

REBIRTH

Tatavarthy Rajyalakshmi



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BIRTH

My name is Rajyalakshmi, my husband's name is Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao. We are from Bhimavaram village, in West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh, India.

My father is Gunda Satyanarayana Murthy, and my mother is Gunda Ratnavathi. Our native is Tuni, East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh.

My grandfather had seven children. Among them, my father was the youngest. When my father was just five months old, my grandmother passed away due to malaria after returning from the Rajahmundry Pushkaralu (celebration of rivers every 12 years). At that time, my grandfather decided to move away from that region and decided to settle in a village called "Belda" near Kharagpur in West Bengal,

where he ran his business. He spent most of his childhood there. At the age of six, he returned to Tuni and continued his education up to SSLC. During this period, he would occasionally visit my grandfather in Belda. In Tuni, my father's paternal grandmother and aunts took care of the children. After completing his education and getting married, my father moved back to Belda where he ran the business and permanently settled there.

My father had strong communist beliefs. He never visited temples or performed any religious rituals. On the other hand, my mother came from a very orthodox family. My grandmother was very particular about rituals, constantly saying, "madi, madi" (ritual purity) and cooking only after having a head bath and wearing wet clothes every day. She would sprinkle water around the house whenever someone from outside came to pay a visit. Coming from such a family, my father wouldn't allow her to perform rituals, saying, "The things that happen in temples are superstitions," and he wouldn't approve of the madi ritual. Every day, he would tell her, "Take a bath and cook by wearing dry clothes."

I was born as the third child to parents with such beliefs. I have two elder brothers, Veerabhadra Rao and Venkateswara Rao, and my brother Gandhi after me. Both the elder brothers were born in the grandparents' house, I was born in Tuni and my younger brother was born in Belda.

Although I was born in Tuni, my father took me to

Belda when I was only three months old.

From then until the age of four, I stayed with my father and mother and then moved to Vizianagaram. My elder parental uncle, Veerabhadram, lived in Tuni, and his second brother lived in Vizianagaram.

With my father's affection and mother's love during my childhood, I grew up with incredible care and attention. My father was fond of girls. so, he was more affectionate towards me than my brothers. Whenever he brought something from outside, he would always give it to me first. After a few days, he sent both my elder brothers to study Telugu in Tuni, but as for me, he thought, "I must keep her close."

One night, while my mother, father, brother, and I were sleeping, my father picked me up, and my mother picked up my brother and rushed outside. Shortly after that, our house burned down completely. That was my first escape from a disaster. Everyone commented, "She has a strong lifespan."

EDUCATION

After that, my father decided, "I must keep them close and make them study." So he moved to Kharagpur. Our family was there and business was in Belda. He used to leave early in the morning and come back at night. So, he could not really pay attention to our studies. The schools there were far away. Kharagpur was mostly inhabited by railway employees. At the time, my elder parental uncle asked him to send me to Andhra. He said, "If you teach her Bengali, she won't be able to educate her children. Anyway, we will get her married to a Telugu person, right? Let's teach her Telugu."

Then, my father sent me to Andhra on one condition: "My daughter must learn dance and music," he said. My elder parental uncle agreed to it saying, "There is a dance school in Vizianagaram" and brought me to Vijayanagaram. But his daughter couldn't learn the dance. So, they made me stop dancing too. I studied in Vizianagaram up to the fifth class. I did not stay at my maternal grandmother's house because I was afraid of the madi ritual. I stayed at my second elder parental uncle's house and completed my elementary school education. When I reached the sixth class, my elder paternal uncle brought me to Tuni saying that he would send me to music classes.

My elder paternal uncle was very short-tempered. His word was law. Everyone in the house had to agree to

what he said. He was that authoritarian. After coming to Tuni, the music classes started. But here too, when his daughter could not learn music, they stopped my lessons also. However, later, after my sister's marriage was fixed, with my brother-in-law's encouragement, she learned to play the Veena, gave programs on the radio. She used to teach music free of cost and continues to teach even now.

My father's love for music and his hopes of "shaping me into something" remained unfulfilled. Here in Tuni, I studied up to SSLC at the Zilla Parishad High School. I always passed every class with good marks, but in seventh class, I got double typhoid and was bedridden for two months. It affected the left eye on my face, pulling the mouth to the left side, and I stopped my studies for a year. They said, "If you continue studying, you will lose your eye." Then my father took me to Calcutta for treatment. He said, "I will no longer send her to Tuni. I will teach her Bengali and keep her close to me," and so he taught me Bengali.

However, after staying with my father for a year, my elder paternal uncle came again and promised my father, "This time I will take good care of her," and brought me back to Andhra. In this way, I escaped from the second accident and returned to Andhra, again continuing my studies. I was always friendly with everyone at school playing pranks and enjoying with everyone. When I was in SSLC, I wrote the answers to all the questions in the science paper without leaving any choice in the half-yearly examination. Our science

teacher scolded me, saying, "You have become over smart! Do you think I would give you more marks without checking?" I used to always glare at him for insulting me in front of everyone. Whenever he appeared, I used to turn my face to the other side as though I had not seen him and would not greet him. Not knowing the meaning of a Guru, I used to look at him with arrogance.

In 1969, while I was studying SSLC, the entire country celebrated Gandhiji's centenary. As in all schools, our school also received a notice to conduct elocution and debate competitions. Then, our headmaster instructed our science teacher to make someone speak about Gandhiji every day in the assembly. On the first day, my science teacher announced my name in the assembly without informing me. Startled, I walked to the stage thinking, "what should I say about Gandhiji?" Immediately, it struck me, and I remembered a lesson about Gandhi that I had studied in the seventh grade. On stage, I spoke about a few things I liked from that lesson.

In that speech, I said, "Gandhiji never lied, his ideal was Satya Harishchandra, he always ate only vegetarian food, he was very humble and thin." Since Gandhi was born into a Vaishya family, he had never eaten meat. But once, a friend forced him to eat goat meat saying, "it will make you very strong." That night, he felt very bad. He felt as if the goat was bleating (crying by making a sound) in his stomach. The next morning, he got up, told his father everything that had

happened and wrote a note asking for apologies and left it on the table. Realizing his mistake, he promised his father, "I will never touch meat again," and kept that promise all his life.

When Gandhiji was about to go abroad, his mother told him, "You were born in India, where one sees a mother and sister in every other woman. Only if you promise me that you will never drink alcohol, never eat meat, and never develop relationships with other women, I will permit you to go abroad." Gandhiji agreed, promised his mother, and went abroad and came back. When I narrated these three incidents on stage, our headmaster told me, "Say something about Gandhiji every day," and handed me a book, saying, "Read this." From then on, I became a great admirer of Gandhiji. In his book, Gandhiji stated, "Whenever I face any problem, I open the Bhagavad Gita and look into it. From it, I would receive the answer."

But if my science teacher had not announced my name in the assembly that day, I would never have overcome my stage fear. Because of him, I gained the courage to speak in front of the crowd. I could speak without any fear. After meeting Patriji, I came to know that "Whatever happens, happens for our good." Once I knew that, I realised, "Everything happens for our good."

I returned to Vizianagaram for my college studies. Mathematics is my favourite subject, but my father wanted

to make me a doctor. So, he enrolled me in BiPC. I had to choose it because of my father. My father was confident that I would pass anyway, even reserved a seat for me through his friends to study in Benares. But it is said that "Man proposes, God disposes." Perhaps, it was destined for me to come into spirituality like this. Right at the time of my exams, my elder brother and sister-in-law tried to commit suicide by taking sleeping pills. At that time, only my uncle and I were at home. Admitting them in the hospital and then, during the entire week of examinations, having house full of relatives and recalling that incident repeatedly, I could not write my exams properly. I failed in my PUC exam. Then, my elder parental uncle said, "Let's get her married." Thus my studies were stopped and I was brought back to Tuni.



**My parents Mr. Gunda Satyanarayana Murthy,
Mrs. Ratnavati.**

CHILDHOOD

Since my entire childhood was spent in a joint family, my elder paternal uncle's children and I lived together like our own brothers and sisters. With eight of us kids always playing together, the house was constantly filled with fun and noise.

Our childhood was spent amidst games and laughter. Every festival was celebrated with great excitement. For Atlataddi (a festival celebrated in Telugu states), we would apply henna on our hands a day before, spend the whole night playing games, swing on the swings, and in the early morning, go to the river, see the star and perform the ritual worship on the Tadiya day. The elders made us do this, saying, "If you do it, you will get a good husband."

During Vinayaka Chavithi, we would collect many flowers and leaves for worship. During Dussehra, school children and teachers together went to each house singing songs and would bring dal and jaggery. For a whole month of Sankranti, we would make Rangoli in front of the house and compete with the neighbors, saying, "We made a bigger Rangoli than you."

One month before the Ugadi festival, we would go to Nukalamma temple in the village early in the morning, clean the premises and put Rangoli. The elders told us, "you must do this at least for 3 days in the month." So, we did it.

At that time, we didn't understand the meaning of why we were doing these rituals, but since the elders said, "These are customs," we followed them. For us, all these tasks were fun. When Nagula Chaviti arrived, we would ride on bullock carts far into the fields, pour milk into the snake burrows, and return. The elders used to do all these and they made us also do them.

We did not know the meaning of God, nor the meaning of worship. If they said, "Do it this way," we would do it. The elders used to say, "If you do like that, all the gods will look upon us kindly." So, we would perform ritual worship. However, the answers given by the elders never satisfied me. I would think, "If that's the case, then all the worshippers should be happy, right? Then, why are they not happy?" When I thought about it, I couldn't find an answer to that. But on the festival day, I would go to the temple, offer coconuts, bananas, put money in the donation box, and pray for my wishes to be fulfilled.

After meeting Patriji, I came to know, "Nothing comes by wishing; you will get anything when you make an effort."

Since childhood, I have never liked hurting anyone. I always felt, "I should help everyone." Since childhood, I would help my elder paternal aunt with all the household work. By doing so, I learned how to do any work and how each work can be done quickly. Because of helping with small

tasks as a child, now I am not afraid of doing any work. In high school, I used to play "throwball," and at home, I always played carroms with my elder brothers.

I have been very fond of "Lord Venkateswara Swamy" since my childhood. I used to immediately go and talk to the photo of Lord Venkateswara whenever I was happy or sad. Because my mother was not around, I thought I was telling God everything that I needed to tell my mother. As a child, I never liked people who were angry. My elder paternal uncle had a lot of anger. He would scold anyone in the house for even a small mistake. Everyone was afraid, but I never used to keep quiet. I would ask him, "Should you scold so much for a small mistake?" Though he scolded everyone else in the house, he never said anything to me. He showed more affection towards me because I studied better than everyone.

MARRIAGE

My marriage with Mr. Raghava Rao took place on February 14, 1972. Mr. Raghava Rao has an elder sister, two younger sisters, and a younger brother. Mr. Raghava Rao was very dear to his parents because before him, they had lost a son. So, he was brought up with great affection.

Mr. Raghava Rao had strong willpower since childhood. He was greatly influenced by his father and grandfather. He inherited the qualities of charity and service from his grandfather, business acumen and honesty from his father. His grandfather Krishnamurthy was a freedom fighter. Mr. Raghava Rao's father served as the Municipal Chairman and also as the President of Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Raghava Rao learned matters about politics at home from his father and grandfather. He also held positions such as Chamber President and Rice Millers Secretary and many more.

He loved to do service. Also, he had set up a free homeopathy hospital at home. He likes to help anyone. Everyone in their family helps others.

His elder sister, Nuli Lakshmi, served as the state president for women, district president, as well as president of Bhimavaram, and conducted many service programs and taught music for free to many. His younger brother, being a doctor, rendered services to numerous people. Mr. Raghav

Rao's younger sisters were both well-educated. All the family members at my in-law's house were well-educated. Theirs is a spiritual family.

Immediately after our marriage, when I stepped into my in-law's house, on the third day, I don't know why I felt "From today, I should live in this house till the end of my life." At that time, I don't know why I felt that way. But now, because of Patriji's teachings, I have known that "Positive vibrations will be present in whichever house people live righteously and serve without expecting anything in return." Since service and charity were a constant part of their home, so many positive vibrations were present there. That's why I felt like that.

I believe that "only because our home was so noble, a great soul like Patriji set foot inside it." A yogi enters a house only if the house and the people in it are very virtuous, otherwise it doesn't happen that way. I have known this only after meeting Patriji.

I still remember the words spoken to me by Mr. Raghava Rao's grandfather immediately after I stepped into this house. He called me and said, "My dear, you are the eldest daughter-in-law of this house, the honour of this house is in your hands and I don't know how you will behave yourself?". Then I promised him, "I will never bring a bad name to this family, Grandfather." Since then, no matter what I do, his words come to my mind.

FAMILY

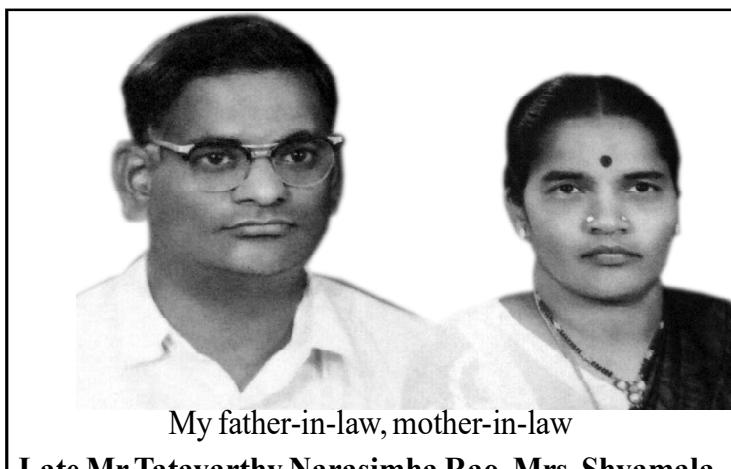
I learned how to do service after coming to my in-laws house after our marriage. From my mother-in-law, I learned how to treat and feed the servants. There were four buffaloes in the house. They would distribute buttermilk to everyone. Every Friday, Mr. Raghava Rao's grand mother used to perform bhajans at home. I learned all this by watching them.

Within a year of marriage, we had a daughter. I like girls, but my husband likes boys. He wished for "three sons." As if God wanted to fulfil my wish, a girl was born first. Her name is "Shyamala." Later, two sons were born. The elder one is "Narasimha Rao" and the younger one is "Kiran."

Mr. Raghava Rao loved all three children dearly but never expressed it openly. He would not express anything outwardly, but purchased whatever they wanted. All three children studied very well. No matter how busy Mr. Raghava Rao was in business, he paid great attention to their studies. He also wanted to be number 1 in business. He built six factories because of his effort and will power. Apart from our businesses, he also looked after his elder and younger sister's businesses. He always wished for the well-being of everyone. He would sacrifice his happiness for others. He would encourage me in many matters, never restrained me from doing anything. Our children's marriages were also performed as per his decision, and all of them are happy.

I heard about Patriji before I even seeing him. Our daughter was admitted to the hospital for her second deliv-

ery. The operation was scheduled at 2 am in the mid night. Then my sister-in-law Mrs. Leela told us about Patriji. She said, "I attended a class conducted by Patriji when he came to Tyagaraja Bhavan at Bhimavaram. He, very nicely told about meditation." She then told my daughter, "Close the eyes and observe the breath. You will not have any anxiety or fear" and our daughter did the same. We consider our grand daughter "Snehita" very fortunate. The operation was carried out after our daughter meditated. My daughter wished for a baby girl, and indeed a baby girl was born, because she had a boy during her first delivery. The next day, my sister-in-law gave a CD of Patriji titled, "Benefits of Meditation." On the second day, I also listened to the CD. Like that, I learned about meditation and also listened to the CD without seeing Patriji. That's how I got introduced to meditation. But at that time, I was not interested in meditation and so, I did not meditate.



My father-in-law, mother-in-law
Late Mr.Tatavarthy Narasimha Rao, Mrs. Shyamala.

Meditation Hall in the Temple

Mr. Raghava Rao is a devotee of Lord Venkateshwara. He built a temple of Lord Venkateshwara in Bhimavaram. After his father passed away, he thought, "There should be something in his name and it should be useful for everyone." So, he built a temple on the premises of our rice mill with the intention that "all the rice mill workers should have a darshan daily."

We used to go to Tirupati every year. There, we saw the Venkateswara Swamy meditation hall. Similarly, in Bangalore we once saw one Hanuman meditation hall. At that time, he felt, "It would be good if we also built a meditation hall in Bhimavaram," and so it was built.

Until then, I didn't know what meditation really means. But my husband had a strong desire to "learn meditation." I, on the other hand, had no such inclination. Whenever my husband started something new, I would first say, "No" but when he said, "I will do it," I would keep quiet because I knew, "Whatever he does will always be something good and beneficial for everyone."

In that way, he built the meditation hall with the thought, "Meditation should be taught to everyone." He would invite some yoga teachers to come and teach meditation. But whether for me or for him, no matter how many days we listened, we never understood. What exactly is meditation?

How should one meditate? Why should one meditate? What happens when you meditate?

What are the benefits of meditation? At what age should one practice meditation? What are the benefits of sitting with closed eyes? We never found a clear answer to all these questions nor did we properly understand them. No matter how many years we practiced, there is no change. Sometimes, we even stopped meditation in between.

Proper meditation did not take place in our meditation hall until Patriji came to Bhimavaram. For the first time, Patriji conducted a meditation class in our rice mill premises on 11th November, 2002. That day, about 1000 people came to learn meditation. On that day, Patriji not only explained the benefits of meditation beautifully but also the different kinds of experiences one may get. He gave us a two-hour class and made us meditate for half an hour. That day, Patri ma'am (Swarnamala Patri) also came and shared many of her experiences. Their eldest daughter and son-in-law Srinivasa Reddy also came. Patriji stayed there for two days and conducted meditation classes. Since then, meditation is continuously going on in our meditation hall.

The prominence of Pyramids

When Patriji first came to the meditation hall, the priest in our temple asked a question to Patriji, "What is the difference between Sri Chakra and Pyramid?" Then Patriji replied, "Ninety thousand Sri Chakras put together make one Pyramid." That means, "the amount of energy present in 90,000 sri chakras together is the same amount of energy present in a pyramid." From this, everyone can understand how much power a Pyramid contains.

Soon after Patriji left, my husband constructed a pyramid on the top of our house. I felt very happy because until then we used to think, "If there is a Sri Chakra, it gives immense energy." But then, the thought that "If a Pyramid contains many times more energy, and if such a Pyramid is built and everyone makes use of it, then everyone will become powerful, right?" gave me great joy.

I came to know many things after meeting Patri Sir. Once, we went to Kurnool and sat with Sir, he explained the meaning of temples and meditation halls.

What he said was: "All temples are Hari-dwaras (gateways to Hari), and all meditation temples are Hari-dhamas (abodes of Hari). When one goes only up to the doorway, thinking of God saying 'Oh Lord,' Hari will not be found there. To attain Hari, one must step into the abode (residence)." He further explained, "'Hari' is not at the doorway;

He is in the abode. People make many attempts, longing "Hari, Hari, I want Hari," and when they finally get tired of repeated efforts, with deep longing they enter the meditation hall and practice meditation. That is when they attain Hari. And what is Hari? It is the Soul, right? So, ultimately, people realize that 'Hari is only in the abode of Hari,' and thus they come into the meditation hall." In this way, sir spoke about meditation halls and added: "If they are built in the form of Pyramids, then their meditation will become three times more powerful, and wonderful experiences will come."

In earlier days, because of the lack of knowledge about technology, meditation halls were built in an ordinary way. But after knowing about the pyramids from Patriji, they are building pyramids in every temple, school, and home. Nowadays, everyone understands that "a pyramid is meant for meditation." That's why everyone is building pyramids not only for those who are striving to reach God but also in a way that benefits everyone.

My Entry into Meditation

Even though I knew about meditation, I didn't meditate. My husband is an angry person. Already, I was afraid of that anger. In addition to that, seeing Patriji's anger I got scared and thought, "I don't want meditation." Even after being introduced to Patriji, though I came to know about meditation, I would not meditate because I lack awareness about meditation. But, after I actually started meditating, I came to know that "Patriji's anger is towards our ignorance, not towards us."

