renounce family, possessions, caste, social position, etc. — in fact everything to which he is attached — and surrender himself to the Divine.

saṁnyāsa mantra Mantra communicated during *saṁnyāsa* initiation for the specific purpose of bringing about complete renunciation.

saṁnyāsi One who has taken *saṁnyāsa* or been seized with *saṁnyāsa*.

sanātana dharma Eternal dharma. The universal teaching based on ancient revealed scriptures plus the experience of countless saints and sages throughout the centuries.

sandhyā Specific spiritual practice performed daily as a duty at sunrise and sunset.

sāstras The sacred Hindu scriptures.

satsang The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the physical company or the mental company by reading holy scriptures or the lives and teachings of saints. Also, a religious meeting. In its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

svarūpa The Thing Itself. The true nature of anything.

Tantra A class of Hindu *Śāstras* which are said to constitute the Scripture of the *Kaliyuga*; a code of religious ceremonies, in particular for the worship of Śiva and Durgā. The *Tantra Śāstra* is a development of the *Karmakānda*, the portion of the Vedas which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites.

tapasya Hardships undergone with the definite object of attaining to the Spiritual.

vairāgya Total disinterest in the things of the world. A state beyond attraction and repulsion.

vairāgya mārga The path leading to *vairāgya*, detachment or dispassion.

vāṇi Word, speech, message. A name of Saraswati, the goddess of speech, learning, music and *brahmavidyā*.

vibhūti Outer expressions of the inner Reality.

(1) The one Supreme Form revealed in all objects of the senses.

(2) Supernormal powers acquired by a yogi in the course of his journey to perfection. These powers are realized through the purification of the mind. Fundamentally all *vibhūtis* are mental powers.

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

viraha Separation from one's object of adoration and love.

viraha rasa Acute pangs and yearning felt at the separation from one's object of adoration and love.

Visvanātha The Lord of the universe. An epithet of Śiva, *Visvanātha* is the presiding deity of Varanasi.

yoga Literally ‘union’. Various methods of achieving the union of the individual *Ātmā* with the universal *Ātmā*.

yogi One who practises yoga or has mastered it.