My husband used to meditate well for three to four hours. I would wonder, "How can anyone sit like that with eyes closed?" I used to meditate only when Patriji came. His first class was held in November, and immediately after that, in December, a pyramid was built on top of our house. Then, Patriji himself came and did the opening ceremony in January. I meditated again on that day.

Patri sir asked to conduct a three-day meditation Yajna in Bhimavaram in the month of February-2003. My husband happily agreed. The Yajna was held from 13th to 15th of February-2003. In those days, no one in West Godavari district knew what meditation was. Therefore, masters from Tirupati, Gudivada, Vijayawada, and Bellary came to spread meditation. They went around many villages, distributed pamphlets and invited everyone to come to the Yajna

by telling them about the importance of meditation Yajna and Patriji.

All the masters who came to spread meditation stayed in our house for a month. They would all tell me to meditate. I would ask them, "Why should I meditate?" They would reply, "'meditation cures all diseases', 'meditation bestows all enjoyments', 'meditation bestows all wisdom'". Then I would stubbornly ask, "I don't have any disease, so why should I meditate?" But, after I came into meditation, I came to know that "Meditation not only removes present diseases but also prevents future diseases."

When they said "Meditation bestows all enjoyments," I would think, "I already have money, then why should I meditate?" I thought, 'enjoyment meant only money'. But after I came into meditation, I understood that enjoyment is not money alone. Enjoyment means to live in bliss no matter "where we are, in whatever circumstances we are in."

When they said, "Meditation is the bestower of true wisdom," I would think, "I already have so much knowledge." But after meeting Patriji, I came to know that "What I know is only like a drop of water, whereas what is yet to be known is as vast as the ocean." Before coming into meditation, I would think, "I know everything". After coming into meditation, I understood that "the wisdom I need to know is infinite". But at that time, due to ignorance, no matter how much I was told, I did not meditate.

A 3-day meditation yajna was held in the month of February at Bhimavaram. The second day happened to be our wedding day. I don't know how Patriji came to know about it. But without our knowledge, he brought a cake through Mr. Shiva Prasad, made us cut the cake on stage. Sir called me on to the stage, gave me the mike and said, "Ma'am please speak." But I didn't know what to say. I knew nothing about meditation or Patriji. However, since childhood, I never had the habit of lying. I get annoyed if anyone lies. So, without lying I said, "I don't like meditation, I have no interest in Patriji. But I like my husband very much, that's why I am doing all these activities." Patriji immediately said, "Everybody, clap for ma'am" because I spoke only the truth without lying on the stage.

I did not know the importance of Patriji that day. I didn't even know that he could read our minds. Patriji made us cut the cake. He knew that "everyone has such small desires," so he always fulfilled them giving mental joys also.

The Yajna was completed, everyone left, and I again got busy with routine household life spending time with children, daughters-in-laws and grandchildren. But how can nature remain silent when one takes birth for the purpose of doing meditation and instead wastes life without practicing it? In some way or the other, nature gives us a warning and reminds us of the work we are born to do. In that same way, nature reminded me also.

Though I was very healthy, within fifteen days after the Yajna I became bedridden. Severe joint pains developed. Every joint in my body was swollen and became painful. Due to fever, I reached a condition where I could not get out of bed and take even a single step. After tests, the doctors said, "it is arthritis. This cannot be cured. You will have to use medicines lifelong." Then my husband persuaded me by saying, "Didn't Patriji say that meditation can cure any disease? Why don't you try meditation then?" Even though I didn't like it, I meditated for his sake. Before beginning, I firmly decided: "If I get cured, I will myself tell everyone that meditation is good. If I don't get cured, I will never meditate again nor tell anyone about it." With this decision, I started meditation.

Within 15 days of starting meditation, I was able to hold a glass of water. Within a month, I was able to get up and walk. In two months, I became like a normal person. Then I came to the conclusion: "Meditation is really very good."

Every day, I used to meditate for two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening. By the end of two months, meditation had become such a strong habit that if I skipped it even for a day, I would feel as if I had lost something. But if I meditated, I would feel immense joy. I reached a state where I could not live without meditation. My experience taught me that "the joy that is in meditation cannot be found anywhere else. Nothing else can give the bliss that

meditation gives." That's why Patriji, in his 9 jewels of wisdom said, "Experience is knowledge." I did not listen to anyone who told me. No matter how much anyone told me, or how many people advised me, I never listened. But the benefit I gained through meditation made me realize: "There is nothing greater than this."

Patriji never told me to meditate, but after meeting him, I understood who he was. He had the power to know everything about a person the moment he saw them. That is why, when he looked at me, he must have already known: "In the coming days, this lady will never give up meditation. She will certainly go around villages and towns teaching meditation." Since he was such a great being who knew everything, he never forced me by saying "Do meditation." Patriji never troubled anyone, nor forced anyone in any matter. Whatever we did, he would simply say "Alright." Even if we said "I won't do it," he would say "Alright." I personally observed him on many occasions. Thus, the meditation I had begun kept growing day by day, until I reached the stage where I could sit in meditation for the whole night on full moon and new moon nights.

SOCIAL SERVICE

All my family responsibilities are over. Our children got married. At that time my husband felt that I should now be engaged in social service, so he suggested, "take up the position of the President of the Women's Association." With the encouragement of all the members, I became the president. On behalf of the Association, we carried out many programs. The encouragement for all this is Mr. Raghava Rao. Outwardly, it looked as though I was the one doing everything, but in reality, it was my husband who did everything. If I did 25% of the work, he would take care of the remaining 75%. In this way, we conducted many activities.

We have also set up a free homeopathic clinic near the house. There would be a doctor and a nurse. People from the nearby villages would also come to take medicines. Around 100 to 200 patients used to come daily. No matter how much service Mr. Raghava Rao was doing, he would still be thinking of doing more. Besides building temples, meditation halls, marriage halls, and establishing hospitals, he also used to do many service programs holding positions.

After some days, my husband established a Women's Training Institute near our house for me to run it. In that institute, women were taught tailoring, painting, embroidery, soft toys, glass paintings, pot paintings, wall decorations and many other handicrafts-all free of cost. There were three teachers in the institute, and I myself used to teach hand

embroidery. Whenever someone attained proficiency in their chosen craft, we would also issue them certificates. With those certificates, they were able to get loans and jobs as well! Many women learned these skills and started earning independently while staying at home.

Even deaf and dumb children used to learn tailoring, painting, and embroidery from me. One handicapped girl also learned. Harijan children and Muslim children too came to learn. In our institute, we never asked, "Which caste? Which religion?" We gave skill education to everyone. In this way, Patriji's ideals entered into our lives without us even knowing who he was. Teaching everyone is one level, but teaching those who could not even speak is another level altogether. When teaching such children, I used to feel immense joy. Many prominent people, collectors, and ministers visited our institute. They used to say, "If you apply, you can get government help and funds, right?"

But Mr. Raghava Rao never had any interest in such things. He would say, "We will spend a part from what we have, from what God has given us. Then only we will feel satisfied." I always liked whatever he did. I never used to give him any advice, because from the beginning itself he knew everything better than me. In such a case, there was no need for me to say anything. Simply following him is a bliss. Thus, the service that began in that way continues even to this day.

After coming into meditation, the free homeopathy hospital was closed. On meeting Patri Sir, we came to know:

"The greatest service of all is spreading meditation." We understood that spiritual services are greater than material services. Virtuous deeds (punya karmas) may bring prosperous future births, but only liberation deeds (mukti karmas) can lead to a birthless liberated state. So, we closed the free Homeo clinic which benefits the body and started a 3-day "Soul-knowledge Training Camp" which benefits the soul.

This camp, which was started in 2004 has been conducted on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of every month continuing even now. Thousands of people have participated in this camp and many have become Masters. Not only from Andhra and Telangana, but from many other states too, people have come and learned meditation in this camp.

No matter what, we understood that the services related to the soul are far greater than the bodily services. That is why, apart from conducting the camp in Bhimavaram, we also traveled to many villages, states, and even countries. In those villages, we shared meditation and wisdom.

If we think a little, we can understand the vast difference between the body and the soul. The body is impermanent. It lasts only for a short period of time but the soul is permanent, it always exists. Therefore, we can realize how much greater soul-service is compared to bodily service. In a way, the difference between bodily service and soul-service is as great as the difference between a fox and the celestial world of the Nagas (snakes). Therefore, Patriji used to encourage everyone saying, "Do soul-service." From this, we can understand how truly fortunate are those who follow Patriji.

SPIRITUALITY

Since childhood, I used to perform ritual worship (pujas), go to temples, recite chants (stotras), Vishnu Sahasranama, Lalita Sahasranama, and read Bhagavad Gita. I attended Purana discourses as well. I thought, "These are only spirituality." I also did bhajans for 10 years. Every Friday, I would do the Lalitha parayana. Every Friday, we would do bhagavad gita parayana, chant Devi stotras and sing songs in praise of the Goddess. On Tuesdays, I would go to the Rama temple and recite Vishnu Sahasranama, Rama Raksha Stotram, and Hanuman Chalisa. I believed, "By doing all these parayanas, I will gain great virtue (punya)." But I did not think beyond that.

If someone was more involved in these divine activities, we thought, "they had become more spiritual." But until I met Patriji, I did not know that "all these are not spirituality". After meeting Patriji, I understood that Spirituality is related to the 'Soul'. As a 'Soul' means God, it is understood that anything related to the 'Soul' is spiritual. Therefore, it is understood that we must engage in works that uplift the Soul. Patriji said, "It can be considered that one is in spirituality only when one engages in whatever practices or works help in the elevation of the Soul."

I came to know that spirituality means the study of the 'Soul'. If we know about 'Soul', it is like we know everything. If we do not know about the Soul, we can understand that we know nothing.

I understood that "There is nothing outside that we

need to know or attain. Everything is already within us" and the best path to know the Soul within us is 'observation of the breath meditation.' Because, as Patriji explained: "That which goes in and comes out of you is your breath. Everything will be known by paying attention to it." Until we know the Soul, we think: "I am the body." But once we know the Soul, we understand that "This is my body, but I am the Soul."

How is that? Look - we often say, "My leg is pain-ing, my tooth is aching, my body is dark, my body is fair, I got rashes, my nose, my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my hair..." All these are parts of the body. If we say, "These are mine," then who am "I"? If all these parts belong to me, then it means I am something other than the body, right? Then what else exists apart from the body? On thinking deeply, it can be known: "That very 'I' is the Soul within the body." Which means it can be understood that "I am the Soul."

Then it becomes clear that "The body belongs to me." Once this is understood, we begin to strive for the eternal Soul that is, for our true self but not for the body because this body ends with this lifetime. With another birth, there will be another body. But for the Soul, which never perishes through countless births, should I think about "myself" or about the perishable body? It can be understood that I definitely must think about myself, the Soul. All these were explained by Patriji because he knew the 'Truth'. Only those who know the 'Truth' can tell about the 'Truth'.

Patriji possessed knowledge not only about this earthly plane but also about the unseen subtle worlds and the entire creation. In his book, "Jnana Navaratnalu (Nine Jew-

els of Wisdom)," he revealed: "The 'Soul' itself is Parabrahman (the almighty). The 'Jiva' (individual being) itself is God. The body itself is the temple." He also conveyed that "Liberation does not come through rituals, bhajans, sacrifices, or offerings. It comes only through meditation, by knowing the Soul through meditation."

Patriji also said, "Meditation is nothing but observation of the breath. Any other method is not meditation." Because Maharshi Patanjali said: "Dhyanam nirvishayamanah" - meaning meditation is the state where the mind has no object. Therefore, If we recite a chant or repeat it mentally, the mind is still at work. If we focus on an idol, the mind is at work.

If we concentrate on a name or a chant, the mind is at work. If we concentrate on chakras, again the mind is at work. Like that, wherever we focus the mind, it is still functioning. But meditation means the state where the mind is not functioning. To reach that state, one must observe the breath. Only then the meditative state arises."

He further said, "Breath and mind are linked to each other. Therefore, if the mind is to come under our control or if it has to become void, we must observe the breath." Look, when we are angry, the breath becomes fast. When we are calm, the breath becomes slow. This means that breath changes according to the state of the mind. From this, it is understood that if we want a state without mind, we must hold on to the breath. That is why Patriji said, "By holding on to the breath, that is, with observation of the breath, we can undertake an inner journey." It was only because of Patriji that I could understand the real meaning of spirituality.

My Rebirth

I used to practice meditation very well. I used to meditate for two hours in the morning and two hours at night. Once meditation became a habit, if I ever had to stop, I would feel very sad. Meditation became like an addiction for me.

But I never had any interest in spreading meditation. I didn't like telling others or going anywhere for that. So, I would just stay at home, meditate every day and I would accompany Patriji only when he came. In the early days, Patriji would come to Bhimavaram about once every two months and visit all the nearby villages to conduct classes. Traveling with Patriji was such a wonderful experience. He would explain so many concepts, and every word that came from his mouth felt like "this is needed for my life." While listening to him, everyone felt, "He said that just for me." After hearing his words, many people said, "My doubt has been cleared." In the same way, many of my doubts were also cleared.

We used to attend his classes wherever they were held. On November 2nd, 2003, Patriji had a class in Amalapuram. We planned to leave early in the morning. I have a habit of drinking coffee as soon as I wake up. So that day, we decided, "Let's wake up at 4 am, meditate and then leave." I went into the kitchen to prepare coffee and the moment I turned on the stove, huge flames burst out and sur-

rounded me. My whole body caught fire! Immediately, my husband came and covered me with a blanket but the flames didn't stop. Then, he threw another blanket over me and the flames finally stopped. While putting out the flames, his hands and legs also got burnt. They rushed me to the hospital right away. The doctors said, "There is no hope" but still admitted me. They did not give any guarantee that I would survive.

Someone informed Patriji about this incident during the class in Amalapuram that day. Then Patriji said, "Ma'am still has work to do on earth; meditate for ma'am" and made everyone meditate. After the class was over there, he came to Bhimavaram and meditated sitting near me and said to everyone, "Madam will definitely survive."

My mother and elder brothers came from West Bengal, thinking I was going to die. My mother asked me, "You always do so many good deeds, right? Then why should you be the one to suffer like this, being burned?" But by then, because of meditation and the wisdom I had learned from Patriji, I did not lose courage. I understood that "In this lifetime, I have done only good and lived well, but perhaps in the past I might have killed many fishes, chickens, goats, and consumed their flesh and blood. This could be the result of that." Once we know that "we only experience the karmas we ourselves have done," then there will be no more suffering. When we know that "the very karmas we decide to experience before coming to earth are the ones we actually go through, then no one will suffer while undergoing them. But

this is unknown to those who do not meditate. It is understood only by those who meditate and gain wisdom.

Thus, I was kept in Bhimavaram hospital for ten days. My children were very anxious and shifted me to Apollo Hospital in Hyderabad, thinking, "There is no hope here." Even the doctors there said, "Survival is very difficult."

All my family members were deeply worried, not knowing what to do. But the very next day, Patriji came and said to everyone, "Ma'am will definitely survive." He sent Patri ma'am to meditate near me for four days. She placed a pyramid above my bed in the hospital and meditated there. Patriji also made many pyramid masters to meditate for me. In the hospital, visitors were allowed only one hour in the evening. During that hour, Mr. Raghava Rao would come daily and speak to me only about wisdom. He cared for me with so much comfort, love and tenderness, he consoled me and cared for me like a small child.

Even after two months, my entire body had become motionless. Because all the blood had drained out, my body had stiffened like a corpse. Every day, doctors would wrap me with gauze (dressing) and thick cotton bandages, but by the next day, those would turn into layers soaked with pus and blood, sticking to my body. Then they would pour saline bottles over me to soak and peel off those bandages. At that time, the pain and burning were unbearable, nothing less than hell. Look, when even a finger burns while cooking, we cry

out saying, "it is burning, burning!" Then, when the whole body is burnt, how much burning pain must be endured? On top of that, being unable to move and lying in the same position caused bedsores on my back, which were extremely painful. That means, there was pain even while lying down and there was no chance to get up. But I understood "this is nothing but the result of my karma!" my meditation power gave me the strength to go through that pain.

During those two months, my body had completely stopped moving. The doctors said, "The body is not responding to medicines" and would only do the dressings. By then, Patriji had come three times. I, who would always speak courageously, when Patriji came the fourth time, held on to him and cried. Usually, Sir would sit on a chair and talk, but that day, he sat on the floor holding my burnt left hand. I cried saying, "I don't want this kind of life where I cannot even move an inch."

In those days, I loved doing service. I thought, "If I die, the Institute will be closed. I must live a few more years and do service." I told the same to Patriji. I never knew that the desire to live could be so worthless. Otherwise, I would not have wished, "I must live." I cried for a long time holding Patriji and said, "I, who wanted to live only for service, but now lying on this bed unable to move even an inch, what service can I do? Living like this is useless, Sir. I don't want such a life." Then Sir asked only one thing: "Will you believe my words, Ma'am?"

I said, "Definitely Sir, I will believe."

Then Sir said, "You will definitely live. You will do all your work and also roam normally."

Then, a meditation yajna was held in Tirupati. When I once again began crying, saying, "I won't be able to go there", Sir said, "What Tirupati, ma'am? We will even go abroad and teach meditation." But at that time, I couldn't believe those words. I thought, "What? me? How can someone like me, who cannot even move an inch, ever go abroad?" But in May 2012, when I went to Malaysia and Singapore to give classes, I felt: "When a word comes from the mouth of a Yogi, it will definitely happen." That day, Sir comforted me gently for nearly two hours and then said, "Close your eyes and sleep, ma'am, I will sing a song." He then sang the song "Nanaati Bratuku Natakam" composed by Annamacharya, and put me to sleep like a small child and then left.

What virtue from some past lifetime must I have carried, that I received the fortune of being sung to sleep like a baby by such a great Guru? From that day on, in my eyes, Patri Sir remained both as a father and as a Guru. About a month after that, even though the medicines did not work, I survived and came back to life. This clearly shows how powerful Sir was. Even when the medicines failed, when my body was stiff like a stick and when doctors said, "She will not survive," with the energy given by Sir, I lived and returned.

Everyone including the doctors were astonished.

Even though I survived, I was still unable to walk. Two nurses were there to help me bathe and walk. The doctor had clearly said, "She will not be able to walk for up to six months." But with the help of the nurses and my husband, I managed to walk and even climbed to the first floor of Apollo Hospital within just 15 days! The doctors were astonished and asked, "We thought you wouldn't survive, and now how is it that you are able to walk so soon?" I told the doctor, "You give the medicine, we do the meditation. When both are combined, recovery happens faster."

Once I was able to walk, I went to Patriji's house. As soon as our car stopped, Sir himself came to the car, opened the door and with the affection of how one would carefully lift a little child, he helped me out and made me sit in a chair inside the house. He then called out his mother, saying, "Mom! Bhimavaram Ma'am has come to our house. Come and see her!"

That day, in Patriji's face, I saw the very joy of a father whose child, once thought to be dying, has come back alive and returned home! Looking at me, he said, "Ma'am, you look as beautiful as a golden doll (Aparanji Bomma)." By then, my hair had burned off, my eyebrows were gone, and my face and body were scarred with white patches, making me look terrifying. For Sir to say such words at that moment shows how much meaning they carry. Patriji never spoke

a meaningless word. Every word he spoke carried profound meanings, which could only be understood with a lot of wisdom but not otherwise. Before my burns, I used to be very proud thinking, "I am beautiful, I know everything, and whatever I know is correct." But during the three months that I stayed in the hospital, recalling Sir's words, I understood how ignorant I was. We usually think, "Everything is in our hands, things will happen as we wish." But, nothing is in our hands and nothing happens exactly as we want. I understood that nature is always watching. Whatever we have done in the past, whatever must come to us will surely come and whatever must be given will surely be given.

No one can escape karmas. One must know that "our life is according to the law of karma." As Sir said, "If you do good, you receive good; if you do bad, you receive bad." Remembering all this, I have known, "This suffering must be the result of some harm I had done to someone, somewhere, long ago." That is why I did not feel sorrow for losing all my beauty. Once I have known that "whatever is necessary is what remains with us," there will not be any grief. In this way, both my ego and my attachment towards my body faded away. During those three months, my soul became purified like pure gold. That is why sir spoke those words. Sir never looks at outer beauty; he always sees inner beauty. For yogis, only the inner beauty matters.

Why I am saying this is, one day I went to

Rajahmundry for Patriji's class. Many people came near sir, and I was sitting right beside him. Just then, a lady came in with heavy makeup and sat close to sir, talking with him. Immediately, sir said, "This is not a 'Miss India' or 'Miss World' contest happening here." When Sir said that, the meaning was clear, "Inner beauty of the soul is more important than outer beauty." Meaning, it can be understood that sir always looks at the soul's beauty and never at external beauty, right? Like that, I thought, "Sir has appreciated the inner beauty within me." Then I asked Sir, "Sir, in this terrible state, I cannot show my face to the world. But how will my desire to see you be fulfilled?" Sir gave me a blessing and said, "Ma'am! Until you will be able to come out, I myself will come to see you." And every month he came for a day, spent the whole night with us, shared many concepts, and gave us a lot of spiritual knowledge!

Sir transformed me from being like a worm into a butterfly. Like that, he came every month! After two years, Sir once told me, "Ma'am, I gave you my word, so I must definitely come. But if I am very far away, isn't it difficult? Won't it be hard for me to come?"

Then I felt, "I should not trouble sir for my happiness. I must not trouble him anymore." So I said, "Sir! Now I am fine. I will never trouble you again. From now onwards, I will come to see you sir!" For a disciple like me, Sir had given his word and just to keep that word, he would come no

matter how difficult it was. These days, there are disciples who run after Gurus, but how many Gurus are there who look after their disciples like their own children, taking the trouble to go to them and console them?

On that occasion, Patriji asked me, "Ma'am! Shall I tell you what your past birth was?" But I replied, "No, please don't." Everyone asked me, "When Sir is offering to tell you about your past birth, why are you refusing?" But for some reason, I never felt like knowing about the past. No one carries past-life memories in any lifetime. If the Creator has set this rule, it must mean that past-life experience is not necessary for the present life, right? Anyway, the present is always based on the past. From Patriji I had learned: "If you do good, you get good; if you do bad, you get bad." So, I must have done a lot of good deeds in the past that's why I got a Sadhguru like Patriji in this birth. That means my past life must have been a good one. But to me, this life feels far greater, because I am a disciple of Patriji in this life! Just thinking that gives me immense joy. Even if the past was great, it feels small compared to this joy. What could be greater than being known as a disciple of Patriji? That is why I told sir that I don't want to know my past.

Just like Patriji, my husband also plays an equally responsible role in me gaining such great wisdom. Truly, after marrying Mr. Raghava Rao, I experienced joy, but after coming into meditation, that happiness doubled. After meeting Patriji, I came to know what birth really means, how we

take birth, how we ourselves choose the people around us, whether they are our parents, our spouse, whether we are born as female or male. All of this is chosen by us. Not only that, I also came to know that "we design our own life - how we should be born, where we should be born." After understanding this, I gained a deep awareness about life.

After my accident, my husband took care of me with precious love and affection. When a wife is beautiful, any husband would naturally treat her lovingly, but when I had lost all my beauty, was bedridden for five to six months in ill health, he still cared for me like a little child and served me. Even when he came to the hospital, he would spend that one hour with me only discussing spiritual topics, sharing many things that would uplift me. To ease the burning sensation in my body, he would divert my attention by telling me new insights he had read in books. Every day he would speak to me about many such matters. As long as I was on the bed, he, like a guru, told me many things. In this way, he greatly encouraged me in my spiritual growth. Thus, for two years doing meditation, reading many books, and learning numerous things from Patriji whenever he visited, while also receiving the teachings of Mr. Raghava Rao, I was able to grow into a Master.

Me, Spreading Meditation

From the time that incident happened, my life completely changed. In a way, it should be said that it was like a "Rebirth" for me.

After I came back from the hospital, I kept practicing meditation and reading books. By the time I had spent two years meditating like this, I also began to feel, "I must teach meditation to everyone." Meditation is such a wonderful practice, yet people are unaware of it and hence no one is meditating. Everyone was under the impression that "Liberation can be attained through rituals, devotional songs, hymns, pilgrimages, chants, sacrifices, and religious rites." But no one has the understanding that "a person can achieve the desired state only through meditation," no guru is telling it.

Many people read the Bhagavad Gita, but the fact that Lord Krishna taught, "Be a Yogi," is not understood by anyone. That is why no one is trying to become a yogi. Everyone remains only as devotees.

They all believe that "worship alone is devotion" and feel satisfied with that. If their problems do not get resolved, they complain, "That God has no compassion," and then change the deity or even shift to another religion. But they have to know that "God does not remove anyone's suffering." They fail to know that one must remove their suffering themselves; the power lies within them.

Whoever attains 'wisdom' never grieves. Why? Because in the Gita, the God said: "jnanajni dagdha karmanam" - meaning, through the fire of wisdom, all karma is burnt away and all suffering is removed. Then why are all these rituals being performed? The reason is that, because of parents and gurus who lack soul-knowledge, society believes that "the idol itself is God." Thus, everyone is relying on the idol, that is, on the untruth instead of relying on the 'truth', the 'soul', through meditation. I also did not know this until I met Patriji.

Although there are gurus in the world who know the truth, they have surrendered to the attraction of wealth and fame, leading people along the path of untruth. But after Patriji came, not only did we come to understand what truth really is, we also came to know that "an idol is not God; the 'soul' itself is God." He explained, "Holding on to an idol gives no benefit; one must hold on to the 'soul'. The path of holding the 'soul' is 'meditation'." He further taught, "God is not found outside; He is found within. 'God' means the 'soul', which cannot be seen with these eyes." Therefore, if we abandon the Almighty within us and hold on to idols outside, we are only wasting our time. But if we do what must be done, we will definitely attain what must be attained.

Patriji had no need of fame or wealth. He was a great soul who came to this earth only to speak the 'Truth'. No matter what anyone thought or said, he never cared. He never misled anyone; instead, he declared the 'truth' openly, like

breaking a pot with a loud crack. Truly, it is a blessing to find such a Guru.

Adi Shankaracharya once said that "a human birth is enriched with three jewels." What are these three jewels? 1) To be born as a human being. Attaining human birth itself is like attaining one jewel. 2) The desire for liberation and the urge to know the 'truth'. If such a desire arises, it is like attaining the second jewel. 3) Even if one has the desire for liberation, the third jewel is finding a Guru who can guide them on that path. But Shankaracharya said, "It is very rare to attain all three jewels." Now, do not all Pyramid Masters have these three jewels? I felt, "Doesn't it mean that there are no beings on earth more fortunate than the Pyramid Masters"?

Because of Patriji, everyone is practicing meditation, reading wisdom oriented books and attending spiritual gatherings related to soul-knowledge. In this way, they are learning many new matters of wisdom. Whenever I learn such new things, it feels wonderful and fills me with great joy.

Patriji used to say, "Whatever is shared will be multiplied." After understanding this, I felt that the 'meditation' I had learned and the 'truth' I have known must also be shared with everyone. I too felt, "I must spread meditation," but then again a doubt arose within me, "I don't have any experience, right?" Patriji would say, "Just tell about two things, that is enough, 1. Non-violence, 2. Anapanasati (observation

of the breath meditation).

If you speak only about these with the people, that is enough." Then I gained courage and said, "Sir, I also want to teach meditation." Immediately Sir said, "You were born only to teach meditation, but until now you never opened your mouth, did teach anyone so I didn't say anything. But now you said, 'I will teach meditation' and I am very happy. Please teach, ma'am." Thus, I received the blessings of guru.

Then I thought, "How should I begin?" and felt, "During the month of Karthika (falls between October and November according to the English calendar), many women avoid eating meat. If I start then, it would be good and I should begin in Bhimavaram itself and teach everyone." So we decided to do a program named 'Intinta Dhyanam' (Meditation at Every Home) and started a 40-day Mandala Deeksha (a 40 day vow). We booked 40 days in advance, printed pamphlets with the schedule and distributed them to everyone. Each day we conducted the session in one street. In that same street, we gave the pamphlets and invited them to meditation telling the benefits of meditation. We began with 40 days but by the time we finished, many more people asked, "Please come and teach meditation in our house also." Then Mr.Raghava Rao said, "In that case, do it for 108 days" and immediately got the pamphlets printed for 108 days. In my mind, I felt scared thinking, "Will I really be able to do all these days?" But with the encouragement of Mr. Raghava Rao, I was able to complete it successfully.

Patri Sir had such an extraordinary memory. In spite of traveling to so many towns, meeting countless people, spreading meditation tirelessly and being among so much hustle, he would still call us in between asking, "Ma'am, how is the "intinta dhyanam" (meditation in every home) program going on in Bhimavaram?" Exactly around 40 days, without us even reminding him, Sir himself said, "Tomorrow the 40 days will be completed. I am coming to Bhimavaram." We were amazed thinking, "With so many responsibilities and engagements, how wonderfully sir remembered this, right?!"

Around the 108 days being completed, Sir said, "Tomorrow marks the completion of 108 days. Wherever you have your class tomorrow, I will come there." Once again, we were amazed. Seeing how well Sir remembered everything truly surprised us. We felt, "He is multi-dimensional, right? That's why anything is possible for him." Then, we told Sir, "It is not you who will come to the class we are conducting. Instead, we will arrange a class for you." And so, we organized a class for Sir. In that class, we had all those who had attended throughout the 108 days and those who had booked the most classes be personally felicitated by Sir. Everyone felt overjoyed, saying, "For such a small effort from us, to be honored by such a great Master himself, what a blessing!" That is why Sir always said, "If you do what must be done, you will definitely receive what you are meant to receive." They did what needed to be done and they received exactly what they were destined to. Completing the

'intinta dhyanam' (meditation in every home) gave me immense joy.

In the beginning, when I was afraid and asked Sir, "What should I say?" he replied, "Just share your own experience." So, I would share my 'rebirth' experience and then tell about the verse from the Uttara Gita.

**Shlok|| puja koti samam stotram stotra koti samo japhah
japa koti samam dhyaanam dhyanakoti samolayah**

After telling about that verse, I would add, "Isn't meditation greater than everything else?" While sharing like this, I would often feel, "I must say something new each day." Then, whenever I read the Uttara Gita again, I would find something new. So, as I continued to tell every day, the things I shared felt new even to me. When I told this to sir, he said, "Ma'am! Whoever spreads meditation, receives the help of two astral masters. So, you just try to share."

That gave me even more courage and I continued completing 108 days. Immediately after that, nature gave me a gift. One day, Veera Jagadishwari ma'am from Vizag called me and said, "Ma'am, you must do a one-day class in Vizag." I replied, "I will think about it and let you know." Soon after, I received a call from Sir. I told him, "Sir! Veera Jagadishwari ma'am called me. But... will I be able to do a one-day Class?" Instantly Sir said, "You have already conducted 108 days of classes. Why wouldn't you be able to one day class? You can definitely do it. Please go ahead, Ma'am." The moment Sir

said "okay", I felt immense confidence that I could certainly conduct the one-day class. Because I firmly believe that the disciples who have the blessings of the Guru can accomplish anything.

Patri sir would always say, "Nature observes everything." I felt that, because of my efforts in spreading meditation, nature had promoted me as a "One-day Master." That's how I conducted my very first one-day class.

After a few more days, I felt, "It would be good to do in 108 villages." So, I set a target for myself: "I must go to 108 villages and teach." I shared this thought with Patri sir and he said, "surely, do it." As soon as I completed that, Patri Sir released a pamphlet titled "Devalayalu dhyanalayalu" (Temples as Meditation Halls). I felt that sir released that pamphlet with the intention of transforming all temples into meditation halls. So, I thought, "We must start meditation saptahas (seven-day programs) in temples." Once again, I got sir's 'okay' and began the saptahas completing them in 40 temples!

After finishing a saptaha in each temple, I would then organize another 40 days of classes there and assign those 40 days to one master each. In this way, many have grown as masters in Bhimavaram. Because of Patri Sir's books and Mr. Raghava Rao's books, anyone could easily teach classes. By handling temples, everyone developed the habit of reading books and attending classes wherever they were

held without missing them. That's when we understood why Patri sir always insisted that everyone should spread meditation.

By teaching meditation, not only do others come to know about meditation, but we also grow. The books we read and the classes we listen to improve our wisdom. However, if we only keep listening to what others say, we remain as disciples. But from the moment we start teaching, we grow as gurus. Patri sir explained that every Pyramid master must both practice and teach because then only one can "rise from the existing state to a higher state." That is why sir asked us to teach classes. Normally, gurus create only disciples, but Patri sir has been creating gurus out of everyone. That is why Patri sir is admired as the "Great Guru" by everyone.

After completing 40 temples, Patriji gave a date for conducting the "Dhyana Grameenam" class in Bhimavaram. There are 900 villages in West Godavari. Mr. Raghava Rao's wish was, "We must cover all the villages, complete the spreading of meditation and ensure that many people attend Patri sir's class." Therefore, a very large ground was booked for the program. At first, we all wondered, "Will such a big ground really be filled?" But since that was Mr. Raghava Rao's strong intention, we believed, "If that is his resolution, it will definitely happen."

With the determination that "this program must be conducted in a grand way," all the Bhimavaram Masters en-

thusiastically took part and made it a grand success. Everyone worked hard personally going to each village, distributing pamphlets and inviting people as if inviting them to a wedding, by putting a tilak on their foreheads. For two full days, all of Bhimavaram resounded with bands, everyone as teams went door to door distributing pamphlets and inviting people with tilak. Mr. Raghava Rao always says, "Whatever we do must be very unique. It should not be like what everyone else does, there must be newness in every work."

At the program held in the DNR College Grounds, around 13,000 people attended! People came from every village in buses and cars. Since arranging food inside the grounds would delay their return journey, we packed meals and distributed them in their buses and cars. For the local people, arrangements were made at the grounds itself. Mr. Raghava Rao organized everything so well that no one faced any inconvenience. Patri sir also gave a very good class at the program. Even before the program began, we said only one thing: "Sir, we have invited everyone and we expect that many people will come. But they must all be captivated by your teaching. We have done our part to the best of our effort. Now, your grace must shower upon them. Your teaching must influence them all."

Until then, none of the programs had ever drawn such a huge crowd. Patri sir sang Vemana poems so wonderfully and explained why one must give up eating meat. He also spoke about the greatness of meditation and why every indi-

vidual should practice it. He explained what is the meaning of Kali Yuga and what the coming Satya Yuga is, describing in detail the characteristics of that era and how people should live. Sir emphasized, "The way to remove your suffering is in your own hands. No God will remove your problems or interfere in your life." He added, "Those who have meditation in their lives will always live joyfully and those who spread meditation will live in the state of Brahmananda (divine bliss)." Thus, the program turned out to be truly magnificent. All the newspapers reported: "An ocean of meditation has overflowed in Bhimavaram" in this way all the Bhimavaram pyramid masters worked together collectively and the result of that united effort left us with the sweetest of memories.

In this way, we continued to spread meditation. A year after 'Dhyana Grameena', Patriji told us, "Now you must organize a 'Dhyana Mahila Program.'" Once again, all the volunteers and Masters intensified the spreading of meditation. Sir said, "In this program, only women should participate. Not a single man should be present in the ground. Since this is a women's program, men should not be seen here." We also conveyed the same to everyone. But those who came from distant villages needed the help of men to travel, a few men came only from far away places. We arranged it so that inside the ground only women were seated, while the men were made to sit inside a hall. We set up a screen and arranged a live streaming for them to watch what was happen-

ing outside.

However, as soon as sir got down from the car, he went straight to the men, shook hands with them and greeted them. From this, we understood that sir would sometimes test whether we have discipline or not. Yet, at the same time, he would make everyone happy. That day, sir taught a wonderful concept about the "Moon (Jabili)" and filled all the women with great enthusiasm.

In this way, all the classes that took place in Bhimavaram happened wonderfully. Because of that, we all grew a lot. The better we spread the meditation, the more we grow not just as disciples but as Gurus. In life, we should not remain only as disciples, we must grow into Gurus. Sir always used to say the same. Thus, with my continuous spreading of meditation, today I have grown into a Master who can conduct a three-day class. This growth, I can say, is entirely due to the grace of Patriji and my husband Mr. Raghava Rao.

Sir would always say, "What is shared will be multiplied." Patriji used to say, "The joy of teaching meditation is a thousand times greater than the joy of practicing meditation." That is the absolute truth.

The Patriji I know

It is very difficult to understand Patriji. He cannot be understood by those who remain in the physical state or the mental state. His words and his actions can be understood only when one crosses these two states and reaches the intellectual state and the soul state. Only those who reach that state can understand him.

Those in the physical state ask, "Why does he allow women and girls to come so close to him? Why does he let them press his legs? Other Swamijis don't do that, right?" This is because in the physical state there is the distinction of male and female. But at the soul level, such differences do not exist. Only the ignorant people who cannot see beyond the physical state, make such separations and talk that way. Hence, it can be said that they have not gone beyond the physical state.

Those in the mental state ask, "Why does he get so angry? Can't he tell gently? Why does he hit?" Anyone who asks like this is surely in the mental state because those in the mental state have ego. It is precisely to break down that ego that the guru behaves in such ways. Without understanding this, people misinterpret his words and his actions. For a stone to become a sculpture, it must first endure many blows of the chisel (carving tool) in the hands of the sculptor. If the sculptor thinks, "Oh, the stone will feel pain, let me leave it

as it is," then the stone would never transform into a sculpture. Similarly, the guru is like a sculptor. Using the chisel of his words and actions, he behaves like that to transform the ignorant disciple into a beautiful sculpture. If we fail to understand this and, out of ignorance, throw false accusations at him, we will be at loss. That is why those who are in the mental state misunderstand his behavior, but they do not search for the deeper reason behind it.

Now the third type are those who are in the intellectual state. They will grasp how invaluable each of his words is. Only those whose intellect has blossomed can understand him but ordinary people cannot understand him. Only those who have matured in intellect can grasp the power within him and the wisdom he embodies; otherwise, he cannot be understood.

Those who have grown in the soul state, can clearly understand why he came to this Earth, what work is needed for this planet and what he is doing here.

He has come to this Earth to uphold the dharma and to reveal what Truth really is. In this Kali Yuga, both the truth and righteousness have disappeared.

Truth means knowing that every human being himself is divine, that is, the 'Soul'. Every person can know that they are divine only through meditation. Then, for effective meditation, one must practice righteousness. That means giving up the path of violence which is meat-eating. Give up

violence and focus on the swan, that is, on the breath, every person knows that "I myself am a God." When everyone strengthens their soul-power and becomes powerful, then the eight supernatural powers (siddhis) and the eight aishwaryas (divine prosperities) will be under their control.

When we look at a pomelo fruit (*Citrus maxima*), we immediately think, "It must be very sweet and tasty" but do we bite into it right away? No! If we bite hastily, it tastes bitter and sour with bitter seeds inside. If we reject it just because it is bitter and sour, we can never taste the fruit. That bitter rind is actually for the sake of fruit's protection and those bitter seeds are what give birth to another tree. In the same way, Patriji is like that fruit! His words are like the hard seeds; his behavior is like the bitter rind. At first, no one will like his words. If they abandon him for that reason, they can never become wise, nor can they make another wise. But if they understand the meaning hidden in his words, they become wise and make others also wise. This can only be understood by those who have understood Patriji.

A message that I received about Patriji in meditation on Guru Purnima

No matter how much we speak about Patriji, it always feels less. The words that came from his mouth were filled with great wisdom.

It is astonishing when we look at the work he did on this earth for humanity. Every single day, he would travel for many kilometers yet, he did not show any sign of tiredness even once. What we could always see in him was a deep longing, "I must continuously share wisdom with humanity." Whenever he was teaching wisdom, he appeared like a divine incarnation who descended on this earth only to remove the sorrows of mankind.

Sorrow and suffering will not go away unless one does enough meditation practice (personal effort). Just as a disease that appeared yesterday cannot be cured without taking medicine today, similarly, "the sorrows carried from past lives can only be removed in this life through meditation practice" said sage Vasishta. In the same way, Patriji also used to say: "If sorrows must go, if diseases must be cured, if one must attain soul-knowledge and Brahma Jnanam (knowledge about the Almighty), then meditation must be practiced.

Just as Sage Vasishta imparted wisdom to Lord Rama, in the same way Patriji imparted wisdom to us. He kept ev-

eryone in bliss. He continuously worked putting great effort with the wish that "Everyone should become wise." He also made many Pyramid masters and encouraged them to spread meditation.

In ancient times, wisdom existed in the form of the srutis. But they were very difficult for human beings to understand. The srutis were as entangled as a woman's hair when rubbed with soapnuts, all twisted and knotted. That is why the sages used to say, "Srutis are very hard to understand." Such srutis were later divided into 4 Vedas and the 18 Puranas by Sage Vyasa. He imparted

The Rigveda	to	Paila
The Yajurveda	to	Vaisampayana
The Samaveda	to	Jaimini
The Atharvaveda	to	Sumantu and
The eighteen Puranas	to	Suta.

The word "Veda" itself means "Wisdom." Vyasa spread that wisdom to all corners of the world.

Patriji also has been sharing this wisdom in the form of small, simple concepts that everyone can easily understand. He even wrote books in simple, everyday language so that even children could understand them. In spreading wisdom this way, Patriji appears like Sage Vyasa. Like the Buddha, he emphasized non-violence greatly. He repeatedly said, "The root cause of all human suffering is meat-eating. As long as violence exists, there can be no peace among people

and vegetarian food is human food." Just like the Buddha's arrival brought an end to animal sacrifices in yajnas and rituals, Patriji also, like Buddha, has spread wisdom while taking humanity away from violence.

Similarly, Adi Shankaracharya taught the philosophy of non-duality (advaita). He traveled across India three times, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, restored many temples, established four peetas in the four directions of India and imparted wisdom. All his scriptures were teachings of wisdom only. In the same way, Patriji not only spread meditation and soul-knowledge throughout India but also took it abroad. He made people construct many pyramids and mega pyramids in villages, towns, and cities. Thus, we can see that the work Patriji has done is the same as what Vasishta, Vyasa, Buddha, and Adi Shankaracharya once did. From this, we can understand how powerful he is.

Programs by the Tatavarthy's that will be broadcasted on YouTube:

a) Channel name: **Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao**

This channel has 2,000+ videos featuring messages from Mr and Mrs Tatavarthy.

b) PMC has also launched a YouTube channel for Brahmashri Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao.

Channel name: **Brahmashri Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao.**

c) For messages from trainees who have trained under Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy, watch the Tatavarthy Spiritual Trainees YouTube channel.

d) You can also go directly to the YouTube app, type Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao in the search bar, and watch all the Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy videos.

The motherly love I saw in Patriji

I had always seen Patriji as a father and a Guru but through one incident I also experienced the motherly love within him. Once, Mr. Raghava Rao and I conducted a three-day Silent Meditation session in Whitefield, Bengaluru. Patriji came to that class and gave a 1 hour discourse. When he was leaving, everyone accompanied him. Even Mr. Raghava Rao asked me, "Shall we also go?" I replied, "You go. It is just 8 o'clock now, meditation is until 10, right? I will come after the meditation."

So, Mr. Raghava Rao went along with Patriji. At 10 o'clock, Mr. Raghava Rao sent word with a car, saying, "Patriji is leaving, come quickly." By the time I came, Patriji had just stepped outside and was about to get into the car. Seeing me, he immediately said, "Have you come now? I will leave after I serve you food." Saying so, he took me near the dining table. By then, the cooking was finished, everyone had already eaten and even he had eaten and was ready to leave. Yet, he came back just to serve food to me!

When we went near the table and looked at the vessels, everything was empty. Immediately Sir said, "Oh, everything is over. But I wanted to serve you food. Never mind, I will cook now, serve you and then I will leave." Then and there, he cooked afresh, served me food and only after that he left. By then, it was already 11 o'clock at night, it had started raining and he still had to travel from Karnataka to

Andhra. Yet, in spite of all that, he cooked and served me the food and then left! From this, I understood that "When Sir gives his word, he fulfills it no matter how difficult it may be. He takes care of disciples like his own children." I understood that sir loves those who meditate and those who spread meditation. He is willing to endure any amount of hardship for them.

That day I saw a mother's heart in Sir. Only a mother satisfies her child's hunger. Only a mother recognizes a hungry child who has come from outside even beforehand. In the same way, that day, I saw motherly love in Patriji. I was wondering in my mind, "How can I express this feeling to Patriji?" The very next day, Patriji himself called me and said, "Yes, ma'am, tell me." I immediately said, "Sir, you gave me rebirth and became a father. You gave me wisdom and became a guru. At night, you cooked and served me food and became a mother. I wonder how many more roles I will see in you in the future." Hearing that, he just said, "Is that so?" and ended the call laughing. Thus, I saw a mother in sir and experienced motherly love in him.

Powers of Sadhgurus

Such Sadhgurus possess four types of powers. With these powers they initiate their disciples. Patriji also used to give such initiations and if we observe carefully, we will understand. They are: 1) Initiation through vision (Drik diksha) 2) Initiation through touch (Sparsha diksha) 3) Initiation through speech (Vaak diksha) 4) Initiation through thought (Mano diksha).

1. "Initiation through vision":- This is called the "Meena Nyaya" (the logic of the fish). A fish lays eggs and then turns back and gazes at them intently. Through the mother fish's focused sight, the eggs gradually transform into baby fish. Similarly, a Sadhguru, by giving this initiation through vision, transmits power and bestows wisdom to the disciple. If we notice, sometimes Patriji would suddenly widen his eyes and look directly into our eyes. At that very moment only the compassionate glance of the guru falls upon us. When the Guru's grace touches us in this way, we leave behind an ignorant life and become wise beings.

2. "Initiation through touch":- This is called the "Vihanga Nyaya" (the logic of the bird). A bird lays eggs, sits over them and through the warmth and touch of its wings, the eggs hatch into chicks. In the same way, the Sadhguru, through his touch, empowers his disciples.

That is why Patriji always gave a handshake to everyone.

3) "Initiation through Speech":- This is called "Bhramara-Kitaka Nyaya" (the logic of the wasp and the insect). The wasp, after feeding on leaf-sap (lead's liquid), brings an insect into its nest, keeps it inside and stays at the entrance making a humming sound. The insect inside keeps listening to the wasp and gradually transforms into a wasp itself. Afterwards, it stops eating leaf-sap and begins to drink nectar from flowers.

In the same way, before coming into meditation, we were like insects - eating meat and living in ignorance. But by listening to Patriji's teachings, we have also gained soul-knowledge, transformed like butterflies, given up meat-eating and nurtured wisdom. Today, though we may not be at Patriji's level, we are at least able to share some knowledge with others. If we have received such power, it is only due to the power of Patriji's words. That very power has turned us into gurus.

4) "Initiation through thought":- This is called "The Logic of the turtle. "A turtle lays eggs in one place and goes away in search of food. When it hears the sound of thunder in the clouds, it makes a resolution: "May my eggs turn into young ones with this sound of the clouds." Immediately, the eggs hatch into young ones. In the same way, wherever the Sadhguru may be, he always protects his disciples.

This fourth initiation was personally experienced by myself. Patriji used to say, "If you want to attain soul-knowledge and grow, there should be no ego. Ego is the biggest obstacle to soul-knowledge." In 2005, when I first began to

spread meditation, in one village people did not turn up. Then, I spoke very harshly to the organizers with ego: "If you had tried, people would have come. You did not put in the effort!" At that time, it was about 2pm in the afternoon. While we were having lunch and talking, suddenly a phone call came from Patriji. He asked, "How was the class, ma'am?" I said, "It went well." He asked the same thing three times and all three times I gave the same reply. After that, sir was silent for a minute.

Immediately, inwardly, his message flashed within me: "I am such a Brahmajnani... 20 years ago, I travelled for six hours to teach meditation for just to two people. Then who do you think you are? Are ten people not enough? People will gather before you according to your power. A seeker must be able to accept everything." That is how I understood it. Wherever sir may be, he knows everything, he can know and he has that power.

If the ego within me grows, I will not progress. That is why he said to me in that way. The call I received from sir actually came from Australia. From this, we can understand how great his power is. Teachings of such a sadhguru must be constantly heard and reflected upon (revised).

We, who are born as karma beings, are being transformed by Patriji through meditation. From just lumps of flesh that came out of the mother's womb, he is turning us into sacred beings - "mantra lumps" and shaping us into children of wisdom. For such a sadhguru, we cannot repay his debt even if we bow billions of times.

Almighty's grace - Guru's grace

Almighty's grace:-

We have come to this earth to know the truth, our real state of being. This entire creation is the creation of the Almighty. All the 8.4 million species of life are creations of the Almighty.

Among these 8.4 million species, only the human birth is meant for knowing the Almighty. But even after attaining human birth, one cannot immediately know it. Until around 300 to 350 lifetimes pass, the desire "to know" does not even arise and even when that desire arises, one cannot know the Almighty by oneself. For that, one needs a sadhguru. Who gets a sadhguru? Only those upon whom the Almighty's grace falls. When does a sadhguru enter our life? it means, only those whom the Almighty's loves will find a sadhguru. If a sadhguru enters our life, it means we have become recipients of the grace of the Almighty.

If there is no grace of the Almighty upon us, we will not recognise the sadhguru even if he is right beside us. Sadhguru means one who can reveal the truth.

Revealing the truth means going against society itself. While other gurus may preach idol worship, the sadguru alone teaches soul-worship. Other gurus encourage performing virtuous deeds, but the sadhguru shows the path of living without karma because if there is karma, there is rebirth; if there is rebirth, there is suffering. But if the karma ceases (stops), then there is no rebirth at all. All these can be known

only by the sadhguru.

If today we have received a sadhguru like Patriji, it means that either in this birth or in a past birth we carried a deep desire to "know the Almighty"! It is only through the grace of the Almighty that we are able to receive a sadhguru like Patriji. The grace of the Almighty lies upon those who do not harm living beings, who live with love for all and who lead a pure life.

Sadhguru's grace:-

When a sadhguru comes into our life because of the Almighty's grace, we must regard the Guru's words as the very "words of the Almighty." A sadhguru never tells disciples to "perform karmas." That is why Patriji would say, "No sin, no virtue... for us, only the vision of Truth matters." He made us give up meat-eating, keeping us away from sinful karmas and engaged us in meditation gatherings (meditation yajnas), encouraging us towards truthful actions. He would say, "Only through truthful actions does the vision of Truth (vision of the Soul) arise." Hence, he made us conduct meditation yajnas. Sadhgurus always think only for the welfare of this creation.

The Almighty never directly speaks to us. He conveys everything only through the Guru. If He Himself were to do everything, then there would be no need for so many incarnations and so many gurus to come to earth. Since He does not directly speak, He sends gurus to the earth. That is why it is said, "Guru himself is the Almighty."

When the guru speaks, we must feel it, "as though the Almighty is himself speaking." Gurus come only to show

the path but all the work has to be done by us. Patriji has given us the seeds of wisdom. For those seeds to sprout, we must water them with meditation in the field of our body, nourish them using reading books as fertilizer and cultivate them with the right association. Only then we will reap the harvest of soul-knowledge. When we share that harvest with many, it grows into the great tree of Brahma-knowledge (knowledge about the Almighty). Patriji used to say, "When shared, it multiplies; it is stolen away when it is not shared." By trusting the Guru's words and sharing the knowledge we have gained with others, we receive the guru's grace.

We should never discuss worldly matters, problems or material gains with a Sadhguru. Instead, we must focus only on learning spiritual truths, practicing the meditation and studying books as taught by him and sharing the wisdom we have gained. Only then the guru's grace will flow upon us.

All Gurus are like waves in the ocean. Just as a wave rises high, reaches the shore and then merges back into the ocean, gurus also come to this earth for their work and once their work is done, they merge back into the Almighty. That is why, those who stay with the guru while he is on earth, listen to his teachings and preserve them in the form of books, can truly walk on the spiritual path.

Without learning directly from a guru who is alive, who only hears from others cannot progress towards the right goal. Therefore, those who have lived with the guru are indeed very fortunate and those who walk on the path shown by the guru become worthy of his grace.

Yearning - Struggle

After taking birth, from childhood to old age, everyone's life is filled with yearnings - struggles. In childhood, there is a yearning like, "I want to play, I want to be mischievous." But elders say, "Study, don't be mischievous, behave like this, behave like that." Then there is a struggle with them.

In youth, there is a yearning like, "I want to roam with friends, go to movies, go on trips, enjoy life." But when elders put restrictions, there is a struggle with them. In adulthood, there is a yearning like, "I must fulfill all responsibilities, earn well, build a good house, buy a nice car, educate the children well and be greater than everyone else." But to achieve all these, one has to struggle daily.

In old age, even after responsibilities are over, there is still a yearning like, "Everyone must listen to me, everything must happen as I say." With such dominance and the fear of losing authority, they struggle to hold their superiority and thus, they will be in sorrow the whole life.

These yearnings and struggles will remain as long as ignorance remains. But once one comes out of ignorance and becomes wise, then one knows what these yearnings and struggles should be directed towards and how they should be used.

Even those who enter the spiritual path cannot escape these yearnings and struggles. Why? Because in the beginning of meditation, there is the yearning, "I must meditate" but then there comes the struggle with the mind which is full of thoughts. Later, the yearning arises: "I must tell everyone about meditation." When one realizes the truth that "God is not in idols, the soul itself is God", then a yearning to share this truth with everyone arises. When one understands that "one cannot really connect with the divine in rituals and that the only way to connect with the divine is through meditation", a yearning "to tell this to everyone" arises but then comes the struggle of convincing those who cannot understand.

When one understands that "harming birds, animals and eating meat is a sin", then a yearning "to make everyone give up meat-eating" arises. But to explain all these, to convince them and to get them to give up meat and take up meditation, one must struggle to a great deal.

In this Kaliyug, ignorance and folly (foolishness) dominate among people. To think, "Whatever I do is correct, I know everything," is folly. To think, "Whatever everyone else does is correct, I must do as they do," is blind-following. Thus, when one yearns to transform those caught in folly and blind-following, one has to engage in much struggle.

In ordinary life, because of yearning and struggle, the body and mind become exhausted, leading to illnesses

like blood pressure and diabetes causing the body to fall into ill-health. But those who enter spiritual life through this yearning and struggle, gain fulfillment, joy and happiness.

Patriji worked tirelessly for 30 years to remove ignorance from people. Those who walk in his footsteps meditate, know the truth and become wise striving to follow his path for the welfare of the world. The very purpose with which Patriji came among the people is the same purpose with which his disciples are working. The yearnings and struggles of Pyramid Masters are only for the welfare of the world! Those who are otherwise cannot be called "Pyramid Masters"!

Patriji's vision was: "Everyone must be transformed into the wise, into the soul-realized beings." For that, he taught, "Each one must do their share of effort." He would say, "Do not think about "What has the Universe given me?" Instead, think about "What did I give to the Universe?"" He never said, "Give up your happiness." Rather, he taught, "We must be happy, while ensuring that others around us are also happy."

Human being means

The body, mind and soul, all three together make a human being.

Body:-

The body comes from parents. It is formed with the five elements of nature. Within this body, there are five motor organs and five sense organs. We, as souls, by our own will, choose a particular type of body depending on what kind of lessons we need to learn and how we wish to evolve spiritually. But after coming, due to ignorance, we think, "I am this body." Until we gain the wisdom that "I am the soul," we remain in the illusion that "I am just the body."

However, we must know that "within this impermanent body lies the permanent entity, the soul." "If the body is pampered with pleasures, it results in disease; but if one is engaged in yoga, one attains wisdom."

Mind:-

The mind is built because of the parents who raise us and the society in which we grow. The mind is not built of flesh and blood. It is filled with the subtle radiance of life-force energy. The mind's work is to receive everything. Whether we like it or not, the mind stays with us throughout our life.

Many people say, "My mind is not well." But it is not about worrying that "my mind is not well", we cannot remove the mind, we must correct it. The only way to correct it is 'meditation'. Our mind becomes polluted by worries and

negative thoughts. Only through meditation, it is possible to remove the impure thoughts within the mind.

The mind dreams and desires more. The mind is like a piece of cloth. If cloth gets stuck on a thorn bush and if we pull it forcefully at once, it will tear. So, we remove it very carefully and gently. Similarly, the mind cannot be changed all at once. It transforms gradually through meditation. A cloth does not disappear suddenly, but if each thread is removed one by one, the cloth vanishes. In the same way, the impurities in the mind are removed little by little every day through meditation until finally, they are completely gone.

Running is difficult for the body and being still is difficult for the mind. The mind must become still, and that is possible only through meditation. The mind is like a garden. We must guard the mind like a soldier like who guards the garden so that strangers or other things do not enter and ensure that weeds do not grow. Similarly, we must also guard the garden of the mind. If weeds remain, the garden cannot flourish. Likewise, in the garden of the mind, useless and unnecessary thoughts must not be allowed to enter. Fears and anxieties are like weeds and if they remain, the 'soul' cannot grow.

If we want to live happily, there should not be negative or destructive thoughts within us. A human being thinks about 60,000 thoughts per day. The strange thing is, 90% of them are about the past. Our thoughts become our actions and our actions become our results. If we dedicate ourselves to transforming the mind, step by step, life moves from an ordinary state to an extraordinary state. If we do not remain

prisoners of the past, we become the architects of the future.

No matter where the boat is sailing, the compass always points north. Likewise, no matter how many worldly affairs there may be, the mind of the meditators always remains focused on the 'soul'.

Any great desire that weakens the mind must be let go. If there is no peace in the mind, just changing places will not bring peace. Only by focusing on the 'soul', the mind attains peace. "Only when the mind becomes zero, we become heroes." But if the mind is the 'hero,' then we are 'zeros.' The moment the mind turns away from worldly matters, it becomes divine in nature. A purified mind itself becomes Brahman (the Almighty). When the mind is turned towards the world, it leads to a 'bond'; when it is turned towards the soul, it leads to 'liberation'. A mind turned towards the soul is freed from everything even if it is being among everything. Just like a lotus remains untouched by the mud in which it grows, a mind turned towards the soul remains untouched by everything it is in, no matter how many karmas it performs.

In still water, even the bottom can be seen clearly. Likewise, if the mind is made still through 'meditation', we can know the 'soul'. As long as the mind dominates a person, the soul cannot be known. When the mind is always occupied with external matters and filled with impurities, it generates negative thoughts. But when thoughts are withdrawn from external objects and directed inwards, the mind attains peace. Through such a peaceful mind, gradually the vision of the Almighty - Brahma-sakshatkara is attained. This leads

to liberation from the cycle of birth and death, as told by Adi Shankaracharya in his 'Vivekachudamani'. "A pure mind becomes like a wish-fulfilling tree (kalpavruksha). An impure mind will never allow the vision of the Almighty and will remain enslaved." Therefore, one must turn the mind inwards through meditation.

Soul:-

The soul originates from the enlightened soul, the Almighty. The Almighty resides in every being as the subtlest of the subtle, as the 'soul'. The 'soul', finer than even an atom, enters into living beings (bodies) and grants them consciousness. The soul has neither death nor birth, neither hunger nor thirst, neither sorrow nor attachment.

- * Death and birth belong to the law of body.
- * Hunger and thirst belong to the law of life-force (vital energy).
- * Sorrow and attachment belong to the law of the mind.

Because the soul is free from these six, it is called 'free of six modifications' (shadurmarahita). Every action of the body is possible only because of the 'soul power'. Without the body, the soul cannot reform itself. The soul is like a seed and the body is like a tree. The more powerful the seed, the stronger the tree it produces will be. In the same way, when the influence of the mind decreases and the 'soul' becomes powerful, the body grows like a wish-fulfilling tree (kalpataru). But, when the soul power is weak, the body becomes unhealthy.

If there is any supreme power in this world, it is only the 'soul-power'. Soul-power awakens the dormant (sleeping), brings forth super-sensory abilities. Just like the life-force (prana), the soul is equally essential to the body. The 'soul' only knows the experiences. It cannot be known through the senses, it is attained only to wisdom. That is why it is called 'soul-knowledge'.

That which unfolds the intellect, ignites the wisdom and energizes the body is only the 'soul'. It possesses countless powers, mystical powers and supernatural powers (siddhis). To perceive and experience them, 'meditation practice' is essential. What can be seen with the ordinary eyes is limited, but what can be seen with the 'eye of wisdom' is unlimited. For that, there must be intense meditation practice and the third eye must be awakened. Whoever opens their third eye becomes God. To know the 'soul' is to know the Almighty (Brahman) itself.

Everything is perishable in this world but the soul alone is imperishable. A meditation practitioner must know that "The 'soul' itself is the Almighty (supreme brahman)." Everyone must know these three truths about the 'soul':

(1) The soul is eternal. (2) One is the soul, not the body. (3) The same soul pervades in every living being.

Through intense 'meditation practice', when miraculous thoughts arise in us, when ideals take shape, our thoughts break the limits and dissolve the bonds and our consciousness, the soul spreads everywhere, across all directions. Then all the dormant (sleeping) powers, talents, and wisdom within us will awaken at once.

Essentials for meditation

For meditation, the most essential things are: 1) Trust, 2) Dedication, 3) Practice and 4) Enthusiasm.

1) Trust:- There are many kinds of meditations but when we have faith in the practice taught by a sadhguru, we perform it sincerely. A sadhguru comes into our life only because of our virtues and good deeds. The practice given by such a sadhguru can never be ordinary. Such sadhgurus always speak the truth, live in truth and lead us towards truth.

When we have trust in our practice and when we come to the opinion that "I can attain wisdom only through this practice", we practice it with a lot of liking. The more liking we develop towards it, the more joyfully we practice it. The 'observation of the breath' taught by Patriji is the same meditation that Gautama Buddha taught to everyone as 'Anapanasati' after trying many kinds of meditations and finally declaring, "This alone is the greatest." Meditation means making the mind void. To make the mind void, we must hold on to the breath because the mind is active in all other practices. But "observation of the breath" quickly takes the mind into voidness. That is why we must have trust in the practice we do.

2) Dedication:- Any work done with dedication becomes highly skillful. Even in studies, they say, "Study with full dedication!" Whatever task is begun with dedication turns

out beautifully. Only when dedication is strong do fruitful results arise. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is explained that dedication is of three types: 1) Tamasic dedication, 2) Rajasic dedication and 3) Sattvic dedication.

It is said that "these arise due to the impressions carried from past lives and also because of the effort made in this present life." Human beings receive results according to the kind of dedication they carry. Sattvic dedication is essential for the practice to be effective and for the wisdom to grow. One can reach the "soul state" only through the 'sattvic dedication.' That's why, it is stated in the bhagavad gita in the following manner.

**Shlok| shraddhavanllabhate jnanam tatparah sanyatendriyah
jnanam labdhva param shantim achirenadhigachchhati
(B.G.4-39)**

Practice cannot be effective through tamasic and rajasic dedication and soul-knowledge will not arise. Therefore, sattvic dedication is necessary for a seeker. Hence, it is instructed that everyone must cultivate sattvic dedication and perform their spiritual activities with it.

3) Practice:- In the beginning, when one starts meditation, it is never effective to anyone. The body does not cooperate to sit in meditation. Naturally, when the eyes are open, many thoughts do not arise but the moment the eyes are closed, countless thoughts begin to flow. One feels like, "When shall I open my eyes?" But by sitting every day, gradually thoughts

reduce and both body and mind get accustomed to meditation practice.

The mind is restless and controlling it is very difficult. However, by cultivating the habit of "observation of the breath meditation" the mind slowly surrenders. No matter how mighty a mad elephant is, it surrenders to a small provocation, when one does the 'observation of the breath meditation', the mind gradually surrenders.

An example for practice: In a village, there was a guru. For a few days, he went for a campaign. In another village, arrangements were made for his meals. The lady of the house where the meal was arranged called the guru's disciple and asked, "What curries does guruji eat?" The disciple replied, "He likes all curries but bitter gourd," and before he could say anything further, the call got disconnected and they couldn't reach her again despite many attempts. The lady thought, "Guruji likes bitter gourd," and prepared all dishes with bitter gourd - bitter gourd curry, bitter gourd chutney, bitter gourd fry, bitter gourd stew, all types only with bitter gourd! When the guru sat for meals and lifted the lids of the dishes, all he saw was bitter gourd in every form. There was no other kind. Therefore, with no alternative, he put the bitter gourd curry and ate it.

The next day, there was a program in the neighbouring village. The people of that village asked those who had cooked the previous day, "What does the guruji like?" They

replied, "Guruji likes bitter gourd. That's why we prepared everything with bitter gourd." Then, the next village people also prepared all kinds of dishes only with bitter gourd. That day also, the guruji had no choice but to eat bitter gourd. In this way, continuously for a week, they kept preparing different dishes only with bitter gourd. Guruji, having no other option, ate them every day. As a result, the guruji gradually got used to eating bitter gourd. Similarly, in the beginning, meditation is not a habit. Even if it feels difficult, if one practices every day for some time, it gradually becomes a habit.

That is why Patanjali Maharshi said, "Abhyasya-vairagyabhyam tannirodhah" (the mind is stilled through practice and detachment). Therefore, to keep the mind focused on the Almighty, practice is essential! By practicing meditation regularly every day without fail, meditation becomes a habit. Hence, 'practice' is necessary for meditation. Even Sage Vasishta taught Lord Rama, "For attaining soul-knowledge, practice is indispensable (mandatory)." The reason is that only through 'soul-knowledge' all sorrows can be destroyed and supreme bliss is attained. So, one must 'practice' consistently to attain 'soul-knowledge', as told by Sage Vasishta.

4) Enthusiasm:- One who practices yoga must be enthusiastic. No matter how many obstacles arise, he should remain unshaken.

Whatever work is undertaken, if it is done with enthusiasm, it gets accomplished very quickly. Just as dedica-

tion, enthusiasm is also equally important while working. That is why elders say, "Better not to do something at all than to do it with a weeping (crying) face." Therefore, not only in worldly activities, but there must be 'enthusiasm' even in soul practice. In the pursuit of knowing the Almighty, the more dedication and enthusiasm a seeker shows, the more nature cooperates. Laziness is of no use in practice. If there is laziness, we can consider that we are influenced by the tamasic quality.

When laziness arises, one should examine whether the food being consumed is increasing the tamasic quality. Any food that strengthens it must be avoided. Especially stale food, fermented food, spoiled food, food cooked and stored in the fridge, or food eaten after it has gone cold. These all increase tamasic quality. Overeating and oversleeping are also characteristics of the tamasic quality. Taking up unnecessary tasks also distracts dedication from meditation. Even physical fatigue (tiredness) can make practice ineffective. Therefore, if all such distractions are reduced, the natural enthusiasm of "I must meditate" will arise. Reading books that enhance 'soul-knowledge' also generates the enthusiasm and desire to meditate.

How to progress in meditation practice?

To progress in meditation practice, the following are most essential: 1) Inquiry, 2) Faith, 3) Self-Criticism, 4) Analysis, 5) Discernment (Discrimination), 6) Detachment and 7) Humility.

1) Inquiry: Just as practicing meditation is important, for progress in practice, inquiry is equally important. First of all, one must inquire: "Who am I?" Meditation is for purifying the mind. Inquiry is for the growth of wisdom. Just as churning curd yields butter, inquiry yields wisdom. Inquiry means inquiry into truth, that is, inquiry into the soul. Philosophical inquiry is the path of wisdom. Wisdom is the right path for soul-realization. Liberation cannot be attained without gaining wisdom no matter how many births one takes. Inquiry such as "Who am I? What is this world?" leads to wisdom. This inquiry happens only when the intellect has blossomed.

Naturally, for the intellect to blossom, meditation is required. Second by second, the mind shows more interest in external matters than in practice. In such situations, one should inquire: "Is this necessary for me or not?" That work should be done only if necessary. Then, interest naturally develops in activities that enhance 'soul-power'. Activities that weaken 'soul-power' should not be pursued. Sage Vasishta said: "Inquiry is supreme wisdom." Therefore, it is known that only through inquiry we can expand our wisdom.

2) Faith: When we find a sadhguru, to attain soul-knowledge

edge, we must have faith in the guru and in the Guru's words. Only then will wisdom arise in us. Sadhgurus always try to lead us towards truth, that is, towards the soul, that is towards the Almighty. Naturally, our mind always tends to run after worldly matters but gurus, through their teachings, constantly guide us on the 'path of the soul' and help us reach the Almighty.

Shabari, the disciple of Matanga Maharshi. He was greatly pleased with her devotion towards wisdom and her deep faith in her Guru, and he said to her, "The Almighty will appear before you in the form of Ram." Believing in her guru's words with full faith, she kept waiting for Ram, saying: "my Ram will come by the time I die; Guru has said so." She never lost hope and at last, she was blessed with Ram's darshan (sight). From this, we understand that once the guru has told, we must always be positive and never allow negative thoughts. That is why, Patriji used to say to us: "Always be with positive thoughts."

Likewise, Patri sir spoke very beautifully about faith. He explained wonderfully: "Though all people may look alike outwardly, depending on the 'soul' state, their stage and direction in life keep changing."

In this world, people of faith can be broadly seen in three types.

A) The first type of faithful ones:- These are like little children in the 'soul' state. They say: "Since we have faith in God or in the guru, our lives must always remain free of problems

and filled with comfort." They place conditional faith on God or guru. Whenever difficulties arise in life, they complain: "Even though we are so busy, we still take time to worship, pray or do good deeds with faith in God, yet there is no benefit. Everything is going to waste."

In the spiritual path, all of them are like children. They expect "God or Guru must respond according to our own wishes and opinions." They fail to recognize that "the realities and conditions of present life are due to past karmas and through these experiences the necessary skills for the future are being given to us." Therefore, they throw tantrums against the law of karma like children. As a result, they subject themselves to even greater sufferings.

For example, when a small child suffering from severe asthma asks for ice cream, the mother will not buy it because the child will suffer more and may end up in the hospital. But the child does not think that way; instead, he sulks against his mother saying, "She did not fulfill my wish." In the same way, these devotees and disciples sulk against God or guru, saying: "They are not fulfilling our desires, they are not removing our difficulties."

B) The second type of faithful ones:- These are more advanced souls. Stuck in the mindset of give and take, they believe: "Gods and gurus can perform great miracles." They don't sway even when major difficulties come in life. They think: "God, guru will surely help me out of this hardship." Their faith goes so far that they say: "This is not my prob-

lem; it belongs to God, it belongs to guru. They will take care of it." They also believe: "Since I have invested my time, energy, and love in them, they will not let my trust go in vain."

For the spiritual journey to accelerate, one must necessarily go through certain karmic results. God and the guru knows that only then, one can rise beyond this physical plane and reach a higher state. That is why they remain silent, observing the seeker's growth like a witness. At such times, to think, "Since I trust You, it is your responsibility to see that I do not face such hardships" is great foolishness. When one goes to a doctor, one has to let the doctor do his duty. After the operation, one should simply wish, "May I recover quickly," but should not demand, "The doctor must prove his skill and power."

C) The third type of faithful ones:- This is the highest form of faith. It is complete surrender. It is like a double-edged sword. These devotees place no conditions whatsoever upon God or guru. They are spiritually mature souls. They live with total dedication to God and guru. They do not expect protection or comfort even in adverse circumstances; instead, they remain with deep awareness about them. They know: "Whether it is illness or pleasure, separation or union, my life unfolds only according to the law of karma." With the supreme wisdom that "Every event that happens is right," they accept and honor all experiences, and they use their life for the progress of the soul.

The supreme faith that comes with complete surrender is very difficult to practice. It releases us from all kinds of expectations. Outwardly, this process may appear as if we are losing our own individuality, but inwardly it merges us into the personality of the Guru. As much as we seem to lose ourselves, that much we are inwardly transformed into divine. At that stage, whatever we hear and whatever we speak turns into a blessing for the welfare of the world. For a seeker with such divine faith, even nature provides the very best.

3) Self-Criticism:- Once we enter into practice, we must always recognize our faults through self-criticism and make efforts to correct them. We should criticize our bad habits. By doing so, those habits slowly begin to change. Without self-criticism, we cannot correct our mistakes. Instead, we tend to remain in the attitude of "I am always right." Therefore, we must keep criticizing our own faults and work to correct them.

Many people criticize others. But the point is not to criticize others; rather, we must criticize ourselves. Doing it once is called "inquiry," doing it repeatedly is called "criticism." Whenever we notice a quality we dislike in others, we should immediately inquire and know: "I must never be like that."

Our sages said: "Whatever causes you pain when done by others, never do that to anyone else. That is the eternal tradition, the eternal dharma." Repeatedly criticizing others brings no benefit. But repeatedly criticizing ourselves and

our bad habits brings good change within us. Then our worldly life becomes better and our spiritual life becomes even better.

4) Analysis:- Whatever we hear, from whomever we hear, we must analyse it. The more we analyse, the more clearly we understand the subject. For example, Patriji said: "Love all fellow beings." By analysing this, we understand why we must love. Just like how and why we have come to this earth, so also every being has come to earth to learn lessons and to gain experiences. There is only one 'soul' pervading the entire universe, the 'one divine essence' but because of 'ignorance', it appears as if there are many differences. When wisdom arises, we understand: "All are forms of the soul, all are one. Therefore, we have no right to hurt anyone."

"This creation is like a cloth that cannot be torn into pieces; therefore, no being in this creation should ever be harmed." This is what is said in the Bhagavad Gita.

**Shlok|| vidya-vinaya-sampanne brahmane gavi hastini
shuni chaivashvapake cha panditah sama-darshinah**

(B.G. 5-18)

Meaning:- Whether it is a learned and humble Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog or even a Chandala (outcast) who cooks and eats dog's meat, those who look upon all with equanimity, they alone are scholars.

The Gita declares: "One should have equanimity towards a Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a Chandala."

Since the same soul exists in all, where is the place for hatred? That is why the Gita says: "Samatvam yoga uchyate" - equanimity is called yoga. Therefore, if we analyse every teaching of Patriji, much wisdom blossoms within us. We must analyse everything to improve our wisdom and to grow into a wise one.

5) Discernment:- Just like a sour and raw mango gradually turns sweet, likewise, through the practice of discrimination, we give up likes and dislikes, abandon desires and attachments. Therefore, the mind becomes purified and serene. Through a purified mind, the realization that "the world is false, the 'soul' alone is truth" becomes steady. Our words should always be truthful. We must state things as they are, without exaggeration, without evil intent towards others, without mocking or insulting anyone. Just as the sunlight shines through a clear mirror, in the same way, the light of truth must radiate within us also.

To know "I am not this body filled with filth and waste; I am the true, eternal soul" is discernment. The living being, upon taking a body is bound to experience many sufferings. Therefore, recognizing that "In every birth, because of birth and death, there will be many pains," the seeker must strive to free himself from the cycle of birth and death. For that, only 'soul-knowledge' is the refuge. Through meditation practice, gaining wisdom and ultimately 'Brahma-knowledge' (knowledge about the Almighty) through the soul is discernment. To be born as a human, having the opportunity to gain wisdom, yet to waste that birth without practicing

meditation is only a lack of discernment.

6) Detachment:- Only through the attainment of detachment one gains the attainment of wisdom and thereby liberation. Liberation means letting go of unreal concepts, removing illusion and realizing the eternal truth of the 'soul' (God). For this, devotion towards the soul, that is, devotion to God must be cultivated deeply. True detachment means remaining in the quest for the soul without an attachment to worldly matters, without cravings for bodily or sensory pleasures, without the desire to enjoy luxuries and without emotional attachments.

What everyone must know is this: "In the fire called time, the house called the body burns day by day and the lifespan gradually comes to an end." Therefore, while this body exists, while health is still good, there must be the desire "to attain liberation." Those of dull intellect say: "I have not yet had the opportunity to practice the paths of devotion and detachment. I have various works, pressures, and worldly life. I alone must look after them. Once my children grow up, I will hand over the family burdens to them and then I will try."

This attitude is like saying: "When the house is burning, we shall dig a well and with that water put out the fire." Instead, the wise think: "Let us use the water that is already near us and extinguish the fire." Therefore, if a human being longs for freedom from bonds, he must cultivate the devotion and detachment required for liberation! One must de-

velop detachment towards the body and interest towards the soul. Only through 'soul-knowledge' the attachment towards the body falls away and detachment arises.

In worldly life, there are three kinds of detachment:

- a) Detachment from listening to scriptures (Purana vairagya),
- b) Detachment from motherhood (Prasooti vairagya) and
- c) Detachment at cremation ground (Smasana vairagya).

a) Detachment from listening to scriptures:-

When scholars or gurus narrate good teachings from the puranas or scriptures, listeners feel inspired in that moment thinking, "We also must practice like that, we also must experience such realization." But once the narration ends, they again get absorbed in worldly and family affairs, forgetting and ignoring those words. This is called 'detachment from listening to scriptures'.

b) Detachment from motherhood:- During delivery, women cannot bear the labor pain and think: "It is only because of union with a man that I have fallen into this painful condition. If not for that, I would never have to suffer this way. Had I not been born as a woman, there would have been no such misery!" They even take a resolution, "Whatever happens, I will never again seek union with a man." But within two or three months after childbirth, they begin to desire again for a union. The detachment felt during labor doesn't last later. This is called 'detachment from motherhood'.

c) Detachment at the cremation ground:- When someone dies, relatives and friends gather, mourning and grieving.

While sitting at the cremation ground as the body is being burned, they think deeply: "One day, we also must leave this world, mustn't we? And when we go, we will take nothing with us, just like him, right?" In that atmosphere, everyone speaks with a sense of great detachment until the rites are completed. But once they return home, that detachment vanishes and they once again fall into worldly desires and affairs. This is called 'detachment at the cremation ground'.

Such types of detachment do not lead to wisdom. Wisdom means realizing the Almighty (paramatma) who exists as truth at all times and in all states. Failing to know this is ignorance.

7) Humility:- Through soul-knowledge a person becomes infinitely powerful. On the spiritual path, ego becomes the greatest obstacle standing in the way. Those who have ego cannot digest soul-knowledge. To attain soul-knowledge and knowledge about the Almighty (Brahma-knowledge), one must remain humble before a guru who has known the soul and the Almighty and should learn from him. Having an ego is of no use. Ego is the greatest hindrance to 'soul-knowledge'. For those who have an ego, attaining 'soul-knowledge' is very difficult. It is like trying to climb slippery steps. One cannot see the ground in muddy water, but the ground is clearly visible in pure water. Likewise, peace cannot be found in a mind filled with ego. Soul bliss arises only when ego is suppressed.

The practices a seeker must follow daily to grow

1) Listening, 2) Revision, 3) Contemplation (deep thinking), 4) Realization.

1. Listening:- For progress in spiritual practice, one must know many things. One should be open to learn from everyone. First, there must be faith in the one who imparts the teaching. The stronger the faith in the teacher, the more deeply the teachings will touch the heart. To understand spiritual matters, purity of heart is essential. Since the mind is often engaged in worldly matters, the words of the preachers may not touch it deeply. Therefore, the mind should be withdrawn from worldly matters and to be fixed upon the soul. Meditation practice greatly helps in this process. If worldly concerns dominate, spiritual truths cannot be easily understood.

Listening is very essential for spiritual practice. One must carefully understand the words of the guru. All great ones became great only through listening. For example:- Bhrigu, son of Varuna and Svetaketu, son of Uddalaka learned through 'listening' from their fathers. When Lord Ram was in sorrow, immersed in intense detachment, he listened to the teachings of Sage Vasishta. It was then that he attained wisdom. By such superior listening, one must gain soul-knowledge. King Parikshith's listening from Suka maharshi is also an example of superior listening. This listening is of 3 types: a) Inferior listening, b) Mediocre listening and c) Superior

listening.

a) Inferior listening:- When they listen, they think, "This is very good, we should also practice it." But within a few days, they forget what they have listened to and continue behaving just like before without changing their behaviour. If those engaged in meditation practice are inferior listeners say, "No matter how many days I practiced, I got no result" and give it up. This means that, if there is no transformation even after listening a lot, it shows that the mind has not yet been purified.

b) Mediocre listening:- These people listen attentively to what they hear and wish to practice it in order to grow spiritually. They think, "We should learn good things from everyone" and carefully listen to what others say. Whatever they consider good, they sincerely put into practice. They always think about being on the good path.

c) Superior listening:- They listen to spiritual teachings with great dedication, practice them and also inspire many others to practice. All Pyramid Masters belong to this category. After coming into meditation, they learned from Patriji that "eating meat is a great sin and vegetarian food is the food of human beings" so they became vegetarians. Moreover, through Patriji they have known, "Every living being has the right to live fully and all fellow beings are like us." So, they are transforming others into practitioners of non-violence, vegetarians and meditators.

These people meditate every single day without fail, teach meditation to others and make everyone practice it. This is called superior listening. By practicing meditation

after listening, we improve our soul-power. By becoming vegetarians, we reduce sinful karmas.

2) Revision:- Listening is like cooking food in the kitchen. But just cooking is not enough, the hunger will not be satisfied. The hunger will be satisfied only when the prepared food is eaten. Eating food is like revision. Revision is like the act of dining. One must know how to revise. A human being should learn by observing each and everything in nature. For example, one can learn revision from a cow. The cow chews the grass it has eaten by bringing it back up and chewing it thoroughly. In the same way, we must write down what we have heard and read it again and again or recall it during leisure time and think upon it. This is called 'revision'. Then only, the things we have heard will not be forgotten and will remain in memory. Only by thinking about what we have heard many times, the keen interest to put it into practice arises.

One must constantly revise the truth: "I am not the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect or the ego. I am the 'Soul,' beyond birth and death."

Vasishta said, "Soul-knowledge arises only through self-effort (one's own effort). It is only through that the being becomes free from all suffering and attains liberation."

Actually, what is meant by self-effort? It means to listen to what the noble ones teach with dedication and concentration, revise to understand and make an effort to practice it. It is called "self-effort."

3. Contemplation:- For those who have engaged in listening and revision, contemplation naturally follows. That means

practice. If listening is like cooking food and revision is like eating it, then deep contemplation is like digesting the food.

Those who sincerely practice listening and revision will always keep their focus on spiritual matters. These matters remain within them like a "treasure". By constantly listening to the spiritual teachings from all, revising them through inquiry and analysis, practicing them and deeply contemplating on them, the "treasure" of wisdom continues to grow. "Deep contemplation" is the beginning stage of the samadhi state. At its mature stage, it is called "samadhi".

4) Realization:- Only when one brings these three into direct experience soul-knowledge arises. That is when realization arises within. In the Brhadaraka Upanishad, Yajnavalkya told Maitreyi the same: "If one wishes to realize the Soul, one must compulsorily practice listening, revision and contemplation."

Through listening, revision and contemplation (deep thinking), the negative impressions and tendencies of past births are removed, and commitment in wisdom is established. Then the mind becomes pure, the sense of individuality dissolves and only the self-luminous 'Soul' remains.

Just like the gold melted in a mold becomes purified, the wisdom purifies the mind. Without wisdom, liberation cannot be attained. Therefore, a seeker must constantly engage in listening, revision and deep contemplation. Only then the soul-knowledge will arise and the realization of the Soul is attained.

Obstacles to those who practice meditation

Those who practice meditation with the intention of "attaining soul-knowledge and experiencing the soul" also face certain obstacles. It is not enough to desire the fruit; one must also make efforts to nurture the tree that yields the fruit. When a seed sprouts, weeds also grow along with it. Just as it is necessary to carefully nurture the plant, it is equally necessary to remove the weeds. If weeds remain, the plant cannot grow properly. Likewise, "those who practice meditation on the soul also encounter obstacles like weeds," says the 'Vedantasaropanishad'.

These obstacles are: 1) Laya, 2) Vikshepa, 3) Kashaya 4) Rasasvadana. Meditation is not possible due to these 4 obstacles. A seeker must know these four hindrances in detail and remove them to progress in meditation.

1. Laya (Sleep):- When we sit for meditation, we withdraw the senses inward. At the time of turning them inward, the mind which is unable to meditate falls into a state of sleep. This state is called "Laya." A seeker must definitely overcome this.

The reason for this state to arise is the seeker not sleeping at the time they should sleep, overeating or undergoing excessive fasting which can also lead to drowsiness. Before meditation, one should not engage in activities that cause excessive physical exhaustion. By understanding these

causes and taking proper care, one can avoid falling into the sleep state or the laya state and settle well in meditation.

2. Vikshepa (Distraction) :- The second obstacle in meditation is called Vikshepa. Once the state of laya is crossed, distraction appears. Vikshepa means the mind diverting towards worldly matters. Recognizing this, one must make an effort to bring the wandering mind back and still it in one place. When the mind turns outwards, it should be turned inward again. A simple way to do this is 'observation of the breath'. Additionally, one should constantly remember and know about the impermanent nature of worldly objects. By contemplating (thinking) about the sorrow that arises from illusion towards such worldly matters, the fault of vikshepa gradually disappears.

We must also be careful in another aspect. Generally, even while performing daily activities, the mind tends to overthink. A mind habituated in this way produces vikshepa during meditation also. Therefore, the seeker must constantly observe the positive thoughts and negative thoughts arising in the mind and guide them along the right path. Only then, distraction can be prevented.

3) Kashaya (Invisible impressions) :- During meditation, the remaining attachments of likes and dislikes disturb meditation. This is called kashaya. The difference between vikshepa and kashaya is this: The mind wandering towards external objects is vikshepa, whereas when external things

are set aside, but inner turmoil arises due to past impressions, giving rise to likes and dislikes is called kashaya. A mind polluted with likes and dislikes becomes an obstacle in meditation. By developing an awareness of every matter, the pollution of attachments of likes and dislikes are reduced and the defect of kashaya is also removed.

4) Rasasvadana (Taste of bliss):- The fourth obstacle in meditation is rasasvadana. This obstacle arises when one reaches the higher stages of meditation. Rasasvadana is also known as Sukhasvadana, meaning the savoring of bliss. It is the experience of a state free from suffering. However, just being free from suffering does not mean that the state of thought-free absorption (nirvikalpa) is attained. Even in deep sleep, we experience a similar state. Samadhi, on the other hand, is eternal bliss, not just a thoughtless state. Therefore, not just when one rises above the absence of suffering but realizes complete bliss, the obstacle of rasasvadana disappears and samadhi is attained.

One must know such kinds of obstacles, remove them and continue the meditation.

FIVE ILLUSIONS

A seeker cannot realize the 'Soul' because of the five illusions that arise during practice. Naturally, ordinary seekers encounter these five illusions.

1) First illusion:- Thinking, "I am the living being, and God is separate" is the first illusion. The truth is that "the living being is only God," but this is not known because of the veil (cover or mask) of ignorance. Just as when grain is put into the mill, after shedding husk, bran and chaff, it comes out as polished, shining 'rice'. Similarly, when the seeker removes all obstacles through practice, he will know that "the living being itself is God," that "I myself am God."

2) Second illusion:- Not knowing the true nature of the truthful 'Soul'. For example, when dust covers a mirror, the face cannot be seen clearly. But when the dust is wiped off, the face is clearly visible. Likewise, one is unable to know the 'soul' because of the impurities of the mind that cover the 'soul.' However, through meditation, when the impurities of the mind are removed, one will know: "I am the Soul."

3) Third illusion:- States of Consciousness (avasthatraya). It means they are states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. The 'Soul' remains as a witness to these states. In the waking state, experiences happen through the physical body; in the dream state, through the subtle body; and in the deep sleep state, through the causal body. To think, "I am the one expe-

riencing these states," is not correct. In truth, it is the 'Soul' that stands as the witness. Because this truth is not known, in all three states, people fall into illusion. Through 'meditation practice', this illusion also is removed.

4) Fourth illusion:- The illusion that "the world is separate and the 'soul' is separate." When examined carefully, though clay pots appear different, the clay in them is one; though ornaments appear different, the gold in them is one. With inquiry and discrimination, one must realize that "the visible world and objects are born from the 'Soul' itself." One must know that "the world is not separate from the Soul". Only the 'Soul' is present in everything, as the inner essence. This illusion is also removed by meditation practice.

5) Fifth illusion:- The illusion that "the world appears as a truth." The sun's image, the sunlight and the sun's name may appear different, but in reality, they are one and the same. Similarly, one must know that "the Almighty itself is the 'Soul' and the world, which is formed of the five elements of nature that emerged from the 'Soul', are also the same." This is the vision of oneness everywhere that is non-duality (advaita). In this way, through constant meditation, the five illusions are removed.

The characteristics a seeker must possess

Qualities a seeker must possess: 1) Patience, 2) Tolerance, 3) Honesty, 4) Waiting.

1) Patience:- Only when a seeker who has entered into meditation practice is able to remain deeply patient, he can achieve progress. That is why, for the Pyramid Masters who entered the path with the desire of attaining soul-knowledge, Patriji gave nine jewel-like statements called the "Nine Jewels of Wisdom." If these are understood and practiced, one can attain complete soul-knowledge and Brahma-knowledge (knowledge about the Almighty). Among them, the sixth jewel, "Patience is progress" is a wonderful one. When the right sadhguru enters one's life, he gives only the right suggestions. What a seeker needs most is 'patience'.

When we practice meditation, ignorant people may mock us saying: "They are just sitting with their eyes closed without any work. What will happen by closing the eyes? It's just a waste of time, isn't it?" We must patiently bear all such insults that come from outside. Moreover, when the nervous system (nadi mandalam) is being purified during meditation, various kinds of pain may arise, those also must be tolerated patiently. A seeker should never be impatient. Whether circumstances around him are pleasant or unpleasant, he must bear them with patience. He should be able to tolerate everything both honour as well as dishonour. Whether at home, in the body or with outsiders, whatever difficulties arise, he must be able to bear them.

Shirdi Baba also spoke about two precious gems: 'Dedication' (Shraddha) and 'Patience' (Saburi). He was a great spiritual seeker. That is why he taught, "Seekers must have 'Saburi' means they must have 'patience'."

Patri Sir often said: Prahlada was put through many hardships by his own father, yet he tolerated everything patiently. Because of that, he attained soul-knowledge and Brahma-knowledge. Those who seek soul-knowledge do not give importance to the body or the mind. They never behave impatiently in any situation; instead, they bear everything with patience. That is why Patri Sir taught the Pyramid Masters, "Patience is progress."

2) Tolerance:- Just as patience is essential for a seeker, tolerance is equally necessary. Elders say, "You will learn anything only when you tolerate it." Sometimes things do not happen according to our expectations. At such times, many people complain, "Nothing is happening as I wished. God has no mercy on me." But God never gives us any suffering. Whatever we do comes back to us. That is why the very first thing a seeker must understand is the 'law of karma'. Once this is understood, if something we expected doesn't come to us, we don't feel sad. Instead, we think, "It was not needed for me, so nature didn't give it." Or else, "In some past life, I caused harm to that person, so now in this life, he is giving me suffering." With such awareness, seekers tolerate and bear the troubles given by others.

Until meeting Patri sir, everyone used to live with impatience and sorrow. But after meeting him and learning

about the 'law of karma' that he explained, they gradually developed patience and tolerance. Because of that, now everyone is able to live happily. No one suffers over hardships anymore; instead, they calmly accept them, thinking, "These are just the results of our karma." Nothing can ever be achieved without tolerating difficulties.

For this, Malayala Swami gives a small example: An iron rod worth of ten rupees, if turned into a horse shoe, becomes a worth of twenty rupees. If it is made into a knife, its worth becomes thirty rupees. The same knife, if turned into needles, becomes worth eighty rupees and if transformed into watch springs, its value rises to two hundred rupees. What is the reason for this increase in value? It is because the rod endured so much pain! It was burned in fire, struck with hammers and filed down repeatedly. It silently bore all of it with tolerance.

Its value increased only because of that. Similarly, when a human being tolerates difficulties, bears the hardships of practice and sheds the dirt of bad karma, then only he rises above being just a living being (jiva) and becomes a "God." His value grows endlessly.

3) Honesty:- Being honest means living in truth. In a way, it means living 'righteously'. Those who live 'righteously' will be able to understand the 'truth' and those who firmly hold on to the 'truth' will live honestly upon this earth.

But today's human beings neither believe in 'truth', nor practice 'righteousness', nor are able to live with honesty. To believe in 'truth' is the same as believing in God. To prac-

tice 'righteousness' is the same as following God. If one wants to know the purpose of human life, one must practice meditation as Patriji taught.

We often think, "I should not lie," yet for some reason or the other, we end up lying. Likewise, we think, "I should not hurt anyone," yet in some situation or the other, we cause pain in one way or another. The reason humans cannot do what they intend to do, or cannot live as they wish to live is because of their mind. The only way to bring the mind under control is through 'observation of the breath meditation'. Only through meditation, a human being can live as he ought to live and speak as he ought to speak.

It is only because of the lack of honesty that we commit many sinful actions. As long as such karmas exist, we cannot know the 'soul'. To avoid sinful actions and to control our speech, 'meditation' is essential. We can be honest only through 'meditation.'

4) Waiting:- This is also very important for seekers. When we hear about others' experiences, sometimes we feel sad thinking, "Why don't I have such experiences?" But we should not feel that way. Instead, we should think, "One day I also will have them. I just need to intensify my meditation practice." We must have faith in the guru's words.

Just like Shabari waited for Lord Ram for many long years without losing hope and finally attained his darshan, we also must increase our time in meditation, take care with our food, observe our own behaviour and patiently wait until the results come without becoming hopeless.

A must know by the seekers

Mainly three things: 1) Purity, 2) Buddhahood, 3) State of liberation.

1) Purity:- The very first thing a seeker must practice is cleanliness. When we hear the word 'cleanliness', most people think only of physical hygiene. But it is not just the body that should be clean, inner purity is also equally important. Therefore, the mind, speech and body must all be kept clean.

Everyone knows how to keep the body clean, but many do not know how to keep the mind and speech clean. Along with these, keeping the surroundings clean is also very important for a seeker.

Mind:- It becomes impure with many negative thoughts and evil intentions. Through intense meditation practice, these impurities of the mind are removed and the mind becomes pure.

Speech:- Every word spoken should be simple, truthful, and pleasant. If one gives up habits such as lying, gossiping about others, speaking too much and criticizing others, then speech becomes pure.

Body:- This refers to the physical body. For bodily purity, bathing alone is not enough; the body must be used for practicing righteousness. That means, one must engage the body in good deeds. The body should always be used only for

good actions. Then only it can be considered clean.

Surroundings:- Keeping the surroundings clean means ensuring that our environment is always peaceful and clean. When the surroundings are sacred, the mind feels at ease and meditation is more effective. Therefore, one should choose to live in such a calm and clean environment.

Altogether, when the mind, speech, body and surroundings are kept clean, purity is attained within us.

2) Buddhahood:- Buddhahood comes only after purity is attained. As Patri sir said, "Every person who has intellect is a Buddha." That means, those who live in the buddhahood are called "Buddhas". In this creation, nothing is more powerful than intelligence. Whatever good or bad happens in our lives, the cause is our own intellect. That is why, when someone makes a mistake, people say, "Don't you have any sense?" Even the smallest event in this creation happens only because of intellect. Therefore, using our intellect, knowing the infinite Almighty's essence and clearly discerning what is good and what is bad, we must know what kind of food is right for the body and eat accordingly. We must know what kind of thought is right for us and act accordingly. Constantly following in the path of a sadhguru, we must sharpen our intellect. Know that "the body is impermanent, but the soul is eternal," and teaching this truth to all is only Buddhahood.

3) State of liberation:- Once we follow purity and gain wisdom in Buddhahood, we will know what is eternal and what

is temporary. To let go of the attachment towards the temporary and to develop love for the eternal, truthful soul is to live in the 'state of liberation.'

We do not have to give up anything. To live among everything yet drop having no attachments to them is only a 'state of liberation'. That is why Adi Shankaracharya said, "Liberation is freedom from attachment. (Mohakshayame moksham.)" Whether you call it moksha or mukti, it is the same. Buddha also said, "One must attain enlightenment while still living in the family life." The great people have said, "Liberation does not mean abandoning (leaving) everything, but giving up attachment to everything." That is what it means to live in a 'state of liberation'.

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Five disciplines that the meditators must follow

Meditators must follow five types of disciplines. They are: 1) Soul discipline, 2) Food discipline, 3) Time discipline, 4) Discipline of Residence and 5) Discipline of Association.

1) Soul discipline:- Once seekers begin meditation practice, they should know many aspects such as: "How should I practice in order to progress? What should I know? How should I live?" The very first thing to know is: "What is the soul? How does it look? What are its characteristics? What happens when we strengthen our soul-power?" First and foremost, one must know: "The soul itself is God." The soul originates from the enlightened soul. The soul has no form; it is called Sacchidananda swarupa. Meaning: they say, 'Sat' means truthful, 'Chit' means form of consciousness and 'Ananda' means blissful.

Through meditation practice, the seeker experiences the soul as indivisible and infinite. The soul is subtler than the tip of a needle, subtler than the smallest atom and it resides within the bodies of all living beings. The 'soul' exists in trees and animals as well but they do not possess mind or intellect. Every activity of the body happens only because of the 'soul- power.'

The 'soul' is like a seed and the body is like a tree. However small the seed may be, if it is powerful, the tree that grows from it will be very strong and fruitful. In the same way, when the 'soul' is powerful, the body becomes like a wish-fulfilling tree; but when the 'soul' is weak, the body also becomes weak.

The wisdom and impressions (samskaras) we acquire are carried by the soul after leaving the body. When the soul is within the body, it is called the 'individual soul' (jivatma).

The functions of the 'individual soul' are of three types:

1. To give energy to the body and the senses.
2. To maintain life through inhalation and exhalation.
3. To perform actions through the body and to undergo experiences.

A seeker remaining in constant 'soul-awareness' through 'meditation' for the sake of the 'soul' is the 'soul discipline'.

2) Food discipline:- Food discipline is also very important for a seeker. The qualities we develop depend on the food we eat. These qualities are: Tamasic, Rajasic, Sattvic, and Nirguna. Since Tamasic and Rajasic qualities obstruct soul-practice, a seeker should avoid food that stimulates such qualities.

1. Foods that stimulate Tamasic quality: Alcohol, preserved items, fermented foods, spoiled foods and fruits stored in the refrigerator. Consuming these leads to excessive sleep, ignorance, illusion, fickle-mindedness, attraction towards sinful acts and characteristics of harming other beings.

2. Foods that stimulate Rajasic quality: Excessively spicy, overly spicy and stale foods. These increase Rajasic tendencies. Meat, fish and eggs also stimulate Rajasic quality. Among vegetarian items, garlic also gives rise to Rajasic quality. From these Rajasic qualities, pride, anger, ego, sensual attachments and useless talk arise.

3. Foods that enhance Sattvic quality: Foods that are naturally sweet, pleasant and fresh fruits are considered Sattvic. Eating such foods makes spiritual practice easier.

The scriptures declare:

"Without giving up Tamas, truth cannot be realized.

Without giving up Rajas, liberation cannot be attained!

Only Sattvic quality leads to the path of liberation. The food we consume turns into blood, giving energy to the body. The subtle essence of this blood transforms into a vital essence, strengthening the intellect. The subtle essence of a vital essence transforms into Ojas, which generates wisdom-power. The subtle essence of Ojas transforms into nectar (amrit), preventing the approach of death. Therefore, we must consume food that grants such great wisdom-power, food that fosters good qualities within us.

In the Chandogya Upanishad it is stated:

"Ahara-suddhau sattva-suddhih,
Sattva-suddhau dhyava smrtih,
Smrti-lambhesarva-granthanam
vipramoksah"

Purity of food leads to purity of mind. From that arises purity of truth. From such purity, the divine remembrance of God awakens and through constant remembrance of God, one becomes free from all bonds.

From this, we understand that: Through purity of food comes purity of mind; through purity of mind comes purity of heart; through purity of heart comes firm wisdom. With firm wisdom, all the bonds tied to the soul are removed. Therefore, Lord Krishna clearly explained what kind of food seekers should eat and how they should live through the following shloka.

**Shlok|| yuktahara-viharasya yukta-cheshtasya karmasu
yukta-svapnavabodhasya yogo bhavati duhkh-ha**
(B.G. 6-17)

"It is said in the above shlok that a seeker must have proper food (moderate and sattvic), proper conduct (behavior), proper sleep (moderate rest) and proper actions (good deeds).

In addition to this, a seeker must take further care regarding food in three aspects: **1) Purity of vessel, 2) Purity of ingredients, 3) Purity in cooking.**

1) Purity of vessel :- This does not only mean to wash vessels cleanly. Only the vessels in which meat has never been cooked should be used. Food must be consumed only when prepared in such vessels. Vegetarian food should not be eaten from vessels in which meat has been cooked. In our rituals and festivals, we never prepare offerings for deities in vessels that have been used for cooking meat. Why? Because such vessels carry the sin of killing a living being. That is why the food prepared in them is called "nichu" meaning "impure food. We are saying it without saying it.

When we do not even cook offerings for the idols we ourselves have made in vessels used for meat, how can we place the food that has been prepared in such vessels into this body - the temple built by God Himself and in which He resides in? How ignorant we are! Just observe, in the temples we build, we bathe the idols of God with five nectars (panchamruta) and offer food prepared in pure vessels. Yet, in this human temple which God himself has created and resides, we pour alcohol as abhisheka and offer meat as an offering.

Thus, having taken a human birth, because of ignorance and such wrong actions, man continues to remain in sorrow. That is why, in the Shirdi Meditation Yajna, Patriji said: "All vessels in which meat has been cooked must be replaced; food prepared in such vessels must not be eaten." By eating food cooked only in pure vessels, one incurs no sin and the rajasic qualities are not stimulated.

2) Purity of ingredients:- To the body which is bound by karma, one must give food aligned with righteousness. Many people say, "We had a first-class meal!" But in reality, man is becoming third-class because of that. True first-class food is that which strengthens the body, keeps the mind peaceful and makes the intellect radiant. For good spiritual practice to happen, the necessary qualities must first be present within us.

By eating the flesh of pigs, chickens, and fish which consume filth, worms, insects, and decayed matter our wisdom is destroyed. Their heads are always bent towards the ground; thus, by consuming such creatures as food, our wisdom also falls downwards, never rising upwards.

All trees turn towards the sun and grow because of its rays. By eating the food that comes from them, wisdom that is within us rises upwards. Knowledge about the Almighty was first imparted to the Sun (based on Bhagavad Gita). That is why the Sun is called the "symbol of wisdom" and is referred to as the "visible God." Therefore, we should eat only vegetarian food.

3) Purity in cooking:- When we cook, we should cook with great love, deep calmness and a pure heart. Just like the food offerings are prepared for God with devotion and sincerity, making them naturally delicious, in the same way, whenever we cook for anyone, it should be with love and care. It is better not to serve at all than serving by scolding. In our

tradition, a guest is regarded as God. That is why it is said, "Atidhi Devo Bhava" - "A guest is God." We should cook and serve with that feeling. Then, the guest will bless us saying, "May the Goddess Annapurna bless you with happiness." Such blessings from one whom you regard as divine will bring great goodness into your life.

By following these three purities - purity of vessels, purity of ingredients, and purity in cooking, our body and mind remain healthy and they support us in our spiritual practice.

3) Time discipline:- Those who begin spiritual practice must strictly follow the time discipline also. If one sits for meditation every day at the same fixed time in the early morning, then after a few days the body is habituated and they can meditate well. A seeker should never waste time. For acquiring worldly knowledge, a little effort may be sufficient, but to gain 'soul-knowledge', one must strive very hard.

The mind troubles the seeker a lot. Those engaged in activities throughout the day feel physically tired and think, "I need to sleep at night." People with tamasic quality tend to sleep more. Therefore, if we avoid foods that increase tamasic quality, we can conquer sleep. One may sit for meditation at night or early morning, but if one meditates regularly at the same fixed time, it becomes a habit. A seeker should not misuse time but rather use it wisely.

4) Discipline of residence:- A seeker should choose a place

of residence that is conducive to meditation. The environment and influences of the place where one lives also affect the mind. Naturally, the places we roam frequently inspire certain feelings.

For example, when near a brothel house, one kind of feeling may arise, while near a temple, pure and sacred feelings arise naturally. In the same way, devotion and detachment are influenced by the place where one lives and the places one visits.

Let us look at another example:- If the raindrops fall into a muddy pit, they become mud; if they fall into a fresh-water pond, they turn into fresh water; if they fall into the mouth of a snake, they turn into poison; if they fall into an oyster shell, they become pearls. Likewise, depending on the place, the form changes. Therefore, the place for meditation should be solitary, silent and suitable for practice.

5) Discipline of association:- This is very important for practice. Nowadays, there are more friends who spoil than those who help. Hence, one must choose the right companions. These days, even people born into families that have no habit of eating meat are getting accustomed to it. Avoiding friends who encourage meat and alcohol is good for those who wish that "practice must succeed and 'soul-knowledge' must be attained."

A seeker must never have a wrong association. For example, in a forest, a king was once riding alone on his

horse. After going some distance, he saw a large building.

From a cage there, a parrot was crying out, "Catch him, catch him, he is running away!" The king got scared and quickly moved ahead on his horse. After some distance, he reached the hermitage (ashram) of sages. In front of that hermitage, from another cage, another parrot was saying, "Come, come, please, Guru is arriving." The king gained courage and asked, "Hey! How is it that you are saying this, while a little distance back, another parrot was shouting 'Catch him, catch him'? Why are you two speaking so differently?" Then the parrot replied, "We both were born to the same mother. That one fell into the hands of thieves, so it speaks like that. I fell into the hands of sages, so living here in the hermitage, I speak like this. All of this is the influence of association!"

Did you see! Whoever we live with, their thoughts, habits and opinions will influence us. Therefore, a meditator must choose only those friends who encourage 'soul-knowledge'.

Guidelines for attaining Soul-Knowledge

To attain soul-knowledge, one must mainly follow these five guidelines:- 1) Service to sadhguru, 2) Satsang (Association with the truth) 3) Association with the wise (Sajjana sangathya), 4) Reading spiritual books (Swadhyा), 5) Service.

1) Service to sadhguru:- A seeker who wishes to attain soul-knowledge should not only practice meditation but must also sincerely follow the teachings of the guru. Practicing like that is only a service to Sadhguru.

But these days, many come forward claiming to be sadhgurus. Among them, identifying a sadhguru is difficult. But with some intelligence and wisdom, one can recognize them. Sadhgurus always teach only 'truth', live only in 'truth', dedicate their whole life for 'truth' and guide their disciples along the true path. Such was Patriji. He always taught only soul-knowledge, teaching: "You are not the body; you are the Soul, know this." He guided everyone on that path. Finding such a great person as our Guru is nothing but the result of immense virtue earned over many lifetimes.

That is why Adi Shankaracharya said, "Getting a human birth (manushyatvam), having a desire to attain liberation (mumukshatvam) and obtaining the sight of a great

soul are all rare."

"Human birth" means among the 8.4 million life forms, it is only in the human body that one gets the opportunity to attain wisdom. Not only that, it is in this birth that one knows, "I myself am God." Therefore, it is said, "Human birth is great."

"Having a desire to attain liberation" means having a deep desire for liberation. Liberation means the dissolution of illusion, it means removing all worldly attachments and infatuations. When does this arise? When one knows, "Whatever I am attached to in this world, gives me only a little happiness and an endless sorrow" and when one also knows that only attachment to the Soul gives infinite bliss, then worldly infatuations begin to dissolve. That is only a state of liberation.

To know this, one must find a great soul, a sadhguru. Finding such a sadhguru is very rare. That is why it is said, "Getting a human birth, having the desire for liberation and obtaining the sight of a great soul are all rare." Such great beings incarnate on earth only occasionally.

Now, in the present day, human beings, due to lack of meditation, soul-knowledge and not knowing that "non-vegetarian food is sinful," are committing many sinful deeds. To remove such impurities and transform them, a great soul (an incarnated being) Patriji has come to Earth. Only such beings are called "sadhgurus". In ancient times, in every Yug,

one such sadhguru would take birth on earth.

For Krita Yug	- Dakshinamurti
For Treta Yug	- Vashishta
For Dvapara Yug	- Vyasa
For Kali Yug	- Shankaracharya

Now once again, the end of Kali Yug and the beginning of Krita Yug is taking place. At this juncture of transition, who is the Sadhguru? It is Patriji! He himself proclaimed: "The entire earth must be filled with meditation; everyone must become soul-realized beings." He travelled across the world, imparting soul-knowledge. Having such a being as our Guru, aren't we not fortunate?

2) Satsang:- Satsang means being in association with truth. And what is the truth? The 'Soul'. Therefore, being in union with the 'Soul' itself is Satsang, which is 'meditation'. That is why Adi Shankaracharya said, "Through Satsang comes detachment. (Satsangatve nissangatvam.)"

That means, only by always holding onto 'truth', that is, through meditation, one can attain detachment. Detachment means, not getting attached to anyone and anything though being among everyone and everything and always being with the soul. Only then detachment is obtained. It means, though the lotus flower stays in water, it doesn't let the water cling to it. In the same way, we also must live without allowing anything to stick to us.

An example for this: Once, the eight wives of Krishna wanted to cross the Yamuna river to offer food to the great sage Durvasa on the opposite bank. At that time, the river was flowing turbulently, so they asked Krishna, "How to cross?" Krishna replied, "Tell the river: "Give way, for the eternal Brahmachari (celibate) has asked" and it will give way." When they said that the river indeed gave way, they crossed the river, served food to the sage and on their return again found the river blocking their path. Then Satyabhama asked Durvasa, "How shall we return now?" Durvasa replied, "Tell the river: "Give way, for the eternal Upasi (one who is ever fasting) has asked and it will give way." They did as told and the river gave way and they returned.

But Satyabhama was greatly surprised. Not understanding she wondered: "What did you say? What are you doing?" So she asked Krishna, "You are living with eight wives; how can you be a Brahmachari? We did not understand. Likewise, we offered food to Durvasa and he ate it, how then can he be called a Nityopasi (ever fasting one)?" Krishna simply smiled and said, "When the time comes, you will understand!"

One day, some people invited Satyabhama for a meal. When she sat down to eat, they placed a sword on her head and said, "Mother! You must eat in such a way that the sword does not prick you. We want to test your greatness." Without paying any attention to the sword, she calmly finished her meal and returned home.

Then Krishna asked her, "Did you eat? What dishes did they serve you?"

Satyabhama told him everything that had happened and said, "I don't remember the dishes because I did not focus on the food items." Krishna then explained, "Just as you were not attentive to the food, even though I live with eight wives, I never pay any attention towards them. That is why I am always a Brahmachari because I am always with eternal Brahman (the Almighty). I remain detached. That is why the river gave way. Similarly, Durvasa ate food only to maintain his body, not for taste. That is why he is called a Nityopasi (one who is ever devoted)."

Furthermore, Adi Shankaracharya said, "Nissangatvame nirmohatvam." It means, when one loses interest in this worldly life, attachments disappear and when attachments disappear, freedom from delusion (nirmohatva) arises. He also said, "Nirmohatvame Nishalatatvam" - Only when delusion on everything is destroyed stillness of mind is attained. It is the restless mind that troubles seekers. The mind always recalls the past and gives sorrow or worries about the future and creates fear. That is why elders say, "The funeral pyre burns only once, but the mind constantly burns us." But those who engage in Satsanga (the company of truth) develop detachment. From detachment arises freedom from delusion. When delusion is destroyed, the mind becomes peaceful.

He further said, "Nishalatatve jivanmukthi." It means

when the state of stillness arises, when the mind becomes completely steady, such a person attains liberation when alive. That means, all impressions of karma are destroyed when alive. It means they become liberated beings. Therefore, Satsanga means meditation. This only is what we call Sadhana (spiritual practice). Sadhana means the wealth we earn by our own effort. It cannot be given by anyone to anyone else; each person must acquire it by themselves.

3) Association with the wise:- The wise are those who have attained soul-knowledge, those who have known that "the Soul itself is the God." By forming friendships with such ones, the dullness of our intellect disappears, There will be truthfulness in our speech, respect from others naturally increases, we will be far from committing sin and the mind always remains joyful. The association of the wise does immense good for human beings. In this worldly life, to avoid drowning in the river of ego and attachment, one needs the boat called 'association with the wise.'

Ashtavakra said, "In all the three worlds, among all virtuous deeds, the greatest virtuous act is to participate in association with the wise."

Similarly, Goswami Tulsidas said, "As an iron turns into gold at the mere touch of the philosopher's stone, likewise, through the association of the wise, even fools become wise."

Through the association of the wise, the foolish

Kalidasa was transformed into one of the greatest poets.

Once, Lord Vishnu asked King Bali:

"Would you rather go to hell along with the wise (or) would like to go to heaven with the evil ones?" For that, king Bali replied, "I would rather go to hell with the wise. The reason is, wherever the wise are present, that itself becomes heaven. Thus, even hell turns into heaven because of the association with the wise." That is why king Bali chose that. That's why Patriji also said, "Be in association with the wise."

4) Reading spiritual books:- Just as 'meditation' is essential for the body's progress, 'reading spiritual books' is equally essential for the soul's progress. That is why the Taittiriya upanishad declares: "Swadhyaya-pravachanabhyam na pramadivyam" - "Never neglect reading spiritual books and teaching".

When water in a pond remains stagnant, it stinks and starts to smell bad. Similarly, if we do not engage in 'reading spiritual books', our mental tendencies become impure and our wisdom also gets polluted. When our wisdom is limited, we live like frogs living at the bottom of a well. Therefore, one must daily practice 'reading spiritual books' at least for one hour. By doing like that, the wisdom in us expands.

Sage Manu said regarding Reading spiritual books: "Reading spiritual books is the supreme tapas."

Because through the study of best scriptures, a human being's intellect blossoms. The intention to perform virtuous deeds arises. The knowledge of the 'Soul' and the 'Almighty' develops. One cultivates equanimity towards all humans, compassion towards all living beings, positive attitude, the desire to serve the world, the urge to live righteously and lawfully and the aspiration to make the best use of life. Such persons remove ignorance in society and kindle the lamp of wisdom.

Manu further said: "Through reading spiritual books, even an ordinary human being can become a Mahatma, a scholar."

Similarly, the Rigveda declares: "The one who studies the sacred Veda (wisdom) proposed by the Almighty and proclaimed by the sages, becomes purified with joy. By reading good scriptures, all their worries vanish, their doubts are clarified, the noble feelings in their hearts are awakened and supreme peace arises."

Likewise, Swami Dayananda Saraswati said, "Just as one dives into the ocean and gathers precious gems, similarly, by reading the vedic scriptures, one gains great wisdom."

Lokmanya Tilak stated: "I would welcome the good scriptures even in hell because wherever they are present, that very place transforms into heaven through their power."

Therefore, knowing that "the power to uplift and make life meaningful lies in the sacred scriptures", practice 'reading spiritual books.'

5) Service:- Service is also very important for seekers. Only when we have love for all, we can serve. Only when we see everyone as embodiments of the soul we will love all. When love arises for everyone, we will do service. Mother Teresa rendered great service. She loved everyone like her own children. First, we must serve the body; then comes 'service to the soul'.

'Service to the soul' means teaching meditation to others, organizing meditation programs, supporting meditation activities, participating in meditation gatherings (Dhyana yajnas), giving up non-vegetarian food and stopping people from doing sinful actions. All these are forms of 'service to the soul'. Sharing wisdom is service to the 'soul'. There is no greater service in this world than feeding the hungry and teaching them meditation.

Expectation (Asha)

Human beings are unable to recognize the 'soul' residing within their body because of expectations. From birth until death, due to the constant longing for worldly pleasures, they fail to think about liberation. In every human being of this world, the Almighty's form, the 'soul' within is veiled (covered) by the illusion of 'expectation'. It is said: "To consider perishable objects as eternal reality and to get misled by them itself is an 'illusion'." People with expectations fall into three categories:

**Shlok|| dhumenavriyate vahnir yathadarsho malena cha
yatholbenavrito garbhas tatha tenedam avritam**
(B.G 3-38)

Meaning:- "Just like the fire is covered by smoke, a mirror by dust and a fetus in the womb by its covering, in the same way, the Soul is covered by desire (kama)," declared Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita.

Let us now look at how the three types of people are bound by 'expectation'.

The first type of people:- Just as fire is covered by smoke, the illusion of 'expectation' stands as an obstacle to attaining soul-knowledge to them. These people are attached to worldly desires. Yet, just as smoke around fire spreads when the wind blows, allowing the flame to shine brightly, in the same way, when they come under the guidance of a sadhguru, through

his grace their ignorance is removed, they will know the truth and attain soul-knowledge.

Until meeting Patriji, my husband (Mr.Raghavarao) used to do many businesses and also in a lot of charity works, considering "those are great". But once he met Patriji, he realized that "above everything, attaining soul-knowledge is the greatest and sharing wisdom is the highest charity." From then on, he has been walking on that path. Mr.Raghavarao is an example for the first type of people.

The second type of people:- These have the desire to attain soul-knowledge but do not know how to attain it. Such people are like those who have the desire to see their face in a mirror but they cannot see it because of the dust on the mirror. As soon as the dust is wiped, the face becomes visible. For such seekers, if a Guru allotted more time for practice, association, and reading spiritual books they can also attain wisdom.

The third type of people:- Just as the fetus in the womb cannot come out without sufficient strength, their mind is so completely covered with expectations that they do not even have the thought "I must attain soul-knowledge." Even if they come across a sadhguru, the thought of "I should attain wisdom from him" does not arise in them. Because of their impure tendencies, they cannot respect or recognize the guru. Such people usually turn to the path only after facing many setbacks in worldly life or after witnessing the joy experi-

enced by their fellow people who have practiced and attained it.

Therefore, Patriji said: "Everyone must attain soul-knowledge while living in worldly life itself. One should not abandon (leave) worldly life, nor should one abandon spiritual life." Just as a rupee coin is valid only when it has a print on both sides, in the same way, we also must manage both worldly and spiritual life wonderfully.

Many people are unable to practice meditation because of excessive expectation of money. Due to this excessive expectation, they cannot allot time for meditation practice. Expectation is natural. But 'over expectation' leads only to misfortune. In worldly life, when one runs with 'over expectations' only sorrow remains.

On the other hand, when one engages in intense practice for 'soul-knowledge', one experiences supreme bliss (Brahmananda). A human being never feels content even if golden showers fall upon him; desire never dies. In that, "there is only a little happiness but great suffering." But in spiritual life, "there is little hardship but great joy." Knowing this, one must strive to attain 'soul-knowledge'.

Three Types of Defects

We are unable to attain soul vision and soul bliss because of the three kinds of defects within us. They are:-
1)Impurity (Mala), 2) Distraction (Vikshepa), 3) Veil (Avarna). We cannot know the soul because of these.

The mind is like a mirror. Whatever is placed before the mind, that only is reflected. If the world and worldly life are placed, that is reflected. If nothing is placed, then nothing is reflected. Therefore, to purify the mind, one has to obtain the required wisdom from the Guru and with faith, trust, dedication, and perseverance has to practice regularly and continuously. Only then the defects of Impurity, Distraction and Veil are removed. Now let us see what these defects are and how they can be removed.

1) Impurity:- The defect of Impurity is of 5 types.

- 1) Minute impurity (Anu mala):- Even after listening to the teaching about knowledge of Almighty (Brahman) when given, there is no desire to know about the Almighty.
- 2) Karmic impurity (Karmika mala):- When elders are teaching Vedantic truths, instead of listening with a steady mind, the person listens superficially while the mind keeps wandering on other matters.
- 3) Illusory impurity (Maya mala):- Never having the thought or inclination, "I must meditate for the sake of the Almighty."

4) Illusion-born impurity (Mayaye mala):- Developing false notions about the Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman (Almighty), placing faith in other deities, their mantras and ritualistic formulas and even teaching such things to others.

5) Impurity of concealment (Tirodana mala) :- It means always desiring sinful actions and remaining engaged in sinful deeds.

These are called the "Five impurities (pancha-malalu)." To remove this defect, one must practice listening (shravan). That means carefully listening to the words of the sadhguru, knowing and holding the conviction that "The Guru's word is the Veda's word; the Guru's wisdom is the Vedic wisdom." One must believe that "The Guru's path is the true path" and walk firmly on that path. In addition, one should practice reading spiritual books and participate in the association of the wise. By doing these three, the impurity defect is eliminated.

2) Distraction :- The Vedantasaropanishad also states: "Distraction during meditation is an obstacle for attaining Soul-knowledge."

This defect occurs during meditation, the mind becomes outwardly directed, wandering towards worldly matters and objects. This is what is called distraction. Controlling it is very difficult.

The mind, wandering in many directions, does not

stay calm in one place. Therefore, when the mind turns outward, one must inquire. Whatever thought arises, inquire into that thought, think about the impermanence of the material world, on the sorrow that arises from objects and repeatedly think over (revise) the bliss that meditation brings. Moreover, repeatedly revise, "I am the soul."

The mind remains caught in many illusions of worldly matters. Through inquiry, those delusions are removed. Whenever there is an opportunity, revise subjects related to wisdom. By engaging more in the company of the wise ones, by spending time with Gurus and the wise, the defect of distraction is eliminated. To overcome the defect of distraction, one must constantly revise the wisdom taught by the guru.

3) Veil :- In the 15th verse of Atma Bodha by Shankaracharya, it is said: "Just as a crystal appears to take on the color of a blue cloth placed next to it, in the same way the pure soul appears as though it has assumed the forms due to its association with the five sheaths (veils)."

Knowing all matters is wisdom. Just as a scabbard (case of a sword) is used to hold a sword, which serves as a covering for the sword, in the same way, the veils in which the soul resides are called sheaths (koshas). When the soul appears associated with these sheaths, the illusion arises that "the soul itself is the sheaths." But in reality, the soul never merges with the sheaths. It only remains as a witness to them.

The ultimate goal is to know the soul, the very source that gives energy to all these sheaths. To mistake the sheaths as the soul is the defect of veil. Only when this defect is removed, one can know the soul. The only way to remove this defect of veil is through intense meditation practice. Without meditation, nothing can be achieved. That is why every individual must meditate to remove the defects of impurity, distraction and veil, thereby knowing the soul.

Information available on Tatavarthy's website:

Website address: www.tst.org.in

- a) Details of programs conducted under the guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy and Google Maps location are available.
- b) All books by Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy are available in PDF format for free download in Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, and English languages.
- c) All the messages of Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy are organized in concept-wise YouTube playlists.
- d) Summaries of Mr. and Mrs. Tatavarthy's messages are provided in the form of quotations.
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For registration of a 3 day free meditation and soul-knowledge training classes held in Bhimavaram on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of every month, contact Sindhura, 8555995217.

Impressions, Tendencies

Impressions:- That is, the habits carried over from previous births are called impressions. Even when the body changes, the tendencies formed in earlier lives are absorbed and carried through the subtle and causal bodies, and they manifest again in the next birth. In the same way, the impressions (habits) of this present life are also absorbed by the subtle and causal bodies and carried forward into the next birth. Impressions can be good and bad. Good impressions lead to heaven while bad impressions lead to hell.

Heaven and hell are not somewhere above; they are right here on this earth. Naturally, by gaining freedom from the lowest and most degraded births, one gradually rises to higher births. These impressions diminish only through experience. Wisdom is necessary to weaken these bad impressions. Only then, they will be weakened and destroyed. No matter how bad the impressions may be, they are destroyed only through wisdom.

Tendencies:- How do these form? Desires and impressions carried across many lifetimes accumulate and combine, thereby forming tendencies.

It is said: "Tendencies themselves are a bond and the destruction of tendencies alone is liberation." These tendencies obstruct the experience of such nature. Liberation is our true nature and it is eternal. Tendencies are of 3 types:

1) Bodily tendencies, 2) Worldly tendencies, 3) Scriptural tendencies.

1) Bodily tendencies:- The illusion born of the feeling "I am the body." Because of this illusion, "This body itself is me," from the moment we wake up till we go to bed, we keep striving for the body. For the sake of health, we take specific foods or follow certain practices. To "look attractive," we give importance to clothes. For the sake of a "beautiful face," we do various facials and hairstyles and we also use different creams, powders and perfumes. All these are done only due to bodily tendencies.

2) Worldly tendencies:- This is the illusion about material possessions. Even knowing that "my house, my children, my car, my bungalow, my land" are not ours and do not come with one (with the soul), we still develop attachment with illusion. This is called worldly tendencies.

3) Scriptural tendencies:- After reading all scriptures, learning everything, debating and reasoning with everyone, one forms mental tendencies based on that. One starts thinking, "Only what I know is right." Even after knowing so much, there remains no awareness that there is more to know in this creation and stops there. This is called scriptural tendencies. One can get the benefit of attaining liberation only when these three tendencies are destroyed.

Characteristics a good seeker must possess

To become good seekers, one must know the essential characteristics. Without these characteristics, no matter how many days one sits with closed eyes, it will be of no use. Therefore, let us see what those characteristics are.

- 1) One should possess patience like mother Earth.
- 2) One should possess a fragrance like Flowers.
- 3) One should possess radiance like the Sun.
- 4) One should possess fearlessness like a Lion.
- 5) One should possess generosity like a Guru.
- 6) One should possess expansiveness like the Sky.
- 7) One should possess a deep desire to renounce all Bonds.

Let us briefly understand them.

1) One should possess patience like mother Earth:-

This means we must tolerate just like the Earth does. What does it mean when we say "the patience of the Earth"? For example, when we build a house, we dig the foundations. Yet the Earth never says, "I am in pain" or "I am suffering." Likewise, when dams are built across rivers or when roads are laid, the earth undergoes many strikes and excavations but it never complains, it simply tolerates. Similarly, if a seeker wishes to progress in their practice, they must be

able to bear physical hardships. After mother earth, the one who displayed such immense patience was Draupadi. While meditating, heat, rain and cold may trouble the body, but one must tolerate and continue the practice. The very first lesson a seeker must learn is patience. One can learn so much through meditation only by tolerating.

2) One should possess a fragrance like Flowers:-

In creation, every flower gives out a pleasant fragrance. Each flower carries its own unique fragrance and everyone enjoys and delights in it. Fragrance is the natural quality of a flower. Speaking is the natural quality of a human being.

Among the 8.4 million species in creation, only human beings have the ability to speak. But these very words turn into karmas (actions). Therefore, words must always be spoken with awareness and great care. One must speak gently and lovingly without hurting anyone. That is why Patriji said: "Your words should either be useful to you or to the people around you. Not a single useless word should come out of your mouth."

Hence, only words of truth must always come from our mouth and we must speak only truth. When we speak with love, everyone becomes our friend. But when we speak harshly, arrogantly or with pride, people turn into enemies. Words can create friendship and enmity. That is why seekers must observe their speech with awareness and speak with care.

Always speak with a smile and love. Speak in a way that encourages and uplifts others, never in a way that discourages them. The qualities God admires within us are love and compassion. When we show these qualities towards all living beings in creation, our speech automatically becomes gentle and soothing. Just like everyone loves fragrance, people must also love our words.

3) One should possess radiance like the Sun:-

Having radiance like the Sun means one must strive to be like the Sun. To be like the Sun is to know his qualities and exhibit them. The Sun shows no partiality. He makes no distinction between the rich and the poor. He shines His rays equally on a hut and on a king's palace. He does not think, "These are my people, those are outsiders." He spreads His rays equally over rivers, dirty ponds, sacred pilgrim places, holy shrines and the ocean.

Similarly, our love must be equal towards everyone. Just as the Sun selflessly radiates his light over all things without attachment, we also must share our love and compassion equally with all, free from selfishness and possessiveness.

4) One should possess fearlessness like a lion:-

Because of fear within us we think, "I cannot do this." As long as there is ego and attachment, there will be fear in us, even fear of death.

First, let's know why ego produces fear. When wealth increases and positions are gained, ego arises and with it

comes the fear, "What if these are lost someday?" To preserve them, people remain anxious every moment, encourage wrongdoing, walk in corrupt paths and commit sins. If that ego was not there, they would try to walk in the good path. Therefore, even if those who live fearlessly without ego face some temporary losses, they ultimately attain lasting joy and victory.

Now let's see how attachment creates fear. Naturally one is attached towards wife, children, relatives and one's caste.

Out of attachment towards wife and children, people may tell lies, cheat and commit sins out of love for them. The fear, "What if they are separated from me?" causes people to do many things they should not do. If that fear is absent, they will always live in truth.

Due to ignorance one thinks, "I am the body" and fears that "this body will perish." The fear of death will be there until one knows "I am the soul, not this body."

As long as this fear exists, one remains afraid to take up any task. Those without fear accomplish anything. The fearful ones live everyday as if they are dying. Therefore, seekers must always be courageous and fearless like a lion.

5) One should possess generosity like a Guru:-

Some teachers of suffering or mere instruction may expect something in return, but sadhgurus teach their disciples without any expectation. No matter how troublesome or difficult a disciple may be, a sadhguru never abandons

(leaves) him until he is made wise. With no trace of selfishness, sadhgurus always wish, "Let everyone be uplifted, let good happen to all." Because of such supreme generosity, sadhgurus are compared to the Almighty. A seeker should aspire to become like the Guru. When a seeker cultivates such generosity, he can also rise to that level.

6) One should possess expansiveness like the Sky:-

A seeker should be like the sky, present everywhere. The sky is visible to everyone, yet no one can grasp it. Similarly, a seeker should live among all, within society and family life, yet should not stick to anyone. Just as the sky cannot be possessed, the seeker also should not become bound by attachment to anyone. When one lives in such a state, one advances greatly in spiritual practice.

7) One should possess a deep desire to renounce all Bonds:-

This is what a seeker must especially cultivate because one cannot practice while being in a bond. Bond is created because of attachment. Even if many people know about practice, about wisdom, they cannot engage in it due to attachment. This attachment may be towards wife, children, wealth, positions, friends, and of many kinds. Attachment only makes one perform actions, be it sinful actions or virtuous actions. As long as actions exist, birth cannot be avoided; and as long as birth exists, suffering cannot be avoided. To realize the true essence (the soul), attachment is only the greatest obstacle. Let us know about the story of Jadabarthas as an example for this.

The sage named Jadabharata renounced (left) everything and went to the forests to practice with a resolution, "I must attain liberation." There he built a hermitage (ashram) and began his practice. One day, while returning after bathing, he saw a deer in labor giving birth to a fawn and dying. Seeing the newborn, his heart was filled with compassion. Thinking, "This fawn has no mother, in the forest some wild animal may eat it," he brought the baby deer to his hermitage and began to raise it.

As he kept raising it, he gradually developed attachment towards it. Before dying, Jadabharata worried, "What will happen to this fawn when I die?" and passed away with that thought. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said: "Whichever thought one dies with, that kind of birth one attains." Because of this attachment, he was reborn as a deer in his next life! It means, attachment became bond and resulted in an increase in a lifetime.

Even though a seeker has the power to attain realization in this very lifetime, because of such attachments, additional births become inevitable. Once we understand this, we must think about the true purpose for which we are practicing. We should let go of the obstacles in our path and follow what is favorable.

Through the virtue accumulated over countless births, one eventually comes across a sadhguru and through the Guru, knows that "Wisdom is the ultimate goal." Then, by removing the obstacles in the path of wisdom and practicing what is essential, one can finally reach the ultimate goal.

Obstacles to the Seeker

1) The obstacle of ignorance:-

Thinking, "I am a living being and God is separate." The weakness of believing, "I am dependent," is ignorance. As long as there are such weaknesses, one cannot know that "I myself am God."

2) The obstacle of inner wisdom:-

Such people, even when elders, gurus or great ones instruct and explain, do not listen. They have no inclination to listen to good words or spiritual teachings from others. This is also called "dullness of wisdom" (prajna-mandya). For such people, spiritual matters are not understood, they do not like to hear them and even if we force them to sit and listen, their mind shows no interest in these subjects.

3) Fallacious reasoning:-

Such people interpret every word spoken by elders in a contradictory way. They take misinterpreted meanings but they never try to understand and grasp the essence of what is being conveyed.

4) Evil arrogance:-

These are the people who carry excessive arrogance, thinking, "I know everything." They will be with an evil arrogance of, "No one needs to tell me anything, no one needs to teach me."

Anyone stepping into the path of practice must re-

move these traits (qualities) and transform such habits. For this very reason, Patriji said, "Along with practice, one must read spiritual books and be in the association of the wise."

Through the company of teachers, one learns what it means to be humble. Through reading spiritual books, one will know how much knowledge one has and how much more there is to learn. Through the company of the wise, one knows the state of one's practice and how much further it needs to be enhanced.

A seeker should always be like a bee. Just as a bee lands on every flower and takes its nectar, a seeker also should be close to everyone and take in their knowledge. By transforming the bad habits, negative tendencies and old impressions within, one must move forward towards the ultimate goal.

To watch Tatavarthy's zoom sessions:

a) Silence meditation from **4 am to 6.30 am**, followed by messages related to soul-knowledge from **6.30am to 7.30am**.

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Distinction in intentions

In creation, all human beings live with various desires and intentions. A desire means wanting something to be fulfilled without effort or striving. An intention means making determined efforts to achieve what one seeks. Simply wishing "I want this" without hard work is 'desire', whereas putting in special effort and attaining it is an intention. Intentions vary according to the qualities of people. Let us now see how differences arise among these intentions.

Animal intention:-

Such people never engage in righteous deeds; they only care for the comforts of their own body. They don't even hesitate to harm others for the sake of enjoyment. They use other's wealth for their joy. Whatever intentions they make are only for their own happiness, not for the benefit of others. Those who act against other's well-being and cause them harm for their own sake are called "two-legged beasts". The intentions of such people are called 'Animal intentions'. In them, the tamasic quality is more.

Human intention:-

Such people have faith in God, in truth, and in righteousness. They strive for the welfare of the world and perform righteous deeds. The wealth they earn is utilized for divine purposes. They never think of enjoying other's wealth. Whatever divine work they begin, they try and complete it however difficult it may be. They possess some rajasic qual-

ties and more sattvic qualities.

Godly intention:-

These people have more of sattvic qualities. Whoever comes to them will not go back without receiving help. They never depend on others while performing righteous deeds. All of their wealth is completely dedicated to divine activities.

Sagely intention:-

These people are total renunciates, in a state of desirelessness (detached). They are ever engaged in meditation on the soul and abide in pure sattva. They recognize that "there is only pure consciousness in all beings and all objects" and therefore love everyone. They always carry the thought, "I must teach and enlighten people." Whatever they resolve to do, it definitely gets fulfilled immediately.

Almighty intention:

Such beings perceive the indwelling Lord, the inner controller, in all moving and unmoving objects. They easily attain the state of absolute absorption beyond dualities (nirvikalpa samadhi). They are ever-rejoicing in the Soul and possess a compassionate intention for the upliftment of the world. They constantly inspire others towards soul-knowledge. The eight supernatural powers remain ready to serve them. Though they may live on earth, they are verily liberated while alive.

Absence of intention:-

Such beings have no intentions whatsoever. The supernatural powers, beginning with anima (the power of becoming minute), serve them. Whatever has to happen for them, happens naturally. Even the Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva fulfill their tasks. Such beings, across countless lifetimes, have cultivated supreme devotion to the Almighty and to the guru. Through the virtue of their good deeds, they reach this mature state. Just as darkness vanishes and light arises with the sun, by their very incarnation ignorance in the world perishes and wisdom flourishes. Only in the absence of an intention state, the direct realization of the Almighty (Brahman) occurs. That is why in the Bhagavad Gita it is said:

**Shlok|| yasya sarve samarambhah kama-sankalpa-varjitaḥ
jnanagni-dagdha-karmanam tam ahuh panditam budhah**
(B.G.4-19)

"He whose actions are entirely free from desire and intention, whose karmas are burned away in the fire of wisdom, such a one is declared as a 'scholar' by the wise."

In the eyes of God, scholarship is not mastery of worldly education but the purity of heart, free from desire-filled intentions and possessing soul-knowledge.

Patriji also once said: "1) In the early lifetimes, what we desire may not come to us, but only what we are eligible for will come. 2) In some later lifetimes, even what we are eligible for may not come, but we will inevitably get what

we need and 3) In the final lifetimes, even what we desire will not come; instead, only that which is essential for the progress of society through us will certainly be fulfilled."

If, even after the guru has instructed or the God has guided, one ignores it and continues to set intentions for selfish purposes and personal gain then unfulfilled intentions will only lead to sorrow. That is why Patriji said, "We must practice without any intentions." They say "If we keep doing what is to be done, everything that needs to come will surely come." Know that "If you desire, only a little will be yours; but if you desire nothing, everything will be yours."



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Purity of the vessel - Purity of the ingredients - Purity in cooking

If human beings wish to come out of sorrow, they must grow spiritually and to grow spiritually, the foremost thing is to practice 'observation of the breath meditation'. Yet, only meditation is not enough for spiritual growth. Along with meditation, food discipline is also essential. Without following proper food discipline, spiritual progress can never be achieved. Therefore, let us know what kind of food one must take.

Most importantly, one should take pure food because only when the food is pure, the mind becomes pure in meditation. According to that purity only, a person's spiritual growth unfolds. Now, let us see what kind of purity is required in food. Mainly, three kinds of purity are essential: 1) Purity of the vessel, 2) Purity of the ingredients, 3) Purity in cooking.

1) Purity of the vessel:-

For every seeker who wants to progress spiritually, Patriiji clearly explained the food discipline: "Non-vegetarian food is dead food, it is the food that decays, rots and stinks. First, give up non-vegetarian food."

He further said, "Not only should one stop eating meat but you must also avoid using the vessels in which such

food has been cooked or served because the very defect of that food remains in the vessel also."

For example, when we use a tin of fertilizer in the field, we throw it away afterwards. We don't clean it and use it in the house. The reason is, no matter how much we clean it, "it will still cause us some harm," right? We only see what is visible but we cannot see what is invisible. Patriji knew that "The vessels in which meat is cooked carry far greater defects." He not only knew the visible defects but also the most subtle, unseen impurities. By eating food cooked in such vessels, the mind changes into rajasic qualities. When one has tamasic and rajasic qualities, they don't settle in meditation and there will be no spiritual progress. That is why one must know that "purity of the vessel is extremely important for spiritual development."

2) Purity of the ingredients:-

The purity of the ingredients means Patriji said, "Do not eat rotten or stored food items." If an apple, banana or any fruit begins to rot, it is considered spoiled. Sometimes, we cut off the rotten part and eat the rest but even such food should not be eaten. Likewise, food cooked in the morning should not be reheated and eaten in the evening. In a way, no food cooked and stored in the refrigerator should be eaten. Eating such stale food not only increases tamasic qualities within us but also creates many obstacles in our meditation. Therefore, food must be freshly and warmly prepared before eating. That is why Patriji emphasized, "Purity of the ingre-

dients is also essential."

3) Purity in cooking:-

Patriji also said, "There must be purity in cooking. If it is not cooked in this way, the true taste will be lost." When the food is prepared after meditation with a pure mind, it brings health and happiness to those who eat it and the food becomes very delicious. But when the food is cooked with negative thoughts, it also influences those who eat it. Let's see an example.

One day, a king invited a sage for a meal. The cook, saw the king's silver utensils and thought, "There are so many things here... who will ever know if I take just one spoon?" He cooked with this selfish intention in mind.

That day, when the sage came for the meal, he quietly slipped a silver glass into his bag while eating and went back to his ashram. After reaching the ashram, when he emptied the bag, the silver glass fell out. The sage was surprised and thought, "I renounced everything and everyone and has come to this ashram, so why did I commit such a karma (action) again?" He knew the reason after seeing with his divine vision. He came to know, "The food I ate was cooked by the cook with such selfish thoughts and after eating it, I also behaved in the same manner." Immediately, the sage went to the king and narrated the entire incident. He said, "Please check your cook, you will find a silver spoon with him." When the king checked, indeed a silver spoon was found

with the cook.

One must know that our thoughts influence the food we cook. Therefore, those who eat it also tend to behave in the same manner.

That is why, when we cook, we must cook with good thoughts, with the attitude, "May everyone be healthy, happy and well", without any artificial feelings. Such food not only tastes delicious but also brings joy to those who eat it.

This is the very reason Patriji would never eat in anyone's house, especially in the homes of non-vegetarians. He knew everything. He would not tolerate even the subtlest impurities because they obstruct meditation and spiritual growth. Hence, know that purity in cooking is also very essential for a seeker. Whoever follows the path of Patriji must practice purity of vessels, purity of ingredients, and purity in cooking. By doing so, grow spiritually and free yourself from sorrow.



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